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What Is At Stake In Deliberative Inquiry? A Review About A Deliberative Practice.

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Abstract: Despite the growing interest in deliberative and dialogue models the research literature lacks investigations of the underlying assumptions of deliberative methods. Starting from the current popularity as well as the broad use of the method of deliberative inquiry -one example of such a deliberative method- this article aims to identify approaches and underlying assumptions of deliberative inquiry. Therefor a systematic literature review of empirical research, of descriptions of practical deliberative procedures and of theoretical research of deliberative inquiry is used. This review demonstrates that the method of deliberative inquiry is elaborated and used within different contexts with a corresponding range of rationales: From (1) a procedure to tackle curriculum questions through (2) a way of investigating and agreeing upon policy actions to (3) collaboratively researching issues. By describing the three approaches and by investigating the assumptions of deliberative inquiry within each approach, we demonstrate a range of rationales behind this method. Despite the distinctions, the primary goal of all manifestations of deliberative inquiry is similar: to contemplate a practical problem in a systemic and collaborative way, to weigh arguments for possible solutions and to make (even temporarily) a decision. This article concludes with future research perspectives.

Key words: *Deliberative inquiry, deliberative democracy, curriculum studies, collaborative research*

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1. The context: a demand for deliberative practices

Dealing with a practical problem often requires a decision: a choice for a particular policy, a decision to act in a certain way, the selection of a program, a tool, a proposal or a method. Such a decision is often value-laden (Burchardt, 2014): the appraisal is based upon (implicit) moral values, rules of conduct and personal opinions. When the practical problem affects a group or community, deliberative practices could support this decision making process (Evans and Kotchetkova, 2009). Deliberative methods are those activities and processes where participants thoughtfully and thoroughly weigh arguments, discuss options and collaboratively make decisions about particular and urgent questions in communities or organizations. These methods hold out the possibility of bringing forth new knowledge and ideas capable of creating and legitimizing new interests. They can reshape our understanding of existing interests, and, can influence political pathways (Fischer, 2003). Moreover, in deliberative methods research is used not so much to give participants a 'voice' that is then interpreted and re-presented by the researcher, but to create a process in which the participants themselves produce conclusions that can then be relayed to others (e.g. policy-makers) (Evans and Kotchetkova, 2009). Not only more legitimate and better informed decision-making (Cohen, 2003; Bekkers and Edwards, 2007), but also the transformation of the preferences of the participants are possible outcomes of such deliberative practices (Button and Ryfe, 2005).

Moreover, there is a growing demand to ground decisions in evidence. While this is obvious in life sciences, nursing and medicine studies (e.g. Songur et al., 2017) where evidence-based medicine is conceived of as the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients (Sackett et al., 1996), there is also an increasing interest in evidence-based practice across the social disciplines (e.g. education, leadership and policy studies). Professionals are asked, individually and collectively, to base actions on existing knowledge and research: researchers' findings, scientific proof or state of the art knowledge have to justify a particular chosen action in order to act in an evidence-based manner. *Deliberative inquiry* seems to address the need for evidence-based practice in a very specific way.

Combining such a policy component –making a decision- and a research component – gathering information and grounding a decision in evidence- could be done with *deliberative inquiry*^j. This method combines a component of deliberation and a component of inquiry. In methodological overviews (Kanuka, 2010; Savin-Baden and Major, 2013) deliberative inquiry is described as a collaborative research approach integrating investigation and analyzing different viewpoints with negotiation and dialogical deliberation of these perspectives in order to make a decision, determine an action or design a solution. As such, *deliberative inquiry* is an example of a deliberative method.

Deliberative methods can broadly be described as methods where the group needs to intentionally deliberate the issues involved, i.e., to talk and listen, reflect and learn before they can develop well-founded actions, plans or decisions (Jordan, 2016). They involve an iterative two-way dialogue between representatives of the public and the deliberation sponsor (researchers, government or other agencies) (Degeling et al., 2015). Likewise deliberative methods tend to overlap with dialogue methods which focus on group conversation processes to jointly create meaning and a shared understanding of real-world problems by bringing together knowledge from relevant disciplines and stakeholders (McDonald et al., 2013). Under the umbrella term of dialogue models, scholars make a distinction between (1) dialogue models

for understanding a problem broadly whereby judgments are integrated and (2) dialogue models for understanding particular aspects of a problem whereby visions, world views, interests and values are integrated (McDonald et al., 2013).

Despite the growing interest in deliberative and dialogue models (Degeling et al., 2015; Abelson et al., 2003; Caluwaerts and Reuchamps, 2015; Carpini et al., 2004; McDonald et al., 2013; Burchardt, 2014), the research literature lacks investigations of the underlying assumptions of deliberative methods. Empirical research on deliberative methods and a critical analysis of the legitimacy, the rationales and the underpinning assumptions appear as two worlds. This study shall therefore incorporate empirical research, descriptions of practical deliberative procedures and theoretical research to overcome this gap. In order to make the challenge achievable, the focus of this study is mainly on the method or procedure of *deliberative inquiry*. By examining the underlying assumptions and rationales of deliberative inquiry, we shall demonstrate a range of possibilities and divergent outcomes when using this method.

2. Research questions and literature

An uneasiness with the considerable variability amongst scholars using and modelling *deliberative inquiry*, some apparently without even awareness of each other's work¹ accompanied our own elaboration of this method. Investigation of the literature about deliberative inquiry, deliberative methods, deliberative curriculum inquiry and deliberative democracy revealed that *deliberative inquiry* has been used and shaped in rather different ways. Scholars tend to apply and use deliberative inquiry as a procedure, an approach, an inquiring system, a tool, a democratic method and a democratic ideal, sometimes interchangeable, sometimes at the same time. In this study we shall answer the question 'what are different approaches to deliberative inquiry'. Furthermore, answering the research question about the approaches to deliberative inquiry seemed impossible without investigating what is at stake in deliberative inquiry in the different approaches that have used and shaped this deliberative method. The second research question was thus constructed as 'what is the rationale for deliberative inquiry in the different approaches that used and shaped this method?'.

Although *deliberation* and *inquiry* touches upon the questions that are equally dealt with within new perspectives on (interdisciplinary) science like Mode 2 science (Gibbons et al., 1994), transdisciplinary research (see Zscheischler and Rogga, 2015) and Integration and Implementation sciences (I2S) (Bammer, 2013; 2016; 2017), this study focusses primarily on the method of *deliberative inquiry*. Therefore, the primary literature list for this study consisted of all retrieved papers, journal articles and book chapters where *deliberative inquiry* was used, either in the title or in the abstract. The search was conducted in three international databases (Eric, Scopus and Web of Science) and enriched with snowball sampling (Noy, 2008). In 20 retrieved articles "deliberative inquiry" was used in the title or in the abstract. Search period is limited to the period 1982 -when one of the acknowledged coiners of the phrase of 'deliberative inquiry' introduced the concept (W.A. Reid, 1982)- till present. A second body of literature is

¹ Both Orpwood (1980) and Asif & Klein (2009) pointed out that Churchman (1971) coined the phrase of deliberative inquiry. However Harris (1991) declared that William Reid was the coiner of the phrase. In a publication of Kanuka and her colleagues (2007), they considered themselves the inventors of deliberative inquiry. In a 2012 publication, Carcasson regarded the coining of the phrase as his work.

used to investigate the rationale for deliberative inquiry in the different approaches. These publications are chosen because they clarify the ontological and epistemological principles of the three approaches. Figure 1 gives an overview of the literature used to analyze the three approaches of deliberative inquiry.

	<i>Deliberative inquiry</i> elaborated by	Rationales of the approach
Curriculum studies	Aikenhead, 2006 Bonser & Grundy, 1998 Christodoulou, 2010 Hansen, 2008 Harris, 1991 Mooney Simmie & Lang, 2018 Orpwood 1980; 1985 Reid e.a., 2012 Scott, 1996 Sleezer, e.a., 1998 Zeuli & Buchman, 1988	Biesta, 2013; 2015 Connelly, 2013 Reid, 1999a; 1999b Schwab e.a., 1978 Schwab, 2013 (reprint) Westbury, 2013
Deliberative democracy	Carcasson, 2012 Carcasson & Sprain, 2016 Savin-Baden & Major, 2013	Burchardt, 2014 Cohen, 2003 Evans & Kotchetkova, 2009 Fishkin, 2011 Ryfe, 2005 Sprain, 2017 Thompson, 2008
Qualitative research	Ackerly, 2000 Asif & Klein, 2007; 2009 Evans e.a. 2009 Kakabadse e.a. 2011 Kanuka, 2010 Kelland & Kanuka, 2007	Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011 Alvesson & Sandberg, 2014 Bammer, 2016; 2017 Burchardt, 2014 Evans & Kotchetkova, 2009 Flyvbjerg, 2011 Koro-Ljungberg, 2014; 2015 Savin-Baden & Major, 2013

Figure 1 Overview of the literature used to analyze three approaches of deliberative inquiry

The first (chronologically speaking) appearance of the phrase *deliberative inquiry* arose within a specific approach to curriculum studies; this approach will be clarified in §3. Followed in §4 by defining deliberative inquiry as a vehicle for deliberative democracy. §5 links *deliberative inquiry* to qualitative inquiry.

3. Deliberative inquiry as practical reasoning for curriculum questions: The method of the Practical

At the end of the seventies and beginning of the eighties of the previous century, curriculum experts strove toward a paradigm shift in the field of curriculum studies, a shift toward 'new' curriculum studies (Westbury, 2013), toward a practical curriculum discipline instead of theoretical knowledge generation about the curriculum. Real curriculum problems, it was said, originate particularly in schools, not in the research literature (Orpwood, 1985). In order to become a practical curriculum discipline, choice and action rather than theoretical pursuits should be the focus of attention of curriculum specialists (Harris, 1991; Christodoulou, 2010). Within this reform movement, Joseph Schwab was the leading intellectual figure and, at the same time, was the leading critic of (existing) curriculum research (Connelly, 2013). Schwab proposed deliberation as the method to consider and decide on a particular choice or a particular action in a curriculum. He understood deliberation as a practical method to improve the capability to make good decisions and professional judgments in a consensual approach with others (Mooney Simmie and Lang, 2018). Based on this idea of deliberation, William Reid, a former student of Schwab, coined the phrase *deliberative inquiry* (Harris, 1991; Christodoulou, 2010) and became a significant contributor to the characterization of deliberative inquiry in the field of curriculum studies.

What is at stake in this conceptualization of deliberative inquiry is solving, at least temporarily, a specific kind of curriculum question. These questions are of the kind of uncertain, particular curriculum problems such as what should be taught in our schools?, by what means?, to whom?, under what circumstances? and with what end in view? (W.A. Reid, 1999a). And the result of this inquiring process is not a claim to general knowledge, but rather a plan of action. Such an outline of an action is grounded by both reality judgments and value judgments: on uncertain grounds, related to a specific context and desired ends, taking into account an existing state of affairs, involving adjudication among conflicting goals and values, and with unpredictable outcomes (Harris, 1991). Situated within this approach, deliberative inquiry is a kind of contribution to enduring curriculum reform (Harris, 1993): its goal is not merely to reach justified decisions, but also to implement these decisions in social and institutional contexts (Harris, 1991). Moreover such deliberative communication is considered to be a way of dealing with the moral dimension of teaching and the role of the teacher acting with professional responsibility (Englund, 2016).

3.1 The Practical: A language for Curriculum

Joseph -Joe- Schwab (Chicago, 1909-1988), a genetic biologist, curriculum expert and educational philosopherⁱⁱ, is, together with John Dewey, one of the key figures in the deliberative tradition in education. Schwab was concerned about the practice-theory-nexus and wrote *The Practical*, a series of practical papers (J.J. Schwab, 1969; J.J. Schwab et al., 1978; J.J. Schwab, 1983) or studies that try to identify the deployment of deliberation in practical issues of education and the curriculum. In a remarkable and highly remarked upon address -*The Practical: A language for Curriculum* - to his colleagues at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association of 1969, Schwab declared the field of curriculum moribund. This self-

described crisis in the field of curriculum studies refers to a perceived conceptual disunity and lack of practical application of curriculum studies to school practices (Au, 2012) caused by the reliance of curriculum studies on theory in an area where theory is inappropriate or inadequate (J.J. Schwab, 1969). Among other things, he proposed an alternative to the rather linear curriculum developmental modelsⁱⁱⁱ common in those times. According to Ilene Harris (1993) this paradigm focused on the systematic analysis of purposes and objectives, selection and organization of learning experiences, evaluation of students' performance and of curricula, and concordance among goals, teaching and learning experiences, and evaluation. It has been translated into a quasi-technology, firmly grounded in a focus on specific behavioral objectives and strongly linked with empirical-analytical, positivistic behavioral science evaluation and research methodologies.

In contrast, for Joseph Schwab (1983, p.240), the curriculum is a thoroughly practical matter:

"Curriculum is (...). What is successfully conveyed. By committed teachers. Using appropriate materials and methods. Of legitimated matters. Which are chosen via serious reflection on alternatives. By those involved in the teaching of a specifiable and known group of students. Who will differ from time to time and place to place."

As a teacher and a scholar he was concerned with *this* classroom, with a careful analysis of the characteristics of the students he had *this* semester, with the here-and-now of the next class in *this* course, in *this* program (Westbury and Wilkof, 1978). This description also mirrors the pragmatic perspective of Schwab: what is worth learning is contextually contingent. The key question for curriculum research is thus what ought to be done in a particular class and not what should be learned by all students.

However Michael Connelly (2013, p.628) warns us: 'practical' sounds down to earth, even gritty (Connelly, 2013, p. 628). Schwab was not giving practical advices to teachers of the kind of 'use this handbook of mathematics', or 'implement this evaluation strategy'. On the contrary, he reconceptualized the relationship between theory and practice in curriculum studies. And he did so by contrasting the nature of practical and of theoretical principles as well as by crafting a dialectic form of principle of theory/practice relations. Schwab was arguing against a particular form of research that appeared to dominate curriculum and educational scholarship at the time. His arguments seem to be targeted at scientific research in education, research that is based on a particular belief in the power of science narrowly conceived (Biesta, 2013).

Where Schwab sees explanation as the result of theoretic inquiry, the needed outcome for *The Practical* is however action. A particular question of a school, of a local or regional educational organization, a specific problem given this time and this place, something that asks for a decision or an action is what Schwab named a *state of affairs* (W.A. Reid, 1999a; J.J. Schwab et al., 1978). Precisely because there is no fixed roadmap to tackle such a *state of affairs*, precisely because such a particular problem is always situated in the context of an actual, real situation of a school or organization, and precisely because there is not one right solution for such *state of affairs*, it is important to approach it from different perspectives, to deliberate it with others. Thus, for Joseph Schwab, the method to address such questions is the method of deliberation. This method differs from induction and deduction (Schubert, 2010). It cannot be inductive since the target of the method is not a generalization or explanation, but a decision about action in a concrete situation. Deliberative inquiry cannot be deductive either since it deals with the concrete case and not abstractions from cases, and the concrete case cannot be settled by mere application of a principle, for almost every concrete case falls under two or more principles, and is not, therefore, a complete instance of either principle (J.J. Schwab et al., 1978). Deliberation is thus another, alternative method of inquiry of practical inquiry, that must inevitably be used when uncertain questions of what action to take are considered (W.A. Reid, 1999b).^{iv} However this method of inquiry is not easy at all as Schwab stated in an often cited description:

'Deliberation is complex and arduous. It treats both ends and means and must treat them as mutually determining one another. It must try to identify, with respect to both, what facts may be relevant. It must try to ascertain the relevant facts in the concrete case. It must try to identify the desiderata in the case. It must generate alternative solutions. It must make every effort to trace the branching pathways of consequences which may flow from each alternative and affect desiderata. It must then weigh alternatives and their costs and consequences against one another, and choose, not the right alternative, for there is no such thing, but the best one.'

(Joseph J. Schwab, 2013, reprint)

3.2 Deliberative inquiry as a method for curriculum questions

Based on Schwab's idea of deliberation and inquiry, William Reid coined the phrase of *deliberative inquiry* (W.A. Reid, 1982) and Ilene Harris subsequently extended the work of deliberative curriculum inquiry as a policy and action-oriented form of curriculum inquiry (Harris, 1991; W.A. Reid, 1999a). Among other things Reid's work contains an outline of a method -not a fixed procedure- for deliberative inquiry. Reid distinguishes roughly four phases in this method and emphasizes that in each step method and subject matter interact:

- The precondition for starting a deliberative process, deliberative communication, is the emergence of a situation of conflicting views. some kind of difference of view and/or perspective on an issue that may in itself be hard to specify (Englund, 2016). The starting phase is thus not a pre-specified statement of a problem, but a feeling that some *state of affairs* is unsatisfactory. The *state of affairs* is constituted of conditions that are wished to be otherwise and that can be made to be otherwise, however there is no certainty on how to handle this dissatisfaction. There is uncertainty about how to cope with a situation, there is a feeling of inadequacy. The first state of deliberative inquiry is therefore the search for the problem (W.A. Reid, 1999a). (Englund, 2016)
- The search for information emerges and interacts with this search for the problem. No item of information has an automatically privileged status in providing answers. Elements of information need to be collected and brought together but no fact or opinion is immediately evident. Only the deliberative process assigns authority to facts and opinions (W.A. Reid, 1999a). So grounds are established for deciding answers (Christodoulou, 2010).
- The next phase is the search for proposals. These proposals could be mentioned from the beginning of the process. Successful deliberative inquiry however, will invent proposals in the course of deliberation. Essential in this phase is the effort to trace out the consequences of actions (W.A. Reid, 1999a). Participants in the inquiry try to determine the relationship between means and ends in this negotiation process (Christodoulou, 2010). Accordingly deliberative inquiry links the interrelated tasks of doing practical curriculum activity with conducting formal curriculum inquiry (Harris, 1991).
- The final state of deliberative inquiry is the process of resolving the problem: the choice of a course of action through consideration of all available proposals. This answer is never a definite solution since that is impossible for practical problems. Therefore inquiry must attend closely to all possible consequences of the course of action it proposes (W.A. Reid, 1999a). Furthermore, through this way of reasoning, participants move beyond singular cultures and practices to seek alternatives for new ways of understanding issues in complex social systems (Mooney Simmie and Lang, 2018).

Influenced by Schwab and/or Reid and/or Harris, specific curricula, often in the context of

reforming science education, are designed by deliberative inquiry worldwide (Aikenhead, 2006; Bonser and Grundy, 1988; Hansen, 2008; Orpwood, 1980; 1985; L Reid et al., 2012; Sleezer et al., 1998; Williams, 1997; Zeuli and Buchmann, 1988; Scott, 1996; Mooney Simmie and Lang, 2018; Tan and Kim, 2016; Harris, 1993). Three examples, part of the primary literature list, illustrate this line of deliberative curriculum inquiry:

- Graham Orpwood (1980, 1985) and his colleagues used deliberative inquiry to investigate and renew the curriculum of Canadian science education. In the late seventies of the previous century, the Science Council of Canada concluded that science education in primary and secondary education should become a common concern in all the Canadian provinces, especially since there were many critics on the current *state of affairs*. A large study was designed to take into account several characteristics of science curricula and the problems of curriculum change. Within this project different stakeholders worked together in a phase of issue identification (What are the problems?), a phase of data collection (What are the facts?) and a phase of option development (Where do we go from here?) (Orpwood, 1985). The first phase consisted of the publication of discussion papers, in which authors, from various perspectives, offered reflections on science education. In the second phase, groups were conducting analyses of science curriculum policies and analyses of science textbooks. Evidence was also gathered by a survey of science teachers and by case studies of science teaching in various parts of Canada. The final phase consisted of a series of two-day invitational conferences in each province of Canada. The conferences approved four resolutions that called for: new directions for science teaching (toward an emphasis on science-technology-society interactions); improved curriculum resources; a general strategy for teacher training (both pre-service and in-service); and the establishment of a provincial science education council (Orpwood, 1985).
- A second example of deliberative inquiry for curriculum decisions is the Curriculum Workshop of Klaus-Henning Hansen and colleagues (2008). The development of local school plans for science teaching was the main goal of this deliberative inquiry project. Based on ideas of Schwab, Orpwood and Harris, investigating local science practices and deciding upon school plans was done through collaboration amongst schools and teachers. Facilitated by information brochures, initial case studies and deliberations about protocols and curricular documents, local science groups discussed the improvement of their practices, initiatives for the development of the schools' science curriculum and the request of the regional Federal Ministry of Education to develop local 'school plans'. The designed school plans were showing how the school teams wished to work with science standards and organized local activities in subject groups. The final documents were also written for local educational policy making with respect to school-based work on science standards and the work of school-based subject groups (Hansen, 2008).
- Recently the Canadian Dalhousie University implemented deliberative curriculum inquiry to renew their Doctor of Medicine (MD) undergraduate curriculum. 600 faculty members, students, staff and external stakeholders developed program outcomes, completed environment scans of emerging content as well as best practices and designed curricular units for an integrated curriculum. During a one year process a new curriculum was designed in order to prepare MD-students better for their future professional lives. After a retreat -where faculty members, researchers and community stakeholders deliberated on international competence profiles- curriculum scan groups searched literature and good practices for content and educational approaches in medicine education. In a curriculum symposium the scan group reports were subsequently discussed. Finally topic-specific units developed learning objectives. This iterative process was facilitated by wikis and blogs (L Reid et al., 2012).

3.3 Assumptions of deliberative curriculum inquiry

As evidenced in the examples mentioned above, deliberative curriculum inquiry rests on two main assumptions. *First*, there is the assumption that theoretic research may not provide adequate solutions for curricular questions. Curricular problems are, on the contrary, practical problems. Any given theory will be incomplete because it oversimplifies the complexities of practical situations (Hansen, 2008). The curriculum consists of particular actions, interventions within this specific class in this specific place and this specific time. The teacher, the class and the situation modify and adjust the learning theory, the formal school subject or abstract educational aim. The generalizations and warranted conclusions of theoretic research could only give a part of the best possible curricular answer for science education in that particular class of that particular Canadian province or for that specific undergraduate MD course.

Second, this framing of deliberation has a specific ontological (view of reality) and epistemological (view of knowledge) stance. The interpretation of deliberation according to Schwab (and following scholars) fits roughly within the paradigm of pragmatism, a philosophy that centers on the results of communication and the workability of ideas. Central to pragmatism are communities of inquiry with a shared interest, problem or issue trying to resolve doubt through critical reasoning (Hannes and Pearson, 2012). For John Dewey, one of the principal pragmatists, communication appears as a practical, open, generative and creative process. And mind, consciousness, subjectivity, meaning, intelligence, language, rationality, logic, consequence and truth arise only as a result of communication (Biesta, 2015). Pragmatism asserts that reality is that what is practical and knowledge is that what is derived from observation of interaction among a group of individuals and artefacts in their environment (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). Decisions are expected to be obtained by gathering and surveying evidence appraised as to its weight and relevance and actions are expected to be assessed in the light of their practical consequences (Hannes and Pearson, 2012). On the ontological question of 'what is reality' Schwab and following scholars would probably answer 'that what is practical'. In Schwab's account of the practical (1978), 'that what is practical' is not just about specific practices but about the particularity and uncertainty of practical problems. '(P)ractical problems do not present themselves wearing their labels around their necks. Problem situations, to use Dewey's old term for it, present themselves to consciousness, but the character of the problem, its formulation, does not' (J.J. Schwab et al., 1978, p. 316). On the other hand, it is characteristic for practical problems that their nature only becomes clear as the search for relevant information takes place (Orpwood, 1980). These clarifications can originate in deliberations or deliberative inquiries. To the epistemological question of 'what is knowledge?' Schwab would probably have answered 'that what is said, knew, experienced and used by those involved in problem situations.' Accordingly the assumption is that knowledge can change and is changeable, and definite answers or solutions are impossible but exists only given this time, this place. Therefore -and this seems to be the major contribution of the deliberative curriculum studies approach- the method of deliberative inquiry can illuminate a problem situation in such a way that it becomes possible to define and to address.

4. Deliberative inquiry as a vehicle for deliberative democracy

The thinking and writing about deliberative democracy is the second approach that adopted the concept of deliberative inquiry. Deliberative democracy -one of the theories of democracy that became known through the work of James Fishkin- makes an explicit commitment to the democratic principles of political equality and deliberation (Fishkin, 2011): citizens should not only vote for politicians but they also can and have to interact with each other and with experts.

In such a democracy, collective deliberation is a key feature: citizens formulate concrete, rational solutions for social challenges via information and argumentation (Van Reybrouck, 2016). Precisely within the theory and practice of the deliberative democracy movement a specific mode of inquiry has been developed. For more than ten years Martín Carcasson and his colleagues of the Colorado State University Center for Public Deliberation (CPD) have been arguing that high-quality deliberative practice should be considered a specific type of research or inquiry that they entitled as *deliberative inquiry* (Carcasson, 2012). Not only did this research approach emerge from the theory of deliberative democracy, but deliberative inquiry itself is also increasingly seen as a cornerstone (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013) or a core concept (Asif and Klein, 2009) of deliberative democracy.

According to deliberative democracy the central questions to tackle with deliberative inquiry are: what should be done in order to solve this particular problem?, what are possible choices and implications of choices?, and how can we obtain a broad viewpoint and different perspectives on the problem, the choices and actions and their consequences? Hence what is at stake is the legitimacy from the start of a process and the legitimacy of a particular, temporary answer to a complex, urgent problem. Consequently, such a legitimacy has an input, throughput and output-oriented dimension (Bekkers and Edwards, 2007) and it is based on the deliberation amongst and investigation done by participants of a local community. Moreover the coining of the phrase 'deliberative inquiry' makes clear that this legitimacy is at its best when research activities and deliberation activities are intertwined. Nevertheless, it has been argued that this important claimed benefit is inherent to the process, not a consequence of it and it is not appropriately subjected to direct empirical investigation (Thompson, 2008).

In order to situate this approach of deliberative inquiry, we will first describe some essentials of deliberative democracy and deliberative methods.

4.1 Deliberative democracy and deliberative methods

An attribute of democratic societies is that it is through elections that we represent ourselves in policy. Our elected representatives are delegated to speak in our names in the parliaments and assemblies, to represent ourselves in the local, regional, national or transnational governments and to make decisions -mostly designed by the majority rule- for us. Through participation in public debates, through mini-publics and citizen forums, we can choose not only to delegate our voices but to discuss issues as equals and face-to-face. As stated by James Fishkin (2011, p.80) combining this political equality with deliberations requires that the deliberation takes place on a human scale, on the scale of the face-to-face democracy. Therefore a deliberative democracy tends towards practices where participants are thoughtfully and thoroughly weighing arguments, discussing options and collaboratively taking decisions about particular and urgent questions in communities. A deliberative democracy is thus an association whose affairs are governed by the public deliberation of its members (Cohen, 2003). This is for Cohen rooted in the intuitive ideal of a democratic association in which the justification of the terms and conditions of association proceeds through public argument and reasoning among equal citizens. Citizens in such an order share a commitment to the resolution of problems of collective choice through public reasoning, and regard their basic institutions as legitimate in so far as they establish the framework for free public deliberation.

A wide range of deliberative methods, projects and activities address the challenges of deliberative democracy and have been carried out worldwide. Deliberative democrats have developed mini-publics such as citizen's panels, consensus conferences, planning cells and deliberative polls (Goodin and Dryzek, 2006), citizens' juries (Smith and Wales, 2000), deliberative polling (Fishkin and Luskin, 2005), deliberative mapping (Burgess et al., 2007), policy Delphi-method (Brydon and Vining, 2016), 21st Century Town Meetings (Elliott et al., 2005), open forum as a form of deep democracy (Mindell, 2002), National Issues Forums

(Melville et al., 2005), participatory budgeting (or public budget consultation) (Wampler, 2007; Gilman, 2016), scenario planning (Amer et al., 2013), the World Café (Brown, 2002) and deliberative or communicative (city) planning (Umemoto and Igarashi, 2009). Common features of deliberative methods include (1) providing participants with balanced factual information about the issue being considered (Abelson et al., 2003; Degeling et al., 2015) (Degeling et al., 2015) (2) the opportunity for free and open discussion and debate within and between citizens and researchers or policy actors or both (Degeling et al., 2015) whereby participants are encouraged to discuss and challenge the information and consider each other's views (Abelson et al., 2003) before (3) making a final decision or recommendation for action (Abelson et al., 2003). The outcome of a deliberative process does not have to be a consensus view but it does represent the considered opinion of lay citizens and could, in principle, form a powerful input into any decision-making process (Evans and Kotchetkova, 2009). This assumption is also taken for granted in the conceptualization of the deliberative inquiry in question.

4.2 Deliberative inquiry within deliberative democracy

The CPD presents deliberative inquiry as an iterative model or as a cyclical learning process. This deliberative inquiry model combines policy analysis of public discourse with structured, productive interaction between relevant parties, all with an eye toward identifying and supporting the move to action by a broad range of actors (Carcasson and Sprain, 2016). In this model, four related tasks of deliberative inquiry are outlined: deliberative issue analysis, convening, facilitating deliberative engagement and reporting. Action, at the middle of the cycle is not technically part of the deliberative approach, but is an important consequence and may occur after going through the cycle once or several times (Carcasson, 2012; Carcasson and Sprain, 2016; Savin-Baden and Major, 2013).

The starting point for this deliberative inquiry process is a wicked problem (Rittel and Webber, 1973). There is no definitive formulation of a wicked problem and possible solutions are not true-or-false, but good-or-bad (Rittel and Webber, 1973). Such a problem involves uncertainty and confusing information, has many decision-makers and affected parties with different and conflicting values and promise ramifications for the whole system (Ferkany & Whyte, 2012 in Carcasson & Sprain, 2016). A wicked problem is seen as one of those complex, systemic, and interrelated problems that inherently involve competing underlying values and tradeoffs that cannot be avoided (Carcasson, 2012), it is messy, circular or even aggressive (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). Within a deliberative inquiry cycle particular wicked problems can be explored and decisions upon action can be elaborated in order to manage the issue (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). Therefore Carcasson (2012) and Carcasson & Sprain (2016) propose four interrelated tasks:

- In this conceptualization the first task of a deliberative inquiry is an analysis of an issue at stake (*deliberative issue analysis*). Such an analysis involves researching issues, positions, and community voices, building a clear map of the issue, and developing the best possible framework for deliberation. This issue analysis has to enable participants to consider multiple perspectives and tensions of an issue (Carcasson and Sprain, 2016) and can be done with background materials or information guides, as long as it is (Carcasson and Sprain, 2016) balanced factual information about the issue being considered (Abelson et al., 2003; Degeling et al., 2015);
- *Convening*, the second task, is about bringing people together for deliberations, gathering stakeholders around the issue (Carcasson and Sprain, 2016). Who can, will may or must participate in a deliberative encounter is a crucial aspect in the deliberative process. In order to obtain legitimate answers, the quality of representation needs to be considered. This aspect of the so called input legitimacy of deliberative events (Bekkers

and Edwards, 2007) deals with citizens' opportunities to influence the process and the outcomes of the deliberation (Caluwaerts and Reuchamps, 2015; Ryfe, 2005);

- *Facilitating interactive communication* focusses on the task of designing processes to discuss issues through interactive communication. This task –often seen as the heart of a deliberative process- requires multiple design features such as deliberatively framed goals and background material, ground rules, small groups with trained facilitators, note takers, and ample time (Carcasson and Sprain, 2016);
- Eventually the task of *reporting* involves the analysis and publishing of what occurred during the first three tasks. The goal of the (provisional) end of the circle is to produce a tangible record of the work, to inform broader audiences, and to help move the public conversation forward. Reports from deliberative forums are seen as an important source of information to advocacy organizations, technical experts, and opinion polls. Furthermore they can serve as a starting point for next convening, thereby setting up subsequent deliberative issue analysis and future engagement (Carcasson and Sprain, 2016). A collective decision is an essential conceptual criterion for a deliberation: from the perspective of deliberative democracy, other purposes - such as learning about issues, gaining a sense of efficacy, or developing a better understanding of opposing views - should be regarded as instrumental to this aim (Thompson, 2008).

This conceptualization of deliberative inquiry is intended to serve as a practical guide and as a theoretical framework to understand deliberation. According to Carcasson and Sprain (2016) the deliberative inquiry cycle can be a useful tool for practitioners of mini-publics and citizen forums to focus on the four tasks of deliberation in order to address wicked problems. Additionally, for them the cycle can also act as a concept map to understand deliberation as a learning process with particular key elements and practices. Since the four tasks or activities (deliberative issue analysis, convening, facilitating interactive communication and reporting) do not tend to occur naturally in our communities, they represent interventions that deliberative practitioners have to perform to influence the quality of inquiry and support deliberation.

4.3 Assumptions

There are some underlying assumptions to the idea that democracy can be strengthened through or shaped by deliberative inquiry. *First*, there is the assumption that traditional frameworks (e.g. the idea that nation states are formed by borders) or traditional institutions (e.g. Western social welfare provisions) are no longer capable of providing adequate solutions for complex questions and urgent issues (e.g. the European refugee crisis). It might be better to decide upon actions in a joint debate with the people involved, with experts and lay citizens (e.g. neighborhoods, refugees, politicians and humanitarian organizations decide together upon plans and actions for migration problems). This *wisdom of the crowds*-idea (Surowiecki, 2005) assumes that knowledge from diverse perspectives, expertise from many stakeholders together provides a richer knowledge base for policy consultation and decision making.

Second, there is a claim that through dialogue, participants can come to appreciate the concerns of others (Evans and Kotchetkova, 2009). This involves an expectation that the beliefs and values of participants may be transformed by involvement in the research (Burchardt, 2014). If stakeholders explore the tensions and tradeoffs of a wicked issue together and decide collaboratively upon a plan or activity, they can even choose for rather unpopular actions (e.g. opening a refugee center in the community).

Third, there is also a legitimacy claim in deliberative democracy. As stated in the deliberative democracy movement, outcomes are democratically legitimate if and only if they could be the object of a free and reasoned agreement among equals (Cohen, 2003). Therefore legitimacy claims on an input, throughput and output dimension are elaborated (Bekkers and Edwards,

2007). Politicians appointed by elections cannot legitimize the political decision-making by themselves. The decision of where to install windmills for example can only be legitimate if local citizens, energy suppliers, renewable energy experts, geographers and politicians are deliberating together as equals (*input legitimacy*). It is through this commonly conducted discussion that different arguments can be weighed and given more or less importance (*throughput legitimacy*) for the final action or decision (*output legitimacy*). Or as it is defended by proponents of deliberative democracy: 'By including everyone affected in the process leading to a decision, deliberation could prove capable of generating political outcomes that receive broad public support, even when there is strong disagreement on the aims and values a polity should promote' (Caluwaerts and Reuchamps, 2015). It is assumed that a deliberative method or model like deliberative inquiry can address this legitimacy claim.

Finally there is a particular premise on learning within this conceptualization of deliberative inquiry. What is often mentioned but not accurately demonstrated by the scholars in this deliberative inquiry cycle is the learning process of all the participants. The intention is to learn about the identification of the wicked issue and the clarification and justification of actions. However the deliberative inquiry projects of the deliberative democracy movement have not yet been studied in order to evaluate this learning goal. Since the final product of deliberative inquiry is never a definitive opinion or recommendation (hence the cycle), the goal is moreover to clarify choices (Carcasson, 2012).

5. Deliberative inquiry as qualitative research

The less closely a deliberative exercise is tied to a policymaking process, the more it begins to look like research (Burchardt, 2014). Moreover deliberative processes seem to involve lots of the same kinds of activities as qualitative research – talking, listening, trying to understand the views and experiences of others – and often for the same end as well, namely, articulating views and perspectives that were previously marginalized or discounted (Evans et al., 2009). In this third approach deliberative inquiry is used and shaped as qualitative, collaborative research. Nevertheless, the varying ways 'deliberative inquiry' is used within the qualitative inquiry community impedes a clear assignment of features and criteria. In the literature we found conceptualizations of deliberative inquiry as a particular data gathering technique combining focus group research and consensus techniques (Kanuka, 2010; Kelland and Kanuka, 2007), as an inquiring system to design research (Asif and Klein, 2007; 2009), as a collaborative research method (Kakabadse et al., 2011; Savin-Baden and Major, 2013) and as an essential tool for social criticism (Ackerly, 2000). Alongside with deliberative methods (Evans and Kotchetkova, 2009; Scottish Government Social Research Group, 2009; Burchardt, 2014), participatory (Elliott et al., 2005; Kemmis and McTaggart, 2005) and dialogue (McDonald et al., 2013) methods and approaches have to be considered when assigning deliberative inquiry to qualitative research.

To elaborate on this variety, it is helpful to examine some of the different choices which challenge qualitative researchers. Methodological overviews are often structured upon these choices: researchers should choose a research approach (e.g. ethnography, arts-based research, collaborative approaches); collect data (e.g. by fieldwork, through interviews, with focus groups); work with these data and findings (analysis and interpretation) and they have to report their findings and make them public (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018; Savin-Baden and Major, 2013).

5.1 Choices of qualitative research

When choosing a research approach, scholars can opt for a collaborative approach. Collaboration and cooperation are key features to describe this research approach: sharing the work between individuals who then come together to solve or manage a problem (collaboration)

and mutual engagement of participants in a coordinated effort to solve the problem together (cooperation) are both a central focus (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). Scholars have argued that amongst the key forms of collaborative approaches in qualitative research are (1) co-operative inquiry, (2) collaborative inquiry, (3) appreciative inquiry and (4) deliberative inquiry (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013).

- (1) Co-operative inquiry is merely a method that involves shared power, participation, action, and contextual reflexivity to support community members to collaboratively develop theories of community work practice through cycles of reflection and action (Godden, 2017). In scenario planning for example scenarios on plausible alternative development pathways are co-operatively constructed. Such participative process supports the transfer of the results to local households and organizations who might actually use them as decision support (Tegegne et al., 2016).
- (2) Within the collaborative research approach, good research is research *with* rather than on or about people: everyone is involved in the design and management of the inquiry; everyone gets into the experience and action that is being explored; everyone is involved in making sense and drawing conclusions; thus everyone involved can take initiative and exert influence on the process (Heron and Reason, 2006; 2008).
- (3) Appreciative inquiry argues that looking through a positive, appreciative lens, beneficial change becomes more likely. Through an iterative cycle of 'discover', 'dream', 'design' and 'destiny' participants make changes in their context (Cooperrider et al., 2003).
- (4) The core rationale for deliberative methods –like deliberative inquiry- however is to uncover the informed, considered views of members of the general public, often on complex issues to which they may not previously have given much attention (Burchardt, 2014).

How to collect data –if data are collected (Koro-Ljungberg, 2015; Alvesson and Sköldjerg, 2010)- is another essential choice for qualitative researchers. Interviews, observation and focus groups are amongst the most widespread data collection techniques (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2011). Particular in deliberative methods the role of the qualitative researcher is mostly limited to that of a facilitator as participants themselves generate, synthesize and evaluate their own data. In doing so they must act without the specialist training and experience of the professional researcher, instead relying on more ubiquitous powers of critical and public reasoning to reach their conclusions (Evans et al., 2009). Since the distinctive objective of deliberative research is to elicit a considered, informed collective value judgment from 'the general public' (Burchardt, 2014) deliberative methods could at the same time be applied as an alternative way of gathering meaningful information, as a complex data-collection technique so to say. Deliberative inquiry is then about bringing together carefully selected participants to deliberate about specific issues or problems. By recording the convening, a particular insight in the meaning making process and decision making process of participants can be obtained (Kanuka, 2010). (Kanuka, 2010)

An additional choice for qualitative researchers is how to work with these data and findings, in which way analysis and interpretation will be conducted. . When drawing upon more traditional qualitative research methods the respondents' views are mediated by the researcher's interpretations of relevance, clarity and interest (Evans et al., 2009). For example in action research projects the researcher and the participants of the action/practice can still keep their proper place as researcher or as participant; the boundaries between researcher and participant are not that strict in deliberative research: all participants are seen as co-researchers of an inquiry group (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). In contrast deliberative methods require the participants to consider evidence, arguments and reach decisions themselves (Evans and Kotchetkova, 2009).

Finally qualitative researchers have to choose how to report their findings, how to make them public and for which audience. Researchers should attend to, and report, which publics they

have convened in their deliberative research and why (Degeling et al., 2015). Another crucial role for qualitative social science is observing and evaluating deliberative events in order to provide an evidence-base for future practice, and assist policy-makers and others in interpreting any consensus that is claimed by participants or organizers (Evans and Kotchetkova, 2009).

5.2 Deliberative inquiry as data gathering technique, a design, a collaborative research method or as an integrated research approach?

Within this approach, we identified four groups of scholars accomplishing and elaborating what they call deliberative inquiry: Kanuka and colleagues used deliberative inquiry as a merging of focus group research and consensus techniques (Kanuka et al., 2007; Kanuka and Kelland, 2008; Kanuka, 2010; Kelland and Kanuka, 2007); Asif and Klein introduced deliberative inquiry as a form of positive inquiry and more specifically as a complement to appreciative inquiry (Asif and Klein, 2007; 2009), Kakabadse and colleagues adopted deliberative inquiry as a dialogue based inquiry approach or a Socratic mode of inquiry (Kakabadse et al., 2011) and Ackerly proposes deliberative inquiry as an essential tool for (Third World feminist) social criticism (Ackerly, 2000). In the following section we exemplify the qualitative research-variant of deliberative inquiry and link this variety to the choices a qualitative researcher have to consider.

- That deliberative inquiry can act merely as a research approach is can be found in the publications of Asif and Klein (2007; 2009) and of Ackerly (2000). Zaheeruddin Asif and Heinz Klein propose deliberative inquiry as a research design technique and more specifically as an alternative for appreciative inquiry (AI). AI is used as a positive approach for the analysis and implementation of change and innovations in organizations, conceptualized in a cycle with four phases (discover, dream, design and destiny) (see f.e.Cooperrider et al., 2003). Where AI seeks strengths from positive emotions, deliberative inquiry employs positive critique to unmask barriers to change and arrive at morally, ethically and pragmatically sound decisions by mutual and authentic agreement (Asif and Klein, 2009). In that way, this variant of deliberative inquiry can be seen as an overall method for design-oriented research. In order to improve design we must improve upon the way we inquire into the design problem and the potential approaches to its resolution. So courses of action that are (seen as) necessary for the development of an organization can be decided by deliberative inquiry. Furthermore by free and open discussion, carried out in the spirit of mutual respect and understanding, these courses of action can be designed. Such a broadly based consensus on the most acceptable compromise is hoped for, but by no means certain. Voluntary coordination of action by appeals to reason is the intended outcome (Asif and Klein, 2007). Apparently without being familiar with each other's scholarship, Brooke Ackerly also mentions deliberative inquiry . For this political scientist deliberative inquiry is the practice of generating knowledge through collective questioning, exchange of views, and discussion among critics and members of society. Alongside skeptical scrutiny and guiding criteria – a list of minimum standards that critics use to challenge existing values, practices, and norms-, deliberative inquiry is essential to her elaboration of the Third World feminist method (Ackerly, 2000) which she sees as broadly critical and self-critical and provides a more effective model of social criticism. As such, this elaboration of deliberative inquiry does not propose a detailed procedure or a precise description of a methodology. The concept is rather used to depict an approach.
- Another interpretation of deliberative inquiry is given by Heather Kanuka and colleagues (Kanuka, 2010; Kelland and Kanuka, 2007). Kanuka (2010, p.102) defines deliberative inquiry as an effective way to stimulate in-depth exploration of a topic or issue when (1) there is a need for greater depth and understanding about the problem under

investigation and (2) polarized views exist. She conceives of deliberative inquiry as a hybrid research technique which integrates aspects of group interviews or focus groups – the research component – and the Delphi technique, a participatory technique to combine in various rounds the opinions of experts toward a consensus for a central problem – the consultation component. Focus groups offer unique insights in the possibilities of or for critical inquiry as a deliberative, dialogic, and democratic practice that is always already engaged in and with real-world problems (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis, 2005). Like a focus group, a deliberative inquiry involves a unique kind of group interview, in that it gathers data from a number of people in a manner that is non-quantitative; it is also similar to consensus techniques in that it requires participants to deliberate on issue(s) to explore where there is convergence of opinions (Kelland and Kanuka, 2007; Kanuka, 2010). According to this view deliberative inquiry is a merely a data collection method for examining consensus on complex issues under investigation, a method that also facilitates the formation of group opinion through a series of narrative and structured discussions (Kanuka, 2010, p. 104). Doing deliberative inquiry requires the gathering of participants and a moderator (who is not the researcher), requires the forming of narrative cases of the problem, opposing opinions on the issue and open-ended questions and requires the guided deliberation on the diverse perspectives (Kanuka, 2010, p. 104).

- A different group of researchers that used deliberative inquiry are Nada Kakabadse and her colleagues. They synthesized literature about Socratic, dialogical inquiry and considered the essentials of this Socratic dialogue as fundamental for deliberative inquiry (Kakabadse et al., 2011). Democratic Socratic dialogue provides not only a forum to cast issues ‘in the open’ or ‘out there’ into a public space. It also provides a forum to further explore their relational nature within a ‘dialogical space of possibilities’ (Shotter & Katz, 1996 in Kakabadse et al. 2011) in order to examine existing assumptions and create new and shared meanings. For these researchers, the goal of deliberative inquiry is to create a special environment in which a different kind of relationship amongst parties comes into play: deliberative inquiry creates opportunities for participants to reflect on their experiences and to learn (Kakabadse et al., 2011). As such, the question of analysis and interpretation comes into play. Whilst deliberative inquiry emphasizes the process of deliberation itself, it is also concerned with examining and comparing different settings and procedures as well as the problems and constraints that one cannot always anticipate by conceptual argument alone (Kakabadse et al., 2011). This deliberative inquiry approach is their background for a project that searches for sustainable change in a children’s trust. The result of this project were proposals for integrated ways of working in children services of a UK local government. Their conclusion, and an example of the report of a qualitative research, is that deliberative inquiry facilitates individuals to speak their concerns in a manner that prompts ‘consensually accepted beliefs’ to emerge through paying equal attention to the motivation of the inquiry participants, as well as to the reality of the contextual demands they need to confront (Kakabadse et al., 2011).

However a more critical appraisal of deliberative inquiry within this approach has to be made. By examining the underlying rationales and presuppositions of this variants of deliberative, collaborative research, we subscribe the conclusion of Evans & Kotchetkova that deliberative methods need to be used, not only with care but with caution (Evans and Kotchetkova, 2009).

5.3 Assumptions

A *first* assumption of qualitative researchers using deliberative inquiry is that it can be an effective method to collect data about the acknowledgment and accommodation of opposing opinions, as the group’s deliberations allow participants to react to and build upon the responses of other group members (Kanuka, 2010). Social sciences must take into account the existence and value of multiple perspectives. Divergent opinions occur, interact and change. Consequently decisions

are provisional, related to a time, a place and a particular group of participants. The perspectives and decisions have to be and can be studied accordingly. Thus another assumption embedded in the deliberative inquiry method is a belief that the decisions are socially constructed and grow out of discussion (Kelland and Kanuka, 2007). In this way, deliberative inquiry serves as a social performance, a complex social situation characterized by being engaged in complicated interactions, bearing the imprints of a multitude of social elements (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2011). So the arguments and assertions mentioned in a deliberative inquiry-trajectory can serve as rich empirical material.

Connected to this rationale is –second- the shifting position of the researcher. Deliberative methods erase the traditional role of the qualitative researcher. Traditionally the qualitative researcher is an analyst who synthesizes and interprets data. In deliberative methods she is primarily a facilitator who enables citizens to synthesize and interpret experience in their own terms (Evans and Kotchetkova, 2009). In that way, this conceptualization of deliberative inquiry is related to the one of deliberative democracy: providing the conditions (e.g. organizing the meetings, administering background information and keeping participants focused in the process) prevails.

Third, deliberative inquiry can also be characterized as an integrated research approach as a methodology to investigate and conceptualize issues and not ‘only’ as a method or technique or design. What is at stake in this practice and development of deliberative inquiry is a kind of ‘new’ or alternative approach to investigate issues and to seek inquiry-based solutions or constructive decisions. This conceptualizing and tackling of wicked issues in organizations, institutions, neighborhoods or communities is seen as a dynamic research process: the accommodation or mutual adaption of different points of view of people within organizations, institutions, neighborhoods or communities happens in consecutive meetings. Zaheeruddin Asif and Heinz Klein (2009, p.191) describe that in these deliberative inquiry gatherings the participants chip away falsehood, disagreement or discord by mutually exchanging logical and rational arguments. They bring out relevant facts and knowledge at appropriate points in time, and incorporate the logic of partner deliberators into their own positions, opinions and judgments. Hence, they arrive closer to truth, agreement or consensus (Asif and Klein, 2009). Accordingly there is an expectation that the beliefs and values of participants may be transformed by involvement in the research. The intentional and direct input of new information by researchers and the assumption that participants’ views may change as a result of the exercise, stands in contrast, of course, to the efforts made in most other qualitative research modes to minimize the extent to which the researcher’s presence ‘pollutes’ the field of study (Burchardt, 2014).

Implicitly, this approach adheres to the intellectual virtue of *phronesis* or practical wisdom. *Phronesis* is one of the three (besides *technè* –craftsmanship- and *episteme* –(scientific) knowledge-) forms of knowledge or intellectual virtues according to Aristotle’s Nichomachean ethics. *Phronesis*, mostly translated as practical wisdom, is knowledge on how to address and act on social problems in a particular context. It focuses on what is variable, on what cannot be encapsulated by universal rules. *Phronesis* requires an interaction between the general and the concrete. Like deliberation, *phronesis* demands consideration, judgment and choice (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Bent Flyvbjerg draws on the idea of *phronesis* in his analysis of why social sciences fail in competition with the natural sciences. His idea of phronetic social sciences is an attempt to make social sciences matter and to take deliberation seriously. This also seems true for the scholars who use deliberative inquiry as research: they assume that practical wisdom, rather than technical or scientific knowledge, is essential in the construction of particular answers to practical problems.

6. Some concluding perspectives

In this study, we made explicit what is at stake in three different approaches that have used and shaped deliberative inquiry. (1) As a way to deal with the theory-praxis-nexus in education and

challenged by a sustained (policy) improvement of schools, curriculum scholars proposed deliberative inquiry as a method for developing the best possible curriculum. For deliberative curriculum inquiry the aim is thus to tackle curricular issues as particular 'practical' questions. (2) The aim of the deliberative inquiry model of the deliberative democracy movement has merely the ambition to contribute to public deliberation and to the ideals of deliberative democracy such as legitimate, stakeholder-based and thought-out decision-making. (3) Deliberative inquiry can also be situated under the umbrella of qualitative collaborative research. The aim here is to investigate and to design collaboratively obtained research-based solutions.

Assigning deliberative inquiry to and investigating the elaboration of this method within different research traditions clarifies what is at stake when using this specific deliberative method. To a certain extent, such an investigation –as proposed by Thompson 2008 - is an attempt to combine empirical research on and the practical use of deliberative inquiry with theoretical insights of deliberative democracy, curriculum studies and qualitative research. In the following explanatory table (see figure 2) the main differences of the approaches and the varying assumptions are recapitulated.

	Deliberative inquiry as	Assumptions
Curriculum studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . a way of solving curriculum questions and/or . a method for reforming education programs and developing the best possible curriculum 	<p>Theoretic research may not provide practical answers.</p> <p>Underlying philosophy of pragmatism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reality ~ what is practical - Knowledge ~ what is said, known, experienced and used by stakeholders
Deliberative democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . an iterative process for tackling wicked problems . decision-making by deliberation . informing policy making by lay citizens 	<p>Knowledge from diverse perspectives provides a richer knowledge base than expert knowledge alone.</p> <p>Beliefs and values can transform.</p> <p>Underlying legitimacy theory: outcomes are democratically legitimate if and only if they could be the object of a free and reasoned agreement among equals (Cohen, 2003).</p> <p>The intention is also to learn about the identification of the wicked issue and the clarification and justification of actions.</p>
Qualitative research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . a research approach . a data collection method 	<p>Deliberative methods are effective for collecting opposing opinions.</p>

	. a perspective on analysis, interpretation and reporting results	<p>Shifting position of the researcher: merely a facilitator than an interpreter.</p> <p>Designing inquiry-based solutions can transform participant's perspectives.</p> <p>Practical wisdom –<i>phronesis</i>– is essential.</p>
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Figure 2 Overview of the main differences and the varying assumptions of deliberative inquiry

By illuminating the use of deliberative inquiry in a certain approach, we have explicated the different aims at stake and the different underlying rationales. Despite the distinctions, the primary goal of all forms of deliberative inquiry seems to be similar: to consider a practical problem in collaboration and to make a decision. Most of the existing criteria refer to deliberation as a form of democratic decision-making, rather than as a form of research. Deliberation as research is on the contrary significantly under-theorized (Burchardt, 2014). This study can serve as a scoping study. When the primary function of research is to contribute to knowledge and understanding, rather than to bring intrinsic or instrumental democratic benefits, or to influence policy, than the evaluation of research as research needs to be based on criteria such as validity and rigor, and not on its contribution to democratic legitimacy (Burchardt, 2014). This insight can be an important focus to critically appraise studies and projects in the future: is deliberative inquiry used as a method for research, for decision-making or for both?

Strong research fragmentation makes it difficult to integrate theories and ideas in a way that can provide a richer and more nuanced understanding of phenomena. In particular, such fragmentation hampers interdisciplinary research, which is often required to better understand and solve complex issues in society (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2014). Accordingly another future research question is how deliberative inquiry and more broadly deliberative methods, are related to and could be applied within new perspectives on (interdisciplinary) science like Mode 2 science (Gibbons et al., 1994), transdisciplinary research (see Zscheischler and Rogga, 2015) and Integration and Implementation sciences (Bammer, 2013; 2016; 2017). Mode 2 Science, a way of context-driven, problem-focused and transdisciplinary knowledge production for real-world problems (Gibbons et al., 1994) seems to have features in common with deliberative inquiry. This also applies for transdisciplinary research, heralded for increasing the decision-making capacity of stakeholders by providing “socially robust” and implementable knowledge, for the capability to rationalize conflicts, to grasp complexity and to integrate various perspectives and sources of knowledge (Zscheischler and Rogga, 2015). Gabriele Bammer also argues for a new discipline: I2S or Integration and Implementation Science. She proposes the development of such a new discipline as a primary way to overcome the fragmentation, to act as a repository for a full range of relevant concepts and methods, and to develop a systematic way of documenting how case studies use these concepts and methods in tackling complex problems (Bammer, 2016). This Integration and Implementation framework organizes methods into three domains: synthesis of disciplinary and stakeholder knowledge; understanding and managing critical unknowns; and providing integrated research support for policy and practice change (Bammer, 2017). Given the features of deliberative inquiry in the different approaches, deliberative inquiry could have a place in the Integration and Implementation Science. Moreover Bammer argues that usually, relevant methods tend to be published in the literature about the societal, educational or environmental problem, in the grey literature, or not published at all. As well as making appropriate methods hard to find, this means that any research team’s knowledge about the methods that are already available is poor, leading to a lot of reinventing of methods for, for instance, engaging stakeholders and translating evidence for practitioners. It also means that existing methods tend to stagnate rather than being continuously improved (Bammer, 2017).

Although not explicitly mentioned in all the approaches, the possible educational dimension of deliberative inquiry is still undertheorized. In the approach of deliberative curriculum inquiry, the method is in some way seen as a way to professionalize teachers and to learn together as stakeholders. However the interference of this implicit outcome and process with practical curriculum making was not a major focus of attention. On the other hand, the deliberative inquiry model of deliberative democracy is presented as a collaborative learning process. Nonetheless what and how is learned could have been investigated more rigorously. What does it mean, for example, to gain a higher level of understanding about a wicked issue? What are the criteria to conclude that interpersonal competences of the participants have developed? Or in what way is there an interference of content and competence learning? Also the third approach is rather vague about the educational dimension of deliberative inquiry. Consciousness-raising and changing beliefs about the issue at stake might be the outcome. There is a strong focus on political and research processes in deliberative inquiry, but much less focus on the learning processes. To the extent that deliberative inquiry includes processes of changes – both at the level of those who are involved and at the level of possible outcomes or results – this is remarkable, for it is hard to imagine these changes without considering learning processes. As such, educational issues seems to remain the black box of deliberative inquiry

Research methods and methodologies are -roughly speaking- invented, constructed, shaped or modelled to analyze issues or to (decide on how to) solve problem situations. Sometimes a method can serve both aims, albeit in case of particular issues, that is in case of (urgent) questions which require an action or a decision. Like Koro-Ljungberg (2015, p.79) we assume that methodologies are choices, often onto-epistemological and theoretical, that cannot be divorced from the values, beliefs, and backgrounds of the researcher or the research context. Methodologies are political, and they have power to disempower, empower, and validate and invalidate experiences, data, lives, and material. Methodological choices not only generate and highlight data, but they also construct and contextualize studies, programs, scholars, and research aims. Methodologies can be informed choices, taken for granted, or just used uncritically without any alternatives. Alternatively, methodologies can be situational, complex structures or constellations that are in flux. Deliberative inquiry seems to be part of such a choice.

In some way, scholars in the three traditions (deliberative democracy, curriculum studies and collaborative qualitative research) are all interested in an approach, a method or a methodology in which deliberation on and inquiring of an issue are inextricably linked. All of the scholars try to combine a research component with a policy component: gaining knowledge by investigating perspectives is not seen as separate from taking (value-laden) decisions. Even on the contrary: only by keeping these two components together can something new appear.

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ⁱ Both Orpwood (1980) and Asif & Klein (2009) pointed out that Churchman (1971) coined the phrase of deliberative inquiry. However Harris (1991) declared that William Reid was the coiner of the phrase. In a publication of Kanuka and her colleagues (2007), they considered themselves the inventors of deliberative inquiry. In a 2012 publication, Carcasson regarded the coining of the phrase as his work.

ⁱⁱ For Connelly, 'Schwab was (at the time) the leading intellectual figure in the curriculum-based educational reform movement and, at the same time, was the leading critic, with the most penetrating criticism, of curriculum research. He wore both hats, the disciplinarian hat and the educational researcher hat.' Connelly, F. M. (2013). Joseph Schwab, Curriculum, Curriculum Studies and Educational Reform. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 45(5), 622-639.

ⁱⁱⁱ An anecdote of F.M.Connelly, a former student of Schwab's: 'At an American Educational Research Association session on Schwab's work, a few years ago, Elliot Eisner stood up to say how intellectually exciting Schwab's first paper was for educators accustomed to reading prosaic how-to-do-it-better curriculum development documents'.

^{iv} Whether this is a valuable alternative for (educational) science is beyond the scope of this article. Based on Schwab's thinking, Donmoyer goes into detail in a reconceptualization of what inquiry in a field like Education should look like, as well as the role that quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research could play in a re-conceptualized approach to inquiry: 'Joseph Schwab at least offers an alternative; the only question is how implementable that alternative really is.' Donmoyer, R. (2014). What If Educational Inquiry Were Neither a Social Science Nor a Humanities Field? Revisiting Joseph Schwab's "The Practical" in the Aftermath of the Science Wars. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 22(8). doi:10.14507/epaa.v22n8.2014.