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Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University

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Should the American research university have a strategy for renewing its civic mission in a diverse democratic society and, if so, what should it be?

Many American research universities were established with a civic mission to prepare students for active participation in a diverse democracy and to develop knowledge for the improvement of communities. Today, however, it is hard to find top administrators with consistent commitment to this mission, few faculty members consider it central to their role, and community groups that approach the university for assistance often find it difficult to get what they need.

Although some faculty members comment on civic disengagement as a subject of study, they seldom suggest that they themselves have a role in creating the problem or finding its solution, even though the qualities needed for engagement are among those that many universities were established to develop, thus causing Mathews (1997a, 1997b) to recognize that there is need to realign the priorities of the professorate with democratic imperatives, and motivating Boyte (1998; Boyte & Kari, 1996,

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Barry Checkoway is professor of social work and urban planning and director of the Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning, University of Michigan.

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1998) to ask penetrating questions about the public work of the professorate.

At the same time, there are new stirrings of democracy in American higher education. From one campus to another, there is increasing interest in efforts to better prepare people for active participation in a diverse democracy, to develop knowledge for the improvement of communities, and to think about and act upon the public dimensions of educational work. There are efforts by national associations to assess the status of civic renewal, reports on faculty roles and rewards, research studies of institutional practices, and new declarations of renewing the civic mission of the research university (Wingspread Declaration, 1999).

This article concentrates on American research universities because of their special status in higher education. They produce most of the world's scholarly publications and prepare the professors who populate the nation's colleges and universities. They exercise disproportionate influence over other colleges and universities, such that their initiatives often spark changes in these other institutions even when these changes are not always appropriate. The belief is that research universities are a vehicle for change in higher education and that by renewing their civic mission it might affect the entire educational system.

Civic Engagement and the Research University

Civic engagement is essential to a democratic society, but too many Americans have reduced their engagement in public affairs. Social scientists have documented a decline in voting in elections, attendance at community meetings, and involvement in voluntary activities (National Commission on Civic Renewal, 1998). Putnam (1995), for example, documents a decline in political affiliations and voluntary association memberships in all generations since the 1940s and concludes that these changes have weakened communal connections and participation of the populace.

Other analysts question these data, arguing that traditional forms of voting and voluntarism are insufficient measures of civic engagement, and conclude that new forms of engagement are emerging from a more culturally diverse society. As Bennett, W. L. (1998) concludes, "Civic culture is not dead, it has merely taken new identities, and can be found living in other communities."

Whatever the numbers, serious questions have been raised about adults' interest in public issues, their respect for differences, and their ability to argue their beliefs. At the same time, young people want to provide direct service and reach out to others, but neither aspire to polit-

ical participation nor strengthen their civic beliefs and behaviors through higher education (Bennett, S., 1997; Hart, 1998). On the contrary, studies show that the interest of entering undergraduate students in political participation is at an all-time-low and that their interest actually declines during the college years.

Higher education can contribute to civic engagement, but most research universities do not perceive themselves as part of the problem or of its solution. Whereas universities once were concerned with "education for citizenship" and "knowledge for society," contemporary institutions have drifted away from their civic mission. Thus today's universities are uneven in their commitments, faculty members are unprepared for public roles, and community groups find it difficult to gain access to them.

"Education for citizenship" becomes more complex in a diverse democratic society in which communities are not "monocultural," consisting of people who share the same social and cultural characteristics, but "multicultural," with significant differences among groups. For democracy to function successfully in the future, students must be prepared to understand their own identities, communicate with people who are different from themselves, and build bridges across cultural differences in the transition to a more diverse society.

American research universities are strategically situated for civic engagement. They are civic institutions whose original mission expressed a strong public purpose (Anderson, 1993; Kennedy, 1997). Many of the original institutions were active in building the new nation and later were joined by new institutions that combined the European emphasis on research with the American interest in service. Its spirit of education can be found in the ideas of Charles Eliot of Harvard University, who wrote that "at bottom, most Americans in higher education are filled with the democratic spirit"; in the ideas of Seth Low, who stated that Columbia University "breathed the air of the city of New York"; in the ideas of the founders of the land-grant institutions, who saw themselves as building communities' capacities for cooperative action; and in the ideas of many others who believed that the route to a civic society went through the universities (Damon, 1998; Gamson, 1997; Hackney, 1986; Harkavy, 1997; Harkavy & Benson, 1998; Peters, 1997). It would be mistaken to ignore that the democratic spirit expressed by Eliot was not extended to all social groups, but the expression was there nonetheless.

Today's research universities have immense intellectual and institutional resources that are the envy of the world. They have faculty members with credentials in academic disciplines and professional fields—

such as business and economic development, education and the environment, health and human services, housing and neighborhood revitalization—with potential for problem solving and program planning. They have large libraries, research laboratories, telecommunications technology, and academic support facilities that are the envy of universities everywhere. They are more than educational institutions; they also are major employers, providers and consumers of goods and services, and powerful social and economic units whose decisions affect communities regardless of their involvement in its knowledge development.

Over time, however, these universities have been transformed from civic institutions into some of the world's most powerful research engines and, in so doing, have undergone major changes in their objectives and operations, research paradigms and pedagogical methods, and infrastructure and external relationships. Historians attribute the transformation to various forces, including the professionalization and departmentalization of the academic disciplines into the university, the drive for Cold War supremacy and national security, and other factors that caused universities to experience their most expansive growth and also to deemphasize their civic mission (Lucas, 1994).

Rice (1996) documents the twentieth-century transformation of these universities and the changing roles of the faculty "from service to science." He argues that the "professionalization of scholarly allegiance" and its "institutionalization in higher education" caused professors to turn inward on themselves, develop knowledge for its own sake rather than its societal benefit, adopt research methodologies and positivist paradigms shaped by scientific neutrality, and focus more on their departments and disciplines than on their communities and society—all with strong support from public and private funders. He describes how the scholarly work of the faculty was segmented into professions and disciplines and was institutionalized into the newly organized professional associations and in the universities. Academic departments and disciplinary societies, rather than the larger society, became the focus of scholarly allegiance and political power in the academy.

As a result, higher education has become the target of critics who charge that much classroom teaching does not develop civic competencies, that much academically based research does not serve community needs, and that universities have lost their sense of civic purpose. In the words of the late Ernest Boyer (1994) of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, "Higher education is suffering from a loss of overall direction, a nagging feeling that it is no longer at the vital center of the nation's work."

There is a historic debate about the future of America's great research

universities, which Bender (1997) believes have reached "a time for renegotiation of their role in society." The dilemma is that these universities have increased in resources, diversified their activities, and exceeded their expectations. But they also have become, like Kafka's castle, "vast, remote, inaccessible."

Elements of Strategy

What are some strategies to renew the civic mission of the American research university? Following are some elements of a strategy that relate to its student, faculty, and institutional constituencies. They are not the only elements, but they are among the important ones.

Strengthening Student Learning

How can research universities prepare students for active participation in a diverse democratic society?

Communities in a democratic society require citizens who have ethical standards, social responsibility, and civic competencies. Communities in a diverse democratic society require citizens who understand their own social identities, communicate with those who are different from themselves, and build bridges across differences for a common cause. Whereas higher education was once concerned with strengthening social values, today's universities have deemphasized their earlier emphases and adopted a more secular view. And, in the transition from monocultural to more multicultural education, universities are uneven in their commitment and performance.

Today's young adults may be among the most politically disengaged in American history. Halstead (1999), the thirty-year old founder of the New America Foundation, which promotes participation of young adults, shows that the youngest voting-age Americans have unprecedented levels of political nonparticipation. They are less likely than any earlier generation of young Americans to vote in elections, call or write elected officials, or work on political campaigns. They are more likely than any of their predecessors to deemphasize the importance of citizenship and national identity and to distrust established political and governmental institutions.

Studies show that the interest of entering undergraduate students in public participation actually decreases during the college years and into graduate education. University curricula and courses do not challenge students' democratic imaginations, campus curricular activities do not offer opportunities for students to engage in political campaigns, and the campus itself is a wasteland of public dialogue. At the prestigious

Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, an outgoing student government leader (Seligman, 1999, p. 1) pleaded for a D at KSG. "I seek one big, glaring, promising D. I seek a D for Dialogue," she said. In one of America's premier schools, she observed that faculty and students do not come together over the difficult issues. Indeed, she continued, they do not even show up or, when they do, they are there to listen to the presenters rather than to participate in serious dialogue, and concluded: "Without the space to examine our own assumptions and to learn about those of our peers, we run the risk of supporting a world in turmoil, a world stuck along self-created fault lines and stated positions, a world unsafe for our children."

If the students are disengaged, does it mean that the universities are not doing their job? Some people inside higher education and outside its walls strongly argue that it is not the job of universities to engage their students; rather, it is the responsibility of the individual, the family, or other institutions. This argument is at the core of the debate over the future university role in education for citizenship.

It is possible to argue that universities no longer should prepare people for public participation, but instead should focus on the production and provision of substantive knowledge and practical skills. However, any argument about "public participation versus knowledge development" still must confront that knowledge development and public participation are interrelated in a democratic society in which there ought not to be one without the other.

In this light, it is arguable that the real problem is not that universities do not prepare people for public participation, but rather that academically based knowledge is not sufficient to motivate or prepare people to think about the issues. In the 1997 national freshman survey conducted annually by the University of California at Los Angeles, the finding that college freshmen's commitment to political causes was at its lowest in the survey's 32-year history may be interpreted as less problematic than the finding that only 27% of the students reported that keeping abreast of political affairs was an important goal. I myself would never argue that the nonparticipation of young adults is a good thing for society because they are ignorant of the issues, but it is arguable. And if research universities neither produce nor provide the substantive knowledge and practical skills that people require to think about the issues, then what does this say about the scope and quality of the knowledge and skills that they do provide?

How can research universities better prepare students for active participation in a democratic society? My colleagues often answer in one of three ways: First, by involving students in research projects that address

important issues in society. In this approach, students initiate independent studies or collaborate with faculty members in community studies that also contribute to their own personal development. Thus when students interview individuals, facilitate focus groups, conduct neighborhood surveys, or make public presentations, they develop knowledge for the community and strengthen their own civic competencies. Several research universities have established research partnership programs with measurable benefits for students, faculty members, and community partners (Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, 1997).

Second, by involving students in for-credit service-learning courses in which they serve the community and learn from the experience. Studies show that when students participate in the community (as when they rehabilitate houses for the homeless or organize the homeless to advocate for more affordable housing) and reflect critically upon the experience (through structured learning activities such as journal writing or in-service seminars), they can learn a great deal as a result.

Indeed, studies show that service learning can develop substantive knowledge with concurrent gains in academic achievement; provide practical skills in problem solving through experiential education; and strengthen a sense of social responsibility and civic values in a diverse society (Conrad & Hedin. 1991; Giles & Eyler, 1994, 1999; Rutter & Newman, 1989; Youniss & Yates, 1997). In a large undergraduate course, University of Michigan researchers found that students in community involvement sections were significantly more likely than those in traditional discussion sections to report that they had performed up to their potential, learned to apply principles from the course to new situations, and develop a greater awareness of societal problems. Classroom learning and course grades increased significantly, and postsurvey data showed significant effects on personal values (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993).

Service learning is increasing nationwide. Several research universities have established serious service-learning programs that have won widespread recognition. Campus Compact is a coalition of more than 500 college and university presidents committed to service learning. The American Association of Higher Education is publishing more than twenty books on service learning in academic disciplines, and the American Council on Education, Association of American Colleges and Universities, American Association of Universities and other national higher education associations have held conferences on the subject. Service learning is not the only form of civic education, but it is popular indeed (Hollander & Hartley, 2000; Stanton, 1990, 1999).

Service learning is a powerful pedagogy and way of knowing consistent with the "learning by doing" philosophy of John Dewey through which some students learn more than they would from conventional classroom instruction (Ehrlich, 1997). Its courses are offered by a number of faculty members in research universities and would attract many more faculty if they had more information and support from the institution. Some of its core concepts are employed in the curricula of the most powerful professional schools—such as medicine—although their educators do not think of themselves in this way.

A third way of preparing students for active participation in a democratic society is by involving them in cocurricular activities with a strong civic purpose. Cocurricularism has a history whose episodes extend from the establishment of student unions to the institutionalization of student affairs divisions in the university. Research universities have many students who volunteer in communities during the school year, during breaks in the academic calendar, or during the summer months, either on their own initiative or with the assistance of professional staff. Although most of these students provide direct services— such as tutoring children in reading or serving meals in a homeless shelter—other students seek social and political changes—such as by addressing poverty conditions that cause illiteracy or organizing the homeless for more affordable housing (Farland & Henry, 1992). For some students these cocurricular activities are their most intensive learning experiences in the university.

Some research universities attempt to integrate curricular and cocurricular objectives in the same program. These include residential colleges, which integrate the lives of students through common housing tied to civic themes, and intergroup dialogues, which increase communications of diverse individuals and groups (Guarasci & Cornwell, 1998). It is difficult to integrate curricular and cocurricular activities through collaboration of student affairs and academic affairs divisions in the academy, but when it happens it can have powerful learning effects.

Students can learn a great deal from their involvement in the community, but the learning is not automatic, and only a fraction of them are formally prepared for entering the community, for working with people who are different from themselves, or for critical reflection upon the experience. Graduate students are placed in communities as part of their professional training, but their preparation and support are uneven from one unit to another. Research universities have various ways to prepare students for entering the community and working with others, but there is much work to be done, and in the absence of support structures that combine "democracy and diversity," significant learning opportunities

can be lost. There is need for new initiatives that prepare students for working with people in communities that are different from their own, and for critical reflection upon their community experience (Bernstein & Cock, 1997).

But even if more students participated in more research projects, or in more service-learning courses, or in more cocurricular activities, would it address the root causes of the present political disengagement? If the root causes of a problem originate outside an institution and if the solution is beyond its reach, then what is the institution's appropriate role?

Involving the Faculty

How can universities engage faculty members in research and teaching that involves and improves communities?

Faculty members can play key roles in renewing the civic mission of the research university. After all, they manage the curricula and teach the courses that can help prepare students for their own civic roles. These include conventional classroom courses and community service learning in which students serve the community and learn from the experience; community-based learning in which community involvement is joined to course content and integrated into the classroom dialogue; individual courses that take students into the community and bring community partners into the classroom; field internships in which students work with practitioners in civic agencies; or workshops in which student teams engage in community efforts to improve community members' conditions (Checkoway, 1996). Problem-centered rather than discipline-based learning is a version of this type (Lagemann, 1997).

Faculty can conduct research that involves and improves communities, employing methodologies that treat communities as partners and participants rather than as human subjects and passive recipients of information. They can come from diverse disciplines and professional fields, but together tend to work with community-based organizations and civic agencies. They involve their partners in the various stages of research from defining the problems to gathering the data to utilizing the results. Increasing numbers of faculty members are "democratizing research and researching for democracy" (Ansley & Gaventa, 1997; Park, Bryden-Miller, Hall, & Jackson, 1993; Schulz, Israel, Becker, & Hollis, 1998).

For example, Israel, Schultz, Parker, and Becker (1998) describe the key principles of community-based research, which recognizes community as a unit of identity and builds on strengths and resources within the community. It facilitates collaborative partnerships in all phases of research, integrates knowledge and action for the mutual benefit of all

partners, and promotes a co-learning and empowering process that attends to social inequalities.

Nyden, Figrt, Shibley, and Burrows (1997) describe a program of collaborative research as an approach that adds chairs to the research table and recognizes the legitimacy of knowledge in both university and community. This approach builds capacity in the community by enabling its members to acquire low-cost technical assistance and develop their knowledge and skills, and in the university by increasing interdisciplinary interaction and collegial collaboration for community improvement.

Reconceptualizing research in this way raises methodological and epistemological issues that challenge the prevailing positivist paradigm. In the positivist paradigm, researchers are "detached" experts who define problems in "dispassionate" ways on conceptual or methodological grounds according to their academic disciplines and gather data on "human subjects" through "value free" methods that assure reliability of findings. They share the results with professional peers through presentations at scientific meetings and publications in scholarly journals whose editors have the same orientation. Indeed, researchers who regard community members as research partners and active participants in knowledge development, rather than as human subjects and passive recipients of information, are not typical.

In the collaborative community-based model, people participate as partners in the various stages of research, from defining the problem to gathering the data to utilizing the results. Together they generate knowledge that serves group goals, strengthens organizational and community capacity, and empowers members for immediate action. Such research also has the potential to generate scientific and lay theory, prepare reports for public audiences, and produce articles for professional peers.

Reconceptualizing research in this way also promotes the scholarship of engagement and contributes to the diversity of research paradigms. Consistent with the work of Boyer (1987), the institution would recognize that there are various forms of scholarship that go beyond the creation of new knowledge to the scholarships of "integration," "teaching," "application," and "engagement" in which the university becomes a partner in addressing the pressing problems of society. This is not to diminish the prevailing positivist paradigm or to advocate the scholarship of engagement for all faculty in all seasons of their career. Rather, it is to recognize that there is no single form of scholarship; there are several (Bringle, 1999).

Faculty also can provide consultation and technical assistance to organizations and communities. Consultation and technical assistance by faculty are common ways for faculty members to draw upon their exper-

tise for the welfare of society, such as when they are asked to analyze some data, solve a problem, or evaluate a program. When a faculty member draws upon his or her expertise in this way, it is another form of knowledge development and an appropriate professional role that contributes both to the civic mission of the university and to improving the quality of life.

Thus faculty members have key roles in the university, responsibilities for fulfilling its core objectives, and relationships with those that influence implementation in the institution. Lacking the faculty, nothing lasting is likely to happen.

However, there are serious obstacles to involving faculty in renewing the civic mission of the research university. First, faculty do not always perceive themselves or their professional roles in this way; indeed, they are conditioned to believe that the civic competencies of students and the problems of society are not central to their roles in the university. They view themselves as teachers and researchers with commitments to their academic disciplines or professional fields, but this does not necessarily translate into playing public roles in an engaged university or democratic society.

Second, faculty perceptions are shaped by an academic culture that runs contrary to the idea of playing public roles. Most faculty are trained in graduate schools whose required courses ignore civic content, and they enter academic careers whose gatekeepers dissuade them from spending much time in the community. They are socialized into a culture—beginning with their first days in graduate school and continuing into their academic careers—whose institutional structures shape their beliefs and cause behaviors that are consistent with their conditioning. They perceive that public engagement is not central to their role, that there are few rewards for this work, and that it may even jeopardize their careers in the university. This is what many faculty believe, this is their dominant culture, and its change would be an enormous undertaking.

The third obstacle is the reward structure of the university, which includes promotion and tenure, time to freely pursue one's own professional priorities, money through salary gains or faculty grants, and status and prestige, which are especially important in institutions where hierarchy is important, relationships are based upon rank, and the value of an academic unit is based upon its place in the national rankings.

Like other people, faculty should be rewarded for the work that they do. Work that draws upon one's academic discipline and professional expertise is a legitimate part of the academy. When professors engage in this work, they should be rewarded. To do otherwise is dysfunctional for the individual and the institution.

However, the present reward structure at many universities places emphasis on research for its own sake, recognizes them for its publication in scholarly journals as a primary way of knowing, and rewards them primarily for the creation of new knowledge, and not necessarily for its utilization through training, consultation, and technical assistance.

Faculty conduct research on problems often defined by their departments and disciplines, using methods acceptable to professionals in the field. They teach courses that fit into proscribed curricula and perceive that the civic mission has low regard or few rewards. These perceptions are reinforced by department chairs and professional peers, by learned societies and disciplinary associations, and by the editors of the journals in which they are expected to publish. They thus tend to respond to the rewards they receive, and these rewards relate to their research above all else.

The scholarship of engagement has benefits for both the individual and the institution. It provides faculty members with new life experiences outside their professional circles that can stimulate research and improve teaching. It causes them to interact with people often very different from themselves and can provide them with new ideas for research and teaching. There is evidence that faculty who consult in the community are more productive researchers and better teachers than those faculty who do not. Indeed, studies show that faculty who engage in significant consultation also score higher in the number of funded research projects, in the number of professional peer-reviewed publications, and in student evaluations of their teaching, than those who do not, a finding that runs contrary to the dominant culture of the research university (Patton & Marver, 1979).

The present reward structure is based on assumptions that if faculty focus on research and teaching, they will become better researchers and teachers, and if they spend too much time on public engagement, it might divert from their work, put them at risk, and jeopardize their promotion, tenure, and other rewards. The irony is that there is little evidence to support this position. When individuals or institutions hold beliefs that run contrary to the actual facts, a problem exists.

Modifying the reward structure of the university would require a systematic strategy for reintegration of research, teaching, and service. This strategy would recognize that the creation of new knowledge and publication in scholarly journals for a small specialized audience of professional peers is only one way of knowing and that another would be through training, consultation, and technical assistance outside of the academy. It would require a system for the documentation and assessment of activities and broaden the criteria for the evaluation of excel-

lence in scholarship—an effort that would encounter resistance from those who are invested in the status quo (Lynton, 1995; Florestano & Hambrick, 1984). It would require changes in the preparation of graduate students, in the behavior of academic disciplines and learned societies, in the criteria for review of submissions to scholarly peer-reviewed professional journals, in the public agencies and private institutions that give financial aid to students based in part on their promise or proficiency in traditional methodologies, and in other systems which support the research enterprise.

The reward structure needs modification, but the limitations of the present structure should neither justify individual inaction nor keep faculty from quality civic work in the interim. Faculty do many things for which there are few rewards, and there are substantial rewards for work that sometimes seems outside the formal structure. The reward structure is an important instrument, but it is probably not enough to alter behavior based on years of conditioning, and some individuals will do civic work with or without its support.

What is the public role of the professorate? When the faculty devote their life to the creation of knowledge and its publication in scholarly journals, they have less discretionary time to spend outside the academy. When they focus only on specialized scholarly studies for a small circle of professional peers, they run the risk of increasing their own social isolation and producing work that lacks immediate impact or public relevance, which can further distance them and the university from the society. When they become isolated from others, they may reduce their own civic engagement, further withdraw from participation in the community, and become alienated from the world.

Rice (1996) writes about "making a place for the New American scholar." Building on his collaboration with the late Ernest Boyer, Rice imagines various roles of faculty engaged in the advancing of knowledge in a field, integrating knowledge through the restructuring of a curriculum, transforming knowledge through teaching and learning, or applying knowledge to a compelling problem in the community. In rethinking academic careers, he imagines a more complete scholar whose career has seasons, a connected scholar who works in a collaborative community with others who care about learning together, and a scholar who feels a sense of responsibility for public life and the quality of democratic participation.

Increasing Institutional Capacity

How can the research university be structured for civic renewal?

Civic renewal is not a one-time event but an ongoing process that re-

quires an appropriate institutional structure. However, the present structure of the research university is best understood as a loosely coupled federation of decentralized units dominated by academic departments and professional schools. Each unit is relatively autonomous in its personnel decisions, research emphases, performance standards, and curricular requirements. Each one strives for excellence measured by its comparative standing in a national ranking by reputation among its disciplinary communities and professional peer groups, which often become the faculty member's primary source of identification rather than the campus or community (Alpert, 1985).

For most universities, civic renewal would require some sort of institutional restructuring. At one level, it would take decisions about whether to promote the civic mission through a centralized office, or through some combination of decentralized academic departments and professional schools, or through its infusion in all institutional units. At another level, it might mean the creation of new institutional units that increase interdisciplinary interaction of individuals from diverse disciplines to focus on problems transcending the know-how of any one of them. No single infrastructure fits all universities; the key is to fit structure to situation.

Civic renewal would require structures for making knowledge more accessible to the public. In contrast to the usual structures that manage the one-way flow of information from campus to the community for the purpose of public relations, new structures would employ serious two-way strategies to exchange information, reach people in a language that they understand, and promote public understanding in society (Council on Public Policy Education, 1998). Special efforts would be made to join together the institutional producers and potential users of knowledge. These include contact and entry points for users and informational and referral procedures to lead them to the resources they need; interdisciplinary arrangements that increase interaction among knowledge producers from diverse disciplines in order to focus on issues transcending the expertise of any one of them; brokering mechanisms and contractual details between partners; bridging mechanisms that mediate between collaboration on campus and in the community; and public understanding for dissemination by communicators who reach diverse audiences, translators who translate jargon into language that other people can understand, and animators who transform knowledge into action (Walshok, 1995).

Civic renewal would require collaborative research and learning partnerships with communities. Collaboration occurs when people work together to accomplish more than any one of them could accomplish act-

ing alone. Partnerships are relationships characterized by cooperation or willingness to assist others often not connected with themselves; partners may be equal or unequal in their resources and power. Sustainability is instrumental to support the work over the long haul, rather than the practice of viewing it as a one-time project.

University-community collaboration can take many forms. These include collaborative research, teaching and training, consultation and technical assistance activities; collaborative planning for coordination of activities or joint evaluation of program effectiveness; or sharing of staff in common facilities and organizations meeting together for shared planning, and outstationing of staff from one workplace to another.

University-community partnerships can have benefits for both parties. For the community, partnerships can provide needed consultation and technical assistance, provide a source of student assistance and faculty expertise, and establish durable linkages with a university whose intellectual and institutional resources can make genuine contributions to improving the quality of life (Dewar & Isaac, 1998; Reardon, 1998; Rubin, 1998).

For the university, partnerships can bring new perspectives that contribute to quality of research and learning, enable students to engage the world and learn from practice, enable faculty to test theory and draw upon their academic discipline or professional expertise, and enable the university to strengthen student learning and the scholarship of engagement. When student involvement is substantial in its frequency, duration, and continuity over time, one group of students follows another in ways that have benefit for community development and academic learning. When faculty members have established relationships with communities that are based on collaborative principles, the partners are more likely to share equally in the process (Brown, 1997; Cordes, 1998; Feld, 1998; Taylor, 1997).

Thus partnerships can have many mutual benefits, but they also face obstacles and their promise is not always matched by the performance. As Israel et al. (1998) explain, some partnerships have a lack of trust between researchers and community members, inequitable distribution of power and control, conflicts associated with differences in perspectives, and conflicts over funding and fiduciary agency. Most research universities have a number of partnerships that, however thoughtfully conceived and well run, have no strategy or structure for learning from the community. Lacking such structure, the learning benefits are not fully realized.

Finally, the university would have a leadership cadre and power structure that embrace the civic mission and facilitate its achievement. These would include the university president who has a platform on which to

campaign, executive officers who promote policies and provide funding support, and deans and department heads who have responsibility for making decisions about personnel appointments and performance standards. It would include intellectual leaders among the faculty who have influence to strengthen support for institutional initiatives. It would include students, who often operate as individuals rather than as a group with potential or real influence, although the history of higher education proves otherwise (Alpert, 1985).

Connecting Democracy and Diversity

Public concern about "education for democracy" is not new. It has a history that extends from the work of Aristotle and Plato to John Dewey and Jane Addams to Carter Woodson and W. E. B. DuBois (Addams, 1902; Dewey, 1916; Knefelkamp & Schneider, 1997). It always has currency in a democratic society but emerges with special enthusiasm on an episodic basis under historical conditions that affect its consideration and its institutional results.

This concern emerges especially in periods when the general population is changing and new groups are increasing in their number and proportion of the whole. At the turn of the last century, for example, there was concern about citizenship training and civic education at a time when large numbers of European and Southern European immigrants were arriving in an America that was largely populated by Western and Northern Europeans. Most of the immigrants arrived in large industrial cities and caused social conditions that challenged progressive reformers to reshape their civic structures and institutional capacities for a changing society (Schachter, 1998).

Progressive educational reformers advocated citizenship training and civic education in an effort to assimilate the newcomers and prepare them for roles in a foreign society. They emphasized language learning and familiarity with American institutions as a basis for becoming citizens. They emphasized education for social, economic, and political participation through study of civics and related courses in the schools. They were idealistic reformers who believed strongly in the assimilationist notion of *e pluribus unum:* out of many, one.

However, revisionist historians have argued that the progressive reformers were motivated less by a desire for the social welfare of the new immigrants and more by a drive for social control in a changing society. In this view, citizenship training and civic education were an effort to assimilate foreigners into existing institutions at the national level and were closely related to municipal reform and "good government" move-

ments at the community level. The new immigrants were neither represented nor involved in the institutional decisions that would affect their lives.

Knefelkamp and Schneider (1997) remind us that there were a few educational reformers who represented the interests of immigrants in the society. They recall that W. E. B. DuBois and Carter Woodson promoted a morally engaged and justice-seeking conception of education, that William James and Ann Julia Cooper called for inclusion of diverse underrepresented perspectives, that John Dewey and Fred Newton Scott called for dismantling the class system, and that Jane Addams hoped that her educational efforts would empower the immigrants. Their voices were eloquent, but they were not typical of their time (Knefelkamp & Schneider, 1997).

Today, there is renewed concern about civic education in another period of population changes. It will not be long before one-third of the United States population will be of African, Asian, and Hispanic descent. As these new immigrants arrive in a nation that has traditionally been dominated by people of European descent and in which the present majority will eventually become the minority, education for citizenship is again on the agenda.

What is different about the present episode of educational reform is that there is a degree of representation of these population groups in discussions about the future of higher education. One result of the campus diversity movement has been an increasing number of African American, Asian American, and Hispanic American students, faculty, and administrators at the research university. Their representation is not proportionate to their numbers, but they often comprise influential enclaves in the academy (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1995; Darlington-Hope, 1998).

Because of these population patterns, there is new consciousness that social diversity is instrumental to excellence in education and the future of democracy. Indeed, the notion that representational diversity and educational excellence are interrelated has been forcefully expressed and seems understood by the most influential stakeholders in the research university (Guarasci & Cornwell, 1997).

Diversity is also basic to democracy in higher education and American society (Bensimon & Soto, 1997). If democracy is about the participation of the people, and the people themselves are increasingly diverse, then excellence in education for the new democracy must emphasize education about the diversity. There are many universities that already expect or require students to take a course with diversity content. Done well, these courses can contribute to some of the competencies needed

for involvement in a diverse democratic society. Done badly, they can reinforce racial stereotypes and increase the prejudice that they were designed to reduce.

What competencies do students need for active participation in a diverse democratic society? This question has no single answer. In the movement away from monocultural education, some reformers describe a pluralistic approach in which culturally specific competencies enable students from particular cultural groups to increase their influence in an imbalanced political arena. Banks and Banks (1997) argue that one aim of civic education in a pluralistic, democratic nation is to help students to acquire the values and competencies needed to engage in successful and human social and political action. Thus this approach expresses the pluralistic notion *e pluribus plures:* out of many, many.

Other reformers describe a more multicultural approach, enabling students to increase the influence of the cultural group while also increasing interaction and building bridges across cultural differences. Bernstein and Cock (1997) argue that the curriculum should enable students to understand their own social identities; the identities of other groups; and methods for communication, collaboration, conflict resolution, and critical thinking about democratic participation. Thus there is opportunity to make the connection between diversity learning and civic learning in the university, in whatever will become the citizenship of the future.

Toward a Strategy?

Should the American research university have a strategy for renewing its civic mission and, if so, what should it be?

Strategy is a resource for institutional renewal and educational reform. It is a process of determining what you want to accomplish and how you will get there. It reflects a commitment to think ahead, anticipate alternatives, and achieve results over time—not as a one-time event but as an ongoing process over the long haul. Strategy for civic renewal and institutional change is part of the process itself, but most research universities do not have a strategy for this purpose.

A strategy for civic renewal would include efforts to prepare students for active participation in a diverse democratic society, and to engage faculty in research that involves and improves communities. It would make knowledge more accessible to the public, reward faculty for their efforts to draw upon their expertise for the benefit of society, and build collaborative partnerships with communities. It would connect the diver-

sity and democracy objectives of the research university in a society that is becoming more multicultural.

It is possible for me to imagine a university whose mission is to prepare students for active participation in a democratic society; whose curricula and courses challenge students' imaginations and develop their civic competencies; whose co-curricular activities offer multiple opportunities for them to engage in community projects that enhance the civic welfare and create social change; and whose discussions are full of argument and dialogue about the civic meaning of their work.

It is possible for me to imagine faculty whose research promotes public scholarship relating their work to the pressing problems of society; whose teaching includes community-based learning that develops substantive knowledge, cultivates practical skills, and strengthens social responsibility; whose service draws upon their professional expertise for the welfare of society; and whose efforts promote a vibrant public culture at their institutions.

It is possible for me to imagine institutions that promote public understanding of their work as an essential part of their mission, recognize an institutional responsibility for publicly useable knowledge, and develop formal structures to sustain such uses. Such practice would create structures that generate a more interactive flow of knowledge between the campus and communities and would create and sustain long-term partnerships with communities in an integrated system of democratic education.

Of course I can imagine these, for they are from the Wingspread Declaration on Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University (1999).

It is also possible for me to imagine a new American scholar whose research and teaching focuses on pressing problems of society and who views education as central to democracy. He views himself as a public intellectual and communicates with a wide public audience through scholarly publications—and also through the lecture, the magazine article, the scholarly essay, the book, the leaflet, the radio broadcast, the encyclopedia entry, the interview, the pamphlet, the public letter, and testimony to Congress. Of course I can imagine this scholar, because he lived more than 100 years ago: John Dewey (Halliburton, 1997; Westbrook, 1991). It is ironic that some of the questions asked by Dewey at the turn of the last century are being asked again as we enter the next.

Indeed, we are returning to first questions about education for democracy and, in the case of the research university, asking: University for what?

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