D&D Practitioners Survey: What is the State of the Field?

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http://sites.lafayette.edu/ddps/

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Lee and Polletta
About the researchers

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Research interests:
deliberative democracy
collaborative governance
social movements

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Why a survey?

• Survey questions grew out of qualitative field work on D&D professionals by Caroline Lee and qualitative content analysis of the role of gender in deliberative forums by Francesca Polletta.

• Other surveys have not sampled across D&D organizations and methods.

• Are there larger trends not visible from ground-level?

• For more information on survey rationale and limitations, please visit: http://sites.lafayette.edu/ddps/
What are we looking for?

Growing field

• Where did it come from?
• What does it look like now?
• Where is it going?
Non-random, self-selected sample using over 20 online communities and listservs as sampling frames, including:

- NCDD
- AmericaSpeaks
- iAP2
- National Issues Forums
- Everyday Democracy
- Group Facilitation Forum
- Open Space World
- OSLIST Email Community
- The Democracy Imperative
- Center for Wise Democracy
- Wisdom Council Enthusiasts
General survey information

• 45 questions
• Launched 9/23/09, closed 10/31/09
• 434 respondents completed the survey
Entering the Field

These slides provide information about the timing of respondents’ entrance into the field, their background and preparation, and their training experience.
Median year of initial interest: 1996
Median year of first facilitation: 1998
Q17: Percentage of respondents (N=427) reporting prior practice in related fields

- Organizing/activism: 45%
- Adult education: 33%
- PR/communications/media: 27%
- Conflict resolution: 25%
- Engineering/planning: 13%
- Social work: 9%
- Counseling/therapy: 7%

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Seventy-one percent of respondents have an advanced degree or certificate. Those advanced degrees are in a wide variety of specialties:

![Diagram showing the percentage of advanced degrees in various fields.]

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Seventy-two percent of respondents have participated in at least one training program. Those with training experience had participated in 2.4 training programs on average.

The most common trainings in the "Other" category were National Issues Forums trainings, alternative dispute resolution and conflict resolution trainings, group process trainings, Future Search trainings, and Appreciative Inquiry trainings.

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Q14: Percentage of respondents (N=413) reporting experience as an instructor in a facilitation training program or D&D methods course

- No: 48.4%
- Yes: 51.6%

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Current Practice

These slides provide information about respondents’ current practice, including number and type of projects, common sponsors, methods used, and topics covered.
Q1: Type of D&D Practiced by Survey Respondents

- **Exploration and education among participants**: 65%
- **Resolving a conflict among participants**: 38%
- **Producing a decision to be implemented by participants**: 61%
- **Producing a decision to be implemented by others**: 53%

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Median number of events facilitated per year: 7
Mode (most common answer): 3
Median budget size: $6000

Mode (most common answer): $0

Q38: Budget Size for Most Recent Project Facilitated (N=434)

No answer/ don't know: 35%

$0: 17%

$1-9,999: 18%

$10,000-99,999: 18%

>$100,000: 12%

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Q5: Percentage of professionals (N=318) reporting paid work by sector of client

- Nonprofit: 55%
- Public: 45%
- Private: 37%
- None of the above: 5%
Q7: Percentage of all selections (N=839) for top 3 most common sponsors in the last two years (five highest categories)

- Local and regional government: 26%
- Local nonprofits and neighborhood groups: 19%
- Business and industry: 18%
- State and federal government: 14%
- Higher education: 9%

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Q21: Methods Used Most Often in Current Practice

- Small group deliberations: 63%
- Panels/task forces/committees: 54%
- Large group methods: 51%
- Visioning workshops/charrettes: 43%
- Open Space/"leaderless" methods: 31%
- Online/digital media: 25%
- Citizen juries/assemblies: 11%
- Deliberative polls: 10%
- Other: 23%

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On average, respondents had covered 5 topics in the last two years.
Q22: Percentage of total respondents (N=419) who have facilitated on top three topics over the last two years

- Education and youth: 47%
- Organizational development and human resources: 42%
- Comprehensive community planning and visioning: 42%

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Field Values and Beliefs

These slides provide information on respondents’ perspectives on opportunities and challenges in the field as it grows, including beliefs about successful outcomes, common problems, who should lead the field going forward, and which research is most helpful to current practice. Some questions also probe respondents’ sense of others’ perspectives on dialogue and deliberation efforts.
Q23: Term that best describes the people and organizations currently leading D&D efforts? (N=403)

- Community of Practice: 57%
- Movement: 16%
- Other: 14%
- Profession: 11%
- Industry: 2%
Q24: Many people who do not currently support D&D efforts would change their minds if they could experience a single great D&D process. (N=427)

- Disagree: 8%
- Agree: 92%

Q24: Expanded access to standardized deliberation tools (community dialogue kits, best practice guidelines, issues guides, etc.) is enhancing dialogue and deliberation in America. (N=394)

- Disagree: 13%
- Agree: 87%

Q24: Training facilitators from within the local community is usually preferable to bringing in professionally-trained facilitators from outside the community. (N=414)

- Disagree: 34%
- Agree: 66%

Q24: While there is some good work done in the commercial sector by for-profit consulting firms, high quality D&D facilitation services are more likely to be found in the nonprofit sector. (N=413)

- Disagree: 44%
- Agree: 56%
Q25: In general, dialogue and deliberation facilitators face the most pressure for particular outcomes from … (N=415)

- Those invited to deliberate: 40%
- Those hosting deliberation or dialogue: 60%
Q26: In general, D&D practitioners should promote the benefits of deliberation by ... (N=418)

- Emphasizing D&D as a positive end in itself: 36%
- Emphasizing useful outcomes: 64%
Q27: The expanded use of deliberative methods within for-profit corporations (with employees or customers) is ... (N=413)

- Good for the D&D field: 97%
- Bad for the D&D field: 3%
Respondents generally believe that it is important to measure many different outcomes as indicators of process success. The only outcome receiving much less support than other options was whether money was saved as a result of a D&D process (27%).
Respondents chose participant satisfaction as a success indicator more often than sponsor satisfaction.
Respondents who did choose sponsor satisfaction nearly always chose participant satisfaction as well.
Q30: Percentage of total respondents (N=417) reporting as their top 3 challenges (7 most common only)

- Not enough time for a high quality process: 58%
- Not enough funding for a high quality process: 46%
- Trouble recruiting participants representative of the entire community of stakeholders: 41%
- Sponsor misconceptions about dialogue and deliberation: 35%
- Limited capacity of participants for full participation in process: 31%
- Participant experience with poorly facilitated processes: 31%
- Participant misconceptions about dialogue and deliberation: 26%
Q29: Most important challenge facing the D&D community, based on challenges defined by NCDD conference attendees

- Making D&D integral to our public and private systems: 34%
- Addressing oppression and bias: 6%
- Demonstrating to powerholders that D&D works: 20%
- Linking D&D with action and policy change: 20%
- Framing this work in a more accessible way: 20%

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Q31: Percentage of total respondents (n=394) selecting top 3 categories of actors who should take the lead in advancing D&D in America (5 most common only)

- Professional associations (NCDD, IAP2, DDC): 62%
- Alliance of experienced local organizations: 51%
- The White House Office of Public Engagement: 48%
- National D&D facilitation organizations: 47%
- Foundations that support D&D: 47%
Q43: Research on D&D That Would Be Helpful to Respondents

- **Case studies of successful processes**: 68%
- **Collaborative action research**: 60%
- **Cost-benefit analyses, including non-monetary benefits**: 43%
- **Systematic empirical evaluations**: 40%
- **Review articles summarizing research**: 34%
- **D&D theory development**: 32%

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The Role of Gender in Deliberation

These slides provide information on how respondents think gender might affect recruitment of participants or styles of participation. Demographic information on the gender balance of survey respondents is also included here.
Q19: If you have been involved in recruitment for D&D projects, is it generally easier to recruit men or women or is there no difference? (N=419)

- Men are easier to recruit: 1%
- It varies from group to group: 33%
- Don’t know/No basis for judgment: 22%
- No difference: 18%
- Women are easier to recruit: 26%

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Q18: Gender Balance of Participants in Groups Facilitated Over the Past Two Years (N=419)

- Most groups had more men: 11%
- Most groups were about equal: 25%
- It varied a great deal from group to group: 37%
- Most groups had more women: 27%
Q20: Do men and women have different styles of participation, in your observation? (N=415)

- Yes: 50.4%
- No: 25.1%
- Don't know: 24.6%
Q33: Respondent Gender (N=431)

- Male: 38%
- Female: 62%
Demographics

These slides provide information about the demographics of survey respondents, including their memberships, employment in D&D work, and involvement in field-building events.
The target population was in the U.S., but the survey was distributed worldwide.

U.S.: 345    Canada: 43    Australia: 12    UK: 7

Countries with 1-3 respondents: Argentina, Bolivia, Denmark, Ecuador, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Spain, Taiwan, Venezuela
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Median age: 53    Ave. age: 51.5    Mode: 62 (22 in 1969)

Q34: Birth Year of Respondents by Decade (N=425)
Q33: Respondent Gender (N=431)

- Male: 38%
- Female: 62%
Q35: Racial and Ethnic Background of Respondents (N=420)

- American Indian or Alaska Native: 1%
- Asian: 3%
- Black or African American: 5%
- Hispanic or Latino: 3%
- White: 86%
- Other: 4%

Percentages add to >100% due to selection of multiple categories.

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Q11: Highest degree received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or associates degree</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors degree</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other professional degree</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of total respondents (N=432)

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93% of professionals belong to at least one organization. Those who belong to at least one professional association belong to 1.6 organizations on average.
Employment in Dialogue and Deliberation Work

Q3: Type of Practice (N=431)

- Professional Only: 36%
- Volunteer Only: 11%
- Professional and Volunteer: 37%
- None of the above: 10%
- Academic or student: 6%

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Q4: Percentage of professionals (N=314) reporting engagement in D&D work on a full-time or part-time basis

- Full-time: 60%
- Part-time: 40%
251 practitioners, or 58% of all respondents, reported participation in at least one of the field-building events listed in the chart below. On average, practitioners who reported participation had participated in two of the events.

![Chart showing number of respondents participating in field-building events and conferences](chart.png)
Thanks so much for your interest in the survey.

For more information about the sample, survey limitations, and opportunities to discuss the results, please see the survey website, at:

http://sites.lafayette.edu/ddps