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EVALUATING DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY:
COMPARING HABERMAS' DISCOURSE ETHIC AND
EVALUATIONS OF CONSENSUS PROCESS
IN RESIDENTIAL COOPERATIVES

by

KATHERYN SUTTER

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in
URBAN STUDIES

Portland State University
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DISSECTATION APPROVAL

The abstract and dissertation of Katheryn Sutter for the Doctor of Philosophy in Urban Studies were presented May 20, 2005, and accepted by the dissertation committee and the doctoral program.

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ABSTRACT


Title: Evaluating Deliberative Democracy: Comparing Habermas' Discourse Ethic and Evaluations of Consensus Process in Residential Cooperatives

How do deliberators reason together on what is best? Planners, policy analysts and community developers should know how to recognize the validity of participatory deliberations claimed to give groups voice in policy decisions. Policy analyses have lost power in the face of post-modern critiques of objectivity. Practical policy analyses require more than objective validity for they express results of what Jurgen Habermas refers to as normative rationality. This study followed John Forester's recommended research agenda for rigorous empirical analyses of policy process deliberations using Jurgen Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action. Three successful residential communities were identified with organizational and institutional characteristics meeting Habermas' criteria for organizational support of democratic discourse. Each was organized as a cooperative over twenty years before. All required formal processes for consensus on policy decisions. This research investigated their analytic criteria for process evaluation as they applied them in
response to formal open-ended interview questions. Democratic deliberation necessarily elicits subjective and intersubjective assertions of validity in addition to objective assertions of fact and each type of validity is evaluated with different types of criteria. Detailed characteristics of Habermasian validity and discourse ethics are illustrated in discourse analyses of selected issues deliberated in each community. Concepts of Habermasian validity, their development and empirical application are also described. In conclusion, procedural rules for policy deliberation may protect otherwise marginal voices if all four types of validity claims are allowed to be challenged, reformulated, and revalidated. In this way, these communities' social experiments inform similar efforts of those working for greater citizen participation and civic capacity in urban and regional policy and planning. These communities are similarly involved with the design and development of social and institutionalized practices for participatory democracy. This cross-fertilization of theory and practice has the potential to offer a significant benefit to each.
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First I want to acknowledge my academic peers and my professors and fellow students in the Toulon School of Urban Studies and Planning at Portland State University for their commitment to, and appreciation of each other's public service and applied scholarship. I thank them for inviting myself and my community participants into authentic pursuit of the university motto: "Let Knowledge Serve the City." From a distance, I thank John Forester whose recommended Habermasian research agenda is applied here. He gave encouragement and multiple opportunities to present and discuss this work-in-progress with international groups of urban planning theorists through the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning. Foremost among academics, I thank my Ph.D. program and dissertation
advisor, Sy Adler. His criticism, patience and wisdom have left me indebted to him with affection, admiration and respect. His uncountable reviews immeasurably improved this work, but the results are completely my own.

Second, I want to acknowledge the community participants for their depth of understanding and wisdom. They gave me access to their homes, and humbly described their struggles and pride with their democratic experimentation. They lived simple lives, felt imperfect in their practices, and were painfully aware of political problems caused by so many "in the world" knowing so little about democratic participation. To our benefit, they were realistic, but hopeful that their experiences might be helpful for planners and others in public policy deliberations. They were also imbued by cautious hope and optimism from having learned from each other that it was possible to reason together on what was best.

Thirdly, I want to acknowledge my neighborhood and local community. Portland, Oregon is a great city and much of that stems from the richness of its public spaces, both institutionally and between homes and businesses. For some years I have been able to move fluidly between friends, family, school and acquaintances without fragmentation. I thank our urban planners and bicycle activists for good transportation planning in the central city, but also my students, friends and neighbors who make life good in the neighborhoods. I have been tutored with observation, advice and
involvement with a great number of consensus-based organizations locally and nationally. These groups have kept my ruminating practical.

My community also includes all of those who have made their resources available for this work. The technical and material support provided by Peter Phelps was large, but dwarfed by the size of insights he provided on my own process and the human condition. The Kellogg Foundation provided grants for civic capacity building administered by Dilafruz Williams, Kettering Foundation provided scholarships for advanced public policy deliberation moderator training. The College of Urban and Public Affairs, at Portland State University (P.S.U.), awarded the Maurey Clark dissertation fellowship. Stephen Reder of Applied Linguistics at P.S.U. for academic support and peer review through the Development Education and Work research group, the Center for Academic Excellence at P.S.U. for numerous professional development support grants, my school for teaching and research assistantships and the Conflict Resolution Program at P.S.U. for opportunities to design and teach original courses in which students exercised and added to understanding of consensus-building theory and community applications. The core of the large community that has supported this work is my small group of close family and friends. To you, I have dedicated my hopes that this might be a small contribution for the benefit of our future generations.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ........................................................................................................... i
LIST OF TABLES .............................................................................................................. vi
LIST OF FIGURES .............................................................................................................. viii
PREFACE ............................................................................................................................ ix

Chapter I: Introduction

I.A. Problem Statement ........................................................................................................ 1
I.B. Purpose and Significance .............................................................................................. 8
I.C. Objectives and Limitations ............................................................................................ 20
I.D. Summary ....................................................................................................................... 30

Chapter II: Literature, Theory and Practice

II.A. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 33
II.B. Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action ............................................................ 43
II.C. Consensus Process in Intentional Communities ....................................................... 94
II.D. Summary ....................................................................................................................... 100

Chapter III: Research Design and Method

III.A. Introduction ............................................................................................................... 101
III.B. Identifying Practical Evaluative Criteria ................................................................ 104
III.C. Subject Selection ........................................................................................................ 105
III.D. Designing Interview Questions ................................................................................. 118
III.E. Methods of Analysis .................................................................................................. 120
III.F. Summary .................................................................................................................... 132

Chapter IV: Comparing Evaluative Criteria

IV.A. Introduction to an Institutional Analysis .................................................................. 133
IV.B. Issues Deliberated in Each Community ................................................................... 135
IV.C. Evaluative Criteria Derived from Interviews .......................................................... 221
IV.D. Financial Criteria and Habermasian Validity ......................................................... 186

- iv -
**Chapter V: Organizational Power Structures and Processes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V.A. Introduction</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.B. Procedural-Ethic Institutionalized in Power Structures</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.C. Running Meetings by Consensus</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.D. Democratic Ideals and Differences by Experience</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter VI: Conclusions and Implications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VI.A. Theoretic Practicality of Deliberative Democracy</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.B. Evaluating Democratic Deliberations</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.C. Intentional Communities</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.D. Organizational Power Relations</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.E. Summary</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reference List**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A. Rochdale Principles of Cooperation</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B. Criteria Used to Select Case Communities</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C. Testable Quantitative Survey Instrument</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D. Interview Questions</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1, All statements in discourse make claims about four worlds or realms..... 17
Table 2, Positivist and Post-Positivist Approaches to Policy Analysis............. 36
Table 3, Locating Each Type of Habermasian Validity (Forester 1993)............. 74
Table 4, Evaluative Criteria for Objective Validity (Dayton 1999).................. 80
Table 5, Evaluative Criteria for Subjective Validity (Dayton 1999)............... 84
Table 6, Evaluative Criteria for Intersubjective Validity (Dayton 1999)........... 88
Table 7, Evaluative Criteria for Communicative Validity (Dayton 1999)......... 92
Table 8, John Forester's example questions about practical criteria for validity 125
Table 9, Research Tasks.................................................................................. 132
Table 10, Comparison of Community Experience Levels ............................ 135
Table 11, Summary of Issues Deliberated in Each Community....................... 136
Table 11, Evaluating Evidence Participants Distinguished Ideas from Feelings 192
Table 12, Evaluating Evidence of Instrumental Effectiveness........................ 193
Table 13, Evaluating Evidence of Objective Reasoning.................................. 193
Table 14, Evaluating Evidence of Facts Being Accurate................................. 194
Table 15, Evaluating Evidence of a Trustworthy Process............................... 201
Table 16, Evaluating Evidence of Emotional Impact on Participants.............. 201
Table 17, Evaluating Evidence of Impact on Participants' Affect..................... 202
Table 18, Evaluating Evidence of Inclusivity.................................................. 210
Table 19, Evaluating Evidence of Beneficial Rules........................................ 210
Table 20, Evaluating Evidence of Following Rules......................................... 211
Table 21, Evaluating Evidence of Power Use .......................................................... 211
Table 22, Evaluating Evidence of Time Allocation ................................................ 212
Table 23, Evaluating Evidence of Changes in Understanding .............................. 218
Table 24, Evaluating Evidence of Understandable Communication .................... 218
Table 25, Summary of Interviewees Habermasian Criteria for Validity ............... 222
Table 26 parts 1 and 2, Habermasian Evaluative Criteria and Interviewees’ ........ 229
Table 27, Testable Draft of a Habermasian Evaluation Survey Instrument ......... 329
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1, Venn Diagram Locating The Research Topic ................................................. 7

Figure 2, Forester’s 1993 Habermasian Research Agenda in Nine Steps ............. 22

Figure 3, Master-Slave Dialectic and Conceptualizing Intersubjective Validity ... 38

Figure 4, Habermas’ Definition of Discourse, with Inclusivity or Universalization Principle .................................................................................................................. 61

Figure 5, Cone Model of Consensus-based Organizational Power Structures .... 241
"We can assess practice not simply as the achievement of goals, but more subtly too," ... "as the practical communicative organizing (or dis-organizing) of others' attention to relevant and significant issues at hand. Such attention-direction is behaviorally observable, phenomenologically powerful, and deeply political at the same time."

(FORESTER, 1993, p. 5)

The topics and questions addressed in this study are traceable to a conference entitled, "Socio-Cybernetics: Our Utopianists' Audacious Inventions." I began my study of the Quaker-inspired consensus process in response to University of Illinois' Professor Herbert Brün. He presented a question traceable to his wife Marianne Brün: "What would be a Socially Beneficial Information Processor, a S.B.I.P.?" At that time, I was struggling to understand the ramifications of a public health problem exacerbated, if not caused, by an economic reality of the neuro-pharmaceutical industry. I was a graduate student in public health at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, with a background in social and bio-behavioral sciences. I was reading critiques of positivism and sociological applications of systems theory in a Critical Theory study group associated with Herbert Brün's Performer's Workshop Ensemble. I had also been collecting information about therapeutic communities as alternatives to
what appeared to be our economy's systematic over-reliance on medical pharmacology for social ills. The purpose of the conference was both systems-science inquiry and performance-based education. We brought aged and forgotten cyberneticians (whose theories predated the first computers) to the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, one of the world's most renowned institutions of computer engineering. We asked them to discuss applications of their theoretical work in cybernetics to social theory. The humorous absurdity of this combination of participants, location and topics was deeply appreciated by the organizers. Herbert Brün's presentation on the question of S.B.I.P. made a powerful demonstration of the seeming irrationality of normative policy questions, those questions addressing "what would be best" rather than a calculation of objectively verifiable facts.

When Herbert Brün asked the question, "What would be a S.B.I.P.?" the audience erupted in anger. They refused to let such a discussion proceed, arguing it would lead to, the then new super computers and, central control. They apparently found it impossible to believe he actually wanted to know from them what they themselves would consider socially beneficial. He countered, "So what would be a socially beneficial information processor?" His repeated emphases on social benefit and the problem of not being allowed to ask the question did not quell the audience's angry response.
The shouting and uproar was taped, and we conference organizers spent a sleepless night replaying and analyzing the video. We immersed ourselves in the frightening but enlightening ramifications of not being able to rationally discuss the question “What would be best?” My involvement with that group informed my decision to seek and learn socially beneficial models of organizational decision processes. For the next fifteen years, I continued to put my attention on the nascent intentional communities movement and the secular practice of Quaker-inspired consensus processes. I have continued to consult with developing community groups. I have also taught courses on Habermasian theories of democracy and formal consensus theory and practice at the graduate level, exploring resulting questions of theory and application to community development and policy analyses.

This monograph describes a formal inquiry into relationships between Jürgen Habermas’ Critical Theory of democratic communication and social experimentation taking place inside three highly experienced and successful small democratically organized housing communities.
(STEP 1) "Distinguish the central reproduction processes shaping worldview and belief, consent and allegiance, self and identity, and issue formulation and definition."

(Forester, 1993, p. 132)

I.A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Evaluating democratic deliberation is difficult, but judgments must be made. In the face of challenges to democratic governance, planners are asked to verify what is accomplished, or not, in consensus-building processes. Still, democratic decision processes in community development suffer from a relative lack of models for systematically deliberating on values. The lack of models for systematically deliberating on values led me to identify two such models that personal indicated were deeply similar, though superficially disparate. One was a theory and the other a practice. My teaching and consulting in academic and field environments led me to believe there was a historically deep failure of political imagination behind this lack of models for rigorous discourse on values. It also led me to believe that an agenda for research and education illustrating the potential for analyses of deliberative democratic processes would bridge a gap I identified between practical social experimentation with democratic community governance and a supposedly hopelessly abstract and
impossibly utopian democratic theory. This study and its description is intended to bridge some of that gap.

I did not focus this study on "characteristics of consensus-building processes." If I had, the information presented in the results might have been different in important ways. For example, there would information regarding techniques of facilitation, or member selection criteria. That information is not well represented in the results, because although it is closely related, the focus of the study has been on criteria for evaluating systematic deliberation on values. Interview questions asked for polarized responses, what worked, what didn’t work, what they liked and didn’t like and etc. From these responses, I gathered their practical criteria for evaluating consensus-building processes. In this way, my search for models of systematic deliberation on norms has been narrowed into a focus on the evaluative criteria used by practitioners of such a successful model.

Evaluative criteria are used by evaluators to judge evidence of compliance or deviation from a norm. Not only do these practitioners deliberate on values and norms, but they also have deliberations about how to best conduct these deliberations. Although the population at large has far less capacity for this, the skills are learnable and there are experienced veterans of these types of deliberative communities with skills to pass on. This study documents this exploration and reviews the methods of the exploration in great depth.
Development of the method of analysis was a significant part of the project. It consisted of a careful application of John Forester's recommendations for empirical appropriation of Jürgen Habermas' theory of communicative action from back in 1993. The search for a method required me to focus on a specific and potentially observable aspect of his theory of discourse ethics. This led me to the validity claims. In this text, instances of the terms for the four types of Habermasian validity: objective, subjective, intersubjective and communicative are italicized. The purpose is to highlight these words throughout the text in an effort to reinforce readers' recognition of their use in a Habermasian sense.

The following is a short introduction to the relationship between these aspects of his social theories and consensus-building practices in cooperatively owned housing communities. In Habermasian terms, the study focused on the specific moment of human interaction he calls discourse. Discourse has a number of characteristics, one of which is the conscious goal of establishing reasoned agreements among participants with differences in interests and values. A working definition of reason for this study is that it "enables contemplation of abstract and material things, weighing what can be said, or thought, for and against them, to draw conclusions and to act accordingly. It enables distinction of truth from falsehood and better from worse, and enables deduction of inferences from facts or propositions."
Habermas explicitly defines utopianism in either a positive or negative sense of the word. Attempts to institute policy making processes based on The Consensus Process in a contemporary community setting are understandably utopian social experiments. In Habermasian terms, this is a positive form of utopianism, based on the experimental and beneficial goals of the project. A negative use of the word is one in which a project is implicated to be impossible.

Habermas and others have concluded that the modern era's fact-value dichotomy undermines the potential for democratic deliberation. It makes deliberation on norms a seemingly illogical or, at best, an ineffective exercise. When rational participation appears impossible, rational demands for participation lose their persuasive force. This problem of the fact-value dichotomy is discussed by critical policy analysts such as Deborah Stone (1988) who follows this reasoning when indicating that the fact-value dichotomy unnecessarily relegates questions of values such as those which characterize politics to an emotivistic sphere of decision-making. Pluralist politics are made more difficult when intrinsic value judgments underlying political decisions are not made amenable to systematic review. Such emotivistic and unexamined value judgments, made without scrutiny of reason, can too easily perpetuate policies not serving the interests of the community being affected by those decisions because a use of force may too easily be resorted to, or allowed when no rational alternatives appear to
exist. Policy analysts influenced by Frankfurt School Critical Theory argue values can be and are amenable to reason. It can be referred to as normative reason.

One part of Habermas' discourse ethic, which is central to the results of this study and revisited often in this text, states that a decision can not be claimed to be the result of rational deliberation if those affected by the decision are systematically excluded from that deliberation. This is referred to as the requirement for inclusivity. The relationship between issues of exclusion and the nature of this Critical Theory as a conflict theory is discussed in the section on development of the Theory of Communicative Action. The existence of this ubiquitous discourse ethic in human discourse is also said to make it possible for interested parties to deliberate on questions of value. The discourse ethics is a central part of this body of theory developed for political interpretation and critique of social phenomena. The Theory of Communicative Action systematically derives the argument that a given society's communicative infrastructure has a foundational role in human culture production, reproduction and change. It is a Critical Theory in the Frankfurt School tradition, which means it is an emancipatory body of theory. The purpose for learning how it works is to learn what choices we have in the face of external and internalized constraints on discourse as well as opportunities for deliberating on what would be best for all concerned.
I understood Frankfurt-School theories in terms of these types of critiques of social science and was intent on finding proposals for positive and practical alternatives. I found parallels in secular, but Quaker-inspired intentional communities. My experience had taught me that communities with long term experience using The Consensus Process regularly expressed rigorous standards for estimating whether a consensus had been reached. Based on observation and the limited literature in the area, I came to believe social reproduction processes in established consensus-run communities were promoting ideals resembling the Habermasian discourse ethic. If their ideals are similar, they will have much to contribute to future discourses on the practical utility of his Critical Theory of Society.
This Venn diagram positions this study of deliberative democracy in the area of overlap between: Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action, a population of Quaker-inspired and consensus-based intentional communities, and the fields of public policy analysis and planning theory. Other instances of this diagram highlight other aspects of this same overlap.
I.B. PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE

1. PURPOSE

This study explores a promising protocol for practical evaluation of deliberative-policy processes. I revisited Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action (T.C.A.) to show how it could be beneficially applied for policy analyses in community development contexts. Examples of contexts benefiting from evaluation of deliberations would be those in which evaluative questions such as the following were asked: Did a particular consensus-building process work? What went wrong? What could be done better?

The theoretical concepts referenced in this study relate to the following line of reasoning. Community policy makers are empowered to make impacts on their communities through their negotiated relationships of property-ownership. Both their tenure rights and power relationships are institutionalized through the particular community's organizational form. The organizational form situates members in a system of economic rights and mediates relations between members, between members and the land, and between members and outsiders. In John Forester's terms, the ways in which "these reproduction processes become actual, concrete and routine" include responses to factors outside the community such as local land-use laws, finance institutions used by the community and the influence of these
and other factors on decision-making practices inside the community. These practices are affected by influences on the individuals and the ongoing cultural or social reproduction processes occurring in the communities. The patterns of evaluations these participants use when judging their communities’ policy-decision processes will bring pressure to bear on the development and maintenance of those processes.

This study is an inquiry guided by the hypothesis that participants in communities with long histories using The Consensus Process may judge good-process with evaluations similar to the theoretically derived ideals for deliberative democracy developed in Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action and his discourse ethics. Discussions of the exploratory and descriptive nature of my inquiry into this hypothesis are presented in sections on the study’s limitations.

The formal decision-making meeting style described in the appendix is capitalized in this report as “The Consensus Process”. The word “process” is used alone when referring to the actual series of events occurring over time. Unless otherwise noted, The Consensus Process is the abstraction; the “process” is what happened. Interviewees were specifically asked to describe the process for a recent issue, or one they could remember well. In practice “the process” was often the term they used when referencing prescribed procedures which may not have been followed in their own community. In this study, I use it to mean the actual series of events in a
particular case, or as they generally occurred. The term 'the process' is used this way in the interviews. The foundational question in each taped interview was my request that they describe “the process for a particular issue.” The process for an issue began with a problem developing in everyday life in the community, in conversations or activities. “The process” for that issue went on to include multiple meetings until a decision was made.

The least experienced community, Trinity Community did not claim to use a “real” consensus process. They associated real consensus with the generation of proposals “from the floor.” They were also aware that resorting to a majority vote and letting a proposal pass, even though a number of members voted a “block” meant that they were not using The Consensus Process. In the results and conclusion I include their processes when I make references to “consensus building processes.” In all three cases, the communities chosen for this study have made explicit efforts to create and use decision-making processes enhancing equality among members in terms of human dignity, avoiding oppressive uses of power and arriving at approximations of the best decisions by sharing each other's perspectives. They are equally concerned with methods which produce outcomes they can all accept and implement for their mutual benefit. These goals can be referred to as demands for both normative social value and instrumental effectiveness. These communities' purposes are similar in this
respect to the efforts of those working for greater citizen participation and civic capacity in urban and regional policy and planning. Since these communities are intimately involved with the design and development of social and institutionalized practices for participatory democracy, the cross-fertilization of theory and practice has the potential to offer a significant benefit to each.

This study documents and interprets important social experimentation and social learning occurring in communities insisting on normative discourse (deliberation on what should be) in their policy processes. Many intentional communities have well-developed methods for bringing multiple interests to the table and for subsequent collaboration on mutually agreeable norms developed in these deliberations. Their limited size and bounded scope of discussion create nearly optimal conditions for this study. I hoped to illustrate examples of formal group reasoning on subjective representation and intersubjective legitimacy by people who may have never heard of Habermas.

2. APPLICABILITY TO OTHER SETTINGS

What can the content of the evaluations teach planners and policy analysts about requirements for deliberative democracy at the organizational level, and what are the implications for other communities and organizations? Habermas claims his Discourse Ethics are found
universally in human discourse. This study did not attempt to address the accuracy of this claim. The requirement for inclusivity in normative rationality refers to the same concept Habermas previously referred to as the Universalization Principle (UP) until the English translation and connotations of "universal" raised what he believed were unnecessary alarms.

There is also a common link between Habermas and these Quaker-inspired communities in their Protestant Enlightenment philosophies and in their more recent influences on twentieth-century social revolutions. However, this study does not have an historical focus. The focus is instead on similar evaluation criteria in their practices and in Habermas' theory.

Any team of people coming together for collaborative planning will have characteristics differentiating them from some intentional communities and making them comparable to others. For example, some communities rely on general meetings. Much like town hall meetings, these general meetings potentially include everyone affected by a decision. Some communities rely more heavily on executive leadership by managers empowered to make policy decisions with relatively high degrees of autonomy. The variation between organizational structures within the intentional communities' movement is large. It may be equal to the variation between intentional communities and other types of community groups conducting deliberations on internal policy issues. Each organizational form is likely to differ in the
value attributed to some process concerns over others. There is some ability, however, to generalize results of this study to other deliberative settings.

Insights into normative reason utilized in The Consensus Process are applicable to other groups in which there is a commitment to cooperatively arrive at social norms through reasoned discourse, especially where there is a commitment to reflect this cooperation in the power structure of the organization or institution. In this context, "A social norm is a shared general expectation serving to resolve potential conflicts of interest by regulating the pursuit of those interests" (Habermas in Rehg, 1994).

The compatibility and mutual reinforcement of the community's ownership structures, decision processes and philosophic influences do not allow the results of this study to attribute causal roles to any of the three, and for this reason, the results are merely descriptive. Still, description is powerful when it yields new insights about the meanings-in-context of these community power relations.

The methodology of this study rests on an assumption that experienced participants did have ideals concerning good decision processes and that they were able to describe those ideals in terms of the presence or absence of those ideal characteristics. Participants used their ideals to judge their own and their community's successes and they were able, to greater or lesser degrees, to reflect on the ramifications of their form of
organizational decision-making on their community's social relations over time.

*a. Application to Public Policy Deliberations: N.I.M.B.Y. (Not In My Back Yard)*

I give an example of a N.I.M.B.Y. argument in the chapter on results from Primo Community. In this section I describe the phenomena more generally. This study's application of Habermasian discourse ethics can benefit those working in and developing the everyday functioning of movements for greater citizen participation in public policy and planning at multiple scales. Planning theorists can apply Habermas' formulation of normative rationality to N.I.M.B.Y., derived from the phrase "Not In My Back Yard." This phenomenon is characterized by local stakeholders resisting undesirable developments in their areas though the development is arguably desirable for the larger region. N.I.M.B.Y. illustrates areas of inquiry and practice where inappropriate theories of rationality are used to delegitimate civic deliberations. It is argued that stakeholders can not rationally deliberate on policies which affect themselves and their own real interests. If we could more confidently and rigorously evaluate the validity of those discourses in ways that did not categorically deny the ability of stakeholders to negotiate for the common good, we would be improving efforts at democratic reform.

Planners' conceptions of N.I.M.B.Y. reflect a belief in the impossibility of rational political discourse. This conception hearkens back to Kant's
Theory of Justice. In Kant's Theory of Justice, the fictive device of an ideal-rational being is used to reason about the most rational course to follow. Kant instructed rational thinkers to ask themselves what the ideal rational being would think about the matter. That is, what would someone think who did not have a personal stake in this matter?

Habermas changes Kant's formulation by insisting we are capable of rationally deliberating on a matter in which multitudes of individuals have subjective and real interests at stake. In the case of an accusation of N.I.M.B.Y., Habermas gives "contra factual evidence" (a translation of his words) that a rational decision on such a development could not be made without considering the subjectively-experienced impacts on those affected by such a development. The logic behind this theory of normative deliberation in policy analyses has powerful implications for design and evaluation of organizational, or institutional communicative infrastructures in which these deliberations take place.

3. SIGNIFICANCE FOR THEORY

The results of this study will be informative for those wishing to shape the context and form of democratic deliberations in organizations with the power to make binding decisions between members. It will also be informative for other levels of analysis besides this study's focus on intra-organizational deliberation. Other levels of analysis which might be
informed by the results for this study include inter-organizational and institutional levels of analysis. This potential benefit is due to the fact that the illustrations of Habermasian theory are made more concrete with analysis of practitioners' interactions and their practiced evaluations of those communicative interactions. This study is significant for its investigation and description of the communicative infrastructures of successful social experiments in democratic communications and governance. I have shown ways in which participants in these communities evaluate their groups' abilities to reflect upon and modify relationships between their objective, subjective and intersubjective conditions together. I started with the understanding that the communicative infrastructure of a community is the inherently dynamic movement and shape of interactions between actors. The communicative infrastructure both indicates and enacts power relations between members. I accepted that possession and control of property also represents and enacts these power relations. The ability to understand and design communicative infrastructure in ways that support democracy must then take advantage of the organizational opportunities for communications about property. Organizational communications about property are pivotal to organizational power relations and the organizational social structures with which they are associated. These communications also function to maintain and reproduce those relations. For a Habermasian investigation of efforts at democratic deliberation
within any community, others may also choose to look at the power relations enacted in their communications and the power structures of the communities in which that communication takes place.

These community participants are practitioners of deliberative democracy for governance, control and distribution of their real property as well as governance over each other's behavior on that property. The criteria they use to evaluate their own deliberations can inform planning theorists, policy analysts and their students about the analytic tools at our disposal for investigation, evaluation and design of democratic institutions.

Table 1, All statements in discourse make claims about four worlds or realms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claims about the objective world</th>
<th>Claims about the subjective world</th>
<th>Claims about the intersubjective world</th>
<th>Claims about understandability or communicative competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Norms</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World view</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Community -</td>
<td>Lingo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretive schemes</td>
<td>Interactive capabilities</td>
<td>Interpersonal relations</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(From Habermas, 1979)

For this study, communities' property relations are distinguished as factors of social reproduction which affect participants with experience and over time. In words similar to those used by John Forester, these relations of property ownership help reproduce communities' shaping of their members' worldview and belief, consent and allegiance, self and identity, and issue formulation and definition. Habermas asks us to look at three
types of validity in their discourse that correspond to these relations. In other words, property relations subtly and powerfully reproduce social relations objectively, subjectively and intersubjectively: 1) “objectively” in terms of knowledge about the way the world works; 2) “subjectively” in terms of personal identities and expressions of self and; 3) socially or “intersubjectively” in terms of rules and obligations. In a little more detail: Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action designates three worlds, or realms of human experience and those three are referenced in terms of validity claims in all deliberations. These worlds or realms include: the objective world, the subjective world and the intersubjective or social world. The corresponding three dimensions of social reproduction which constitute these three worlds are: cultural beliefs (Habermas refers to this as the world of socially reproducing world views, knowledge, or belief of truth, but it is my sense that for this study, written as it is for United States audiences “objective knowledge” is a better translation of this concept.) subjective identity (individuals' senses and representations of self) and social relations (social structure). These relationships between the communities' property relations and their democratic potential are described in depth in the chapter on organizational power structures. These three realms of social reproduction above are shaped by the community power structures and property relations. For this reason, it was important to
design the case selection criteria with these three realms of social reproduction in mind.

The three case communities were not selected before developing theory-driven criteria for case selection. They did, however, each belong to a universe of communities with which I was familiar. The communities of this national sample pool were sources of vision beyond failures of political imagination. The impact of ubiquitous failures of imagination can not be underestimated. Oppressive power is exercised when a population is convinced it is impossible for citizens to effectively and rationally hold or wield power together as voluntary participants in civic association. The negative effects on civic capacity are broad and deep.

Habermas' theory of discourse ethics delineates attributes of communications which meet demands for both normative rightness and instrumental effectiveness. The theory is uniquely matched to these communities' situations, and because of this match, experienced intentional community participants contributed to my refinement of this theory's application to their situation. In terms of applicability to other contexts, they are intended for pluralist groups dedicated to cooperatively resolving their conflicts by reaching argued agreements on norms regulating future pursuits of their various interests. More is said about this premise later under the section addressing Habermas' Universalization Principle. These communities' efforts can illuminate the work of policy and planning

I.B. Purpose and Significance - 19 -
scholars because both scholars and these communities focus on education, inquiry, and practice in self-government as necessary components of their abilities to reach reasoned agreement on shared norms.

The discourse ethics is a central part of Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action, a body of theory developed for political interpretation and critique of culture. In The Theory of Communicative Action, Jürgen Habermas systematically derives the argument that societies' communicative infrastructure has a foundational role in human culture production, reproduction and change, which should be more deeply recognized. This study's application of Habermasian discourse ethics might also benefit participants in the development and everyday functioning of intentional communities, as well as informing participants in movements for greater citizen participation in public policy and planning.

I.C. OBJECTIVES AND LIMITATIONS

1. OBJECTIVES

Much of the report on this study covers the results of investigating the following theoretic and methodological questions: 1) For application of Habermasian discourse ethics, which criteria are considered applicable for evaluation of democratic deliberations? 2) What criteria were used by participants when they evaluated their communities' deliberations? 3) What methods would be appropriate for collecting and analyzing participants'
Chapter I: Introduction

criteria for evaluation? 4) How do the Habermasian evaluative criteria developed for planning and policy contexts compare to those used in these consensus based communities?

To answer these questions, I conducted two operations: 1) I conducted and analyzed onsite interviews to invoke evaluations made by participants of The Consensus Process in three successful intentional communities. This included total visit times from a week and a half to four weeks. 2) I compared practitioners' criteria for evaluation with criteria derived from Jürgen Habermas' Discourse Ethics for policy and planning contexts.

The decisions to address these theoretic and methodological questions listed above were guided by considerations put forward by John Forester. John Forester (1993) has written persuasively on the usefulness of Habermasian theory for policy analysis and planning practice. He has outlined recommendations for empirical applications, including appreciation for the ways participants narrate the stories of their own communities' planning and policy-making processes. This follows through on his recommendations to apply Habermas' theory to practice. Forester's recommended research agenda is listed below in its entirety. To the best of my ability, I have attempted to cover each of these steps in this study. The two chapters on results are focused on steps four and five.

I.C. Objectives and Limitations - 21 -
Figure 2, Forester's 1993 Habermasian Research Agenda in Nine Steps

(Step 1) Distinguish reproductive processes shaping the four types of validity.
(Step 2) Identify institutional and organizational infrastructure that make them actual, concrete and routine.
(Step 3) Identify range and repertoire of programmatic speech acts for coding.
(Step 4) Map the variety of claims that such acts make in these dimensions: How are the claims to truth, rightness, identity, and issue definition made? What is the range of possible forms a claim in any one dimension might take?
(Step 5) Specify system forces fostering capital accumulation and bureaucratic power in organizational actors and relations.
(Step 6) Assess lifeworld background capacities that give meaning to questions, claims or challenges.
(Step 7) Examine rationalization strategies.
(Step 8) Assess resistance strategies.
(Step 9) Locate possibilities of action in the next round.

The design of this research project follows the Habermasian research agenda in nine steps outlined above. (Paraphrased from Forester, 1993, p.132)

Participants in these communities' consensus processes described their evaluations and ideals concerning group decision-making. I asked them questions which exposed ideals, or criteria they held for good decision processes and evoked examples of deliberations that did, or did not live up to those ideals. I then compared their criteria, and other aspects of their evaluative comments, to those evaluations Habermas theorized as necessary for reasoned cooperation.
It was my working hypothesis that if a Habermasian-style ethic was learned with experience in these communities, participants would evaluate their group's decision processes with criteria similar to the validity claims and other criteria expressed in the Discourse Ethics, specifically the Principle of Inclusivity. I also expected that cooperatively-owned communities would have participants expressing ideals more closely resembling Habermas.' This likelihood of participants expressing ideals closely resembling Habermas' was addressed in a careful formulation of what was meant by 'experience' at the organizational level. I sought this type of experience in the cases I considered for selection in the study.

The steps required in this method were long and arduous. The final value of this exercise with text analysis had three components: 1) the value in quizzing my ability to recognize these abstractions in more concrete terms. From my subjective perspective, this education seemed to help me in my own ability to label what I saw in my observations of groups outside this study. 2) The value to readers with a desire to understand these concepts as they might observe them in deliberations. My difficulties in some of the required coding and comparison of criteria from literature and practice are discussed in great length in the results. They should assist future readers understand the theory better, especially the aspects of theory that inform strong participatory deliberations on policy questions, and 3) the value to future research applications of the theory with more explicitly defined...
Chapter I: Introduction

criteria for judging good process. I write about some differences between my interpretation of empirical observation of Habermas' concepts of validity claims and those I found in the work of John Forester and David Dayton.

I primary purpose of this study was to explore a methods for recognizing theory in practice. Here I briefly describe the methods in order to explain the objectives they meet. After selecting communities with the longest history of using this type of consensus process for their group decisions, my role with participants was to enter their community, tape interviews with the most experienced participants, and keep a field journal of observations about the interviews and interactions. Due to the difficulty of qualitatively analyzing large bodies of interview text, the final number of interviews in the analysis was to be kept under thirty.

Questions for the taped interviews focused on participants' evaluations of consensus meetings in their own terms. Informal interviews were used to elicit descriptions of the communities' organizational structures in both their own terms and in relation to state power. These descriptions included legal issues of ownership and control of resources. It was important for me to be familiar with the community's organizational form and participants' roles within it when analyzing participants' evaluations of the fairness and effectiveness of their meetings. Later, the results of that knowledge led to a

I.C. Objectives and Limitations - 24 -
significantly enriched picture of the role of their power structures in supporting their consensus practices, and vice versa.

The methods chapter reviews the Theory of Communicative Action enough to explain the method of comparing texts of interviews and literature.

2. LIMITATIONS

Limitations of the study discussed here include: mixing methods of grounded theory and critical theory, having only one observer-analyst, expectations of the participants, and limits to the descriptive method of analysis. This study does not put a focus on the potentially sizable impacts of gender, or physical site factors on community life. Where these factors are discussed, it is within the context of illustrative examples of deliberations described by participants.

Grounded theory is an analytic approach often associated with qualitative analysis. There is a conflict between a premise of grounded theory and the Critical Theory approach used here. This conflict rests in the notion that any theory can "emerge" from data without being pre-established by the observer-analyst. It was my assumption that there is always pre-existing theory. From this critical theory perspective, the themes which emerged in the first coding of interview texts were specifically valuable for the light they shed on my own pre-existing understanding of the Theory of

I.C. Objectives and Limitations - 25 -
Communicative Action. Again, the original analysis of interview texts closely resembled grounded theory, but unlike grounded theory, the emergent coding did not emerge out of a vacuum, but instead was informed by and informed my understanding of this previously studied theory. In response to critiques of this sort, the critical theorist does not attempt to conduct purely objective research when doing empirical work. Instead, he or she attempts to give the reader a better understanding of the subjective perspective being illustrated. This is done by explicitly articulating the underlying assumptions and approaches being used. Instead of problematic biases, these background assumptions are relevant aspects of the increasingly self-aware research experiences, analyses and conclusions.

Although I used qualitative methods associated with grounded theory, I make no claim that my previous understanding of theory was put aside while I did my observations. The original open coding of interview texts and subsequent clustering of themes was informed by my own analytic framework, specifically years of immersion in Habermasian analyses of consensus processes. In a form true to the tradition of Critical Theory, my interpretive frame is made clear from the onset and readers are encouraged to understand the study with that in mind. Like any research product, the results and their interpretations can only make sense after taking into account the instruments of observation and the assumptions of analyses. My background and interests in the analysis do not limit the importance of the
findings, but instead are crucial aspects of their value. From a Critical Theory perspective, proponents of grounded theory are always on epistemologically shaky ground, even while methods of the grounded theory are useful. The reason for this is that interpretive themes never evolve purely from the data itself, so what advocates of grounded theory term developing theory "from the ground up" is not possible. The assumptions and value systems of the researcher, the research community, the participants and the method itself will always necessarily shape the emergent themes.

In addition to my role as a researcher and interpreter of their situations, I expressed my support of each community’s democratic goals. Essays based on the dissertation may be shared with each community in the future. I also used this dissertation project to improve my social organizing practice. It shed light on the lived experience of participants who were striving to reflect their ideals in both their individual lifestyles and in the new institutional structures they helped create and maintain. They were acting to redesign social infrastructures by working on their self-designed communities. Much of the above was accomplished with informal dialogue and copious notes. In formal interviews, I asked them to evaluate their communities’ deliberations on problem-issues of their choice. I then analyzed similarities between their criteria for judging successes and failures, and reasons judged important by Habermas. The method of this
study was normative. I required that it not only offer an interpretive scheme for analyses of normative and contested claims, but also required a framework for expressing a pro-democratic stance in the assessment of deliberation processes.

Participants' expectations also had an impact and should also be considered with other limitations of the study. Although these participants were highly committed to good process, including honesty and rights to information, the consent-form did inform every interviewee I was interested in their process for positive contributions to discourses on public policy. This probably contributed to the trusting atmosphere of my interviews. Except for the most experienced participants, whom I approached directly, most interviewees were self-selected. I was sometimes required to correct their assumptions that I wanted them to portray their experiences in a positive light. This was a technical limitation that I took into account when I analyzed their evaluations of their processes. This did not damage the inquiry into evaluative criteria because their criteria for judgment were present in both their positive and negative evaluations. More often than not, those positive evaluations were based on resolutions of internal crises. By this, I mean that their overwhelmingly positive stories were stories about problem issues, or crises. The difficulties they described were the difficulties their communities' had addressed in recent, or otherwise easy to remember deliberations on those problem issues. These
Chapter I: Introduction

were also difficulties they addressed in order to resolve the issues. The participants' evaluative criteria were then derived from both their positive and negative judgments. For example, when explaining why they liked some aspect of the process, it was common for interviewees to report liking that it was not executed in a manner they would have otherwise disliked. No matter how positively they regarded the process in general, each answered questions about positive and negative aspects of the process applied to a particular issue. These positive and negative descriptions provided a great deal of information about the nature of the criteria they were using in their evaluations.

The selection for positive regard toward The Consensus Process had an impact on the results that are discussed throughout. Conclusions regarding the unusually high levels of trust between members were strengthened however, by my finding only one incident of deceit, and that was between members of a single household. One might hope this exception proves the rule. Although the interviewees universally attributed high values to sharing information, the possibility of exaggeration of that particular finding must be acknowledged. Eventually, I concluded that their forced, high-level awareness of one another's personal limitations both increased anxiety about a lack of individual privacy while simultaneously increasing trust in the powerful, social embrace experienced by each over the years. I was repeatedly impressed by the degree to which they expressed profound
respect for the social learning required of them, especially in conflict-situations which they admitted freely. I came away from each community with the impression that participants had developed wisdom in their years of community life.

The descriptive nature of this study has accompanying limitations. Although it explores, it can not test the validity of its guiding hypotheses. Much of this limitation stems from the problem of having only one researcher with the multiple roles of theoretician, observer and analyst. In future work however, multiple observers can compare these types of observations with explicitly experimental research designs. Also, as in any analysis of cross-sectional data, this study's short term observations do not support conclusions which are necessarily representative over time, or for other communities. It does however; provide a snapshot of thinking and practice embedded in these experiments with power sharing conducted in these well established communities. It represents lessons garnered from applications of theory to practice, lessons that should aid future analysts and evaluators of democratic processes. This study has then developed the necessary hypotheses which may be tested in future research. It has also generated inferences regarding the types of issues addressed in these communities, and successful approaches to community resource sharing used by the memberships of these groups.
I.D. SUMMARY

I had encountered communities instituting the kinds of normative policy deliberations called for in critiques of so-called objective policy analyses. I had studied Frankfurt-School theories in terms of critiques of social science and had sought application of similar reasoning in existing social groups. I discovered strong parallels between calls for theoretically grounded protocols for practical democratic deliberation and The Consensus Process used by secular, but Quaker-inspired community organizers. My intellectual approach to this topic had been developed by a combination of scholarly abstraction and practical social experimentation. In this study, I have endeavored to contribute this perspective to the existing literature.

In order to address the gap between theory and practice, I developed a method of comparing recommendations for Habermasian analyses in the literature to experienced practitioners' own evaluations of their deliberative processes. I did this so that I would have specific literature-based criteria in mind when designing the interview questions and later when analyzing the text of interviewee's responses. I conducted and analyzed onsite interviews to explore evaluations made by participants of The Consensus Process in successful intentional communities. I did this so that I could collect data that reflected the criteria used by experienced practitioners of a method of decision-making that theoretically met Habermasian criteria for
institutionalized democratic discourse. My onsite visits gave me the opportunity to use methods of data collection appropriate for discovering criteria used by participants, a combination of observation, informal conversation and pointed, but open-ended and taped interviews. I also compared practitioners' criteria for evaluation with criteria derived from Jürgen Habermas' Discourse Ethics for policy and planning contexts. I did this so that I could make recommendations and convey illustrative insights about the potential usefulness of Habermasian analyses for future evaluations of democratic deliberations at various levels of analysis. The focus on these two sets of evaluative criteria provided a focus for this in-depth exploration of Habermas' concepts regarding rationality in discourse on norms. Although this hypothesis guided the inquiry, the results can not be interpreted as proof or disproof. I met these objectives listed above and have made my observations available for future development and testing of evaluation protocols.
II.A. INTRODUCTION

Habermas' work now receives less attention in planning circles and is criticized for unwieldy abstractions and lack of practical application. John Forester and others have moved to more practical observations of public discourse in planning. In this study, deliberative democracy is approached with a Habermasian look at theoretic and applied requirements for democratic discourse. Habermas has a very specific definition of discourse described in detail below. For this study, this definition of discourse is used interchangeably with the term deliberation. In its most simple form, normative policy discourse is a process of evaluating norms together by checking claims.

Habermas and Forester refer to the dominant form of policy analysis as one utilizing "instrumental reason." Mary Hawksworth offers a number of distinctions between positivistic and post-positivistic policy analyses which are compared in a table below. "Positivistic" policy analyses are characterized by goals of predicting and controlling natural phenomena. On
the other hand, she characterizes a "post-positivist" approach with searches for understanding of the meaning of normative statements in their applied contexts. Habermas and Forester describe this search for meaning as the purpose of communicative action. Rather than prediction and control, policy discourse requires participants to reach intersubjective understandings of both conflicting and complimentary interests. Hawksworth posits that a post-positivist approach is more appropriate for policy analysis, a field requiring reasoned investigation and theorizing about human interaction at social, organizational and institutional levels of analyses. A table differentiating the purposes and methods of two broad approaches to policy analysis with Hawksworth's labels of "positivist" and "post-positivist" compares these two approaches across eleven variables. These variables range from their conceptions of truth to the pragmatic goals of those using each approach to policy analysis. The distinctions are particularly useful in highlighting similarities between the intellectually rigorous, but normative approach to practical policy analyses advocated by Habermas and the policy deliberation practices developed in these intentional communities. This table was created from statements made by Mary Hawksworth in her book; Theoretical Issues in Policy Analysis, 1988. I added the column on Habermasian contributions to post-positivism. These are not modifications of post-positivist policy analyses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habermasian contributions to</th>
<th>Post-positivist Policy</th>
<th>Positivist Policy Analyses:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contrasts purposive with communicative action. The goal of social science should be emancipatory.</td>
<td>Understanding and communication</td>
<td>Prediction and control of nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theories, like norms, are better when communicatively achieved and not merely traditionally received.</td>
<td>Theoretical presuppositions operate at the tacit level and require uncovering</td>
<td>Theories are conscious conjectures, which can be systematically elaborated and deductively elucidated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All policy proposals are normative and, as such, make claims to objective facts, subjective representation and</td>
<td>Interpretive proposals on coherent relationships between these three: (1) perceived facts, and (2) assumptions in (3) a</td>
<td>Empirically-based proposals on the relationships between observed data, the ontological assumption being that there is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language of discovery of validity claims made and open to challenge by all affected.</td>
<td>Language of deliberation, judgment and practical reason</td>
<td>Language of scientific laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging broad public discourse for deliberative democracy.</td>
<td>Democratic decision-making</td>
<td>Technocratic decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guarded optimism and advocacy of dwindling, but possible opportunities for democratic development.</td>
<td>Investigation of the theoretical presuppositions that shape policy prescriptions and circumscribe political options. (p. 190)</td>
<td>Pragmatic notion that the existing political system constitutes the appropriate reality against which to test policy prescriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habermasian contributions to post-positivism applicable to this study:</td>
<td>Post-positivist Policy Analyses:</td>
<td>Positivist Policy Analyses:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All utterances in normative discourse are composed of embedded claims which can be rationally challenged, or supported in order to establish normative rightness.</td>
<td>Policy presuppositions must be judged based on the world they would produce if significant numbers of people acted in accordance with their precepts. (p. 169)</td>
<td>The fact/value dichotomy and emotivistic interpretation of values do not allow rational discussion of normative judgments. Politics are problematic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models of deliberative democracy nurturing and fighting to protect public institutions such as freedom of thought, scholarship and independent scientific bodies, freedom of self and group expression, public spaces for freedom of the press, as well as broad public spaces for discourse and public will formation.</td>
<td>Incrementalist model of decision-making using multiple dimensions of politics to facilitate problem solving, neo-pluralist strategy and a power and value conflict model</td>
<td>Invoked frequently by those committed to an applied pluralist approach to policy analysis (p. 48), rational comprehensive policy model, empiric-analytic strategy and management sciences models.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawksworth's interpretation of post-positivism holds true for Habermasian analyses with the addition that the T.C.A. provides a tool for analysis of public dialogue.</td>
<td>Requires analysts to reorient the discipline's methods and mission toward investigation of the theoretical constitution of facticity and away from acquiescence in the myth of the given. It requires questioning of the political cast of cognitive claims and consideration of the political implications of tacit theoretical presuppositions (p. 190)</td>
<td>Requires professionals to provide value-free prescriptions for achieving politically designated ends. The practitioner de-politicizes decision-making and generally ignores, or de-legitimizes public discourse and democratic decision-making. (p. 184)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Habermas' work is greatly reflected in Hawksworth's description. Instead, this added column gives some context to selected aspects of his T.C.A. Habermas addresses problems in defining normative reasoning by adding the concept *intersubjectivity* to modern distinctions between objectivity and subjectivity. To understand and describe Habermas' conception of *intersubjective* validity, I link it to *intersubjective* recognition conceptualized by the author of *Women, Nature and Psyche*. In that book, she poses the theory that patriarchy has perpetuated cultural and institutional power abuses through history in ways represented by Hegel's master-slave, or subject-object relations. She ends that work with the emancipatory question, "How can we conceptualize *intersubjective* recognition?" In my inquiry into the possibility of *intersubjective* validity being deliberated and evaluated in consensus-based communities, I developed the following graphic for representing her question. I represent hierarchical power relations with a triangle with the crown at the pinnacle. Just as the crown can relate to the people at the bottom as objects, the people supposedly have no power except on those below them. The triangle can take the form of an organizational chart with lines connecting employers to employees as genealogical descendents. The triangle has the leader at the apex and followers at the base. There are few depicted in power and there are a greater number of followers. The distinctive characteristic of this triangular representation is that it is intended to show
the only direction in which legitimate use of coercive power, the chain of command, should be applied. Those above may legitimately originate coercive action against those below, but not vice versa. Periodic changes in power roles as they occur in democratically run organizations are difficult to represent in this type of triangle, or a two dimensional pyramid. Examples include situations in which a leader is legitimately impeached. How can the power of the many over the few be represented there? A triangle does not allow representation of individuals changing their positions cyclically, over time, as they take on the occasional use of power as a collective over their erstwhile superiors.

*Figure 3, Master-Slave Dialectic and Conceptualizing Intersubjective Validity*

How should we conceptualize intersubjective validity?

\[ \overline{\text{master}} \leftarrow ? \rightarrow \overline{\text{slave}} \]

This graphical representation of the problem helps depict the organizational context of communicatively achieved intersubjectivity.
because it set the stage for a graphical representation of the deliberative
democratic power-sharing alternative. I explain in the methods chapter that
a flat or horizontal organizational structure was an indicator of consensus
experience and its more central role in these communities.

Forester's 1993 work attempted to explain the problem of normative
reasoning in the public realm as an alternative to strictly positivist policy
analyses. He applied the Theory of Communicative Action (T.C.A.) to the
contexts of planning practice and public policy analysis. He specifically
targeted the education and practice of planning professionals and policy
analysts. The positivist, or instrumental rationality said to underlie theories
of managerial or technocratic government were taken from the form of
rationality successfully used to predict and control phenomena in the
natural sciences. He introduced Habermas' argument the this model of
rationality is not appropriate for wholesale application to development and
management of social phenomena. That model of rationality is not
appropriate because it ignores the human reasoning that regularly supports
intersubjective understanding and coordination between humans when they
interact. The model of rationality that codifies reasoning on the effects
physical phenomena have on each other is not a model that codifies
reasoning occurring in multiple participants together weighing their mutual
interests. Normative reasoning in the public realm cannot be conceptualized
as a practice of rationality within theoretic models from the Enlightenment,
employing either self-welfare maximizing rational actors, or unbiased neutral rational analysts. This may be taken to mean that one of the tasks before any theoretical work on the practice of normative deliberation is to address the question, "How should we conceptualize intersubjective validity?"

For this study, I read about this question of normative policy in the literature, learned to recognize it in the field and used it as a concept for a analysis of interview texts, then reintegrated it into descriptions of the theoretical concept.

The implications of this type of theoretical and applied inquiry are particularly important when studying or designing organizational elements which support meaningful deliberation on policy norms. As indicated in John Forester's second research step, it is important to "identify the institutional and organizational infrastructure that makes possible, actual, concrete, and routine these reproduction processes." The social reproduction processes we can track in terms of perpetuated participant values are both social and economic processes. Material interests are at stake and have large bearing on the content and function of life-world reproduction. Discussion of these aspects of intentional communities is important in order to understand the context of their organizational cultures and expectations.
Conceptually, this material economic frame of reference for social reproduction processes is brought into view by looking at community members as policy makers. Members' roles as policy makers shape their relationships with each other. Such roles also shape relationships between members and those outside their communities. This framing of member's roles constitutes a social-structural approach to community power relations. When we frame members' power relationships as institutionalized by their community's particular organizational form, we are able to see members situated roles in a system of economic rights and incentives. This power structure mediates relations between members. The organizational form also mediates between members and the land and between members and outsiders. The instances in which these reproduction processes become "actual, concrete and routine" (in Forester's 1993 terms) include responses to factors outside the community such as local land-use laws, finance institutions used by the community, as well as the influence of these and other factors on decision-making practices inside the community.

Dimensions of social reproduction may be supported or challenged in normative discourse, so each statement or response theoretically has some impact on developing beliefs, patterns of consent, relations of solidarity and investments of attention. These are the four types of validity that are referenced repeatedly throughout this study. When opportunity for normative discourse is allowed and protected in its most undistorted form,
participants can respond to any or all of these dimensions. When there are distortions (for example, when affected populations are systematically excluded), participants may still evaluate the reasoning of the deliberations in terms of the hypothesized impacts of those distortions. At the outset of this study, it was my sense that these types of validity were deliberated in secular intentional communities in which ownership was equally shared and in which policy decisions on the use of common property required consensus of the membership. The structural power relations of these communities reinforced their democratic intentions through protecting rights of members to have meaningful impacts on their policy deliberations.

At the end of the essay, Challenges of Organizational Mobilization, Forester distilled a strategic nine-step Critical Theory Research Program (pp. 132-133). The method chapter outlines this ambitious nine-step program in terms relevant to the goals of this study. I adopted this framework for its ability to locate my work in relation to the applied Critical Social Theory it describes. This nine-step program is the organizational principal of this study.
II.B. HABERMAS' THEORY OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTION

1. INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL THEORY IN POLICY ANALYSIS

Scholarship applying Critical Theory to normative policy analyses has most often focused on the contrasting roles of normative and scientific methods. That is, theoretic perspectives favoring objective social-science methods have been criticized in policy analysis literature with calls for alternative perspectives with analytic methods capable of addressing questions of normative rightness. The critiques are not accompanied by full proposals for their practical alternatives. For example, Hawksworth wrote about the way positivist social science had created a form of policy analysis which de-legitimated democratic decision-making. It undermined citizens' constitutionally secured rights to establish the legitimacy of their self-defined needs and desires. The overt responsibility of policy analysts in the positivist tradition has been to "provide value-free prescriptions for achieving politically designated ends" (Hawksworth, 1988, p. 184). This illuminates the pressure to give an apolitical appearance to decisions when the goal is to legitimate them through calls to a positivist sense of reason. The legitimacy of the public sphere in which citizens must inform governmental goals and ends is then immediately made suspect as irrational. It is irrational in the sense that it is outside the purview of the legitimated social-science methods generally brought to bear by policy
analysts. From a positivist perspective, the methods appropriate for rational study of natural phenomena cannot be applied to normative concerns. Questions of prediction and control of specified outcomes are addressable by positivistic social science, while questions of normative rightness are not. Thus, from the perspective of positivist social science, the normative role of the democratic polity is relegated to an irrational or emotivistic realm. The arguments of critical policy theorists answer with the following: If the methods of policy analysis are to be made relevant to the normative questions of politics, they must be able to address questions of norms. Although this is a powerful critique of positivism in policy analysis, it is not accompanied with a solid proposal for an alternative.

In the absence of a normative approach to analysis of policies and policy formation processes, policy deliberation would be left to what Stone calls the messy spheres of power and competition. The choices between approaches are apparently made between positivistic social science with its failed attempt at objectivity, and the emotivistic and often-violent plays for position in the competitive world of power politics. Stone insists this is a forced choice within a false dichotomy of approaches. Stone explains that it is specifically the designation of irrationality which forces critical approaches to deliberative practices to be emotivistic. Hawksworth describes the need for a post-positivistic approach to policy analysis bridging this gap. In Hawksworth’s terms, a post-positivistic orientation
requires "analysts to reorient the discipline's methods and mission toward investigation of the theoretical constitution of facticity and away from acquiescence in the myth of the given" (Hawksworth, 1988, p. 190). The post-positivist orientation requires analysts to question the socio-political implications of the conditions within which goals are set. In a seeming paradox, attempts to be objective about policy analysis lend themselves to a political position of unquestionably supporting norms established as part of the status quo. On the other hand, the attempt to openly admit historical bias within rigorous political analysis could lend itself to the intellectually more open position of questioning established norms and the conditions in which they arose. This highlights an area of study, moral reasoning, that is also discussed in length by Habermas. Although I do not attempt to explain Habermas' approach to in this study, I do focus on his conception of discourse as deliberation on norms. This is very closely related to practices of moral reasoning in individuals and cultures.

Habermas' T.C.A. is, among other things, developed upon a sympathetic, yet critical response to the sociological functionalism outlined by Talcott Parsons. At the risk of over simplifying, functionalists tend to theorize sociological phenomena in terms of their function, as if that function were an indication of what is best. This aspect of functionalism reflects a subtle but powerful tendency to accept the normative assumptions of the status quo as though alternatives did not exist. Critical Theory adds dimensions of
conflict by bringing attention to competing normative claims. This approach incorporates awareness that *objective* conditions can only be understood in the situated nature of their historical moment. A foundational element of Critical Theory incorporates awareness of political power dynamics present in all human interactions, coupled with awareness that these power dynamics can and must be recognized, described and taken into account when stating the facts of a case. It is also true that attempts to obfuscate these power dynamics by suggesting they do not exist, or cannot be rationally recognized, described, challenged, or validated is an oppressive tool of governance.

There is a difference between this form of normative reasoning when it is applied to policy formation and what Critical Theorists call technocratic, instrumental, or purposive action and reasoning. One of the unique contributions of the Frankfurt School to social theory was their application of Freud’s psychoanalytic methods to the empirical and emancipatory analysis of “false consciousness.” This false consciousness is Marx’s socio-political concept of the psychological and cultural effects ideology has on the masses. These Critical Theorists did not elaborate on philosophic reformulations of what it would mean to be “rational and just” while including situated participants as analysts, except in the most rudimentary sense of demanding existential awareness of the analyst's impact on society through conscious and unconscious interpretations. This problem is well
illustrated by critiques of Rawls' changing versions of the "veil of ignorance," which he originally developed as an improvement over Kant's "ideal rational being." Even with this reformulation, Rawls did not allow for known stakeholders to deliberate rationally on issues affecting themselves. This type of reformulation can be found in another body of literature, a body that did have some impact on Rawls' reformulations and other bodies of literature related to justice. These were demands by feminist theorists for an ethics-of-care. Gilligan's feminist concept of an ethics-of-care directly addresses the question of systematically and rationally deliberating on norms without accepting Kohlberg's definition of advanced stages of moral development as stages in which one would aspire to objectively unbiased application of rules. The ethics-of-care was originally developed to address a problem in broad applications of principles of justice from an observer's supposedly objective position without taking into account the normative and situated stances of those involved in a case, especially normative stances including loyalty and care for specific others. Whether objective language is used or not, the author or subject of a statement-of-fact is situated in respect to both the fact and the statement itself. In a theory named, the ethic of care, defendable theories of ethics should include factors of loyalty, care and other elements of affective ties. Ethical agents must also take into account their actions' impacts on particular others. It is not logical to call such awareness of

II.B. Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action - 47 -
impact "illogical," and yet it is not "objective" in the sense of applying a single, generalized rule in the same way in all situations.

There is a body of literature addressing these concerns of democratic policy deliberation by applying Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action (T.C.A.) to the evaluation of policy and planning. This application is best developed in the work of John Forester. The following abbreviated history and basic introduction to Habermas' development of the Theory of Communicative Action is presented before describing the specifics of John Forester's applications to policy and planning and the simplified presentation of that application appropriated from David Dayton.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEORY OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTION

Highly misunderstood, the T.C.A. outlines mechanisms for deliberating on contested norms. It explains mechanisms, by which distortions in communications are minimized when discussants make, challenge and redeem validity claims. Habermas insists that in reasoned discourse we must necessarily designate intersubjective and communicative concerns in addition to our accustomed modern designations of subjective and objective concerns. Each type of validity has its own forms of challenge and validation which will be described below. The importance of these distinctions between claims is based on the power relationships between participants and larger societal entities reflected by, and enacted with every
-CHAPTER II: LITERATURE, THEORY AND PRACTICE-

statement. By making these relationships open to challenge and validation in safety, we can theoretically create public spaces for democratic deliberation on norms. Meanwhile, the creation of such public deliberation spaces will always be contested and will always need protection.

From the time of his earliest work with the Frankfurt School of Social Research, Habermas worked on concerns he himself raised in his youthful response to the re-establishment of Nazi intellectuals and government officials in Germany's post-war regime. Habermas continued theorizing relationships between fascism and the inappropriate application of technological, or what he terms "instrumental reasoning," to political problem solving. Throughout his career, Jürgen Habermas has been exploring, explaining and justifying theories of modern Euro-American democracy and capitalism. In the nineteen-seventies, he explored the European intellectual histories of sociological, philosophical and linguistic theories framing modern Western conceptions of "rational" organization and scientific approaches for studying social phenomena. Habermas most extensively studied and reformulated the social theories of Weber, Lukacs, Adorno, and the "tradition of Western Marxism" as well as Mead, Durkheim, and Parsons. In development of the T.C.A., he analyzes each of these with methods of critical deconstruction in the Frankfurt School tradition. The Frankfurt School's use of deconstruction developed from an intentional-sociological mix of Freud's psychoanalysis and Marx's

II.B. Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action - 49 -
Chapter II: Literature, Theory and Practice

historical materialism. It is referred to as cultural Marxism, or emancipatory social theory. It was heavily influenced by the twentieth-century discovery of Marx’ early writing on sociology and philosophy.

Habermas has continued Marx's early cross-disciplinary social research agenda by investigating the theoretic bases and empirical applications of these questions of objective, subjective and intersubjective concerns. Objective concerns are akin to Marx's material concerns. Subjective concerns are akin to Marx's concerns with consciousness, and intersubjective concerns are akin to Marx's concerns with legitimacy and social reproduction.

Marx developed similar questions in his youth. Economic and political hardship forced the young Karl Marx to become disillusioned with the philosophy, religion and law he studied at the doctoral level. When he lost his doctoral candidacy, family support, and funding by criticizing the Weimer Republic's claim to God-given legitimacy, he was forced into journalism to support himself. He was then, for the first time, shocked into awareness of the impact of material economic relations on social conditions, such as the impact of class relations in the plight of traditional wood gatherers when they were newly denied access to what had always been the publicly accessible, but privately controlled Black Forest. This change in Marx's approach to social analyses was marked by his exhaustive study of everything then published in the field of economics and his
subsequent theoretic work in political economy. His readings in economics highlighted two of the most important questions any Critical Theoretic analysis of socially *objective* “facts” must consider. These two additional lines of inquiry may be stated as, “In whose interest?” and “In which historical moment?” Marx used the term “false consciousness” to point out the ability of a person or class to not understand its own real interests and Marx used the term “propaganda” to indicate the efforts of a person or class to mislead other’s about his, her, or its own interests.

In Habermas’ theory, questions of historical moment and the interacting interests of those affected are addressed as *intersubjective* questions. That is, we participants and evaluators of discourse are asked to consider both a claim’s potential impacts on social norms and the legitimacy of those social norms upon which that legitimacy is based. In terms of theory being related to method, Marx insisted that the devastating material relations of his time could be overcome if the masses were educated to look at the material interests served, or the impacts made by their own and other’s actions. He criticized and hoped to reform the social ideologies of the time by raising the consciousness of an entire class. This means he was indicating problems of material (*objective*), social and historical (*intersubjective*), issues and the practical problems raised in efforts to address the false-consciousness of a class, which was working against its own (*subjective*) interests. These aspects of Marxian critical theory, historicism and class

II.B. Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action - 51 -
consciousness, are reflected in Habermas' critical response to those articulating the current state of Western modernity's conceptions of reason and communication.

Habermas has specifically formulated the reasoning and representation taking place in the form of communications he defines as discourse. The analytic steps taken to develop his theory are laid out in a 922-page monograph in two volumes collectively entitled, *The Theory of Communicative Action*. The first volume is: *Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, and the second volume is: *Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*. In those volumes, he theorized a need for reformulation of Western modern reasoning about *objective*, or empirical and concretely observable, phenomena originally formulated by Kant. Habermas values but criticizes and reformulates Kant's Enlightenment philosophy. Whereas Kant's analysis of rationality is comprised of *objective* and *subjective* dimensions, Habermas argues that anytime assertions are made, the speaker necessarily makes all three claims: *objective*, *subjective*, and *intersubjective*. As a result he allows that, in communications, we not only evaluate the claims made about *objectively* measurable phenomena, we also evaluate claims about the *subjective* position of the speaker and the *intersubjective* or social world and its communicatively achieved and legitimized norms. As a restatement, when Habermas refers to "communicative action," he means "action which relies on a cooperative
process of interpretation in which participants relate simultaneously to something in the *objective* world, the *intersubjective* social world, and their *subjective* world." In a related way, Habermas points to the endemic problem of negating situated actors' roles in communication when they are categorized as "illogical." Stakeholders' subjective and intersubjective understandings are categorically relegated to an illogical realm outside objective rationality. In planning and policy deliberations, the intellectual and political problem of responding to N.I.M.B.Y. responses is a good example of this dilemma. In the field of planning, N.I.M.B.Y. is a prime example of this categorical negation of the possibility of stakeholders being rational. It is also an example of future applications of this study's exploratory results. I will reiterate this in a number of ways below.

These analytic questions about the situated nature of truth are familiar to scholars of post-modernism across disciplines. In N.I.M.B.Y. problems, the situated nature of the participants' perspectives are used as reason for negating their legitimate contributions to debate. Habermas addresses these analytic questions epistemologically. He does this by explicitly formulating four validity claims made in any statement in a discourse. These break validity down into four types of claims about reality and these claims are inherent to every utterance in discourse. For example, if the speaker said there was an object in a particular place, she would be saying one could *objectively* verify that object as being there. She would be saying she was
sincerely representing her subjective experience of the object being there. She would be saying this was an intersubjectively, or socially appropriate, context for indicating that object's presence. Further she would also be saying her utterance was communicatively meaningful and understandable. She would be saying that she used her terms in the same ways understood by those with whom she was speaking. To say this in another way, every statement in discourse makes a claim about the subjective state of the speaker. No statement, no matter how objective, is made without a speaker or author. Likewise, every statement makes claims about its relevance to the situation at hand. There is never a social vacuum, and every context has its socially or intersubjectively relevant norms. The same applies to the language chosen for a statement. Every word choice has an impact. Some of those impacts may be quite large and may change an otherwise acceptable statement into something invalid. The language used makes claims to communicative validity and language is recognized intersubjectively, so communicative validity is also a special case of intersubjective validity. Later in this chapter, I will give a more detailed description of these four claims. They are reiterated throughout the entire study.

a. Power and Conflict

In any real world of competing and cooperative human interests, communicative power is distributed with greater or lesser inequalities which can be mapped in terms of power relations and conflict. The T.C.A.
is a conflict theory. That is, there is no assumption that a functionalist's account of harmoniously interacting social-system components is sufficient for theorizing about social phenomena. The Theory of Communicative Action however, does also outline conditions for cooperation within inherently competitive situations. Conflict, then, refers not merely to competing individuals, but also to competing positions within groups, institutions, societies and cultures. These constellations of systemic influences are usually beyond the direct understanding or control of any one individual or subgroup, but communicative action takes place in their cooperative attempts to understand each other within the larger conflict. In this way, they discover those aspects of their conflicts which are in their abilities to address. Regardless of the extent of their abilities to reach understanding or to address the issues at stake, the larger system in which they interact can be conceptualized in terms of a communicative infrastructure. Again, although Habermas conceptualizes communication as cooperative, and the primary structure of social phenomena, this conflict theory does not diminish the importance of material power relations. Instead an emphasis is put on the impact of material power relations on social relations through their impact on the communicative structure of those relations. The results of that impact are looked at in terms of the communicative infrastructure, which it shapes.
The unique contribution made by Habermas, in his T.C.A. is his insistence on humans' abilities to reason together on the impacts of power dynamics, as long as accommodation is made for the need to cooperatively share their insights into those dynamics. The distortions of communications caused by power inequalities can and do effectively limit the ability of discussants to reason together. The normative values applied to evaluation of discourse in this framework are necessarily procedural. That is, it is necessary to analyze procedures used by groups when they attempt to reason together in pluralist circumstances.

Habermas elaborates in great depth on the correspondence of each of the validity claims to an institutional relation. His evaluative framework provides a conceptual frame for describing a community's communicative infrastructure. A communicative structure is a dynamic system characterized by its ability to provide participants with sufficient legitimacy, facts, personal awareness and communicative competence to communicate or challenge validity claims made in their attempts to govern themselves. This means that actual organizational structures make communities' consensus processes possible. To restate, communicative structure is an analytic concept that is not about words alone. Instead it is about power relations in terms of both material power and the currency of ideas in a social system associated with that set of power relations. Power
relations are enacted in every communication and are reflected in a community’s communicative structure.

Habermas also designed the T.C.A. to be useful for empirical research and evaluation of structural relationships between organizations and institutions. It is also intended to be useful for evaluation of policy discourses. The T.C.A. outlines the power of claims-making in discourse. It can help differentiate the effects of structural relationships on claims made by participants in those discourses. The theory is useful for investigating structural relationships that may account for systematic distortion of communications. There are other types of distortions we will not consider here. They include distortions due to less systematic causes, such as the daily variations in agents’ lives, and random noise such as occasional unintentional errors.

Compared to simple observations that some participants have more influence in deliberation than others, the T.C.A. facilitates more sophisticated analyses of power differences. It delineates broad but distinct categories of communicative power. The broad categories of power correspond to the four validity claims made in each utterance in discourse. After describing the specific interaction Habermas' terms “discourse.” I describe an empirically applicable conception of each of these four types of validity and what it means for a discussant to claim them.
In the T.C.A., a supposed "ideal speech situation" functions as a foundation for everyday communicative reason and for the special case of deliberating on norms or regulations, what he termed "discourse." Because of confusion caused by the term for English readers, the "ideal speech situation" was renamed and elaborated in the form of the "Universalization Principle" of Discourse Ethics (and this new translation had new problems related to the anti-universalism debates in post-modernism). This Discourse Ethic is intended to refer to that which makes it possible for people to deliberate on questions of value, on what is best. The point is not that one set of norms can be universally applicable in any culture or context, but instead that any culture establishes truly legitimate norms through the living communicative action of its population over time.

It is important to note, in this context, that although Jürgen Habermas describes the importance of democratic societies having procedural ethics, this does not mean that Habermas' Discourse Ethic is a procedural ethic, except to the extent that it was developed in communications with other scholars, historical and contemporary. There is a subtle but important distinction to make between most procedural ethics and the type of discourse ethic described by Habermas. He is saying that any democratic society must have procedures which safeguard its peoples' rights to inclusion in discourses whose outcomes affect them. This makes procedural ethics universally necessary for democracies, but Habermas does not
designate any universal procedures. It would not be accurate to say he proffers a specific procedural ethic.

A part of Habermas' discourse ethic that is revisited often in this study is the statement that a decision can not be claimed to be the result of rational deliberation if those affected by the decision are systematically excluded from its deliberation. This is referred to as the requirement for inclusivity and is discussed in the results section. In the Inclusivity Principle described below, Habermas also allows for one of the results of unethical or non-inclusive discourse: Those affected may not be morally expected to observe unjustified norms. These and other important correlates to the discourse ethic, are discussed in the results and conclusion.

William Rehg (1994) gives a dense description of Habermas' unfortunately named Universalization Principle (U), which is also the basis for the Principle of Inclusivity. In the following paragraphs, I attempt to convey an expanded and more readable approach to understanding and applying this principle. It is termed the Universalization Principle (U), because it outlines the conditions under which a requirement for inclusivity is universally applicable. These aspects of a discourse on shared norms establish the requirement for inclusivity. According to Habermas' definition, discourse is not merely any situation in which verbal communication takes place. For Habermas, it is a specific kind of discussion characterized by an existing conflict, or an unmade decision,
and by participants with some level of commitment to reach a mutually beneficial resolution. These are the conditions of a discourse-situation in which inclusivity is required. That is, the *communicatively* achieved norms must be based on reasons which all those affected by the norms could accept if they heard them in open debate.

Habermas outlines the contexts in which one would apply discourse ethics. Rehg, a translator of Habermas’ previous works, presents this succinctly in his book *Insight and Solidarity*. (As an illustrative aside: The title of that work “Insight and Solidarity” refers to those conditions in which participants can contribute their unique insights while also being in solidarity with their group.) Those contexts for applying discourse ethics are quite specific. Rehg first names them in general and then describes each assumed premise behind them.
Figure 4, Habermasian Definition of Discourse

Discourse ethics addresses the specific problem context of "morality as conflict adjudication in pluralist circumstances." If one assumes:
(1) Context; If a pluralistic group decides to resolve its conflicts of interest cooperatively by reaching argued agreement (as rational conviction) on a norm;
(2) Rationality Premise (RP); and if a commitment to argument means treating all the competent speakers on the issue as equal dialogue partners in this argument;
(3) Content Premise (CP); and finally, if a social norm is a shared general expectation serving to resolve potential conflicts of interest by regulating the pursuit of those interests;
(4) Inclusivity Principle (U); Then; every such moral expectation must rest on reasons all those subject to (and affected by) the expectation can accept in open debate, for otherwise the norm is not justified for those subject to it, and thus its observance may not be expected of them (nor may the noninterference of other affected parties be expected).

Paraphrased from Rehg (1994). This text above should be read as an extended "if-then" statement put forward in the T.C.A. It is paraphrased from Rehg (1994, p. 66) for readability. Note that this formulation of inclusivity does not exclude inclusion through representation. The original includes notes which describe the translation from German which derive the RP, or Rationality Premise: RP= (RPa; Öffentlichkeit or "publicity") + (RPb; the right to equal participation).

I restate these in a number of simplified statements, and then explain them throughout the rest of this section. In general: Discourse ethics addresses the specific problem context of "morality as conflict adjudication in pluralist circumstances." There are a number of assumptions behind this statement. Habermas is positing a specific definition of morality. He is equally specific about what he means by conflict adjudication and by pluralism. Each of these is addressed in Rehg's lines which follow that
statement above. The context involves participants among a pluralistic group, that is, a group with a multiplicity of interests, and therefore different values ascribed to potential outcomes. They have real or perceived differences in the impacts they expect to experience when action commences. One aspect of Habermas' definition of discourse that Rehg could have added here was that the context is a situation in which a group's action has stopped because there is no agreement on what should be done. Habermas would not consider the context a discursive situation if the participants were engaged in some action together in which there was enough background consensus to coordinate their activities as usual. I will discuss this below in an extended example about a pair of movers communicating about their work in a cooperative fashion until it is necessary to engage in discourse. The discourse would also be cooperative, but addressing a conflict which has been making their cooperation difficult.

The situation is considered discursive when there is also a commitment to reach a reasoned agreement, meaning the use of argument based on reasons which could be accepted in open debate. This is pursuit of an agreement about norms, shared moral expectations about how they should pursue their differing interests, because norms and morality are implied when the problem is put in terms of "what should be." I will speak more on all of this below. These desired results of discourse are what Habermas terms "communicatively achieved norms." He contrasts them with "traditionally
received norms.” Consider societal norms passed on through tradition. No matter how they were originally established in previous generations, discourse entails challenging existing norms held by any or all parties, or challenging the ways in which those norms are being applied. It could be the case that the traditionally received norms have not been allowed to be challenged or reconsidered in a process of *intersubjective* reasoning. A radically conservative or fascistic approach to traditional norms which forbids debate of their legitimacy is an example of what Habermas terms a systematic distortion of communication which invalidates any claim to rationality of that norm. This is because norms are inherently *intersubjectively* established, yet in the case of radical conservatism *intersubjective* understanding has been systematically thwarted. There is more to say about the contexts in which important norms of a culture or group can be conserved and passed on, without being unnecessarily rejected by those who do not understand them, contexts such as those requiring jurisdictional differences between lower and higher courts, but this takes us away from a brief discussion of the discourse ethics attempted here. *Communicatively* achieved norms are the desired end result of discourse.

For example, when participants of a community's consensus process are committed to using good reasons with each other, and to find a new common agreement about how to decide their differences in the future, the reasons should not be considered good reasons unless they are inclusive.
That is, when they establish a new norm, it is a moral expectation which
participants and those affected by the decision are able to accept in open
debate. If the so-called “argued agreement” is derived by arguments that do
not take in account the knowledge and perspectives of those affected by the
agreement, it isn’t inclusive and doesn’t meet the rationality premise for
discourse ethics. Community participants could rightly protest that their
concerns were not included in the deliberation and the outcome could not
be justly called a consensus. This is an example of the inclusivity principle
as it would be found in residential cooperatives’ consensus building
processes.

The following uses hypothetical examples to illustrate these Habermasian
concepts of discourse. It also introduces the four validity claims which
have a central role in the empirical aspects of this research.

In an example of a group of community residents moving boxes and
furniture together, the movers may speak about the weather, or the food or
the place where each arm load of furniture should be set, none of which
would necessarily come under the definition of discourse. It may become a
discourse if they stopped what they were doing because they needed to
discuss their disagreements about the most appropriate way to do some
aspect of the job. One mover’s perspective on the work might be that a long
couch would not fit safely through a doorway at its current angle. Another
mover may disagree that the potential damage is important enough to
change routes. This disagreement is an example of expected differences in impacts. Until their differences affected their willingness to cooperate, directions could be given and cooperation could be expected. A group engaged in the concrete task of moving furniture might never be completely bereft of discourse, no matter how automatic their actions appear, but there may be communicative action that could take place without discourse. I follow with a moment in which discourse begins.

The hypothetical movers' interactions with each other are commonly communicative actions of some kind. They make, and accept normative validity claims with each other without speaking, and the communicative actions are usually clear and cooperative enough that no discourse is needed. When two movers approach each other with trajectories which are expected to collide, they accept validity claims made in subtle communications without challenging those claims. One mover can accept the following four nonverbal claims when the other makes a single step in one communicative gesture:

The other stepped to the side widely enough to prevent collision:

1) This could be taken to emphasize a claim to objective validity: the calculation of the step size was accurate;

2) The other was honestly representing intentions and was not intending to re-step into the collision course at the last minute. This emphasizes a claim to subjective validity: that the gesture was sincere;
3) The step allowed the space to be shared appropriately. This could be
taken to emphasize intersubjective validity: The gesture was appropriate to
the norms of the situation.

4) The step was a signal that prevention was taking place, not a spurious
twitch of the leg. This could be taken to emphasize communicative validity:
The gesture was a meaningful communication.

In summary of the above non-discursive version of these work-party
interactions, although this is not technically a discourse situation,
communicative action did take place. It was not formally discourse because
there was no discussion, the action had not stopped, and no validity claims
were challenged. It might still be successfully argued that the movers could
challenge each other's claims by gesturing, acting-out alternatives, and
checking or redeeming claims as they were made, but to call it discourse in
the Habermasian sense, there would need to be continuous conversation on
the reasoning behind assertions and the answers to challenges they might
raise. For discourse to take place, one might imagine that an argument
breaks out between these two movers regarding the position of a couch in a
doorway. The context must have some level of pluralism: some real
difference in values. For the sake of simplicity, we can add differences in
economic incentives concerning the way the job is later valuated. They stop
the action long enough to deliberate on how they will proceed. To call it
discourse in a Habermasian sense, they also go into that deliberation
dedicated to reasoning together about how to coordinate future action. They have an agreement to reach consensus on standards of behavior to follow when the discussion is complete. That is, the content of the discourse is the establishment of a new norm applicable to future pursuits of their separate and mutual interests. They have incentives to reason together. To apply discourse ethics to this situation, one expectation for good “reasoning together” would be that each was able to make claims concerning the problem and its potential solutions. Each should also be able to challenge those claims. This would continue until a commonly supportable norm was established. This could take a short moment, one in which they find that their differences can be accommodated quickly. Conversely the discourse could also result in a standstill in which they decide it would be best for all concerned that they not work on the same jobs together, now or in the future. The important point is that to reason together ethically, they would be able to make statements, challenge any of the validity claims in those statements, and proffer alternatives to those claims until mutually supported, *intersubjective* claims to rightness were established. These would be norms applied to the situation when action resumed.

An example outcome, based on discovery of concerns raised in the discussion, might be a decision that one mover is best motivated and equipped to decide how the couch should be handled in transit, while the other is most concerned with its final placement in the building. This
outcome would be based upon the reasoning that this new distribution of responsibilities addressed the concerns that had caused their conflict. They had not been able to move the heavy couch together or separately because differences in their priorities caused them to be working against each other. They had not been able to discover the cause of their conflict or its solution, until they stopped their work. Then they were able to express and check the validity of their respective judgments about how the job should best be done. By stopping the action and hearing each other’s claims, they are able to newly understand the differences in values placed on each of these areas of concern, enabling them to establish a new norm regarding management responsibilities, and appropriately distributing responsibilities and payoffs. The amount of time this takes may be trivial in the sense that it is only a couch, but the long term consequences of strengthened working relations can be profound.

3. INTRODUCTION TO THE VALIDITY CLAIMS

This section introduces the development and the application of each type of validity claim to discourse evaluation. This is necessary in order to explain their later use in the analytic methods of this study. It is also necessary to understand some of the background of validity-claim development when later discussing Habermas’ reasoning that inclusivity is a moral imperative in rational-democratic discourse. This crucial role of
inclusivity, in rational discourse, is the foundation for what he believes is a
moral obligation to support democracy as a norm. This role of inclusivity,
as well as Habermas' premise of rationality, contributed to his development
of analytic methods for evaluation of the context and content of discourse.
The claims to validity, which are always and necessarily made in discourse,
are also the foci of challenges speakers make to each other in that
discourse.

Habermas tells us we necessarily evaluate discourse by applying criteria
for four types of validity. Habermasian analyses use these four types of
validity claims in a highly formalized expression of the analytic method of
deconstruction. The four claims to validity are tested in terms of: 1) The
objective truth of what is being stated, 2) the way statements make claims
to the particular and subjective interests of those making (or affected by)
the statement, and 3) the social legitimacy of intersubjective norms applied
in the context. He also has a category of communicative validity, which for
now, can be considered a special case of intersubjective validity. One way
to introduce these four claims is to reference Habermas' agreements with
post-modern social theorists. Like them, Habermas notes the impossibility
of divorcing facts from norms. Indeed, even in the case of technical
prediction and control of the physical world, the relevance of scientific
assertions' are normatively based. For example, peer review by
institutionally uninvolved third parties are relied upon to check norms
concerning which scientific principles are applicable to any given technical procedure or statement of theoretic truth. Peer review is one of the time-tested approaches to objective problem solving about the facts of a matter and the objective facticity of a statement. Peer review is a discursive method used in attempts to prevent political, and policy-relevant motivations from taking attention away from scientific assertions about the object-world. In this sense, there are also normative components of the most abstract and objective technical assertions, especially when used in applied settings such as impact-analyses. Even in the most abstract fields of theoretical physics, when relevant facts are applied to any theoretic problem, the relevance of those facts can only be established through a normative judgment of the meaning of an outcome.

The validity claims have empirical importance for analyses of policy processes at any scale. They make it possible to select tangible criteria for evaluating policy discourse. This means that after learning and understanding the concepts, policy analysts, or anyone analyzing policy, can empirically identify occurrences of claims to these four types of validity. They can identify the claims, challenge them and defend them. Democratic discourse then becomes amenable to rigorous analysis. Habermas asserts that humans already do this all the time, albeit with various extents of awareness, when reasoning together to coordinate action across differences in real or perceived interests.
By definition, all evaluative criteria are evidence of compliance or deviation from a norm. As such, they represent what should or should not be, but each type of validity is supported with its own type of evidence. It is the evidence and arguments that establish the differences between Habermas' four validity claims.

A small number of scholars have pursued the project of identifying speech acts for Habermasian analyses of participatory policy deliberations. I found two particularly helpful published recommendations from policy and planning literature, and one from the field of technical rhetoric. By far the most complete source for the analytic method for applications in planning and policy contexts is John Forester's *Critical Theory, Public Policy and Planning Practice: Toward a Critical Sociology of Public Policy* (1993). Dayton presented Forester's Habermasian recommendations for research and practice simply, but without losing theoretical depth.

Following John Forester's strong lead, the analytic method was applied in a text-analysis of nuclear facility site hearings by Ray Kemp (1985), and nicely outlined and clearly presented by David Dayton in 1999 for a technical communication's conference in 1999. Though Dayton later published in 2002, he had understandable difficulty getting editors of the time to recognize the importance of this epistemological approach to the field of rhetoric for technical audiences. I found the power-point presentation for the conference and immediately recognized it as the best
single representation of empirical application I could find at the time. His tables of criteria for the four types of validity provided a focus for empirical data collection and analysis. This dissertation’s results report a comparison of what I found in my three community cases against what David Dayton found in his two environmental impact review processes (E.I.R.’s) for public transportation projects. My efforts in this project have resulted in some recommended changes in interpretation which might improve future empirical research, but in this area of scholarship, which attempts to delineate easily overlooked assumptions behind normative practices, being succinct is a rare gift. It is very difficult to make good use of simple language when highlighting abstractions behind abstractions. David Dayton’s application of Forester’s work provided that succinct framework for this study’s method.

Dayton and Kemp show applications of the Habermasian criteria so well interpreted by Forester. Dayton most succinctly applied them for empirical analyses of policy deliberations. He outlined questions to ask when evaluating environmental impact statements (E.I.S.’s) and their public review processes. These questions were most directly applicable when analyzing community members’ evaluations of their own policy processes.

John Forester outlines a use of Habermasian validity claims for empirical studies in “Background Consensuses: The Problem “Context” Facing Social
Movements” (Forester, 1993, p. 146-47), as well as his other essays in that same collection.

The following table was created by noting each instance of empirical evidence for each type of validity claim in that work by Forester in 1993. This outline holds crucial information for empirical analyses of cases. Each empirical question is phrased for research ranging from interpersonal to institutional levels of analysis. This study applies them at the level of organizational activity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural Learning</th>
<th>Interaction and Learning</th>
<th>Analysis of Policy Initiatives: (p. 8)</th>
<th>Four Terrains of Resistance:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore actors' investments of attention</td>
<td>Explore the nature of the social infrastructure that mediates between claims making actors &amp; the structural learning embodied in developing institutions</td>
<td>Explores speakers' enactment of relationships. When they speak about whatever they do, Four pragmatic claims are made on listeners.</td>
<td>To Study Understanding, Issue Definition, or Communicative Validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relations of solidarity</td>
<td>The meaningful character of the words, gestures, or tokens used particular claims formulating the significance of problems and the socioeconomic institutions that allocate social attention</td>
<td>The economic terrain (including time and attention costs)</td>
<td>To Study Trust, Identity, or Subjective Validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns of consent</td>
<td>The expressive character of the claim &amp; social patterns of identity and membership particular legitimacy claims &amp; social political patterns of authority</td>
<td>The ritual-structured terrain</td>
<td>To Study Consent, Legitimacy, or Intersubjective Validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing beliefs</td>
<td>The enacted truth of the claims &amp; social stock of knowledge particular truth claims &amp; the social stock of knowledge</td>
<td>The political legal terrain</td>
<td>To Study Belief, Truth, or Objective Validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive terrain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Localizing each type of Habermasian Validity from Forester.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Study Understanding, Issue Definition, or Communicative Validity</th>
<th>To Study Trust, Identity, or Subj ective Validity</th>
<th>To Study Consent, Legitimacy, or Intersubjective Validity</th>
<th>To Study Belief, Truth, or Objective Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STRATEGIC PRACTICE; planners' questions before going into a meeting:</strong></td>
<td>How will what I say likely be understood or misunderstood, and how best will I be able to make clear what I have to say?</td>
<td>How am I likely to be seen by them; trusted staff planner, or suspicious professional, untrustworthy delegate from city hall, someone with hidden agenda?</td>
<td>What positions do they support or oppose that I should know about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ORGANIZATIONAL (RE)PRODUCTION, assess:</strong></td>
<td>use of clear and obscure language, abilities to bring up and articulate questions, issues, needs and concerns</td>
<td>myriad taken-for-granted social ritual whose performance provides means of evaluating intentions in deeds</td>
<td>formal and informal precedents, mandates, sanctions, threats, bargains and deals, the political, legal and ideological culture of planning organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STRATEGIC PRACTICE; examining processes and conditions under which planners shape other's:</strong></td>
<td>framing of issues, formulating, clarifying, translating, depicting, focusing, selecting, simplifying, teaching, explaining meaning</td>
<td>disclosing, expressing, avowing, wishing, hoping, dreading, fearing, committing, waffling</td>
<td>judging, evaluating, recommending, advising, criticizing, correcting, objecting, supporting, affirming, dissuading, persuading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>organizational intelligence, reporting and information systems, research units, use of studies and scientific analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td>reporting, stating, informing, asserting, representing, or presenting, suggesting, indicating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
David Dayton's formulation of Forester's recommendations was reported in a conference presentation in 1999 and was later published in 2002 in The Journal of Business and Technical Communication. I found this, early and yet unpublished, report valuable for my own research methodology and for teaching because he wrote with brevity and clarity. Dayton presents parallel illustrations of each validity claim by listing practical questions each one answers, the types of evidence one would look for to support the claim, and contra-evidence warranting a challenge to each claim. As a researcher and educator in the field of rhetoric and technical writing, Dayton presented Habermasian analyses of two environmental review processes. Thus, Dayton uses Forester's Habermasian recommendations for analyses of public-policy reviews. Both reviews concerned transportation projects in Puerto Rico with which he was highly familiar. He reported that the transportation project which met with public approval also met Habermas' four criteria for validity. Conversely, Dayton concluded the environmental review process, which did not gain public support, did not meet those same four Habermasian criteria for validity. He used this as an example of how policy-process analysts might evaluate the quality of Environmental Impact Reviews and the writing of Environmental Impact Statements. He concludes that the Puerto Rican public responded to these public review processes in manners similar to critiques generated by his Habermasian analysis. I used Dayton's analytic framework and reporting structure in the results chapter
comparing participants' evaluative criteria and criteria for Habermasian Validity.

The third source for the method of analysis was the chapter, "Planning, Public Hearings, and the Politics of Discourse," by Ray Kemp, in John Forester's edited book Critical Theory and Public Life (1985). Kemp's work explains the Habermasian theory, the guiding questions and empirically applies these to specific public hearings that were conducted before building a nuclear power plant. His empirical analysis is textual. It treats a series of public hearings as texts in themselves. Kemp's report is also a discourse analysis in a narrative form. He treats each type of Habermasian validity as a lens through which he describes the case he studied. In this manner, Kemp's work provides examples of Habermasian validity assertions and challenges in his critique of the hearings.

The following are summaries of these three authors' recommendations of what to look for when analyzing Habermas' four types of validity claims as they are made or challenged in evaluations of democratic discourse.

**a. Criteria for Objective Validity or Truth**

Objective validity is the most familiar form of validity to Western educated minds. Habermas' use of the term "objective" is not intended in a technical sense any differently from the word in general English parlance. If there is a distinction, it is in his attempt to save the concept of objectivity from the undermining it receives in post-modern philosophy.
Habermas holds that *objective* methods of reasoning are effective but limited, and that objectivity is not the only type of validity to check in evaluations of discourse.

Evaluative criteria for *objective* validity can be identified in interview statements which judge the accuracy of participants' facts about the *objective* world. Evaluations of *objective* validity will focus on truth, facticity, or the constantives of an argument. These evaluations judge the factual accuracy of participants' propositions.

In the literature, claims to *objective* validity may variously named claims to facticity, truth claims, and early translations from the German original referred to these as claims to belief. I do not believe the term; "belief" is helpful in English. Apparently, the German version of the word does not connote the potential for error, as it does in English. The intention is that claims to *objective* validity should denote something as close as possible to observable and verifiable fact, or the constantives of logical arguments. The cultural worldviews, or perhaps paradigms in which these facts are observable are also referenced, but the philosophical ramifications of this relationship between fact and culture will not be addressed here, except to the degree that this study may make this philosophical perspective more understandable to the reader in the future. Belief is not a word associated with criteria for objective validity in this paper.
Forester recommends identifying these as truth claims representing objective states of affairs: "claims established or presented in the cognitive domain of facts through studies, reports, analyses, tests, findings, investigations, testimony, research, historical studies, and objective (versus arbitrary, biased, or whimsical) scientific studies and inquiries." When analyzing truth claims, Dayton recommends focusing attention on the credibility of the overall case made, especially as checked against information from other sources (Dayton, 1999). Kemp recommends analyzing discourses for "constantives." For a discourse to be valid in these terms, it must meet "demands that all participants to the discourse should have equal opportunity to put forward or criticize statements, explanations, interpretations, and justifications so that in the long run no one view is exempt from consideration and criticism" (Kemp, 1985). For an example of a claim to objective validity: "Here is the evidence we used to determine the acidity of our pond."
Table 4, Evaluative Criteria for Objective Validity (Dayton, 1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical Criteria for Objective Validity</th>
<th>Evidence of Objective Validity</th>
<th>Contra-Evidence of Objective Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q: Is this true?</td>
<td>+ Best arguments based on all available information</td>
<td>- Inadequate analysis justifying the proposed action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q: Presenting complete, undistorted evidence to support its claims?</td>
<td>+ Appears to be more truthful than alternative proposals</td>
<td>- Inadequate analysis of project impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q: Do comments by reviewers and opponents present any credible evidence of manipulated or hidden relevant facts?</td>
<td>+ Very little testimony challenges factual veracity of policy rationale, or technical claims. Key technical claims are subject to verification and/or challenge from communities of expertise. + Utilizing independent/critical third-party expertise</td>
<td>- Evades key challenges to veracity of claims supporting policy rationale and technical merits of the project - Key technical claims cannot be challenged because the factual evidence is not subject to third-party evaluation - Information withheld - Responsibility obscured - Need misrepresented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table is paraphrased from David Dayton's application of John Forester's recommendations to a set of particular environmental impact statements and environmental review processes (Dayton, 1999).

b. Criteria for Subjective Validity or Representativeness

Subjectivity has not been considered a form of validity for western educated scholars. Kant's work on justice and ideal rationality delineated a separation of all but objectively viewed concerns from rational discourse. Habermas' technical use of the term "subjective" is intended to connote something more specific than the common catchall for every form of knowledge that is not objective and therefore unable to be validated. More specifically, it refers to that which can be truly known only to the individual or group that experiences it. Subjective validity refers to the degree of trust one can put in representations of that experience. The
concept may be most easily accessible in fields of analytic psychology. In these arenas we may often compare representations of individuals' and groups' subjective experience with what one believes is their actual experience. It is also a component of rater reliability in behavioral sciences. In these fields we can and should ask if a particular rater or reporter of observational data is able to represent their own perceptions in ways that are reliable over time.

Evaluative criteria for subjective validity can be identified in interview statements which judge the authenticity, truthfulness, or sincere representation of discussants' perceptions of their personal experience. These criteria are used to judge participants' claims that they sincerely believe their own statements. Evaluations of subjective validity claims focus on sincerity. These evaluations judge the sincere representation of participants' interests and perspectives, that is, their honesty. They can be identified in interview statements judging the honesty of discussants' representations of their personal world, that is, praise or criticism of discussants' claims of subjective validity.

In the literature, subjective validity may also be named expressive claims, claims to sincerity, or representatives. Forester recommends identifying these as expressive claims indicating the intentions and perceived interests of affected parties: “claims established or presented in the moral domain of actors' expressions of interests and intentions through expressed desires.
and needs, conflict and cooperation, wishes and preferences, demands and challenges, actions of solidarity and opposition.” When analyzing sincerity claims, Dayton recommends putting the focus of attention on honest and fair presentation of comments from others and significant accommodation of concerns (Dayton, 1999). Kemp uses the term “representatives.” He recommends analyzing discourses against the “ability of participants to discourse to express themselves sincerely and to have equal opportunity to represent fully their attitudes and opinions on particular issues. All speakers must be free from both internal and external constraints on their arguments” (Kemp, 1985).

For example, the community deliberations discussed in interviews included statements much like the following which offers contra-evidence of another's subjective validity “the original contractor seemed to have been serving his own interests with that appraisal of the pond’s condition.”

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of concerns (Dayton, 1999). Kemp uses the term “representatives.” He 
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discourse to express themselves sincerely and to have equal opportunity to 
represent fully their attitudes and opinions on particular issues. All 
speakers must be free from both internal and external constraints on their 
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of another's *subjective* validity “the original contractor seemed to have 
been serving his own interests with that appraisal of the pond's condition.”

*Table 5, Evaluative Criteria for Subjective Validity (Dayton, 1999)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical Criteria for Subjective Validity</th>
<th>Evidence of Subjective Validity</th>
<th>Contra-Evidence of Subjective Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q: Can we trust?</td>
<td>+ Evidences genuine “answerability”</td>
<td>- Many pro forma answers to public comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q: Representing the concerns of project opponents fairly?</td>
<td>+ Detailed and carefully cross-referenced answers to public comments received</td>
<td>- Minor or suspicious changes in response to input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q: Addressing opponents concerns adequately?</td>
<td>+ Numerous details, some of major significance, changed in response to input</td>
<td>- Perfunctory representation of concerns raised by opponents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter II: Literature, Theory and Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical Criteria for Subjective Validity</th>
<th>Evidence of Subjective Validity</th>
<th>Contra-Evidence of Subjective Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q: Recording significant changes to the project in response to concerns and suggestions?</td>
<td>+ Quality of responses to comments</td>
<td>- Inadequate responses to raised concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Changes in project</td>
<td>- Rhetorical reassurances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Organizing counter advocates</td>
<td>- Expression of false concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Checking with contacts,</td>
<td>- Hiding motives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>networks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table is paraphrased from David Dayton's application of John Forester's recommendations to a set of particular environmental impact statements and environmental review processes (Dayton, 1999).

c. Criteria for Intersubjective Validity or Legitimacy

Intersubjective validity may be the least familiar form of validity to Western educated minds. For this reason, it is probably the most important component of the validity claims outlined in Habermas' T.C.A. Habermas' use of the term "intersubjective" is not technically identical to any other English term in common parlance outside fields of philosophical discourse. To differentiate it from other forms of validity, one can first contrast it with subject-object relations. Whereas the subjective position of the speaker is usually best known and represented by the speaker, multiple subjects or speakers can establish facts about an object using objective methods of analysis. In regard to intersubjectivity, instead of treating each other as objects, a group of subjects in pluralist circumstances must recognize each other as meaning-making actors. They recognize claims each other make to intersubjectively, or socially-constructed relevance, legitimacy, or appropriateness. This form of validity is a primary concern in realms of law, organizational procedures, and other fields which attempt to establish

II.B. Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action - 85 -
or interpret norms and agreements about the meaning of language, customs, or other social and cultural understandings. This form of validity is no less real than the others for being socially-constructed, that is, *intersubjectively* established.

Evaluative criteria for *intersubjective* validity can be identified in interview statements which judge the legitimacy, rightness, appropriateness or regulative elements in statements made by discussants. These criteria are used to judge participants' claims that their utterances are appropriate with respect to the norms applying to the situation. Evaluations of *intersubjective* validity claims focus on reasonableness of applied rules. In the literature, claims to *intersubjective* validity may also be named regulative, claims to appropriateness, or claims to legitimacy. Forester recommends identifying these as legitimacy claims prescribing legal-moral norms appropriate to the case: "claims established or presented in the interactive domain of normative authority and power relations through legislation, regulations, legal decisions, precedents, cultural and social norms, corporate policy decisions, taboos, formal and informal sanctions, and other relations of perceived authority." For example, the following statement makes such a claim of normative rightness: "These substances should be banned from industrial use!" (Forester, 1993). When analyzing legitimacy claims, Dayton recommends putting the focus of attention on the reasonableness of decisions regarding issues of need. The focus is also on
bases for evaluating alternatives when these decisions are challenged. When participants speak in a discursive setting, one of the claims they are making is that what they are saying is appropriate to the context. This claim also goes by a number of other names, such as the claim of appropriateness. This is also a normative claim. It refers to what we think “should” be. Speakers are saying that their utterances are appropriate with respect to the normative rules of the situation. It may also be termed a claim to rightness (Dayton, 1999). In evaluation of a public hearing on a nuclear power-plant development taking place in a court of law, Kemp put attention on distortions in communication caused by power imbalances between conflicting parties in the debate. In his conclusion on intersubjective validity, Kemp recommends analyzing discourses against the “need for all participants to practical discourse to have the equal chance to command and oppose, permit and forbid arguments” (Kemp, 1985). For example, the community deliberations discussed in interviews included statements much like the following which offers evidence to support a claim to intersubjective validity: “Our community’s commitment to stewarding the land requires us to maintain the ecological health of our pond.”
### Table 6, Evaluative Criteria For Intersubjective Validity (Dayton, 1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical Criteria for Intersubjective Validity</th>
<th>Evidence of Intersubjective Validity</th>
<th>Contra-Evidence of Intersubjective Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q: Is this justified?</strong></td>
<td>+ Agreement on validity of official boundaries to debate and the rules of engagement</td>
<td>- Refusal to address opposition's key arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q: Does the affected public generally share the norms for action and evaluation?</strong></td>
<td>+ No challenges were raised to the framework of norms of action and evaluation shaping the process</td>
<td>- Offering inadequate explanations or evidence, or declaring them outside the scope of the inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q: Recording significant changes to key considerations in evaluating the project in response to issues raised?</strong></td>
<td>+ Making decisions participatory + Checking with affected persons</td>
<td>- Opponents refused to recognize the legitimacy of the norms of action and evaluation asserted - Unresponsiveness - Professional dominance - Assertion of rationalizations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table is paraphrased from Dayton's application of John Forester's recommendations to a set of particular environmental impact statements and environmental review processes (Dayton, 1999).

d. **Criteria for Communicative Validity or Understandability**

Communicative validity is possibly the simplest form of validity to recognize in practical terms, but in terms of theory it is actually a special instance of *intersubjective* validity. For this reason, Habermas' use of the term "communicative" is intended to describe the specific instance of meaning being understood between speakers, but also the larger concept of validity claims being made in all communicative action. In general English parlance, communication may be said to have taken place if meaning is conveyed by a speaker to other speakers.
Evaluative criteria for *communicative* validity can be identified in interview statements which judge the understandability, meaningfulness or communicative qualities of statements made by discussants. These criteria are used to judge participants' claims that their utterances expressed something comprehensible to the person(s) addressed.

In the literature, claims to *communicative* validity may also be named comprehensibility claims and meaning claims. These criteria are used to evaluate the extent to which participants are able to make their arguments understood, or to challenge the meaningfulness and understandability of others' articulations. Comprehensibility-attention directing claims formulate the framework in which "the problem" is to be understood. These criteria judge the meaningfulness of discussants' language and other symbols of their claims that is if they are used to praise or criticize discussants' claims of *communicative* validity.

Forester recommends identifying these as comprehensibility or attention-directing claims, formulating the framework in which the problem is to be understood. "These are claims established and presented in the communicative-linguistic domain of shared-meaning systems, verbal (via words) or nonverbal (via meaningful tokens of behavior, e.g., gestures or money)." Criteria for this kind of validity may also be used to judge participants' communicative competence through the ability to call attention to the issues at hand through language use, symbolic presentations.
(art and music), or investment of resources (economic capital as conventional, congealed attention) (Forester, 1993).

When analyzing understandability claims, Dayton recommends putting the focus of attention on effectiveness of presentation (Dayton, 1999). Kemp recommends analyzing discourses by asking, were “the participants at the inquiry equally able to initiate and perpetuate discourse that is, to raise issues and provide appropriate answers? To what extent were they able to make their arguments understood?” (Kemp, 1985)

For example, the community deliberations discussed in interviews included statements much like the following which offers evidence to redeem a claim after it was challenged, that the term “ecological health” meant something specific: “When we say “ecological health” we mean the ability to sustain the life of certain fish and plants we value in this pond, not necessarily all fish.”

The main problem with the concept of a communicative validity claim is that a statement has communicative validity if it can be shown to mean something, if its meaning is made understandable, but this simple claim can be generalized to the entire T.C.A. It would not be inaccurate to say that the most important point to take away from the T.C.A. is that humans are capable of a specific form of verbal communication we can call discourse. Humans are then capable and in the habit of discourse on norms to communicate across differences and coordinate action. Humans are capable
of coordinating action with wide ranges of power sharing as well as power-wielding. The first and last step in all of this is the ability to understand others' claims. It is always important to be able to challenge and redeem those claims, but first and last, they must be understood. They must be understood if power is to be shared or otherwise wielded with any degree of normative rightness. For these reasons, this form of validity was the least useful for categorizing the criteria used by practitioners' to evaluate their consensus processes. It was used as a category of criteria in the very limited circumstances of speakers understanding each others' terminology and ways in which they framed issues. Otherwise it would apply to any and all evaluations of their communications.
Table 7, *Evaluative Criteria for Communicative Validity (Dayton, 1999)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical Criteria for Communicative Validity</th>
<th>Evidence of Communicative Validity</th>
<th>Contra-Evidence of Communicative Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q: What does this mean?</td>
<td>+ Effective document design</td>
<td>- Document difficult for non-experts to use and understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q: Designed to communicate effectively to a mixed audience?</td>
<td>+ Has more document design qualities supporting this communicative action norm + Clearly superior in packaging, accessibility, and visual aids, and slightly better in readability + Writing quality + Clearly aimed to impress ordinary readers from the general public + Minimizing jargon + Creating public review committees</td>
<td>- Economic considerations dominated document design - Clearly not aimed to impress ordinary readers from the general public - Public exclusion by jargon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table is paraphrased from Dayton's application of John Forester's recommendations to a set of particular environmental impact statements and environmental review processes (Dayton, 1999).

4. SUMMARY OF THE THEORY OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTION

In this section, I have presented conceptions of each claim which can be applied to empirical evaluations of discourses. These four conceptions are appropriated from the works of John Forester and David Dayton. Although discourse participants will necessarily always be making claims that each of other participants' statements is valid in each of the four ways, these empirical conceptions give us tools for more explicitly checking and analyzing the validity of each. For research purposes, they make it possible to tangibly select criteria for evaluating policy discourse. This means that, in theory, after learning and understanding the concepts, policy analysts or

I.B. Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action - 92 -
anyone analyzing policy could empirically identify occurrences of claims to these four types of validity. Participants and researchers may identify the claims, challenge them, or defend them. The value of this theory to this study is that discourse then becomes amenable to rigorous analyses. It is Habermas' assertion that humans necessarily do this all the time when reasoning together in order to coordinate action.

In summary, the T.C.A. has utility for empirical analyses of policy discourse. This is because deliberations on the appropriateness of policy alternatives are inherently normative discourses. In policy discourse, there is no way to reasonably avoid the question of what would be best. The T.C.A. provides a formula for intellectually rigorous analysis of normative claims and illuminates both overt and subtle manipulations and other possibly unintentional distortions of communications. To reiterate, those four asserted and contestable normative claims in discourse are: objective truth, subjective sincerity, intersubjective legitimacy and communicative understandability. Habermas argues that these analytic techniques are inherent in the modern Western-European cultural assumptions and the underlying notions of what it means for a discussion to be rational.

The application of the T.C.A. for analysis in this study is discussed in the methods chapter.
II.C. CONSENSUS PROCESS IN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES

When asked how they made major decisions, 451 out of the 550 intentional communities listed in the Communities Directory identified themselves as using "consensus," indicating some variation on the Quaker method. Secular use of Quaker consensus processes is derived from the Society of Friends' (for brevity, more commonly termed Quakers or Friends) "meetings-for-business." These Friends meetings were originally convened during the lifetime of the founder, George Fox, in the 1600's and continue to this day, usually on the same program with meetings-for-worship. In secular groups, the formal name given to the procedure is The Consensus Process.

There is an historical basis for the Society of Friends call for quiet consensus and its contrast with their reputation for outspoken vehemence. The original and continuing purpose of Friends "meetings-for-business" was the cooperative protection of their common interests. By the end of the seventeenth century, English historians have estimated there were anywhere from one tenth of the adult population, to one out of sixteen men who were Quaker at some point in their lives. At that time state reprisals against these radical English Protestants were severe. This was persecution which eventually resulted in many members of the Society of Friends leaving to settle new American colonies. Support of jailed Friends' farms and orphans was a primary and expensive function of local meetings.
In their parlance, "meeting" refers both to the event in time and to the authority it constitutes. I later discovered this had some bearing on the unique interaction of power-roles and procedural justice in consensus-based groups. "Bring it to monthly-meeting" is comparable to the statement in other groups: "Take it to headquarters." "Weekly-meeting" (spoken with an article such as "the") is a local jurisdiction and "annual-meeting" constitutes a larger regional jurisdiction. In England, these meetings-for-business mediated members' radical individualism within and between communities. Radical individuals' actions in resisting the state, or the church, had real and powerful impacts on other members. There was an anti-authoritarian element to their actions which resulted from their belief that every human individual had the ability and the God-given right to speak and otherwise present a source of God's truth from within themselves. Politically, they were extreme pacifists who supported the Protestant tenet of every human having direct access to God's truth without mediation by a priesthood or other worldly leaders. With increasing numbers in jail for resisting military taxation, or deprived of their property by state seizure and arson, the actions of every individual labeled "Quaker" potentially endangered every other individual with that label.

From their beginning, meetings-for-worship and meetings-for-business were designed to both respect individual insight and to provide a mechanism for social solidarity. Solidarity between radical individualists
was supported with the following rational. Because every Friend had “a piece of the truth” and only the community in its entirety could get an overview of God's will, meetings sought unanimity by giving individuals opportunity to hear each other deeply and opportunity to strive together for understanding. They strove to understand “the sense of the meeting.” It might also be looked at in terms of individualists refusing to follow rules they were not consulted on. This is similar to the logic behind the statement “no taxation without representation.”

I accumulated much of my own background in consensus process experientially, just as this practice has always been taught and learned through association with existing groups and through oral presentations and practices of experienced facilitators. There are few written sources, and fewer with scholastic rigor. There are a small number of instruction manuals describing similar processes to the ones used by these communities, but few of them had been read by community members. They are primarily available from small presses: C.T. Butler's, On Conflict and Consensus (1998), two recently reprinted books from the Conflict Resolution Center in Madison Wisconsin, A Manual for Group Facilitators (1978) and A Handbook for Consensus Decision Making: Building United Judgment (1981) and a guide for business managers in large organizations seeking more facilitator-like roles entitled: Mining Group Gold by Kayser (1995). Another useful publication on related facilitation tips, methods and

There are those referred to as "strong facilitators" outside the Society of Friends meetings-for-worship who have made powerful impacts on contemporary consensus practitioners' understandings and skills. Caroline Estes is a nationally renowned teacher of the method. She has been a primary source of consensus training for an extensive network of individuals and interacting groups including communities associated with the Fellowship for Intentional Community, Hewlett-Packard in Seattle, various state groups and the eventual nationwide development of the Green Party. She also has a growing group of students and their students now working as consultants for political, community and business organizations, but most of these work with small residential groups within the larger circle of those calling themselves intentional communities or co-housing communities.

My own study and experience with the specifics of this secularized version of Quaker consensus began with reading Butler's book, and with trainings from Caroline Estes while I was a resident member of a consensus-based community. It was Caroline who provided my favorite interpretation of the word "consensus." This interpretation is consistent with Habermas' use of the word. She breaks it down into its roots "con" and "sense." Consensus is thinking and feeling together. She reminds her
trainees of the term used for final decisions among The Society of Friends: “the sense of the meeting” and reminds that “sense” should be interpreted broadly as both thinking and feeling; and “con” as in connect, or together.

Consensus is both the process and the outcome. In these communities a frequent challenge is put in a form similar to: “That isn’t consensus!” They could be meaning the process rules were not followed correctly. They could be meaning that the decision was different from the statement they heard, or they could be saying the decision was not yet made. I have learned in my observation and questioning, they usually mean all three. There is another connection between the consensus process I learned from Caroline Estes and her larger circle and The Consensus Processes used by the communities chosen for this study. While conducting formal interviews in the case communities, I learned she was directly involved in the social and organizational circles which founded all three communities. She and her students provided consensus training for at least one of them and she was a well known and respected facilitator among the founders of the other two.

This means that interested scholars could possibly learn more about the decision methods described here by seeking interviews, attending trainings, or reading future publications of Estes and her associates. This is particularly important given how little has been published on the wide use of consensus processes in intentional communities.
This connection with the intentional communities’ movement does not mean that these three cases referred to themselves as intentional communities. I repeat this again and explain it in the section describing the case communities.

Attempts to institute policy-making processes in contemporary community settings based on The Consensus Process are understandably idealistic social experiments, but given their purpose, they are nonetheless effective experiments. These experiments vary in their ambitions, or intentions, some being much more utopian than others. Yet in every case in which there is an attempt to build consensus on policy decisions, the experiment is at least partially intended to provide avenues for members to build what Habermas terms “intersubjective understanding.”
II.D. SUMMARY

While there have been many calls for a new form of policy analysis that takes into account normative elements of policy processes, neither the theory nor practice of such evaluations have been well established. The Theory of Communicative Action is criticized for unwieldy abstractions. Consensus-building processes are also criticized for being unwieldy as well as being difficult to meaningfully evaluate by any systematic method. The context requirements of T.C.A., however, are particularly well suited for application to consensus processes as they are used in policy deliberations. These requirements include the specific problem context of attempts to establish norms through rational deliberation among parties with conflicts of interest. This study breaks new ground in an area where theory and practice are both needed. This is an area in which neither practice nor theory have been well understood, because the other has been absent. This study does not focus on the epistemological foundation of Quaker practice, and it does not focus on the practical methods of facilitating Habermasian dialogue, but I am suggesting that this type of study can help these two areas inform each other. This study does focus on one small comparison between empirical criteria for evaluating communicative validity claims as described in planning literature, and practical criteria for evaluating The Consensus Process as described in interviews with highly experienced practitioners.
(Step 3) Identify the range and repertoire of pragmatic speech acts that may work particularly in each dimension (so that we might "code" from transcribed interviews, for example, cognitive reports, normative challenges, personal expressions, and definitions or characterizations of issues)."

(Forster, 1993, p. 132)

III.A. INTRODUCTION

Theory-driven research design and methods were used for this study. New methods were required for identification of the types of speech acts associated with Habermasian evaluation of democratic processes. Methods were also required for analyses of participants' evaluations of their own community's democratic processes. In combination, these methods allowed identification of evaluative criteria in interviews and analysis of those criteria. In the Theory of Communicative Action (T.C.A.), participation in discourse is defined as the activity of making, checking and potentially redeeming claims made between participants. The methods chosen for this study did not allow me to analyze real-time evaluations of discourse, but they did allow me to elicit participants' criteria for evaluating discourse after the fact. Habermas elaborated on the qualities of an ideal speech situation in terms of claims participants must necessarily make or
challenge when deliberating on what would be best, given the practical context of a specific community issue.

The methods used in this study were self reflective to the extent that interviewees could potentially evaluate their consensus processes with criteria comparable to Habermas' four types of validity. The methods were required to both elicit interviewees' evaluative criteria and to compare those criteria to Habermas' criteria for objective, subjective, intersubjective and communicative validity. In terms of the theory, we can say that participants can respond to the norms of discourse, or the discourse ethic, whether or not that ethic is being followed in their discourse. For this reason, methods were chosen which would elicit judgments from participants, then provide analytic tools for comparing those judgments to judgments one might expect with a Habermasian discourse ethic.

Forester, Kemp, Dayton and others give examples of ways in which pragmatic speech acts may reflect the presence or absence of Habermasian validity claims. These examples were used when developing the coding instruments.

This chapter is organized to describe the steps by which I: 1) designed a theory-driven method of comparing these two instances of discourse evaluation; 2) investigated a set of evaluative criteria recommended by Habermasian planning and policy theorists in the literature and a set used
by practitioners in communities; 3) analyzed and compared the two sets of evaluative criteria; and 4) applied the results and developed new recommendations for decision structures supporting deliberative democracy at the organizational level.

The methods of this study described below include case selection by snowball sampling, design of open-ended interview questions and qualitative software-supported methods of text analyses.
III.B. IDENTIFYING PRACTICAL EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

It was important to develop practical ways of recognizing the use of Habermasian validity claims in interviews. The goal of this step was to develop my own understanding of what forms such criteria might take. This was a fairly complex task because of the complexity of writing by and about Habermas. This task was made easier by the mid-level work done between theory and practice by John Forester and those applying his work. I gathered descriptions of speech-acts in deliberations which should be evidence of Habermasian validity. These descriptions were published by Forester, Dayton and Kemp and are reviewed in the theory chapter in the section introducing criteria for objective, subjective, intersubjective and communicative validity.

The format of David Dayton's tabular presentation of positive evidence and contra-evidence of each type of validity was particularly helpful. It provided the model for presentation of criteria used by interviewees evaluating their deliberations.
III.C. SUBJECT SELECTION

The case communities were labeled the first, second and third communities based on their experience with The Consensus Process. The methods, criteria and results of this selection process are described below.

The first community, or Primo Community uses a method most similar to its origins in Quaker meetings-for-business and the third, and Trinity Community uses a method least influenced by Quakers, as well as having the least experienced membership overall. Primo Community may be more like Quakers in their definition of consensus and the use of silence during meetings, but the levels of experience by other measures in the first and second communities are very similar. The second community, or Segundo Community is also very experienced and much more like the first than the third in terms of having members with many years' experience using consensus.

1. SELECTING CASE COMMUNITIES WITH SNOWBALL SAMPLING

Designing the method of case selection was a significant part of the study. This section describes both the methods and the theory behind the methods of case selection. Case selection linked theory to practice in this study with carefully chosen characteristics of appropriate case communities. The goal was to identify and gain access to three communities which were most likely to have characteristics supporting
Habermasian discourse ethics in their policy-making practices. (Although this structural characteristic of case communities was originally intended as a theoretic assumption of the method, an additional results chapter was added which focuses primarily on these power relations. The power relations are discussed both in terms of decision-procedures and ownership structures.) Selection criteria were followed as they were presented in the original study proposal. This section also describes relationships between each of the selection criteria and aspects of Habermas' discourse ethic.

The contexts in which The Consensus Process was used were matched with the premises of Habermas' Universalization Principal (U) for the discourse ethic. That is, they were pluralist groups dedicated to cooperatively resolving conflicts by reaching argued agreements that established shared norms. In the paragraphs below, I describe criteria used in my search for communities utilizing formal procedures and property ownership structures which supported their efforts to make decisions by consensus.

I used snowball sampling which is a method of soliciting nominees from a sample pool built upon original elite contacts, that is, building upon contacts with people known to have access to the kind of information and people needed. It was a method well suited to this study, both because of my personal contact which were developed over a period of twenty years, and the existence of definite restrictions to community access for most
members of the public. My ability to get helpful information and access communities was benefited by my history in the national effort to build cooperation and share know-how between intentional communities; the selection criteria for this study were stringent and were not swayed by convenience. On the other hand, the communities which best fit the selection criteria came to my attention through organizational and personal contacts that left me with impressions of being strange and strong coincidences. Although I had hoped to find communities in close proximity and warned my dissertation committee that geography would be one of my selection criteria, in the end I considered other parts of the country before finding these three cases were the best choices nationally.

Snowball sampling began with the pool of communities listed in the directory and from my own contacts. I contacted the most experienced people I knew in the most experienced communities in order to establish a sampling pool. Before calling, I reviewed tables listing founding dates and decision processes for over 300 communities in the Fellowship for Intentional Community's Communities Directory: A guide to Intentional Communities and Cooperative Living. The sample pool was not restricted to those listed in the directory, but in the end, the final three cases could all be found there. This connection with the intentional communities' movement does not mean that the selected cases referred to themselves as intentional communities. At least one participant in each community asked
me about use of the term "intentional community" with some level of alarm that their own community might be considered one of those. I repeat this again in the section describing the cases. In Primo Community and Segundo Community, the comments concerned a "hippy commune" stereotype with which they did not want to be associated. Trinity Community most closely resembles that stereotype, but they did not believe they were intentional communities because they did not believe they had the level of solidarity and closeness required to be an "intentional community." They did not believe they could honestly claim such a high achievement. The first two communities, Primo and Segundo more accurately met those conditions for intentionality. Although the term "intentional community" might be contested, each of these communities used some combination of articles of incorporation, partnership agreements or bylaws to make their principles of cooperation legally binding. Each of the three can be regarded as a housing cooperative. The relationship between the international cooperative movement and commitment to principles of democracy is well documented. There is more about this relationship in the appendix.

Although I was not previously familiar with the selected cases, I was able to take advantage of my social connections to gain access. These contacts included prominent consensus facilitation trainers and editors of the communities' directory. For example, although Trinity Community was chosen for other reasons, it happened to have a well respected member who
had been a close friend of mine when I had lived in that town. In another coincidence, I found the most experienced but most private and secluded community: Primo Community, while asking a friend to suggest people I could stay with while visiting Segundo Community. His reference led me to the community from which founders of Segundo Community had emerged. In each case, I was able to make my initial calls to the communities with personal references.

After seeking case nominations across the country in six to ten conversations with national organizers, two communities were mentioned repeatedly. Although I had originally wanted geographic proximity, I later decided to make a national search. In the end, the three communities which best met all the requirements for this study were each on my side of the country.

The case selection criteria were primarily linked to the experience with The Consensus Process. The three names used for the cases in this study are based on their experience levels. Primo has the most consensus experience and Trinity has the least. Segundo has less than Primo and more than Trinity. A large number of human hours in consensus meetings per month indicated a more experienced community, but the operational definition of experience was required to account for more than the numbers of years in which this type of process was used in the community. Factors indicating experience included: the type of consensus-building processes
used in the community; organizational structures which were designed for consensus-building; philosophical influences on the community which oriented members toward consensus; and larger community sizes for intensification of pressures on consensus building efforts. All of these were considered when determining communities' experience levels.

**a. Age of Participants**

I sought the oldest of those communities using some form of consensus process in their policy deliberations. The ideal cases were those which had been using consensus since their founding. It was also possible that experience was introduced with strong attention to good process by experienced founders. It might have been possible to discover a newly established community made up of residents among the most experienced in the movement. In practice, this requirement narrowed case selection to groups with a longer history and a greater likelihood of having established ongoing social reproduction processes.

**b. Flat Organizational Structures**

It followed that communities with flat versus hierarchical organizational structures would place more importance on and have more at stake in their abilities to make mutually agreeable and binding policy decisions. They relied as little as possible on power hierarchies which were not amenable to modification in through discursive practices. I looked for descriptions of the current organizational structure of each community and for the relations
between people and groups, their social structure. A more central role for consensus in the organization was taken to indicate more experience with the process in the community. This was indicated by the relative power of committees or other bodies using consensus compared to the relative power of committees or other bodies that did not. A more flat organizational structure meant there was less of a gap between the power levels of individuals and groups in the larger community. It also indicated the pursuit of consensus was more central to a community's organization. There is more written about this in the chapter on power structures. A flat organizational structure was also one that had less extreme differences between members' power positions. It meant members were more likely to make policy decisions in parallel with others of similar power positions. I sought and found communities holding property in common and require voluntary consent among all members for policy decisions. This was a national search for communities using consensus to decide issues related to control of real property. While there were many communities using the process to decide issues such as chore sharing, or other non-economic issues, these groups had less at stake in their decisions. This lower stake was likely to lead to less formality in their decision processes and fewer clear opportunities for investigating their methods. Some of the power relations I expected to find could be expressed as owner versus renter, core members versus more peripheral members and formal roles versus informal
Chapter III: Research Design and Methodological

roles. Although this term was not used in these communities, 'core group member' is a term used by some communities to designate a participant whose involvement was central to the policy making center of the group. These may have been the owners group, executive board members, or etc.

These communities conscious attempts to create an even playing-field between members were reflected in their organizational structures which more closely approximated the context described in the discourse ethics. That is, agreements were made by reasoning together instead of adopting or rebelling against unexamined tradition, or use of force. For example, in the course of discussion in a community with a mix of owners and renters, participants would likely be cognizant that an owner could resort to state support for forcing a renter to leave their home regardless of the value of their reasoning. In this study, the goal was to select case communities that made conscious attempts to share that ownership control between equal membership shareholders instead of relying on such owner-renter dynamics.

The relationship between the flat shape, or horizontal nature of a community's organizational structure and the intensification of consensus experience was referred to in terms of The Consensus Process being more central to the organizational structure. Hypothetically, cooperatives would have ideals much closer to those of Habermas than participants of more
hierarchical organizations, even when years of participants' involvement were equivalent.

c. Philosophical Influences

The developers of intentional communities interviewed in this study made explicit efforts to create and use decision-making processes enhancing equality among members in terms of human dignity and avoiding oppressive uses of power. Although some participants used "communitarian" to describe themselves and a larger social movement of which they considered themselves a part, no systematic research was done to pursue these comments. Instead, I focused on communities using secular versions of the Quaker style consensus process. Religious communities were not selected, but communities with Quaker influences were considered more experienced with The Consensus Process. More Quaker influence indicated increased experience. There was a limit to this. A priority was put on secularism. The requirement for a pluralist context required for derivation of Habermas' inclusivity principle would not be met in a religious community. In this study, pluralism is defined in terms of differences in values or purposes, and by definition religious communities are able to govern value orientations of their members. I was seeking communities where differences in values were at least nominally tolerated. These were communities in which there was reason to believe participants were allowed to systematically deliberate on values in any given policy.
decision. If this were a study at the state, or national level of analysis this selection criterion could be characterized as a requirement for separation between church and state.

d. Size

A larger population with interests coordinated by consensus indicated more experience. A larger monetary value or greater complexity of common property coordinated by consensus also indicated a more experienced community.

2. SELECTION OF INTERVIEWEES

The first formal interviewees in each community were solicited because of their experience levels. After introducing myself to the most experienced members and attending a formal community meeting, I extended an invitation for an interview to any community member with interest in discussion of The Consensus Process.

Philosophy was not used for selection of formal-interview participants except in the case of "birth-right Quakers." In each community, such members were repeatedly nominated by others for interviews.

The most long-term residents were sought for interviews.

In each of the communities chosen for this study, I first interviewed those participants most experienced with the consensus process. In one case, an interviewee was no longer a resident, but lived nearby. Some of the more experienced members were not necessarily in longest residence, but were...
more actively involved in policy deliberations. A larger responsibility level in a highly experienced community was indicative of more experience with The Consensus Process.

Access to interviewees was largely successful. I was repeatedly told that my access was extraordinary and that it was usually highly limited for others attempting interviews. Although requests for interviews were rarely refused, there was an exception highlighting a limitation of the study. The interview was refused because the participant was unhappy with The Consensus Process. He was greatly offended because his neighbors' approval was required for use of common property. With some insistence, I was able to extend a conversation with him long enough to learn about one of his complaints. From stories he told with pride about his past, I took away the impression that he put a great amount of value on status objects he had owned. I guessed that he felt impoverished by the community requirements to ask permission for things a house owner would not. He was likely to be the kind of resident that would challenge neighbors' expectations no matter where he lived. This highlights the fact that participants' values expressed in this study are values which put consensus-building processes in high regard. The results are presented with this in mind.

Some participants wanted me to express more than a passing interest in their opinions before they would grant an interview, but then showed
enthusiasm and gratitude for being chosen. One agreed with reluctance and kept the interview short. I observed this person express reluctance to speak frankly in a number of other venues not related to my visit: personal conversation over politics with family, describing community dynamics, or telling a neighbor about a sick relative. For these reasons, I did not believe the reluctance in the interview was a selective response to the study.

In each community, I encountered stories about problems encountered with previous publications. I interpreted these comments as expressions of concern regarding how I would write and how I would write about and evaluate their community. I considered these stories as requests to tell them more about my sense of fairness in reporting. In each community, I responded to these types of stories by paraphrasing the confidentiality promises made in the consent letter. I told them the “good and bad news” that dissertations were not intended to be read by the people they could help. I also told them of my hope that some other form of writing could help the public learn from this community’s experience in the future. These conversations allowed us to more fully share perceptions of the world. This resulted in enough trust to garner repeated comments of surprise. In every community, I was told the level of welcome and sharing I was receiving from other residents was highly unusual. It was often the reason an otherwise reluctant interviewee elected to participate. While some residents in every community offered permission to repeat anything they said, it was
made very clear to me that many interviewees accepted my presentation as a trustworthy confidant and would not have granted interviews otherwise.
III.D. DESIGNING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Designing interview questions which would elicit participants’ evaluative criteria presented a methodological challenge, but the method was successful. These interview questions were required to direct participants into evaluating their processes without directing them toward evaluation of any particular issues or particular process steps.

Although I was involved in the national intentional communities’ movement, I did not select or know of these case communities until after I designed criteria for their selection. This section also includes each set of questions, questions eliciting case nominations, questions for the nominee communities, informal interview questions asked of key informants in each selected case community, and questions for formal taped interviews.

Saturating the response or the data was both a goal and a result of the interview method. Saturation indicates the extent to which all possible criteria are likely to have been recorded. Open-ended interview questions were designed to ask for similar information with the intention of eliciting as much information as possible from each interviewee. I sought saturation because, the analysis of interview text focused on their evaluations of positive and negative traits of the process for some particular issue and I wanted to record every way in which they chose to judge those processes. For this study, the term “issue” refers to topics deliberated by the group. Interviewees were asked to describe an issue whose “process went...
particularly well.” This might also be referred to as a content issue as contrasted with a process issue. That is, “the issue” was the problem being discussed. “The process” was the way it was discussed. I occasionally explained this to interviewees if there was confusion. I decided to concentrate on those processes that “went well,” because those that did not go well were usually those deliberations that did not develop into any length. Interviewees had much less to say about these. Those that went well, were usually large problems that were eventually resolved or that led to new understandings, whether or not the issue was still pending as a problem in the community.

In order to elicit their criteria for evaluation, I decided to ask questions which forced interviewees to polarize their responses: “What did you like about the process? Not like? What made it better? What made it worse?” And so on, as listed below. These questions were asked in enough ways to saturate their responses. That is, the questions had variations, but in general they all asked the interviewee to evaluate their consensus processes from both positive and negative perspectives. Indications of saturation within individual interviews included repetition of answers and comments on the interviewees own inability to think of anything more to say on the topic. Their evaluations can be confidently interpreted to be complete or saturated. I found saturation both within and between interviews. I also found that the interviews across communities gave very similar information.
and I was less and less likely to hear anything new as the last interviews were being completed. Indications of saturation across cases similarly included repetition of answers heard in many or most interviews.

The full text of all interview questions for case and subject nomination, for informal conversation, and for formal interviews is included in the appendices. Case nomination questions were prepared for initial telephone calls with community contacts. I did not use these questions word-for-word if it would break the flow of conversation. Case-community nominees were screened for selection based on questions establishing their levels of experience. Organizational structure and history questions were asked informally of my first contacts in each case community as opportunity arose. One to two hour taped and hand noted interview questions were asked of selected participants in each case community in their home, the commons, or some other quiet and private place for concentration and confidentiality.
III.E. METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The analyses in this study are intended to be more than bare details of abstractions. The entire study has been an exploration of a promising, emancipatory critical social theory in practice. If illegitimate socio-political power is maintained, in part, through disorganizing the ability of pluralist groups to reason together, then an emancipatory theoretical lens is needed which makes such deliberative reasoning visible, something we can discern, criticize and improve. The analyses focused on interviewees' evaluations of deliberative-democracy in practice, but it was also intended to increase readers' abilities to use this Habermasian analytic lens. In addition to analyzing their use of criteria for Habermasian-like validity claims in their interviews, I also present examples of my own Habermasian analyses of problem issues in each community. The goal is for readers to better understand the reasoning which these types of evaluations describe these communities' judgments from a Habermasian perspective and describe the ways in which my participants' judgments were similar or dissimilar to my own. If readers are not better able to do this type of analysis themselves, the study has not succeeded. For this reason, these descriptive results intentionally include my own growing understanding of Habermasian validity.

The design of data presentation is partly influenced by a model report in John Creswell's Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among
Chapter III: Research Design and Method

Five Traditions. That report modeled data analysis and presentation for a phenomenological study. It is an appropriate method of data presentation because it allows the reader to review the analytic steps resulting in consolidation of long and numerous interview texts. The consolidation was done by coding, clustering and narrative description of the resulting themes as described below. The design of data presentation in this study is also heavily influenced by a model presented by David Dayton.

I began with interview texts. Each interviewee shared insight and a considerable amount of wisdom about their community experience. In the results, "participants" refers to resident members of any one of the three case communities that took part in the formal consensus process of that community. In the three case studies, participants are almost always community members, but may at times not include the full membership. "Participant" refers to anyone attending policy-deliberation meetings. It is meant to be interpreted in the broadest sense. When the participant is referred to as the specific source of information, he or she is referred to as the "interviewee." With this distinction I was able to report what "interviewees' believed other 'participants' believed.

The results of analyses were abstracted from interview texts, yet the interviews themselves were not abstract. Each formal interview began with the story of a recent issue's development through community events, and a description of The Consensus Process used to address the issue. The range
of issues described was broad, but membership issues were the most common. They highlighted the theoretic arena of social reproduction and boundary maintenance.

To understand the method of data collection and subsequent coding of the data, we must remember that John Forester asked planning and policy researchers to code the ways in which validity claims are made in policy deliberations. Although I did not code deliberations per se, I did code practitioners’ evaluations of those deliberations. This means that the resulting interview text should not be confused with what is referred to as “self report” data. This is not self report data because I did not ask them to tell me what, or which criteria they used to make their evaluations. Instead I asked them questions which caused them to evaluate their community processes in whatever way they chose. I then analyzed their evaluations using methods from grounded-theory to identify emergent themes, criteria they were using in practice.

They used these criteria in the practical process of responding to my polarizing questions. Interviewees had been asked questions forcing them to polarize their responses: What did they like? Not like? Better? Worse? Worked? Didn’t work? These questions were asked in enough ways to saturate their responses. That is, the questions had slight variations, but in general they all asked the interviewee to thoroughly evaluate a consensus process.
The analysis also took advantage of an aspect of Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action, that these evaluations of deliberations necessarily indicate practical uses of validity claims. This is because there are validity claims made with each statement in discourse and these claims are inherently available for challenging, or redeeming claims made by deliberators that what they were saying was valid along a number of dimensions. According to the Theory of Communicative Action, this is the action taking place in the specific situation of discourse, that is, when action has stopped in an effort to rationally deliberate for agreement on norms. This is done in order to non-violently coordinate action in situations in which there exist differences in interests: pluralist circumstances. The interviewees’ evaluative comments are practical uses of these validity claims because they are applied in moments of reflection on the validity of the deliberations on a particular issue. I was following John Forester’s fourth recommended research step in which he directed us to ask the following research questions:
Table 8, John Forester's example questions about practical criteria for validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“How are claims to validity made?”</th>
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</table>
| How are claims to truth (objective validity) made? | Q: Were claims to truth based on accuracy?  
Q: Were claims to truth based on precision?  
Q: Were claims to truth based on completeness?  
Q: Were claims to truth based on objectivity?  
Q: Were claims to truth based on propriety? |
| How are claims to rightness (intersubjective validity or legitimacy) made? | Q: Were claims to legitimacy based on custom?  
Q: Were claims to legitimacy based on precedence?  
Q: Were claims to legitimacy based on utilitarian calculation? |

These are examples, two of the four sets of practical questions Forester suggests we investigate when holding deliberations up to standards of two types of Habermasian validity; objective validity and intersubjective validity. These and the other two types of validity are described in more detail in the section on criteria for each of the validity claims in the chapter on literature, theory and practice.

The question I asked myself at this stage of the analysis was, “What criteria did the interviewee use to make this evaluation?” I used their own phrases when they were accurate English, or used my own to describe their phrases when their phrases were slang. My task was to find a phrase that described what they meant, especially when they said it in a few different ways. For example, when they said they liked that “everyone had a say,” and that it was good that “everyone had a voice,” I used the phrase, “everyone had a voice” for coding. Again, during the analysis, I gave codes to the criteria they were using for judgment in each statement and then later clustered similar criteria together in terms of evaluative questions they addressed. This step required a great deal of re-reading, re-listening to tapes and contemplation about my knowledge of the issues being...
deliberated and the points these people were trying to make about those issues in their interviews.

The results of this investigation were produced in the form of grounded (emerging from the data) and pre-established (taken from the literature) codes of such claims made in interviews. Each code described a positive or negative criterion for evaluating the process. (For the pre-established codes, see Dayton's tables in the literature chapter.) For example, when an interviewee stated they liked the process because "everyone felt heard," I noted this with a code "felt heard," and later merged this with others which were eventually grouped under the code "inclusivity." Later, when comparing their criteria to those of Habermas, I was confused when comparing inclusivity to Habermasian validity. I discuss this in the results. This is similar to coding one would do for grounded theory because participants' criteria were first clustered into related categories before comparing them to Habermasian criteria. A comparison of grounded-theory with Critical Theory, as well as the strengths and limitations of this combination of methods is included in discussion of the study's objectives and limitations.

With these steps above, I methodically mapped what Forester termed "the varieties and forms of their claims" by clustering them within categories of evaluative questions they apparently addressed. I eventually clustered all such questions into categories corresponding to Habermas' four types of
validity without any outstanding. The only large changes I needed to make in my efforts to do this comparison were changes in my understanding of the validity claims.

While it is difficult to say they should be called large or small changes, I did change some criteria suggested by Forester and Dayton, but not for mere convenience. My changes to Forester’s and Dayton’s criteria are reported in the results because they better represent Habermas’ meaning regarding validity claims, for example, in the results discussion regarding relationships between subjective validity and representation. These changes are overwhelmingly in the form of refinements, not reformulations of entire concepts. At first there was at least one set of criteria that did not seem to fit. This was related to finances. I did not understand Forester’s reason for referring to these as attention costs. I say a great deal about this in terms of the larger context of a group deliberating on value. While clustering, I asked myself, “What type of validity might they be evaluating with this set of evaluative criteria?” and “What validity is judged with that question?” In this way, each set of evaluative criteria addresses the objective validity, the subjective validity, the intersubjective validity, or the communicative validity of the process. I coded their responses with their criteria by asking myself what factors they chose to judge when I asked them to judge generally. I put these criteria into the form of questions and listed apparent
answers to those questions as they were found in the evaluative comments in interviews.

As an example of this coding and analysis, if the evaluative comment stated that an interviewee liked the process for a particular issue because they were heard even when they disagreed, I coded this with "heard when disagreed." Later, this code was clustered with others into a larger category entitled "inclusivity." I clustered hundreds of these codes to develop the tables included below under the relevant validity claims, as guided by Forester and Dayton.

As a second example, when I asked, "What did you like about the process for that issue?" the interviewee made evaluative comments, such as, "I liked that I could trust the community to come up with a better outcome than any of us would have come up with individually." I coded this comment with "trustworthiness." In the results, I represent evidence of trustworthiness from all the interviews. All of them evidence affirmative or negative answers to the practical question, "Was the process trustworthy?" For the presentation of results, I provide a table of comments addressing that question. In this way, the evaluative criteria are presented in the form of questions and their answers.

To summarize, in the example of the table on trustworthiness, the criterion for judgment is interpreted as a question which interviewees were
apparently answering for themselves in one cluster of evaluative comments: “Was the process trustworthy?”

In a related step of the analysis, Forester’s question about the range and form of validity claims was addressed by comparing these practical evaluation questions to those he recommended. The decision to present the data in the form of tables for questions with their positive and Contra-Evidence was inspired by Dayton. He used this type of table to outline the practical questions to ask about an actual deliberation. He also outlined the types of evidence one might find to address those questions. Versions of his validity tables are presented in the methods chapter and again before they are compared to criteria used by interviewees below. To better understand these tables of practical questions, consider that Dayton has been a scholar of rhetoric and technical writing and has appropriated John Forester’s numerous theory-driven and methodological lists for application to policy deliberations, specifically the response to public input in two environmental impact reviews.

The results of analysis are now reported in terms of practical questions answered with the evidence they offered in their evaluations. These results occasionally include quantitative terms such as “more,” “less,” “frequent,” and “uncommon,” among others. These terms do denote relative levels of importance between results. Although these terms are somewhat vague, they accurately reflect the relative weights of responses made in the
interviews as a whole. These terms are the most appropriate because they match the level of significance attributable with the methods of data-collection and methods of analyses in this study. On the other hand, other frequencies in the results are not as relevant. Specifically, the practical criteria used by interviewees are often described in multiple ways to reflect the multiple ways in which they were found in the interview texts. These multiple occurrences are not indicative of increased frequency and do not denote more or less emphases put on them by the interviewees.

The discourse analyses reported in the results, discussions and conclusion do contain quantitative terms that reflect strengths of response. For example, distinctions are made in terms of very few, few, almost none, long, short, deep, superficial, more, less and etc., as in: There were very few references to the accuracy of facts, almost none positive and a few negative. But in conversation, it was clear that the length, depth and inclusiveness of discussion caused almost all participants to believe the facts of an issue had eventually become available and checked for accuracy. These distinctions are described in the narrative report of discourse analyses, but is not indicated by the number of criteria regarding accuracy of facts in the tables.

All interview tapes were listened to repeatedly and all notes were reread for clarity. Evaluative statements were coded in all transcripts using firs N.U.D.I.S.T. and then N.V.I.V.O. qualitative analysis software packages.
from Qualitative Solutions Research, Australia. When evaluations were coded, duplicate or synonymous codes were clustered into composite themes representing ideas from all such references. I reviewed the meanings of their statements in the contexts of the original transcriptions and tapes. I searched for evaluative criteria which may have been missed in the current cluster and verified their accuracy of those criteria already coded. I also organized clusters of themes in an outline form to show sub-themes. I listed positive and negative criteria separately, because they represented the range of evidence presented by interviewees to make their evaluations. I learned however, that the positive and negative evaluations were not qualitatively different from each other. Although the number of positive evaluations was much greater than the negative, the tables of evaluative criteria are not organized to convey information that is quantitatively significant. They could all be easily stated as either positive or negative statements and still be accurately assigned to the same criterion. That is, they could all be stated in terms of the evidence the interviewee cited for the criteria being met, or evidence of the criteria not being met. Taken in their entirety, the tables include every evaluative comment made in response to questions about desirable and undesirable aspects of their processes. The tables are intended to be exhaustive, but the items on the list are not exclusive. Some items reflect more than one type of criteria for validity or can be found in more than one table.
### III.F. SUMMARY

*Table 9, Research Tasks*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning tasks</th>
<th>Data-collection tasks</th>
<th>Data analysis tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature review</td>
<td>Request case and participant nominations</td>
<td>Transcribe interview notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot study of analytic strategy/learning qualitative analysis software</td>
<td>Narrow case selection</td>
<td>Assemble supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-establish Habermasian themes</td>
<td>Arrange interviews and travel</td>
<td>Verify transcription, reading while listening to taped interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refine interview protocol</td>
<td>Request participant consent</td>
<td>Prepare field-journal and documentation for confidentiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview, visit sites, collect documents</td>
<td>Document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare data sets for secure storage and travel</td>
<td>Identify emergent themes of evaluative criteria used by interviewees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compare interviewees' criteria with pre-established Habermasian criteria

Contemplating implications
(Step 4) Map the variety of claims that such acts make in these dimensions: How are the claims to truth, rightness, identity, and issue definition made? Is a truth claim a claim to accuracy, to precision, to completeness, to objectivity? Is a claim to legitimacy a claim to propriety, to the customary, to precedent, to utilitarian calculation? What is the range of possible forms a claim in any one dimension might take?"

(Forrest, 1993, p. 132)

IV.A. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I first present discourse analyses in narrative examples of issues deliberated in each community. I discuss my own perspectives on their decisions and on how Habermasian validity claims were made, challenged and defended, or modified in their deliberations. Then in the following sections, I present the criteria used by participants when they evaluated their communities' deliberations on these and other issues in taped interviews. Criteria are presented in both descriptive prose and in tables. I present the results in this way because the research questions addressed in this chapter are about the nature of criteria used by interviewees and about the comparisons found between them and Habermas' validity claims. Following the example set by David Dayton and the request made by John Forrest in his fourth research step, the goal of this chapter
is to describe the empirical results and to focus on the fourth step, the task of mapping the variety and range of expressions of validity claims made in participants' speech acts. This is a form of discourse analysis. In order to map the variety and range of their expressions of validity, I present these criteria as questions in tables similar to those presented by Dayton. This tabular format presents the information in the most systematic way possible, but it may confuse the reader without preliminary explanation. The section on Criteria Applied by Interviewees begins with a description of how these tables may be understood.
IV.B. ISSUES DELIBERATED IN EACH COMMUNITY

Although the focus of the interviews was on their criteria for judgment, not on the content issues they deliberated, every interviewee was asked to describe the process for a recent or easily remembered issue. This means there was at least one issue described in great depth by each interviewee. Membership was a category representing the most frequent issue described in interviews. The following discussions of membership issues in each community are intended to make evaluative criteria more understandable. Participants often said the most difficult and important decisions were related to member rights, responsibilities and limits. These were the issues they most often evaluated.

Table 10, Comparison of Community Experience Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primo</th>
<th>Segundo</th>
<th>Trinity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member satisfaction with meetings</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property value</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaker influence</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long term residents</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of males to females</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years since founding</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of land</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Least</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formality in committee meetings</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged members</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member years residency</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Least</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11, Summary of Issues Deliberated in Each Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIMO COMMUNITY ISSUES</th>
<th>SEGUNDO COMMUNITY ISSUES</th>
<th>TRINITY COMMUNITY ISSUES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Appropriate care of animals and property</td>
<td>- Blocking election of a vice-presidential nominee</td>
<td>- Membership issues, financial and probationary requirements for new members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Long term visits of ex-residents or family</td>
<td>- Gun ownership or storage on the property</td>
<td>- Needing objective measures for evictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Rebuilding a pond for environmental impact</td>
<td>- Selection of new members by personal characteristics</td>
<td>- Evicting squatters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conflict over shared building</td>
<td>- Versus first-come-first-served with activities required to stay on the waiting list</td>
<td>- Construction remediation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cutting trees</td>
<td>- Community dispute with a neighbor over property boundary plantings</td>
<td>- Converting land use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Animal policy</td>
<td>- Membership committee selection process</td>
<td>- Amending pet policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Where to locate the commons</td>
<td>- Selecting furniture for the commons</td>
<td>- Problem filling empty units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Whether to design a land management plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>- High turnover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Conflict-of-interest in hiring a resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Improving conditions inside a residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Resident participation requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Corporate legal structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual interviewees were asked to evaluate the process used to deliberate on (optimally) one recent or easy to remember issue in their community. These were the issues described those interviews.

A story about any of these groups without narrating examples of their interactions for self-governance would miss the social glue that makes these communities places. In every case, stories about the decision-making process in their communities were stories about the life of the community itself. In most regards, the meetings and the issues addressed in those meetings were the location of the greatest communal activity.

Again, the specific quality of the issue was not the focus of interview questions. The focus was on The Consensus Processes and what they liked or did not like about them. Interviewees often described processes for issues which had been deliberated, but not finally settled. Even when the
deliberated issue was not resolved and was currently not decided, interviewees were frequently impressed with the process because it had resulted in enough community deliberation to reach a consensus on the nature of the problem between them. The processes gave them greater insights into the thinking on the issue at the time, and this was a type of consensus they were happy to have developed.

Their stories about membership issues are good examples of the applications of their evaluations. At the time of my visits, listening to multiple renditions of overlapping issues gave me an excited sense of insight into their lives. I wanted to record the richness of the meta-story that emerged without breaking confidences, but that would be historical fiction, not a dissertation. Instead, I took advantage of the clarifying questions about their issues and discovered that membership issues generally covered themes of social reproduction and boundary maintenance. These included all aspects of membership, from intake and eligibility, rights and responsibilities, evictions and buy out procedures. I had established no theoretical grounds, or methods for analyzing the issues themselves, but the study would be less meaningful without some narrative description of the lived experience of participants and I was asked to include something of my own experience. For those reasons, I describe my situation as an observer in each community within the context of examples of membership and related issues in each community and base these
descriptions on my own interpretations of formal interviews, informal conversation and both formal and informal observation of participants as they emerged.

1. PRIMO COMMUNITY

Primo Community had thirteen households, primarily professional couples over forty years old, four-hundred acres of primarily forested mountainous land, eleven houses (one a triplex), outbuildings, woodshop and offices, a roughly two-thousand square foot meeting hall, ponds and roads. At the time of my visits, they had twenty-six adults and six children. Primo Community was founded by a non exclusive group of Quakers and others, some of which had known and raised children together as neighbors buying, building and living on adjacent house lots for over twenty years in a nearby metropolitan area.

Friends of friends introduced Primo Community to me. Primo Community was the third discovered while preparing to visit Segundo Community. I sought advice from friends and neighbors on lodging. A reference I contacted for lodging was aware of a resident who became my first contact inside the community. This community had previously been nominated by a Communities Directory researcher from the Fellowship of Intentional Communities. This community was a strong candidate because it had a relatively large population, a large amount of common property, and
although secular, was founded by Quakers. I was provided with a referral to my first contact, an environmental educator whose academic studies included research on use of consensus-process methods in a grade-school class room. I initially spoke with her by email and phone. She arranged my first visit. When I attended a meeting, a formal contact person was assigned to me. I arranged my lodging and the extent of my visit with the formal contact. She was also the one I went to with general questions. This often occurred between conversations and interviews with others, at the end of a day, or during two occasions when she invited me for breakfast in her unit. She kept me informed of event schedules, and oriented me to the property.

I was told guests were encouraged to attend their two week-end general meetings each month. I was carefully forewarned I could be asked to leave during discussion of some issues. I was told a guestroom was available, and that the garden was a great place to spend time. I was also asked to bring food for breakfasts and lunches because shopping would have required a long drive. I later realized that I would have had more informal conversations with members if I had spent more time in the garden instead of their under-utilized common house.

On the first morning of each visit, I attended a bimonthly garden-work party, general meeting, and committee meetings. As it was explained to me, these were good opportunities to get a varied selection of experiences and to speak to the widest selection of residents in a short amount of time. The
The gardening-committee meeting is typically scheduled directly after, or during the lunch following the work party. At the first visit's work party, one of the numerous small tasks I moved between was holding and bolting large recycled barn boards on a new, roughly ten foot diameter, metal framed, outdoor meeting table. Other tasks included raking tall cut grass before a new garden bed was tilled, and spreading compost after. Conversations were fluid and friendly throughout. On the second visit, I sat at the same table mentioned above with roughly ten people for a social lunch following the work party.

The group of Quaker families which founded this community were not an exclusive group and were open to non-Quakers. It had been meeting for many years. Some of them had purposefully found homes close together in a nearby major metropolitan area to raise their children. Those children were grown by the time Primo land was found. The original group met in the fifties and raised children together in a suburban community before finding the land and creating this home in the seventies. This planning ahead is a good example of the "long-view" on decision-making with which Quakers are often characterized. The founders established a garden committee as a mandatory committee for all members. At the time, there were regularly scheduled, four-hour garden work meetings most mornings. When the founding women grew old, people stopped coming as often, the work parties kept happening and the large garden continued to be a central
meeting place and activity, but there was no organizational avenue for
garden-decision-making. This was the reason the new gardening committee
was formed. At the time of my visit, the committee was still ad-hoc.

Primo Community was quiet. Most homes were far enough apart to have
visual privacy and some enough for auditory privacy in this silent rural
area, depending on the volume and wind direction. In the evenings, the
only sound was crickets screaming, an unnerving uproar for this urban
dweller accustomed to gentler background hums of automobile traffic. A
car or truck entering the property could be heard echoing for minutes
before it came into view. It was also quiet during the day. Unlike the two
urban cases, this rural community functioned like a bedroom community for
its primarily professionally employed residents, contributing to the sense of
stillness and emptiness during the day and after dark. From the patios of
two hill-perched homes, we sat with a view of over forty-five miles of tree
covered rolling hills and not a home or farm in sight. The common house
was roughly one-hundred feet long and fifty feet wide. It has a large
kitchen, one covered porch and one screened porch, a guestroom, bathroom
and utility closets. A sign in the commons reads: maximum occupancy one-
hundred and twenty-six. I had learned of their plan to host a wedding with
considerably more than that number, which suggests they are not slaves to
the words over the intent of regulations. Ringed with windows, the building
certainly had extensive emergency exits.

IV.B. Issues Deliberated in Each Community - 141 -
In a misunderstanding of what I was looking for, one of my first contacts told me she did not believe her community had the ideal method of reaching consensus. In different words, she had told me she facilitated collaboration among adults by helping equalize power dynamics. I clarified that I was not necessarily looking for the ideal. Instead I was interested in how they, as experienced participants in the process, conceptualized the ideal.

Houses and land are owned together in a legally undivided entirety. It is owned by a partnership of all permanent adult residents excepting guests. Everyone “should” be an owning partner on the partnership agreement, but there is ambiguity regarding some domestic partners and spouses. All members are partners with some differences between them as described in their partnership agreement. Although they are organized according to cooperative-principles (see the appendix on coop principles) they have written those principles into their partnership because of legal restrictions on cooperatives in their state. Adult children of members are not members. There are also children who do not have community-mediated responsibilities outside their nuclear-family households. Rentals have been made to prospective owners. This community seeks Quaker-style unanimity in their consensus processes and members rarely do what they call standing aside, or letting a decision go forward when they believe it is not in the best interest of the group.
There was a reported difference between the current membership's ability
to express feelings together compared to the original generation. The
change was attributed to two major causes. One was a generational
difference in the general population. The men who were currently middle
aged were thought to be better at expressing feelings together in groups
when compared to the previous generation at the same age. The newer
generation was in its forties and fifties, the older in their eighties and
nineties. Another cause for the change was attributed to the extensive
membership process used to select and orient the newer generation. The
original membership group did not have that benefit. Instead, members
were compelled to commit themselves to their articulated vision and their
land as a group together, instead of being able to choose between
applicants. The vision or purpose of community was established by the
original group before the land purchase. These early founders solicited new
members of the original cohort from their Quaker and other social circles
when the land was purchased, but not all of these new members knew each
other.

In Quaker fashion, an ideal was consistently expressed that difficulties
between participants should be addressed by focusing on the process and
the raised concerns instead of the people. This was a commonly accepted
and supported norm, but it was not always followed. There was discussion
and gossip about personalities that were not liked. In practice, the norm of focusing on process rather than focusing on persons meant that concerns about the process, and concerns raised in the process were given legitimacy in formal deliberations, while issues of personality were not. (Legitimacy is a way to express Habermas' "intersubjective validity" in less technical language.) Their criteria for legitimate process on membership issues was reiteratively developed over time and strengthened in ways that formalized steps required to deliberate on such issues in the future. This focus on process can be likened to a procedural focus in governments legitimated by a rule of law. It closely resembles those one would find in parliamentary procedures. Application of formal rules and obligations regardless of identity is a central component of such a procedural approach.

Sophisticated formal and step-wise approaches to Primo Community's membership intake practices were developed because of the emphasis on process over identity. Formal understandings regarding their approved methods of soliciting, introducing, accepting and orienting new members were not complete at Primo, but there was enough new structure to the membership selection process to be considered an important element in the second generation's better ability to communicate with each other.

For example, a young and inexperienced participant was a grown child raised in the community and back visiting for the summer while her military husband was away. She hadn't been a participant in meetings as a
youngster except for one issue brought by the children to the adults while she was doing childcare for younger ones during meetings. Even without that experience, she was articulate in describing the rationale behind their practices. She spoke at length about the aspect of the membership process affecting her as a returning adult relative of her parents who were central members of the community. To paraphrase, “There have to be rules and processes to live-by for everyone to live together, people are so close here. If someone said “absolutely not,” then I couldn’t stay here (for the summer). It’s everyone’s home.”

In her interviews, this adult child of community participants put an emphasis on the importance of considering impacts on others, instead of identity issues. She considered her parents to be highly active and respected members of the community, but she repeatedly emphasized that being a child of her mother was not enough. Another adult child had the same identity role to claim, but the impact of their presence on the community might have been quite different. She made frequent references to the importance of legitimate reasons used in a good membership process and her complete willingness to have heard she was not invited, if that had been the case. She trusted that reasons used to reject her request for temporary residency would not be spurious. “Not just because they didn't like me.” This testimony to the value placed on good process instead of unfair personal advantage speaks to an anti-discrimination ethic. This
downplayed the influence of identity-politics in deliberations. However, there were legitimate identity criteria in policy deliberations, such as the higher likelihood that the community would be more tolerant of annoyances from members than nonmembers.

This young visiting family member described the example of the ideological differences between her military husband and some of the founding Quakers of the community. She had great respect and affection for the founders and deeply believed they judged the system and did not approve of military service. However, she also believed they were able to discern the difference between their concerns with the system, concern over her husband the man and his role in her life. In other examples, she explained that the community could not create an across-the-board policy on grandchildren visiting, or a dog policy. All cases were different. From her entire interview, it was clear that she was very proud of the community policy process and the approval they had given her request to stay there for the summer.

In another interview, I found one of my best examples of the importance of taking subjective concerns seriously in policy deliberations. By definition, subjective experience will always be affected by the community's policies. Sometimes participants are willing to "live with" the effects because the larger situation is good enough to make personal inconvenience, or occasionally a real discomfort, worthwhile. Sometimes
the subjectively experienced effects will be more than participants want to endure. Even when the trade-off is fair, the enormity of personal endurance required may seem unfair. Self reflection might lead one to decide the requirement for endurance was illegitimately founded if it is realized that others' needs are being put first on a systematic basis. It is in a moment like this that others' understanding of a participants' subjective predicament can make a large difference in their ability to bear inconvenience for the common good. The universality of a need for subjective recognition may be easy for anyone to accept, but those concerned with development of deliberative democratic policy procedures want more than acceptance of honest psychological needs. They also want to know how the procedure-design allows a community to deliberate on the trade-offs. There are many dangers to prevent. How can the process prevent individual nuances from tyrannizing the others? If no one can argue that one member has overwhelming emotional fear about a decision affecting their home, how can this member's subjective experience be incorporated into the deliberations while staying objective about the impact on the community as a whole? The possible shapes and outcomes of such deliberations are as diverse as the number of humans and situations affected. Regardless of the vast range of variations, there were a number of patterns expressed in the interviews that can illustrate actual and potential outcomes regularly
addressed by these consensus processes. There are also examples of the outcomes.

One example embodies the issue of N.I.M.B.Y. It is the story of a senior member of Community One who was very unhappy about the planned citing of the common house close to her and three other homes. There homes had had large views of the pond in one direction and the parking lot and front door of the common house in the other. When I heard her story, I realized her concerns were large, and to my mind valid. The common house, the one building everyone could claim equal rights to, was closest to her home. She was a single, quiet and serious woman was committed to her community in its actual practice and in its more abstract general purpose as an exemplar of good community living. In its design phases, the common house could have any number of potential uses. In this absolutely silent (except for the insects) remote rural community, the traffic of residents coming and going, the potential of late night parties and guest residents' activities in that space were all valid reasons for her personal worry.

My own interpretation of the issue was different from the evaluations given by community members of the situation, but the difference may give a broader perspective to the reader. The community was deliberating on the best location for a common house, and by many criteria, the best location was on a flat spot close to the first fork in the community's entrance drive. The flat area between the long house and the road that headed up to houses
on the hill gave the site accessibility to every car entering the community before passing any residence. The next best site on this hilly land was farther from the entrance and literature available to members promoted common house sites near the community entrance. The location was broadly supported, but the resident nearest the proposed site was very unhappy with that site. She habitually woke before dawn and went to bed early in the evening. Her quiet part of the land, as all parts of the community were quiet, would be potentially noisy with a new common house. She expressed worry and concern that this common house site would disturb her sleep and cause her to be identified as the "difficult member" in the future, especially when future decision were made about events to host in the commons. As it became more obvious that this site was favored over all others, her own worries and fears became more pronounced until she was eventually the one person who might block the decision.

She spoke of her worries in her interview in ways that expressed her deep commitment to the community and its process. She also expressed her sincerely deep fear that this site decision would be very bad for her and her home. In her interview about the original citing decision, her largest worry was that she was being perceived as a selfish community member. It was very difficult for her to balance her inner fears and feelings of being singularly hurt by the citing. She voiced her strong desire to be a cooperative member of the community. She both feared the effect on her
home and the effect on her community status as she expressed her needs before and after the citing.

That was the dilemma. Here was the outcome of the process: In the midst of the deliberation, between meetings, an influential member of the community initiated a conversation with her in the garden. The garden was an important part of this community. Historically it was the place and activity of most common purpose among members. Currently it was still the place where residents shared most social interaction outside meetings. This community member specifically arranged to work the garden with her at a time when they could discuss her concerns about the common-house citing. The result of that conversation was transformative in terms of her subjective understanding of her role in that community decision. Before the conversation, she was feeling singled out, the sole participant standing in the way of an emerging consensus. After the conversation, she believed her personal (subjective) concerns were honored and important to her fellow community members. This influential member asked about her concerns in detail. As a result, she had been reminded that she lived in a community of concerned and responsible people who cared about each other. She came to believe that the citing would not result in her losing control of her home. Her compatriots would continue to consider her needs when common house events were hosted and she would not be ostracized for expressing her needs. In the next meeting, she agreed on the site.
My own interpretation of that citing decision differs from the community's. I believe this community suffers from a lack of common space in the evenings. Residents were, in part, isolated in their homes and found it difficult to host guests because they positioned the common house next to a set of residences. The land is in a remote and mountainous place where sounds carry far. For example on a hot evening with windows open across the many acres of this community, I unwittingly overheard an offensive divorce-related telephone conversation a resident had in their own home hundreds of yards away. This told me that the way noise carried was a very large and real concern for life in that community. My own sense told me the community would have been wiser to take that one member's subjective concern more seriously as a legitimate issue for anyone in that position to bring up, and a potentially good reason to select another site for the common house, perhaps the site near the garden which is still their most used commons. Because the site for the common house was so close to private residences, all residents were relegated to a more private experience in their community. I witnessed difficult decisions made about potential social events that were eventually restricted because of the conflicting demands for early closing and the amount of travel time required for visitors to arrive after their own work days were done. Numerous members of the community expressed regret that such a large and expensive building could not be reasonably used by groups at night. This example illustrates
two points about deliberating on subjective validity claims: 1) Soliciting and recognizing subjective concerns increased trust in the process by a member potentially able to block a decision. 2) Subjective concerns expressed by a single member were important aspects of a site-decision that the community may have unwisely pushed through. They did this by invoking long-term trust and good will from an individual, but in the process may have undermined the entire group's long-term best interest.

2. SEGUNDO COMMUNITY

Demographically, Segundo Community had twenty-four households. They had three acres including flood-plane in a neighborhood of apartment complexes on a busy thoroughfare. All of the units were in five buildings, and an efficient meeting hall with less than five-hundred square feet. At the time of the interviews, over half of the current residents in Segundo Community were over Sixty-two years old. There were forty current residents in twenty-two households. The recent list of households having left the community showed forty-eight had left in eighteen years. One had been evicted, but was not designated by name on the list as a courtesy. Twelve, or one fourth of them had died. One left for a convalescent hospital, three moved to a local Quaker nursing facility, and two to other professional care facilities. Three married and moved locally. The rest were listed in terms of the town they moved to.
My first telephone contact in Segundo Community told me he had over eighteen years of experience governing by consensus and his wife was the president of the board of the whole. In those few sentences, he had told me this community had a strong potential for meeting all of the selection criteria. The community room was used for overnight guests, and I was warned it was also the meeting room and only short stays could be accommodated. "Monthly meeting" was held in the community room on the second Saturday of every month. I was told these were good weekends to visit. My first impressions on visiting Segundo Community give a good picture of this dense, two-story apartment complex and its residents. When I first turned onto the wide and busy strip of road, I passed by a number of times without seeing the place. I had predicted the site would be an apartment complex with a driveway opening onto the street. There were others of this kind along the road. This was a street with sidewalks and high speed traffic. The driveway, narrowly set between two houses, navigated roughly a couple hundred feet in a circle between crowded, covered parking spaces on either side and looping behind a turn-of-the last century bungalow. The community founders had spent many years negotiating the maximum number of units on this small piece of land without negatively disturbing their wetland or the existing houses. This included political lobbying to negotiate less than one parking space per unit given the large number of aged, disabled and other non-drivers. The
complex consisted of two-story, wooden apartment buildings painted gray with barn-red accent trim around the roof lines. At the end of the cramped driveway between cars parked so close they almost touched, I could see plants and trees between buildings and behind a fence. I saw a Latino family with children staring at me, as if my arrival were unusual, as if they were trying to recognize me. Every parking spot was marked with obvious signs of personal property hanging or leaning in their cramped, but tidy, open but covered parking. I parked temporarily in what was obviously a private space and was warned to move quickly in my first conversation. The drive immediately ended, and was gated off from the garden with a picket fence which was set between two buildings. The green preserve on a stream had large trees looming from the back of this dense but green apartment lot. Every flower pot, or deck sculpture looked cared for. Every rug was swept. My hosts' apartment, like every other, was clearly marked with large numerals over the doorways. All building numbers were also clear, without ambiguity. All of this struck me as the epitome of Quaker's reputation for putting high values on functional simplicity and clarity.

Two of the cofounders of Segundo Community were a Unitarian couple who first got involved in community-organizing activities in the seventies. They were inspired to form their first group when they read about intentional communities, particularly those claiming egalitarian principles. That initial group provided them with the opportunity to plan and execute
organizational meetings. While this group provided the couple with an introduction to some of the challenges of community organizing, it did not last long. Members drifted away after meetings, preventing the group from becoming organized in a meaningful way. During their struggle to maintain that initial group, the co-founding couple were advised to get involved with a group of environmentally conscious Quakers who later formed Primo Community. The couple did not move to Primo's new land because it was rural and the wife was not yet retired. The commute to work would have been formidable. They and others with similar concerns from Primo Community found Segundo land in a nearby city and formed Segundo where their interests in living simply could be followed in commuting distance from their jobs. They were helped in this by an occasionally attending member working on his real estate licensure. He found the one and one half acre urban property which at that time had five units; a duplex, a cottage and two houses against a floodplain with trees and greenery.

The site reminded me strongly of a common way Quakers would like to describe themselves, but not necessarily each other: reflective and unassuming. It was not an unusual apartment complex, but perhaps more clean, homey and cared for than most. It had the architectural pattern of a space-efficient, garden-apartment project without porches. A large degree of trust between the residents was suggested by the removable items
arranged by doorways and in common areas. These included personal aesthetic choices such as planters, or door plaques. There was an occasional tool left near a place where a task was frequently done, such as the recycling area or by the well documented and maintained bulletin boards, complete with use-instructions and up to date meeting minutes.

Segundo was owned by a cooperative which was governed by the board and the board included all adult residents, including residents of ten government supported units for disabled and other low income tenants, but the exception was one reportedly unofficial, long-term house guest and some said their were residents with subsidies that acted more like renters, not participating in meetings. I heard of language barriers, but interviewees had little to say about this in follow-up questions. They sought consensus, but believed consensus was not always achieved, because they allowed members to “stand aside.” This meant a participant might not agree a proposal was a good idea, but did not try to prevent it from being accepted and implemented, though they might not help. Houses and land were owned together in a legally undivided entirety. All members were share owners, board members and full time residents. Prospective members also periodically attended meetings and community work days, this was an important labor source for this community of active elders.

IV.B. Issues Deliberated in Each Community - 156 -
a. Example Issues Deliberated in Segundo Community

The membership process was strikingly formal in Segundo Community. Being urban, inexpensive, and in a desirable location for employment, the time on the resident waiting list was sometimes as long as three years. The reason prospective members also periodically attended meetings and work days was because this was a requirement for keeping their position on the waiting list for open apartment units. There was a housing shortage in the area, and little turnover in the community. Open units were awarded to the top person on the list without evaluation of their personal characteristics, on a "first come first serve" basis. This commitment to open membership requirements was actively debated, but still maintained. Family associates of members did not have formalized differences in their membership processes. This openness is also reflected in an international standard for cooperative associations called the Rochdale Principles. Two versions of these principles can be found in the appendices.

Some interviewees compared the formal membership process in Primo and Segundo Communities. In each interview, Primo Community was considered more selective, an issue that was on the minds of participants in all three communities. Even though Segundo Community had a parking-space requirement waiver and government financial assistance for aged and disabled residents, they did not pick members by age or any other personal characteristic, but took the next on the waiting list. As decision makers,
Community members had no approval to formally meet and listen to prospective members in order to select between them. At stake was the degree to which new residents would be interviewed and selected for their appropriateness in the community. Some were unhappy with randomly taking from the top of the waiting list. This controversy was referenced in terms of proposals to establish criteria for new members. The contention was caused by a related membership issue of too few residents doing most of the work and discussion. There was concern among some members that the community should select new participants for their abilities to help with these needs.

Segundo Community had a slow turnover rate compared to the other two. They recently had three deaths in two years and five people moving in over the same period, and they considered the disruption was largely a factor of original and influential members passing away. They considered a new member's first year a settling-in period, and a time requiring adjustment of other community members. For this and other reasons, the question of formally interviewing and selecting prospective members was a frequent topic of discussion that year. Another area of concern centered on the principle of nondiscrimination in housing and related laws. Some argued that the community should select by ability and they argued the community was legally allowed to establish criteria for a selection process that filled its own needs, especially their need for members that could do physical
labor. This issue was a large one mentioned in some form by most
interviewees. Some considered this an issue of potential age discrimination.
I was inclined to agree with this characterization because those who
expressed strong opposition to the proposed changes in the selection
process interpreted the proposals as "age-ist," or symptoms of "age-ism."
They expressed that opposition in a way that struck me at the time as an
expression of personal fear for their own perceived usefulness in the
community as elderly members.

A number of participants expressed sentiments like the following, "The
membership process would be better if it were fearlessly discussed longer.
When there was fear it would become divisive and we would start feeling
bad about each other. I don't think we fully explored the issue." "Did
people get all their concerns out?" "No, I think more than attitude or
concern, it's about lack of information."

The topic of age-ism and fears of age-ism were evaluated by members in
ways similar to the Habermasian concern for freedom of subjective
representation. Members who were concerned with age-ism, whether
accusing or denying it existed, all reported their concerns were not being
reflected in meetings, and my own interpretation of their comments
suggests to me that in addition to experiencing social evidence of those
constraints on their communications, they also felt internal constraints
(personal or psychological) against expressing those concerns.

IV.B. Issues Deliberated in Each Community - 159 -
Age-ism also appeared as a membership issue. Age-ism was part of one member’s response to a property rights issue which had many implications and impacts over the recent years. As in each of the other communities, each interviewee told me one long and elaborated story about one issue. Each story focused on a single issue which had impacts on the issues elaborated in each of the other’s interviews. This small property-rights issue might be considered one of the lightening points. By this I mean to say that, although this deliberation on a particular event was not a primary problem, it was a distinct and disturbing enough issue in the lives of enough people to be a central focus of discussion and to serve as both a spark and an illustrative example in the heated deliberations of related issues. This interviewee described a dispute over another member’s use of a part of the common outside his unit. When describing the way the original event felt, he compared it to someone coming into an old man’s home and taking his possessions before he died. More will be said about this event below. He and others frequently noted that attitudes about age and aging were not openly discussed in meetings, as if their commitment to not discriminate by age kept them from discussing the topic at all. the topic had historically been raised without success, and with subsequent avoidance. Many said they attempted to bring it up, but the discussion was thwarted. Although these were frequent comments in interviews, no one
spoke of it in enough length for me to know if the topic was ever put on the formal agenda of meetings and I did not look for it in minutes.

Deliberation on housing accommodations for well-defined disabilities appeared to be more open, but not necessarily less contentious. The reader will remember that Segundo community had a high majority over retirement age. Disability issues included the cost, desirability and eventual refusal of second-floor wheelchair access, a ramp to the commons and a room-wide, hearing-aid transmitter system in the common house for meetings. All of which were reported to require long processes that eventually resulted in agreements and increased understanding of member needs, although not without an occasional but isolated resentment. I was personally impressed by their level of architectural and behavioral support and accommodation of disabilities on private property. I thought the interviewees might not realize the size of their accomplishments. I suspected their fears of discussing age-ism and disability rights, even if wise under the circumstances, was preventing them from developing pride in their successes compared to the rest of their urban world.

This type of disagreement about the most appropriate way to characterize an issue, whether for example, it is age-ism, housing discrimination, disability rights, or the right of an organization to choose its own membership is a disagreement on issue definition. When an issue frame is chosen for an issue, one is also selecting the realm of appropriate norms to
apply to the situation. Schon’s and others’ recommendations for resolving intractable policy controversies all include some form of stepping back, getting more abstract, uncovering suppositions, reflecting on the frame, and other approaches that encourage participants to learn more about the multiple and often changeable interpretations possible for understanding the meaning of a problem. This frame reflection is most helpful when it is done collectively, before selecting approaches for solving it. Also, all of these recommendations draw attention to a necessity for selecting norms appropriate for evaluation of the situation. Without opportunity for frame reflection on these contentious issues, some contention must have been avoided and I that avoidance might have been an important part of their success. Still, as mentioned above, it also deprived the group of common articulation of their successes. Their incremental solutions were successful for accommodating many difficult memberships needs, but their common embarrassment about the original conditions of aging and disability often made it difficult for them to see (or describe?) the way they were successfully facing the human condition together. This particular approach may have been characteristic of their ethnicities and the decades they lived through, but the analysis of its impact stands.

Here is an example of such a non-membership issue which appears small on the surface, but had large impact on the community. Even without deliberation on disability or aging, the process allowed members with such
concerns to incrementally block, or at least slow down approval of a proposal until its advocates gave up for the time being. At issue was the proposal to purchase a set of chairs to replace the unmatched plastic lawn chairs in the common meeting room and dining hall. The proposal to purchase new chairs for the commons struck me as an issue that would have been less frustrating if it had been openly discussed as an accommodation of normal aging. Without a consensus on the style for the new chairs, the one-chair-style-for-everyone proposal was dropped and members could continue with the mismatched and lightweight lawn chairs. Criticism that such a simple chair-style decision should have been easier does not take into account the possibility that the style decision was, in their lingo, a “weighty” decision. It was not as simple as advocates for new chairs believed it should be.

As described in my introduction to the community, the ability of this group to self manage is profound. Remember they are mostly over seventy years old. They show up and sit in a circle on a regular basis and conduct detailed hearings on everything from cat policies to redrafting legal documents, celebrations, funerals and potential for eviction (though this rarely happened.) There was enough mobility restriction, physical pain and discomfort to make these highly attended meetings impossible with the wrong chairs.
Although not beautiful, the design of these common plastic chairs’ was elegant for being easily movable as well as having a curved and accommodating shape. These light weight chairs saved labor, a rare commodity in this community. It saved most participants from one more need to ask for help, some still needed help with these, but those in wheel chairs could still move them. This was one way in which member’s supported each other’s independence.

Interviewees said otherwise, but it was my sense that this inability to get consensus on replacement chairs was actually a successful outcome for a group that relied on meeting together on their common concerns. Another less consensus-based group may have been immeasurably affected by a purchaser with more personal discretion. Such a purchaser could have easily overrode member’s concerns and felt much less frustration. Such a purchaser would have caused real discomfort and may have unwittingly undermined the democratic participation base of the board. It is my sense that fears of topics such as aging and disability made it difficult for participants to understand the impact chair choices could make on the physical environment and their ability to make policy decisions. The proposal for matching chairs would have made member participation more difficult in that environment. as it was, Segundo’s commitment to give voice to all concerns forced them to refrain from acting on a false consensus. This kept their commons accessible.
An important part of membership socialization, maintenance or expulsion was a community’s ability to define its membership’s common purposes. This was done through the practice of members carrying out community activities together or individually. Their reasoning together on normative judgments also included deliberations in which members moved out. Stories about members leaving were always told with humbleness and regret. One of these stories was particularly illustrative of a community’s central concerns because it took place over a number of years and came to my attention through the overlapping interviews of members describing the development of related issues. This is the story mentioned above. It began with complaints about a member’s small misuse of common property and ended with an undermined executive position on the board. In the end, a family left unhappy and community members felt regret. It is a powerful example because it illustrates a central conflict over the principles of individual freedom and communal responsibility. Over the course of many interviews, small pieces came together into the story of an active woman member whose husband was ideologically opposed to what he considered community infringement on individual freedoms. Meanwhile she was an active and popularly appreciated participant in community business. Their son was repeatedly involved in community controversies over his private use of community property. In a tight little courtyard with so many uses
and at-home residents, the active youngster must have had many eyes on him.

This husband not only supported his sun's appropriations of space such as a tree house in the middle of the courtyard, but also publicly insisted he was the final arbiter of issues with his family. Participant's sentiments were torn because they had a general consensus on the equality of women with men. This caused them to judge the husband negatively and to raise sympathy for the wife. The community's appreciation of the wife's energetic work and involvement in community business also caused them to give allowances for the family's difficult dynamics. Interviewees chose to keep the details of those difficulties vague, but participants advocating for community sanctions against the child's appropriation of common spaces were not able to build a consensus. One interviewee felt torn because of a shared concern with the husband about a principle of individual rights which impinged on another current issue in the community, the right to own firearms. Another interviewee had complaints about the boy's derelict car parked in valuable common space, where even working parents were not allowed more than one parking space per household. The force of the car complaint was weakened by other's accusations that complaints against a derelict car were "classist." The boy's family was reportedly working class. This car which was considered trash from a professional family perspective, was arguably an important functional and ritual object from a
working class perspective. This difference in class perspective was illustrated by the father saying “a boy needs a car to work on.”

This controversy was difficult to address and without resolution until it came to bear on a new issue. The wife and mother was nominated for Vice President under an incumbent president whose health had already made meeting facilitation more difficult. The interviewee with strong concerns about individual rights mentioned above, came to a personal realization that the vice president might become president due to illness. This changed everything. The family difficulties had been accommodated to this point, partially through their alliance on the gun-ownership, property-rights issue. Now a woman could unexpectedly become president, while being controlled at home by a husband who did not acknowledge the community's legitimate control of the commons. The torn sentiments from the unresolved previous issues were thus tested and this supporter of individual rights came to believe that the danger to the community would be too great if the wife became president. This interviewee’s values about individual rights had caused her to speak for the family in the past, but now the wife's potential role as president, a representative of the common good, was incompatible with the husband's stance against the commons and over his wife. At this historical moment, the participant supporting individual rights realized her conscience would not allow her to consent to the vice-presidential nomination. This was because the nominee was a woman in a family with
the same strong sense of individual property rights. This family extended these into the rights of the husband over the home and over the woman whose place was in the home.

This is an example of something I have seen uncountable times in consensus-processes. The term used for it in conflict resolution and psychology circles is transformative moment. I have learned to describe it in Habermasian terms. Members taught each other (reflected on their life-worlds) concerning the impact of their normative judgments (interpretation of intersubjective understandings which might be based on tradition, abstractions, dogma or personal experience) on the policy decisions they have at stake (intersubjectively established legitimating of rules and regulations in the system world). As a result of deliberating on their common policies, they also learn about the impact of policy decisions on their own and other's personal and shared lives (life worlds). After being faced with the knowledge of the communicative impacts of their original assumptions, opinions and senses of right, they then adjust their norms to better reflect their understanding of what would be best. This reflects a movement in which the life-world and system world become more less incompatible with each other, and this is the emancipatory goal of normative rationality.

Years of experience with communicatively achieved norm formation required this member to reflect with others on what would be best in this
place and time, to compare their principles and impacts in their practices. This member knew this one small statement would make a real and important impact on the future of the community’s control of its commons. Inside her subjective experience, she experienced a great amount of upheaval and emotional pain. She did not want to speak out against this nomination but internal conflicts between her beliefs in individual independence and the rights of all such individuals to govern the place together forced her to resolve the internal conflict by causing an external conflict. She blocked the nomination. She couldn’t tolerate the subjective position this put her in, and raced out of the room. Participants’ were originally shocked, surprised and outraged. She left because there were parts of her concerns that could not be discussed with emotional safety, like aging, illness and the risk of impairment for the standing president. It was emotionally difficult to stand against the direction in which the group had been moving. This walk-out was highly criticized by participants. In subsequent conversations, the pain of her torn sentiments were understood by the group. Eventually, they agreed her concerns had merit, and the nomination was declined, though the way she expressed herself was considered a lack of faith in the group’s ability to understand.

The family of the vice-president nominee responded to the crises of confidence by notifying the community that they would be moving out. It was generally believed that this was something the husband had been
wanting. The community's final inability to support the wife's attempts to stay in the community was still a cause of regret for interviewees. It was my sense, that there was considerable regret and possibly shame. All were emotional when speaking of it, concerned for the wife's wellbeing.

In Habermasian terms, the husband systematically restricted her abilities to accurately reflect her own subjective viewpoints. This made her impossible to trust as a representative of the group. She could not represent herself with subjective validity, so could not represent the group's intersubjectivity. In its entirety, this issue embodied a painful combination of common concerns about the competing interests of individuals' rights, communal responsibilities and the inevitable impacts of private individual's households on each others' life courses.

3. TRINITY COMMUNITY

At the time of this study, Trinity Community included a population of twenty-seven households, almost all of which were single mothers. The average age was under thirty years. They had semi-contiguous single home lots and townhouses covering most of two city blocks. Trinity Community met all the criteria for selection with two qualifications. First, they had high membership turnover, resulting in a small portion with extensive experience in the community consensus-building process. Second, all participants were careful to point out their decision process was only a
hybrid version of The Consensus Process I was seeking. They were concerned that they were not using consensus at all. I decided to select their community as a case for the study because they had variations on all the criteria I was seeking. In the end, I refer to them in all analyses as the least experienced community. In general they aspired to much the same ideals as the two more experienced communities, but had achieved less. They were financially strained as the others were more secure or moderately wealthy. They were younger and the others older. They had many of the same philosophical backgrounds, but less Quaker influenced since their founding. They were primarily high school graduates or equivalents. They all owned the land together, but had less experience with that kind of shared responsibility. All these reasons made them an important group to add to the study. The experience factor was increased by the relatively large number of people involved, the size, value and complexity of resource decisions made in their deliberations, and the ownership structure which held all the land in its entirety. These made their consensus-building process centrally important to the community's organizational structure.

Trinity was owned as a cooperative with one voting member per household and was governed by a board of all members. Each household was asked to identify their active member when moving in. At that time I thought these less than full voting rights were a weakened form of...
consensus, but in retrospect, I have realized that this rule functioned to protect single women heads of households. With one voting right per household, the women could accept long term guests, or even family members without losing control of their homes. From the community's point of view, in a culture of short term relationships, this designation of one voting member per household slowed down the turnover somewhat in business meetings.

At the time of the study, they were converting to a non-profit low-income housing association with a resident-controlled and elected board, almost all of their units' monthly fees were paid with government support. They attempted a modified consensus, or consensus-minus-one on most policy issues with a two-third majority vote accepted after three attempts to reach consensus. This could all happen in the span of one meeting where as the more experienced communities required first, second and third readings for most decisions. (The number of readings is measured by the number of meetings in which a proposal has time on the agenda). Trinity almost always had members "blocking" proposals, so often that the word was more accurately referring to a negative vote than to a principled concern warranting a blocked proposal. The second meaning was used in more experienced communities.

Houses and land were owned together in a legally undivided entirety. Residents and frequent quests had a number of status roles. Just as each
Each household had one financially responsible member, usually the single mother, each household was also given one vote in meetings. There were a majority of children. Domestic partners and ex-partners helping with childcare were also normally present. Although my interviewees were not sure, including the hired administrative assistant, there may have been only one married couple. This administrative assistant was not a resident, but she was an employee and was a great asset to the group, with significant experience with cooperatives from experience working with a university student cooperative before starting this job.

a. Example Issues Deliberated in Trinity Community

Trinity Community did not have a waiting list and sometimes had no applicants. They had high turnover and frequently empty units. The most frequent complaints were the volatile emotions expressed in meetings and the lack of follow-through on community work which depended on overworked, young and single mothers who already had considerable financial and personal strains. The property landscaping was both messy and comfortable. At first glance it looked like something abandoned by absentee landlords, but on closer investigation, is also had a considerable amount of personal investment from residents. There was a large amount of privacy, play spaces, and there were paths between building’s doors which evidenced a great amount of house-to-house foot traffic. Colors of buildings, porches, sheds and pavers were bright and contrasting with a
Great amount of personal discretion evidenced in residents' choices of colors and materials.

In formal interviews, there were frequent complaints of emotional reactions making meetings difficult. This was not completely attributable to member characteristics. Not only did that community have the least experienced and most impoverished and overworked members and a simple majority of children, but the community was also in a neighborhood with frequent violence and although police patrolled regularly, this added to the sense of fear. Residents were afraid of the police because they believed neighborhood residents were patrolled against possible intrusion on the rest of the town, rather than for their own personal safety. Of the three communities, they had the most cause for being emotional.

The following two discourse analyses provide examples of this community's coordinated activity in the face of these highly charged pressures in their daily lives. The first issue deliberation is much less dramatic than the second, but illustrates a way in which their experience with a modified consensus process taught them they could mobilize their own resources in the face of intrusions.

The first deliberation was described in an interrupted attempt at a formal interview. This was the community in which formal interviews were the most difficult to arrange. Everyone was cautiously friendly with me. They would ask who I was, then include me in their audience when they spoke to...
others in the room, but they were too busy to be curious about the research project. Their hourly schedules were too unpredictable to set aside the hour and a half of a formal interview with a prepared sequence of questions. I did get formal interviews, but these were with older and childless members. Even those were interrupted interviews. As in each of the other two communities, my efforts to get a real sense of what was happening were spontaneous and followed the flow of activity around me, or went where I was told to go. This community had more happening than the other two, in part because there were many participants at home with children. More accurately, many participants were in and out between part time jobs and child-care shifts, getting children ready for school busses and sleeping at any hour they could. I never was able to articulate a daily rhythm of activity, and this was unusual for me. I believe the unpredictability was part of the charm and stress of this community.

Two participants recounted their decisions about how they should negotiate with a contractor who was claiming to use professional expertise they would not be able to understand. One of the interviewees explained that consensus decision-making had taught her and others to not trust authority. I had predicted unusual vocabulary in my research design. I asked extensive follow-up questions. This form of interviewing worked better here. From the context of their other comments, it seemed clear they were using the word authority idiosyncratically. They certainly respected
the authority of a legitimated decision of the community, but the term authority was used to describe an illegitimate authoritarian, someone who illegitimately claimed, or wielded power over others. In my words, the story was about illegitimate claims to authority, but within the context of this issue, they used the word authority to mean illegitimate power.

The person with illegitimate authority was a male construction worker they had hired to fix a floor. They had been asking him about damage he was causing. He acted authoritatively when women-owners asked him why he had put a large number of visible nails in the finish floor. He had done bad work and was attempting to avoid accountability to young women who knew almost nothing about carpentry. He attempted to avoid accountability by claiming to have expert professional knowledge they could not possibly understand. In their story to me, they did not use the term finish floor and did not seem to have a word for it, but their experience with community decision processes had taught them that arguments moved through steps of assertions, challenges and responses to challenges, followed by reformulated assertions which moved progressively closer to mutually acceptable normative assertions. They explained this to me with examples of the kinds of questions and responses they had learned to expect from each other. They explained how their consensus experience had given them the confidence to insist on answers to their questions.
They explained that although they didn’t know carpentry, they knew that the hundred year old wood floors in their homes did not have visible nails. He was claiming to be exempt from the obligation to address the problem with his workmanship. They moved ahead with negotiations with him and his supervisors that forced others to do some remediation of his bad craftsmanship. The women interviewees reported this event as evidence that experience using a consensus-building process had helped emancipate them from previous tendencies to allow sexist and professional domination in these kinds of interactions. They reported that before they had experience with consensus in the community they would have doubted their own abilities, or rights, to question a professional’s decisions, even though his actions were damaging their own property.

The second issue—deliberation was a larger and more dramatic issue. It is an example of the community participants protecting themselves, their property and their homes against considerable danger. This was an example of the high emotional pressures mentioned above and is an example of them using their decision making powers to effectively coordinate their actions against intrusion. When I was present in the community, I observed events unfold. I walked away from the community for meals at local café’s and food stores, so I was not always present. It was clear I should put minimal pressure on their cooking, food, or kitchen access. I observed deliberations on this issue in impromptu meetings called by participants as they walked...
They shared each other's knowledge of the histories of the people involved and news of others' recommended strategies.

A participant reported that a small group of squatters had taken over an apartment unit. The community representatives' citations of community rules and previous agreements with the original tenant did not sway the squatters. Young mothers hurriedly walked between apartments sharing the progress of related conversations through a kind of network tree of neighbor to neighbor relays as they checked in on their children's naps or left on their way to work. Some of it was through phone calls, but when I was present in the community, the resident member of one apartment spent most of the day sitting by the phone and greeting and hearing these relays as neighbors came and went. I noticed that the event appeared to be both stressful and just another day of crisis. I got the sense it was not the worst thing they had dealt with.

While these relay meetings were taking place through multi-locational discussions between strongly avowed feminists, I was keenly aware of the resemblance between what I was witnessing and something I had read in a bookstore years before. (I have been unable to find the citation.) In a feminist dictionary, the listing for "gossip" included strategic vilification of women's communications in European history. I thought about that dictionary as I witnessed these deliberations, because it had said that
women were a threat to patriarchal power when they were in direct communications between households. Gossip was the activity of women spreading news and strategizing opinions and information about community understandings and history. Gossip gave women considerable power across populations and a gossip was a woman who wielded that power. I knew from reading the word gossip in the context of early colonial New England witch-craft trials, that the term gossip seemed to mean adult-female or was used as a title designating Mrs. In the feminist dictionary, the goal of vilifying gossip applied to both gossip, the activity and gossip, the woman. Gossip frightened men and gossip could only be prevented by isolating women from other women. Community norms were established, especially through the church, that framed both kinds of gossip as inherently undesirable and immoral. This was an attempt to limit women’s power in community politics. I thought of all this and jotted it in my field notes as these women who suffered from poor education, lack of job skills, lack of interview-ready clothes, or even waitress wardrobes, lack of societal recognition, lack of personal telephones (plenty were shared) and overwhelming responsibilities for the health and wellbeing of children without access to formal health care, or male protection were demonstrating the power of gossip for their community security. This is what I thought about as I watched and listened to this communicative action of women with vocabularies which would not give them the ability
to make a concise police report, but which were extremely adequate for the job of sharing facts, feelings and mutually agreed strategies. All of this was done in messy and rich streams of human interaction between uncounted women in two city blocks in one day. Their power as a neighborhood force was palpable.

Participants made active efforts to understand the squatters’ histories and motivations so they could understand their own best next steps. The squatters reportedly trusted one of the community members who was unavailable. Participants decided a call to a common loyalty was the best strategy. In another time and place, with different participants, it would have been reasonable for participants to dehumanize the squatters. By this I mean, anyone with a history of having used a knife to force a neighbor out of her previous home might reasonably be treated as a non-person, someone to be disposed of, instead of someone to understand. These community participants did not have that power and freedom. In this case, they did not have access to legitimate communal use of force, such as more economically advantaged communities had with access to police forces and courts of law. As was described above, they told each other that police did not care about their safety. They discussed this at length. They recounted stories of police indifference and escalation of problems. They told each other numerous stories of recent events (in the past few months) in which women attempted to report muggings and sexual assaults. Their conclusion
was that women victims were more likely to get punished than male attackers. They were also in the same part of town as a local jail. Released prisoners left the jail with nowhere to go. Having the squatters taken away would not necessarily solve the problem.

Because these squatters' methods were to occupy and defend the living space through intimidation and threat, participants reasoned that the squatters were being internally consistent in their reasoning. Physical possession and force were acceptable to the squatters, because they did not believe in legal agreements about property ownership. Community participants also had strong beliefs about property ownership. They believed that the most respectable way to deal with property was for all affected in the community to make the decisions about what would be the best way to take care of it. This is how participants owned and managed their common property, the buildings and land. They talked about their vision of the world being a better place if communities took care of their members and members took care of their communities. I also heard them apply peer pressure of social norms against community residents who did not understand this. I heard stories about participants who spoke only for their own preferences and opinions in meetings without seeking to understand the facts, or their preferences' impacts on the rest of the community. Participants who did this were judged in terms of not being community minded. This gave such participants less persuasive force in
deliberations. Other participants did not trust them to be speaking for the community. On the other hand, participants who spoke for the community’s overall wellbeing were the ones participants approached for strategic advice and approval. This common concern with issues of private versus public control of property expressed by experienced members of this community gave the other participants a way to understand the squatters. This is why participants believed the squatters were being internally consistent with their beliefs: the squatters did not believe in private property rights, or systems of law that protected those rights, so they were able to rationalize taking control of property by force in order to take care of their personal needs. The community participants discussed this problem. They reminded each other that they controlled property differently and better. They controlled it by making agreements together that were binding, because the entire community backed up those agreements.

Since the squatters respected a member of the community who had much to say about these things, participants decided to approach the squatters with a call to a common loyalty. The argument was that the squatters should extend that loyalty to the community and respect the community’s ownership of the apartment unit. This kept open the possibility they could bring the squatters to an understanding. This does not mean the women were ignoring the risk of violence.
They believed they would be respected more than police, but participants included police in their strategy. A neighbor to the community had an ex-roommate who was a policeman who visited often. The policeman had spoken recently to one of the participants about a common interest in the subject of community. The participant called him and asked him to lend her a book about it the next day. If the community could not take care of the squatters themselves, she would explain the problem to him and ask for help at that time. She believed there was a chance he would be careful because they had built a personal rapport. When that contingency plan was established, they were able to reach a consensus. Calling the police was likely to cause violence, so they would approach and enter the squatters' unit with the largest possible group of women early the next morning. In the night, the squatters apparently learned about the plan and snuck away before dawn.

The sigh of relief could be felt across the neighborhood. They changed locks and removed trash immediately. A work party of a small group of women, in shifts, was arranged for the following day. I witnessed all of this without ever seeing a group of more than three women and myself at any one time.
IV.C. EVALUATIVE CRITERIA DERIVED FROM INTERVIEWS

Each of the tables below presents one set of criteria used by interviewees to evaluate deliberations on problem-issues in their communities. These sets of criteria are presented in the format modeled by David Dayton (1999) as reviewed in the literature chapter section on criteria for evaluating validity claims. The criteria are presented in the form of questions with both positive and negative evidence addressing that question, but while the Dayton-Forester tables were generated from Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action (T.C.A.), the tables below were generated from interviews. Each table is accompanied by a few analytic comments. The tables are followed a larger summary table summarizing comparisons between criteria used by interviewees and criteria used by Habermas.

To understand the tables, it is important to remember a chain of events in scholarship: John Forester made many recommendations for applying Habermas' T.C.A. in Public Planning and Policy. David Dayton developed tables for applying those recommendations to empirical evaluations of public hearings and their associated documentation. My analyses deduced the criteria used in experienced participants' evaluations of deliberations and those results are organized with Dayton's tabular format. This is important to keep in mind, because these are results of comparisons in each side of the comparison is abstract and difficult to present.
individually. The questions about comparable forms of validity deduced from interview texts are presented in the form of questions to show their similarities and differences to criteria presented by Dayton. Here is a review of the analytic method, the results of which are reported below. Each statement in the tables, whether it is categorized as affirmative evidence or negative evidence, represents statements made by interviewees in response to interview questions. These tables are helpful and worth the effort required to understand them, because they provide a graphic and methodical view of each type of validity required in deliberations from both a Habermasian and practitioners' perspective.

As an example, when I asked, “what did you like about the process for that issue?” some interviewees responded with something very similar to, “I liked that participants criticized ideas without hurting feelings.” I included those statements as affirmative evidence that the group was discerning between ideas and feelings. I am reporting that participants' abilities to make distinctions between ideas and feelings were an organizing theme that categorized many interviewees' evaluative comments. I present this result in a table showing the criterion for evaluation in the form of a question, and their statements evidencing answers to that question are included as either affirmative or negative evidence. That is one example of a results table and it is further categorized as a criterion most strongly comparable to Habermas' concept.

IV.C. Evaluative Criteria Derived from Interviews - 185 -
of objective validity being claimed by participants. I put the table in the section below on objective validity and discuss that criterion there with other criteria for objective validity. Each of the other criteria used by interviewees in evaluating consensus processes are presented similarly. For more discussion of this method, please see the methods chapter and methods of analyses.

The terms interviewees, participants, and practitioners are used below to denote the following: Interviewees are the speakers making evaluative comments about their consensus processes. Their voices are reflected in these tables. Participants are members of their communities involved in the deliberations, including themselves. Practitioners are all of the above and more generally people who are actively practicing the art of democratic deliberation for policy-making and other decisions.

1. INTERVIEWEES EVALUATE OBJECTIVE VALIDITY

The Dayton-Forester tables present criteria for objective validity in the form of questions an evaluator should ask about the deliberative process. The three questions we are told to ask about objectivity are: a.) Is this true? b.) Is there complete, undistorted evidence presented to support claims? c.) Do comments by reviewers and opponents present any credible evidence of manipulated or hidden relevant facts?
Participants' interviews included comparable evidence suggesting they were asking themselves the following questions when they were asked to evaluate consensus processes. These four questions are in order of their frequency in interviews, from most to least: a.) Was the group discerning between ideas and feelings? b.) Was the process instrumentally effective? c.) Was the group showing *objective* reasoning? and d.) Were the facts accurate? Although both sets of questions, from literature and from practitioners, address evidence of *objective* validity, Forester and Dayton focused objectivity questions on the facts in deliberations, while participants put a greater focus on the relevance of those facts. That is, even their evaluative criteria with the greatest similarity to Habermas' criteria for *objective* validity were heavily weighted with *intersubjective* concerns.

**Discussion of Objective Validity**

When I reviewed ways in which participants looked for *objective* validity, I noticed that they actually did use the word "objectivity," but it came up primarily in their occasional complaints about emotionalism. They almost never criticized accuracy, but occasionally wished people were less emotional so more information could be gathered and presented. The process was evaluated positively when participants were able to argue ideas without hurting others' feeling, or having their feelings hurt when they should have been accepting responses as differences in ideas. This
occurred around issues of ecology, age-ism and sexism. I'll speak of this more in its relation to subjective validity. From the larger contexts of their evaluations, I gathered that accuracy was mentioned so little, not because it was not important, but because inaccuracy was not a large problem. The emphasis on “giving everyone a voice” apparently gave ample opportunity for facts to be presented, challenged and modified for accuracy. I believe this result is unique to this kind of community in which there is considerable face-to-face interaction. This would be interesting to compare in contexts with less face-to-face interaction. David Dayton showed that the mass public response to environmental review processes for federal transportation projects were also more positive when facts were publicly checked and modified as a result of challenges from new perspectives.

It was not mentioned often in terms of accuracy, but objectivity was a concern and they had criteria for it in their evaluations. The most frequent evaluation of accuracy, or truth was in the least experienced community and concerned lack of knowledge and preparation. Objective validity was judged more often in evaluations of participants' abilities to reason with each other. They talked about people putting aside their feelings long enough to talk about the ideas. They also talked very positively about their effective abilities to use agendas in methodically applying previously presented evidence and previously established purposes to the problem at hand. Dayton uses the term “objective reasoning” and to some extent,
interviewees also used this criterion and this phrase. As I mentioned briefly in the chapter on literature and theory, Kemp wrote that we should evaluate the "constantives," the elements used by participants to construct objective arguments. One could also say that interviewees evaluated others' abilities to apply evidence in argument. I got the impression that interviewees were not able to easily describe this kind of criteria, though they judged it often. They sometimes said directly that participants were logical or not, but more often they described the specific circumstances in which a line of reasoning did not make sense. This lack of vocabulary for their evaluations of objective validity may have been one of the reasons they so often mentioned that participants discerned between feelings and ideas. It was probably easier for them to describe the negative than the affirmative evidence of objective validity. I tried to capture the variations in these types of comments in the table entitled objective reasoning.

While Forester and Dayton ask us to evaluate evidence of manipulated or hidden relevant facts as criteria for objectivity, these communities' particular circumstances did not bring this criterion for objectivity to the forefront. I believe attention on manipulation and hiding of facts, when it does occur should be interpreted as a concern for subjective validity. The difference being that a fact can be presented honestly and sincerely, in a subjectively valid way, while being objectively false, or invalid. Just
because someone is honest in their representations, doesn't mean they have the facts right.

This is an important distinction because deliberative mechanisms, ways of talking, for challenging and correcting these two types of invalidity are quite different. One challenges the participants' good will, the other challenges the data. The dangers risked in confusing the two are high. In some settings, political support provided by an entire population is alienated when their collective character is insulted. This insight could be applied strategically when there is an opportunity to more validly differentiate subjective validity, or the person's good representation of their own experience and character as opposed to their access to accurate information, information with objective validity. Asians may refer to this as causing someone to "lose face," for example, when an exposed factual error might cause someone to appear as though they have a character flaw.

My participants were referring to a more positive aspect of this when they praised processes for "giving everyone a voice," even while challenging inaccuracies in their understanding. They could walk away knowing they were respected, even if they had some of the facts wrong. This left the entire group the safety to deliberate facts with less danger of insulting members who presented those facts. So while Dayton presents Forester's concerns with manipulation and hiding facts to be a concern for objective validity, I argue it is instead an issue of representational or

IV.C. Evaluative Criteria Derived from Interviews - 190 -
subjective validity. To summarize, these experienced evaluators of practical discourse raised objective concerns most often in the form of concerns for methodical application of evidence to arguments, including the ability to discern the difference between the accuracy of information and their own feelings in response to that information. I will argue later that this confusion is often caused by inability to articulate each other's concerns about intersubjective validity. There is more about this in the discussion of their use of intersubjectively valid process-rules; rules that helped them talk together about the issues at hand in more objective ways.

The least frequent way in which participants evaluated objective validity was in their judgments of instrumental effectiveness. They would positively evaluate a process for an issue if "it worked." That is, they judged the process by its ability to produce results they could support. The most positive evaluations of instrumental effectiveness were evaluations of difficult, almost intractable issue deliberations which had creative and unexpectedly positive outcomes. The most negative evaluations of instrumental effectiveness were sometimes addressed to seemingly trivial problems that were never solved. I discuss one of these elsewhere, the issue of new chairs in the Segundo common house in the chapter with example issues. In interviews, participants were unhappy that the outcome of this issue deliberation was not instrumentally effective, but it is my sense that they were underestimating the issue's importance, so they did
not recognize the instrumental effectiveness of its outcome. (The existing mismatched chairs accommodated special needs of an aged and frequently disabled membership. When the group underestimated the importance of the issue, they were less able to rigorously address the surprising strength of resident complaints about the new-chair proposals.) I coded those evaluative criteria in terms of evaluating (negatively) the instrumental effectiveness of the outcome.

**Table: Evaluating Evidence of Participants Distinguishing Ideas from Feelings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Were participants discerning between ideas and feelings?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants criticized ideas without hurting feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants took feelings into account.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants trusted and continued to follow formal process steps, even when feelings were difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants focused on common issues when they might have been tempted to unfairly reference each other's personal characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants at times put less importance on their own feelings if the group situation warranted it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants are making progress together on problem issues instead of merely playing logic games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants articulated the relationships between their feelings and professional opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants appreciated irony in an issue without losing focus on the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants intentionally hurt each other's feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants' feelings were hurt, causing negative consequences in subsequent meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants' feelings were hurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants appeared emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants reported feeling wounded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These were instances of interviewees evaluating the process by judging evidence of participants distinguishing between ideas and feelings.*

IV.C. Evaluative Criteria Derived from Interviews - 192 -
Table 12, Evaluating Evidence of Instrumental Effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Was the process instrumentally effective?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The process resulted in decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The process “worked,” resulting in a resolution to the issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ There was a consistency between the outcome of a deliberation and its original mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The process was long and did not make progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These were instances in which interviewees evaluated the process by judging evidence of it being instrumentally effective.

Table 13, Evaluating Evidence of Objective Reasoning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Was the group showing objective reasoning?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants combined their ideas to solve problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants gave consideration to each aspect of an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The conversation was focused on the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ There was a paper trail and other physical evidence of input made by participants over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The deliberation remained focused on the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants provided reasons for points of view that were appropriate to the question at hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants listened to each other’s points of view before making conclusions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The policy outcome addressed its purpose well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Proposals were considered separately from the persons presenting them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Final decisions were well thought out by the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants attempted to excuse behavior or statements with inapplicable reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants did not argue logically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants raised the same arguments repeatedly after they were addressed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These were instances in which interviewees evaluated the process by judging evidence that participants' arguments used good reasoning. These have strong similarities to evaluation questions recommended by Forester and Dayton for objective validity.
Table 14, Evaluating Evidence of Facts Being Accurate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Were the facts accurate?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants allowed more time to be spent on an already lengthy issue to answer difficult fact-checking questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants should have estimated the cost better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There was a lack of information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Objections should have been researched so positive suggestions could be made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Proposals should have had more specific details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants' statements were incorrect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These were instances in which interveiwees evaluated the process by judging evidence that presented facts were accurate.

2. INTERVIEWEES EVALUATE SUBJECTIVE VALIDITY

The Dayton-Forester tables present criteria for subjective validity in the form of questions an evaluator should ask about the deliberative process. The questions we are told to ask are: a.) Can we trust? b.) Are project opponents' concerns represented fairly? c.) Is the project recording significant changes in response to concerns and suggestions?

Participants' interviews did include comparable evidence suggesting they were asking themselves the following questions when they were asked to evaluate consensus processes: a.) Was the process trustworthy? b.) Did the process make a positive emotional impact on participants? c.) Was the process benefited by participants' affect? Neither Forester, nor Dayton suggest criteria related to affect or attitude for subjective validity, but participants used them often. Attitude and other aspects of affect were mentioned in terms of an emotionally difficult process being worth the discomfort it caused, or in terms of wishing others were more “objective.”
Still, interviewees regularly complained or praised the way the processes made participants feel, and this is not discussed in Forester's or Dayton's literature.

Discussion of Subjective Validity

Interviewees gave evidence of addressing these questions in their evaluations: Did the process make a positive emotional impact on participants? And, Was the process benefited by participants' attitudes? This can be interpreted to mean they evaluated both the effects on feelings and the effect of feelings. This was significant for their abilities to engage each other in lengthy discourses. Although an emotionally taxing and exhausting set of discussions on an issue might be therapeutic in the end, there were also real costs in these exchanges. If the process was too difficult, it hurt participants' abilities to "stay engaged." On the other hand, if they avoided all discomfort, those who were the most sensitive effectively limited others' abilities to explore the underlying causes of conflicts.

In a manner associated with the modern conception of individual freedom, participants idealized the potential of The Consensus Process to guarantee the independent thinking of fiercely independent individuals. They required each individual to speak for themselves and only for themselves, except in their efforts to advocate for the opinion, or "piece of the truth" of those who were otherwise unheard, or not present.
Participants in the two more experienced communities more often criticized the process for ignoring individual experience than for intruding on it. Criticism in the least experienced communities were more often focused on individuals' difficulties in putting aside their personal feelings long enough to deliberate on community concerns. With less experience, they had less opportunity to be heard and to trust others would take their concerns seriously. In all three communities, some reported that participants' emotional responses were occasionally judged negatively, yet not openly discussed. I often heard those accused report that they believed un-discussed reactions to their emotionality gave them less credibility in the group. They evaluated this type of problem in terms of a frequently referenced ideal in which all participants' perspectives would be given voice.

Participants gave considerable praise to processes which took into account the sensitivity of the topic and made provisions for the emotional safety and comfort of members who took risks to expose difficulties. This was an important part of allowing for exploration of subjective validity. Of course there were also extra congratulations given to issue deliberations that left people feeling good. Likewise participants quite often said that commitment to good process required emotional courage as well care for the feelings of others. Interviewees did take participants' internal thoughts and feelings into account. This was mentioned most often in terms of

IV.C. Evaluative Criteria Derived from Interviews - 196 -
individuals' personal characteristics and the opportunities in the process for allowing those with very different feelings and points of view to "feel heard." The ability to evaluate subjective validity may strike to the core of differences between positivist social science policy-process evaluations and the evaluations recommended by Habermasian analysts. There was fairly frequent blaming of participants' negative emotions for preventing the full information about an issue being presented. Successful efforts to overcome this kind of problem usually included some compassionate acceptance of the person's feelings while continuing to encourage openness to hearing others.

Participants in the least experienced community frequently mentioned overly subjective positions of the participants getting in the way of attention to the needs of the larger community (Intersubjective concerns). Participants in the two most experienced communities referenced subjective claims the private business of each individual and did not consider it the prerogative of the group to openly challenge or discuss individual's questionable subjective experience.

One of the questions for evaluating subjective validity recommended by Forester and Dayton was, "Can we trust?" By this, they mean that the inherently private understanding of subjective experience is best judged in terms of our grounds for trusting the reliability of its representation. Trustworthiness of the group process was also one of the representational
or subjective validity claims individuals made to each other in their deliberations. Participants frequently said that something they liked about the process was being able to trust the group. Participants were known to put aside their concerns about a difficult issue, because experience had proven to them that their group and their group's processes were trustworthy. They had ample evidence their group used a good process for achieving its end decisions and those end decisions usually resulted in better outcomes than those they themselves imagined or proposed. Although there was occasional mention of participants trusting each other, conceptually, this criterion of trustworthiness was synonymous with "trusting the process," because the interview questions addressed process, not individual participants.

Both individual participants and the process itself were evaluated in terms of their dependable representation of the state of affairs inside the community, or inside the person. Although participants freely admitted some of their fellow members were too wrapped up in their own subjective experience to understand the impacts they were making on others, there was an extraordinary amount of agreement that the process was trustworthy. Interview after interview reiterated appreciation and awe for the ability of their communities to listen to each other in difficult circumstances and together move through the process in ways that generated new beneficial understandings no one would have predicted.
before hand. They said they could trust that this would happen if the process were supported by all concerned. In Habermasian terms, I would say they were evaluating the subjective validity of the entire process. They were saying they could trust it to represent and reflect their real collective interests. When it did not, they were saying the process had not allowed participants to make, challenge and re-present claims to subjective validity. In terms of trusting the veracity of information between members, although there were a number of cases in which I was made privy to information the full community did not have there was only one issue in which I was given evidence of misrepresentation between members. This unusual case involved a secret between spouses in which one arranged for a proposal to be presented, which the other would reluctantly accept. This was the only case of blatant deception I heard discussed. It was also concerning an issue anyone outside of the couple might have found relatively unimportant, while the benefit to the couple was great.

There were a great many uses of feelings as criteria for representational validity. I divided these into two questions, one about the process’s emotional impact on participants and the other about the impacts of participants’ affect on the process. These evaluative criteria both referenced the emotional states of participants. Evaluations of the role of feelings in deliberations reflect Habermasian expressive, representational, or subjective validity claims. Emotions, values, stakes, and feelings about

IV.C. Evaluative Criteria Derived from Interviews - 199 -
issues were discussed by participants in both positive and negative terms. There were also frequent references to better or worse ways in which emotions were treated in proceedings. Almost all of these relate to the group’s ability to recognize, hear or see others’ perspectives together. They gave examples of how “giving others voice” (listening) led to creative and powerful solutions to difficult problems. In all communities, when participants’ potentially troublesome emotional responses were given credence and time for expression, they expressed feelings of validation and abilities to “let go” or let others’ reasoning prevail. They let go because they felt their concerns were included in the decision and believed the process produced better outcomes for having given attention to their own and others’ dissenting, or divergent viewpoints. All interviewees reported this kind of opportunity for inclusive voice as something they liked about the process.

So although inclusivity was an important intersubjective claim to validity, the norm served the community by assuring them subjective representation would be available to all. Inclusivity is categorized under intersubjective validity and more about the categorization decision is explained there.
Table 15, Evaluating Evidence of a Trustworthy Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Was the process trustworthy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The community is predictable in behaving like an organism, taking care of its needs and all its parts in ways that individual participants could not do alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The group may be wiser than the individuals in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ As individuals, participants are often better off letting go of plans and letting the process unfold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants are able to get their own needs met while addressing group needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The common values of the group were invoked as reasons for blocking a decision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Negative Evidence**            |
|                                 |
| - Participants’ proposals and responses did not acknowledge existing unity of purpose across the community. |
| - Participants attempted to devalue others’ real concerns. |
| - Participants’ questions did not seem important for the issue being addressed. |

These were instances in which interviewees evaluated the process by judging evidence that it was worthy of trust. Dayton Categorizes this as subjective validity, but it is conceptually closer to intersubjective validity, that is, reflecting socially constructed values, legitimacy and appropriateness.

Table 16, Evaluating Evidence of Emotional Impact on Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Did the process make a positive emotional impact on participants?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants felt as if they belonged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Humor lightened the feelings shared in the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants felt good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The atmosphere of the group was loving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants had a sense of empowerment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants’ negative feelings did not last long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants had a sense of responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants were inspired and enthused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The general tone of discussion showed respect to participants by acknowledging and allowing for disagreement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Negative Evidence**            |
|                                 |
| - Participants were not forgiven for past problems.               |
| - Participants were not comfortable.                              |
| - The meeting environment was physically or aesthetically uncomfortable. |

These were instances in which interviewees evaluated the process by judging evidence that the process had emotional or aesthetic impact on participants.
Table 17, Evaluating Evidence of Impact on Participants’ Affect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Was the process benefited by participants’ affect?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants calmly said what they needed to say without undue repetition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants showed professionalism and concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants did not feel the process was hopeless.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants were patient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants were frustrated enough by the issue to seek a solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants countered others’ negativism when it was raised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants were able to be vulnerable with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants could let their child-like selves show and have fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A participant had a disruptive nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A participant was “flaky.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A participant was made to feel inflexible and selfish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants lost interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A participant had a petty attitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A participant had a tough attitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A participant showed too much male ego (sexist attitude).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A participant felt s/he was being annoying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A participant felt s/he was being impatient.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These were instances in which interwiewees evaluated the process by judging evidence of impacts caused by participants’ personalities, attitudes, or other personal attributes.*

3. INTERVIEWEES EVALUATE INTERSUBJECTIVE VALIDITY

The Dayton-Forester tables present criteria for *intersubjective* validity in the form of questions an evaluator should ask about the deliberative process. The questions we are told to ask are: a.) Is this justified? b.) Does the affected public generally share the norms for action and evaluation? c.) Recording significant changes to key considerations in evaluating the project in response to issues raised?

Participants' interviews did include comparable evidence suggesting they were asking themselves the following questions when they were asked to
evaluate consensus processes: a.) Was the process inclusive? b.) Did the process steps, or rules serve their intended function, or should they have been different? c.) Were the process steps, or rules applied appropriately? d.) Did the process achieve a real consensus? e.) Was power used appropriately in the process? f.) Did the process take an appropriate amount of time? The communities were working in the direction advocated by Habermas. Participants held an ideal similar to Habermas’ preferring communicatively achieved norms to norms established by might, or unexamined tradition. Participants’ most frequent criteria for evaluating their deliberative processes were clearly criteria for Habermas’ intersubjective validity and most of these referenced some aspect of inclusivity. That is, they evaluated their consensus processes in terms of inclusion of all participants, especially those with critical perspectives.
Inclusivity was undoubtedly the largest and most frequent category of criteria for validity used by participants across the three communities. Habermas requires this in the Inclusivity Principle, a part of the Discourse Ethics described in the chapter on literature, theory and practice. Every interviewee referenced aspects of inclusivity as criteria for judgment. Inclusivity was the word I used to code comments about the ability of the process to allow members' statements to be heard, understood, and considered in the development of common understandings, or new policy decisions. In my decision between using the terms participation or inclusivity, I decided inclusivity was the larger term. Inclusivity refers more specifically to qualities of the process that encouraged, or allowed full participation and inclusion of points that might be raised by others affected by a decision, whether or not they were present. This inclusive aspect of the process was highly valued by all interviewees for difficult as well as simple issues. They frequently said everyone should be able to express his or her needs, concerns, or preferences when evaluating both positively and negatively regarded processes. For example, if a process went particularly poorly in terms of contentiousness, high emotions, lack of follow through, or if it took too long, it was still cited as a good process if, in the end, it could be said that everyone's concerns were addressed in the process of reaching a consensus.
Interviewees frequently mentioned their own surprise at eventually discovering a difficult process had been a good one. Their confidence that the process had been inclusive was the criterion for saying they eventually liked it. Often the element of surprise came with the group's realization that something important had been overlooked or undervalued until extra effort was made to make sure everyone's concerns were heard. The new understanding of participants' concerns resulted in a more inclusive solution.

Inclusivity was also indicated when interviewees stated the process was conducted in such a way that participants, even brand new ones, were able to ask for answers to difficult questions. This also was indicated by statements to the effect that their meeting allowed any participant to challenge another's statements. It also included participants including the community in their own decisions, showing they were including other residents in decisions that might affect them.

There is a group of questions that Dayton and Forester use to evaluate subjective validity. I believe are better conceptualized as evidence for intersubjective claims of inclusivity. Dayton's questions are, "Is it representing the concerns of project opponents fairly?" "Is it addressing opponents concerns adequately?" and "Is it recording significant changes to key considerations in evaluating the project in response to issues raised?" Although it makes sense to think of subjective validity as a form of valid
representation, when a group decides how to represent each other's concerns, the focus has shifted from \textit{subjective} to \textit{intersubjective} validity. The distinction between \textit{subjectivity} and \textit{intersubjectivity} is important because it exposes our general lack of attention to the most ignored and most important aspect of normative discourses, their role in establishing \textit{intersubjective} validity. It is arguably the widely shared confusion between \textit{subjectivity} and \textit{intersubjectivity} that makes the normative rationality of discourse so difficult to grasp. Following the intentions expressed by interviewees, I categorized criteria for representation of all perspectives in the category of inclusivity and categorized concerns for inclusivity as criteria for \textit{intersubjectivity}.

It is likely that the next most common criteria for evaluation of processes' \textit{Intersubjective} validity, or legitimacy were analogous to the Dayton questions: "Is this justified?" and "Does the affected public generally share the norms for action and evaluation?" In Habermasian terms, when participants evaluated their process in terms of the appropriateness of its logic and methods to the goals of the group, they were evaluating the legitimacy of the decision-making procedure. Within participants' statements about legitimacy, I found communities and participants characterized it differently. Some said the rules were followed, so the process was good. Others described rules which were illegitimate for some reason. If a process with questionable legitimacy was used to make a
policy decision, then the decision resulting from the process was also suspect. The Dayton and Forester questions are broadly accurate descriptions of interviewee criteria, but more specific questions they seemed to address were, “Did the group apply the process-rules or steps appropriately?” or “Did the process steps, or rules achieve what they were expected to achieve?” Here, interviewees evaluated their processes in terms of participants following proscribed procedures. They also evaluated the proscribed procedures to establish whether they were good norms to apply to such a problem issue. Some participants criticized the process rules believing changed rules would improve their community’s ability to deliberate on an issue. This is a good example of Habermas' concept, “communicatively achieved norms.” These communities evidenced strong tendencies to openly argue the legitimacy of policies and this means they were able to apply communicatively achieved norms rather than invariably accepting traditionally received norms. This might help outsiders understand why such supposedly freedom-minded individuals so often got involved in rule-making activity. They expressed the demand for freedom by insisting on their rights to help make the rules, and by insisting any rules they made and followed should protect that right for others. In these most successful and experienced communities, the result is an intense process orientation and high frequency of member involvement in policy deliberation.

IV.C. Evaluative Criteria Derived from Interviews - 207 -
Evaluations of time usage were the least frequent set of criteria for evaluation of intersubjective validity. These were some of the most difficult to compare to the Dayton and Forester criteria. After considering other possibilities, I finally decided Forester's emphasis on attention-framing was the closest to what participants said and the closest to my understanding of Habermas. They were addressing the question, “Did the process use time well?” and meant it as a question of intersubjectively shared value. In other words, they were evaluating the process's allocation of a valuable shared resource, the group's attention. This epitomizes deliberation on a norm. Time is a real but also abstract resource, which is almost impossible to conceptualize separately from its value. Picture a circle of people as a configuration of inwardly directed arrows. The arrows are their attention. It moves from their own subjective positions to their shared and centrally placed or intersubjectively held norm. This illustrates how the thing they are all “paying” attention to is the thing they all find valuable enough to give valuable attention, or use of time. When interviewees said the process used time well, especially when they admitted it took an extraordinary amount of time, they were saying the outcome was better than it would have been without the process. They infrequently said the process was not worth the time. This only occurred when they were unable to reach a common understanding. Common understanding, real consensus was definitely highly valued. For these reasons, I categorized criteria related to

IV.C. Evaluative Criteria Derived from Interviews - 208 -
time and the use of other resources as measures of intersubjective validity. When time was used well, it meant the process was worth it and the intersubjective norms established with that process were valid. I suppose it could be argued a participant could evaluate a deliberative process in terms of their own subjective experience of the time-use, but I didn't notice this in interviews. That is, interviewees did not say the process wasn't worth the time they individually spent, but this would have also been evidence, albeit negative evidence, of using this criterion for evaluation. This result would likely be different in communities with less commitment to good process.
### Table 18, Evaluating Evidence of Inclusivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Was the process inclusive?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
<td>+ Interviewee was able to ask difficult questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Anyone could challenge other’s assertions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Participants came to the group as a whole and asked permission, including others in their decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Interviewees reported being “heard.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Participants as a whole persevered with the deliberation and did not walk away. They were willing to talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ The interviewees found the courage in themselves to disagree and otherwise expressed their opinion more than they would have elsewhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Discussion was encouraged by the facilitator and by other participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Participants encouraged each other to disagree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ The others heard even the most ignorant participants, even when some didn’t value the content of what they said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Participants knew the status of the proceedings and had access for input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Participants expressed desires to discuss the issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ All participants were involved in the decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Interviewee felt forced to listen and appreciated it in the end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Participants made obvious efforts to see the other side’s point of view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Evidence</strong></td>
<td>- Interviewee was ignored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Interviewee was treated as if they were invisible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Committee’s events were not attended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Many participants were not involved in the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- There was not a sense of community between participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Some participants felt singled out.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These were instances in which interviewees evaluated the process by judging evidence of inclusiveness.

### Table 19, Evaluating Evidence of Beneficial Rules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Did the process steps, or rules serve their intended function, or should they have been different?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
<td>+ The formal process is a good one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Affirmative evidence of this criterion being met was impractical to differentiate from interviews, because all positive interview comments were about “the process” or implied its steps and rules.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Evidence</strong></td>
<td>- The decision process was unclear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The process put too much pressure on participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Participants were micro-managing each other’s activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- A process rule should have been changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The process does not result in a true consensus, but instead in unanimity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These were instances in which interviewees evaluated the process by judging evidence that the rules benefitted the deliberations.

IV.C. Evaluative Criteria Derived from Interviews - 210 -
Table 20, Evaluating Evidence of Following Rules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Were the process steps, or rules applied appropriately?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants used committees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ There was a formal time created for discussing the issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The facilitator did their job well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The process unfolded “organically.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ It helped that a difficult discussion item was put at the top of the agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The decision was consistent between the general meeting and the committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The decision went through the formal steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There was inappropriate use of “lobbying” for an idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The issue was never formally assigned to a committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Some had undue influence through choosing the timing of the discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There was inappropriate use of “blocking.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There were problems with too much informality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The full requirements of good consensus process were not met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants practices did not live up to their ideals of good process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These were instances in which interveiwees evaluated the process by judging evidence of rules being applied appropriately.

Table 21, Evaluating Evidence of Power Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Was power used appropriately in the process?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants could stop the progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants’ authority was given to them by the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants took responsibility as a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants all owned and ran the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Participants made efforts to persuade others instead of attempting to overpower them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Some participants had too much power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Some participants backed down, though they were making good points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Roles gave participants arbitrary power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants competed with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants treated each other bureaucratically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participants went against the rest of the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The community had a problem with internal hierarchy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A participant liked blocking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A participant was evaluated in a way that was inappropriate for their role.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These were instances in which interveiwees evaluated the process by judging evidence of participants, or the entire group, using their power appropriately.
Table 22, Evaluating Evidence of Time Allocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Did the process take an appropriate amount of time?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Evidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The process went at its own speed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The meetings were long, but they needed to be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ More frequent meetings were needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Consensus takes time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ The group gave the amount of time needed to address the issue well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Negative Evidence</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- A decision should not have been passed, but there was not enough time to discuss it further.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The decision was made too quickly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Time limits were stressed too much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- It took too long.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These were instances in which intervieewees evaluated the process by judging evidence of rushed decisions, or poor use of time.*

4. INTERVIEWEES EVALUATE COMMUNICATIVE VALIDITY

Dayton used Forester's questions for *communicative* validity: a) "What does this mean?" and b) "Is it communicating effectively to a mixed audience."

I found these helpful when analyzing participants' evaluative criteria, but the forms of these sentences should be changed and they may miss one of the most important aspects of *communicative* validity. They miss any reference to changes that occur in participants' understanding because of engaging in discourse. There were occasions when participants learned that some of their conflicts were caused by differences in meanings they applied to their terminologies, but they did not directly discuss problems, or benefits of understanding meaning and the effectiveness of their communications. Instead, they more often evaluated the inclusiveness of
the process that gave them the opportunities to learn about each other's ways of looking at things. Analyses of their evaluations suggest the evidence they offered addressed the questions: a) "Did the group change their values, or understanding through the process?" and b) "Did the group communicate in ways others could understand?" Although they rarely used this for evaluation, the second one is most similar to Dayton's questions.

Discussion of Communicative Validity

Habermas uses the term 'communicative validity' to highlight the need for statements to mean something or for the speaker and the listener to share an understanding of its meaning. This is the purpose of giving ample opportunities for all claims to be made, challenged and potentially defended, or modified. If a statement is put in a poorly phrased sentence, uses terms others do not know, is transmitted with faulty radio equipment, or is made to sound like speech when it is not (mumbling when the speaker does not want to share information), or is published in a language other than the language of those affected, then the statement does not have communicative validity. The question, "Did the group communicate in ways others could understand?" combines Dayton's two questions, about meaning, and about communicating effectively to a mixed audience.

These emphases on language-use did exist, but generally, this form of communicative validity did not come up often, even when discussing issues related to non-English speaking residents. Again, this result may have been
shaped by the questions I asked, but I also got the sense these community members have such close ongoing contact with each other that they may forget how important it is to clarify each other's meanings when they speak. It is also true that their attention to procedure and norms such as making sure one listens well and asks questions before voicing opinions allowed them to check *communicative* validity of each others' statements without having words for it.

Interviewees occasionally evaluated the process in terms of participants' abilities to understand each other, but they rarely put this in terms of the quality of their language-use. My sense is that this lack of mention does not necessarily indicate a lack of concern with clarity of language and meaning. It might indicate problems with the interview questions. The interview questions were explicitly focused on their group's decision process, not on each other's use of language. I would redevelop the questions with attention to this in future studies. Concerns of understandability would more likely be invoked if I had asked them about their communications with each other. My attempts to check this hunch were not successful. I occasionally asked community members informally about the idea of making sure people were using the same words to mean the same things. My sporadic attempts to get participants to recognize this way of considering differences between people's meanings were not successful. Whereas a large proportion of people I met seemed comfortable,
saying things like "I wish some people could be more objective," I never heard comments about the importance of clarifying differences in meanings, or systematically checking understanding. There may have been indirect indications. For example, in Primo Community and to a lesser extent in Segundo Community there was a method they used in deliberations called "letting it season." This entailed taking time between discussions to talk informally with each other about related issues, or "sleep on it," or simply put the topic aside for some weeks before addressing it again. Letting things season sometimes resulted in participants realizing something new about what they had heard, getting more depth of understanding about what the others' had meant in their presentations and discussion. Another possible indication was the emphasis these communities put on using non-inflammatory language with each other. I have generally considered this an important aspect of their regulatory efforts with gossip. The two more experienced communities regularly voiced the expectation that communications should be direct and that talking to third parties about a problem between members should be done with care and compassion. They knew how much discord gossip could cause. There were occasional written agreements about using neutral and non-inflammatory language, but this was a more conscious and sophisticatedly complex norm in the two more experienced communities.
The other question of *communicative* validity referenced in interviews was much more frequent and always mentioned with reverence. That was "Did the group change their values, or understanding through the process?"

This reasoning about Habermas' most pivotal characteristic of *communicative* action, that it is meaning-making and a conscious action conducted for the purpose of reaching understanding, led me to categorize participants' evaluations of learning and change as criteria for *communicative* validity.

These criteria related to changes in issue framing.

They positively evaluated the process when it brought them new understandings of their situation, even when they didn't like what they learned. This aspect of their attempts to reach consensus seemed profound to me. It meant the goals of consensus-building processes were not primarily conflict resolution, though this was one of the results. Consensus is inherently shared understanding: "con" plus "senses," thinking and/or feeling together. Even participants who were not in conflict met periodically to share understandings. This was about the entire group changing in some way because of the deliberation itself.

For instance, there were times in which an issue was originally understood so differently across the community that the deliberation on a proposed solution brought the group to a new and beneficial shared set of common images and a vocabulary for describing the issue, but without
resolving the original problem. This result was praised highly, and often described as a cause for great beneficial change in the community. That is, there seemed to be a beneficial impact on the community from reaching new understandings of the issues involved, whether or not the original proposal under discussion ever developed into a consensus for implementation. Change resulting from the process was also reflected in reports of surprise at inclusive attitudes toward members' differences. A group's ability to hear everyone's concerns gave it the ability to learn and change as a group. That is, issues reportedly going well were usually described as both learning experiences and frustrating. Interviewees attributed both the frustration and the benefit to substantial change taking place in and between the participants as they learned to understand each other's meanings.
### Table 23, Evaluating Evidence of Changes in Understanding

| Q: Did the group change their values, or understandings through the process? |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Affirmative Evidence**    | + The process decreased differences                                      |
|                             | + The process educated and enlightened                                     |
|                             | + An individual or the group was unstuck                                    |
|                             | + Learning a lot                                                            |
|                             | + The process being a learning experience                                    |
|                             | + Learning group responsibility                                              |
|                             | + Life long learning through participation in the process                   |
|                             | + Expressed feelings changed minds                                           |
|                             | + Participants able to see a different perspective                         |
|                             | + Participants' conducted their conversations in such a way that disagreements were helpful for building common understandings of the issues. |
| **Negative Evidence**       | - The participants ended up having the same opinion they started with.     |
|                             | - Participants did not understand each other's statements.                  |

These were instances in which interviewees evaluated the process by judging evidence that participants' understandings changed.

### Table 24, Evaluating Evidence of Understandable Communication

| Q: Did participants communicate in ways others could understand? |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Affirmative Evidence** | + Participants were able to understand professional language |
|                         | + Participants understood each other.                            |
| **Negative Evidence**   | - Participants did not understand each other's statements.        |
|                         | - There was a language barrier.                                   |

These were instances in which interviewees evaluated the process by judging evidence that participants' were able to communicate meanings to each other.
IV.D. FINANCIAL CRITERIA AND HABERMASIAN VALIDITY

There was only one set of evaluative criteria that I found in interview texts that I was initially unable to meaningfully compare with a type of Habermasian validity. This was finance. It surprised me that financial issues were almost never raised in interviews. John Forester suggested economics should be considered in terms of time and attention costs, a claim to communicative validity. I originally concluded that this characterization did not provide the kind of criteria for deliberative validity parallel to the other criteria. However in the end, I determined that the use of finance in interviews was very similar to Forester's.

I came to understand this in the following way: I saw that finance may be difficult to fit well in any specific type of validity specifically because finance is inherently a way to measure value. The original point of distinguishing the four types of validity is to understand ways in which participants deliberate on questions of value. This means that determining financial value is one kind of outcome. If the desirable outcome of any democratic deliberation is discovery, or new establishment of shared values and norms, values are the outcome of the process and the subject of the process, not the rational basis. Establishing values is the primary aim of democratic deliberations and my interview questions were not about results or outcomes. The interview questions were about the value of the deliberation itself. For these reasons, finance was not a criterion for
judgment of the process except in the case of a group evaluating the financial cost of time used to make decisions. In that issue deliberation, everyone commented on the great amount of time they took to make decisions, but they overwhelmingly believed the time was well spent if the process was followed carefully. This was because the process then resulted in better decisions, and overwhelmingly more conservative financial decisions.

Now having said that, it is also true that the normative evaluation which a financial value represents is also a claim to *intersubjective* rightness. Again, the goal of this study was to ascertain the criteria used by practitioners for judging their consensus processes, not the outcomes of any particular issues deliberated in that process. To categorize finance as a criteria for judging the process, the claimed cost of a particular deliberation would be a normative claim about the value of the process as it might compare to the cost of other decision making methods. John Forester categorized finance this way, as a choice between issue frames. He references time and attention costs as costs incurred as a result of framing an issue in one way as opposed to another. For example, a participant could easily frame an issue strategically, attempting to choose issue frames which would sway other participants to “give in” instead of pursuing their best interests. If structural power relations were in place that protected participants rights to contest issue frames, this cost might be
mitigated. In this hypothetical situation, the financial cost of the deliberation might reflect the wisdom with which appropriate frames were chosen. This would reflect Forester's characterization of time and attention costs as criteria for communicative validity. That is, the degree to which the chosen issue-frame was a meaningful and appropriate way of directing time and attention costs. The criteria tables reported in the sections above do not yet reflect this categorization of finances as criteria for communicative validity.
IV.E. DISCUSSION, COMPARING HABERMAS AND PRACTITIONERS

Table 23, Summary of Interviewees’ Habermasian Criteria for Validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Questions for Evidence of Validity</th>
<th>Validity of the Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective validity of the process</td>
<td>Q: Was the group discerning between ideas and feelings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Was the process instrumentally effective?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Was the group showing objective reasoning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Were the facts accurate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective (representational) validity of the process</td>
<td>Q: Was the process trustworthy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Did the process make a positive emotional impact on participants?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Was the process benefited by participants’ attitudes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intersubjective validity of the process</td>
<td>Q: Was the process inclusive?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Did the process steps, or rules serve their intended function, or should they have been different?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Were the process steps, or rules applied appropriately?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Was power used appropriately in the process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Did the process take an appropriate amount of time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative validity of the process</td>
<td>Q: Did the group change their values, or understanding through the process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Did the group communicate in ways participants could understand?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These questions were generated from evidence offered by interviewees when they evaluated their communities’ consensus-building processes.*

DISCUSSION

In this section, I draw conclusions based on comparisons between Habermasian evaluative criteria and those applied by interviewees.

Although it was in no way one of the most salient or most frequent criteria for judgment, community interviewees definitely used impacts-of and impacts-on affect as criteria for their evaluations. This is relevant because Forester and Dayton do not. When describing subjective validity as it would be presented in discourse, Forester and Dayton describe the
importance of trustworthy representation of what is likely to be elusive, which is, the internal or subjective experience of individuals and interest groups. Subjective validity would then be judged according to the historically established ability of participants to trust the honest and accurate representations of each others' internal states. It might be helpful to think of this as others' abilities to trust there is coherence between what is expressed and what is experienced by the speaker.

A difference between the literature and the practitioners is apparent when some substantial portion of the interviewees described not only trust in each others' representations of their subjective experience, but they also describe the importance of the quality of that experience. These important qualities included how good it felt, the impact of the process on their feelings, and the impact of participants' feelings on the process. This role of feeling or affect in their evaluations of the process has implications when applied to N.I.M.B.Y., that is the tendency and problem in planning processes for those personally negatively affected by an otherwise public-good to resist implementation (not in my back yard). The question raised about N.I.M.B.Y. in the introduction of this study was, can participants who feel real or imagined impacts from a public policy decision be rational participants in discourse on that policy? Or to ask the question more specifically for these case communities, do feelings sway participants from otherwise beneficial community policies? One result of
this study clearly indicates that the answer to this question is bifurcated by experience. In general, less experienced participants and communities did get swayed away from community goods by privately felt gains and losses, while more experienced participants and communities did this less.

This answer to the question is based on observations of two overwhelmingly frequent criteria judged positively by interviewees. The first was inclusivity, being heard. Interviewees in the two more experienced communities almost all stated that they knew participants’ real interests, concerns and suggestions were well represented, addressed and had an impact on the process and the issue’s outcomes. In the least experienced community, they believed their attempts at consensus building improved this likelihood. This inclusivity was usually cited as the basis for the second criterion, trustworthiness. Experienced participants and entire experienced communities had learned they could trust the process to create shared solutions which were usually better than the solutions they individually envisioned before the process developed. For this reason, they could often step aside for decisions they did not understand, even when they had an important personal stake in the outcome, such as fee levels and membership decisions, because they trusted the process to deliver an outcome that was likely to be best for all concerned.

Although accuracy of facts, a criterion for objective validity was glaringly infrequent in interviewees’ evaluations, it was apparent from the
overall results that participants in the two more experienced communities were well satisfied with the level of fact accuracy. *Objective* validity was evaluated in a number of ways. Participants made statements addressing questions such as the ability of other participants to discern between ideas and feelings, the instrumental effectiveness of decisions, and showing good reasoning together.

There were complaints about a lack of objectivity in Trinity Community. These were in the form of many complaints about emotionalism and lack of preparation for meetings. They also reported difficulty focusing on the relevance of disparate arguments to the issue at hand. This combination of complaints led me to the conclusion that this least experienced community had considerable difficulty sharing the information necessary for reaching well-informed decisions. This effect of experience was also present, to a lesser degree in Segundo Community, in which the most and least experienced participants reported newer members’ occasional difficulties discerning the relevance or necessity of gathering certain types of information. Similarly, emotionalism was reported as a problem preventing a more desirable level of depth in discussion. The emotionalism in Trinity Community was attributed to less educated and overly stressed single mothers in poverty and without as much awareness of the principles of cooperative development and governance as that found in the memberships of Primo and Segundo communities. These members had a less awareness
of the need for, or the ability to present objectively accurate and relevant information necessary for good decisions together. They also reported less ability to accommodate each others’ emotions when they arose. In the effort to differentiate between feelings and facts, they were the most likely to attempt disowning the feelings and thus being least able to take them in account compassionately. The stress involved with interpersonal vying for influence in decisions that were approached competitively, made them more emotionally volatile and less likely to organize meetings efficiently for checking facts and evaluating proposals. It was complained that proposals were rarely well prepared. In Segundo Community there were concerns raised about new people not having some information they needed, and from the newer and often coincidentally younger members (in their forties instead of seventies) there were complaints that sensitivity to issues of age-ism made too many issues difficult to discuss in detail. There was ongoing awareness among these younger members that the emotions raised by issues of age and health prevented the level of discovery necessary for challenging or confirming the accuracy of facts, such as in disagreements about points of housing discrimination law as it applied to proposed changes in their membership selection policies.

The most experienced, Primo Community was in an enviable position compared to the others in this regard. This community was in a late stage of their development. They had a number of advantages. They had a strong
community bond between mature founding members up to twenty years before the land was found. Their founding members' drive and strength of vision had been instrumental in establishing this now stable community. In these case communities, the term "vision" referred to a representation of a desirable future held by members and preferably a commonly shared representation. Portions of a shared vision were occasionally represented by a formally approved plan. In other instances, "a shared vision" was considered a form of solidarity. At their current stage of development they also had the advantage of experienced second generation members who were now the elders. This means the most elderly and experienced, but also some of the most rigid and least emotionally open members had recently left the community to live with family, join a cooperatively managed nursing home, or had passed away. The community had been experiencing the pain of loss over the last years, but the second generation members, especially the men, were reported to be more amenable to processing feelings brought up by difficult community issues than had their predecessors.

This level of openness was described as a relief and a benefit for open and in-depth discussion of important policy decisions, as well as a benefit for more streamlined and business-like efficiency in meetings. There were also reports of women feeling that their emotions were occasionally or too often discounted as distractions from the real issues at hand, instead of
being taken seriously as reflections of real differences in values between participants. However, this problem with emotions and value differences was moderated by reports of small but growing progress in the direction of discovering, or more importantly developing, new common values. Overall, this most experienced Primo Community was best able to meet criteria for fact-accuracy and objectivity in their policy discourse. It is significant that this was a direct offshoot of their increased ability to address concerns with affect. That is, concerns with subjective validity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Validity of the Process</th>
<th>Habermas' criteria interpreted by Forester via Dayton (literature)</th>
<th>Evidenced by Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Answers to these Questions are Evidence of the Process Successfully Allowing Deliberation on Objective Validity</strong></td>
<td>Q: Is this true? Q: Presenting complete, undistorted evidence to support claims? Q: Do comments by reviewers and opponents present any credible evidence of manipulated or hidden relevant facts?</td>
<td>Q: Were the facts accurate? Q: Was the group showing objective reasoning? AND Q: Was the group discerning between ideas and feelings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Answers to these Questions are Evidence of the Process Successfully Allowing Deliberation on Subjective Validity</strong> (Dayton categorizes these under subjective validity)</td>
<td>Q: Can we trust? Q: Representing the concerns of project opponents fairly? Q: Addressing opponents concerns adequately? Q: Recording significant changes to the project in response to concerns and suggestions?</td>
<td>Q: Was the process instrumentally effective? Q: Did the process make a positive emotional impact on participants? AND Q: Was the process benefited by participants' attitudes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Answers to these Questions are Evidence</strong></td>
<td>Q: Recording significant changes</td>
<td>Q: Was the process trustworthy? Q: Did the group apply the process-rules</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 26 part 1, Habermasian Evaluative Criteria and Interviewees' Part 1

IV.E. Discussion, Comparing Habermas and Practitioners - 229 -
### Table 26 part 1 continued, Habermasian Evaluative Criteria and Interviewees:

This table shows the similarities and differences between criteria recommended by Forester and Dayton, and those evidenced in participants' interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Validity of the Process</th>
<th>Habermas' criteria interpreted by Forester via Dayton (literature)</th>
<th>Evidenced by Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>of the Process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successfully Allowing</td>
<td>to key considerations in evaluating the project in response to issues raised?</td>
<td>or steps appropriately?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Deliberation on         | Q: Is this justified? Expert.  
| Intersubjective Validity| AND Q: Does the affected public generally share the norms for action and evaluation? | AND Q: Was power used appropriately in the process? |
|                         |                                                                     | AND Q: Did the process steps, or rules achieve what they were expected to achieve, or should they have been different? |
|                         |                                                                     | Q: Was the process inclusive? |
|                         |                                                                     | Q: Did the process take an appropriate amount of time?? |
| The Answers to these    |                                                                     | Q: Did the group change their values, or understanding through the process? |
| Questions are Evidence  |                                                                     | Q: Did participants communicate in ways others could understand? |
| of the Process          | Q: What does this mean? Expert.  
| Successfully Allowing   | AND Q: Is it communicating effectively to a mixed audience? |                           |
| Deliberation on         |                                                                     |                           |
| Communicative Validity  |                                                                     |                           |

IV.E. Discussion, Comparing Habermas and Practitioners - 230 -
### Table 26 part 2, Habermasian Evaluative Criteria and Interviewees’ Evaluations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATING THE VALIDITY OF THE PROCESS</th>
<th>Habermasian Criteria Recommended in Literature</th>
<th>Application of Criteria Recommended in Literature to Evaluative Comments made by Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Answers to these Questions are Evidence of the Process Successfully Allowing Deliberation on Objective Validity</td>
<td>Q: Is this true?</td>
<td>Almost no references to issues of truth versus lies, some reference to lack of knowledge or preparation, especially in the least experienced community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Presenting complete, undistorted evidence to support claims?</td>
<td>The quality of evidence supporting claims was most often presented either in terms of discerning between emotions and objective information, or in showing objective reasoning in the course of deliberation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Do comments by reviewers and opponents present any credible evidence of manipulated or hidden relevant facts?</td>
<td>This criterion used by Dayton was also used by interviewees, but they presented it in the positive sense of the process being inclusive, reflecting the input of all sides of an issue. I categorized this as criteria for legitimacy, or intersubjective validity. There was almost no evidence of deceit and the exception made that lack of deceit more obvious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most interviewees stated that they evaluated the process positively because “it worked.” This was less the case in Trinity Community. That is, they judged the process by its ability to produce results they could all support.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Answers to these Questions are Evidence of the Process Successfully Allowing Deliberation on Subjective Validity</td>
<td>Q: Can we trust? Q: Representing the concerns of project opponents fairly? Q: Addressing opponents concerns adequately? Q: Recording significant changes to the project in response to concerns and suggestions?</td>
<td>Participants do the same kind of evaluation as suggested by Dayton on the trustworthiness of the process and its content, but unlike Dayton, I categorized this as intersubjective validity, because it reflected inclusion of all concerned and legitimated their decisions. These three questions are reflected in participants’ criteria of inclusivity. The real interests, concerns and suggestions of participants were well represented, addressed and recorded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants feelings, both the feelings they had in response to the proceedings, and the impact their feelings made on the proceedings were moderately prominent in practitioners’ evaluations and not mentioned at all by Dayton, Kemp, or Forester.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Dayton categorizes these under subjective validity)

| Q: Is this justified? AND Q: Does the affected public generally share the norms for action and evaluation? | Participants regularly evaluated their process using criteria for legitimately following required process steps. Challenges often resulted in changing the way issues were deliberated. Participants also freely criticized the process rules when they believed changed rules would improve their community’s ability to deliberate on their real perspectives on an issue. |
| Q: Recording significant changes to key considerations in evaluating the project in response to issues raised? | When participants used criteria indicating levels of inclusivity, they were requiring the process to do what Habermas requires in the Inclusivity Principle of his discourse ethics. In many ways they combined the legitimacy given by the inclusivity of the process to the decision outcome with evidence that the outcome was a “real” consensus. |
| The Answers to these Questions are Evidence of the Process Successfully Allowing Deliberation on Intersubjective Validity | Participants did evaluate the process in terms of how well the time was spent. |
| The Answers to these Questions are Evidence of the Process Successfully Allowing Deliberation on Communicative Validity | Participants very frequently evaluated the process with criteria related to changes in the issue framing. That is, the process was most often attributed with bringing participants to knew understandings of their situation. |
| Q: What does this mean? AND Q: Is it communicating effectively to a mixed audience? | Participants criticized difficulties expressing strong feelings about value differences and praised creative efforts to get each other understood. |

Table 26 part 2 continued, Habermasian Evaluative Criteria and Interviewees’. This table summarizes the analysis of interviewees’ criteria in the light of Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action, and in light of interpretations of that literature by Forester and Dayton.
CHAPTER V: ORGANIZATIONAL POWER STRUCTURES, AND PROCESSES

(Step 5) "Specify the system forces that foster capital accumulation and consolidate bureaucratic power: What organizations, which actors, what relations?"
(Step 6) "Assess the life-world background capacities that give meaning to questions, claims, or challenges regarding facts, rules, identity, or issue definition. Consider here formal and informal, institutionalized and less routinized traditions, cultural values, defining historical experiences and territorial characteristics."

(Forester, 1993, p. 132)

V.A. INTRODUCTION TO AN INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

In writing and discussing results, it became increasingly apparent that secondary and tertiary sources on Habermasian theories overwhelmingly mistake the emphasis on communications as an alternative to analysis of material power relations. Nothing could be further from the truth, and this critique does not apply to John Forester’s work. This broad misunderstanding had an impact on the placement of this chapter. Originally, power structures supporting consensus processes in each community were used as theoretic assumptions behind case selection methods. Unlike the original proposal, in this chapter, discussion of power structure is presented as a result. The original research design did not accommodate a methodical analysis of power structure. For this reason, the reader is respectfully asked to consider this chapter a large and hopefully
interesting side discussion of the study, though perhaps the most important
discussion. The need for this chapter also came about, in part, because of
consistent demands for more narrative description of conditions inside the
communities.

The discussions in this chapter reflect concerns which must be raised in
Habermasian institutional analyses. Habermas posits communicative action
as a powerful reproductive force for authoritarian or any other form of
power relations. He also posits communicative action as a force for social
change, and so it puts forward a conceptual basis for understanding both
successful, and unsuccessful interventions. This applies to all kinds of
intervention. While human actions can be differentiated in terms of being
strategic or communicative, all human actions involving human
communications can be analyzed in terms of the communicative action
involved. Even strategic communications are conducted with the goal of
some communication taking place, albeit frequently less than completely
valid in terms of subjective or representational validity. The Theory of
Communicative Action is a theoretic lens for observation and analysis, not
merely a specific kind of event termed a communicative action. To
reiterate, communicative action is not “all about words.” As an example of
possible applications to the use of oppressive force: police violence is
easily analyzed in terms of communicative action when its intersubjective
legitimacy is considered. Judicial apathy and lack of civilian oversight of
police violence are also structural elements which are naturally analyzed in terms of communicative action. The legitimacy of extreme uses of force is claimed in the process structure. In similar fashion, the power relations of co-owners and neighbors are asserted, challenged, and maintained in their communicative actions. It was the structural elements of material power relations in these communities which made their successful consensus-building processes possible. To accommodate this misunderstanding about Habermas, this additional results chapter was added. It focuses primarily on the organizational power structures in these communities which made consensus decisions binding. The power relations are discussed both in terms of decision-procedures and ownership structures. In John Forester's terms, the organizational power structures of the communities make these communities' governance experiments concrete.

In terms of research design, the results presented in this chapter concern the issues deliberated in each community, and what they can teach about maintaining deliberative democracy at the organizational level. Their explicit goals were each focused on power-sharing.

The focus of this chapter is on Forester's research steps five and six quoted above. Because this study is focused on relations inside communities, instead of specifying the system forces that foster capital accumulation, I specify the organizational relations inside the communities within which these consensus processes operate. The organizational
relations are specifically patterns of capital ownership and control. I also assess the lived experience which gives a context to the meanings of their questions, claims and challenges appearing in the content of their evaluations analyzed elsewhere. The process evaluation criteria are reported elsewhere, but investigation of practitioners’ evaluative criteria produced a rich set of interviews. And each interviewee shared insight and a considerable amount of wisdom about his or her community experience. Each interview began with the story of a recent issue’s development through community events, and a description of The Consensus Process used to address that issue. Examples of organizational issues from each community are presented as well as the community dialogue in which the issues were raised. I also engage in a Habermasian discussion of each.

This chapter provides a more literary-textual analysis in the vein of Kemp instead of the previous chapter’s use of Dayton. (Kemp's use of Forester's Habermasian recommendations are described in the literature chapter’s introduction to the validity claims.) In this chapter, participants’ evaluative criteria are only discussed in the context of the process rules and community organizational structures that institutionalized, or otherwise made those structural elements durable.

For review of the community names: the communities were labeled the first, second and third communities based on their experience with The Consensus Process. The first community, or Primo Community uses a
method most similar to its origins in Quaker meetings-for-business and the third, and Trinity Community uses a method least influenced by Quakers, as well as having the least experienced membership overall. The Primo community may be more like Quakers in ways such as their definition of consensus and the use of silence during meetings, but the levels of experience by other measures in the first and second communities are very similar. The second community, or Segundo Community is also very experienced and much more like the first than the third in terms of having members with many years' experience using consensus.

Each community made its major decisions by consensus. They met on a monthly or twice-monthly basis in a general meeting of the entire membership to deliberate on the degree to which a proposal was ready to be accepted as presented, or otherwise to give more specific feedback to the committees from which it arose. In Primo and Segundo communities, all members were expected to attend these meetings and all members attending affirmed the proposal in some way before it could be accepted as policy. The three communities used slightly different terminology with slightly different meanings for this affirmation. Some said everyone must agree while others said that without agreement, members could "stand aside." One of the communities, Trinity, allowed members to 'block' decisions, something the other communities frowned upon. Trinity Community used a hybrid method that attempted consensus, but allowed a vote if the
consensus could not be achieved. This provided an interesting opportunity for a comparison because it had been frequently said by proponents of consensus in this study that such recourse to voting was dangerous and fractious. For this reason, evidence of fractious deliberations in the least experienced community are noteworthy.
V.B. PROCEDURAL-ETHIC INSTITUTIONALIZED IN POWER STRUCTURES

I found the flat organizational structures I was looking for. These communities did not have steep hierarchies and power was definitely shared, but the interesting discovery was that they accomplished this with a strong procedural ethic institutionalized in their community power structures. I made this discovery in my attempts to draw their organizational structures and attempts to graphically represent their uses of power throughout the stage sequences of a decision process. Traditional methods of drawing organizational charts lacked context variables related to procedural elements in their power relationships. In this section below I describe the general form of those processes in terms of best-practices and process rules. That is, I describe the procedural aspects of these communities' power structures. I suggest useful ways of graphically illustrating these power structures and I discuss relationships between steps in The Consensus Process and the roles and power of participants using the process.

The procedural nature of the power structures in these communities makes graphical representation difficult with traditional charts of organizational structures resembling genealogical trees, two dimensional triangles or pyramids. As a result, the organizational structure and
governance of these communities may be best described with these best-practices, or the generalized form of The Consensus Process. I begin by describing their power structures in terms of the organizational characteristics I sought in the case selection process. I then describe a cone-shaped organizational chart as it would be contrasted with a two dimensional triangle, or pyramid shaped chart. There is a section which describes steps and stages of The Consensus Processes in terms of the best practices I observed, especially in the more experienced communities. I also cover details of their procedural ethic and its effects on their unique form of power relations.

Intermediate organizational forms might have included resident workers reaching consensus together in staff meetings for decisions on daily tasks. As a staff collective, they might have shared power horizontally, even while the power of final decision-making about resource allocation might have been held by the farm's private owners. This hypothetical organization would have less flat organizational structure than the cooperatively organized home owners' associations I found for this study. The comparison would have shown more horizontal power-equality between owners of the cooperative. I refer to this flatness as The Consensus Process being more central in that type of organization, that is, it has more power and the decisions made by the people can be wielded with more authority when property control is in their hands.

V.B. Procedural-Ethic Institutionalized in Power Structures - 240 -
To represent the power structures in these flat communities, I decided to take advantage of the spatial characteristics of terms such as 'flat' and 'central.' We can graphically represent them in the form of a three dimensional cone. This is contrasted with the common representation of a power hierarchy in the form of tree roots, a triangle, or two dimensional pyramid.

Figure 5, Cone model of consensus-based organizational power structure

This cone model of a consensus-based power structure reflects the kinds of images evoked in experienced participants' discussions of the process. Participants are depicted in a circle while creating their consensus between and above them, an umbrella under which the entire group functions. The more active and involved committees, or core members are depicted as more central to the power structure and are more likely to speak and act for the entire group.
A representation of power relations between participants in these consensus-based organizations can be pictured by transforming the triangle, or two dimensional pyramid into a three dimensional cone. Power would still reside at the apex, but by changing the perspective to a plan-view (looking down from above) the apex of power is a point in the middle of a circle. In this model, individuals’ and communities’ legitimate use of power is delegated from the center of the organization, where the consensus of the group resides. In the ideal consensus-run organization, a legitimate consensus can only be achieved through careful attention to processes which give every affected and concerned member real opportunity to incorporate their concerns into the group’s policies. This diagrammatic representation of the power hierarchy as a three dimensional cone is also illustrative of the relationship of members to the entirety. That is, their influence may change depending on their activity and the organization's ability to give each member access to that power.

The relationship of individual members to committees, and the relationship of committees to the power held by 'the general meeting' or 'the community,' can also be described with this model. In each case community, interviewees used the term “the community” when referring to the whole of the membership. For the purposes of this study, more limited terms such as ‘the group’ or ‘the organization’ have been used to describe more technically specific aspects of their associations with each other,
except when quoting participants. To them, the term 'the community' was used with some reverence and seemed to represent the reality of the people as a collective, as opposed to potentially inaccurate statements about them made by individuals.

In the cone model, participants in this collectivity or general meeting are represented in a large circle surrounding the central consensus. Committees and individuals more central to the process receive their delegated authority from the general meeting. The positions of those who were more active or involved in The Consensus Process can be visualized graphically as more central to the core of the cone. (In some consensus-based groups not selected for this study, more active members were referred to as 'core-group members.') Although these individuals and committees may know more about what is going on and have more powerful voices because of their central involvement, experience and skills, they also have more pressure from the community enforcing its norms of transparency in decision-making. For example, focusing scrutiny on facilitators and committee chairs as servants of the whole, insisting they not speak with authority unless it was to express a consensus of the group. In this sense, committees in case communities were more central to the process, in that they were directly empowered by the general membership for their work. While a member was in the 'general meeting' they were merely one among many. When they were acting as directed by
the general meeting (perhaps as a committee member) they acted with authority vested in them for the specific responsibilities they had been given, not as empowered personalities. They were not empowered as persons, but as functionaries for the group and their judgment was required to represent the specifically articulated interests of the group of which they are merely one member. This did not mean their ability to apply themselves intellectually and creatively to the job at hand was not appreciated. Rather, other participants had high expectations that those speaking for them would accurately represent the consensus as it was reached in the group. These expectations were especially high when an individual was delegated responsibility for leadership, or a spokesperson role by the authority of the group.

Another example of a difficult power relationship to represent with a triangle, or two dimensional pyramid, is the circumstance in which a committee chairperson's roles and responsibilities change as a project moves through its developmental stages. The triangular diagram is unable to represent cases in which responsibility for staff and their actions moves regularly between committee members and those in their committees who then lead the next phase. Such changes in responsibilities over time could be represented with new organizational charts, but this would suggest the organization has changed form, or that individuals have changed positions. If project management regularly results in managers handing over
responsibility to someone previously "below" them in the organizational hierarchy during the life cycle of one or more projects, then the triangle, or two dimensional pyramid is problematic.

Instead of interpreting their power structure as ever-changing, I think it better to interpret their power structure as having a time-based element which institutionalized their procedural ethics. The power structures of the case communities were definitely characterized by members whose formally recognized roles changed between inside and outside meetings and throughout policy-making processes. As individuals, they did not have fixed titles designating their positions in a hierarchy. This is not to say these communities had no such titles. Rather, these communities had ideals concerning giving responsibility for a particular kind of community service to a person as part of The Consensus Process. That is, the community as a whole could delegate a level of authority to a member, such as clerk or facilitator, often the roles given to the president of the corporation, without giving that member rights to decide problem issues outside of their delegated role in the process. These individuals were designated people in whom the group had placed trust for facilitating meetings and facilitating the transfer of information between meetings. There were some interview examples in which members with leadership titles were criticized for deciding minor issues without good process. The fact that such minor decisions were worthy of criticism emphasized the
importance of the general rule. Titles did not give power to the person, but to their role which changed according to the stage of the process engaged. In this sense, they had a procedural ethic around legitimate use of organizational power. This is extraordinarily similar to the procedural aspects of Habermas' description of practical reason and discourse ethics. Habermas' Discourse Ethic is not a procedural ethic, but it does describe the importance of a democratic society having a procedural ethic. This is described briefly in the chapter covering the Theory of Communicative Action (T.C.A.) in the section on Power and Conflict.

The procedural movement of an issue through a process can be visually represented in the following way. Ideally, when a proposal was presented or criticized in the group, it was no longer the property of, or in the control of the individual making the statement. The expressed ideas became the property of the group. In spatial terms supported by the cone model, concerns or other ideas expressed during a deliberation were 'put out' by individuals or committees for group consideration. Although interviewees did not use these terms, one could say no individual owned the idea. Instead it emerged from the process, even if that process encompassed many general meetings and committee sessions. One might visualize it spatially in the middle and directly above the group with power over the group. This was a shared history and bond that transformed as the conversation continued. Ideally, concerns about a proposal were discussed
in ways that potentially improved and reshaped the proposal into something closer and closer to the expressed consensus of the group. As concerns were addressed in ways that either resulted in the concern being 'put aside,' or in ways that modified the original proposal, a consensus on some action emerged. Frequently, the only consensus to emerge was that the proposal needed more time 'to season.' In the cone model, the emergent consensus and the power it represents is above and in the center of the group. This consensus represents the common will of the group no longer held by any individual, but held up by all. From that moment forward they were all bound by that consensus.

The emphasis on intersubjective validity in these communities was definitely associated with a procedural ethic. This was not a rigidly applied set of procedures, but instead a dynamic application of situationally contingent understandings of what would be entailed to systematically build a mutual recognition of supported norms regarding issues. This procedural ethic institutionalized in their decision processes is consistent with the purposes of the discourse ethic in the T.C.A. The discourse ethic is not a procedural ethic in the sense of designating the correct procedures, but it does designate functions required of any particular set of procedures for democratic communications. Though Primo and Segundo did this better, each community had decision-making rules intentionally created for the purpose of creating environments conducive
to deliberation. This ethic was most clearly pronounced in their frequent evaluations that the processes included the input of all concerned, or inclusivity. Participants repeatedly discovered their processes had allowed an appropriately long period of time to make decisions. The processes took into account critical voices which strengthened the eventual decision. For this reason, the most difficult issues and most lengthy decision processes, sometimes taking years, were most often evaluated as good processes.

This had a striking resemblance to Habermas’ procedural aspects of his discourse ethic. It is not that his ethic is procedural, it is that he describes the inherent ability of any discourse community to establish norms on procedural aspects of their normative discourse. That is, any community can and does ask itself, “Is this claim appropriate to this context?” The speech acts of primary concern in this situation were claiming, or challenging legitimacy of decisions and actions of fellow community members.

These communities all had high expectations for legitimacy in their decision processes, especially legitimacy based on each participant’s procedurally equal opportunities for sharing their piece of the truth. I had attempted to locate communities with a similar focus on this aspect of sharing power. For this reason, the three case communities had a narrow range of variation in the types of claims they made concerning the legitimacy of their decision processes. In Habermasian terms, these
communities were intent on conducting deliberations with as few distortions as possible in their communications, especially those distortions attributable to imbalances of power between participants. This included efforts to create property ownership structures equalizing power, as well as governance structures and procedures which encouraged full participation of all community residents. Many of their challenges to legitimacy claims were conscious efforts to create and maintain structural and procedural systems which they hoped would give them equal opportunity for a voice in decision-making.
V.C. RUNNING MEETINGS BY CONSENSUS

The following is a general description of The Consensus Process as it was best practiced in the communities. These descriptions are my own and not those of the participants. Also, the step-wise character of this description is helpful for categorizing aspects of their practices, but the meetings themselves would not appear to be conducted in steps if they were observed by a novice. Although meetings were formal, the following step-wise description is written in a much more formal way that should be interpreted for the mood of meetings. They were particularly warm and responsive to participants and this description might be mistaken to represent an approach that does not take in account the subjective impact on participants. The description is meant to describe logical steps behind the most formal methods of discussion used in the meetings, not the mood or feel of them when practiced. This is especially important to keep in mind because more experienced participants were able to keep their meetings on task without as much formal announcement of the deliberation steps as less experienced participants.

1. OPENING THE MEETING AND REVIEWING THE AGENDA

In each community, meetings began with informal conversations and greetings as participants arrived arranging chairs and posting, or distributing a pre-printed agenda. The facilitator, sometimes referred to as
the Clerk or the President, opened the meeting by announcing the time, asking if the group should wait for latecomers, or otherwise stating it was time to begin. If they had not already done so, participants sat in a circle and faced the facilitator who sat or stood as part of the circle. In Segundo Community, the facilitator stood or sat behind a table facing the group arranged in a semicircle. The first activity was often a “check-in” as described below.

The first item on any agenda was typically the review and approval of the agenda itself. The agenda was preplanned, but the facilitator asked for affirmation of the agenda before proceeding. Any last minute changes were made at that time. Agenda items were read aloud and, if necessary, described enough to establish how much time was needed, who was presenting, whether they were in attendance and prepared, and what process step was entailed. For example, a first reading on a new proposal may have entailed discussion and listing of concerns, a decision, or brainstorming on possible approaches to a problem. Most last-minute requests for discussion were referred to committee unless it promised to be brief and immediate action was required. The agenda items were in an order proposed by the facilitator, or by another at the facilitator's request. When the group affirmed the agenda, the first item was begun. Generally, affirming the agenda took no more time than it took to read and nod assent with a question or two.
An agenda acceptable to all reassured participants they could give attention to others' issues without losing opportunities to address their own.

2. FACILITATIVE QUESTIONS

In very small and larger, but experienced groups, facilitative questions were asked by any participant, not always the facilitator. This is generally true of facilitation in consensus processes. Much of the task is accomplished through posing appropriate questions to focus the group's attention.

3. REVIEWING THE MINUTES

The group was asked to approve the minutes of the last meeting as written. Minutes were distributed between meetings. Then, at the start of each meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting were added to the permanent record of the group. This is a final step in consolidating group opinion by reminding itself of its own decisions and creating a common history.

4. CHECK-INS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Other preliminary steps were introductions of new participants, check-ins and announcements. Both check-ins and announcements were expected to be presented without discussion but were often accompanied with levity.
or clarifying questions. Similarly, announcements were given time early in
the meeting to get things started without discussion when the presenter
was not requesting an immediate response.

Check-ins were opportunities for participants to let each other know
something about themselves emotionally and personally, concerning recent
events in their lives, or news about themselves which would not otherwise
be given time in the meeting. They also served as social warm-ups for the
meeting. It seemed difficult to start meetings on time when open social
time was not allowed before meetings. I interpreted this as a need to
express each others' subjective selves with each other, at least
ritualistically.

5. DECISION ITEMS

Proposals expressed a course of action in response to a stated problem.
They included the expected benefits, costs and potential problems. The
presentation includes alternative courses of action, which were considered
as well as their own benefits and problems. In the more experienced
communities, when a well-formed committee brought back a written
proposal, it was more often adopted than not.

Decision items were pursued in a number of formal steps. A member
presented the proposal and the facilitator reminded the presenter to ask the
group for either a specific response, permission to proceed with research, a
permanent change in policy, or something similar. Discussion or problems with the proposal were discouraged until after the presentation was complete. After presentation of the proposal and clarification questions, the facilitator invited open discussion. If a decision was imminent, the facilitator expressed the consensus as she heard it and asked the group for confirmation. She asked the note taker to write it down as stated and possibly to read it aloud. In the best circumstances, the decision minute was complete without obscure detail. It answered the questions: Where? When? What? How? By whom? and With what resources? It also included a note about “weighty” concerns raised in the deliberation.

Separation of presentation from discussion of alternatives insured participants had a shared understanding of the topic before supporting or challenging it. C.T. Butler provides this explanation in his book On Conflict and Consensus and it applied well to proceedings in the communities.

6. SENDING WORK TO COMMITTEE

If a consensus was not imminent after open discussion, there were a number of choices to make. The facilitator could ask if all concerns were accounted for. S/he most often asked the presenter to take note of those concerns without discussion and to present possible resolutions of those concerns in committee. Whenever possible a committee was asked to work
through these concerns and to report back to the meeting of the whole. If no standing committee was appropriate, an ad hoc committee was selected with the hope it would be capable of forming a proposal the larger group would approve. The committee was usually reminded by the facilitator to announce a future general meeting in which they would report the results of their work. The more experienced groups could work through clusters of concerns in one meeting when the issue was urgent. The group could choose to cluster the concerns into categories and to resolve categories of concern one at a time. Each one was expressed as a problem to be solved. The problem was described and resolutions were proposed, as well as alternative interpretations of the problem.

More time intensive approaches were helpful in committee meetings or in the general meeting if it was an important issue on which the whole group needed to take more time to hear each other. Committee meetings were more or less formal depending on their purpose, whether they were standing committees, ad-hoc, or sub-committees. While the general meeting delegated authority to committees, committees delegated tasks to working groups. According to participants in two of the communities, the preferred membership of any committees included interested, concerned, and skilled individuals. That is, someone very interested in the project at hand, someone with strong concerns or conflicts regarding the proposal and someone with access to necessary information or skills. Committees
reported back to the general meeting requesting permission to change their activities, or with action and policy proposals recommended to the community.

7. COMMITTEE STRUCTURES

Delegating work and requests for reports and proposals from committees held a strong coordinating function in these communities. This was the way in which labor, information and the will of the community were solicited and combined for coordinated action. After observation, I came to believe that sending work to committee was one of the most important organizational elements in these consensus based groups. This was especially the case when committees were also given power to act on decisions they had proposed and built community consensus upon. It seemed to work well when the committees were diligent in reporting their work to the general meeting and when the committees were well-formed. Many interviewees reported the best chances of creating a strong and supportable proposal when the committee included the following elements: someone enthusiastic about the proposal, someone with reservations about the proposal or an ability to resolve concerns expressed by the membership in the general meeting, and someone with technical expertise, historical or other knowledge applicable to the situation. If all these elements were
found in the committee, the rest of the community was more likely to approve the committee's proposals for action.

8. AT THE END OF THE MEETING

Before the end of the meeting, new decisions and items generated for the next agenda were reviewed. The note taker was asked to read decisions as they would be recorded in the minutes and to list items referred to the following meeting's agenda. Times, locations and conveners of future meetings were also decided before the meeting was adjourned. This step gave clarity and closure while re-iterating the group's won actions to itself.

9. EVALUATIONS

Occasionally, at the close of meetings, the facilitator would ask for evaluation comments from participants without discussion. These might be one word, or a sigh of relief, a wish something could be done differently next time, or a statement of gratitude for way a facilitator handled something.

Evaluations gave participants opportunities for expressing dissatisfaction, or for encouraging future action. The whole mood of the meeting could be changed with the addition of new group understanding which could emerge from evaluations.
10. ROLES CHANGED BETWEEN PROCESS STAGES

Individuals' and groups' obligations and formal power to act were situationally specific and tied to the stage of a given issue in The Consensus Process. Their formal power was not tied to their status roles outside meetings. The general meeting of all members created committees and authorized them to do required work. Occasionally it also authorized methods by which the work would be done. The committees not only conferred with each other, but were also made up of the same persons as the general meeting. In effect, everyone answered to each other. These organizations had a recognizably circular follow of information, decision-making and implementation authority, so the bi-directional arrows of the chart might give the impression there was not clear accountability. In these communities, accountability was determined procedurally, so a time-static chart without distinctions for time sequences does not represent it well.
V.D. DEMOCRATIC IDEALS AND DIFFERENCES BY EXPERIENCE

Participants were able to reflect on the ramifications of consensus decision-making on their community's social relations over time. The organizational form of their communities created specific structural relationships between members and it was within these structural relationships that they convened meetings for the purpose of making community decisions together. Participants believed their communities' organizational forms structured power relations between members which were vastly different from those in authoritatively controlled groups. They most likened them to structures of democratic governing bodies such the representational branch of government.

More experienced participants believed their organizational shape was close to their idealized model for sociopolitical power structures in the world at large. They were particularly enamored with the ideal of consensus, though to degrees parallel to their differences in experience. Those with less experience idealized the process in more simplistic terms. They believed it was important them to recognize each other's rights to self expression giving others' voice in shaping the community policy agenda. Those with more experience idealized the process in more complex terms related to the social and political institutions they were creating and maintaining. They were committed to their organizations' enactment of its unique internal and external power relations. Overall, participants put high
values on the capability of their communities' organizational forms to protect and enhance individual rights and freedoms. Participants exhorted each other to more fully follow the letter and intent of their community's rules for the purpose of more completely guaranteeing their own and others' freedoms.

As an example of the social reproduction processes, or social learning that took place as participants gained experience inside their community's unique organizational-power structures, consider the following example of a new member "blocking" consensus on a proposal. Less experienced participants were much more enamored with the power their voices carried in meetings. They were overwhelmingly enthusiastic about the power given to individuals by the process. It gave them opportunities for input, especially the opportunity to stop or "block" the process if they did not approve of what was being done. The most experienced members expressed nearly the opposite view. They said they were wary of the power of their own and others' voices. It caused them to pause and refrain from speaking out as much as they had earlier in their lives. They understood it, but also expressed dismay and regret about their own and other's reluctance to speak to large issues. Many attributed this to the large amount of power their opinions had over each others' lives.

As an example of this type of exercise and the learning that accompanied it: I learned that a new member blocked a proposed resolution to a
neighbor dispute. A number of highly experienced participants expressed disapproval of a new member doing such a bold thing. They complained about the inappropriateness of blocking, while agreeing the new proposal resulting from the disagreement was a good one and the process worked well in the end. The new member expressed mixed feelings too. He had pride in being part of a community allowing such strong input from him as a new member, but also reluctance to do it again because of the amount of work involved to follow through. The new member's conclusion was reached after he had been appointed to a committee to come up with a good alternative to the well developed proposal he had blocked. The new approach to the problem required considerably more work. The new member gained appreciation for the ramifications of having a voice. He also gained appreciation for older members' reluctance to speak against proposals which had been prepared by committees for the general meeting. This seemed to be a mechanism by which experience taught participants to respect and support the work of committees which had the responsibility for development and implementation of decisions.

I liken this phenomenon to the power exercised by two-year olds when they learn they can affect others by saying "no." They try it everywhere, exercising their ability to make things stop until they get more sophisticated with their impacts on social relations.
(Step 7) "Examine the strategies used to rationalize accumulation, or bureaucratic power. What choices exist? On what do those choices depend?

(Step 8) "Assess the strategies available to agents acting to resist such accumulation/exploitation and power, so acting to democratize political relations (in Habermas' terms: to rationalize the life-world, or in more ordinary terms, to have a say in directing one's life). Upon what do these strategies depend?

(Step 9) "Given the analysis of the contingencies of hegemonic (from Step 7) and counter-hegemonic (from Step 8) strategies, locate the possibilities of action in the next round: What is now to be done? How do policy proposals promise (or threaten) to realign relations of interaction, power, strategy? What are the prospects and tasks of the democratizing forces- if only the most elemental popular interest in voice- that exist?"

(Forster, 1993, p. 132)

VI.A. THEORETIC PRACTICALITY OF DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

Planners and policy analysts should know how to recognize the validity of processes claiming to give the population its voice. In John Forster's recommendations for empirical research, he tells us to ask "What is now to be done?" He points out that, at the very least, there is the possibility of mobilizing the democratizing force which can be found in a populations' interest in "having voice." This study certainly discovered that participants had strong desires for voice in their communities, but the intended audience for this research is planning and other public-policy oriented...
theorists and scholars. The goal was not to discover these communities’ motivations, but instead to discover what analytic criteria they used and to use those practical criteria to enrich discussion of analytically derived criteria from Western civilization’s intellectual history. This is a research strategy for discovering democratizing forces, because the power and respect traditionally given to objective analyses of policy processes have been undermined by the critique of so-called objective policy analyses in late-modern debate. The goal of this study has been to increase the power of rational analyses without this outmoded definition of rationality that does not take in account subjective and intersubjective concerns. The research design of this study has focused on giving planning and policy theorists the benefit of its descriptive results. I describe Habermasian validity and discourse ethics in practical ways: in their development, in their potential empirical application, and rationale for comparing those theories with the evaluative criteria used by highly experienced democratic deliberators in intentional communities which in these cases, have been organized as cooperative housing associations.

Participants did use empirical criteria in their evaluations that paralleled practical criteria for Habermasian Validity. This study’s emphasis has been on this pragmatic reasoning on norms, on “what would be best.” This emphasis underscores the confusing use of the word “practical” in what appears to be hopelessly abstract publications. Literate, intelligent and
skilled academicians and professionals are overwhelmingly confused by this when reading critical theory. This confusion is also frequent when reading its applied forms, such as John Forester's 1993 title: Critical Theory, Public Policy, and Planning Practice: Toward a Critical Pragmatism. Readers should have found an understanding of critical pragmatism in this work and to be able to apply it in research, design and practice of democratic deliberation.

To make this kind of work useful, one must be aware of one's situated and finite place between theory and practice. This is what the theory is intended to encompass. Before beginning, I had been familiar with communities of practitioners of participatory democracy. I was aware of an applicable societal critique in the literature of Frankfurt School style Critical Theory, in normative policy analysis literature and in Forester's introduction to its application in planning theory. I regularly heard and read scholars and practitioners asking for empirical work guided by this emancipatory philosophy. From this position, I conducted this particular study for planning scholars, while knowing introductory primers on Habermas have not been available. The result of applying this theory to the cases of three different case communities, three small societal microcosms, is that one should now be able to understand what is practical and pragmatic in this abstract theory. The Theory of Communicative Action (T.C.A.) is pragmatic in the sense that it is theory that takes into account
the positioning of human actors in their contexts with other humans. These situated actors attempt to reach understandings together for coordinated action. They do not use Habermasian terminology, but they do apply highly comparable reasoning. Habermasian concepts can help us understand and what they are doing intellectually, and at the organizational level.

For example, a woman said she couldn't talk about her concern about animals on their four-hundred acres without seeming crazy. She told the story of the long slow road of participants learning to communicate with each other across disparate backgrounds. I learned to hear what she was saying in terms of unshared subjective responses to unshared intersubjective norms. These were norms about “man’s” relationship to nature. These unshared norms made her look like she wasn't objective. In her own way, she was saying their initial lack of intersubjectively shared norms caused her expressions of compassion and grief for the ecology of the area, the animals and trees so routinely killed in rural practices, to appear as subjective representations of a confused mind. This undermined her credibility as a reasonable participant. In response, she and others in a land-use committee took on a three-year effort to build consensus around common environmental values and did not so much change minds as build new awareness of shared norms that were larger and which encompassed the smaller issues discussed on their current agenda. This committee got permission to display the posters and draft resolutions, the thank-you
Chapter VI: Conclusions and Implications

letters, the brainstorms and artwork produced by the entire community over a three year period. These representations of what the committee had learned about the environmental values and concerns of community members reflected the community's *communicatively* established norms back to themselves. This was invaluable in helping the community recognize and develop *intersubjectively* valid meanings they had each put on aspects of their shared property.

The importance of this display taking place in their expensive, but underused common house was also described. This was their converging shared understanding of what was best for the land they owned in common. This community's new-found solidarity around a vision of land stewardship, and their new-found readiness to draft a land-use plan, did not result from *objective* analyses. It resulted from interplay of participants recognizing the validity of their *intersubjective* understandings about rules and agreements, and each other's *subjective* psychological and materially embedded perspectives, on the otherwise *objective* information about facts which they shared with each other. This was their new commons in personal, interpersonal, organizational and physical space. This was deeply practical and the description of it above is benefited by the pragmatic nature of theory that takes in account the meaning-making activity of human agents.

VI.A. Theoretic Practicality of Deliberative Democracy - 266 -
In the future, this critical pragmatism can be invaluable for systematic treatment of the messy realm of deliberation on the commons. John Forester has encouraged planning theorists to recognize these pragmatic aspects of theory for planning, community development and public policy settings. The theory and the recommended empirical criteria for its application contribute to an analytic lens for policy analysis, research and professional practice in the art and science of deliberative democracy.

In the introduction, I tie together two related problems. The first was that planners and policy makers are in a quandary with the seeming infeasibility of democratic processes. Unfortunately they do have good reason to doubt any pluralist community can effectively deliberate and decide policies, or create norms and plan cooperative action in a rational way. They have reason to believe community members can not talk rationally with each other when they have conflicting personal interests. This problem is exemplified by N.I.M.B.Y., (not in my back yard) a phenomenon encountered in land-use planning in which locals oppose sites of facilities which would be good for the larger community, but are not desirable in close proximity to their own homes or businesses.

Without theoretic or practical grounding for intersubjective validity of multi-interest deliberations, it is theoretically sound to believe the public interest is only well served by those who are objective, or not involved in the issue at hand. In this case it might appear to make theoretic sense that
technicians should decide such issues with the technical information at
their disposal because deliberative processes would apparently be
ineffective in deciding issues which had conflicting effects across interest
groups. There is little or no awareness of theoretic grounds for rational
deliberation on differently valued outcomes. Neither is majority vote a
more reasonable democratic approach when effects on a disaffected
minority could be severe.

This feasibility problem was also illustrated in the anecdote conveyed in
the preface. There, I spoke of being confounded by a similar problem. A
conference session began and ended in uproar because the audience
interested in sociological applications of cybernetics was outraged at the
question: “What would be a socially beneficial information processor?”
This was illuminating, not because the audience worked hard and
accomplished nothing, but because the question was taken as a threat and
answered with hostility. It showed that for practical purposes, it was
beyond their imaginations that they might be realistically asked to
rationally deliberate on what would be best. The participants in that
session answered as if they believed there was no possible way for
information to be “processed” for social benefit, and they strongly
believed the suggestion was dangerous. They believed it was obviously a
ploy designed to obfuscate a proposal for an offensive political
intervention. In a sense, this is the same problem faced by policy makers
and professional planners when asked to theorize about the use of deliberative practices between interest groups in the face of such phenomena as N.I.M.B.Y.. In effect, planners are saying something like, "We can't reasonably expect people with different material interests to reason together on what is best. This is an arena outside rationality."

It was with this introduction that I stated my intention of defending the theoretic and practical feasibility of democratic processes as means for policy making and communicatively achieving the creation of new norms. From a Habermasian perspective, a foundational problem for policy analysts, or anyone else pursuing deliberations with reasonable expectations of them establishing "what is best," is the problem of rationally deliberating on normative questions. As stated earlier, from a Habermasian perspective, the problem with normative rationality is the societal belief that it is impossible. There is a lack of education in what Jürgen Habermas terms communicative rationality, where reason and normative concerns come together in "discourse ethics."

Habermas has deduced this theory in order to delineate what is missing and contradictory in modern western scholasticism's philosophy, sociology and technically objective science when they are applied to communications and social norm formation. He has meant to show that people already do this normative reasoning informally through communicative action and can do it formally in appropriate discourses. He presents the discourse ethic
and the Theory of Communicative Action (T.C.A.) as theoretic derivations of something implicit in the structure of attempts to reach understandings between people, groups, institutions, or nations.

While Habermas' more recent work applies these theories to international constitutionalism, I focused on his early work on the theoretic grounds of communicative action. He writes that a discourse ethic is implicit in the structure of society and in the way that we talk with one another, the way that we deliberate on norms informally all the time as long as there are not systematic distortions of our attempts to do so. While a dominant critique of democratic deliberation among planners and policy analysts is its impracticality, Habermas says the opposite, it is the logic formalized in Western science which is impractical.

When I wrote that Habermas' work is so often criticized for being unwieldy, I used the word carefully. On the theoretic level his work is powerful and foundational, but the language used to explain it is overwhelmingly complex. The result is unwieldy in that it is difficult to incorporate into one's thinking well enough to apply to concrete situations, but much of the complexity and difficulty in explaining the T.C.A. is paradoxically related to it being highly basic. More common words would too easily confuse what is meant with what is usually meant by those words. This theory is very literally about the actions for reaching understanding between any two or more relatively independent subjects.
This level of abstraction helps keep the theory accurate, but hampers practitioners' abilities to apply it in their evaluations of actual deliberations. I now argue that although its abstract language is often unwieldy, the theory is inherently practical. Instead, readers can learn to recognize the stilted and impractical nature of attempts to ignore subjective experience and intersubjective relevance when making value decisions about objective conditions with others.

It is one thing to establish the existence of a well established body of theory legitimating the possibility of normative rationality for policy discourses, and yet another thing to establish empirical grounding for that theory. I recognized this need for empiricism as an opportunity for introducing the social experiments which often call themselves intentional communities. It was important to select case communities which were theoretically appropriate for the kind of empirical comparisons I thought fruitful. It was important that the communities be structured in a way that increased the likelihood of participants being well versed in the requirements of good democratic communications. The participants in this study had a great deal to say about these structural requirements, but mostly in the form of a procedural ethic concerning good decision processes.

Although we theoretically always use a discourse ethic to reach understandings, experienced deliberators insisted there were important
steps in their processes which needed to be followed. This procedural nature of their discourse ethic addresses the skepticism of policy analysts and planners about a rationality of deliberation. Community participants told me that they could and did deliberate on value differences, but when they wanted “a real consensus,” they believed it was necessary to formally preserve the practical conditions necessary for such deliberations. The concerns they raised and deliberated upon were not “just the facts.” Nor were they necessarily about their personal preferences. Experience had taught them these consensus building processes brought aspects of others’ personal, cultural and material realities to light which had unforeseen impacts on the problem and the solution. The conditions necessary for such deliberations were required to provide ample opportunity and support for what Habermas calls “making, challenging and redeeming claims to validity.” When these conditions were met, they reported discoveries of the group process developing creative solution that individual participants often had not originally desired, considered or understood.

I introduced John Forester and David Dayton’s work because they have applied Habermas’ theory in planning and policy practice. They suggest ways of appropriating his theory as a tool for evaluating planning and policy deliberations. I still defend and encourage others’ belief in groups’ and societies’ theoretic abilities to systematically and rationally deliberate together on what would be best, but for now, I have presented some of the
details of this theory's application to a set of three successful experiments of democratically organized homeowner's associations, these residential cooperatives.

1. IS THAT CLAIM VALID? MAKING, CHALLENGING AND REDEEMING VALIDITY CLAIMS

The following sections review the results of this study and address implications for future development of analytic concepts and empirical measures for evaluation of democratic deliberations. In the text above, I went into great detail on questions about Habermas' vocabulary, such as "what does participation mean?" "What does discourse (or deliberation) mean?" "What does it mean to be rational?" These are all large questions. "Rationality" opens up a discussion of the Enlightenment: "What is the difference between Enlightenment concepts of objectivity and subjectivity?" This is an important distinction because concepts related to subjective validity are rarely given attention outside psychology and then there were two additional types of validity being introduced, intersubjective and communicative.

I had four types of validity to both explain in terms of Habermasian theory and to understand well enough to recognize when they were referenced in evaluations by people who did not use that vocabulary. In other words, I broke down two things for the two results chapters. I deconstructed the power structures of the groups organized around their

VI.A. Theoretic Practicality of Deliberative Democracy - 273 -
deliberative policy processes, and I deconstructed practitioners' evaluations of discourses by comparing them to Habermasian approaches outlined by Forester and Dayton. I was forced to include the chapter on organizational power structures and the institutionalization of a procedural ethic because although it is in discourse that claims are made, the group must also be structured in such a way that there is enough equality, freedom and safety for anyone to challenge claims made by anyone else. This does not require a perfect world, but it does require constant vigilance to protect spaces for free speech. There is a great amount of careful structuring required in these communities to keep this kind of freedom available to their members. There were frequent stories of members' early resistance to process-rules that later developed into staunch defenses of those same rules so that all members could continue to have a voice in shaping the actions taken in their name.

This is an important component of the discourse ethic in the T.C.A. That is, there is an inherent rationality of normative deliberation that requires making, challenging and redeeming claims raised in discourse. If there is not enough formality in the process to insure that participants in difficult disagreements can be given the time and attention from others they need for a safe hearing of differences, then the valid claims they are trying to make, or the valid challenges they are trying to make to others' claims may never have a safe place and time for others' hearing. For this reason, it was
often those with the greatest resistance to business-as-usual who developed the strongest appreciation of process rules, because the rules gave them opportunities to deliberate on their concerns without jeopardizing their positions in the community. There were also common reports of previously serious concerns being "put aside" when the opposition learned their concerns were taken seriously by the membership not spuriously or selfishly ignored.

This phenomenon of strong support being voiced by participants who previously held positions as serious opponents is illustrated in the following example. In this deliberation, those who had the most worries and complaints about a proposal were the ones that eventually put the largest effort into its implementation. Many interviewees reported that the inclusiveness of the discussion for all points of view was the important element that allowed them to put so much of their community's resources, time and labor into the final implementation. This deliberation resulted in an entire pond being drained, reshaped and refilled. The original proposal was presented as if it were sufficient. There were many complaints. This was a high stakes project and alterations to the proposal had large impacts on personally valued use and care of natural phenomena, large expenditures of money, credit, precious months of research effort and physically heavy work. The financial costs were balanced against others in lengthy deliberations on everything from environmental consciousness, the
right of humans to use the bounties of nature, and the technicalities of fish species' habitat requirements, as well as potential impacts on the rest of the land. There was a crucial time-window for action, but there was also a crucial need to make the right decision. It took a lot of time, and by the time the pond was rebuilt, it had been the most skeptical participants who had taken some of the largest parts in the work. Perhaps their knowledge this would be the case inspired some of their opposition. I was present during the new construction and was highly impressed with the cooperative spirit among the whole membership on the project. They were all elated that such a difficult decision had apparently been well made. They had all been able to make, challenge and redeem claims to validity made in their deliberations until they reached "a real consensus."

I often saw this impact on implementation in these communities. When reasons for disagreements were ignored, unexplored, or otherwise shut out of the discussion, implementation might never happen, but when the time they spent in discussion allowed thorough review of all concerns, including the ability to check and redeem claims of all kinds, and a "real" consensus was reached, implementation was well coordinated and looked easy. In the case of the pond, financial assistance made available from an outside source and new information about long-term consequences of inaction coincided with a stage in their deliberations in which everyone's understanding and reasons for resistance had been explored and the bases
of disagreements were well known. They had developed a great amount of
trust in each other, because people on all sides of the debates and with all
levels of understanding were each impressed by how seriously others had
taken their concerns. They knew enough about each other's concerns at this
stage to use the new outside information to develop a new proposal
everyone could understand and agree upon. The structure of their decision-
making process gave those with concerns the freedom to insist that their
concerns be addressed. The entire community benefited by the resulting
complexity, subtlety and practicality of the final plan.

Another component of the theory I addressed, is the importance of
making distinctions between types of validity claims. I learned to
recognize and identify all four of Habermas' validity claims well enough to
recognize them in interviewees. While visiting the communities, I heard
such claims described, heard them being argued, and heard them being
applied as criteria in their evaluations of deliberations. I also saw ways in
which participants' distinct approaches to these types of validity had
impacts on their abilities to understand each other. I often believed they
could understand their communications better if they could better
articulate the different kinds of validity they were evaluating in their
deliberations. The vocabulary helped me and I came to believe it could
eventually help them.
In the process of discovering the criteria they applied to judge their processes, I also learned a great deal about the contexts and issues involved. I heard many versions of the same issues and developed my own Habermasian analyses of them. So, although I heard participants use criteria for all four types of validity in their process-evaluations, I also learned to recognize patterns in those uses. This addresses John Forester's question when he asks what form those claims and their challenges take. I did methodical analyses of those evaluations and delineated the ways in which they used those criteria.

For the reasons described above, it is important to distinguish between each type of validity, especially because each is challenged, or redeemed in ways different from the others. When participants in discourse do not recognize the claim, its challenge, or ways in which it has been redeemed, they lose some competence as deliberators. The ability to reason together on norms may be innately human, but the ability can be improved with practice and education. In general, readers of this study will be fairly aware of the methods of claiming objective validity and ways of challenging, and addressing the challenges, or otherwise redeeming their claims of objectivity. This is commonly understood in the general population and we can easily find others to hold us up to these expectations when we fall short of them. Each of the other types of validity lend themselves to similarly important methods for being claimed.
or being challenged, but without as much common recognition of the validity of these methods. For example, a participant could accuse another of being too torn by their subjectively experienced family dynamics to know their own mind, or of using information for their own advantage. Both of these are challenges to the subjective validity of a participant's statements. On the other hand, a participant could accuse another of making statements that were irrelevant to the issue being discussed, not on the agreed agenda. This is a way of challenging the intersubjective validity of the same statements. Likewise, each type of validity claim needs a different kind of support to be redeemed after a challenge. The following graphic locates the position of these types of discourse validity within the T.C.A., the field of application in deliberations on community issues contested between participants with a plurality of interests, and specifically in a population of participants experienced with consensus processes.

The following are some unexpected discoveries in the comparison between these community expectations of discourse validity and concepts developed in John Forester's recommended applications of the four types of validity claims in Jürgen Habermas' T.C.A.

VI.A. Theoretic Practicality of Deliberative Democracy - 279 -
2. WHY INCLUSIVITY IS AN INTERSUBJECTIVE CONCERN

The distinction between subjectivity and intersubjectivity is important because it exposes our general lack of attention to the most ignored and most important aspect of normative discourses, their intersubjective validity. It is arguably the widely shared confusion between subjectivity and intersubjectivity that makes the theoretical rationality of normative discourse so difficult to grasp.

I categorized criteria for representation of others in the category of inclusivity and put inclusivity under the rubric of intersubjectivity. Participants' abilities to have their own concerns represented accurately and to have those concerns taken seriously in accordingly modifying existing proposals are abilities to have their "voices" validly included in the overall processing of the problem-issue. Individuals and interest groups must be held up to requirements for subjective validity, but the shared meanings they are creating together are intersubjective.

These are certainly concerns in regard to authentic representation, but they are not concerns about a person, or interest-group representing themselves validly. That would be a concern for subjective validity. Instead these questions evoke criteria for the validity of their representations of each other. This is a concern for Intersubjective validity, or the validity of their shared expectations. We could say that the organizers in Dayton's study were intentionally misrepresenting others,
and those would be subjectively invalid claims. Both Forester and Dayton also point out that it is important that all those involved in the debate be able to make, challenge and redeem each other's as well as their own claims to subjective validity, but if the discourse process is so designed that participants are systematically misrepresented, then this is not a problem with their own representation of their own subjective experience, this is instead a problem of breaking intersubjectively valid norms for fair representations of all concerns. This is an important distinction to make because intersubjectivity is the type of validity we do not tend to recognize with our impaired understanding of democratic communications.

When participants purposefully, or otherwise systematically obfuscate others' contributions to discourse, they are delegitimizing the very process from which they claim legitimation. To show the important role this plays in the relationship between norms and rationality, I will explain it as Habermas does with the following contra-factual evidence: showing evidence of something we know to be false. Consider that it would be illogical to say a pluralist group came to an agreement together cooperatively and rationally by systematically excluding affected segments of their population. This certainly would not make sense, and members of these communities which put so much at stake in their efforts to build consensus understood this. Their elders, their founders, their facilitators, their committee leaders and their most trusted members could not claim to
have reached a consensus on a problem without leading the entire community through a process which gave every interest a voice in the decision. By this reasoning, representations of the oppositions' concerns and changes in response to those concerns are not measures of any member's subjectively valid representations, but instead are mechanisms for improving the intersubjective validity, the legitimacy and validity of the deliberations' structure and rules of engagement. It keeps the process more legitimate and applicable to the appropriate norms of the situation. For how else can we say we understand the appropriateness and legitimacy of what we are saying to each other and what our decisions mean if we have a deliberative process which systematically excludes representations of affected parties?

As a disclaimer, if one were challenging the honesty of the note-taker's representations of what other's had said, then yes, the note-taker's claims to subjective validity of their notes would be challenged. However, if it is the process-rules or rule-interpretations which do not include requirements for meaningful representation of all concerned, then it is the intersubjective validity of the process itself or interpretation of its norms, which is being challenged.
3. CONCLUSIONS ABOUT COMMUNICATIVE VALIDITY

Communicative validity is a type of validity that Habermas sometimes leaves out. In reference to the question of having three or four validity claims, Habermas considers communicative validity a special case of intersubjective validity. And this makes sense, because certainly language and meaning are inherently intersubjective. But as a result of this study, I was forced to compare the theory of communicative validity to actual cases of participants putting value on, or evaluating deliberation and establishing its validity. I have retained communicative validity as a fourth type of validity, though I changed my mind about this a number of times in the course of the analysis. In the end, it seems that having a name for a type of validity concerning claims that a statement means something, and that the meaning has been conveyed, is very useful. In some ways, this may be the most profound aspect of validity one can attribute to a deliberative process.

I found that communicative validity was the least theoretically consistent type of validity in published sources and this hurt my ability to distinguish it from other evaluations of validity in practice. Eventually I discovered the reasons for the confusion. Now I can make recommendations for others. Much of this was due to the ambiguity of its use in the T.C.A. itself. For one, the term "communicative validity" might be used to include all types of validity claimed in discourse and to be another name for these
validity claims in general. Dayton used Forester's questions, "What does this mean?" and "Is it communicating effectively to a mixed audience."

In contrast to communicative action, although the end goals of instrumental action are necessarily established through the conscious or unconscious application of value judgments, those value judgments may or may not be *communicatively* achieved. Those values may or may not be valid representations of the *communicatively* achieved norms of the group. The group may not have had any opportunity to establish common values about desired ends. In contrast, the end goal of *communicative* action is development of some degree of shared meaning around symbols such as words or symbols such as those which represent any particular way of framing an issue. The meaning of a symbol is its value, and this is the relationship between *communicative* validity and deliberation on values.

Therefore, although the concept of *communicative* validity can be interpreted as a simple claim that a statement means something, in a more important sense, this form of validity is a measure of the claim that discourse participants share some understanding of that meaning. They share that value. This means that if a new statement or result of interaction is *communicatively* valid, participants in that interaction experienced a change in understanding after it occurred as compared to before it occurred. They thought one thing and now they think another. If the meaning of a situation changes for them, so does its value, by definition.

VI.A. Theoretic Practicality of Deliberative Democracy - 284 -
The value of the meaning they attribute to a situation changes in some way. This is true because the statement had meaning and it conveyed that meaning. Something was conveyed. What was not there is now there. If there was no communicative validity in a statement, all the other claims inherent in the statement, that the speaker was honest, that it was an appropriate time and place to say this, that the facts were accurate... none of this could be checked.

This reasoning about Habermas' most pivotal characteristic of communicative action, that it is a meaning-making and understanding-building activity, led me to categorize participants' evaluations of learning and change as criteria for communicative validity. That is, they frequently evaluated the process with criteria related to changes in issue framing.

4. COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Another aspect of communicative validity worth noting here is the controversial concept of communicative competence. Individual differences in skills and understandings attributed to class, gender, generational attributes, education, ethnicity or health status were occasionally criticized in terms of hurting participants' ability to contribute to the discourse. This is comparable to Habermas' concept of communicative competence. Some were obviously judged to be more able to contribute to the shared understanding of the group in more positive
ways. The valued ability of the process to give inarticulate people a voice to positive effect was also almost universally acclaimed, though often described as unpleasant to hear. I did not include this in my formal results, because it would require me to explicate relationships between communicative competence and communicative validity. I did not believe Habermas' simple statement about this was enough to explain it and I was not prepared to do this at the time when the analyses were done. I now have a sense that the idea is much simpler than I originally thought. We can understand communicative competence as a simple idea referring to the requirement that a participant in discourse have the ability to speak statements with meaning. The role of judging that competence is shared intersubjectively, and as in the other semi-procedural aspects of his theory, Habermas insists we must judge competence, but does not claim there is any one way to do this in all situations. Someone might challenge speakers' competence on the grounds that nothing they say makes sense. As an example, some communities have a semi-formal role given to advocates who might leave a room with a participant if that participant is experiencing subjective impacts (such as emotional upset) which diminish their ability to argue for themselves. Advocates can then help that participant represent themselves. With representation, a person seemingly incompetent to speak might be shown to simply need assistance. In every group, an important role was attributed to those community members
willing to express points of view in possibly inarticulate ways when no better way could be found. A member in this situation would frequently contribute an intuitive, poetic, or non-analytic perspective on an observation that broke seeming deadlocks, opened minds, or allowed the levity required to help others find beneficial approaches to what was otherwise an intractable controversy. There is no formal Habermasian definition of communicative competence beyond this basic ability to speak in ways that convey meaning.
VI.B. EVALUATING DEMOCRATIC DELIBERATION QUALITATIVELY AND QUANTITATIVELY

1. COMMUNICATIVE ACTION VERSUS INSTRUMENTAL REASON

The key difference between theories positing that we can reason together and those theories positing that we can not is shown by contrasting the differences between instrumental action and *communicative* action. It is the realm of instrumental action in which *objectively* analyzed compromises are instituted in order to seek the best method of controlling an operation leading to a desired outcome. *Intersubjectively* valid claims are established in the realm of *communicative* action, so are established through efforts to reach understanding. The *intersubjective* agreement is not always a pre-existing or potentially unrecognized commonality between *subjective* perspectives. It may not yet exist before *communicative* action takes place. One could not derive it from an overlapping Venn diagram of each participant’s *subjective* experience. Instead, the *communicative* action of participants in discourse creates a new understanding. In theoretic and general terms, the *communicative* action of free subjects (at least free enough to disagree), creates a new *intersubjective* understanding: a new agreement on norms. In other words, the act of understanding each other’s *subjective* perspective changes those *subjective* perspectives. Not only did participants frequently change their views as a result of newly
understanding others, they also changed their views as a result of being understood by others. Among other effects, being understood built trust. This development of intersubjective understanding is what Habermas refers to with the term “communicatively achieved norm.”

Using instrumentalist reason, planning and policy analysts are constantly in the position of attempting objective analyses of others’ subjectivities from a distance. These attempts to distance the analyst from the multiple subjectivities of those involved are attempts to be more reasonable or objective. They are important and useful aspects of deliberations, but these analyses done strictly by uninvolved analysts can not produce the kind of consensus reached through participatory deliberation. The type of consensus reached by voluntary participants in discourse is created through the practice of making, challenging and redeeming claims. And in the process of making, challenging and attempting to redeem validity claims, some subjective and intersubjective conditions will change because participants will learn each others’ perceived impacts and others’ understandings of the appropriate norms applying to the situation. New intersubjectively ordered understandings emerge both from discovery of previous unknowns and from the creative construction of new claims. Participants’ interactions create new subjective awareness. When the new intersubjective understanding of the group has been reiteratively claimed,
challenged and redeemed and all remaining concerns have been addressed. This is what community participants termed "the final consensus."

These communities, like Habermas, had high standards for establishing whether a legitimate *intersubjective* consensus had been voiced. Planners and policy analysts can learn from these standards. Policy analysts, specifically practical policy analysts which planners become in practice, can more consciously use normative rationality to evaluate their own work and other deliberative practices. The variations in levels of analysis from face-to-face groups to distributed populations of strangers require different methods of making, challenging and reformulating each type of validity claim. Theoretically however, these *communicative* actions must occur in normative deliberation at any level of analysis.

2. QUANTITATIVE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

One of the results of this qualitative study has been a testable draft of a quantitative survey instrument for evaluations of democratic deliberations. The draft can be found in the appendices. This was a benefit of having phrased the results as questions. Each question represents interviewees' criteria for evaluating a consensus-building process for a given problem issue. Because these questions are categorized in terms of Habermas' four types of discourse-validity, they could hypothetically be used to evaluate the validity of a given discourse. The assumption being that the ability to
evaluate the four types of validity in a process would provide indications of
the best interventions for process improvement. This resulting list of
questions is presented in the form of a survey instrument to be completed
by participants, or observers of a deliberative process for one decision.
These questions could be rephrased to be appropriate for a given
population, after studying the original research results that resulted in the
existing wording. For research purposes and development of instrument
reliability, testing should include comparable questions from Forester and
Dayton.
VI.C. INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES

The goal of this study was to explore evaluations made by experienced users of The Consensus Process. I saw parallels between Frankfurt-School theories in terms of critiques of social science and the national network of secular, but Quaker-inspired, intentional communities. I had been familiar with this network for many years. I located three communities with institutional characteristics supporting the type of discourse Habermas’ theorizes at the foundation of deliberative democracy at these communities’ scale. They were residential communities with thirteen to twenty-seven households. They had relied on formal consensus procedures to insure their policy legitimacy for over twenty years each. I knew they had not heard of Habermas but that the Quaker creed developed at the same intellectual moment in the Enlightenment which Habermas attempts to reformulate.

The organizational and institutionalized forms of these case communities were selected for this study, because at the theoretic level they were considered well suited for The Consensus Process. Normatively, The Consensus Process emphasizes careful attempts to build understanding between autonomous member-owners and the membership of these communities had economic and sociopolitical relationships that required and supported deliberative forms of policy-making. The theory is uniquely matched to these communities' situations, and because of this match,
experienced intentional community participants contributed to my refinement of this theory's application to their situation. When considering applicability to other contexts, consider that discourse ethics rely on the premise that they be applied to pluralist groups dedicated to cooperatively resolving their conflicts by reaching argued agreements on their norms for self regulation. For this study, we can accept that participants evaluated aspects of The Consensus Process in ways that exposed their interpretations of what socially beneficial power relations would look like in their communities. These evaluations provided insights into participants' understandings and judgments of consensus processes with which they were experienced.

These case communities were resisting the status quo of authoritarian power relations reflected in most organizational structures. Many participants were consciously attempting to demonstrate an alternative: sharing power equitably within and between organizations. These communities are examples of those resisting such accumulation and exploitation by creating organizational power structures and concomitant policy-making processes that democratize political relations.

Each of the three case communities had created a home ownership organization with explicitly shared responsibilities for ownership and policy deliberation. Democratically controlled housing cooperatives were the inspirations for their organizational forms. Power sharing was a goal
and a result of their organizational form. Power sharing was recognizably central to all of the communities' communications for decision-making and all formal relations between members, their property and the rest of the world.

The *communicative* infrastructure of the communities maintained and reproduced power sharing relations. For a Habermasian investigation of efforts at democratic deliberation within a community, others may also choose to look at the power relations enacted in their communications and the power structures of the communities in which that communication takes place. These community participants are practitioners of deliberative democracy for governance, control and distribution of their real property as well as governance over each other's behavior on that property. The criteria they use to evaluate their own deliberations can inform planning theorists, policy analysts and their students about the analytic tools at our disposal for investigation, evaluation and design of democratic institutions.
VI.D. ORGANIZATIONAL POWER RELATIONS

Discourse on policy will always have a context of human agents with real interests in an historical context and in a material world. Material power relations such as those configured by an organization's ownership structure are not sole determinants of power relations between participants, but the *communicative* structure of these communities is also more than a flow of verbal communication. In Habermasian terms, their formal decision processes were reflected in the *communicative* structure of their community and, to a large extent, the *communicative* structure was shaped by the structure of ownership and control of real property. Their organizational form embodied structural conflicts motivating and restricting participants' enacted roles. Of particular interest here were motivations to listen for understanding and real engagement with the points of view emerging from positions much different from their own in a deliberation. Their evaluative criteria were used to judge The Consensus Process and the organizational power structures of their communities had complex relationships to their uses of Habermasian-like validity claims. The structures of these organizations made consensus a central focus of communications between members as they interacted in their individual lives and in their various community functions. The empirical focus of this study was on participants' evaluations of their policy-making processes, but these evaluations were embedded in the background contexts of each
community's material and organizational power relations. Issues of power remain problematic in these communities. Embracing an ideal of sharing power did not give members equality, but their ownership structure supported the power sharing methods designed into their policy-making processes. When describing the unique shape of these community's property relations, I was particularly interested in their organizations' abilities to give members joint authority over common property. In discussions of the case selection, I described this focus in terms of horizontal ownership and horizontal power relations. These property relations were indicative of their internal power relationships. Their evaluative criteria for policy processes were also indicative of their power relations. In terms of systematic or unsystematic distortions of communications, these communities were chosen because they had adopted property ownership structures expected to systematically motivate and support efforts to build consensus.

Habermas takes as a given that in every interaction, participants enact their social relations. For this study, property relations are considered central reproduction processes of power relations. As examples that justify this assertion we can consider that individual participants' property relations with each other were formalized by property laws and formal state enforcement of those laws. They were also shaped through economic incentives mediated through banking, insurance and other institutions.
Over time, property relations have a large and continuing impact on the form of power relations in any community. Before I found the selected cases, I posited the example of landlord-tenant relations making property relations possible, actual, concrete and routine reproduction processes. I specifically sought communities whose institutional and organizational infrastructures were designed to maintain the kinds of power relations between members that would support democratic discourse. We can accept that possession and control of property represents and enacts power relations. The ability to design communicative infrastructure in ways which support democracy can only be enhanced by abilities to understand and communicate about the communicative aspects of power relations and the social structures with which they are associated. We start with the understanding that the communicative infrastructure of a community is the inherently dynamic movement and shape of interactions between actors both indicating and enacting power relations between them. We can start anywhere in our analysis of power and property ownership, but outside the community, residential Real Estate conventions, including contractual relations between landholders and their lending institutions were system forces that had real impacts on the communities. Without explicit agreements to not gain at each others’ expense, these system forces would, in Forester’s terms “foster capital accumulation and consolidate bureaucratic power.” Instead these communities actively shaped their
internal ownership structure in ways that equalized these system forces between members and distributed the benefits and responsibilities to the community as a whole.

Difficulties unambiguously representing power relations in consensus-based groups are discussed here because they are emblematic of common questions about accountability and power in this type of organization. An advantage in having chosen this particular set of case communities concerns the unique shape of their power structures and common questions about the risks attendant with undifferentiated, or undisclosed power structures. The common two dimensional triangle, or pyramid model for organizational charts could easily lead one to argue these groups have invisible, non-existent, or unclearly defined chains of command. Either this form of chart is unable to accurately represent their power relations, or it suggests the actual power relations represented therein are dysfunctional. It could easily be argued that ignoring the requirement for a clear chain of command could only be done at the risk of crisis. The crisis would inevitably emerge when a time for wielding authority became necessary but no legitimate authority was designated. These communities' organizations were well developed, and the appropriate ways to use organizational power were clearly defined, the more experienced communities having the most clarity. Their organizations' power structures were not invisible, or undefined. Instead, the two dimensional
organizational chart in the form of a triangle, or two dimensional pyramid does not adequately represent the organizational structures functioning in these communities. There was a need for an alternative graph that more accurately represents these structures. For this reason, I introduce a cone-shaped model. It is important that these organizational forms be represented in an alternative graphical form if results of their experimentation is to be more easily reproduced in new organizations. Without an ability to represent their power relations for new participants, newcomers and newly forming organizations remain at constant risk of unclearly designated use of organizational power as well as the risk of misuse of power, or other hazards of disorganization.

1. Implications for Structuration Theory

Habermas' concept of *communicative* infrastructure might be made more understandable by referencing Giddens' concept of structuration. Although it is less rigorously derived, does not come to the same conclusions and is possibly derivative of Habermas' work, Anthony Giddens' writing style is much more readable. When I analyzed the criteria for Habermasian-like validity used by participants to evaluate their consensus processes, I also discovered that I could not report meaningfully on relationships between the theory and their practices without discussing the organizational contexts in which they interacted. I had known these were important for
the purpose of case selection, but did not predict how important it would be for describing the power-relations they enacted with their validity claims. This result of the research caused me to write a second results chapter on the topic of organizational power structures and processes. That chapter is about Habermas' concept of communicative infrastructure, but I now see that it is also described by Giddens' concept of structuration. I had reported on the ways participants evaluated their groups' abilities to reflect upon and modify relationships between their objective, subjective and intersubjective conditions, but did not believe these results would be meaningful without discussion of the power structures constituted by those conditions. Again, I took John Forester's lead in using the Habermasian concept of communicative infrastructure to explain relationships between their communicative norms and their community power relations. I described it in terms of social reproduction taking place as speaker's enacted their relationships to their objective, subjective and intersubjective worlds.

Anthony Giddens' concept of structuration also describes this relationship. Community members are active agents working within structural constraints which they in turn maintain, reproduce, change and create. After reviewing the results of discourse evaluations and the power structures in which they occurred, I gained more insight into the relationships between the organizational forms of communities which I had
previously assumed (for case selection purposes) were more conducive to Habermas' sense of valid discourse on norms. I gained more insight into these relationships because greater understanding of four types of validity improved my vocabulary and mental imagery of what these people were accomplishing with their social experimentation with egalitarian control of shared property.

I concluded although undistorted normative discourse might be a normal function of human communication, active protection of safe organizational spaces must take place for authentic deliberation on norms. This is comparable to Habermas' conception of public space. As an example of a physical space in which a small group of people share control, these communities' commons (meeting rooms and offices) were the spaces they used for their deliberation on intersubjective norms. The same applies to a greater extent in the materially based, but abstract world of organizational power structures. There must also be common spaces in organizational decision processes in which intersubjective validity claims can be safely made, challenged and redeemed in public deliberation. As an illustration, I applied a supposition of the T.C.A. in case selection and analysis. To state the same thing in two different ways: 1) the ability to deliberate on norms is shaped by the power structure of the discourse community, and 2) power relations have a distinct shape, or structure and this structure shapes
communication amongst participants through time. It shapes their respective relations to each other and to the material world.

This study's application of structural issues for analyzing experimental communities illustrates a strong similarity between the work of Habermas and Giddens. In the future, it may be fruitful to investigate the following comparison between them: Giddens' conceptions of the three functions of power structures are 1) signification, 2) legitimation, and 3) domination. They can be compared to Habermas' four validity claims. 1) Signification is the act of establishing meaning for symbols and is comparable to the establishment of communicative validity. 2) Legitimation is the establishment of intersubjective validity, and 3) domination is the establishment of subject-object relations which Habermas asks us to treat separately in terms of subjective validity and objective validity.

Emancipation from false consciousness is at the core of Critical Theory's purpose. The Theory of Communicative Action is intended to offer an emancipatory perspective. This emancipatory goal, is Habermas' reason for insisting that these distinct forms of validity be treated differently from each other. For example, some policy decisions might be challenged on the grounds that they perpetuate domination. To argue this rationally, or to understand the rationality behind such an accusation of domination, he insists the differences between objective, subjective and intersubjective validity should be recognized as widely as possible. He shows that this is
normal in lived experience, and that the system's world rationality does not reflect this normative rationality, making democratic deliberation appear irrational and undercutting attempts to reason about this in public forums. For these reasons, Habermas separate delineations of subjective validity and objective validity may be superior to Giddens' blanket concept of domination. Subject-object relations have their place. After all, it may be quite appropriate for a population to control material resources, while not appropriate to exercise the same level of control over other humans. These are normative assertions that are debatable in a case by case basis, but they are not completely relative assertions in an amoral sense. That is, a group can not rationally decide what is best while systematically excluding affected populations from the deliberations (Habermas' inclusivity principal). Objective validity and subjective validity are established and challenged in quite different ways. From a Critical Theory perspective, exploitation and domination occur when subjects are treated as objects without meaningful participation in the establishment of intersubjective norms.

Giddens' structuration theory might help elucidate Habermas' conceptions of communicative structures and Habermas' T.C.A. sheds light on the phenomenon of structuration. One of the most important articulations of this study's empirical observation has been the application of Habermas' conceptions of discourse and analyses of the design and protection of
organizational spaces with time and place for authentic deliberation on validity claims. Giddens' conceptions and conclusions about opportunities for agency in structuration processes might be looked at in new ways after seeing these same relationships in Habermasian communication terms.

2. DEMOCRATIC IDEALS AND CHANGES WITH EXPERIENCE

What can the content of participants' own evaluations teach others about maintaining deliberative democracy at the organizational level? And what are the implications for other communities and organizations? This study has highlighted the importance of creating and protecting public places in time and space for authentic deliberation on what is true and important to individuals and collectives in democratic society. Participants evaluated their community's successes and were able, to greater or lesser degrees, to reflect on the ramifications of consensus decision-making for their community's social relations over time. The organizational form of their communities created structural relationships between members. These were the structural relationships new and experienced participants met within when they met to make their community decisions together. Participants believed their communities' organizational forms structured vastly different power relations between members compared to the power relations more common in business. They most likened them to structures of democratic governing bodies. More experienced participants expressed
awareness of the organization as a manifestation of their idealized model for sociopolitical power structures in the world at large. Interviewees were particularly enamored with the ideal of consensus, though their understanding of the process paralleled their differences in experience. Those with less experience conceptualized an ideal process in more simplistic terms related to the importance of participants recognizing each other's individual rights to self expression and the importance of participants giving others' expressions power to shape the community policy agenda. Those with more experience idealized the process in more complex terms related to the social and political institutions they were creating and maintaining. They were committed to their organizations' enactment of its unique internal and external power relations. Overall, participants put high values on the capability of their communities' organizational forms to protect and enhance individual rights and freedoms. Participants exhorted each other to more fully follow the letter and intent of their community's rules for the purpose of more completely guaranteeing their own and others' freedoms.

I learned the practical utility of identifying validity claims for evaluation. Comparisons between their criteria and Habermas' illustrate practical application of the discourse ethic. Sophisticated process rules and facilitation skills largely supported group testing of validity. This allowed them to think and feel together aloud, step by step. They evaluated meeting
processes with democratic principles and facilitated accordingly. They deliberated across differences in values and were able to teach the process to new members. They created common understandings on previously disputed values. They shaped agendas collaboratively as new needs arose. The more experienced communities were able to recognize when a decision had been made. The depth of their policy insights were made apparent in lengthy descriptions of their problems.

3. NEED FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EDUCATION

When reflecting on John Forester’s recommendation that empirical studies identify dubious strategies rationalizing accumulation of bureaucratic power, I have concluded that education was potentially very helpful in combating some of these forms of rationalization. I found dubious strategies advocated by some frustrated members when they judged others for lack of understanding or competence without acknowledging their community obligations to provide necessary training and education. This obligation is also implicated in Habermas’ requirement for communicative competence and the requirement for inclusivity. These members were understandably frustrated in a community with low-education and high turnover, but blaming uneducated participants tends to perpetuate the rationalization of organizational structures that give power to the few. This underscores the importance of education in co-operative
organizational methods and this is one of the Rochdale principles of Cooperation that have helped perpetuate the hundred and fifty year old cooperative movement, that is, education on the ways of cooperatives for members and for the public. Given the contingencies of their social and political-economic environments, the communities and their members needed more opportunities for exposure to such other living examples of cooperative ownership structures.

4. IMPLICATIONS OF A PROCESS-ORIENTATION FOR DELIBERATIVE PRACTICES ELSEWHERE

These communities' efforts can illuminate the work of policy and planning scholars because these communities also focus on education, inquiry, and practice in self-government as necessary components of their abilities to reach reasoned agreement on their shared norms. Their experience has developed strong insights that should be mobilized to help planning theorists, practitioners and analysts improve our understanding of deliberative democratic processes. These community members show there are methods for understanding and evaluating deliberations that can be better developed and utilized.

One of the potentially most fruitful insights found in interviews is their process-orientation applicable to binding decisions. There is a need for this process orientation to decision-making at many levels of social organization. Deliberative democratic processes may be easier to
understand in both theory and practice because Habermasian theories are made more concrete by these illustrations of practitioners' evaluations. In the original theory, as operationalized by Forester and Dayton, the evaluative criteria are intended to be applicable larger and smaller units of analysis if they are accompanied by appropriate modifications. For an example of modification from face-to-face to state government units of analysis, we can generalize from representing an individual's subjective impact to the subjective impact on a class of people. Both require subjective representation, but the form of representation will need to be modified.

Awareness of the successful process-orientations in these three communities can also be applied across organizational forms and sizes of social units. Consider the problem of new member orientation, deteriorating social bonds and weakened commitments to cooperation in new generations of a group. I give the example of other housing associations here, but the example might also be applied to other forms of groups tackling the problem of new membership orientation. Some co-housing developments face difficulties with deterioration of commitment as original resident-founders sell their units. The condominium structure gives more private ownership rights than those found in cooperatives. These private ownership rights restrict housing associations' abilities to select fellow members according to personal characteristics. Also, fair-
housing laws protect against restrictive covenants, no matter how detailed the founders were about the kind of people more likely to support good group process. This means that these potentially closed communities are not able to restrict resale by buyer characteristics and the new membership does not have the advantage of building strong relationships with each other through the development process shared by the founding members. As a result, understandings shared by the original group are often not shared by incoming members. The condominium legal structure does provide some provisions for required participation in group events, but requirements for labor may also be problematic. One of the communities provides an exemplary resolution of that problem by requiring extensive and ongoing participation in community meetings and other events for prospective participants to maintain their positions on a waiting list to purchase ownership shares. Through participation, prospective buyers screen themselves by learning more about what they are getting into, and the communities have an ongoing stream of potential buyers who have proved themselves able to follow through on at least the most minimal, but also the most important of participation goals: "showing up." The benefits of putting weight on process-orientation instead of member-identity could be large because the continuation of current trends in co-housing developments may be leading to deterioration of commitments to
This is not a trend these socially and organizationally complex housing associations can afford.

This process-orientation is also potentially useful for government bureaucracies which have notorious difficulties with interagency negotiations, such as those required for environmental protection. Many re-iterative steps are required to check representation and legitimacy of preliminary agreements between often unequal representatives of each other's agencies. Examples of this include state and federal agencies and their overlapping jurisdictions over environmental regulations for a given development project. A process-orientation requires something quite different from investing power in persons in large hierarchies, but it can take advantage of the best aspects of rule-driven bureaucratic organizations. Severe role confusion can occur in large hierarchical organizations when reiterative decision processes are required, that is, when preliminary negotiated decisions between agencies require ongoing review and modification. A more explicit process-orientation could mitigate that role confusion.

Procedural rules for policy deliberation were used to protect otherwise marginalized voices by creating and protecting places in time and space for participants to check each others' claims to validity. This a procedural orientation to deliberation that helps mediate differences in power between personalities, or between larger social units.
VI.F. SUMMARY

The research questions were focused on Habermasian normative-reasoning in deliberative democracy. The methods used to address the questions were elite (snowball method) sampling of three case communities and qualitative analyses of evaluations done by highly experienced participants in consensus-building processes. What I found was the organizational context and criteria for evaluating discourse analogous to Habermasian criteria for normative validity. There were some notable differences between their evaluative criteria and those operationalized in David Dayton's application of John Forester's work. The research reported here is an empirical investigation of the post modern critique of separations between fact and value. This means that it not only describes the idealizations of good democratic process in these consensus-based communities, but it also addresses and explains Jürgen Habermas' socio-philosophical reformulation of Kant's Theory of Justice. Specifically, This research illuminates ramifications of two concepts that Habermas adds to Kant's formulation of rationality. Kant separated objectivity from subjectivity. Habermas adds the concepts of subjective validity, intersubjective validity and communicative validity. Considerations raised in this study are intended to aid theorists in applied fields of public policy and planning when designing rigorous evaluation protocols for participatory democratic processes.
Evaluating democratic deliberation is difficult, but judgments must be made. In the face of challenges to democratic governance, planners are asked to verify what is accomplished, or not, in consensus-building processes. Habermas' work has contributed a large impetus and promise of foundations for theories of deliberative democracy in the last twenty years. His work is now receiving less attention in planning circles and is criticized for unwieldy abstractions and lack of practical application. John Forester and others have moved to more practical theorizing about public discourse in planning. In this study I attempt to show that the abstract theoretical work should be revisited for purposes of evaluating planning and policy processes, for example when documenting responses to evaluative questions such as: Did a particular consensus-building process work well? What went wrong?

I understood Frankfurt School theories in terms of anti-authoritarian critiques of social science and saw parallels in the experimental power-sharing in secular, but Quaker-inspired intentional communities. From a nation wide population, I located three communities with characteristics meeting Habermas' criteria for institutionally supported democratic discourse on norms. These characteristics include holding property in common and requiring voluntary consent among all members for policy decisions. They rely on formal procedures to insure policy legitimacy. I knew they held democratic values similar enough to Habermas' to make a
valuable comparison. I hoped to illustrate examples of formal group reasoning on subjective representation and intersubjective legitimacy by people who may have never heard of Habermas. The goal of the study was to explore evaluations made by participants of The Consensus Process in successful intentional communities and to compare them with criteria from Jürgen Habermas' Discourse Ethics.

Highly misunderstood, the Theory of Communicative Action (T.C.A.) outlines mechanisms for deliberating on contested norms. It provides the theoretical basis for asserting that distortions in communications can be methodically checked and minimized if conditions (especially power-structure conditions) are created and maintained in which discussants can make, challenge and redeem validity claims. It also provides the theoretical basis for explaining the systematic distortions in communications which are caused by power distributions and it supports explanations of structural power distributions in terms of communicative structures of groups and society. Habermas insists that in reasoned discourse we must necessarily designate intersubjective and communicative concerns in addition to our accustomed modern designations of subjective and objective concerns. Each has its own forms of challenge and validation. I looked for ways in which community participants might do the same. They did, but emphasized intersubjective concerns and the communities' ability to create environments in which they could acknowledge each other's subjective
concerns. This was described in terms of "voice" and "being heard". That is, deliberation is the process of evaluating norms together aloud by checking claims and these communities, like Habermas, had high standards for establishing whether a legitimate intersubjective consensus had been voiced. One way of voicing this concern was in the demand that a thorough process be followed before one member could claim to voice the consensus of the rest. That is, legitimate processes were required before a member could legitimately say he or she spoke for the collective voice of the community.

While analyzing interviewee's evaluations of their processes, I learned the practical utility of identifying validity claims. Comparisons between their criteria and Forester's Habermasian criteria illustrate practical application of Habermas' discourse ethic. Sophisticated process rules and facilitation skills largely paralleled the recommendation of discourse ethics. From Habermas' point of view, this discourse ethic describes a universal ability for humans to understand each other when they agree or disagree on what would be best. This Habermasian discourse ethic enables humans to deliberate on norms, provided speakers allow each other to challenge and possibly redeem claims they make in their statements. The community participants I interviewed described something very much like this when they evaluated their various consensus-building processes. This insistence on allowing each other opportunity to make, challenge and
redefine claims allowed them to think and feel together aloud, step by step. This is the definition of consensus process used for this research, con = together and sensus = a reflection on thoughts and feelings on a topic. They evaluated their own meeting processes with democratic principles paralleling these Habermasian criteria and facilitated their formal deliberations accordingly. They deliberated across differences in values and were able to teach the process to new members. They created common understandings of previously disputed values. They shaped agendas collaboratively as new needs arose. With increasing levels of experience, communities were also able to better recognize the finality and ability to modify decisions, that is they knew whether they had reached a "real consensus." While their evaluations were overwhelmingly positive, the strengths of their policy insights were made apparent in lengthy descriptions of their communities' problems, not in overly rosy descriptions of conflict-free lives. The results also suggest that these and their related networks of communities have evaluated policy and planning deliberations in practical ways for generations.

These three communities corroborate Habermas' assertions that deliberative democracy necessarily elicits subjective and intersubjective assertions of value from individual participants and from the collective as a whole. It elicits deliberation on contested meanings and a wide array of communicative competencies in addition to more familiar claims to
objective facts. Each of these types of validity are challenged or redeemed in specific ways. Finally, this study suggests an emphasis on procedural rules for policy deliberation may protect otherwise marginal voices if all four types of claims are allowed to be challenged and reformulated, or revalidated. In this way, these communities' purposes are similar to the efforts of those working for greater citizen participation and civic capacity in urban and regional policy and planning. Since these communities are intimately involved with the design and development of social and institutionalized practices for participatory democracy, the cross-fertilization of theory and practice has the potential to offer a significant benefit to each.
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APPENDIX A. ROCHELDALE PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION

This section has three examples of principles which, in theory, are shared by all organizations calling themselves co-ops. The Rochdale Principles of Cooperation and part of Mercer's 1931 essay about them by this prominent advocate and educator for cooperatives are presented below. Notice that democratic control for decision making is combined with economic, legal and political elements to greater align the organizations' philosophic and structural foundations. Versions of the Rochdale Principles are adopted by cooperatives around the world and can be found through the International Co-operative Alliance or in the literature of individual cooperatives.

Item: Rochdale Principles of Cooperation of 1844, with Comments from 1931

"1. Open membership.
2. Democratic control (one man, one vote).
3. Distribution of surplus in proportion to trade.
4. Payment of limited interest on capital.
5. Political and religious neutrality.
6. Cash trading (no credit extended).
7. Promotion of education."

"On the day that the Pioneers adopted the method of 'open membership' they laid the foundation stone of the International Co-operative Common-wealth. Never while it holds fast to this grand Principle of Universality, can Co-operation degenerate into any form of particularism. Before the impact of that principle all the barriers of race, colour, creed, class, and party are broken down. Never can a Co-operative Movement built upon the Principle of Universality be less than universal in its scope, its purpose, its spirit, or its appeal.

The Pioneers decided that the capital they used 'should be of their own providing', that the method of "one member one vote" should obtain in the government' of their Society; that all members, whether men or women, should have equal rights; and that the
powers of management should be placed in the hands of officers elected periodically. These methods are familiar today. They were less familiar in 1843, and were probably then borrowed from the programme set forth in the 'People's Charter'. What secret do they hold? Those methods are the very substance of the Master Principle of Democracy.

When the Pioneers included those simple methods in their rules they made the original Co-operative Declaration of Independence. They refused to hire capital from persons not of their own body, for they were well aware that he who borrows is a servant of him who lends, and they were not willing to be enslaved to any money-lender. And what is even more important, they recognized that Democracy is not only a form of government, but also a declaration of the Rights of Man. By the method they adopted the power to govern was given to each member as a human being, irrespective of the amount of the capital each owned. Long before States had learnt to distinguish between the rights of man and the claims of money, the Pioneers established the Principle of Democracy, as the second basic principle of Co-operation.” (Thomas William Mercer, 1931)

The Rochdale Principles of Cooperation are attributed to the Rochdale Pioneers, a group of poverty struck textile industry laborers of a neighborhood in London who opened an embarrassingly small and under stocked storefront with collectively purchased foods. This coop was formed in a place and time when unadulterated and fairly measured goods were otherwise extremely difficult to obtain. The Rochdale Pioneers grew steadily and were long lasting. They are considered the inspiration for an international movement of cooperative organizing since the nineteenth century. Their principles are still the standard for cooperatively organized enterprise.

Many cooperatives use some version of the Rochdale Principles in their organizational documentation. The above version of the Rochdale principles was found on the internet and chosen for illustration purposes because of its well developed explanation of each principle. See Weavers' Way Cooperative in the reference section.
"OPEN, VOLUNTARY MEMBERSHIP. Membership in a cooperative society should be voluntary and available without artificial restriction or any social, political, racial or religious discrimination, to all persons who can make use of its services and are willing to accept the responsibilities of membership.

DEMOCRATIC CONTROL. Cooperative societies are democratic organizations. Their affairs should be administered by persons elected or appointed in a manner agreed to by the members and accountable to them. Members of primary societies should enjoy equal rights of voting (one member, one vote) and participation in decisions affecting their society. In other than primary societies the administration should be conducted on a democratic basis in a suitable form.

LIMITED RETURN, IF ANY, ON EQUITY CAPITAL. Share capital should only receive a strictly limited rate of interest.

NET SURPLUS BELONGS TO USER-OWNERS. The economic results arising out of the operations of a society belong to the members of that society and should be distributed in such a manner as would avoid one member gaining at the expense of others. This may be done by decision of the members as follows: a) by provision for development of the business of the cooperative; b) by provision of common services; or c) by distribution among the members in proportion to their transactions with the society.

HONEST BUSINESS PRACTICES. Cooperatives should deal openly, honestly, and honorably with their members and the general public.

ULTIMATE AIM IS TO ADVANCE COMMON GOOD. The ultimate aim of all cooperatives should be to aid in the participatory definition and the advancement of the common good.

EDUCATION. All cooperative societies should make provision for the education of their members, officers, and employees and of the general public in the principles and techniques of cooperation, both economic and democratic.

COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES. All cooperative organizations, in order to best serve the interest of their members and their communities, should actively cooperate in every practical way with other cooperatives at local, national, and international levels."
APPENDIX B. CRITERIA USED TO SELECT CASE COMMUNITIES

1. HOLDING COMMON PROPERTY.

These communities should hold property in common and require voluntary consent among all members for policy decisions.

I did a national search for communities using consensus to decide issues related to control of real property. While there were many communities using the process to decide issues such as chore sharing, or other non-economic issues, these groups would have had less at stake in their decisions and having less at stake was likely to lead to less formality in their decision processes and fewer clear opportunities for investigating their methods.

I also determined communities should be residential rather than interest, project or business based. A non-residential worker-owned cooperative would have met the criteria for shared economic control, but residency added degrees of intimacy to their commitments. They had to live with each other and the decisions they made together.

2. PROCEDURES AND OWNERSHIP STRUCTURES

I sought communities utilizing formal procedures and property ownership structures which supported their efforts to make decisions by consensus. I looked for descriptions of the current organizational structure of each community and for the relations between people and groups, their social structure. Some of the power relations I expected to find could be expressed as owner versus renter, core members versus more peripheral members and formal roles versus informal roles. The developers of intentional communities interviewed in this study made explicit efforts to create and use decision-making processes enhancing equality among members in terms of human dignity and avoiding oppressive uses of power. It followed that communities with flat versus hierarchical organizational structures would place more importance on and would have more at stake in their abilities to make mutually agreeable and binding policy decisions. They relied as little as possible on power hierarchies which were not discursively established.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES REQUIRING CONSENSUS EXPERIENCE

Another indicator of experience using consensus was an organizational structure which gave formally equal roles to co-owners of common property. In other words, I looked for flat organizational structures.
indicating they would have frequent experiences making decisions when no one could claim to be the boss. This was one indication of concrete experience with consensus decision making. These communities conscious attempts to create an even playing-field between members and so more closely approximated the context described in the discourse ethics. That is, agreements were made by reasoning together instead of adopting or rebelling against unexamined tradition, or use of force. For example, in the course of discussion in a community with a mix of owners and renters, participants would likely be cognizant that an owner could resort to state support for forcing a renter to leave their home regardless of the value of their reasoning. In this study, the goal was to select case communities that made conscious attempts to share that ownership control between equal membership shareholders instead of relying on such owner-renter dynamics.

I consider this relationship between the horizontal or flat shape of a community's organizational structure and the intensification of consensus experience as a manifestation of The Consensus Process being more central to the organizational structure. Variations on this shape might have included resident workers reaching consensus together on daily tasks they completed on a privately owned farm, or use of consensus between resident-owners of a cooperatively-owned single room occupancy (SRO) building. The comparison would have shown more horizontal power-equality between owners of the cooperative. The Consensus Process is more central, that is, it has more power and the decisions can be wielded with more authority when property control is held by a body running itself by consensus.
### APPENDIX C. EXPERIMENTAL QUANTITATIVE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

**Table 27. Testable Draft of a Habermasian Evaluation Survey Instrument**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What would you like to call this issue?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many meetings, or sessions were used to decide this issue?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please circle the closest answer.</td>
<td>(1 or 2), (Roughly 5), (Probably 10 or more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please circle the closest answer for each statement below. They are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about a process used to make a decision on an issue, no matter how</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>many meetings were involved. Each one is about the overall process, by the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time the deliberations were stopped.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Could the group tell the difference between ideas and feelings?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Was the process instrumentally effective?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Was the group showing objective reasoning?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Were the facts accurate?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Did the process make a positive emotional impact on participants?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Was the process trustworthy?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Was the process benefited by participants’ attitudes?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Was the process inclusive?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Did the process steps, or rules serve their intended function?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Were the process steps, or rules applied appropriately?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Did the process achieve a real consensus?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Was power used appropriately in the process?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Did the process take an appropriate amount of time?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Did the group change their values, or understanding through the</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>process?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Were participants communicating in ways each other could understand?</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Untested developmental version of a survey instrument to be used for evaluation purposes in democratic deliberations. The questions were derived from discourse analyses of process evaluations in three highly successful and experienced resident controlled and consensus-based housing associations. Also see (Dayton 2000) and Forester (1993). Sutter, K. 2006*
APPENDIX D. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. NOMINATION QUESTIONS

The following script was prepared for initial telephone calls with community contacts. I did not use these questions word-for-word if it would break the flow of conversation.

a. "One of the goals for this research is to share the wealth of experience that has developed inside intentional communities. I am hoping to speak to the most experienced members in the most experienced groups which use consensus."

b. "Which communities have used The Consensus Process the longest?"

c. "Which are the oldest communities you know of that use The Consensus Process?"

d. "Which are the largest communities you know of that use consensus?"

e. "Do you know of networks of communities that use consensus?"

f. "I am looking for nominations for the most experienced people in the most experienced communities, as well as less experienced people in those same communities. Who are the most experienced people using consensus that you know of?"

g. "Whom would you suggest I speak to in your community?"

h. "Why them?"

i. "Can you suggest people in other communities?"

j. "Why them?"

2. QUESTIONS ASKED OF NOMINEES

The following questions were used to establish the level of experience:

a. "How large is the community?"

b. "What do you call your decision-making processes?"

c. "For how long has your community been using consensus?"

d. "Does your community coordinate resources by consensus?"

e. "What levels of your community-organization use consensus and is everyone invited?"

f. "How large a group of people will get together for a consensus meeting?"

g. "How much time is spent in consensus meetings in your community?"

h. "Does your community resolve conflicts by consensus?"

i. "What type of ownership structure do you have?"

j. "What philosophies have influenced your community and members?"

3. INFORMAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN CASE COMMUNITIES

The following questions were asked informally of my first contacts in each case community as opportunity arose:

a. "What would an organizational chart look like with owners, renters, temporary, or permanent members on it?"

b. "How would you draw the way your community is organized?"

c. "Do you know if something like an organizational chart exists somewhere else?"

d. "How are decisions made?"
e. “Who owns the land?”
f. “Who owns the houses?”
g. “Does the community have a description of itself in legal terms?”
h. “Are there different types of membership in the community?”
i. “Do those different types of membership come with differences in their participation in the policy-making process?”

4. FORMAL TAPED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following questions were asked of selected participants in each case community in their home, the commons, or some other quiet and private place for concentration and confidentiality.

a. (Date, time, place and interviewee pseudonym)
b. “Please describe an issue whose processes went particularly well, or particularly poorly. If you can think of more than one, please choose the more recent.” (Occasionally interviewees would restart with a second more complex issue when they learned how many questions I would be asking.)
c. “Can you describe the community events and conversations that led up to that issue?”
d. “What did you like about the process for that issue?”
e. “What did you not like about the process for that issue?”
f. “Can you think of anything else you liked or didn’t like?”
g. “What attempts were made to make the process better?”
h. “What worked?”
i. “What didn’t work?”
j. “Can you think of anything else that worked or didn’t work?”
k. “What attempts made the process worse?”
l. “Can you think of anything else that made the process worse?”
m. “Did you like the outcome?”
n. “Can you think of anything else you’d like to say about the outcome?”
o. “What would you do differently in the future?”
p. “Would you like to summarize what you have said so far?”
q. “Thank-you. ...”

END