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## Protecting America Through Better Civic Education

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**NAVAL  
POSTGRADUATE  
SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**PROTECTING AMERICA THROUGH BETTER  
CIVIC EDUCATION**

by

Brian P. Ravert

September 2013

Thesis Co-Advisors:

Anders Strindberg  
Wayne Porter

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**PROTECTING AMERICA THROUGH BETTER CIVIC EDUCATION**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES  
(HOMELAND DEFENSE AND SECURITY)**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
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## ABSTRACT

How does civic education affect homeland security? A civic education curriculum that provides for the foundations of our youths' individual and collective identity may significantly contribute to the preservation of our democracy and enhance homeland security. Through a civic education, students can enhance their grasp of the concepts of our American representative democracy and learn the tenets of good citizenship, critical thinking, and the ability to self-govern. Presidential Directive Number Eight (8) clearly indicates the need for national preparedness using a *whole of nation* approach. The plan requires robust citizen engagement. To have an informed engaged citizenry and for a democracy to thrive, the populace must be educated. But there is no guidance or mention of the education of American youth or how such education may play a role in achieving the goals of national preparedness. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reported in 2010 that only 27 percent of the nation's fourth-grade students were proficient in civics. Only 22 percent and 24 percent of eighth-grade and twelfth-grade students, respectively, were proficient in the area. Civic education must provide youth with a personal and collective identity.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AACC	American Association of Community Colleges
CCSSO	Council of Chief State School Officers
CELT	Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIRCLE	Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement
DoE	Department of Education
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GED	General Education Development
HCPS	Harford County Public Schools
ICCS	International Civic and Citizenship Education Study
NAEP	National Assessment of Education Progress
NBCT	National Board of Certified Teachers
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
NCSS	National Council for Social Studies
NEA	National Education Association
NFTE	Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship
NGA	National Governors Association
PD#8	Presidential Directive 8
STANCE	Strategic Thinking Asynchronous Network Complex Environment



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## I. INTRODUCTION

How does civic education affect homeland security? A civic education curriculum that provides for the foundations of our youths individual and collective identity will lead to the preservation of our democracy and enhance homeland security. Through a civic education students grasp the concepts of our American representative democracy and learn the tenets of good citizenship, critical thinking, and the ability to self-govern. It is in large part, the source of our national identity. A 2009 report to the U.S. Department of Education concludes that, “Terrorist groups are adaptive adversaries who use a variety of tools and tactics to reach potential recruits and supporters, which often include young people.”<sup>1</sup> That report continues that while it may seem that it is not occurring on our shores to an alarming extent, the fact remains that we do not know how widespread the problem may be.

In the years since September 11, 2001, the potential for radicalization of our nation’s youth by terrorist or extremist organizations has galvanized the thoughts of our law enforcement and government leaders. In 2009, concern was raised in the U.S. over a number of Somali-American teenagers living in Minnesota, who were contacted and radicalized by the group Al-Shabaab, a terrorist organization that is trying to instill an Islamic state in Somalia. In their native Somali-Arabic dialect, Al Shabaab means, “The Youth.” In a more recent case, two Chechnyan born Americans Tamerlan and Dzhokar Tsarnaev, ages 19 and 26, participated in a terrorist bomb attack in Boston at the Boston Marathon in 2013. Before his death, Tamerlan Tsarnaev reportedly said that he had not one American friend.<sup>2</sup> Many Somali youth in Minnesota and the Tsarnaevs have been in America for several years and are educated in American schools.

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1 Catherine Bott, W. James Castan, Robert Dickens, Thomas Rowley, Erik Smith, Rosemary Lark, and George Thompson, Homeland Security Institute, Recruitment and Radicalization of School-Aged Youth by International Terrorist Groups, Arlington, VA., 62, <http://www.cleanitproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/2009-recruitment-and-radicalization.pdf>.

2 Wayne Drash, Boni Masu, and Tom Watkins, 2013, Boston Suspects: Immigrant Dream to American Nightmare, CNN U.S., <http://www.cnn.com/2013/04/19/us/massachusetts-bombers-profiles>.

The threat of terrorist attacks in the twenty-first century continues to be at the forefront of every public safety or administrator's mind. Every president who assumes office will be met with the challenge of protecting Americans from brutal attack. Radicalization, resiliency, national preparedness, and the lone wolf, cyber terror, pandemic, and natural disaster are words and phrases that will haunt us for what will seem to be a lifetime.

But there is another threat that seems to go unnoticed; one that does not harness the drama of killings, bomb attacks, and earthquakes. A silent threat, but one that is very real nonetheless, and it threatens the future credibility and resilience of our democracy. That is the threat of an underachieving or undereducated citizenry. A citizenry that lacks the ability to think critically, to solve their own problems, to innovate, adapt, and overcome adversity cannot long endure. The ancient Greeks demonstrated that for a democracy to thrive, citizens must be educated. Aristotle postulated that the laws and rules of governance of a democratic society had to be known by its citizens; it had to be written. It followed that to be a good citizen one was required to read the law and to do so required education.<sup>3</sup> This is considered a civic duty.

In her preface to the National Strategic Narrative,<sup>4</sup> Slaughter points out in times of uncertainty, such as the present, more Americans are asking where the United States is going in the world. How can we get there? If we are to become the strongest competitor and most influential player in the world<sup>5</sup> we must recognize that strong education system, particularly in the area of civic education is paramount. As Porter<sup>6</sup> writes, "Without a doubt, our greatest resource is America's young people, who will shape and execute the vision needed to take this nation forward into an uncertain future."

This thesis explores the concept that, among the subjects taught to our youth in grades K through 12, civic education impacts homeland security. It is through civics, that

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3 Civic Education, 2007, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/civic-education/>.

4 Anne Marie Slaughter, Preface to Wayne Porter, Mark Myckleby, 2011, A National Strategic Narrative, Woodrow Wilson Center., Washington, D.C., <http://www.nationalstrategicnarrative.com>.

5 Ibid., 3.

6 Ibid., 7.

students grasp the concepts of our American representative democracy and through which they learn the tenets of good citizenship, critical thinking, and the ability to self govern. To realize its maximum affect on our youth it must begin early, and must reach across the curriculum. This thesis will not attempt to impart indoctrination of nationalism. Nationalism imparts a sense of superiority that can be the source angst among others and may even be the reason for hostility directed toward America.<sup>7</sup> It will attempt, however, to present civic education in the light of critical patriotism; that is, a love of country but with a willingness to be thoughtful, critical of its policies and leaders when necessary.

## A. THE PROBLEM

Civic education in the United States is in decline. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)<sup>8</sup> reported in its 2010 *Nations Report Card*, that only 27 percent of the nation's fourth grade students were proficient in civics. Only 22 percent and 24 percent of eighth-grade and twelfth-grade students, respectively, were proficient in the area.<sup>9</sup> In Presidential Directive #8, President Obama calls for the development of a national preparedness goal that identifies the core capabilities necessary for preparedness.<sup>10</sup> The plan calls for a robust citizen engagement but there is no guidance or mention of how to achieve that goal. Politicians have recognized the need for an educated citizen to effectively engage in our governance. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared, "That the schools make worthy citizens is the most important responsibility placed on them."<sup>11</sup>

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7 Bruce Bongar, "Defining the Need and Dextrcribing the Goal," in *Psychology of Terrorism*, ed. Bruce Bongar, Lisa M. Brown, Larry E. Beutler, James N. Beckenridge, and Phillip G. Zimbardo (New York: Oxford Press 2007), 26.

8 National Assessment of Education Progress, Civics 2010, [http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics\\_2010](http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics_2010).

9 Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action, Washington, D.C., 2012, <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/road-map-call-to-action.pdf>.

10 Presidential Directive 8, The White House, Washington, D.C., 2011, <http://www.dhs.gov/presidential-policy-directive-8-national-preparedness>.

11 Civic Education, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/civic-education/>.

A monolithic communist political framework in the former Soviet Union and the eastern bloc European nations disintegrated in the 1990's. Globalization soon prescribed that to compete in the new world markets Americans would have to enhance their technological, scientific knowledge, their mathematical ability, and reading prowess. The change that occurred in education in response to an effort to prepare students for a global workforce caused subjects like history, political science, and the arts to fall by the wayside.<sup>12</sup> Civic education in the United States, directed at fostering the growth of a citizen and explicating our national identity, was one subject area so affected. In the curricula of public schools it became an "add-on" as opposed to a core topic.<sup>13</sup> Currently only one third of our high school seniors in the U.S. are able to read or think critically; only one third understands or have a proficient knowledge in our government, how it works, and what it means to participate in government.<sup>14</sup> This becomes a matter of national security because our reactions and our ability to recover from disasters or attacks are shaped by who we think we are, by what we know of ourselves, by what we believe we are capable of, and by knowing what we have already come through as a nation.<sup>15</sup>

## **B. RESEARCH QUESTION AND THE CHAPTERS**

The primary research question that this thesis attempts to answer is: How does civic education affect homeland security? In the first chapter, the problem and literature review will be outlined. In Chapter II, Making the Case for Civics, the history of civics and its role in our society will be explored and the necessity of civic education will be discussed. Chapter III, The Barriers, will identify and discuss the difficulties teachers encounter in teaching civic education in America and the ineffectiveness of prevailing civic curricula in the country. In Chapter IV, Civic Education Curriculum, the thesis examines the elements of an American civic education curriculum. It will include subject

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12 Eric Lane, 2008, "*America 101, How We Let Civic Education Slide-and Why We Need a Crash Course in the Constitution Today*," Democracy Journal, <http://www.democracyjournal.org/pdf/10/LANE.PDF.pdf>.

13 Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action, Washington, D.C., 2012, <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/road-map-call-to-action.pdf>.

14 National Assessment of Education Progress, Civics 2010, [http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics\\_2010](http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics_2010).

15 Ibid., 181.

areas common to civic education including the rights and duties of citizens in a democracy, and suggests that such knowledge is essential to building the skills necessary to sustain our democracy and provide the skills necessary to maintain a resilient community, thus enhancing homeland security. Chapter V offers Discussion. In this chapter, the thesis will examine the importance of the overarching effect of an education that grounds one not only in civic knowledge, but also with an understanding of how that knowledge serves to affect the good citizen; one who will be able to move us to a sustainable prosperity, hence, protecting America through better civic education. Chapter VI will outline recommendations for re-invigorating a civic education and chapter seven offers conclusions and key findings.

### **C. THE METHOD**

The thesis will follow a qualitative approach. It will involve a review and content analysis of the literature to explore commonalities concerning the history of civic education in the U.S., its past role in our society to include its successes, its present condition, and barriers to improvement. Data will also be collected from reports issued by the U.S. Department of Education, professional journals of the education industry, and a sampling of civics curricula that have been recognized by the education industry as having been successful. Student achievement levels will be examined through the National Assessment of Education Achievement for Civic Education. Emergent themes from the data will be developed into a conceptual model of what a civics education curriculum should include to enable American youth to establish the skills for citizenship, provide them the opportunity to compete in global markets, and continue our democracy.

Considering the magnitude of the issues and the different facets of society that are affected, this study cannot hope to serve as the final resolution to this very complex problem. It can however, serve as an aid the U.S. Department of Education and school boards across the nation to build the capacity together through a renewed emphasis on civics, to transform the American citizenry into one of greater resiliency through better critical thinking, recognition of our national identity; of who we are as Americans, and



how our national security depends on it, hence, protecting America through better civic education.

## **1. Hypothesis or Tentative Solutions**

This thesis will explore how civic curriculum in the classroom may provide students across all grades with a better sense of individual and collective national identity, which could lead to a more resilient community, provide them better skills for citizenship, and lead them to better self-governance. Civic curriculum in the classroom can aid in positively fulfilling the goals of homeland security outlined in Presidential Directive Eight.

## **2. Review of the Literature**

Presidential Directive Number Eight (PD#8) dated March 30, 2011,<sup>16</sup> clearly indicates the need for national preparedness using a *whole of nation* approach. Throughout his six-page directive, President Obama calls for the development of a “national preparedness goal that identifies the core capabilities necessary for preparedness.”<sup>17</sup> Through PD#8, the President instructs the Assistant for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism to coordinate efforts with all state, local, tribal government agencies and private sector organizations to develop a plan that will mitigate threats to the nation to include training and exercises for all stakeholders.<sup>18</sup> The plan would require a robust citizen engagement but there is no guidance or mention of how to achieve a robust citizenry. There is no mention of the education of American youth or how such education may play a role in achieving the goals of national preparedness.

The Presidents goals for resiliency may be attainable through training programs for the general population which may be a good first step indeed, but training programs may only as good as the number of refresher courses or practical exercises undertaken. Educating young people as to why the training is essential, can provide the foundation

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16 Presidential Directive 8. The White House, Washington, D.C., 2011, <http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/presidential-policy-directive-8-national-preparedness.pdf>.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

upon which understanding is based. Civic education speaks to the values of a nation and provides a framework for an identity that remains with a citizen. We seem to have lost the connection between the changes in American values in the past decades and the changes in the teaching of the humanities and social sciences.<sup>19</sup>

The literature suggests that we are on the right track with regard to revitalizing our education system. In his report, *Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy, A Road Map and Call to Action*.<sup>20</sup> The U.S. Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan proposes that “The need to revitalize and reimagine civic education is urgent. But that urgent need brings a great opportunity—the chance to improve civic education in ways that will resonate for years.”<sup>21</sup> Although many scholars have argued that the education level of known terrorists is not a primary factor in the radicalization process, their perceptions may be derived from a lack of confidence in their personal or collective identity.<sup>22</sup>

The National Counterterrorism Center’s framework representing the process of how an individual radicalizes and finally commits an act of violence presents several possible factors that may suggest the reason for such radicalization but it points out that no one particular factor explains the phenomena.<sup>23</sup> Among the factors listed by the NCTC are socio-political and ideological factors, group factors, and personal and community factors. Education is not mentioned.

### **3. Findings and Claims**

The prodigious political philosophers of the modern era, Rousseau, DeTocqueville, and Mill agree that good government is affected by the good citizen and

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19 Bruce Bawer, *The Victim’s Revolution, The Rise of Identities Studies and the Closing of the Liberal Mind* (New York, Harper Collins 2012).

20 *Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action*, Washington, D.C., 2012, <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/road-map-call-to-action.pdf> .

21 *Ibid.*, v.

22 Fathali Moghaddam, “*Multiculturalism and Intergroup Relations*,” Washington, D.C. (American Psychological Association, 2008).

23 National Counterterrorism Center, “Radicalization and Mobilization Dynamics Framework Methods and Tactics,” <http://www.nctc.gov/site/technical/radicalization.html>.

one must be educated to that end.<sup>24</sup> From the time of the writing of the *Federalist #23* by Alexander Hamilton<sup>25</sup> schools have played a critical role in forming the citizen. Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared, “That the schools make worthy citizens is the most important responsibility placed on them.”<sup>26</sup> Between 1998 and 2010 however, studies have shown that our public schools have not fared well in civic education.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)<sup>27</sup> reported in its 2010 *Nations Report Card*, that only 27 percent of the nation’s fourth-grade students were proficient in civics. Only 22 percent and 24 percent of eighth grade and twelfth grade, respectively, were proficient in the area.<sup>28</sup> The NAEP is not the only metric used for measuring the success or deficits in education. The Bureau of Labor Statistics also concludes that unemployment in America in early 2012 was at eight percent. More than three million jobs were vacant in the country and that is because “too many American workers don’t have the math, reading comprehension skills, or technical abilities that are now required in advanced manufacturing.”<sup>29</sup> The focus on reading, math, or technical skills, thought necessary in the 1990s, does not seem to have been adequately addressed by our system of education. Civics continues to be treated like an add-on class.<sup>30</sup> Statistics like these, present an urgent need to reconsider the future of our youth and their ability to not only avoid being radicalized, but to one day govern this country. Friedman<sup>31</sup> writes that America has succeeded in every turn of events in its history, because of its own formula for success that consists of five pillars. The first pillar is

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24 Civic Education, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/civic-education/>.

25 Ibid., 9.

26 Ibid.,10.

27 National Assessment of Education Progress, Civics 2010, [http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics\\_2010](http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics_2010).

28 Ibid.

29 Thomas Friedman, and Michael Mandelbaum, “*That Used to Be Us, How America Fell Behind in the World it Invented and How we Can Come Back*,” New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2011).

30 Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action, Washington, D.C., 2012, <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/road-map-call-to-action.pdf>.

31 Thomas Friedman, and Michael Mandelbaum, “*That Used to Be Us, How America Fell Behind in the World it Invented and How we Can Come Back* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2011).

providing public education for more Americans. While education in math, reading, and the sciences is certainly essential, more education in these areas is not the issue. More schools and teachers are not the only problems.<sup>32</sup> Better education is the issue. Education that involves the history of our people, our values, and the importance to us as a nation to have a firm grasp of those subjects that will enable our youth to compete in a global society, are the reasons why civic education must be resurrected and brought to the forefront.

#### **4. What is Right?**

Secretary Duncan advances the thought that for too long, civics education has been considered an add-on to education by the Nation's school districts and institutions of higher education, because of their focus on other pressing subjects like reading and math.<sup>33</sup>

The report identifies at least ten programs in place today that target civic learning through service projects such as The Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), which trains teachers how to teach students to learn how to start their own business, or Democracy in Action, a Chicago-based high school program designed to teach high school students through mock trials, elections, and offering their own governance through youth councils.<sup>34</sup> The initiatives are noteworthy and relevant but they do not address the very basis of our way of life, our history.

The NAEP's *Civics Framework for 2010*<sup>35</sup> offers a closer examination of what civic education should entail. Proficiency in the documents that ground our freedom is identified. These documents, and a study of the conditions that forged their existence, are central to an understanding of who we are. They explain our identity. The framework unequivocally posits that responsible citizenship is essential to sustain our democracy.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>33</sup> Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action, Washington, D.C., 2012, <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/road-map-call-to-action.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Civics Framework for the 2010 National Assessment of Educational Progress, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C., <http://www.nagb.org/content/nagb/assets/documents/publications/frameworks/civicsframework.pdf>.

Perhaps emphasis should be placed on the term responsible. This document sets the ground work for a standard curriculum.

## 5. What is Wrong?

The literature suggests that the decline in civic education is grounded in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)<sup>36</sup> Steven Zack, President of the American Bar Association, and an advocate of civic education holds that the NCLB's focus on standardized testing in reading and math has weakened civics in the curriculum. He continues that more people in America can name the judges on American Idol than they can the Supreme Court.<sup>37</sup> These thoughts are echoed by retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals Judge, and the former Pennsylvania first lady, Marjorie Rendell.<sup>38</sup> In fact, Rendell notes that after presiding over a naturalization ceremony, she was struck by the number of new citizens that seemed to know more about our government and how it operates, than most natural born citizens.<sup>39</sup>

“The impetus for change built into the NCLB was to effectively to shame schools into improvement,” according to Susan Neumann, who was a top White House advisor on education, and who left the G.H.W. Bush administration, writes Jehlen.<sup>40</sup> The National Education Association (NEA) has labeled the NCLB “President Bush’s failed education experiment.”<sup>41</sup> One leading test researcher, Harvard Professor Daniel Koretz<sup>42</sup> claims that when you place an emphasis on teaching kids how to answer test questions

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36 No Child Left Behind Act 2001, *Education Week, Research Center*, <http://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/no-child-left-behind>.

37 Marilyn Cavvichia, “Civic Education: How Your Bar Can Get Involved Today,” *American Bar Association Journal, Volume 35 No.1* (2012), [http://www.americanbar.org/publications/bar\\_leader/2010\\_11/3501/civiced.html](http://www.americanbar.org/publications/bar_leader/2010_11/3501/civiced.html).

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Alain Jehlen, “NCLB: Is It Working? The Scientifically Based Answer,” *National Education Association* (2012), [www.nea.org/bare/print.html?content=/bare/20755.htm](http://www.nea.org/bare/print.html?content=/bare/20755.htm).

41. Miguel Gonzalez, “*No Child Left Behind Cemented as a Failed Legacy of President Bush*,” National Education Association (2009), <http://www.nea.org/home/29458.htm>.

42 Alain Jehlen, “NCLB: Is It Working? The Scientifically Based Answer,” *National Education Association* (2012), [www.nea.org/bare/print.html?content=/bare/20755.htm](http://www.nea.org/bare/print.html?content=/bare/20755.htm).

according to a particular standard format—as the NCLB is designed to do—they will eventually answer the questions correctly using only a narrow set of skills (thus raising their scores) until you ask a question a different way. It is suggested that the impetus for change lies in critical thinking and problem solving. Real-world issues must be discussed in classrooms. This requires teachers to take time away from preparing students for standardized tests.<sup>43</sup>

Compounding the failures of the NCLB Act is the lack of authority of the Department of Education (DOE). The DOE is forbidden to prescribe curricula.<sup>44</sup> The education policy in America is not usually within the scope of the federal government. The Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution reserves powers not specifically granted to the federal government, to the individual states. While the DOE would like to strongly support national standards for education,<sup>45</sup> the American history curricula in this country seem to tell another story.

In a Fordham Institute study of the American history curricula of 49 states, in which most civics lessons reside, only one state got an A on a grading scale of A through F.<sup>46</sup> That state was South Carolina, and it only received the high mark because its curriculum identified resources for educators to use when teaching history. Peter Levine, Director of the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), concludes that the federal government normally does not play a leading role in forming curriculum but it has inserted itself strongly with the NCLB, which means teaching civics no longer has a high priority.<sup>47</sup> He further posits a poignant point, “the colleges aren’t saying they need civics for admissions, so if a school district is doing fine

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43 Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don’t Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), xvi.

44 Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action, Washington, D.C., 2012. <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/road-map-call-to-action.pdf>.

45 Ibid.

46 Mark Hansen, “Flunking Civics: Why America’s Kids Know So Little,” *ABA Journal* (2011), <http://www.abajournal.com/magazine/article/civics/>.

47 Dawn Reiss, “Why Teaching Civic Engagement is Essential,” *District Administration Magazine*, October 2012, 2, <http://www.districtadministration.com/article/why-teaching-civic-engagement-essential>.

[on core competency exams], they include civics education. When things get rough and there's a school dropout rate of 30 percent or more, they cut civics."<sup>48</sup>

## 6. Conclusions

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the natural disaster of a hurricane in 2005, did more to America than the taking of innocent lives and destruction of property. These events raised concerns over the American citizenries' resiliency; the ability to adapt, to cope, to resolve, and overcome attacks or other adversity that threaten our ability to survive and thrive in a constitutional democracy. The new enemy, terrorist organizations and other homegrown subversive groups, challenge us through the imposition of fear, by attacking the psyche of our people, especially our youth. They bring the fight to our homeland, something foreign to us.

The world is an ever changing place, and globalization is bringing the world's citizens closer than ever before. New governments will continue to emerge, and we will not always know their immediate intent.

It is perhaps a foregone conclusion that this is no time for our citizenry to lack the skills that are required for good governance, for the inability to respond to an attack or disaster, or to recognize when radical indoctrination is occurring. It becomes a categorical imperative that, for our nation to survive, our future leaders must understand who they are, and where they have come from. That understanding can be significantly enhanced through a solid civic education and that cannot be viewed as an add-on class. "Our first investment priority, then, is the intellectual capital and a sustainable infrastructure of education."<sup>49</sup>

Former Deans of Harvard University, Ellen Condliff Lagemann, and Harry R. Lewis, conclude that<sup>50</sup> "The need for civic education is urgent, because so many aspects of our civic life have become dysfunctional." Civic education sustains democratic self-

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>49</sup> Wayne Porter, and Mark Myckleby, "A National Strategic Narrative," *Woodrow Wilson Center*, <http://www.nationalstrategicnarrative.com>.

<sup>50</sup> Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, and Harry Lewis, "Renewing Civic Education," *The Harvard Magazine*, <http://harvardmagazine.com/print/34692?page=all>.

governance. It involves intellect, morality, and action grounded in a firm base of education in American history and constitutional principles.



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## II. MAKING THE CASE FOR CIVICS

### A. WHAT IS IT AND IS IT REALLY A PROBLEM?

The definition of Civic education can be elusive. Is there a single all encompassing definition that can be agreed upon? And why is it important anyway?

Civic education in a democracy is an education in self-government. Democratic self-government means citizens are actively involved in their own governance. Citizenship must be based on informed, critical reflections and must be concerned with promoting understanding of the ideals of democracy.<sup>51</sup>

Broadly speaking, Civics is the study of a theory of governance as it applies to governmental bodies. It is the study of the theoretical and practical steps of citizenship, its rights and duties. It can include the study of the civil code.<sup>52</sup> Traditional Civics lessons in primary or secondary public education is typically found in the social studies or history departments of our schools. While the primary focus of teaching American history is not for teaching citizenship, it is important for students to know where we came from as a nation to better understand the issues that we face now.<sup>53</sup> It typically provides a framework for students for understanding our democratic values, principles, what it means to be an American citizen. As Arthur Schlesinger noted, the importance of Civic education cannot be understated, especially in a free and open society.<sup>54</sup>

Alexis DeToqueville rightly posited that each new generation is a new people that must acquire the knowledge, learn the skills and develop the disposition to maintain and improve a constitutional democracy.<sup>55</sup> But DeToqueville's thoughts cannot be narrowly

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51 School Improvement in Maryland, "What Is Civic Education, The Role of Civic Education in Schools," 1997–2013, [http://mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/social\\_studies/what\\_is\\_civiced.html](http://mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/social_studies/what_is_civiced.html).

52 Education.Com, "Civic Education," <http://www.education.com/definition/civic-education/>.

53 Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 99.

54 Bruce Bawer, *The Victim's Revolution, The Rise of Identity Studies and the Closing of the Liberal Mind* (New York: Harper Collins), xv.

55 The National Assessment Governing Board, "Civics Framework for the 2010 National Assessment of Education Progress," NAEP Civics Project, vi, <http://www.nagb.org/content/nagb/assets/documents/publications/frameworks/civicsframework.pdf>.

construed to include only the new generations of Americans born on our soil. Immigration issues within the U.S, especially at the southern border, must be considered. As we admit more immigrants into the country, we see more immigrant children in schools looking for a social or national identity, just as those who are native born. Civic education instills a willingness and competence to take effective action on matters of public concern.<sup>56</sup> Without it, the goals and values of our way of life as penned in the U.S. Constitution are meaningless.<sup>57</sup> Civic education begins with the lessons of the past. It is the story of our American government; the explanation of liberty for every person born in this country or naturalized. It is important because it teaches the ideals and principles that form our constitutional conscience.<sup>58</sup> It is important for citizens to know why the framers of the Declaration of Independence and our Constitution risked their lives, their homes and the welfare of their families<sup>59</sup> and the events of our present day world will still support those ideals through an examination of current affairs. As President Reagan said in his farewell speech to America, “If we forget what we did, we won’t know who we are.”<sup>60</sup>

The story of America cannot be just a grandiose tale of great generals and heroic battles won. We must tell the story of our failures, such as our policy towards the relocation and treatment of Native Americans, the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII, or launching a war in Iraq based on inaccurate intelligence. To maintain our democracy, its fragility must be recognized.<sup>61</sup> Civic education must include the study

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56 Ellen Condiff Lagemann, and Harry Lewis, “Renewing Civic Education,” *The Harvard Magazine*, <http://harvardmagazine.com/print/34692?page=all>.

57 Eric Lane, 2008, “America 101, How We Let Civic Education Slide-and Why We Need a Crash Course in the Constitution Today,” *Democracy Journal*, <http://www.democracyjournal.org/pdf/10/LANE.PDF.pdf>. 59. “Civic literacy provides meaningful understanding and support of constitutional values like compromise and tolerance.”

58 Ibid., 55. “It was a set of ideals and principles about our government and democracy that form our constitutional conscience.”

59 Dawn Reiss, “Why Teaching Civic Engagement is Essential,” *District Administration Magazine*, October 2012, 2, <http://www.districtadministration.com/article/why-teaching-civic-engagement-essential>.

60 Ronald Reagan, Farewell Address to the United States, [http://www.reaganfoundation.org/pdf/Farewell\\_Address\\_011189.pdf](http://www.reaganfoundation.org/pdf/Farewell_Address_011189.pdf).

61 Eric Lane, 2008, “America 101, How We Let Civic Education Slide-and Why We Need a Crash Course in the Constitution Today,” *Democracy Journal*, 60, <http://www.democracyjournal.org/pdf/10/LANE.PDF.pdf>.

of a constitution that could not even save the country from abuses like slavery, or the absence of a woman's right to vote, but that through the processes established by it, could lead the way to abolition and suffrage.<sup>62</sup> Civic learning is about the effect of human decisions on other people.<sup>63</sup> Without it, we are denied the ability to understand and measure the conduct of our elected officials. Our civic ignorance puts constitutional democracy at risk.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, the thoughts of civic education by DeToqueville, Schlesinger, and others should not be taken lightly. In making the case for civics however, it must be noted that as the world has changed, so too must our definition of civics.

In the 1980s American began focusing its education efforts on reading, math, science, and technology; areas that had been identified as showing student deficits, in order to catch up with the education systems of other countries.<sup>65</sup> In 1991, the USSR collapsed. Communism was defeated, and the Cold War was over. America made perhaps the worst mistake a nation can make—we misread our environment.<sup>66</sup> From that point forward, the world began evolving into an ever more global place, one to which we must adapt. Our citizens are no longer simply competing with one another for jobs; they now compete with citizens globally. Today, it matters not how schools are ranked in the counties or states, it matters how they stack up in the world, and according to President Obama, “The country that out educates us today will out compete us tomorrow.”<sup>67</sup> Education is more critical today than ever. Corporations are looking for team players, critical thinkers, those who can ask the right questions rather than know all the right answers. Critical thinking and problem solving is at the heart of civic education.

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62 Ibid., 57.

63 Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, and Harry Lewis, “Renewing Civic Education,” *The Harvard Magazine*, <http://harvardmagazine.com/print/34692?page=all>.

64 Eric Lane, 2008, “America 101, How We Let Civic Education Slide-and Why We Need a Crash Course in the Constitution Today,” *Democracy Journal*, 55, <http://www.democracyjournal.org/pdf/10/LANE.PDF.pdf>.

65 Nadav Morag, *Comparative Homeland Security, Global Lessons* (Hoboken: 2012), 245.

66 Thomas Friedman, and Michael Mandelbaum, “*That Used to Be Us, How America Fell Behind in the World it Invented and How we Can Come Back* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2011), 14.

67 Ibid., 108–109.

“Education should focus on the whole person and should aim to produce better citizens, not just better test takers” according to Susan Engle, an education expert at Williams College.<sup>68</sup> If our schools teach American kids what it means to be American citizens, they will have a better chance of passing on the American formula for success.<sup>69</sup> That formula includes, to name just a few, our resiliency, our ability to continually modernize our infrastructure, enhance our technology, and exploit new inventions. That formula includes the ability to think and make decisions on civic issues like immigration, which helps to keep our society energized between new Americans with high aspirations.<sup>70</sup>

Continual success of the world’s oldest constitutional republic depends, in large measure, on the education of its youth. In “The Moral Consequences of Economic Growth, (2005) Harvard Economist Benjamin Friedman<sup>71</sup> asserts that periods of prosperity were also periods of social and religious tolerance that saw the expansion of rights and liberties marked by broad social harmony. Likewise, periods of decline such as the Great Depression of the 1930s brought conflict.

Civic education is required to teach the history of our innovativeness. Throughout our history, we have been able to expand, but only through an understanding and appreciation of our constitutional process.<sup>72</sup> Without the knowledge or understating of that history, without the appreciation of our constitutional process, we imperil that formula for success. Today, only 38 percent of Americans can identify the three branches of government,<sup>73</sup> let alone identify how they work with each other to ensure domestic tranquility, security, and economic gain. The greatest vulnerability to America has always been the lack of an educated and engaged citizenry.

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<sup>68</sup> Thomas Friedman, and Michael Mandelbaum, *That Used to Be Us, How America Fell Behind in the World it Invented and How we Can Come Back* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2011), Susan Engle is an education expert at Williams College. 141.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 141.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 141.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>72</sup> Eric Lane, 2008, “America 101, How We Let Civic Education Slide-and Why We Need a Crash Course in the Constitution Today,” *Democracy Journal*, 57, <http://www.democracyjournal.org/pdf/10/LANE.PDF.pdf>.

<sup>73</sup> I Dawn Reiss, “Why Teaching Civic Engagement is Essential,” *District Administration Magazine*, October 2012, 2, <http://www.districtadministration.com/article/why-teaching-civic-engagement-essential>.

Through its independent task force on education reform and national security in the United States, the Council on Foreign Relations<sup>74</sup> recommended that creative thinking and problem-solving skills—two elements that are outcomes of civic education—should be woven into all parts of the public school curriculum, thus identifying civic education as a national security necessity. While science, technology, and foreign language, should remain at the core of the curriculum, according to their report, all education should revolve around civics.<sup>75</sup>

## **B. A NEW DEFINITION OF CIVIC EDUCATION?**

Civic education is in part, by the definition provided by the State of Maryland, an education in self-government. That democratic self-government means citizens are actively involved in their own governance and that citizenship must be based on informed, critical reflections and must be concerned with promoting understanding of the ideals of democracy. But this thesis proposes that it must include a mastery of all subjects with the focus on the “whole of student,” or “whole of education.” Civic education helps to equip youth to take control of the trajectory of their own lives and also provides them a national identity and an understanding of their place in the world. It is an education that enables them to compete for economic success, growth, and provides leadership ability to lead America to prosperity in this century and beyond.

Civic education is necessary to understand our nation’s history, policies, and our relationships with other countries. While civic learning comes in a variety of forms it is the schools that have a historic responsibility for the development of citizenship. Civic education prepares the citizen for the acquisition of rights and the fulfillment of obligations in order to sustain a system of government in which one citizen cannot fear another.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, CFR Sponsored Independent Task Force on U.S. Education Reform and National Security, <http://www.cfr.org/united-states/us-education-reform-national-security/p27618>.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Daniel Prinzing, “Civic Education in the Twenty-first Century: A Call to Action (paper presented at the International Conference on The Future of Civic Education in the twenty-first century, Montpelier, VA., September, 2008), 1.

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### III. THE BARRIERS TO CIVICS

#### A. CIVICS OF THE PAST

Was there ever a golden age of civics? Probably not, or at least, not in absolute terms.<sup>77</sup> Throughout America's history, the responsibility to foster civic learning and the development of the citizen fell to the public schools.<sup>78</sup> In the pre-cold war and cold war era, civic education was taught through history classes and in higher education settings, through dedicated political science courses. Resilience preparedness was also taught in the schools through the use of civil defense drills. Air raid drills, the value of survival kits, and the construction of bomb shelters, were accompanied by broader discussions about the need for these drills in terms of current affairs at age-appropriate levels to bring meaning to this civil defense posture.<sup>79</sup> Curricula in schools in Louisiana, North Carolina, and Mississippi covered team work, moral values, and ability to follow directions, obeying rules, accepting decision, facing danger realistically, and caring for one another, social problems.<sup>80</sup> These lessons underpinned the meaning of good citizenship. Published goals and objectives clearly showed that civic preparedness, good citizenship, fell to the schools, and it was clear that they should endeavor to build competent citizens.<sup>81,82</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Eric Lane, 2008, "America 101, How We Let Civic Education Slide-and Why We Need a Crash Course in the Constitution Today," 57, *Democracy Journal*, <http://www.democracyjournal.org/pdf/10/LANE.PDF.pdf>.

<sup>78</sup> Teresa Gustafson, "Empowering Children to Lead Change, Incorporating Preparedness Curricula in the K-12 Education System (Master's Thesis, NPS, 2009), 17, "Published goals and objectives clearly show the responsibility of civil preparedness fell on the schools. The goal was to build competent citizens and it was clear that citizens and government believed that preparedness would result in preservation of life."

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 16, 17.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>82</sup> Civic Education, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/civic-education/>.



## B. NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

Today's barriers to teaching civics are not unlike the barriers to education in general. Many people believe teachers unions are to blame for failing to prepare students for the workplace.<sup>83</sup> Others may think the barriers are social issues or the disengagement of parents from their children's academic lives. Social issues, absentee parenting, and teachers unions account for only a few.<sup>84</sup> Some evidence, such as the NAEP assessments, would suggest that the challenges of teaching survival skills for the twenty-first century are just not being met by our schools, regardless of their location or the affluence of their community. The same can be said about civic education. While well intended, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act is actually hindering more than helping and is probably the largest hurdle.<sup>85</sup> NCLB requires teachers to spend most of their day preparing students to pass a test despite the fact that most teachers and parents are unhappy with the amount of testing that is taking place in schools.<sup>86</sup> Little time is left in their day for meaningful discussion of any issue, a critical element of a good civic education.

Compounding that is the trepidation many teachers have to discussing sensitive current events due to the perceived repercussions from parents who may hold opposing points of view.<sup>87</sup> And since the focus in education today is on raising scores in math, science, technology, and reading, civic education has been pushed aside. As Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said in his report concerning civic learning, "It is regarded as an add-on."<sup>88</sup>

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83 Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), xiii.

84 Ibid., xiii.

85 Ibid., 9. It is becoming increasingly clear that even in good schools kids are simply not learning skills that matter most in the twenty-first century. Our school system was created in a different century addressing needs of a different era.

86 Ibid., 12. There is growing evidence that teachers and parents are uneasy with the amount of testing but they do not know how to advocate for change.

87 Ibid., xvi.

88 Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action, Washington, D.C., 2012, <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/road-map-call-to-action.pdf>.

Figure 1 shows the amount of time fourth graders spend on social studies, where civic education is mainly found in an average week. About 80 percent of fourth-grade students had teachers who reported spending 61 minutes or more on social studies instruction in a typical week.<sup>89</sup>

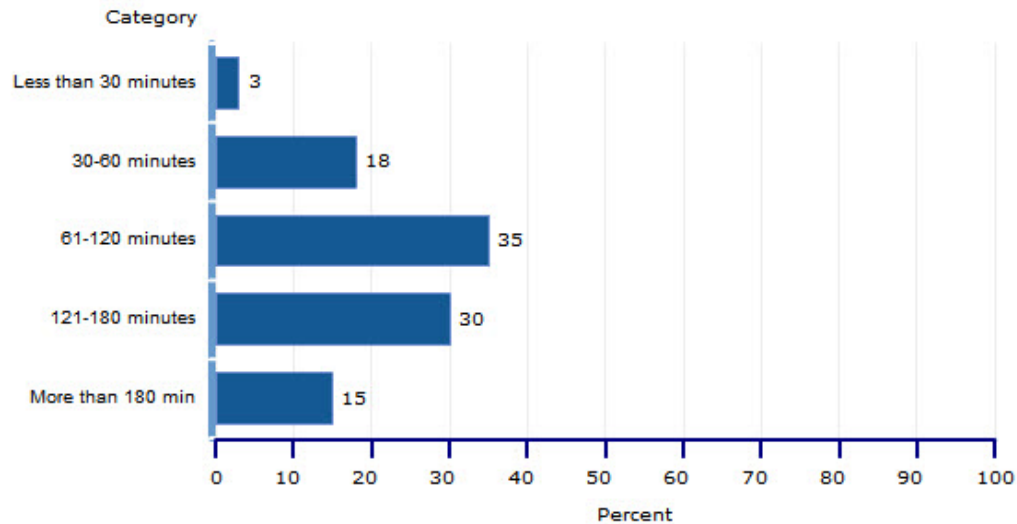


Figure 1. Amount of time fourth-graders spend on social studies

Seventy percent of teachers surveyed think NCLB does more harm than good.<sup>90</sup> Studies are also revealing that overall achievement has not significantly improved as a result of NCLB.

Figure 2 reveals the decline that occurred in civic education for twelfth graders, between the years 2006 and 2010. It is important to note that most educators agree that the high school years are where most students are academically mature enough to grasp concepts of critical thinking. The study reveals that the overall decline is significantly different.

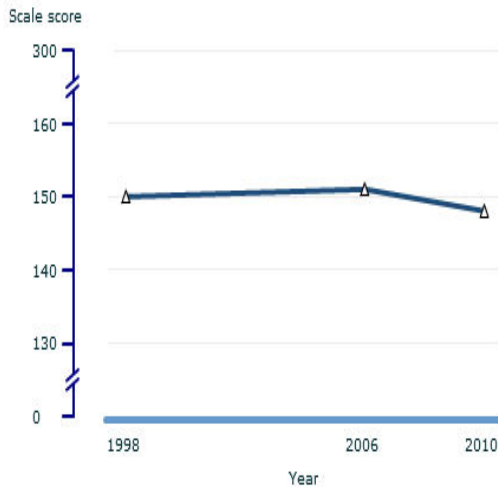
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<sup>89</sup> National Assessment of Education Progress. Civics 2010. [http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics\\_2010](http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics_2010).

<sup>90</sup> Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), xii.

It is equally important to note that teachers in the twelfth grade are not surveyed as to the number of hours they spend per week on social studies or civic lessons.

Average scale scores for civics, grade 12 by all students for year and jurisdiction: 1998, 2006, and 2010  
National



△ All students

\* Significantly different ( $p < .05$ ) from 2010.

NOTE: The NAEP Civics scale ranges from 0 to 300. Some apparent differences between estimates may not be statistically significant.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998, 2006 and 2010 Civics Assessments.

Figure 2. Average scale scores for twelfth-graders in 1998, 2006, and 2010

Most educators agree that a change in education is needed, but they have difficulty identifying specifics. Wagner asserts that some educators don't feel a sense of urgency to change because they are isolated from the larger world of rapid change and have lived through too many teaching fads. He continues that the result is course curricula and teaching practices remain unchanged in the U.S. for the last 50 years.<sup>91</sup> Educators do not agree on whether we need a longer school day, a longer year, more charter schools, or less involvement from teachers unions. Text books are not designed to

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid., xii.

teach analytical skills or the ability to reason.<sup>92</sup> Barriers to general education such as that certainly affect specific courses like civics, social studies, and American history.

Social studies and American History are not target areas of the NCLB. As such, the deficit in civic learning is even seen in the curriculum of school districts across the country. “When I went to school there were all kinds of courses on civics and government,” says retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day-O’Connor. “Today, at least half the states don’t require high school students to take civics; only three states require it in middle school. According to a survey conducted by a national think tank on education in Washington, D.C.,<sup>93</sup> the history curriculum, where traditional civic education resides, 28 states out of 49 fell into a grade category of D or F for content and rigor. Many educators feel the decrease in civic instruction is because it is not a focus area of NCLB.<sup>94</sup>

Other barriers to teaching civics involve how we regard education as a whole in the United States. We do not seem to regard the education profession as a top career choice even though, as Friedman points out, “the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers.”<sup>95</sup> Our teaching colleges and universities do not teach educators how to teach critical thinking.<sup>96</sup> Those educators become principals, and their inadequate training follows them.

### **C. BETTER TEACHERS?**

In the U.S., we regard education as a social issue, so in times of economic hardship, it becomes easy to dismiss, to cut funding, to reduce, or eliminate programs.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., xxiv.

<sup>93</sup> Mark Hansen, “Flunking Civics: Why America’s Kids Know So Little,” *ABA Journal* (2011), <http://www.abajournal.com/magazine/article/civics/>.

<sup>94</sup> Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don’t Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 12.

<sup>95</sup> Thomas Friedman, and Michael Mandelbaum, “*That Used to Be Us, How America Fell Behind in the World it Invented and How we Can Come Back*,” New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2011).

<sup>96</sup> Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don’t Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 64.

<sup>97</sup> Thomas Friedman, and Michael Mandelbaum, “*That Used to Be Us, How America Fell Behind in the World it Invented and How we Can Come Back* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2011), 109.

These issues lead to job dissatisfaction, especially among newer teachers. While teachers must undergo new, more rigorous standards to be admitted to a teaching college, it is estimated that as many as 20 percent will leave the field within their first three years. Among the reasons listed for their lack of tenure is low pay, poor working conditions, decreasing upward mobility, and the fact that many states will not admit them to certification unless they have been teaching for a minimum of three years.<sup>98</sup> Table 1 reveals a schedule of the teaching skills that are most in demand, ranked highest to lowest. As noted, teachers skilled in social studies are ranked near the bottom of the list, scoring only a 2.20 out of a possible 5.00. Social studies—the area that typically covers civic education in the lower grades and high school—is simply not in demand.

Table 1. Schedule of teaching skills most in demand

Fields with Considerable Shortage (5.00–4.21)	Fields with Some Shortage-con't. (4.20–3.41)
Severe/Profound Disabilities 4.47	Middle School Principal 3.46
Mathematics Education 4.46	Library Science/Media Technology 3.46
Physics 4.39	Elementary Principal 3.42
Multicategorical 4.39	
	Fields with Balanced Supply and Demand (3.40–2.61)
Mild/Moderate Disabilities 4.37	Speech Education 3.40
Chemistry 4.35	Gifted/Talented Education 3.34
Mental Retardation 4.34	School Social Worker 3.34
Emotional/Behavior Disorders 4.31	Family & Consumer Science 3.33
Bilingual Education 4.31	Counselor 3.29
Learning Disability 4.28	Languages—Classics 3.22
Visually Impaired 4.24	Elementary—Middle 3.20
Dual Certificate (Gen./Spec.) 4.23	Languages—French 3.13
Hearing Impaired 4.23	Music—Instrumental 3.13
Speech Pathologist 4.21	Languages—German 3.04
	Music—Vocal 3.04
Fields with Some Shortage (4.20–3.41)	Journalism Education 3.03
English as a Second Language/ELL 4.08	Music—General 3.01
Early Childhood Special Education 4.07	Business Education 3.01
Biology 4.06	English/Language Arts 2.89
Earth/Physical Science 4.01	

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<sup>98</sup> James Johnson, Diann Musial, Gene Hall, Donna Gollnick, Victor Dupuis, Teaching in a Changing World, in *Foundations of American Education 14<sup>th</sup> Ed.* (Boston: Pearson Books, 2010).

Audiologist 3.99	Elementary—Pre-Kindergarten 2.74
Physical Therapist 3.91	Art/Visual Education 2.74
Languages—Spanish 3.88	Elementary—Intermediate 2.73
General Science 3.87	Theatre/Drama 2.70
Occupational Therapist 3.82	Dance Education 2.69
School Nurse 3.80	Fields with Some Surplus (2.60–1.81)
Technology Education 3.58	Health Education 2.57
Languages—Japanese 3.53	Elementary—Kindergarten 2.52
Agriculture 3.52	Elementary—Primary 2.41
Computer Science Education 3.52	Physical Education 2.33
Reading 3.52	Social Studies Education 2.20
Superintendent 3.50	Fields with Considerable Surplus (1.80–1.00)
High School Principal 3.49	None
School Psychologist 3.49	

Table 1 (continued from previous page)

Most schools in the United States still employ a traditional, hierarchical pedagogy. Children are accustomed to being told what to do and almost never work in teams.<sup>99</sup> This is in direct conflict with the types of skills most employers seek today. Overcoming the barriers to civic education means first overcoming barriers in education generally. As the following chapters will conclude, a new curriculum is required as well as new teaching methods. Teachers will need to be retrained. Closing schools with poor performance records as required by the NCLB is not the answer to raising performance levels.

#### **D. RE-TEACHING TEACHERS**

The certification of teachers has merit. But we need to identify competencies that are most important to be an effective teacher. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has set standards for teacher assessments.<sup>100</sup> Pennsylvania’s Department of Education has summarized the impact of National Board of Certified Teachers (NBCT). That summary has revealed that students who were taught by NBCT

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<sup>99</sup> Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don’t Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 26.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

scored 7 to 15 percent higher on exams than those who were not, and NBCTs were particularly effective with minority students. Students of NBCT absorbed more and had more positive learning experiences than those of non-NBCT.<sup>101</sup> NCTB and competencies are addressed further in the Chapter IV.

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 149, 150.

## IV. CIVIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM

### A. THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES

Many institutions help develop citizens' knowledge and skills and shape their civic character and commitments. Family, religious institutions, the media, and community groups exert important influences. Schools, however, bear a special and historic responsibility for the development of civic competency and civic responsibility. Schools fulfill that responsibility through both formal and informal education beginning in the earliest years and continuing through the entire educational process.<sup>102</sup> While the history of the United States and our political system is essential to traditional civics, civic education must be seen as one that reaches across the curriculum and touches all subjects.

Curriculum will vary from one school district to the next. While there is no precise formula for building a civics curriculum, the responsibility to foster civic learning and the development of the citizen fell to the public schools.<sup>103</sup> Traditional Civics lessons in primary or secondary public education is typically found in the social studies or history departments of our schools. The National Council for the Social Studies<sup>104</sup> (NCSS) identifies ten areas or themes that standard social studies curriculum should include:

1. Culture – Human beings create, learn, share, and adapt to culture. The study of culture examines the socially transmitted beliefs, values, institutions and behaviors of a way of life of a group of people.
2. Time, continuity, and change – studying the past will make it possible for us to understand the human story across time.
3. People, places, and environments – this enables us to understand the relationship between human populations and the physical world.
4. Individual development and identity – personal identity is shaped by an individual's culture, by groups, by institutions, and by lived experiences shared with people inside and outside of individuals own culture throughout his or her

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<sup>102</sup> Margaret Stimmann Branson, "The Role of Civic Education," A Forthcoming Education Policy Task Force Position Paper from the Communitarian Network, [http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles\\_role.html](http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles_role.html).

<sup>103</sup> Teresa Gustafson, "Empowering Children to Lead Change, Incorporating Preparedness Curricula in the K-12 Education System,"(Master's Thesis, NPS, 2009), 17.

<sup>104</sup>National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, "National Council for the Social Studies," <http://www.socialstudies.org>.



lifetime. As we will see later in this thesis, this can perhaps be the most important aspect of a civic curriculum in an age of uncertainty.

5. Individuals, groups, and institutions – the formal and informal political, economic, and social organizations that help us carry out and manage our daily affairs.
6. Power, authority, and governance – programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create, interact with, and change structures of power, authority, and governance.
7. Production, distribution, and consumption – experiences that provides for the study of how people organize production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.
8. Science, technology, and society – a program that provides for the study of relationships among technology, science, and society.
9. Global connections – a program that provides for the study of global connectedness and interdependence.
10. Civic ideal and practices – a program that provides for the study of the ideals, principles, and practices of citizenship in a democratic republic.

Properly applied, a curriculum that engages each of these learning points should impart knowledge that would make one knowledgeable of his/her own self, the group to which he/she belongs, and the world around them.

## **B. CIVICS IN HARFORD COUNTY**

The Harford County Maryland Public School District (HCPS) captures each element of the NCSS recommendations in their curriculum and as such, represents what a rigorous civic curriculum should be, according to those standards.<sup>105</sup> Throughout the individual units prescribed in grades Kindergarten (K) through twelve, the curriculum is broken down into sections that specifically point to the learning areas addressed by the NCSS. It includes expectations of students in each area, and indicators of how the student has or should assimilate the knowledge. The curriculum delineates how each of the learning points identified by the NCSS is addressed. Each unit of curriculum is explained

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

by a rationale, guiding the teacher with regard to the overarching purpose of the unit and the required time to teach the unit is recommended. The ninth-grade rationale<sup>106</sup> at HCPS follows:

## **Unit One: Types and Purposes of Government**

**Grade: 9**

**Recommended Instructional Time: 10 Days**

### **RATIONALE:**

This unit is designed for students to study the relevance and purposes of government in their lives as well as to study the nature of comparative political organizations in order to evaluate their effectiveness in addressing the needs of citizens in a changing world. They will examine contemporary issues and situations to determine the need for government and identify the structures of various government systems and determine their advantages and disadvantages. Through this examination process, students will discover connections between government and their lives and establish why government is needed. Each section of the curriculum is then delineated for the teacher, for example:

### **Peoples of the Nation and World**

Students will understand the diversity and commonality, human interdependence, and global cooperation of the people of Maryland, the United States, and the World through both a multicultural and historic perspective.

**Expectation PNW9.1.1:** Students will analyze advantages and disadvantages of various types of governments throughout the world. (CLG Indicator 2.2.1)

**Indicator PNW9.1.1.1:** Students will describe the advantages and disadvantages of direct and representative democracy.

### **Political Science**

Students will understand the historical development and current status of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence, with particular emphasis on the democratic skills and attitudes necessary to become responsible citizens.

**Expectation PS9.1.1:** Students will evaluate how the principles of government assist or impede the functioning of government. (CLG Indicator 1.1.2)

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<sup>106</sup> Harford County Public School District, "Ninth Grade Curriculum," <http://www.hcps.org/departments/curriculum/SocialStudies.aspx>.

**Indicator PS9.1.1.1:** Students will evaluate the principles of federalism, representative democracy, popular sovereignty, consent of the governed, separation of powers, checks and balances, rule of law, limited government, and majority rule and how they protect individual rights and impact the functioning of government.

HCPS curriculum identifies materials and resources for teachers, provides notes for teachers, and breaks the curriculum down into daily plans, or “experiences.” This style of curriculum writing is common across all grades at HCPS. Each unit contains a section that clarifies the purpose of the instruction in the enduring understandings.

### **C. ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS**

- The political and economic rights, responsibilities, and choices exercised by a governed people are dependent upon the type of political system under which they live.
- Government exists to meet basic needs and to provide structure to society.
- Democratic governments must balance the rights of the individual and the needs of the common good.
- Cooperation and conflict influence foreign and domestic policy decisions.
- The evolution of government in the United States can be traced to numerous historical documents and philosophies.

### **D. TRADITIONAL CIVICS**

The content of civic knowledge is concerned with what citizens ought to know.<sup>107</sup> As identified by the enduring understandings of the HCPS curriculum for ninth grade, the evolution of the U.S. Government can be traced to numerous historical documents and philosophies.

Civic instruction in public schools should be rooted in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution-particularly the Preamble, the Bill of Rights, and the Fourteenth Amendment. Emphasizing the ideals in these documents is in no way a distortion of U.S. history. Instruction in the

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<sup>107</sup> Margaret Stimmann-Branson, “The Role of Civic Education,” A Forthcoming Education Policy Task Force Position Paper from the Communitarian Network.  
[http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles\\_role.html](http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles_role.html).

history of the United States, as a unique engine of human liberty notwithstanding its faults, is an indispensable foundation for solid civics training for all Americans.<sup>108</sup>

A traditional civics curriculum should be thought provoking. The study of the founding documents, the Declaration of Independence, The U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights should be designed into the curriculum in a manner that permits assessment to determine knowledge, but it should also be framed as a discussion, a dialogue,<sup>109</sup> for that is precisely what democracy is. The curriculum should address five areas or questions:

1. What are civic life, politics, and government?
2. What are the foundations of the American political system?
3. How does the government established by the Constitution embody the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy?
4. What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs?
5. What are the roles of citizens in American democracy?

The U.S. Constitution should be woven into the curriculum and treated as though it is a living document, not a family heirloom, according to former Philadelphia Mayor and Governor of Pennsylvania, Ed Rendell.<sup>110</sup>

Knowledge of these documents paves the way to an understanding of citizenship in a constitutional democracy. Citizenship in a constitutional democracy means that each citizen is a full and equal member of a self governing community and is endowed with fundamental rights and entrusted with responsibilities. Citizens should understand that through their involvement in political life and in civil society, they can help to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods, communities, and nation.<sup>111</sup> The Declaration of

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. “The choice of question format as a means of organizing the knowledge component was deliberate. Democracy is a dialogue, a discussion, a deliberative process in which citizens engage. The use of questions is intended to indicate that the process is never-ending, is an on-going marketplace of ideas, a search for new and better ways to realize democracy’s ideals.”

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. “When asked to identify the causes of American ignorance of the document which they profess to revere and which they acknowledge matters a great deal in their daily lives, Rendell faulted the schools failure to teach civics and government. He said he believed Americans lack of knowledge stems partly from an education system that tends to treat the Constitution in the context of history, rather than as a living document that shapes current events.”

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights are but three documents that tell the story of America and frame our national identity.

The NCSS identifies individual development and identity as a requirement of a social studies curriculum. The elements of a civic curriculum postulated by that organization support the premise that personal identity is shaped by an individual's culture, by groups, by institutional influences, and by lived experiences shared with people inside and outside the individual's own culture throughout his or her development.<sup>112</sup> Self-esteem and personal identity has been emphasized in public schools as a motivator for learning. Development of the individual is indeed important, but so too is collective identity.<sup>113</sup> By teaching children to aspire to be evaluated in certain ways, society regulates behavior and achieves higher group cohesion.<sup>114</sup> Development of the individual includes development of the individual's character.

Civic education provides elements of character building. While primary responsibility for the cultivation of ethical behavior and the development of private character, including moral character, lies with families, religious institutions, work settings, and the other parts of civil society schools can play a major role in the overall development of the character of students.<sup>115</sup>

Civility, courage, self-discipline, persistence, concern for the common good, respect for others, and other characteristics relevant to citizenship, can be promoted through cooperative learning activities and in class meetings, student councils, simulated public hearings, mock trials, mock elections, and student courts.<sup>116</sup> "That the schools

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<sup>112</sup> National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, National Council for the Social Studies, <http://www.socialstudies.org>.

<sup>113</sup> Fathali Moghaddam, *Multiculturalism and Intergroup Relations* (Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association, 2008), 99. "D.M. Taylor turned the idea of identity theory on its head when he described that before one can achieve a personal identity, he must achieve a collective identity."

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>115</sup> Margaret Stimmann-Branson, "The Role of Civic Education," A Forthcoming Education Policy Task Force Position Paper from the Communitarian Network, [http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles\\_role.html](http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles_role.html).

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

make worthy citizens, is the most important responsibility placed on them.”<sup>117</sup> A key ingredient to a curriculum capable of instilling a sense of personal and national identity might fruitfully include an examination of a particular era that characterized the resilience of the American population: World War II.

#### **E. CIVICS IN PEQUEA VALLEY**

World War II dramatically altered the global landscape and put America into a leadership role in world affairs.<sup>118</sup> The Pequea Valley School District in Lancaster County, PA begins their American Life ninth-grade curriculum with the questions surrounding the causes of WWII, the U.S. reaction, and the significance of the attack on Pearl Harbor. It examines tyranny, dictatorships, and the Holocaust.<sup>119</sup> The significance of this curriculum is in the resemblance to current affairs, considering threats of attacks within the United States or our interests abroad. These concepts should spur debate and dialogue, but perhaps most important to the curriculum, is how American citizens endured. It examines whether the events of the 1930s and 1940s are relevant to the twenty-first century, and asks if this could happen again in America.

#### **F. ACROSS THE CURRICULUM AND OVER TIME**

Civic education need not stop at the social studies, American history, or political science courses. Civic education should be merged into all courses within the curriculum of K through twelfth grades. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is the primary advocacy organization for the nation’s community colleges. The association represents 1,100 two-year, associate degree—granting institutions and more than 10 million students. AACC promotes community colleges through six strategic action areas: national and international recognition and advocacy, learning and

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<sup>117</sup> Civic Education, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/civic-education/>.

<sup>118</sup> Pequea Valley K-12, “Ninth Grade Social Studies Curriculum, American Life,” Pequea Valley School District, <http://www.pvsd.k12.pa.us/cms/lib04/PA01001110/Centricity/Domain/13/Gr9Combined.pdf>.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

accountability, leadership development, economic and workforce development, connectedness across AACC membership, and international and intercultural education.<sup>120</sup>

AACC had observed that service learning programs could be linked to civics. Recognizing that an intentional civic responsibility component was missing from many service learning initiatives, AACC selected six colleges from around the country to participate in a pilot project whose purpose was to identify service learning strategies to boost civic engagement and foster civic responsibility among community college students.<sup>121</sup> The results of their two year study concluded that civic education could be linked to service learning activities.

First the study concluded that service learning is a combination of community service and classroom instruction, with a focus on critical, reflective thinking as well as personal and civic responsibility.<sup>122</sup> Second, that the level of service learning programs in American schools has risen but the impact of the lessons learned by participants is unclear because they seem to lack any real guidance or leadership from faculty members.<sup>123</sup>

The study suggests that integrating civic responsibility through all levels of the curriculum can have a positive impact on the student by providing a semblance of active learning, not just passive lectures, a better understanding of the skills necessary for good citizenship, and recognizing that one can make a difference on another's life.<sup>124</sup> These few criteria closely resemble some of those which are accepted as the definition of a civic

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120 Karla Gottlieb, and Gail Robinson, A Practical Guide for Integrating Civic Responsibility in the Curriculum, ii, <http://educationprogram.duke.edu/uploads/assets/IntegratingCivicResponsibility.pdf>.

121 Ibid., iv.

122 Ibid., 5.

123 Ibid., 5, 6. Second, although there are hopeful signs that students, especially those in high school and college, are now more involved in service than in the past, it is not clear whether this service is actually cultivating a greater understanding and commitment to civic responsibility. Although service learning continues to gain momentum as an important and far-reaching movement in higher education, it seems that faculty and service learning program coordinators are not sufficiently addressing the concept of civic responsibility with their students.

124 Ibid., 1.

education. While the Practical Guide is written as an aide to curriculum developers and faculty at the community college level, it could also serve to augment curriculum at the K–12 levels.

As noted by Stimmann-Branson,<sup>125</sup> community service can be an important part of civic education, provided it is properly conceived as being more than just doing good deeds. Community service should be integrated into both the formal and informal curriculum of the school. Community service is not a substitute for formal instruction in civics and government, but it can enhance that instruction. Schools, therefore, need to do more than make students aware of opportunities to serve their schools and communities. Students need to be adequately prepared for experiential learning. They need to understand the institution or agency with which they will be engaged and its larger social and political context. Students need to be supervised and provided with regular opportunities to reflect on their experiences. In the course of reflection students should be asked to consider questions such as: Is this something government should do? Is this something better attended by private individuals or groups in the civil society sector?

Any curriculum designed for civic education requires the investment of time. Time to plan adequate lessons that impart the knowledge that will encourage students to participate in civic life, and time dedicated during the instructional day to deliver such lessons. Table 2 is a representation of a civic curriculum that reaches across the school day, considering reading, math, science, and technology, as presented by Margaret Stimmann-Branson,<sup>126</sup> Associate Director of the Center for Civic Education, in 1998 in her paper *The Role of Civic Education*.

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125 Margaret Stimmann-Branson, 1998, *The Role Of Civic Education*, A Forthcoming Education Policy Task Force Position Paper from the Communitarian Network, [http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles\\_role.html](http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles_role.html).

126 Ibid.



Table 2. Civic curriculum across reading, math, science, and technology (From Stimman-Branson, 1998)

<i>Requirements by Grade</i>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Specific Treatment</b>	<b>Treatment in Other Subjects</b>
<b>K - 2</b>	30 hours per school year at each grade, e.g., focus on rules, authority, justice, responsibility	Primary and elementary - a minimum of 30 hours per school year, e.g., as part of instruction in reading, language arts, math, science, physical education, etc.
<b>3 - 4</b>	40 hours per school year at each grade, e.g., community and state studies focusing on local and state government	
<b>5</b>	40 hours per school year, e.g., integrated into a course in U.S. History/Civics and Government/Geography	Teams of middle-grade teachers develop integrated curriculum units infusing content standards for civics and government, e.g., a language arts/literature unit focusing on the theme of power and authority; a science unit on environmental pollution focusing on the public policy aspects of the issue
<b>6 - 7</b>	Four two-week units at each grade (approx. 30 hours per school year), e.g., focus on comparative government as part of a World Civilization/Area Studies program	
<b>8</b>	One semester course (approx. 60 hours), e.g., U.S. Constitutional Government	
<b>9 - 10</b>	Six two-week units at each grade (approx. 40 hours per school year), e.g., focus on comparative political philosophies and political systems in a World History/Global Studies course	
<b>11</b>	60 hours per school year as an integral part of specific social science course work, e.g., 20th-Century U.S. History and Government	Teachers planning high school courses in other subjects could use the content standards for civics and government to develop thematic organizers, e.g., a technology education class exploring how safety procedures and work place rules protect everyone.
<b>12</b>	Full-year course (120 hours), e.g., Applied Civics/Participation in Government	
<p><i>NOTE: For grades K-4, 30 minutes per day was used as an average instructional period. For grades 5-12, 40 minutes per day was used as an average instructional period.</i></p>		

## G. COMMON CORE STANDARDS: A NEW WAY TO TEACH

Curriculum content is only part of the issue. Teachers have been told that teaching content is more important than teaching skills.<sup>127</sup> There is a higher emphasis on the professionalism of the teacher than the value of education.<sup>128</sup> Perhaps it is the method used to teach curriculum content that matters most, but unlike European systems, the American education system relies on the 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution to keep education within the hands of local or state government. A national curriculum for civics or any other subject for that matter would not now fit into the American precept of public education but standards for delivering curriculum would.

Educational standards are often employed in the education industry and are often encouraged by the U.S. Department of Education. There has been disagreement in standards based education reform though due to a lack of agreement on just what skills and knowledge a student should acquire.<sup>129</sup> A recently emerging trend in American education is the Common Core Standards Initiative<sup>130</sup> for developing curriculum. The standards were developed by the National Governors Association (NGA) the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Teachers, parents, education experts, and school administrators nation-wide assisted the effort. The U.S. Federal Government was not involved.<sup>131</sup> Their goal is to set standards for K–12th grade students to prepare them to enter college or the workforce. They are designed to ensure that high school graduates are prepared with the necessary skills to compete or collaborate with their peers in the U.S. and citizens of foreign countries.<sup>132</sup>

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127 Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 54.

128 Ken Robinson, TED Talk, 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wX78iKhInsc&list=WL886F086AA37AC1E8>.

129 Dan Kahlenger, "What To Do With No Child Left Behind?" in *The Obama Education Plan, An Education Week Guide* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 45.

130 Common Core Standards Initiative, "Common Core Standard Setting Criteria," <http://www.corestandards.org/resources/frequently-asked-questions>.

131 Ibid.

132 Ibid.

Unlike previous standards, the common core standards also include collaboration among states to ensure standardization of the text books to be used in courses as well as developing and implementing comprehensive assessments and measuring tools that would replace state standardized tests as we now know them.<sup>133</sup> As of this writing common core standards have been adopted by 45 states but the standards are only written for English and mathematics. The CCSSO and NGA do not plan on development of common core for other subjects.<sup>134</sup>

## **H. ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS**

“The qualities of the answers we get are a direct reflection of the quality of the questions we ask.”<sup>135</sup> Critical thinking skills have often been identified as skills that are central to a civic education. But what are critical thinking skills, and how are they taught? Lessons using common core standards would present ideas to students and challenge their intellectual ability to think through their answers by posing questions that require explanation. For example: a current question in a Language Arts or Social Studies course using today’s approach may be—write an informational essay about Alexander the Great and his influence on world history.<sup>136</sup> One could simply research one source from the Internet to produce enough information to satisfy this question. The same question framed in a common core standard may elicit a more meaningful and comprehensive answer requiring more effort on the part of the student. Consider – after reading a variety of texts on Alexander the Great, write an essay on whether he was a great military commander, providing supporting evidence from the texts and citing your sources.<sup>137</sup> Such multi-layered question requires the student to research the topic, formulate ideas, consider those ideas, give weight to them, and present his/her summation based on his/her individual thoughts regarding the material. The student must think through such

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133 Ibid.

134 Ibid.

135 Douglass Krug, Leadership Conference Lecture, E.L. Solutions, Washington, D.C., June 24, 2013.

136 Ibid.

137 Common Core Standards Initiative, “Common Core Standard Setting Criteria,” <http://www.corestandards.org/resources/frequently-asked-questions>.

an answer. “By connecting material to a significant theme that resonates with the lives of adolescents, essential questions can add relevance to a unit of study.”<sup>138</sup> But the goal of questions should not be only to assess, they should also be used to teach.<sup>139</sup>

Cue questions constructed using the six thinking skills in Bloom’s Taxonomy, knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, should be used to stimulate all levels of the cognitive domain. Emphasis should be placed on the higher order of thinking, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in order to promote critical thinking.<sup>140</sup> Questions that are multi-layered will provoke students to research and develop answers that reveal the richness and complexities of subjects.<sup>141</sup> With regard to civics, a question like, after reading a variety of text about the Japanese attacks at Pearl Harbor in 1941, describe the impact on the American public and compare or contrast that impact to the attack on September 11, 2001. Such a question should evoke a response from the student using Bloom’s six levels: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. To answer the question, one would have to conduct research, ask questions, evaluate information, draw conclusions, and report findings in writing on a higher plain. The student would be required to determine how the two events were similar, how they were different, and support the answer. Perhaps there is an underlying benefit to questions framed like this; that given enough exposure to them, students will learn how to ask well thought through questions themselves, thereby developing critical thinking skills.

While the common core standards are only written for English and mathematics, they could easily be applied to traditional civics. Consider using several resources, and writing an essay describing the impact of the Declaration of Independence on the American society of 1776, presenting the opposing points of view of in the Continental

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138 Facing History and Ourselves, “Essential Questions,” <http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/strategies/essential-questions>.

139 Teacher Vision, “Levels of Questions in Bloom’s Taxonomy: Teaching Methodology Advice (Grades K–12),” <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/teaching-methods/new-teacher/48445.html>.

140 Bloom’s Taxonomy, “Sample Questions,” <http://www.officeport.com/edu/bloommq.htm>.

141 Facing History and Ourselves, “Essential Questions,” <http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/strategies/essential-questions>.

Congress at the time. This assignment would require a student to research the political climate of the American colonies of that era, what issues they faced, what caused them to sever all ties with England, and what were the consequences for failure.

## **I. TEACHERS AND COMMON CORE**

The transition from traditional curricula to common core will require professional development of teachers regardless of the subject being taught. The Hanover Research report<sup>142</sup> revealed a need for basic development for teacher implementing common core standards into their curriculum. These needs included assessment literacy training, technology skills, professional collaboration between other teachers and a teacher in a leadership position in the school to act as a mentor in the new design. Chief among the report's findings are that teachers will need to understand the distinctions between formative assessment, and summative assessment.<sup>143</sup> Formative assessments are a part of the learning experience and need not be graded in the same manner as summative.<sup>144</sup> Formative assessments serve as practice for students and check for understanding as the lesson is being taught. Framed for a traditional civic education, these assessments could be used to have students demonstrate their understanding of our founding documents, the Declaration of Independence for example, in essay form.

Teachers also need ready access to one or more teacher leaders in their building who are familiar with common core techniques. They require the ability to network with other teachers.<sup>145</sup> Moreover, teachers should be provided with a coherent set of instruction such as the Model Core Teaching Standards manual, designed for

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142 Teacher Professional Development for Common Core Standards Transition, Hanover Research, <http://www.hanoverresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Hanover-Research-Teacher-Professional-Development-for-Common-Core-Standards-Transition.pdf>. The Hanover Research Group is a Washington, D.C., based professional research service with expertise in education.

143 Ibid.

144 Judith Dodge, "What Are Formative Assessments and Why Should We Use Them (2010), *Scholastic, Where Teachers Come First*, <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/what-are-formative-assessments-and-why-should-we-use-them>.

145 Teacher Professional Development for Common Core Standards Transition, Hanover Research, <http://www.hanoverresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Hanover-Research-Teacher-Professional-Development-for-Common-Core-Standards-Transition.pdf>.

mathematics and English language arts.<sup>146</sup> This manual is designed to provide teachers of these subjects knowledge of how to deliver content. The manual should be used as a basis to form similar directions for all subjects, including civics. Key themes in that manual describe how to impart global skills such as problem solving, interpersonal skills, and the ability to synthesize material across all disciplines. Table 3, taken from the Hanover report, represents those themes.

Table 3. 2011 Model Core Teaching Standards–key themes<sup>147</sup>

Theme	Description
Personalized Learning for Diverse Learners	Teachers need to adapt to a variety of learners, including students with disabilities as well as those who perform above grade level and need opportunities to accelerate. Along these lines, teachers must provide multiple approaches to learning so that students may personalize their learning experiences, including what is learned, and how learning can be demonstrated.
Stronger Focus on Application of Knowledge and Skills	Teachers need to be able to impart global skills and dispositions on learners, particularly in the areas problem solving, curiosity, creativity, innovation, interpersonal skills, the ability to synthesize across disciplines, global awareness, ethics, and technological expertise. There is an emphasis on cross-disciplinary skills, including communication, collaboration, and critical thinking, as teachers must design learning experiences that draw upon multiple disciplines.
Improved Assessment Literacy	Teachers must gain “knowledge and skill around how to develop a range of assessments, how to balance use of formative and summative assessment as appropriate, and how to use assessment data to understand each learner’s progress,

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 6.

Theme	Description
	adjust instruction as needed, provide feedback to learners, and document learner progress against standards.”
Collaborative Professional Culture	In order to deliver rigorous and relevant learning for all students, teachers need to collectively engage in collective inquiry, particularly with regard to decision-making processes, lesson design, and analyzing data from multiple sources.

\*Source: Council of Chief State School Officers’ Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium

## J. CREATIVELY TEACHING CREATIVITY

In a globalized world, our youth will no longer compete for lucrative jobs with other Americans on our own shores; they will compete in a global job market with citizens from other countries that are seeking those same jobs.<sup>148</sup> Their ability to achieve as citizens, to emerge as leaders, and to sustain our principals is an essential element of our security. Creativity and innovation are essential to competition. U.S. Employers have rated both among the top five skills that will increase in importance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>149</sup> “In order to teach creativity one must teach creatively.”<sup>150</sup> Several techniques to teaching creativity are offered by The Iowa State Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).<sup>151</sup> Following are three techniques:

1. Assumption Busting: assumptions are unquestioned assumed truths. Breaking through an assumption is beneficial in seeking out or generating new possibilities, stimulating creativity.
2. Brainstorming: a useful tool in to develop creative solutions to problems. Brainstorming leads to acute problem definition which in turn leads to viable solutions or alternatives.

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148 Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don’t Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), xv.

149 Creative Oklahoma, “The State of Creativity,” <http://www.stateofcreativity.com/education/>.

150 Iowa State University, “Techniques for Creative Teaching,” Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching 2013, <http://www.celt.iastae.edu/creativity/techniques.html>.

151 Ibid.

3. Concept Mapping, or mind maps: mind maps aide in generating ideas in graphic form. They can lead to creative focus and produce priorities in solving problems.

If employers are requiring a work force that can think outside of the box, then it is adduced that creativity must be an essential part of a civic education. Creativity is a combination of creative thinking skills, motivation, and expertise.<sup>152</sup> With regard to students, expertise comes with time; motivation is intrinsic and can be influenced; creative thinking can be taught. One simple method of fostering creativity can include offering extra credit for student participation in out of class groups or activities that enhance learning and thinking in the particular topic area being taught.<sup>153</sup> This thesis suggests however that the most effective way to teach creativity would be to provide a specific course or modules within the curriculum at appropriate grade levels that impart the skills for creativity. These modules should contain elements of collaboration (teamwork), or playful competition.<sup>154</sup>

One such module is divergent thinking. In this template, teachers set up friendly atmospheres of competition within the classroom centered on a pre-defined problem. Students are placed in teams and may be required to restate or reframe the problem, work toward a solution with free, uninhibited thinking that might differ from the norm to foster a solution.<sup>155</sup> The teacher may guide students with ground rules like fostering the most original solutions to the problem in a limited amount of time; what risks are involved in implementing the solutions, how would solutions be applied to the current problem?<sup>156</sup> Teachers could use approaches like this to frame issues that occurred in the past and compare / contrast them to present day issues using the context of the past and present. That is to say, offer students a problem that historical figures once faced, place the student in the context of that era, and have them work through the problem to see how

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152 Ibid.

153 Ibid.

154 Ibid.

155 Ibid.

156 Ibid.



they would solve it. Then, repeat this process with a contemporary problem and using the same framework, in today's context.

## **K. CIVIC EDUCATION IS NOT ONLY FOR THE CLASSROOM**

Civic education can take on many forms and is not limited to formal classroom instruction. Campaigns to enhance civic learning and citizenship have been addressed in the past by the Ad Council. The non-profit mission of the Ad Council is to stimulate action on issues through communications programs to make a measureable difference in society.<sup>157</sup> In-school programs are listed as one of their primary services that they provide. Begun in 1941, the Ad Council remains America's leader in public service communications. Some of their most noted campaigns that addressed civic issues were "Buy Bonds," aimed at raising revenue to fight WWII, "Loose Lips Sinks Ships," developed to raise awareness for the need for national security during WWII. Perhaps their most successful campaign designed to promote the elimination of forest fires was and still is, Smokey Bear.

But of particular interest to this discussion, are the Ad Council campaigns that are already associated with education; A Mind is a terrible thing to waste, bullying, college access, high school dropout prevention, to name a few.<sup>158</sup> These messages carry the importance of education into our homes and more recently on the Internet and other forms of digital communications. "The mind is a terrible thing to waste" is 40-years-old in 2013. Other Ad Council campaigns that carried civic overtones are those associated with emergency preparedness; emergency preparedness for business, for New York City, for community engagement.<sup>159</sup>

The effectiveness of Ad Council campaigns has generally been very good. For example, a case study concerning their General Education Development (GED) program reveals that 4 in 10 (40 percent) of the respondents to their campaign reported that they

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<sup>157</sup> Ad Council Inspiring Change Improving Lives, 2013, <http://www.adcouncil.org/About-Us/Mission>.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> The Ad Council Inspiring Change Improving Lives, 2013, <http://www.adcouncil.org/Our-Work>.

were actively engaged in pursuing their GED or taking steps to gather information toward that degree.<sup>160</sup> Sponsors of Ad Council campaigns vary, but there is precedence of the U.S. Government using the agency. The bullying campaign was sponsored by the federal government, according to the Ad Council's website,<sup>161</sup> and the emergency preparedness campaigns were sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

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## V. DISCUSSION

### A. DOES CIVIC EDUCATION LEAD TO RESILIENT COMMUNITIES?

The threat of terrorist attacks in the twenty-first century continues to be at the forefront of every public safety or administrator's mind. This thesis suggests that civic education may have an impact on homeland security and may offer as a possible defense to terrorist attacks, or recovery from disasters, the tools with which citizens may use to foster a more resilient community by becoming a more enlightened, engaged citizen. It is through civics that students grasp the concepts of our American representative democracy and through which they learn the tenets of good citizenship, critical thinking, and the ability to self govern. It is in large part, the source of our national identity. While a sound civic education may be delivered in several ways through home and community affairs, the schools are the primary center for learning in America.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP),<sup>162</sup> however, reported in its 2010 *Nations Report Card*, that only 27 percent of the nation's fourth grade students were proficient in civics. Only 22 percent and 24 percent of eighth grade and twelfth grade, respectively, were proficient in the area.

In Presidential Directive #8, President Obama calls for the development of a national preparedness goal that identifies the core capabilities necessary for preparedness.<sup>163</sup> The plan would require a robust citizen engagement to achieve a more resilient community. A robust citizen engagement is a phrase most often associated with civic life but there is no guidance or mention of how to achieve that goal. This thesis suggests that the robust resiliency the President refers to in PD#8 is already built into our human nature, but must be nurtured through education.

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<sup>162</sup> National Assessment of Education Progress, Civics 2010, [http://nationsreportcard.gov/civics\\_2010/](http://nationsreportcard.gov/civics_2010/).

<sup>163</sup> Presidential Directive 8, The White House, Washington, D.C., 2011, <http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/presidential-policy-directive-8-national-preparedness.pdf>.

Humans show an extraordinary capacity to survive in adverse conditions.<sup>164</sup> Through adaptive behavior people will seek each other out in times of distress. This is perhaps the reason why neighbors come together after crisis in a community, supporting each other and displaying resiliency. “Public participation in dealing with community disasters has repeatedly been shown to bolster public morale and ameliorate psychological stress from the bombings in London during World War II to the modern-day Israeli / Palestinian conflict.”<sup>165</sup> This was demonstrated after the 9/11 attacks in Manhattan and Washington, D.C., As described in Bongar, Brandon, and Silke, people may do this also to affirm their cultural view of the world and the threat.<sup>166</sup> If this explains the resiliency component of the Presidents directive, then robust engagement should be addressed through a free and public education.

As Gustafson notes:

Instilling preparedness as a core value in children beginning at a young age when political bias has yet to be fully developed, coupled with the child’s ability to broker the preparedness message, may insure that our future generations view preparedness as a fact of life rather than as an ad hoc exercise.<sup>167</sup>

Societies have long had an interest in the ways in which their young are prepared for citizenship and in how they learn to take part in civic life.<sup>168</sup> The interconnectedness of the twenty-first century world requires in depth attention to the identity that our youth ascribe to. Civic learning is not bounded by the walls of a classroom but schools play an

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164 Susan Brandon, and Andrew Silke, “Defining the Need and Describing the Goal,” in *Psychology of Terrorism*, ed. Bruce Bongar, Lisa M. Brown, Larry E. Beutler, James N. Beckenridge, Phillip G. Zimbardo (New York: Oxford Press 2007), 175. Although there are tragic instances of people who are permanently scarred by trauma, these are relatively few. Stress and uncertainty produce social behaviors: People seek out others, perhaps to enhance social support to help them to affirm their cultural view of the world and the threat.

165 Ibid., 187. Edgar Jones, William Durodie, Robin Woolver, and Simon Wessely, in *Psychology of Terrorism*, ed., Bruce Bongar (New York: Oxford Press, 2007), 187.

166 Ibid., 187.

167 Teresa Gustafson, “Empowering Children to Lead Change, Incorporating Preparedness Curricula in the K-12 Education System,” (Master’s Thesis, NPS, 2009), 5.

168 Margaret Stimmann-Branson, 1998, The Role Of Civic Education, A Forthcoming Education Policy Task Force Position Paper from the Communitarian Network. [http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles\\_role.html](http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles_role.html).

integral role in affecting the civic minded citizen. Education plays a crucial role in providing students with their personal identity as they develop, and this thesis suggests it should also play a lead role in forming their collective identity. Because of technology American children not only play games with the kids in their own neighborhood; they can now interact with kids from across the seas. Today, they are able to form friendships, play games and have discussions with citizens of other countries in real time.

## **B. THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY: GAMING**

Technology has been identified as a critical enabling tool for students in the twenty-first century.<sup>169</sup> “Young adults who have grown up on the Internet are habituated to multimedia learning experiences, as opposed to merely interacting with text.”<sup>170</sup> Our youth are already well adapted to the cyber world through social networking and gaming. The Pequea Valley School District in Lancaster County, PA, is already taking advantage of that in their approach to education that reaches across all high school curricula.<sup>171</sup> Their use of Moodle, a software program designed to engage students in utilization of technology in all classrooms, was implemented in 2012. Students entering the ninth grade, receive individual lap top computers that are used for a majority of assignments. The lap top remains with the student throughout the high school career. This allows students to conduct research on line, present findings in reports written in word document format or by using pre-scripted software for quizzes. One course, Contemporary Physics uses what the teacher describes as the upside-down classroom. By using You Tube video, the teacher presents lectures to the student electronically and assigns this as homework. During their next classroom session, the lecture is discussed and clarified. This allows more time for open dialogue in the classroom; a chance for formative assessment, a demonstration of how the students have assimilated the information. That same technique could be applied to nearly all classes, which would result in more time during class for

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<sup>169</sup> Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 178.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 178.

<sup>171</sup> Pequea Valley K-12, “Technology in PVSD.,” Pequea Valley School District, <http://www.pequeavalley.org/domain/25>.

discussion and debate, a chance to see and hear other sides of issues. Similar programs have been used across collegiate domains.

Simulations using technology are yet another learning concept using gaming. Strategic Thinking Asynchronous Network Complex Environment (S.T.A.N.C.E.) is a simulated environment being used at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA. This environment places students in a current world threat environment that targets the United States. The graphic interface represents an office that could easily be configured to look more like a classroom. It offers interactions with advisors who remain anonymous, each with a fictitious name and with their own skills. A chat room is available for students who are broken up in teams can converse to share ideas, offer proposals and solutions to problems. Other resources in the simulated environment include a white board to collaborate ideas, a map of the area that can present current resources in the affected area, and a library with documentation and reference material germane to the problem. A video center offers up to date information on the state of affairs in the affected area and most important, a voting booth. Before students can move any solutions to problems ahead, they must vote on it, and the vote is controlled by course moderators. Imagine a simulator like STANCE being used to teach history, or other subjects, as part of a civic education curriculum.<sup>172</sup>

### **C. THE IMPORTANCE OF IDENTITY**

Identity studies have taken a leading role in intergroup relations in the twentieth century.<sup>173</sup> All types of governments, democracies, socialist, communist, require its citizens to possess certain traits that enable those governments to survive. They are the foundation of any political system.<sup>174</sup> These psychological citizens—to which they are referred—require development, including the educational growth of a child, the mental

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<sup>172</sup> Rodrigo Nieto-Gomez, Personal Communication, Center for Homeland Defense and Security, Naval Postgraduate School, “research is being conducted to determine if an environment like STANCE can be redeveloped for all classroom levels,” May 1, 2013.

<sup>173</sup> Fathali Moghaddam, *Multi-Culturalism and Intergroup Relations* (Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association, 2008), 89.

<sup>174</sup> Fathali Moghaddam, *From the Terrorist Point of View* (Westport: Praeger International, 2006), 130.

skills required to enable a person to comprehend, evaluate, and make choices, and to actively participate in their society in an appropriate manner.<sup>175</sup> This becomes especially necessary in a society that requires the assimilation of its immigrant population for survival such as democracies. Experiences occurring in other countries can point to the dilemma of groups within societies that suffer from identity issues. While there may be many other reasons associated with a failure to assimilate into the citizenry, the following section addresses the issue from the educational aspect of identity, and what can occur if it is not addressed.

#### **D. CIVICS IN THE U.K.**

Britain does not fare well in creating patriotism among its Muslim population for example.<sup>176</sup> They have not done well at cultivating them into their citizenry through their education system and therefore there is a sense of isolationism or victimhood among the Muslim community.<sup>177</sup> There are 1.6 million Muslims in the U.K., making up 3 percent of the population.<sup>178</sup> The majority of the Muslim population in the U.K. is immigrants. Surveys have revealed that among those Muslim citizens aged 16 to 24; 86 percent believe that Shar'ia law is more important than British law. The UK fosters an official education with Anglican origins.

It is undeniable that the cultural heritage that underpins the curriculum of British schools is European and Christian, and that for many Muslim pupils whose families originate from other parts of the world, and have different cultural heritage, this leaves them disadvantaged in British schools.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>176</sup> Nadav Morag, 2013, Lecture at U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, April 17, 2013.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Jodie Reed, "Young Muslims in the U.K: Education and Integration (paper presented at the FES/ippr seminar, London, England, December, 2005), <http://www.library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/london/03682.pdf>.

<sup>179</sup> Open Society Institute, "Muslims In The UK: Policies For Engaged Citizens," <http://www.quest-learning-org/BritishMuslimsEdHals.pdf>. 154.



Most Muslims in the U.K. would prefer being free to develop their own distinctive identity and still take on the rights and responsibilities of British citizenship.<sup>180</sup>

Senior teachers may ban the wearing of the Niqab, a traditional Muslim garb for women, if they are so inclined. Islamist groups have capitalized on that and gained influence in their communities. ‘Britishness’ has been weakened by this. The UK has one of the highest radicalization rates in Europe.<sup>181</sup>

In Britain, civic and citizenship education is a policy priority and a statutory component of its national curriculum however, citizenship is still a relatively recent addition to the curriculum in England, having been statutory for just eight years.<sup>182</sup> New key concepts introduced in just the past eight years in the U.K. are the key concept of identity and diversity; the key process of advocacy and representation; and the key process of taking informed and responsible action. These concepts demonstrate the U.K.’s response to the challenges of instilling a sense of identity, social cohesion, and a willingness to get involved as active citizens now and in the future.<sup>183</sup> The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS),<sup>184</sup> Britain’s version of the NAEP shows a significant decline in civic education in the UK between 1999 and 2009.

The conclusions of the ICCS study for the U.K. recounted that four themes had emerged that required attention. They are: Civic knowledge and understanding, views and attitudes towards civic and citizenship related issues, sense of civic identity, and civic engagement. These themes are similar to the robust citizen engagement and resilient communities that the President identifies in PD#8.

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180 Ibid., 154.

181 Nadav Morag, Lecture at U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, April 17, 2013.

182 Judie Nelson, Pauline Wade, and David Kerr, Young Peoples Civic Attitudes and Practices: England’s Outcomes from the (ICCS), International Civic and Citizenship Education Study, 2010, Department for Education, London, UK, <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RR060.pdf>.

183 Ibid.

184 Ibid.

The recommended changes to the U.K.'s national curriculum include encouraging students to engage with, and learn about, controversial issues, through research, debate or collective group work.<sup>185</sup> Students should be given opportunities to participate in school and class decision-making processes and to take an active part in school life.<sup>186</sup>

Multilevel modeling analyses have demonstrated that having a high civic knowledge score (as measured by the ICCS cognitive test) is a strong predictor of a range of positive pupil outcomes. These include: having support for democratic values, having support for gender equality, and for equal rights for ethnic minority and immigrant groups, being likely to vote in future elections, and having interest in social and political issues.<sup>187</sup> The U.K.'s ICCS report further concludes and recommends that schools should focus on enhancing students civic knowledge along a range of socio-economic and political fronts<sup>188</sup> and that citizenship must be regarded as a specialist subject in schools, supported by a staff that is particularly trained and given adequate curriculum time to deliver the concepts.<sup>189</sup>

America is a melting pot.<sup>190</sup> We not only depend on citizenry born of this country, we depend on those who join us from other countries; those who settle here to make their home, their way of life. As de Tocqueville said, each new generation is a new people that must acquire the knowledge, learn the skills and develop the disposition to maintain and improve a constitutional democracy.<sup>191</sup> Democracy is not a "machine that would go by itself, but must be consciously reproduced, one generation after another."<sup>192</sup>

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185 Ibid., 107–108.

186 Ibid., 112.

187 Ibid., 114.

188 Ibid., 114.

189 Ibid., 114.

190 IIP Digital, "eJournal USA: Becoming American: Beyond the Melting Pot," U.S. Department of State, <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/publication/2011/04/20110428123939su0.9612957.html#axzz2YxemEYNf>.

191 Margaret Stimmann-Branson, 1998, *The Role Of Civic Education*, A Forthcoming Education Policy Task Force Position Paper from the Communitarian Network, [http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles\\_role.html](http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles_role.html).

192 Ibid.

This includes person's native born or naturalized. As we admit more and more immigrants to the country, we see more immigrant children in schools looking for a social or national identity as well as those native born.

As noted earlier by the NCSS, personal identity is shaped by an individual's culture, by groups, by institutional influences, and by lived experiences shared with people inside and outside the individual's own culture throughout his or her development.<sup>193</sup> Most of a person's identity is shaped by their in-group, that is, those they closely associate with such as family, friends, and church groups, to name a few. But some argue that a collective sense of identity must first be formed to provide the basis for which personal identity can be molded.<sup>194</sup>

In molding that collective identity however, care must be taken to assure that what is imparted to students is not in effect, a sense of nationalism. Nationalism leads one to a feeling of superiority that could fuel intergroup hostility and only foster more hostility.<sup>195</sup> Nationalism can be akin to uncritical patriotism which is distinguished by Schatz and Staub, et al.<sup>196</sup> as blind patriotism is to constructive patriotism. It is described as a feeling of "my country, right or wrong."<sup>197</sup> Nationalism and uncritical patriotism can lead to support for authoritarian government and research has shown that it may have a larger propensity to lead to less involvement or engagement by the citizenry.<sup>198</sup> Critical patriotism, on the other hand, is described as a love of one's country with a willingness to

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193 National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, 2013, National Council for the Social Studies, <http://www.socialstudies.org>.

194 Fathali Moghaddam, *Multiculturalism and Intergroup Relations* (Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association, 2008), 99.

195 Clark McCauley, Psychological Issues in Understanding Terrorism and the Response to Terrorism, in *Psychology of Terrorism*, ed. Bruce Bongar, Lisa M. Brown, Larry E. Beutler, James N. Beckenridge, and Phillip G. Zimbardo (New York: Oxford Press 2007), 26.

196 Leonie Huddy, and Nadia Khatib, "American Patriotism, National Identity, and Political Involvement," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 51, No.1, January 2007, 64, <http://www.u.arizona.edu/~jag/POL596A/HuddyKhatibAJPS2707.pdf>.

197 Ibid., 64.

198 Ibid., 66.

criticize its political processes or leaders when things go wrong.<sup>199</sup> But critical patriotism cannot imply that one is bound to criticize or show a desire to change the status quo by becoming active in politics. Nonetheless, studies by Huddy and Khatib<sup>200</sup> conclude that a strong national identity, a collective identity, is a better predictor of citizen engagement.

In most American schools, children spend up to six and a half hours of their day together in school. In the lower grades, at age levels where their learning skills are most formative, this time is usually spent together in one group or class room. As they mature and move into intermediate or secondary levels, they begin changing classes at periodic intervals thus exposing them to more and more class-mates, all with different personalities, different identities. Here, students have the opportunity to contemplate the question, “What type of person am I?” Lessons that reach out to students across the entire curriculum should influence civic learning to enhance that identity.

According to Sir Ken Robinson,

What we have is a culture of standardization. Standard tests are good and can be necessary as a tool to aide in knowing how we’re doing but it should be relied on for everything. Systems must recognize that education has to be individualized. Kids prosper best with a board range of curriculum that celebrates all of their talents.<sup>201</sup>

Should NCLB be left behind? The well-intended act is in fact, putting our children further behind in acquiring the skills for citizenship.<sup>202</sup> Studies are showing that the act is not effecting overall student achievement.<sup>203</sup> The 2010 NAEP on Civic

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199 Clark McCauly, Psychological Issues in Understanding Terrorism and the Response to Terrorism, in *Psychology of Terrorism*, ed. Bruce Bongar, Lisa M. Brown, Larry E. Beutler, James N. Beckenridge, and Phillip G. Zimbardo (New York: Oxford Press 2007), 26.

200 Leonie Huddy, and Nadia Khatib, “American Patriotism, National Identity, and Political Involvement,” *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 51, No.1, January 2007, 64, <http://www.u.arizona.edu/~jag/POL596A/HuddyKhatibAJPS2707.pdf>.

201 Ken Robinson, TED Talk, 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wX78iKhInsc&list=WL886F086AA37AC1E8>.

202 Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don’t Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 9.

203 Ibid., 12.

Education provides proof of that<sup>204</sup> and Secretary Duncan has identified civics as an “add-on” in the nation’s schools.<sup>205</sup> But leaders of urban school districts by and large do not disagree with the tenets of NCLB; in fact they embrace the accountability that it brings.<sup>206</sup> NCLB requires, however, more focus on English, math, science, and technology leaving little time during the instructional day for the humanities, arts, social studies, and civics.

American history curriculum is intended to better inform students about our development as a nation and to better understand the issues we face now.<sup>207</sup> The meaning of citizenship at a personal level must be included in this education, if students are to acquire the skills necessary to understand the threats, challenges, and our new global environment, to lead our country in the twenty-first century. If our schools teach American kids what it means to be American citizens, they will have a better chance of passing on the American formula for success.<sup>208</sup>

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204 National Assessment of Education Progress. Civics 2010, [http://nationsreportcard.gov/civics\\_2010/](http://nationsreportcard.gov/civics_2010/).

205 Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action, Washington, D.C., 2012, <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/road-map-call-to-action.pdf>.

206 David Hoff, “What To Do With No Child Left Behind?” in *The Obama Education Plan, An Education Week Guide* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 30.

207 Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don’t Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 99.

208 Thomas Friedman, and Michael Mandelbaum, “*That Used to Be Us, How America Fell Behind in the World it Invented and How we Can Come Back*,” New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2011), 141.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The research indicates that the recommendations to forming a better civic education in America are plentiful, useful, and this thesis cannot hope to highlight every one. Central to any discussion of national preparedness or community resiliency in a republican democracy is the understanding of one's obligations of citizenship.

For the ideals postulated in PD #8 to become a reality the populace must clearly understand their role in our society. That understanding is brought about through a civic education but The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP),<sup>209</sup> reported in its 2010 *Nations Report Card*, that only 27 percent of the nation's fourth grade students were proficient in civics. Only 22 percent and 24 percent of eighth grade and twelfth grade, respectively, were proficient in the area.

Civic education is usually addressed in the social studies curricula of public schools and is particularly rooted in American history. It typically focuses on functions of government and the rights and duties of citizens using a study of the founding documents of our society, the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, and their implications or impact on our society. In depth study of those documents is essential. But the term "civic education" must be more broadly defined if we are to meet the challenges of a global society.

While the traditional definition of civics is centered on the history and functions of our government, and the rights and duties of citizens, we must expand the concept of a civic based education to include all subjects not only to afford our future leaders the ability to think critically and self-govern, but to provide a sense of national identity as well. A collective identity is also essential.<sup>210</sup> The American experiences of the past continue to be the path to our future. The study of the era that produced in Brokaw's

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209 National Assessment of Education Progress, Civics 2010, [http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics\\_2010](http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics_2010).

210 Fathali Moghaddam, *Multi-Culturalism and Intergroup Relations* (Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association, 2008), 99.

words, The Greatest Generation,<sup>211</sup> the period between 1933 and 1945 should be explored deeply by the curriculum at the middle or high school level for it was during that period of the modern era when we almost lost this democracy to tyranny.

Unlike the U.K., civic and citizenship education cannot be a statutory component of education curricula because our federalist design prevents that; education curricula in America is not governed by the federal government, it is a right reserved to that states by the Bill of Rights in the 10th Amendment. This can be seen as a barrier to education as well. It can however, be a policy priority of the states. The U.S. Department of Education should take steps to eliminate barriers by providing leadership in education through the use of the Ad Council, promulgating public service messages through the media that serve to remind the public of the overall perception of education in America and the need to consider the education of our youth as a necessity to the future security of the nation. As described in Chapter IV of this paper, Ad Council campaigns have had success in implementing change in our society since 1941.

While it cannot dictate curriculum, DOE can urge the implementation of educational standards as it has with the Common Core Standards. DOE can work with and provide support to state governors and other state policy makers who hold significant leadership positions in education. Together, those entities can communicate a vision for reform of civic education and implementation of common core standards. They can lead the way in transitions in assessments, supporting local development of curricula and material.<sup>212</sup> Governors should lead the way through businesses, urging reforms in civic education, emphasizing the value it would have on the future of their business and the work force.<sup>213</sup>

Common Core Standards for curriculum development should be considered for all subjects commensurate with all grade levels. Developed by the National Governors

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211 Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation* (New York: Random House, 2008).

212 Tabitha Grossman, Ryan Reyna, and Stephanie Shipton, *Realizing the Potential: How Governors Can Lead Effective Implementation of Common Core State Standards*, 8, <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1110CCSSIIMPLEMENTATIONGUIDE.PDF>.

213 *Ibid.*, 8–11.

Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), these guidelines afford students the ability to apply critical thought processes while learning. Common core focuses more on conceptual understanding as opposed to procedural skills.<sup>214</sup> A common core curriculum should also use assessments that measure the depth of a students' knowledge as opposed to simply knowing the right answer. These assessments should include essential questions, ones that require more than just a yes or no answer.<sup>215</sup> "By connecting material to a significant theme that resonates with the lives of adolescents, essential questions can add relevance to a unit of study."<sup>216</sup> But the goal of questions should not be only to assess, they should also be used to teach.<sup>217</sup> Cue questions related to the six thinking skills in Bloom's Taxonomy should be used to stimulate all levels of the cognitive domain with an emphasis on those constructed for the higher order of thinking.<sup>218</sup> Questions that are multi-layered will provoke students to research and develop answers that reveal the richness and complexities of subjects<sup>219</sup> should be integrated into the curriculum and used for formative assessment. Questions that evoke a response from the student using Bloom's six levels—knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation—should be used. To answer such questions, one would have to conduct research, ask questions, evaluate information, draw conclusions, and report findings in writing on a higher plain. An assignment such as this may even be more effective if students are assigned to work in teams, thus addressing Wagner's assertion that teamwork and collaboration is essential for the type of workforce that employers are looking for in the twenty-first century.<sup>220</sup>

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214 Common Core Standards Initiative, "Common Core Standard Setting Criteria," <http://www.corestandards.org/resources/frequently-asked-questions>.

215 Facing History and Ourselves, "Essential Questions," <http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/strategies/essential-questions>.

216 Ibid.

217 Teacher Vision, "Levels of Questions in Bloom's Taxonomy: Teaching Methodology Advice (Grades K–12)," 2013, <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/teaching-methods/new-teacher/48445.html>.

218 Bloom's Taxonomy, "Sample questions," <http://www.officeport.com/edu/bloommq.htm>.

219 Facing History and Ourselves, "Essential Questions," <http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/strategies/essential-questions>.

220 Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), xv.



And all teachers should be certified. In at least one survey, it was resolved that students responded better to teachers that held certifications from the NBCT.

Community service should be integrated into the formal curriculum of the school. While it is not a substitute for formal instruction it enhances the student's ability to interact socially and enhances experiential learning. This leads students to better understand our individual position as citizens and may lead them to consider such things when facing societal issues as: Is this something government should do?<sup>221</sup>

Standard tests are good and can be necessary as a tool to aide in knowing how we're doing but it should not be relied on for everything.<sup>222</sup> The requirements of NCLB should be revisited and equal weight must be given to social studies and civics as time spent on English, math, science, and technology: After all, what is value of either math or science, if we don't have our democracy?<sup>223</sup>

Curriculum must undertake what Wagner describes as the survival skills for the twenty-first century:<sup>224</sup> Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Collaboration, Effective Oral and Written Communication, Analysis, and Imagination. Critical thinking and problem solving go hand in hand.<sup>225</sup> This is the ability to ask the right questions in order to solve problems, the ability to work through problems on their own in the work force. The definition of critical thinking can be elusive but would include knowledge of what caused the problem one is faced with; what is at the core or root. It involves knowing what frames the problem; who else is experiencing it, and what are they doing about it. It requires a systemic view.<sup>226</sup> Collaboration is the ability to work in teams, but in the

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221 Margaret Stimmann-Branson, 1998, *The Role Of Civic Education*, A Forthcoming Education Policy Task Force Position Paper from the Communitarian Network, [http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles\\_role.html](http://www.civiced.org/papers/articles_role.html).

222 Ken Robinson, TED Talk, 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wX78iKhInsc&list=WL886F086AA37AC1E8> Access May 21, 2013.

223 Eric Lane, 2008, "*America 101, How We Let Civic Education Slide-and Why We Need a Crash Course in the Constitution Today.*" *Democracy Journal*, <http://www.democracyjournal.org/pdf/10/LANE.PDF.pdf>.

224 Tony Wagner, *The Global Achievement Why Even our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills our Children Need and What We can Do About It* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 15.

225 *Ibid.*, 15.

226 *Ibid.*, 16.

twenty-first century this will involve working in teams across borders and boundaries, with people who may never come face to face.<sup>227</sup> They must possess effective oral and written communications skills, the ability to express and convey thoughts and views clearly, across cultures considering that they will be working and living in a global world.<sup>228</sup>

With the amount of information and the speed by which it is presented, today's students must more than ever be able to perform critical analysis.<sup>229</sup> Technology should be employed across academic disciplines and should leverage our ability to adapt to on-line learning through the use of an electronic classroom and through simulators like S.T.A.N.C.E. Simulated environments like these bring out the curiosity in our youth and appeal to their innate quality of curiosity, and will foster their problem solving and critical thinking ability. Technology like this captures and holds their interest and above all, makes their learning experience more enjoyable. DOE should encourage governors to work with local businesses, philanthropists, and other sources to fund programs that include technology in the classroom.

Finally, students must be permitted to imagine. In their imagination is creativity.<sup>230</sup> Employers want out of the box thinkers. Our creativity is where that comes from. Teachers must be trained to teach students how to reason, hypothesize, analyze.<sup>231</sup> They must teach students how to observe, how to identify an issue, how to develop testable questions about the issue, and how to interpret the results of their investigation or experiments.<sup>232</sup> And using the scientific method of hypothesizing can reach across the curriculum; it should not be limited just to the science classroom.

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227 Ibid., 24

228 Ibid., 34.

229 Ibid., 38.

230 Ibid., 39.

231 Ibid., 64.

232 Teacher Vision, Lesson Plans, Printables, and More 2013, [http://www.teachvision.fen.com/tv/printables/SISA00111\\_3.pdf](http://www.teachvision.fen.com/tv/printables/SISA00111_3.pdf).

## A. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has attempted to identify the role or impact that civic education has on homeland security. Findings have concluded that civic education is necessary to understand our nation's history, policies, and our relationships with other countries, for as President Ragan once said, "If we forget what we did, we won't know who we are."<sup>233</sup> Continual success of the world's oldest constitutional democracy depends in large measure on the education of its youth. It is necessary for students to discuss the events of the past and understand how those events led our forefathers to take the actions that they did. It is necessary to understand them from the context of that era. It is important to examine each century of our national existence in this manner but care must be taken when applying those lessons to current events. Teachers must assure that students have a grasp of what is happening in other countries, in order to utilize critical thinking skills to analyze current events. They must discuss current events among each other in open debate, a perspective that is central to our form of democratic self governance, but with an understanding of how that perspective fits globally. Students must have some understanding of other societies or cultures and be able to analyze events that involve the U.S. and those countries in a context that considers the issues of those countries.

Central to providing quality civic education to the youth of our country, is the concept of providing them with a sense of identity as outlined by the NCSS, and supported by social identity theory. But that identity is not just a personal one, it must be a group identity that outlines our values.

The importance of teaching our values to our youth should not be understated. By providing them with an understanding of how we came to be, we would be teaching them the strength of our nation and we would be providing them with a strategy of survival and success.<sup>234</sup> But highlighting the successes of our past should not preclude those lesser attractive moments of our history. A civic education is not about teaching nationalism.

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<sup>233</sup> Ronald Reagan, Farewell Address to the United States, [http://www.reaganfoundation.org/pdf/Farewell\\_Address\\_011189.pdf](http://www.reaganfoundation.org/pdf/Farewell_Address_011189.pdf).

<sup>234</sup> Thomas Friedman, and Michael Mandelbaum, *That Used to Be Us, How America Fell Behind in the World it Invented and How we Can Come Back* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2011), 187.

Nationalism imparts a sense of superiority that can be the source angst among others and may even be the reason for hostility directed toward America.<sup>235</sup> Indeed, our darker moments, like our treatment of Native Americans as we expanded our territory, or slavery, must be directly dealt with in the curriculum. In that manner then, civic education would impart a sense of critical patriotism, the love of one's country, and a willingness to criticize its policies or leaders.<sup>236</sup> But it is not simply the history or social studies of American curriculum that counts. Civic education must encompass the whole of education, leaving its mark on all subjects. The skills of critical thinking and problem solving should reach into all areas of the curriculum and our youth should understand how their education plays a role in the global world. The connection between civic education and homeland security should be clear. Those who will one day govern our nation; lead us, and continue our form of democracy, are in school today. They are our future, and only about one-in-four of those ready to graduate from high school are proficient in understanding our principals.

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235 Clark McCauly, *Psychological Issues in Understanding Terrorism and the Response to Terrorism*, in *Psychology of Terrorism*, ed.; Bruce Bongar, Lisa M. Brown, Larry E. Beutler, James N. Beckenridge, and Phillip G. Zimbardo (New York: Oxford Press 2007), 26.

236 *Ibid.*, 26. "Critical patriotism refers to love of country and willingness to criticize its policies and its leaders when things go wrong; uncritical patriotism refers to love of country coupled with a rejection of criticism – my country, right or wrong."

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