

Document-Centered Discussion and Decision Making in the *Deme* Platform

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Four Forms of Communicative Action

Conflict Dimensions		Preference Conflict	
		<i>low</i>	<i>high</i>
Belief Conflict	<i>low</i>	coordination	negotiation
	<i>high</i>	argumentation	deliberation

Two Common Effects of Online Text Dialogue

Biased recasting

Lack of resolution

Biased Recasting

Participants with conflicting perceptions and goals often misunderstand and/or misrepresent the positions of others

Problem is exacerbated by message-thread systems that encourage statements by others to be *recast*, through paraphrasing, summarizing, or interpreting, often in a *biased* way.

Addressing Biased Recasting in Asynchronous Text Discussion

What You See Is What I See (WYSIWIS)
[Stefik et al. 1987, “Beyond the Chalkboard”]

Flexible covisibility of target text and comments
[Davies et al. 2006, “Displaying Asynchronous Reactions to a Document”]

Lack of Resolution

Discussion between people with different opinions often fails to settle these differences, or to identify areas of agreement.

Can be a problem when collective action/ agreement are in the interests of both sides.

Threaded conversation can lead to lack of resolution --- generally does not impose common goals or deadlines.

Addressing Lack of Resolution

Require a decision with a deadline, e.g. voting/polling with a decision rule

Support project creation integrated with other parts of the deliberation

The “Deme” Platform: Deliberation and Content Management

Project began in 2003 (PHP prototype)

Current version in PythonDjango (2008-)

Free/open source – Affero GPL

Currently in use for...

- Website hosting (e.g. `symsys.stanford.edu`)
- Community Forum experiment (AHRQ)

See www.stanford.edu/~davies for papers

Demo