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# Capturing Citizens' Values: On the Role of Narratives and Emotions in Digital Participation

<https://doi.org/10.1515/auk-2018-0003>

**Abstract:** This paper argues that social and political problems currently addressed by local governments through new forms of digital participation can be considered wicked problems, because they cannot be tackled through factual information alone. Addressing such problems means connecting diverse citizens' values to empirically based and logically based arguments. The paper addresses the question of which role citizens' personal narratives and emotions play in digital participation and how narratives and emotions articulate personal and social values. This line of inquiry is illustrated by two examples of digital participation on the local and regional level of democracy. The examples show that citizens' narratives and emotional expressions articulate diverse values and value conflicts (e.g., security vs. universalism). Finally, the paper develops some preliminary ideas about how online argument mapping tools could be combined with value mapping.

**Keywords:** online deliberation, deliberative democracy, values, narrative, storytelling, emotion, emotional expression, online participation

## 1 Introduction

In recent years, representative democracies have experienced a critical situation, in some cases even a state of crisis. After the global financial crisis, the enduring challenges of the Eurozone crisis, the migration crisis, and the threat of global climate change, many democracies are facing the challenge of a sudden shift to populism, which promises simplistic solutions to citizens' dissatisfaction through radical policies that reject established institutions and laws. Governments and political experts appear powerless to address such challenges. At the same time, a great number of citizens worldwide are seeking participation in

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political decision-making (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2011; Pew Research Center 2017), for instance in local or regional politics (Forsa 2015; Infratest dimap 2012). It appears that democracy has been taken for granted for a long time and now needs to undergo a process of change. Governments and administrations realize that in combination with representative democracy, new forms of citizen participation are needed. The guiding light is supplementing *legitimation through procedures* with *legitimation through communication* (Brettschneider 2013). Moreover, researchers from the tradition of deliberative democracy (e.g., Carcasson/Sprain 2016; Dryzek 2009; Fishkin 2009; Grönlund/Bächtiger/Setälä 2014), including myself, have proposed *legitimation through deliberation*, highlighting the role of *interactive communication* between the parties affected by political decisions and the parties responsible for implementing them, such as citizens, experts, planners, administrations, and governments. However, it is controversial among deliberative democrats how ‘real world’ deliberation processes actually work (Ryfe 2006), which forms of communication fulfill which functions in deliberation (Bächtiger/Niemeyer/Neblo/Steenbergen/Steiner 2010), and how interactive online communication can be designed in the face of deliberative democracy (Towne/Herbsleb 2012). One area in which research is lacking, but which might illuminate these controversial issues in deliberation research, is the expression of citizens’ values through narrative and emotions.

It is a common belief that experts, high-quality information, and healthy institutions are crucial for political decision-making, which is true. However, deliberative democrats have argued that these factors are insufficient for solving problems in contemporary societies. Governments, administrations, and planners in heterogeneous societies are tackling *social problems* that can be described as “wicked problems” (Rittel 1972). These complex problems cannot be definitively described or solved with true/false answers alone, and therefore have no definitive or objective solutions (Rittel/Webber 1973). Instead, the *diverse values* of the people affected play a crucial role in defining and addressing the problems (Carcasson/Black/Sink 2010). This does not mean that facts are useless, but that *empirical facts* or *logical conclusions*, required to address wicked social problems, are connected to *personal and social values*.

Our personal values, as abstract “concepts of the desirable” (Kluckhohn 1951, 36) or “desirable transsituational goals” (Schwartz 1994, 21), influence our interpretation, evaluation, and prioritization of information (Hsieh/Chen/Mahmud/Nichols 2014). In their connection with social values (or norms), they also guide our attitudes (Whitfield/Rosa/Dan/Dietz 2009) and behavior (Rokeach 1979). Because personal values are more stable than preferences or opinions, they provide a better window on what citizens want from politics in the long run. Therefore, I argue that citizens’ personal and social values should become *visible* within the

scope of digital participation on public issues. In this way, values can be subject to other participants' reflections and can be included in norm setting (e.g., laws or organizational rules; Escher et al. 2017) and policy making. Moreover, by paying attention to communicative interactions on values, deliberative democracy scholars can better understand how value conflicts are addressed during deliberation. In the case of digital participation, where the process is rationally grounded but not attentive to diverse citizens' values, planners and administrative or political staff (who are also, of course, human beings with values) will continue to make decisions guided first and foremost by their own 'concepts of the desirable', which may differ significantly from citizens' values (Francescato/Mebane/Vecchione 2017). If we think about representative democracies where officials are elected to handle legislation and ruling, this is not a drama per se, but then the idea of participation or taking part in decision making seems to be shaky on its feet.

How do citizens express values in interactive communication online? I argue that they do so sometimes through argumentation, but most of the time through storytelling and expressing emotions. This is because personal values, as well as facts that are related to personal values, are more strongly related to ourselves (in particular to our experiences and emotions) than are facts that we consider value-free. In reality, we are aware that a large portion of online-discussion content consists of expressive forms of communication, such as the expression of negative emotions, narratives or stories, humor, sarcasm, and trolling. In theory, researchers, mostly focusing on argumentation, have attempted to develop models that can be translated into design considerations in order to make citizen communication more deliberative (Janssen/Kies 2005; Towne/Herbsleb 2012). For example, empirical research has begun to test the influence of certain design features (e.g., moderation, identification, information, topic definition; Esau/Friess/Eilders 2017) or features of the initial posts (e.g., news and discussion factors; Ziegele/Breiner/Quiring 2014) on specific standards of deliberative communication (e.g., argumentation, constructiveness, respect, civility, interactivity, and reciprocity). In practice, computer scientists, together with philosophers and sociologists, work on approaches to support online argumentation, such as dialog-based online argumentation and argument mapping (Krauthoff/Baurmann/Betz/Mauve 2016). The main goals of these tools are involving as many participants as possible and coming closer to the ideal of formal reasoning in practice. Because most deliberative design concepts focus on argumentation—and define arguments as either empirical facts or what researchers and other experts count as logical conclusions—they do not take into consideration that what counts as relevant or logical for citizens is determined by citizens' values (Clay Tempelton/Fleischmann 2011; Elliott/McCright/Allen/Dietz 2017; Hsieh et al. 2014; Whitfield et al. 2009).

Bearing in mind that addressing social problems means connecting diverse personal, social, and moral values to empirically based and logically based arguments, the aim of this paper is twofold: (1) I address the question of which role citizens' personal narratives and emotions play in expressing citizens' values during digital participation in local democracy (*section 2*). I illustrate how personal narratives and emotions articulate diverse values by using examples from two participation cases on the local and regional level of government. Thereby, I determine which values are expressed and in what way participants react on the values of others (*section 3 and 4*). (2) I make some suggestions about how existing online tools (e.g., argument mapping) could be advanced to make citizens' values visible for decision-making in a productive way (*section 5*).

## 2 Values, Narratives, and Emotions in Deliberative Theory and Beyond

There are different perspectives on how democracy works best. Deliberative democrats advocate a notion of democracy in which deliberation as a *reflective and demanding type of interactive communication* plays a central role in democratic decision-making. Habermas (1984), Cohen (1989), and others have discussed why the exchange of reasons among all those affected has a "truth-tracking potential" (Habermas 2006, 413) and is therefore central to deliberation. The *rationalizing potential of human communication*, which is realized through *communicative action*, is conceptualized as the key source of legitimacy (Habermas 1984; 1996). In this view, deliberation is an ideal procedure in which *original desires* are communicatively shared and mutually tested against their *generalizability* (Habermas 1975[1973], 108). Thereby, the communication process is oriented toward *mutual understanding* (Habermas 1996, 18), which can be established through listening and responding to the contributions of others (reciprocity), giving reasons and reflecting on others' reasons (reflexivity), and taking into account others' perspectives and personal situations (perspective taking) (Graham 2008; 2010; Gutmann/Thompson 1996). Although there is no consensus among deliberative democracy theorists on a specific form or model of argumentation, and although Habermas has stated explicitly that he is "less interested" in the "norming of the language of discussion permitted in the deliberation" (Habermas 1975[1973], 109), one dominant, though sometimes implicit, notion of deliberation is that primarily empirical facts or logical conclusions count as reasons (for an overview, see Friess/Eilders 2015).

Since the 1990s, deliberative democracy has continued to receive critical attention mainly, but not only, from feminist theoreticians. Much of the criticism has targeted the concepts of rationality, rational discourse, and reason (e.g., Bickford 2011; Dryzek 2000; Krause 2008; Sanders 1997; Young 1996; 2000). Young (1996) points out that restricting the concept of reasoning to specific forms of argumentation bears the risk of marginalizing certain perspectives or segments of the population and excluding them from deliberation processes. She states that the preferred style of communication in traditional notions of deliberation is related not necessarily to *understanding* but rather to *articulateness* and *dispassionateness*. So understood, deliberation carries hegemonic elements and fails to adequately reflect the communication cultures of less powerful social groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, migrants, and people with lower levels of formal education (Young 2000). Following up on this, Bickford (2011, 1025) argues that 'norms of good' public communication are not neutral, but tend to reflect the communicative styles of already powerful social groups. Against this background, some traditional concepts of deliberation are based on a tightly constrained understanding of rationality, and what counts as rational is negotiated primarily by white Western men (Dahlberg 2007; Fraser 1990). Furthermore, Young argues that narratives and other forms of communication that are often classified as emotionally charged express experiences that can count as reasons from a normative point of view, for instance in legal cases (Young 2000, 71). This insight recalls the Habermas of *Truth and Justification* (1999, 305), who argues that *emotions* as *value judgments* can play the role of justifications in practical discourse.

Since the turn of the millennium, there has been an ongoing discussion about the significance of emotions and different forms of communication in deliberative democracy theory (Bächtiger et al. 2010). At the same time, the *affective turn* in democratic theory and political psychology has produced new theoretical concepts in which emotions and reason are conceptualized not as mutually exclusive but complementary when it comes to citizen participation and deliberation (e.g., Hoggett/Thompson 2002; Marcus/Neuman/MacKuen 2000). Inspired by the critical calls for a more inclusive concept of deliberative communication, empirical studies have begun to explore the role of different forms of communication, such as narrative or storytelling, expressions of emotions, and humor, in deliberation processes (e.g., Black 2008; Graham 2010; Polletta/Lee 2006; Roald/Sangolt 2011; Steiner/Jaramillo/Maia/Mameli 2017). The results all suggest that deliberation can be realized through different forms of communication and that dispassionate arguments based on facts and logic alone are not sufficient to establish a discourse between different perspectives. For example, Polletta and Lee (2006) analyze deliberation in the context of an online consultation forum and found that storytelling was more likely to result in engagement with other users and their

contributions (70%) than were nonnarrative claims (37%). The authors argue that understanding a citizens' story means "to grasp its moral implications", which does not mean that citizens have to appeal directly to shared values: "Rather, the values are built into the story itself. [...] What is important about personal stories is their personal, particular quality. [...] Stories integrate the particular and the general." (Polletta/Lee 2006, 703)

In the following section, I take up the idea of building on approaches from value theory (Bilsky/Schwartz 1994; Schwartz 1994) to examine how citizens reveal their values through narratives and emotional expressions. Further, I illustrate how other citizens respond to the contributions (reciprocity), how reasons are given and reflected on (reflexivity), and whether participants take into account the perspectives and personal situations of others (perspective taking).

### 3 How Narratives and Emotions Reveal Citizens' Values

I assume that citizens intuitively use narratives to express their experiences, emotions, and values. This does not mean that citizens do not use argumentative language that makes use of facts and logic, but that such argumentation is often embedded in personal narratives. In a typical narrative, the speaker describes first-hand or second-hand experiences from a personal perspective (first-person perspective), expressing for example wishes, desires, and emotions. Through personal narratives and the expression of emotions, citizens define problems and articulate what they think is good for them personally (personal values) and for society (social values). Thereby, they appeal to broader social values or norms shared in societies. In this section, I illustrate how citizens' narratives and emotional expressions appeal to values either shared or not shared by other participants and how other participants react to those contributions. As a theoretical framework, I use Schwartz's 10 value types: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security (Bilsky/Schwartz 1994; Schwartz 1994). The values, definitions, and examples are summarized in *table 1*. Further, I refer to Inglehart's (1977; 1979) materialist and postmaterialist value dimension. Both approaches have a sound theoretical basis and have been applied in numerous empirical studies, for instance in psychology, political science, and other social sciences (e.g., Clay Tempelton/Fleischmann 2011; Davidov/Schmidt/Schwartz 2008; Whitfield et al. 2009).

**Tab. 1:** Schwartz's (1994) Value Categories, Definitions, Example Statements from own Study

Value Type	Definition	Values	Example statements	Value conflicts
Power	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over other people and resources	Social power Authority Wealth	'May our region stay strong and satisfy everyone.'  'Lignite ensures prosperity and purchasing power.'	Power and benevolence
Achievement	Personal success through demonstrating competence	Success Capability Ambition	'Lignite mining and use contributes significantly to the success of our region.'	Achievement and benevolence
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself	Pleasure Enjoying life	'In summer, an open-air stage would be a popular destination to enjoy music for free and outside.'	Hedonism and security
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life	Daring Varied life Exciting life	'The freedom for new things should be preserved in any case.'	Stimulation and security
Self-direction	Independent thought and action – choosing, creating, exploring	Creativity Freedom Choosing own goals	'Free field for free citizens!'  'Let's go for the motto: YES, WE CAN.'	Self-direction and conformity
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of <i>all</i> people and for nature	Broad-mindedness Social justice Equality Environmental protection	'100% field, for all people!'  'In a democracy all people have the same rights.'	Universalism and power
Benevolence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact	Help Honesty Forgiveness	'Look how people help themselves in Russia, Greece, Portugal, Poland, or Kenya.'	Benevolence and power
Tradition	Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that tradition or religion provide	Humbleness Devoutness Acceptance of one's lot in life	'Holzweiler is a great local community with lively traditions.'	Tradition and stimulation
Conformity	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses	Politeness	'An incredible number of field visitors sh** on any social rules.'	Conformity and stimulation
Security	Safety, harmony, and stability	National security Social order Cleanliness	'One cannot ignore this and pretend that only a few bent blades of grass are the victims of a complete opening.'	Security and stimulation

The discussion extracts I use to illustrate this perspective originate from two different digital participation cases, both conducted in 2015, on the local and regional level of German politics. The original discussions were translated into English. The first online consultation focused on the future of brown coal mining in the

region of North Rhine-Westphalia and was initiated by the federal state government. The background was the governments' new political guideline for future reduction of coal mining in the region. The second case was an online consultation with a narrower regional focus on the future public use and cultivation of a former airport in Tempelhof, which is a city district in Berlin. It is important to note that over the years, many Berliners have developed a close relationship to this place, which has hosted many self-organized projects and diverse forms of use. In this sense, both local political issues can be expected to occasion a high level of concern and expressions of strong personal attachment on the part of citizens.

This study's quantitative content analysis of all 2,850 user comments written in the two digital participation procedures shows that a total of 808 comments (28.4%) both contain at least one argument and are free of expressive forms of communication (narratives and emotions), that 839 comments (29.4%) include at least one personal narrative, that 421 comments (14.8%) contain at least one positive emotional expression, and that 489 comments (17.2%) contain negative emotional expressions. Narratives and arguments often go together: the two forms of communication are strongly correlated ( $r = .28, p < .001$ ), which means that comments with arguments often contain narratives as well. There is also a positive significant correlation between negative emotions and arguments ( $r = .16, p < .001$ ), but no significant correlation between positive emotional expression and argumentation ( $r = .02, p = .216$ ). Intercoder reliability Krippendorff's Alpha scores (Krippendorff 2004) were satisfactory (argument  $K-\alpha = .75$ , narrative  $K-\alpha = .80$ , positive emotion  $K-\alpha = .73$ , negative emotion  $K-\alpha = .78$ ) In this section, I use examples from the analyzed discussions to illustrate how citizens convey their values. The examples were chosen on the basis of random samples from all narratives and emotional expressions.

The first example is taken from the discussion of coal mining, in which one participant provides his personal perspective on this topic and the preceding discussion, which had been equally dominated by 'coal fighters' and 'coal advocates'. The participant's perspective is made explicit through a narrative accompanied by the expression of negative emotions. Another participant reacts to this, continuing with the narrative from a similar point of view, expressing a wish for the future of the region. In this example, reciprocity, reflexivity, and intravalence perspective taking between two participants with similar values takes place:

"I am constantly astonished by the course of the discussion and the weighing up of what is now the 'right way', the issue of security of supply and the affordability of electricity are completely ignored—even in the governments' guideline. Come visit me in my homeland and *experience what it means to have no electricity for a few hours*. In such a situation, I would



*like to see how serene you remain and say: 'Well, the wind is not blowing and the clouds are covering'. Yesterday it was the nuclear power plants, today it is the coal plants and tomorrow the gas plants which will be pushed to exclusion because you don't want them either.'*

*"[...] and then it's the cars, and someday in the future you might want, well [...]! Anyway, it should not come that far! May our region stay strong and satisfy everyone!"*

Through their narratives and emotions, both participants demonstrate that security of supply and affordability of electricity are important to them. The second participant emphasizes that 'our region' should 'stay strong and satisfy everyone'. From their own personal perspectives, they both appeal to the more general social values (or value types) of *social order and national security (security)* and of *prosperity or wealth (power)*, which can be categorized as typical *materialist values* (Schwartz 1994, 37). At the same time, the narratives suggest that the values are threatened by people who advocate a departure from conventional energy sources such as coal ('yesterday it was the nuclear power plants, today it is the coal plants and tomorrow the gas plants', 'and then it's the cars'). Their reciprocal sharing of the perspective that people who want to protect the environment are unrealistic shows that *security and power* are more important to them than *protecting the environment*, which Schwartz refers to as *universalism* and which is one of the typical *postmaterialist values* (Schwartz 1994, 37). Already, these two comments demonstrate which broader value conflict may stand in the background of the discussion: *security vs. universalism* or *materialist values vs. postmaterialist values* (see figure 1).

Another extract from the online discussion of coal mining begins with an example of a participant's *postmaterialistic value* orientation; she argues for reduction of coal mining, encouraging a debate on sustainable consumption that from her point of view should be supported by the government. The comment triggers critical reactions from two other participants, who do not agree with the first participant's perspective on either coal exit or the generalizability of her ideas on sustainable consumption:

*"My desire to bury fossil energy is linked to the idea of making more people speak out in order to use as little energy as possible. I believe that is a key point for the future. This does not have to mean a step backwards. Why does every family need a lawn mower, or one car for anyone over the age of 17, if you can share those goods? What I wish for would not only be debates on political guidelines, but also the voice of the government to its citizens to encourage debate on sustainable consumption. For me, it is incomprehensible that supermarkets are allowed to trade with an abundance of food and 'secure' the non-salable but still edible products in dumpsters, which will not allow anyone to eat it. Of course, such thoughtless consumption can be associated with increasing requirements for energy. Both are questionable. If I work less and get less money, I have more time for autonomous projects like gardening. I wish that*

the government would call for more energy and resource awareness. *If children can share from the heart, we have a role model.*"

"Your ideas are all fine and good, but *unfortunately completely distant from real life*. Also, this has not much to do with the topic. *Reliable energy is always needed and when less is needed, which should be welcomed, it lasts longer.*"

"*I regard some of your views as dangerous, as they are incompatible with a democracy*. If you would like to share your lawn mower, your car, or even your apartment, then *you have the freedom to do so*. If you do not want to support the supermarkets, then you have the freedom to buy from organic farmers. I do not think there's anyone who wants to talk you into something. But *people are different and in a democracy everybody has the same right*. No matter how much one is convinced of one's own views, *one should not prescribe them bindingly on others.*"

The first participant's narrative starts with the 'desire' to stop using fossil energy and goes on to describe from a personal point of view how 'sustainable consumption' could help to save energy at both private ('use as little energy as possible', 'thoughtless consumption') and industry levels ('non-salable but still edible products in dumpsters'). With this narrative, the participant expresses that she values *environmental protection* and at times also *unity with nature* ('projects like gardening'), both of which are *universalism values* (Schwartz 1994, 31). Especially at the end of the narrative, but also in some earlier parts, the participant indicates that sharing with others is possible and important for her, which appeals to the broader value of being *helpful* to others (*benevolence*). The two participants who react to this narrative argue that its ideas are either unrealistic ('distant from real life') or even 'dangerous' and 'incompatible with a democracy'. Whereas the first answer appeals to *security*, stating that 'reliable energy is always needed' and that when less is needed 'it lasts longer', the second conveys the values of *freedom* and *choosing own goals* ('one should not prescribe them bindingly on others').

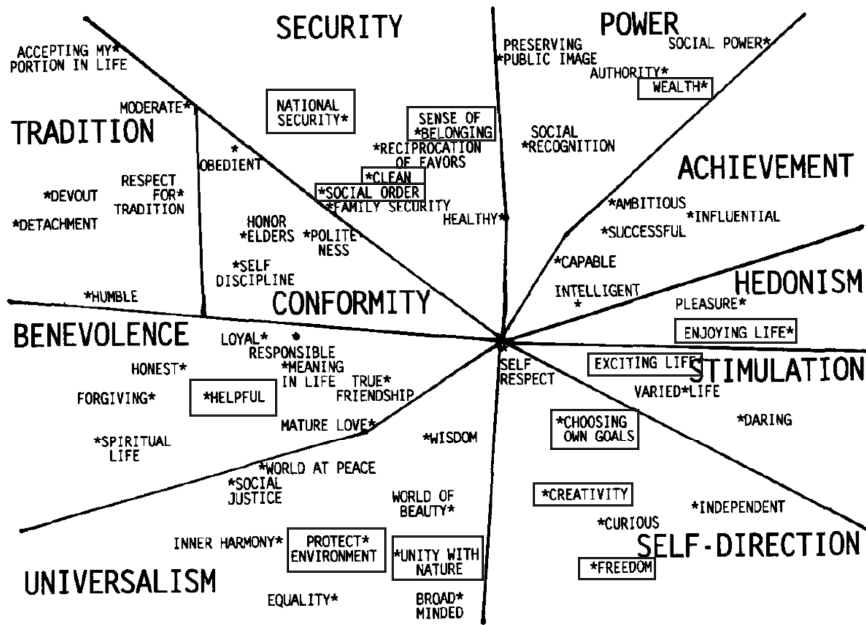


Fig. 1: Examples of Participants' Values from Online Consultation on Coal Mining in North Rhine-Westphalia and Former Airport in Berlin (Schwartz 1994).

Although most participants in the discussion of coal mining appeal to either power and security ('coal advocates') or *universalism* and *benevolence* ('coal fighters'), some participants from both sides take a different point of view, that is, a *self-direction* perspective. As in the following example, they often try to build a bridge between the opposing sides and raise hope for the future. In doing so, they appeal to a 'let's do it' or 'yes, we can' culture, which is oriented less toward weighing *security* or *prosperity* against *protection of nature* and more toward considering innovative solutions for the future. Such participants also oppose the spread of panic and fear regarding a loss of *security*:

"Through daily newspapers and television, like a prayer wheel, the public is told that we absolutely need centralized large-scale power plants such as coal-fired power stations. For years, black outs have been announced and the collapse of the public power supply has been predicted. And what actually happened: nothing! Our power grid still works. It is finally time that the four major energy providers realize that even the 'little' man can make his contribution to power generation and thus to CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. Namely by tens of thousands of decentralized power generation systems with electric cars as battery storage. This includes

the corresponding *energy mix of wind energy, biogas plants and CHPs*. The *excess electricity should not land in the public network, but be used for the electric car or a battery storage*. *Only in this way we can create the energy transition and make the environment worth living in again. All this is possible if you want it*. The policy with the lobbyists is a drag, but it will not succeed in bringing the energy transition to fail. *Let's go for the motto: YES, WE CAN. The next generations will thank us.*"

An example from the Berlin participation project, in which citizens discussed the future public use and cultivation of the Tempelhofer Feld (a 300-hectare field and former airport), is taken from a discussion of the field's opening hours, which at that time were until 10:00 p.m. As in the discussion of coal mining, participants' comments are often based on the conflicting values of *security, environmental protection, and self-direction*:

*"That's absurd. Unnecessary high costs, just to enforce the dictum of an open field. If you really want to lie down on a meadow at night in Berlin, then you should go to the Hasenheide. Not a good idea? Then think why [the Hasenheide park is dangerous at night]."*

*"It remains now in the dark which costs arise from the fact that the private security service is no longer driving around with cars, no longer locking the entrances, etc. And by the way, there is no problem at all in the Hasenheide on the lawn at night (why ever) or in the evening. Or jogging there very early in the morning, etc. The rioting and the drug trafficking take place almost exclusively during the day (says one who has lived near the Hasenheide since 2001, including children)."*

*"Well then, the field can be closed at night, if the stay in the Hasenheide at night is not a problem. Do you really want to see the very likely problems of a party mile in the field? For example, in the summer, on the side of Neukölln. For all who live there or are engaged in gardening projects on the field that is an impertinence. One cannot ignore this and pretend that only a few bent blades of grass are the victims of a complete opening of the field."*

The first participant argues that expanding the field's opening hours would cause problems such as parties, drugs, and more waste and noise. Here and later in her reaction to the counterarguments of another participant, she demonstrates that *security and social order* are important to her. The other participant minimizes the supposed risks, referring to another park in Berlin near his home. Other discussions of the Tempelhofer Feld exhibit conflicts between *universalism* (e.g., protecting nature) and *hedonism* (e.g., enjoying life) or between *stimulation* (e.g., kitesurfing) and *security*.

## 4 How Transparency of Values Informs Discussion and Decision-Making

The examples analyzed in the previous section demonstrate that citizens' narratives and emotions articulate personal and social values and thereby appeal to shared values in society. But why is it helpful in a deliberation process that citizens articulate values? First, what is important in deliberation is that other participants can comprehend what stands behind a personal narrative, that they understand not only the personal perspective of the speaker but also to what extent their own personal and social values fit or fail to fit with the values expressed through the speaker's narratives. In this way, participants can understand the deeper value conflicts or similarities behind expressed personal experiences. In many instances, citizen-to-citizen discussions are complex and lengthy, and they are sometimes even chaotic. Structuring discussions along the lines of value conflicts could help to make transparent not only who stands on which side but, more importantly, which values are crucial for whom and for what reasons. On the one hand, value theory and analysis can determine which empirically founded values directly oppose each other, such as security and self-direction or universalism and power (Schwartz 1994). On the other hand, it might be able to determine which values lie next to each other and are therefore compatible, such as the pursuit of benevolence and universalism values. Against this background, transparent values, in addition to arguments, could help citizens learn about the values of others, opening new doors to knowledge gain, perspective taking, and mutual understanding.

Second, transparent value similarities and value conflicts could indicate how likely it is that the outcome will be a consensus or compromise or that the deliberation process will get stuck in disagreement (Dryzek/Braithwaite 2000). In his empirical studies, Schwartz (1994) points out that value types are interdependent. For example, some types of values stand in opposition to each other, such as values emphasizing *personal independence* and *openness to change* and values emphasizing *self-restriction*, *tradition*, and *stability*. In those cases, in which consensus or compromise seems unlikely, participants can learn to understand the perspectives of others and mutually search for compromises. Dryzek and Braithwaite (2000, 261) argue that deliberation between citizens with different personal and social values will probably not produce a normative consensus, but that positive-sum outcomes are possible through mutual understanding. Against this backdrop, participants who value *self-direction* and *creativity* could introduce new ideas and build bridges between participants who value *security* and participants who value *universalism*. The greatest challenge seems to be reaching pro-

ductive outcomes when one group is motivated exclusively by opposing another group and is not formed on the basis of common values (Dryzek/Braithwaite 2000, 259). At times, citizens are motivated by unpleasant experiences or by hatred and marginalization of other social groups, which makes deliberation very difficult. However, there is empirical evidence that under certain circumstances, deliberation is possible even between deeply divided groups (Steiner et al. 2017).

## 5 Combining Argument Mapping and Value Mapping

As mentioned at the beginning of the paper, in recent years, researchers have devoted considerable attention to designing online deliberation in several contexts, including that of digital citizen participation (e.g., Janssen/Kies 2005; Noveck 2003; Towne/Herbsleb 2012). The preliminary results of deliberative design research suggest that particular design features (e.g., platform design features) are related to specific characteristics of deliberation (e.g., Esau et al. 2017; Himelboim/Gleave/Smith 2009). However, this research initiative is young, and because new online tools are developed constantly, there is still much work to do. Thus far, deliberative design research has focused on argumentation, and there are no design approaches that focus on the personal experiences, emotions, and values of participants.

For future digital participation, a key challenge will be experimenting carefully with designs in real-world deliberation procedures and learning what works best to inform decision-making. To the best of my knowledge, no existing model or tool combines citizens' arguments with citizens' values. Further, there is no theoretical or empirical research on the question of how design could guide a deliberation process that incorporates citizens' emotions and experiences on the discussion topic. More precisely, I envision an online tool that on the one hand can generate an argument map based on already existing tools for online argumentation (Krauthoff et al. 2016) and on the other hand can create a value map on the basis of the values revealed through citizens' narratives and emotions. As an orientation for visualization of the value map, Schwartz's (1994) value structure prototype (*figure 1*) seems appropriate. This would have the advantage of making value conflicts directly visible. The value structure entails typical empirically tested value contents and possible conflicting relations (e.g., universalism and security). A particular advantage of such a tool would be that relations between positions, claims, arguments, and values could be visualized. The value map could be created by participants tagging their utterances to values that they articulate.

The tagging procedure might also be supported by other participants, moderators, or scientists. Instead of deleting comments or reacting to citizens' contributions, moderators could help to structure the debate by using text-annotation techniques such as tagging different types of arguments, stories, and emotions so that they can be linked to a location in the argument map respective value map.

## 6 Conclusion

I have argued that citizens' narratives and emotions reveal personal and social values that should become part of the deliberation process in order to be included in decision-making. The topics discussed in research on digital participation usually represent *wicked problems* (Rittel 1972; Rittel/Webber 1973), which involve both facts and values; however, many current digital participation projects and tools focus on facts. As the short examples from two online consultations on the local and regional level of democracy show, citizens use narratives and expressions of emotions to articulate personal and social values. The use of value approaches that can make sense of relations between values (Schwartz 1994), such as the one used here, could facilitate the tagging and visualizing of citizens' values. Taken together, citizens' arguments and values could be a resource for understanding what exactly citizens define as a problem and what they expect from planners and administrative and political staff. Apart from the positive outcomes of the deliberation process (e.g., more reflective opinions), the results of such research would provide a richer stock of information about citizens' opinions on public issues than is typically made available through opinion polls.

Although I think the short examples analyzed above are suitable as illustrations for the argument offered in this paper, future empirical research is needed to analyze systematically how exactly citizens use different forms of communication to articulate their values, how they listen and respond to other citizens' values, and under what conditions reflexivity and perspective taking or empathy take place (Graham 2008). Further, more research is required on the relationships between different forms of communication, for instance in different stages or sequences of deliberation (Curato 2012).

Citizens know their own lives, experiences, and emotions better than they know scientific facts; they are experts of their everyday lives. Why expect citizens to perform like political experts when only a small number of citizens has expert knowledge of a given issue, and when a large number of citizens is affected by and has substantive experience with the issue and expresses specific values, problem definitions, and perspectives when discussing it? A better understanding of

citizens' values as they are expressed through communication represents a compelling opportunity to experiment with new methods of citizen engagement—as well as with new scientific methods that investigate underlying value conflicts in order to develop a better understanding of deliberation processes.

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