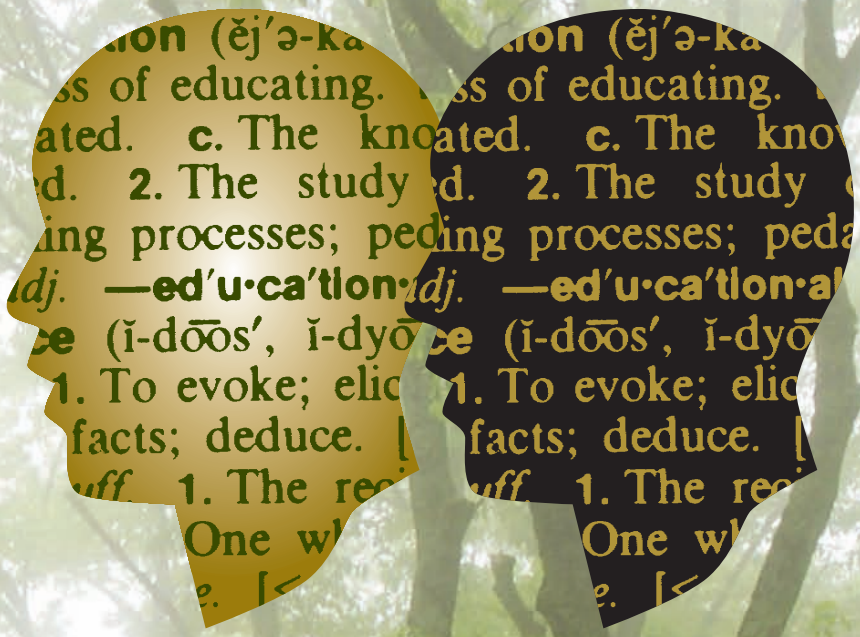
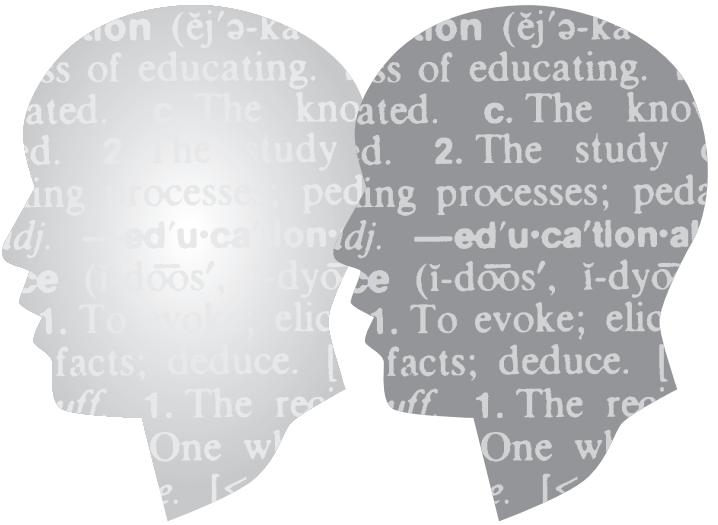


HIGHER EDUCATION EXCHANGE

2007



HIGHER EDUCATION EXCHANGE

2007

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The *Higher Education Exchange* is founded on a thought articulated by Thomas Jefferson in 1820:

> I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education.

In the tradition of Jefferson, the *Higher Education Exchange* agrees that a central goal of higher education is to help make democracy possible by preparing citizens for public life. The *Higher Education Exchange* is part of a movement to strengthen higher education's democratic mission and foster a more democratic culture throughout American society. Working in this tradition, the *Higher Education Exchange* publishes case studies, analyses, news, and ideas about efforts within higher education to develop more democratic societies.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

By Deborah Witte

When I begin work on an issue of the *Higher Education Exchange*, I often don't know where the issue will end up. I hope that doesn't come as a shock to any of you. I believe in a kind of serendipity, or even divine intervention, when it comes to identifying a theme for each issue. Maybe it's a little bit like growing a garden. When you start with the right ingredients of good soil and plenty of water, you can't help but end up with healthy plants. That doesn't mean that you can just plant and cross your fingers, a little bit of care, thought, and expertise goes along with it too.

I admit, some years it's easier than others. David Brown, co-editor of this journal, will ask me, "So, how are the articles shaping up? I'm always interested in seeing how you'll make them come together in your foreword." This year's theme emerged fairly easily; the articles came together around the idea of "growing" public scholars.

The authors in this issue are open to experiments, honest about their struggles with teaching and doing research, but they are not shy about sharing the fruits of their work. Each article, whether written by a faculty member or administrator, has a student component to it. They are embracing the idea and practice of public scholarship, not only for themselves, but also with their students. And, as you will see in these essays and articles, the students are responding enthusiastically. I know it's an old saw, but the faculty really do learn as much from the students as the students learn from their teachers. Here's what you'll discover in this issue.

John Gastil writes about a public scholarship course initiated by the University of Washington for every incoming graduate student. Experimental and cutting edge, not only do faculty get a chance to share their own public scholarship, students get an opportunity to begin to examine their own areas of research interest within a public scholarship frame.

David Brown interviews Mary Ann Murphy about a new curriculum at Pace University on engagement and public values, part of Project Pericles. Murphy suggests this new requirement of all students at Pace redefines the role of faculty as collaborators with students and the community. Working within guidelines and with a community agency to produce something of public value within a disciplinary context and content, the courses focus on active citizenship skills, not simply service. Murphy also outlines additional plans for the project within the university, so we'll be sure to follow up with her to see if the promise of the project has been fulfilled.

James Davis addresses the life role of the student/citizen and his role as college faculty. He was inspired to write this essay when he read an interview with Don Rothman that appeared in the 2005 issue of *HEX*. He shares an affinity with Rothman for writing and the teaching of writing for democratic citizenship. Davis too has developed a course in his university using a "civic rationale."

David Brown interviews Denny Roberts about the Fraternal Futures projects that he is heading up on his campus. An offshoot of a Greek Summit conference with college and university administrators along with representatives of fraternal headquarters, the Fraternal Futures project was started to help these fraternal organizations face problems of declining interest, hazing allegations, alcohol abuse, and lawsuits. Roberts recognized the need to include student and alumni voices if real substantial answers to these problems were to be found. Read about the successes and failures of the project and the reasons why.

Barbara Nesin, a visual artist, provides a voice and viewpoint not often found in the pages of this journal. While social science academics often find the link between public scholarship and their personal research an easy one to make, the same is not true of visual artists. As Nesin points out, art is indeed public, meant for the public to view, yet it is the intentionality of an artist's works that can serve as an opportunity for public learning. Through her teaching, Nesin hopes to bring to her students an artist's sensibility toward social problems and help students arrive at their own sense of "whatever seems most urgent in their lives at the time" … as they "connect art to their lives."

David Brown announces the forthcoming publication of a Kettering Press book, the result of two years of meetings and writing by eight past authors of *HEX* articles/essays. Over the course of those meetings while the group shared draft chapters with one another, he came to realize that the process of exchange within those meetings was as important to capture as the final drafts. As a way of introducing the volume to *HEX* readers, Brown shares a bit of those remarkable conversations.

Kenneth Brown offers a review of Alan Wolfe's latest book, *Does Democracy Still Work?* Readers of this journal may remember an article by Wolfe about public scholarship in a previous issue. He wasn't much in favor of it, to put it bluntly, but his article sparked a lot of debate among academics. This time, Wolfe takes on all of democracy and finds blame with both politicians and the citizens they serve.

As you dig into these pieces in this issue of *HEX*, you may discover other themes than the one I have highlighted in this piece. David Mathews certainly does, as his "Afterword" shows. And that's fine. That's why this journal is titled an "exchange." So let us know what themes this issue reveals to you. Drop us a line, or better yet, start a garden. Then let us know how it grows.

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP, GRADUATE EDUCATION, AND THE RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

By John Gastil

The idea of public scholarship has gained considerable popularity in the past decade. The *Higher Education Exchange* (HEX) has published numerous articles on the subject, and relevant books have become more numerous in recent years, from Jeffrey Goldfarb's *Civility & Subversion: The Intellectual in Democratic Society* (1998) to Rosa Eberly and Jeremy Cohen's edited volume *A Laboratory for Public Scholarship and Democracy* (2006).

Many colleges, universities, and departments have embraced public scholarship as something to be lauded in a mission statement and celebrated in public addresses. A few initiatives have gone even further. For instance, Penn State has a Laboratory for Public Scholarship and Democracy to strengthen community ties with the university and the University of Minnesota convened a Public Scholarship Committee to study the subject. Other programs dot the nation's higher-educational landscape, and various national initiatives also promote the idea.

In spite of these advances, I have found only one program where public scholarship is a required course for graduate study. Whereas undergraduate service-learning requirements have become common, my home unit, the Department of Communication at the University of Washington (UW), may be the only academic department in which each incoming graduate student is required to take a full-credit seminar on public scholarship. The seminar has done our department and our students a tremendous service. In this essay, I will explain how this anomalous course-offering came about and what exactly it has done for us.

Building a Unit from the Ground Up

The Department of Communication was created through a merger in 2002 between the UW School of Communications and the UW Department of Speech Communication. Our divisional

dean encouraged the two departments to design carefully the merged unit, and our newly-appointed department chair chose to establish a four-person faculty committee to draft entirely new policies—from a mission statement to curriculum details.

Working on this transition committee, three colleagues and I decided to begin by identifying our core principles. After a fair bit of debate, we arrived at four: intellectual and cultural pluralism, interdisciplinary theorizing, collaboration, and public scholarship. Our department described public scholarship using this language:

> All too often, rigorous and relevant scholarship undertaken in colleges and universities does not become known to the broader society. Given the importance of communication in human affairs, it is necessary that our scholarship and citizenship go hand-in-hand. Thus, a core principle of the Department is a commitment to take one's research goals and findings beyond the academy. Students are encouraged to engage in constructive dialogue not only with academics, but also with other citizens, diverse communities, and political and cultural leaders. Such dialogue increases the potential transformative power of communication scholarship, while also fulfilling a central mission of a public research university.

When we drafted policies for our new department, we made sure that these principles shaped our decisions in ways obvious to the outside observer. When it came time to reflect on our work, we found that public scholarship remained merely a "good idea" if we failed to give it more influence over our curriculum. We concluded that if we wanted our graduate students to embrace these principles, they had to be built into our seminars. Thus, we established a three-course core that all graduate students take their first year in our program: theory, methods, and public scholarship.

The Graduate Seminar on Public Scholarship

Since its first appearance in the spring of 2003, 4 different faculty have taught COM 502, our core seminar on Communication Scholarship and Public Life. Each has taught it in their own way, but the thrust of the course has remained constant. In my 2006 syllabus, I oriented students to the course with these words:

> Communication theory and research can make valuable contributions to public life, and interaction with communities beyond academia can spark new ideas and lines of

"This course helps students understand the potential connections between communication scholarship and the general public."

> research. This course helps students understand the potential connections between communication scholarship and the general public, as well as government, markets, civil society, and the media. The seminar introduces and explores the idea of public scholarship, as well as many specific instances of communication scholars whose work has influenced the larger culture and economic, political, and social institutions. Students will have the opportunity to learn about major instances of public scholarship in communication and related disciplines, and to discuss the issues raised by public scholars and their critics. (Complete syllabi for the course are available at http://www.com.washington.edu/Program/Grad/public.html.)

Over the course of the quarter, students in this seminar read a variety of viewpoints, including essays, articles, and books from public scholars, leading intellectuals, and skeptics and critics of the "public engagement" project. Students also read the works and autobiographical essays of scholars like Robert Putnam and Deborah Tannen, who have conducted rigorous academic research and subsequently become popular public figures. Faculty from across the country have visited the seminar to reflect on their experiences partnering with communities, writing for general audiences, and appearing on talk shows. All of these materials and visitors, combined with the instructor's own reflections on the experience of public scholarship, give students the chance to imagine a life they might lead in their own academic careers.

For their grades, students have done a variety of projects in the seminar. In addition to the standard short reaction papers, students have been assigned to summarize in plain English difficult academic writing. In the best version of this assignment, students give five minute NPR-style "live" interviews on their subject, having to answer questions the public wants to ask and use language any educated listener could understand. Students have also written advocacy-oriented op-eds based on academic research they or others have done.

For a final project, students have done a variety of assignments. Some have written biographies of noted public scholars, such as Mary Parker Follett. Others have drawn out the implications for public scholarship from research programs presented solely to academic audiences. Some have designed public scholarship plans for their own research, trying to imagine what their own work might look like in the future. Still others have written

theoretical essays on the idea of public scholarship, public intellectuals, and related subjects.

In their assessments of the course, students have commented on how much the seminar helped them think through their own aspirations as scholars and engaged citizens. Appearing in the first year of their studies, the seminar has helped many plan a course of study that can lead to a satisfying, public-spirited career. In preparing this essay, I've spoken to some who look back on their seminar experience and remember how much energy it gave them while working through graduate school.

An Example of Student Work: Defining Public Scholarship

One tangible benefit of teaching this seminar has been to help our department continually reflect on and sharpen its own conception of what it means to be a public scholar. This past year, a group of students in the core seminar fleshed out the concept better than any had before. Students Carlys Allen, Tamara Barnett, Ben Crosby, Elizabeth Scherman, and Lea Werbel worked collaboratively with me to identify eight varieties—or dimensions—of public scholarship.

"One tangible benefit of teaching this seminar has been to help our department reflect on what it means to be a public scholar."

The public scholar can *provide public insight* in one or more of the following ways:

1. raising public awareness and knowledge by disseminating research findings;
2. facilitating self-discovery/self-awareness by sharing insights that may resonate with different members of the public;
3. serving as a moral critic or advisor by raising difficult questions, challenging taken-for-granted assumptions, or making prescriptions for social change; and
4. providing a broader worldview for the public to consider in its deliberations on public issues and private matters.

In some ways, these are the more traditional roles of public scholars—and public intellectuals. This can be simply sharing one's work with the larger public, and depending on the nature of one's labors, that might mean knowledge diffusion, moral critique, or any of the other actions described above.

Beyond offering knowledge and insight, however, the public scholar can also *facilitate public action* in one or more of these ways:

1. seeking to empower people with the skills and dispositions necessary to govern their own lives and make their own decisions;
2. elevating the quality of public discourse or directly promoting deliberation to further help the public do its work;
3. building community by bringing disparate parties together and increasing people's sense of place, connectedness, or belonging; and
4. promoting social activism and/or seeking to influence public policy directly.

Scholar-activists would find themselves in these forms of public action, as would deliberative scholars, who offer the public the skills to find its own answers to the questions it must resolve.

"Deliberative scholars offer the public the skills to find its own answers to the questions it must resolve."

Public Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion

Does it really benefit graduate students at a research university to undertake projects such as this—defining public scholarship or imagining themselves as public scholars? In our department, we take seriously the responsibility to give Ph.D. students the skills and portfolio they need to get any job they desire in their field, including the most competitive jobs at other research institutions.

We have reconciled this pedagogical responsibility with our commitment to public scholarship by stressing the second word in that oft-repeated phrase. From the first day in the seminar, we stress that a public scholar is not merely a public servant. They are a scholar first, and their public service should flow from (and back into) that scholarship. Serving on the board of Habitat for Humanity is hardly public scholarship, unless that work dovetails with one's own research on, say, organizational design or homelessness discourse. Advocating on behalf of a proposed state law may be good public citizenship, but it's only good public scholarship if the substance of the law is at the center of one's research.

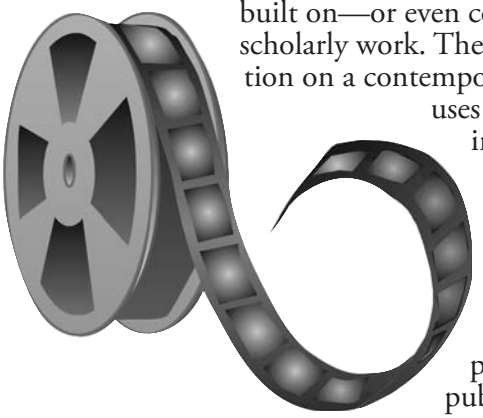
Since we tell our students that public scholarship can aid one's scholarly advancement, we decided that we must make that

true in the case of our own faculty. Thus, within our own university, we have aimed to model how public scholarship can strengthen cases for tenure and promotion. Toward that end, our department faculty wrote a statement clarifying public scholarship as a criterion for professional advancement. Even within our own unit, spelling out public scholarship in this way generated controversy. Nonetheless, we were able to arrive at something close to a consensus on the following language:

> As faculty guided by this principle seek promotion, it is also necessary to provide general evaluative criteria for both internal review committees and for university committees and officials, who need to understand our department's mission. For these purposes, [we define] this important principle and [identify] the criteria by which one might assess the merits of any given project in public scholarship.

First and foremost, we stressed that "public scholarship begins with scholarship—an original idea or discovery, the application of critical thought, an investigation, or the creation of resources that can shape social attitudes, structures, or practices in some fundamental way." To stress the frequently reciprocal flow of insight, we added that "public scholarship also brings public views and experiences into our academic conversations when those interactions lead us to reexamine and improve our own research and teaching." By way of illustration, we offered these examples:

> Public scholarship is different from influential, public-spirited activities that serve public purposes but are not rooted in the scholarly enterprise. A documentary film is a piece of public scholarship, for example, if it is carefully built on—or even constitutes an instance of—original scholarly work. The orchestration of a public conversation on a contemporary issue is public scholarship if it uses available research and criticism to inform the event's framework and materials.… From a pedagogical perspective, public scholarship promotes constructive dialogue with and among students, citizens, diverse communities, and political and cultural leaders. When done in this way, public scholarship is more than merely public education; it is the fusion of research, education, public outreach, and community dialogue.



How would one evaluate the merits of a project in public scholarship? As we explained in our departmental policy, we welcome "any effort to produce valuable public scholarship," but inevitably, "some endeavors will be more fruitful than others." We established two evaluative criteria. First, we argued that "public scholarship must be related to a scholar's area of research. Projects in public scholarship are stronger in proportion to the quality of the scholarship underlying—or entwined with—them." Second, we maintained that "a public project rooted in scholarship can be assessed in terms of its (a) public impact, (b) reach across diverse publics, and (c) opportunities for active public involvement." The first of these is crucial, and the others are important to the extent that the scholar's project aspired to have a broad reach and spark engagement.

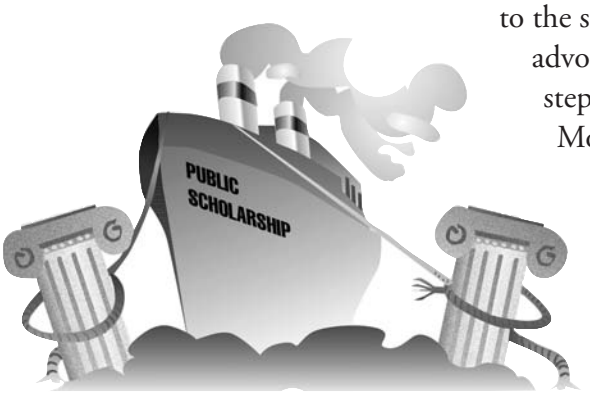
Multiple promotion cases in our department have stressed their public scholarship components. In the interests of respecting my colleagues' privacy, I will use my own promotion to full professor as an example. After summarizing my research and teaching in my personal statement, I included a "Public Scholarship" section, which began, "Outside the University, I have maintained my commitment to being an engaged scholar, linking each of my research areas with service to the larger community. My public scholarship efforts have consisted of educational software development, extending scholarship beyond the academy, and consulting on the development of electoral reforms." Later in that section, I explained that "my two main collaborative research projects both aim to reach beyond academic journals to have a significant impact on public life." I also described how one line of research I have pursued on public deliberation has led me to work collaboratively with Citizens Jury founder Ned Crosby to introduce a bill on initiative reform to the Washington State legislature.

These and other efforts might be squeezed into a "service" section in a personal statement for promotion, but they would lose their power when separated from my research. Instead, the public scholarship framing lets me demonstrate how my energy in public outreach and advocacy actually flows from my core research programs.

Climbing Aboard the Public Scholarship Bandwagon

Most of those who have read to this point in this essay are likely fellow travelers, advocates of the variously-named but closely-

related ideas of engaged, civic, or public-spirited scholarship. To this audience, I ask, What more can we do to steady the institutional moorings of this "good idea"? Our department's answer is to make public scholarship a required competency for graduate study and to encourage our faculty to incorporate this concept into their promotion materials. In the long run, we believe this helps solidify public scholarship as an essential part of academia, rather than a popular fad or weak challenge to the status quo. In the spirit of public advocacy, I invite others to take the same steps our department has taken.



Most of all, I encourage continued innovation that paves the way for future public scholars who aspire to walk the asphalt that connects the ivory tower to the town square.

EDUCATING FOR CITIZENSHIP

An Interview with Mary Ann Murphy

David Brown, coeditor of the Higher Education Exchange*, spoke with Mary Ann Murphy, Director of Project Pericles at Pace University, about her work as a scholar, teacher, and administrator.*

Brown: Tell me about Pace's three-credit course, "Civic Engagement and Public Values." How often is it offered? When does a student take the course in his/her path of study at Pace? As part of the core curriculum, is it required or elective?

Murphy: Pace University has a long tradition of commitment to educating for citizenship and social responsibility, but, over the years, that goal has been approached in a rather fragmented fashion. In 2000, Pace underwent a change in leadership with the appointment of David A. Caputo to the Presidency. From the outset of his administration, President Caputo stated that educating for citizenship would be one of the central foci of his agenda. Further, he challenged the University to approach this mission to educate for citizenship in a systematic fashion. To that end, in 2003, Pace instituted a new core curriculum that has as its hallmark a three-credit "Civic Engagement and Public Values" requirement.

This course is not an elective. It is required of all students graduating from Pace, even transfer students. One unusual aspect of this requirement is that, although the core curriculum is the intellectual property of the College of Arts and Sciences (as is the case in all universities), the decision was made to allow other schools in the University to participate in this area, provided the course followed the guidelines for service-learning as articulated by the American Association for Higher Education (1993) in the following statement:

> Service-learning means a method under which students learn and develop through thoughtfully organized service that: is conducted in and meets the needs of a community and is coordinated with an institution of higher education, and with the community; helps foster civic responsibility; is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students enrolled and includes structured time for students to reflect on the service experience.

We encourage students to take this course in their sophomore year. Because these courses take students into the community and lead them to confront difficult social issues, we want to ensure that students have achieved a certain level of maturity when they take these courses.

Brown: What "strategy" did you use to encourage the development of courses for this section of your core?

Murphy: We approached this process in a very pragmatic manner. We realized that implementing this initiative meant redefining faculty roles, creating new opportunities for students and faculty to collaborate, and building partnerships with the community. To that end, first, we implemented a Project Pericles funded Faculty Fellowship Grant for the development of community-based learning classes. Second, we offered a Project Pericles stipend to students interested in assisting faculty teaching the courses for the Civic Engagement and Public Values component of the core (Faculty Assistants for Civic Engagement Series–FACES). Third, we implemented a campaign to educate faculty about the rigors and challenges of adopting this new pedagogy into their teaching repertoire. Since the Center for Community Outreach is located in Dyson College of Arts and Science and already had a visible presence in the community as a result of its extensive volunteer programs, it was decided that the Center would serve as the location for our efforts to build internal support for developing and sustaining this new initiative at Pace.

While the received wisdom suggests that the best way to educate faculty about a new pedagogy is through workshops and in-service training sessions, we opted for a "softer" approach. We knew that this pedagogy was not for everyone, and we wanted to create an environment that would give us the best chance for developing ownership of the new pedagogy by creating an environment of trust. Hence, we worked with faculty on a one-to-one basis to encourage a connection with service-learning. We began by acquiring a library of resources on service-learning, and scheduling to present information sessions on the grants at departmental meetings and new faculty orientations. It became clear, before long, that the junior faculty and some of our best senior faculty were very interested in developing courses for the core. This faculty brought forth really interesting ideas, and our office helped clarify how these ideas could be implemented. Specifically, we offered information on developing civic engage-

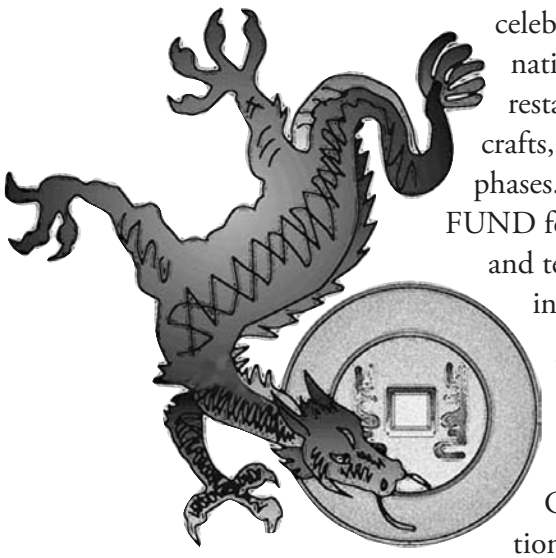
ment course objectives, provided possible readings for inclusion in the course, and identified appropriate community placements for the students.

Our results were better than expected. In 2002-2003, we developed 10 courses for the new core. By 2005-2006, we had 55 courses developed. In 2005-2006, 73 sections of Civic Engagement and Public Values courses were taught. Of course, we continue our effort to build new courses. I wish to add that we issue a call for proposals for the Project Pericles Faculty Fellowship Grants once a year.

Brown: Could you give me a thumbnail sketch of one or more of the heavily enrolled courses?

Murphy: One course that illustrates all the values we are aiming for with our core is the course Travel and Tourism Management. Through public-private community partnerships, Pace students are working with the Chinatown Partnership, Indochina Community Center, and the FUND for New York City. The goal of this collaborative project is to help the Chinatown community regain the tourism that has been lost since 9/11. Following 9/11, the Chinatown area was blocked off; streets were re-routed; parking spaces were lost; barriers were established; and businesses suffered great losses and many closed. Before 9/11, there were 600 garment producing businesses in Chinatown. Today there are only 100. Many stores have closed and have never re-opened.

This course is based on two goals: 1) to improve the appearances and the infrastructure of Chinatown, and 2) to honor and celebrate the authenticity of Chinatown destinations and businesses, which includes hotels, restaurants, religious institutions, shops, crafts, jewelry, and more. The project has two phases. In Phase 1, the course works with the FUND for New York City, using their expertise and technology to identify areas in Chinatown in need of attention. Using COMNET, a proprietary software for GPS tracking which is loaded onto a Personal Data Assistant (PDA) technology, teams of 3-4 students each scan 30 square blocks of Chinatown to record and report the locations of broken lights, broken windows,



graffiti, uneven sidewalks, blocked drains, and more. The Chinatown information is recorded electronically and downloaded to a server that generates reports for various New York City (NYC) agencies.

In Phase 2 of the project, students have become official Americorp volunteers and have partnered with existing Asian Americorp volunteers. In teams which include an Asian translator per team, the students help identify and honor the authenticity of Chinatown businesses through the development of "Green Map Chinatown," which not only records the locations of specific sites but also the history of the site, business, or destinations.

Brown: How do you distinguish what you refer to as "simply service" from "active citizenship" on the part of your students at Pace?

Murphy: It is a difficult distinction to make, and you simply have to draw some boundaries and hope that they are effective. In our decision, we were guided by the discussions that were taking place as a part of the development of Project Pericles. Eugene Lang of the Lang Foundation was the impetus behind the development of Project Pericles. Lang was concerned about the contradiction exhibited by the actions of many young people. That is the fact that youth are volunteering in their communities in record numbers but are very disinterested in the political process and in cultivating and sustaining our democracy. Lang, long a benefactor of education, wanted to intervene in this process by changing higher education and challenging academic institutions to educate for citizenship. Through the Center for Community Outreach at Dyson College, which was founded in 2000 before the launching of Project Pericles, we already had implemented a vigorous program of co-curricular volunteer activities. When the core curriculum requirement took effect in 2003 and Pace University joined Project Pericles that same year, we wanted to differentiate between what one might call "random acts of kindness"—some kind of one-time volunteer acts in the community—and sustained direct encounters with a social issue.

At the same time, we did not want to impose unrealistic criteria on faculty or interfere with academic freedom. Hence, we came up with some general guidelines for distinguishing between volunteering and community-based learning. We suggested the following: 1) Each class must have a sustained connection to issues by working with the community agency throughout the

full course of the semester; 2) Students should be required to produce something of "public value" during the semester that fulfills a community need; 3) The community-based learning experience should bear a connection to the disciplinary content of the course; and 4) The course must contain a substantive classroom reflection on the community-based component and on the way it elaborates aspects of citizenship.

Brown: Why was Pace chosen as one of ten institutions of the initial Project Pericles? What explains the 22 participating higher education institutions that are now part of the Project?

Murphy: I am delighted that Pace was selected as one of the founding Periclean institutions, but I think this question can only be answered by Lang. My understanding is that Lang was seeking to build a coalition of independent metropolitan and more rural campuses. Further, he wanted to involve both small liberal arts institutions and comprehensive universities. One superlative feature of the coalition is that the respective institutions are not required to work in any lock-step fashion. Each institution has the freedom to craft a program that elaborates the large goals of the institution. This is what makes it such a pleasure to belong to Project Pericles. The participating institutions can be creative, share information, and learn from one another.

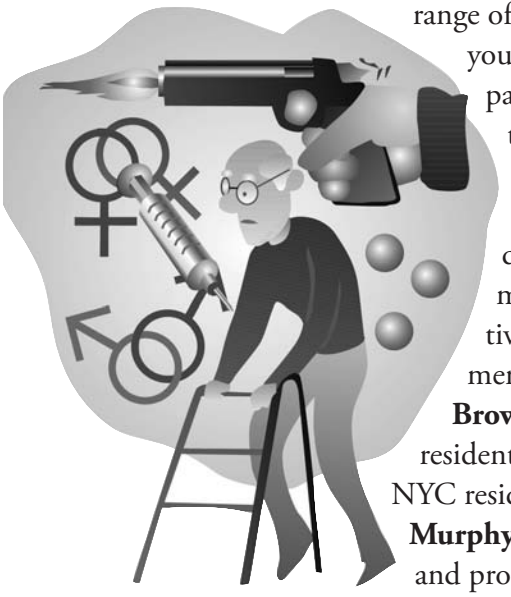
"Each institution has the freedom to craft a program that elaborates the large goals of the institution."

Brown: Your Center for Community Outreach helps to establish "community connections for faculty." Could you give me some examples of how that has been done?

Murphy: Pace is a comprehensive university with multiple campuses. The Center for Community Outreach at Dyson operates on our two main undergraduate campuses, the downtown campus in lower Manhattan and the more rural campus in Westchester. The Center's administrative structure is such that I travel to both campuses each week, and I have an assistant director on each campus. To develop the community connections, my assistant directors and I set about getting to know the respective communities. We met with directors of various agencies, and we set up meetings between faculty, community representatives, and ourselves. In a sense, we took a very organic approach to the

process. We tried to build relationships in the community and demonstrate to the community that our University was not merely interested in using the community as a data base or laboratory where our students would hone their professional skills; instead, we made it clear that we wanted to provide needed services to the community and do what served their interests.

Each of our community partners is an expert in the community that his/her agency serves. It would be impossible and unfair to single out one as being more influential than another. We have benefited from the expertise of all our community partners who provide placement sites for our students. This represents a wide range of community needs and social agencies. If you are asking what types of agencies we have partnered with over the years, I can tell you that our connections include the following: agencies serving individuals impacted by HIV/AIDS, at-risk youth, victims of domestic violence, individuals living with mental illness, gay and lesbian issues, alternative media, senior citizens, the homeless, and mental retardation, to name but a few.



Brown: Could you tell what projects Westchester residents were interested in, and similarly what NYC residents cared about?

Murphy: The two campuses have different identities and programs. The Westchester campus is rural and most of the courses that are developed there need to be supported by transportation and require that the community component of the course be conducted as a group assignment. On that campus the courses have tended to develop around particular themes: intergenerational issues, domestic violence, support of nonprofit technology development and enrichment, homelessness and hunger, and work at residential treatment facilities for at-risk youth.

On the NYC campus, the courses run the gamut and connect with every possible issue, including those operative on the Westchester campus and others, like HIV/AIDS, immigration, labor issues, mental health, to name but a few. On the NYC campus we are firmly committed to Chinatown and lower Manhattan, as they are our closest neighbors.

Brown: Faculty indifference or opposition is often a problem in programs such as yours. How has this been evidenced at Pace? How has it been countered?

Murphy: Now you have really asked me a question. On first blush, it is a question that seems very straightforward and easy to answer; upon close analysis, however, this question requires some parceling and detail. I suspect what you are really asking is the following: What does it take to implement an innovation in an established organization? My answer is that it takes leadership from both the top and lower levels of the organization. I don't know of any innovation at a university that has been successful when it came exclusively from the faculty. Likewise, I know of no innovation that has been successfully imposed on faculty by the higher administration. It takes a concerted effort from both parties.

In our case, the University had new leadership at the top that was pressing for making "educating for citizenship" a central feature of a Pace education. The Provost had commissioned a Core Task Force to develop a new core curriculum that would meet the challenges of a twenty-first century education. This Task Force comprised faculty from all across the University and worked for two years, soliciting ideas and suggestions from every corner of the University.

I don't think the faculty is ever indifferent. The faculty always has a point of view and is never hesitant about expressing that point of view. The problem is that faculty can be divided along generational lines, and the generation gap is a consequential one in that faculty who have a seat at the decision-making tables of the university are likely to be the senior members of the faculty. Most often, but not always, these are the faculty who are least likely to embrace an innovation. These are the faculty who want to maintain the status quo. When we were designing our core curriculum, we did all that we could to ensure that all had a voice in the process. We held open forums, had working lunches with individual faculty, and solicited comments from anyone interested. Our experience has been that the young faculty, and some senior faculty, were very receptive and even excited about incorporating community-based learning into the general education requirement of the university. Happily, our soft, democratic approach turned out to be a wise choice. We have convinced many that community-based learning is an effective pedagogy.

However, there are still pockets of opposition and discontent. In any case, if you demanded 100 percent support, you would be sadly disappointed. I think the biggest argument against implementing the community-based learning requirement was that we would never be able to generate enough courses to support the requirement. As our record demonstrates, that prediction was false. In fact, we have now developed a strong cadre of courses as well as faculty who are dedicated to the pedagogy of community-based learning. This is the best evidence to legitimate a community-based learning requirement in the core.

Nonetheless, opposition to the pedagogy of community-based learning in the academy reflects a long-standing, and often not so implicit, division of labor that valorizes abstract mental activities over practical, or if I may say, menial activities. This is articulated in the distinction between professional education and what is regarded as proper liberal arts education, to which unequal cultural or symbolic capitals are attributed. While it is very tempting to romanticize the university as being an organization that is exempt from the forces that influence other social institutions, it is important to remember that the university is like any other institution. It has a work force, faculty, who exists and operates in the same postindustrial context as any other complex organization. It is subject to the same Taylorization that has colonized so much of what is called work life in so-called modern societies.

"The university is like any other institution. It exists and operates in the same postindustrial context as any other complex organization."

This is a complicated issue, and I would not presume to be able to address it adequately. All I am suggesting is that a certain outdated intellectual elitism, assumed often by those who, for whatever reasons, have failed to have clear purchase on it, is now being (mis-)used as an excuse to thwart curricular changes and meaningful innovations in the education of the twenty-first century.

Brown: Do students consider their service work as done on behalf of Pace or mainly as individual acts of service?

Murphy: I have never thought about community work in this way. I really don't know how students would answer this question. As I said before, we try to situate the activity more in

terms of citizenship activity than service. My primary concern is that we at Project Pericles translate Pace's abstract mission to educate for citizenship into the material practices of the university. I cannot speak for and speculate on how students interpret their experiences; all I can do is work to ensure that students have a safe and meaningful experience.

"My primary concern is that we translate Pace's abstract mission to educate for citizenship into the material practices of the university."

Brown: Tell me about your current research to assess community-based learning outcomes.

Murphy: We are assessing several aspects of our implementation of a required Civic Engagement and Public Values course. First, we are developing pre- and post-instruments to measure the impact of our courses on students' civic attitudes and behaviors. Essentially, we are attempting to assess the degree to which our core requirement encourages active citizenship and concern for social responsibility. We have some pilot data that we are in the process of analyzing now. Once this is done, we will refine our questionnaires and implement a broader study.

Second, we are interested in data that would have some institutional value that would shed light on how students feel about these courses. Indeed, we are interested in learning if these courses are positively received and if these courses have any impact on retention. Likewise, we want to learn what percentage of students takes more than one community-based learning course. We have much anecdotal information that tells us that the students really like these courses and do take more than one. For example, one student came to the office and said he wanted to repeat a course that he had already successfully completed. He said he knew that he could not get credit for the course, but he didn't care because he just had such a positive experience in the course that he wanted to do it again.

The final thing we want to assess is if, how, and to what extent the introduction of community-based learning into the curriculum has had an impact on faculty teaching style. We are in the process of designing a study to get at that information.

Brown: Could you say more about the "Action Reflection" sessions at Pace?

Murphy: These sessions have little connection to the Civic Engagement and Public Values courses. They are held for the purpose of contextualizing the one-time volunteer experiences that students participate in over the course of the semester. We have an introductory course for our freshmen. It is a one-credit course,

Univ.101, that introduces students to various aspects of university life. As part of that course, students are encouraged to participate in one or more of the volunteer activities that we offer through the Center for Community Outreach. Prior to Project Pericles, our students volunteered but had no opportunity to reflect on the value or meaning of that experience. Once we joined Project Pericles and began to emphasize "citizenship" as well as volunteering, we decided to offer the "Action Reflection" sessions as an opportunity to begin to make connections between the two.

The "Action Reflection" sessions are held once a semester. All students who have participated in volunteer activities offered through the Center for Community Outreach are encouraged to attend and are provided a reading on some aspect of social responsibility or citizenship. The sessions are facilitated by a faculty member, and the faculty member works with our office, prior to the session, to select the reading and plan for the discussion. The sessions are one-hour long and take the form of discussions rather than lectures. Because participating in these sessions is not required, I think the choice of faculty as moderator is the key to bringing students out for the session.

Brown: How is "a strong emphasis on global citizenship" realized at Pace?

Murphy: A central feature of Project Pericles at Pace is its programming around three issues: Democracy in Action, In the Margins, and Global Citizenship. Democracy in Action, as you might guess, focuses on aspects of the political processes in a democracy (e.g., voting, advocacy in legislation, and many others), and is programmed in the fall semester, during the latter part of October and early November. In the Margins and Global Citizenship connect to aspects of human rights and international issues. We do thematic programming around these three themes. In February, we program Political Action Week for Human Rights, and in April, we program Global Citizenship. All of our programming is spearheaded by students who have enrolled in the Project Pericles Leadership Certificate Program, which is a central feature of our Project Pericles at Pace. This is a hierarchical program wherein students earn points toward the completion of the certificate by organizing various programs around the aforementioned themes. Once the student has an idea for something, we require that the student get another co-sponsor for the event. This could

be a faculty member, student organization, or an academic department. Over the past few years, our programs have featured a combination of invited speakers, panel discussions, films, and roundtables about issues that are relevant to legislation and elections.

With regard to Global Citizenship, we encourage students to consider the geopolitical implications of government's actions and leadership, as well as the implications for citizens of their particular countries. We have programmed events on Environmental Issues, Global Economics, the Nuclear Age, to name a few. Of course, it must be pointed out that our In the Margins programming intersects with this issue of Global Citizenship. For example, for Political Action Week for Human Rights, we have programmed events around the following: Argentina's Dirty War, The Wall in Palestine, Immigration, and Survivors of Hiroshima.

Brown: Thank you, Mary Ann.

Murphy: My pleasure, David.

CIVIC DELIBERATION IN A COLLEGE WRITING CLASSROOM

By James S. Davis

> "Compelling essays mostly focus on issues about which thoughtful people disagree, and the substance of that disagreement should be evident in essays."
>
> —Don Rothman
> *The Writing Classroom as a Laboratory for Democracy*

When I came to college teaching after 37 years in K-12 education, I was struck by how few students at the point of transition into college engage readily with difficult issues, much less in personal or civic terms. In my first-year college classes, excellent anthologized essays provoked little of the controversy inherent in them, and most student writers sought only to meet my expectations, not to raise their own. Too many sought a degree and a lucrative career, not learning and an interesting life. Since the introductory writing course is intended to serve the academy and increasingly the academy is pressured to serve employers, acquiescing to students and the status quo was, and often is, tempting. However, I believe life roles other than trainee and worker are important to the individual and to society. The university is obligated to both. Materials and approaches germane to public deliberation help me address the life role of citizen in ways that honor and inform other roles as well while recognizing that personal isolation and narrowness of perspective undermine responsible citizenship, thus eroding democracy.

Support abounds for a deliberative and public issues approach in college classes. In 2002, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) published *Greater Expectations: A New Vision of Learning as a Nation Goes to College*, contending that the nation needs to ensure an education of real and lasting value to a more diverse population than ever before. The relationship of the individual to society is a major concern in this report. The panel behind *Greater Expectations* believes college-level learners become active participants in society through discussion, critical analysis,

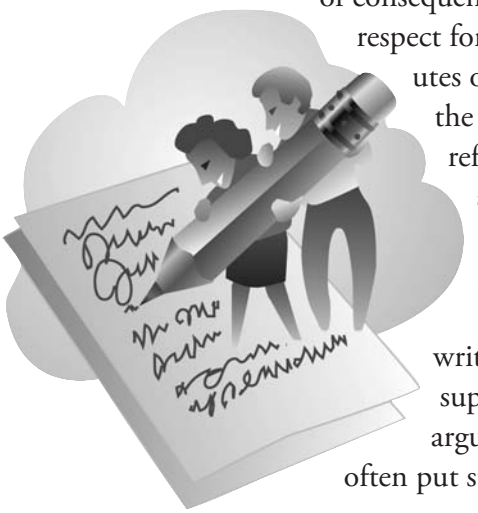
and introspection. I believe students must apply these behaviors to socially significant public issues if such learning is to occur.

Also contending that higher education should be more actively engaged in local communities, the Pew Partnership challenges us to "become more deeply involved in the issues of our time, not by demanding allegiance to a particular viewpoint or ideology but by creating opportunities for public reflection, deliberation, and debate."

The Carnegie Corporation and CIRCLE claim that "When young people have opportunities to discuss current issues in a classroom setting, they tend to have greater interest in politics, improved critical thinking and communication skills, more civic knowledge, and more interest in discussing politics outside of school." These organizations are particularly concerned that young people mirror society's disengagement from civic life, thus need an education that will prepare them to participate more fully in our democracy.

Peter Levine seeks "open-ended" political work, especially at a local "micro level," characterized by direct participation and deliberation to do "public work." He believes "a whole range of issues is better addressed in a participatory, deliberative way than through state action" and that doing so "may be the most powerful form of civic education," including participation in macro-politics. I believe a university education should include access to such learning from the student's first experiences in our classes.

Explicitly and implicitly, writing is woven through the specifics of such an education, contributing to success. In my experience, blending deliberation and writing fosters "intellectual honesty and engagement … responsibility for society's moral health and for social justice … intuition and feeling, as well as thinking … discernment of consequences … deep understanding of self [and] respect for the complex identities of others," the attributes of responsible learners (citizens?) called for by the AACU panel. Furthermore, I believe written reflection and using writing to learn while also learning to write permeates learning experiences conducive to this practical liberal education.

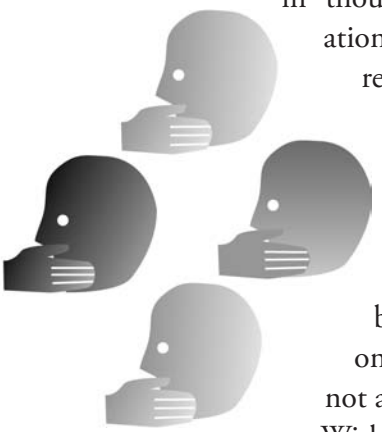


Many textbooks for beginning college writing courses emphasize modes of writing, supposedly building student capacity to write argument and persuasion. Writing assignments often put students in the position of having to say

something rather than of having something to say. Don Rothman recognizes his students' tendency to equate persuasion with coercion, in part associating it with advertising. My students share this aversion and recognize their own absence of definitive answers to important questions and problems. Not only are my Midwestern students uneasy about disagreeing in the classroom with teachers, texts, and each other, they will choose silence over incivility. Less formal writing and talk lets more students enter the class conversation, especially when our pace allows time for thought and our rhythm allows their voices to enter. Across numerous conversations, large group and small, we experience the cumulative, constructive effect of ideas and greater clarity as a collective, not just individual, accomplishment.

"My Midwestern students will choose silence over incivility."

William Covino urges teachers to question the traditions and conventions of rhetoric, the closed form as the literate ideal. Using argument to end rather than continue discourse, for example, which we see almost universally in politics today, might not be the best outcome of student learning. I find Covino's belief in "thoughtful uncertainty"—a stance informing exploration—and wonder, pushing investigation beyond stock responses, and launching conversation with other ideas and people—resonant with my views of writing and of public deliberation. Both happen locally but allow us to see beyond ourselves; both are often initiated because we are puzzled or troubled. While enacted and even when concluded, both may find us tentative, even disconcerted. But, on many issues worthy of our investment, if we are not anxious and uncertain, we are not thinking.



With a civic rationale and strong beliefs about writing in mind, I developed and have been refining plans for my section of College Writing and Research, a liberal arts core requirement in our university where some sections of such basic courses are still taught by faculty. I use an anthology of provocative essays, most of which invite us into personal and contemporary public issues. Conflicting views of a father in two essays by Scott Russell Sanders, for example, legitimize as writing material our ambivalence about someone close to us—as writing strategy the inclusion of personal experience in the context of a social problem, as audience those proximate and distant in both space and time. In this rhetorical nexus of writer, text, and reader,

Sanders' awareness of his son as audience is poignant and illuminating. Getting students to take an active, constructive stance in their experience of this relationship is a challenge.

"Engagement is the fundamental demand in the syllabus."

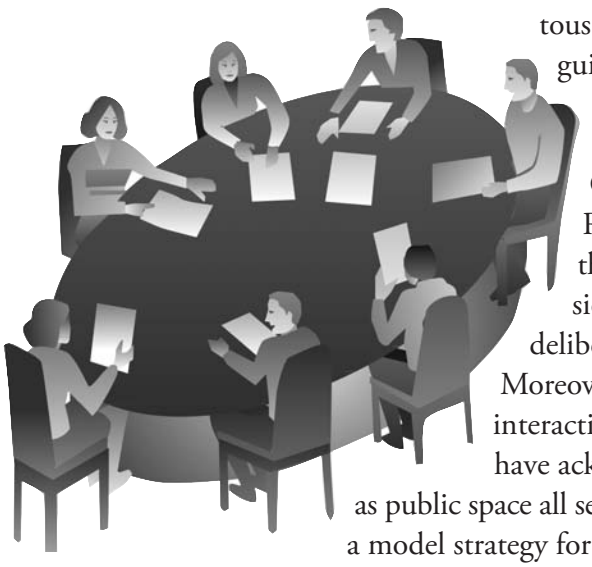
Engagement is the fundamental demand in the syllabus: with texts and other readers in the process of making meaning and with experience, information, and ideas in the process of writing. Research examines both interior and exterior landscapes; writing discovers, explores, and clarifies on its way to communicating. Written reflection, a constant companion throughout the semester, sharpens discernment for reader, writer, and discussant. However, reading essays, then talking and writing not only about them but, more importantly, about ideas and experiences prompted by them, takes us only so far. Polished "models" often intimidate as much as they challenge, and beginning college students must adjust to an active classroom role in a new pond, one larger than many are used to. Our classroom has to become a safe public space for our interactions, an environment conducive to public conversations. I remind students and myself that we operate in a public university where our work has both personal and public value and intent, but Rothman reminds me that "The classroom (like other public forums) has not always been a safe place to talk, and it certainly has not been a safe place to write." We move into paired and small group conversations often, and return to the whole group to synthesize common ground because both the physical setting and how people interact create our environment.

In the College Writing and Research course, initially I invite attention to selected essays—first on reading, writing, and talk as students examine their own literacy, then on familiar matters like places and people involved in significant life-learning experiences. I am especially concerned that we tap each student's personal stake in the matters under consideration, although we are not yet talking in those terms, and that we follow an inward to outward trajectory in our work. My intensive responses to the content of their writing affirm any degree of candor about their personal relationship to the topic and probe for ways to deepen their exploration. Papers shared for peer response in "writing workshop" sessions demonstrate the risks and rewards of such writing. My response often points to a potential use of the writing beyond the class, like sharing a piece, perhaps as a gift, with the person about whom it was written. I do not grade individual papers, and

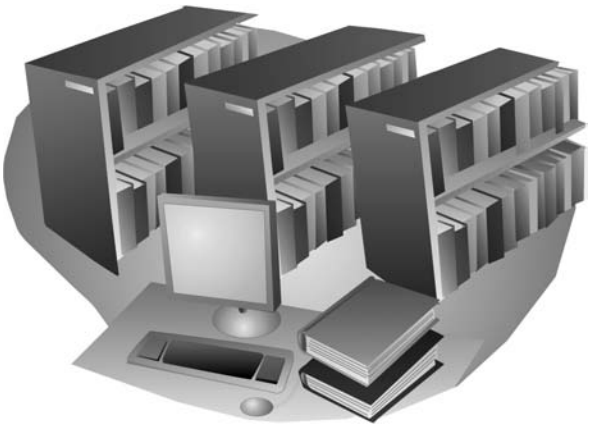
students may revise until the paper becomes part of an end of semester portfolio, displaying and evaluating individual growth.

For approximately the middle third of the semester, student teams select essay clusters and focusing topics for our work; they facilitate interaction and prompt writing about their choices, moving us further into public concerns and issues. One effect of this strategy is that team members read numerous essays in order to select the small cluster everyone considers during that team's "week" of class facilitation. Another is that teams must negotiate to resolve overlap in their developing plans. Each team "selects" more than enough essays for their cluster, which allows them to choose an alternative to any essay central to the plans of another group. Finally, each team poses invitations and questions to open discussion, and prompts for possible writing to be generated from their topic. Each student must pre-draft writing possibilities for every topic, and must complete an essay for two of the four to five topics developed by the teams. Informal writing is part of the teamwork and the facilitated class sessions; written reflection accompanies the entire process; formal writing emerges based on individual response and fuels further conversation and composing as we "workshop" these essays.

By the last third of the semester, we are ready for a different focus and approach. I introduce the concept of a deliberative forum and an array of National Issues Forums (NIF) issue books. We select an issue and, using the brief version or "placemat," hold an in-class forum. Last fall, just prior to a momentous election, we engaged with the issue guide *Democracy's Challenge*; our results were part of the Kettering report, "Public Thinking About Democracy's Challenge: Reclaiming the Public's Role." Experiencing and debriefing the forum takes a week of class sessions; modeling a different way to deliberate publicly is well worth the time. Moreover, the forum extends our patterns of interaction into a different public arena. We have acknowledged the university classroom as public space all semester, but now are clearly engaged in a model strategy for community conversation, for doing public business. We are able to embed writing in ways not



common to public forums, perhaps, but which could be. A "personal stake" journal entry written in advance helps us get into our deliberation efficiently; since we deliberate about roughly an "approach" per class period, written consolidation of thinking and perception (What was the best support you heard for a stance with which you disagree? What point(s) do you wish you had made, or made better?) help usre-enter the forum at the next session. Written reflection helps us refine our common ground, and the post-forum questionnaire fuels further reflection to inform our debriefing session. We are able to consider the roles of reading, writing, and talk in the forum experience; we examine congruence between public deliberation and class discussion on matters like responsibility, participation, and empathy. Following the forum, students select an issue of personal interest to explore further, with an NIF booklet, or occasionally a Study Circle issue guide, or a Brown University Choices Program Unit serving as a starting point. I also urge students to explore websites as part of their civic repertoire; they may find additional material of interest. Some choose to obtain their own booklets, guides, or Choices Units; all navigate their online quest better than I would, often to our collective benefit. Some college students are drawn to issues like alcohol and drug use; gambling, immigration, land use and bio-tech foods are live issues in our state, so they attract some students. Many will explore health care, education, social security, or the economic plight of working families. Some alignment between the student's major and issue choice is common as well.



The public issue portion of the course coincides with our attention to research techniques. The issue books allow us to jump-start such work, lose less time to topic selection, and move quickly to more sophisticated research strategies and demanding materials. An orientation to the university library early in this work enables students to use both print and online sources. Students who choose a somewhat dated issue book face the challenge of updating information; all students must make the issue their own and apply it in a local and/or state context. The

issue books offer a national perspective; more importantly they inhibit the either/or thinking so prevalent in society, thus in student research, and even in the materials commonly available to them. To reinforce this thinking, I ask students to "deconstruct" the issue book they chose, often in pairs or teams, as a step toward writing a brief issue summary. They are challenged to put the issue in their own terms, and to summarize the issue, not the issue book. As they do so, we look at the roles of public and expert perspective on issues, the challenge in a civic setting of choosing among competing expert "solutions." They then research the issue further to find their own position (a discovery draft often helps) and write more formally to convey their stance and rationale, while accounting for the fact and legitimacy of other positions. We stress primary sources, especially fellow citizens as informants, as a necessary part of their inquiry. Finally, each student writes an advocacy piece, an editorial or letter to an editor or policy maker, for example, on a specific facet of their issue. The piece carries extra weight in their portfolio if they actually submit it to the intended audience. I have enjoyed pieces for college, hometown, and regional newspapers, and for school boards, local and state officials, and state and national legislators.

In "The High Cost of Uncritical Teaching," Ira Winn observes "the greater lesson of history is that honest men and women can and will disagree over the meaning and importance of facts, events, and ideas. The great lesson of democracy is that the people should work out their differences in the open marketplace of ideas. To withdraw from the rigors of that marketplace … is to surrender, in whole or in part, the responsibility of our freedom." Beginning college students encounter the formidable rigors of the marketplace of ideas in disciplines in which they are novices; they are fortunate if they are mentored toward maturity. For decades, citizens, young and old alike, have withdrawn from the public sphere. As David Mathews says, they will get involved when they encounter together problems they care about, which affect them or their families, and which they can do something about, when "they themselves can—and must—act in a way that will make a difference." Recent evidence suggests that college students are increasingly open to such involvement. A CIRCLE pilot study on political engagement found that college students are not apathetic, engage in civic activities, and are reflective

about many facets of the political system. A recent profile of college freshmen finds them both increasingly politically minded and less "centrist" in their views. Most students report frequent political discussion in their last year of high school. This may bode well for my aspirations to make my classroom community a "little republic" of democracy; it may also underscore the need for a deliberative approach to controversial issues about which students have conflicting views. The ominous complexity of many of the issues they face requires civic maturity.

I believe learning a rhetoric of inquiry, of position finding rather than position taking and defending, is possible, but it is more likely in an environment of safety and civility as well as challenge. Deliberation is a civic strategy and value, something I want students in my classes to derive from sustained, oral and written, respectful conversations of consequence.

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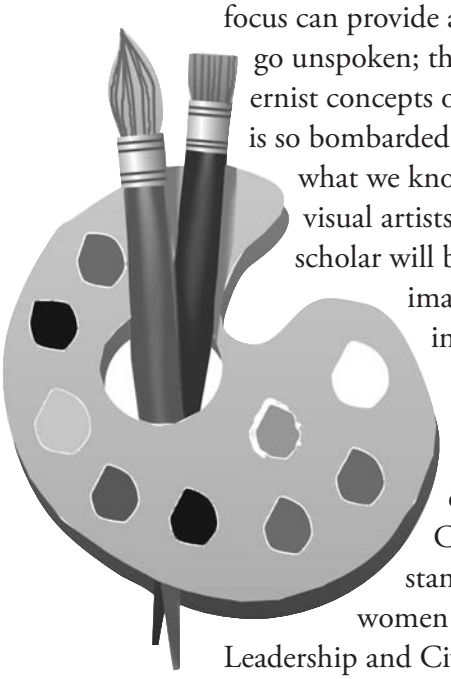
AN ARTIST'S APPROACH TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

By Barbara Nesin

I believe that civic engagement is compatible with the creative work of the visual artist who addresses social issues in the hope of contributing to positive social change. As I see it, an important role of the artist is to create spaces for learning, reflection, the exchange of ideas, and visions of new possibilities with a broader public.

Although not all art is concerned with social issues, a social focus can provide a visible form of expression that might otherwise go unspoken; this, of course, represents a shift from earlier modernist concepts of art as purely aesthetic. Contemporary culture is so bombarded with visual imagery and we learn so much of what we know visually that, while this essay is written with visual artists in mind, I believe that any wise educator or scholar will be aware that messages are likely to be read from images, whether or not the artist consciously intended them.



Fortunately, in the Department of Art at Spelman College where I teach, the notion of making and using art for considering and expressing social concerns is consistent with the College's mission. In addition to Spelman's long-standing tradition of preparing African-American women for leadership and service, the new Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement includes advocacy through the arts as one of its five major strategic goals. I am glad that, at Spelman, this work goes beyond espousing any particular position on an issue to include, as they say in their brochure, "creating a site for the cutting-edge interdisciplinary exploration of important social issues through the arts." As pointed out by Charnelle Holloway, one of my colleagues at Spelman College, in this age of being bombarded with images in the media, perhaps the arts are one of the best avenues toward realizing positive social change.

As a Fellow in the Kettering Foundation's New Scholars Program, I began research on a specific course of inquiry—concern

about the tensions between the Black and Jewish communities in the face of ever-escalating conflicts in the Middle East.

I was excited to see that—as my research on this topic progressed through reading, travel, and interviewing various individuals about their interactions and perceptions of Black-Jewish relations—the focus shifted from just a report of findings on this particular subject to offering some ideas about how to help engage students in using art as a means for discovering, articulating, and sharing their own social concerns.

For an artist, the end result of the process of uncovering and gaining insight into such a topic is the creative work it inspires, which, in turn, we share with the public community through exhibitions, gallery talks, reviews, or other written visual documentation. The interaction with viewers or an audience completes the work.

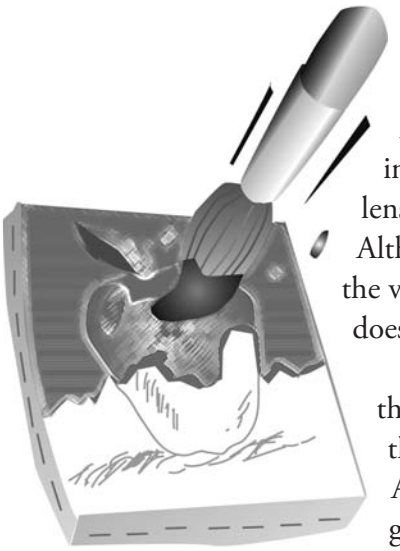
Therefore, through a summary of my creative process, I will initially summarize an approach I have found useful for making art that may serve to engage public deliberation; then I will offer suggestions for informing students or other interested parties about using visual art to engage the public about issues of their choosing.

Three major steps in this process may repeat, overlap, and unfold over short or long periods of time: (1) using personal experience as a base, (2) choosing the tools with which to best articulate ideas in visual form, and (3) expanding from the personal to the global. Not only has each theme I have investigated progressed through these stages, but so has my entire body of work over the past 12 years. Each discrete theme links to broader themes and, as new voices are added to the conversation, the process repeats and continues to be transformed with new ideas.

From the Personal to the Global

The Feminist Art Movement coined the slogan, The Personal Is Political in the early 1970s. I was studying art at Pratt Institute, then strongly committed to the Modernist creed of universalism with its emphasis on form over content. That feminist mantra flowed naturally from the height of the 1960s Civil Rights movement, as it was an approach adopted by numerous artists, not only women, who sought to insert their previously silenced voices into mainstream culture. For me, an artist working in her studio, the soul-searching process of physically working with tactile materials and images that have taken hold in my psyche serves to unfold,

unravel, and lay bare essential truths that become an important way of knowing. I've learned that whatever external input through research, mass culture, or other sources we use to inform ourselves, this truth is intuitive or spiritual, not empirical, and very much a product of seeing through a particular lens.



My personal family background was the starting point in the investigation of Black-Jewish relations. As a descendant both of Christian Blacks in Haiti and Jews of European origin, my artist's lens included inside knowledge of these perspectives. Although my cultural mix by no means represents all of the viewpoints existing within each community, the mix does encompass a range of views.

In addition to being motivated by my concern for the planet as a whole, it expresses my personal stake in the role and outcomes of more than one ethnic group. As such, the worsening tensions among various groups here in the United States causes me concern about the policy decisions Americans will make that will impact the Middle East conflict(s); these decisions are now a key element for world peace or its disastrous alternative.

Before addressing the subject cultures together, beginning in 1993, I spent several years investigating each component separately; upon entering graduate school at Indiana State University as a non-traditional student, I began making images depicting my Haitian family, including my own childhood experiences in Haiti during the "Papa Doc" Duvalier dictatorship.

This was when Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the first democratically elected president of Haiti, had been overthrown; that story, along with stories of the boat people, was on the front page of newspapers everywhere—even in Terre Haute, Indiana. The overthrow (known in Haitian Kreyol as *dechoukaj*) demanded study of not only the current political and economic situation, but also of the colonial history of Haiti. This study required delving into the history of slavery, African culture, the indigenous people of the Caribbean, and the syncretic religion of Haitian Vodou.

Study of this cultural history resulted in my making images about each of these parts of the whole, from which I developed a special interest in the ways that various cultures of the African, European, and Taino people had merged. Soon after, I learned

that my process was consistent with Multiculturalism (with a capital "M!"), one of several practices among Postmodern artists of the 1990s.

Exhibitions of this work engaged audiences ranging from children to seniors, students to art professionals. Audience responses have ranged from those who see something in the work that triggers dialogue about a dormant aspect of their own personal stories, to reconsidering their previously held views of the situation in Haiti or notions about dominant pure cultures and the social, economic, and political roles of the citizens of the United States. My participation in the Haitian Studies Association, an international organization of scholars, continues to be an important avenue for learning about Haiti and Haitians across disciplines.

I had also begun studying Jewish traditions through readings, conversations with rabbis and other Jewish scholars, as well as adult education classes offered through the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. This led to using what I learned about *métissage* from Haitian culture to create a personal iconography that incorporates Jewish symbols and cosmology along with the Haitian. (*Métissage* involves the creation of new hybrid cultural forms by oppressed people attempting to subvert the dominant culture imposed upon them as a strategy of cultural survival.) Making connections and parallels between these seemingly opposite poles came quite easily. With learning came the growing realization of how interconnected we all really are, and that syncretic practices exist in most, if not all, cultures. At this point, my connecting with personal history seemed to have come full circle, and I was able to expand the references in my creative work to include additional histories and broader concerns.

While living in Colorado for six years, I discovered the existence of Crypto-Jews, descendants of those who had fled as far as New Mexico to escape the long reach of the Spanish Inquisition. My continued research included travel to southern Europe and New Mexico, which facilitated even more connections across cultures and resulted in more images. These included a series of *Cryptablos*, my variation on the *retablos* of the Southwestern United States and Mexico, in which images of Catholic saints are encrypted with Jewish symbolism. The survival strategy of the Crypto-Jews was similar to that of Africans in Haiti who encoded Christian images with African meanings, adapting and subverting

them to fit their own cosmology. It should be noted that I actually produced the *Cryptablos* after leaving Colorado. A lag time is often important between the experience and the creative work, to allow for digesting and reflecting upon new stimuli. This lag time is like an incubation period, a necessary stage in the creative process.

In Taos, I had met an Israeli artist who was involved with a grassroots peace effort between Israeli and Palestinian women in Israel. Shortly after, while completing installation of this Israeli-Palestinian art exhibition in the college gallery, the September 11 terrorist attacks took place. The gallery exhibit became a place where faculty and students talked, role-played, contemplated, and tried to understand the fears, hopes, and human costs on both sides, so that whatever action they might take next would consider the other point of view.

An artist needs to be involved with community on a variety of levels. During this period, serving on the board of the Northern Colorado Multicultural Corporation also provided me with opportunities to work with the community, deliberating about local concerns through forums, conferences, seminars, and other programs in partnership with city government, local businesses, and schools.

In Northern Colorado, diversity meant mostly the Chicano or Hispanic populations. Since we cannot speak of Spanish history without including the medieval confluence of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, and in the atmosphere of post-9/11 (about which I had not specifically made images), it became clear that some of the work remaining for me included gaining a better understanding of Muslim culture, including Black Muslim culture.

This was also germane to understanding Black-Jewish relations. Despite years of working together during the Civil Rights Movement to combat segregation in voting, housing, and access to education, the rift between American Blacks and American Jews seemed to have started with the early rise of the Nation of Islam in the United States. To gain greater insight into

interactions between Muslims, Christians, and Jews of all races, I have conducted interviews, read extensively and traveled with a group of 33 interfaith "Peace Pilgrims" to Spain and Morocco to visit the sites of the hiatus of convivencia, where the 3 religions coexisted and flourished in a climate of tolerance and mutual exchange. We learned numerous lessons about peaceful coexistence, not only from the history but also from interactions with fellow pilgrims in our many discussions, both formal and informal. I was particularly encouraged at getting to know several Muslims on the trip, including Black Muslims who were equally committed to working for peaceful and cooperative coexistence.

Back in Atlanta, I conducted interviews with individuals who were either involved in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s (or whose parents were), or who are currently involved in conflicts or coalitions between Blacks and Jews. Because interviewing was not part of the academic training of a professional artist, I found it necessary to learn the methodology of using this new (to me) tool.

Resources came from the Atlanta Black-Jewish Coalition, Spelman College's Interfaith Dialogues, and meetings with Black Jews from a synagogue in New York, all presenting new opportunities for deliberation on issues of mutual concern. I have no intention of publishing the interviews, many of which were quite informal, but I will continue to incorporate the gleanings from those interactions and responses (verbal and nonverbal) in new imagery. As usual, I share the resulting work through exhibitions, lectures, and writing. As Peter Levine states in "What is 'Public' about what Academics Do? An exchange with Robert Kingston and Peter Levine" in the 2004 issue of this journal, "What makes such work public is the presence of a real dialogue between scholar [artist] and those studied … if she listens to their responses and uses their conversations to inform her own work [and] … *takes direct responsibility for creating public dialogues or opportunities for public learning.*"

For precisely this reason, as an artist and as an educator, I have concentrated on presenting exhibitions on college and university campuses, in order to promote a predisposition to an attitude of learning and exchanges of ideas. Through more traditional academic venues, including a conference panel on the theme and publication, I hope to encourage other faculty to guide students

to verbally and visually articulate their own concerns for public deliberation.

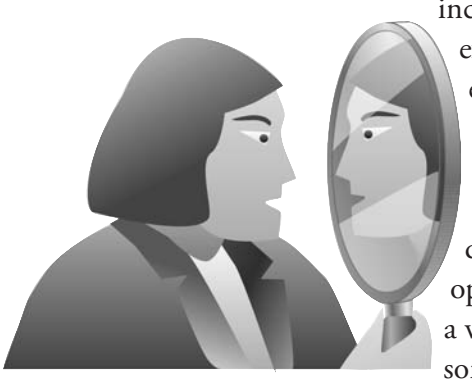
Helping Students to Connect their World to the Public Sphere

Start from personal experience.

"Ironically, an introspective approach can lead to the universal."

The Personal is Political can serve as a starting point for tapping into the margins of racial, religious, economic, class, and other conflicts that ultimately address broader social issues. Many artists who work from this vantage point learn to value their own experiences and to extrapolate broader truths. Ironically, an introspective approach can lead to the universal, as the issues grappled with are a product of our time and history.

In this case, the role of the teacher is to guide students to discover whatever seems most urgent in their lives at that time, and to create a safe space for the student to explore that subject honestly. Beginning art students often need directed exercises to help them to get going. These may include any number of pedagogical strategies including journaling, collage, or assemblage incorporating biographical information. Ample examples of artists working from personal experience, as described in Lucy Lippard's, *Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America*, can help to initiate this sort of dialogue and relate it to the student's own work through studio and art history classes supplemented by opportunities for students to view and hear from a wide range of practicing artists. From the personal experience, students can learn to connect art to their lives and consider the possibility that one person's experience and choices can make a difference for others.



Provide the tools with which to articulate ideas in visual form.

Many artists and patrons of art who are conscientious citizens of the twenty-first century find the teaching of technique or art for art's sake inadequate unless it encompasses an understanding of the need for artists who take their social responsibility seriously. Art as entertainment or respite will probably always find a place, but we are speaking here of art as a vehicle of advocacy for social change, and exploring how to empower our students for that purpose, to harness the powerful impacts of images in our culture. While no longer the only component to enable any artist

to articulate her or his ideas in the medium most appropriate for the intended goals, a foundation of basic skills is still an essential component to effectively communicate ideas. Concurrently, preparation for making socially responsible art demands discussions about a content of ideas as equally integral to a strong foundation. Students need to understand how images function on a personal level, how they function culturally as communication with the public, and the artist's responsibility as a citizen for the images put into the public arena.

It is important for students (and artists) to become well informed and to think seriously about the medium that will best serve their purposes. A student should be introduced to a wide range of media options so that no one medium becomes the driving force for the creative process. In using the term medium, I refer also to display, distribution, and anything to do with engaging the work by the viewer, as well as the materials of which the work is made. New media do not render traditional media obsolete any more than the invention of photography eliminated painting, as nineteenth century painters and critics once feared, although the purpose of painting has evolved from reproducing "reality" to more subjective or analytical interpretations of reality in the twentieth century, and now, in the twenty-first century, often as a vehicle for social critique. If anything, the postmodern practice of critiquing the past seems to demand that traditional art forms be employed in order that they may be reconsidered in new contexts. Millie Chen provides a pedagogical framework for providing a relevant foundation to students in her article, "ReBoot: Fresh Manifesto for Foundations" in the journal *FATE in Review*, 2002-2003.

Finally, not least of the skills students will need in order to make effective work in this vein are those of learning to develop research techniques, critical inquiry and thoughtful discernment, and to become lifelong learners and good citizens. Along with guided assignments, faculty example is critical in imparting these values to students, so it is important that faculty share their own work and processes with students on a regular basis and in a manner that clearly values the work. Administrative commitment of resources—or lack thereof—sends a strong message to students, faculty, and the public about the value placed on the role of the arts as a central—not merely co-curricular or "fringe"—component of serving the institution's mission.

Expand from the personal to the universal.

Having identified some substance for art which is meaningful to each student, and provided the basic tools with which to execute those works, further development suggests the need to expand the students' personal sphere to broaden their vision.

In some ways, a liberal arts institution, such as Spelman College, may seem to have an advantage, for it is through the student's opportunities to learn about a wide range of ideas from a variety of disciplines that she or he might make connections between personal experience and related historical, community, and global concerns. But any diverse campus can also provide opportunities for students to practice interacting with people and ideas different from their own. Interdisciplinary studies and study abroad programs can also help students to understand the interrelationships of their work within these broader contexts. There may be several stages and levels of making these new associations, for, as every artist knows, the creative process is non-linear; it is dynamically amorphous.

"The creative process is non-linear; it is dynamically amorphous."

This basic framework, only one of several possible approaches, will no doubt continue to evolve. One result of focusing on this topic is a panel that took place at the biennial conference of the national association, Foundations in Art: Theory and Education (FATE) in March 2005. The panel—titled *Elephants in the Room: Learning to Make Art About Difficult Issues*—gave artist-educators from colleges and universities across the country an opportunity to discuss their own approaches and experiences with facilitating students who want to make a difference in the world through their art.

My students have created work based on their personal experience—as well as research on such themes as the responsibility of the average citizen for the plight of homeless people, the role of the fashion industry in identity formation, and a poignant series of photographs on the nature of mortality and immortality. Regularly assigned readings complement the liberal arts curriculum as grist for students' ideas on contemporary criticism, as well as the role of the artist in studio classes, including life drawing classes that critique representation of the human form. The class discussions about students' research and interactive group critiques are essential aspects of this pedagogy.

As a result of these socially relevant art experiences, we anticipate more opportunities, pursued through increased

community interaction and civic engagement, in order for students to create meaningful work both within and outside the classroom. At Spelman College, the outlook is promising.

The Department of Art at Spelman has begun to partner with the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement and the other Arts Departments (Music, Drama, and Dance) to involve our students with ideas for art-making that take into account public concerns. We are planning partnerships with some of the local activist arts organizations for our students to take part in specific projects in the community as interns, volunteers, and service-learning class assignments. In 2007, a new course titled Art as Social Action will be offered for the first time; it is open to art majors and students of any other major as an elective, with the intention that students will bring to bear research in a variety of disciplines to create a work of art of social significance to the community surrounding the campus.

These past several years, we have been fortunate to hold our senior exhibitions in public galleries in downtown and midtown Atlanta. Despite our not having the exhibit located conveniently on campus, the great benefit became interaction between the community and the students' work. That experience leads me to believe that wherever possible, a visual arts program should attempt to provide a physical presence in its surrounding community, precisely for the public engagement it brings. As we prepare to build a new arts facility at Spelman, our students will benefit from the added advantage of additional workspace and equipment to produce and exhibit powerful works of art that will articulate the concerns of many voices, thus paving the way for new solutions for the public good.

"A visual arts program should attempt to provide a physical presence in its surrounding community, precisely for the public engagement it brings."

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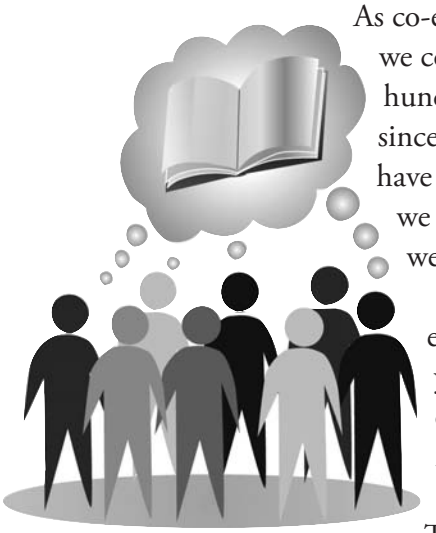
THE MAKING OF A BOOK: EXPLORING THE LINKAGES BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY

By David W. Brown

Two years ago I wrote a piece, "Talking the Walk: Making Sense of *HEX* (1994-2004)," recounting how the *Higher Education Exchange* got started with a "nascent conversation" among "educators who could learn from each other … where everyone should have access and opportunities to improve what they find—much like what good teaching and research are about, or a healthy democracy for that matter, which is the Kettering Foundation's central concern."

Since that *HEX* piece of mine, eight of those educators have met to fashion a book, forthcoming this fall, that explores the linkages between higher education and a "healthy democracy." As co-editors, Deborah Witte and I were sorry that we could not include the other distinctive voices, a hundred or more, who have contributed to *HEX* since 1994. Nonetheless, those who came together have a range of experience and points of view that we think are representative of what we call "the *HEX* years."



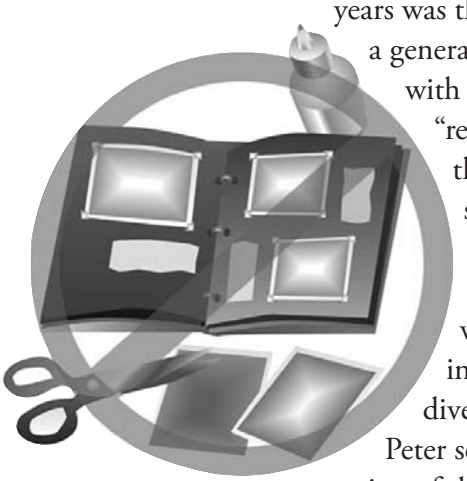
The book is rooted in what these eight educators have written for *HEX* over the years. We did not want, however, a scrapbook of their writings, but instead new pieces informed by their current work and the conversations they shared in writing the book. They used a deliberative process, not for the sake of compromise or consensus but knowing that together they could fashion a richer understanding of what higher education can do to revitalize democratic practices. Everyone

understood that such an exchange helped curb any pretensions that someone could somehow get things "right" before engaging others in the ongoing narrative that developed. As veterans of the academic scene, no one had any illusions that there would be agreement and some of the book's contributors were puzzled by being paired up in chapters, but we stuck with it so that differing views co-existed just as they did in the conversations they shared at Kettering workshops over the course of two years.

At our concluding workshop last December, David Mathews, Kettering's president, observed that the making of the book had been "the story of a conversation." Let me then tell you something about that story.

Peter Levine (research scholar and deputy director of the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement CIRCLE at the University of Maryland)

To start things off, we asked Peter to describe from his vantage point what has been going on in higher education since Kettering first published *HEX* in 1994, or what David Mathews referred to as the "landscape." Of course, when any group of people views a landscape, each of them may see and remember different highlights. For Peter, what first distinguished the *HEX* years was the engagement of what he calls "Boomer faculty," a generation shaped by the "tumultuous" 1960s and 1970, with Peter's generation, "Generation X," and their "rejection of formal politics." Peter acknowledged that a workshop discussion early on helped him shape his argument that the disillusionment of these two generations with the change-potential of formal politics turned them to various forms of voluntary public work that included "service learning," "deliberation," "public scholarship," and using diversity to "expand the cultural commons."

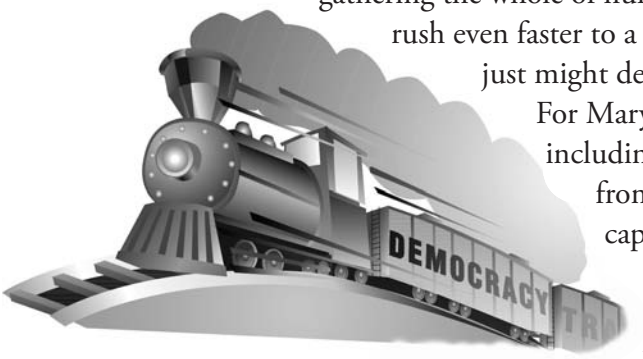


Peter sees a greater interest in formal politics with the coming of the "Millennial Generation," shaped by the events of 9/11, but he notes that these intersecting generations are all committed to the "open-endedness" of "democratic participation, diversity, consensus building, and constructive problem-solving"—"values [that] have deep roots in American political history."

Mary Stanley (independent scholar and formerly at Syracuse University)

Knowing that Peter could not provide a comprehensive picture of the higher education landscape, at least not in one opening chapter, we asked Mary to weigh in with her view, knowing that it was likely to be very different from Peter's. We were not disappointed.

Mary vigorously and eloquently quarreled with Peter's view, not disputing his description, but finding it seriously inadequate. As Mary sees it, Peter and others have boarded "the democracy train," while ignoring the market-driven "neo-liberal train that seems to be gathering the whole of humanity, forcing its passengers to rush even faster to a temporal and spatial world that just might destroy our capacity for community." For Mary, globalization spares no one, including those who labor in academia, from the consequences of unbridled capitalism.



Mary argues that too many in higher education are too much the unwitting allies of globalization when they retreat into civil society. She fears that "the larger political economy becomes the weather; out there, not of us. Or the 'thing' gentleman and ladies don't discuss." She doesn't ever say it, but Kettering and her *HEX* colleagues are obviously part of that polite company.

Well, Mary certainly stirred things up. Her *HEX* colleagues responded favorably, however, not necessarily agreeing with her view of the landscape but acknowledging that it prompted them to take a fresh look at what is out there to see and grapple with. In the final conversation of the book's contributors, Harry Boyte told her, "Don't pull back." And Mary had no intention to do so.

Mary thinks that higher education institutions must do more than just acknowledge those who share her dissenting view. They should, given Peter's stress on "open-endedness," make room for the consideration of macro changes to deal with "the conundrums, contradictions, and tensions globalization brings to all institutional sectors, including their own." Although Mary is far from satisfied, she does not totally despair. For her, the "world-spanning, neoliberal political economy so vast and seemingly uncontrollable, is a human creation, was once otherwise and could be different."

It was Peter Levine who pointed out in a *HEX* 2004 interview that "the culture of American universities is not uniform, rather it is passionately contested." That is certainly true in the chapter that he and Mary share.

Claire Snyder (associate professor of political theory at George Mason University)

We asked Claire to reflect on an earlier piece she had written for *HEX* in 1998 providing an important, but neglected, story about the "civic roots" of higher education. We agreed that there are far too many in academia who are ignorant of such roots. Since it is difficult to get more than lip service for the work of democracy in the precincts of higher education, Claire's work has been indispensable, and she continues to explore the past and present civic dimensions in the piece that she has written for the book.

Although Claire acknowledges higher education has had "multiple understandings" of a "civic mission," she "privileges" the "republican version of civic" over the "liberal individualistic" version in which "the liberal citizen has individual rights but few duties." That is one reason why another contributor thought her piece seemed "nostalgic" in tone, but I disagree. Claire's piece is meant to tell the story of higher education's civic history, not celebrate it.

Furthermore, Claire's ambition for the piece goes beyond looking back as she questions the current adequacy of higher education's civic mission. "If democratic citizenship involves acting collectively to achieve common goals, then what does higher education need to do to prepare citizens for that task?" The question in her title, "Should Higher Education Have a Civic Mission? Historical Reflections," reflects her uncertainty, not about having a civic mission, but whether higher education will "play its historic role in helping democracy work as it should."

Harry Boyte (co-director of the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University of Minnesota)

We wanted to include important "perspectives" that have emerged from *HEX*, and Harry was certainly the obvious choice as far as "public work" is concerned. I had just completed an interview with Adam Weinberg, then Dean of the College at Colgate, and Adam reminded me of how much Harry's concept of "public

work" had influenced his work with students at Colgate. As Harry puts it:

> Democracy is, in fact, a kind of work. Its labors occur in multiple sites, enlist multiple talents in addressing public problems, and result in multiple forms of common wealth. The public works of democracy create an environment of equal respect.

So Harry's piece and Adam's interview that follows it in the forthcoming book combine that concept with an excellent story about how one institution put "public work" to work, so to speak.

When I interviewed Harry for *HEX* 2000, I learned a lot about how he works and reworks and reworks and reworks—well, you get the idea—of whatever he writes. It was no different for the book. Harry rarely took the easy way by cutting and pasting from prior work. When he occasionally couldn't resist the temptation, we hashed it out and Harry was able to locate his current voice instead. Whether Harry's drafts came from the South African Wild Coast or Minneapolis, he always asked for feedback. Having worked with *HEX* contributors since 1994, I can't think of anyone more devoted than Harry to making the editing process a conversation and not a contest.

"Democracy is a verb."

Harry welcomed the opportunity for "updating and new thoughts," given the intellectual and experimental ground that he had covered since our 2000 interview. In tying the threads together, he took aim at "technocratic politics—domination by experts removed from a common civic life—[that] has spread throughout contemporary society like a silent disease." After umpteen drafts, Harry seemed satisfied, and the Boyte "voice" on "public work" remains at the center of what Kettering and *HEX* are about—democracy is a verb.

Scott Peters (assistant professor of education at Cornell University)

We asked Scott, who has been prominent in *HEX* journals helping to develop the perspective of "public scholarship," to share his ongoing research of the new connections that land-grant colleges and universities have been forging with the public. Scott's piece anchors the chapter on public scholarship, which includes Jeremy Cohen's story of public scholarship of faculty and students at Penn State.

Scott admitted that his first draft distributed to the other

contributors was "too academic in its style." Scott well knew that *HEX* tries to be a refreshing alternative to the publish-or-perish world that can so consume and limit the public reach of scholars. He later rewrote the piece with *HEX* in mind. When he did complete the draft, what Scott and I wrestled with, or, more accurately, wrestled over, was the length of his finished work. As Scott put it, we "negotiated" some of the edits.

The length of a piece reminds me of Mary Stanley's humorous defense of her unusally long first draft written during a stay in Brazil: "Writing surrounded by rain forest you get lush in everything. They 'plow' the roads here with bulldozers to keep the vegetation from growing over them. So consider the draft 'short,' all things considered."

In his piece, Scott responds to a question posed by Noëlle McAfee as to "what kind of civic relationship there might be between the academy and the public." Looking back, Scott sees the importance of the agriculture extension work of the land-grant system. Looking ahead, however, Scott sees a "civic conception of academic professionalism" as more tenuous. After conducting extensive interviews, both with individuals and focus-groups, with current land-grant faculty engaged with the public, Scott found that these "remarkably positive people" do not see their work "valued, supported, or pursued by most of their academic peers." And so Scott concludes that such scholars face the task of *reconstructing* the democratic tradition of public scholarship in the land grant system. Can they succeed?

Jeremy Cohen (professor of communication and associate provost for undergraduate education at Penn State University)

Jeremy, hardened by academic experience but with an infectious idealism nonetheless, was a delight to work with when I did an interview with him for *HEX* 2005 about the ongoing story of public scholarship at Penn State. So we asked him to advance that narrative by contributing to the *HEX* book underway. Jeremy readily agreed, seeing his work with Kettering as contributing to his work and commitment at Penn State.

At times, Jeremy and the pressing business of what he called his "hybrid task of administration and academics" kept him from joining the group's workshop discussions, although, on one occasion, when I couldn't reach him at all, he explained "no

email, no phone, and I'm not certain about the plumbing or electricity on Papua New Guinea." Much of the time, Jeremy was so engaged with his hands-on work at Penn State that he didn't have time to write about it too. When he did, he asked about the expected length of his draft and I told him we were aiming for 5,000 words, a length, by the way, that some contributors ultimately found too limiting. Jeremy too, but he did promise to eliminate the section "about parting the Red Sea and crossing the desert."

As Jeremy was working on his draft last summer, he and his wife visited with us in New Mexico. Over enchiladas and a beer, we had a good conversation about the book project that we shared. When I got his draft in September, as with other contributors, I held out for Jeremy's distinctive voice that I was afraid might get lost in the din of secondary sources. We went back and forth and then it was ready for his fellow contributors to discuss at their workshop in December.

In his piece, Jeremy ranges beyond the Penn State story to put it in the larger context of American constitutional history, and argues for "purposeful democratic learning," that is, "learning to be democratic." Jeremy thinks "we have failed as educators to fully grasp the fact that nothing about democracy, not its theory and certainly not its practice, is hard wired into anyone." The story then at Penn State seeks to remedy this "failure."

Noëlle McAfee (visiting associate professor of philosophy at George Mason University)

There was no better person to discuss democratic deliberation than Noëlle, who has worked closely with Kettering and others to make such a practice take hold in various jurisdictions. In fact, having the book's contributors deliberate together in workshops over two years could have been Noëlle's idea in the first place. We were sure that we needed her for such an undertaking, which, to borrow David Mathews' observation about democracy itself, was to be "more a journey than a destination."

For the book, we asked Noëlle to offer her perspective on the potential of higher education institutions for "public making," or "public building" as some put it. Noëlle resisted any "model" for such institutions that has them "organize" others, which can too easily resort to the hierarchical relationship between expert and

public. She insisted that only citizens through their own democratic deliberation and public work can become a "public." Noëlle believes, however, that academic institutions can be an important "ally" through their "research and teaching with a newfound respect for public work." As she put it at the concluding workshop, "ally" fits her preference for "horizontal" relationships and makes it more "*HEX*ish."

Douglas Challenger (associate professor of sociology at Franklin Pierce College)

The perspective of "public making" needed an institutional story to ground it, and Doug at Franklin Pierce College had certainly lived that perspective in the work of the college allied with the community of Rindge, New Hampshire. Doug tells the story of the ups and downs of that civic journey together, and a "pivotal moment" when those in Rindge "realized that they had the answers to their own local problems and had grown to trust deliberative community dialogue as a way to access their own collective wisdom."

Noëlle's point exactly.

Putting aside his writing, Doug traveled far beyond New Hampshire, telling me of his three-week-long walk with a group of students through the Austrian and Italian Alps, and, last year, walking and camping with another student group through Ireland, France, Spain, and Portugal. Doug's civic journey at home also went beyond Franklin Pierce and Rindge.

Working with others, Doug helped to establish the New England Center for Civic Life to serve as a catalyst for other communities and colleges to offer "a fresh approach to politics" through "the work of citizens in grass root efforts." In taking that journey, it also led Doug back to his own campus and to a renewed focus of using deliberative dialogue including a "deliberative session" that became a part of the monthly faculty meetings. There is no conclusion to Doug's institutional story. Like others, it continues to evolve.

The book comes full circle to David Mathews' concluding chapter, which asks, "What does all the ferment over democracy mean for higher education?"

> The world is struggling with the meaning of democracy as current problems challenge old forms. Questions of where academic institutions will weigh in—and how—are inescapable. The way these questions are answered, knowingly or not, will be the ultimate measure of how accountable colleges and universities are to the public.

The book does not really end there but will continue on with what readers also do to explore the linkages between higher education and democracy. Like the book, that will be another story in the making.

DELIBERATION AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

An Interview with Dennis C. Roberts

David Brown, coeditor of the Higher Education Exchange*, talked with Denny Roberts, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs at Miami University about the Fraternal Futures initiative.*

Brown: What exactly is the Fraternal Futures initiative?

Roberts: Fraternal Futures is a process based on the National Issues Forums (NIF) deliberative model. The Fraternal Futures deliberations respond to the myriad challenges faced by fraternal organizations (men's and women's) on modern college campuses. The existence of these organizations is threatened by declining interest, hazing allegations, alcohol abuse, lawsuits, and other distracting elements. Through Fraternal Futures, students are encouraged to look at their organizations in realistic ways, and they are challenged to consider three approaches that might be used to resolve the problems that exist. The approaches students consider are opening recruitment, focusing on accountability and values, and partnering to address campus health and safety problems.

Brown: Could you say more about what "opening recruitment" means?

Roberts: Opening recruitment would mean that fraternal organizations would seek to attract broader representation and more members in the future. The history of fraternal organizations is that they have protected their memberships very carefully. Opening up would be a departure from this precedent.

Brown: And who are the potential partners for addressing "campus health and safety problems"?

Roberts: Literally everyone on the college campus could be a potential stakeholder on campus health and safety. One of the reasons this choice was included is that fraternal organizations are sometimes seen as the cause of some campus health and safety problems. The idea would be that these organizations would be advocates for change within their own ranks and on the broader campus.

Brown: I'm always interested in origins. How did the Fraternal Futures initiative get started?

Roberts: The actual origin of the Fraternal Futures initiative was at a conference of college/university administrators and representatives of the inter/national headquarters of men's faternities and women's sororities where the focus of the conversation shifted to deeper and more systemic causes of the problems fraternities face.

Brown: When was that?

Roberts: This was a meeting of the Greek Summit, a meeting that took place in Dallas, Texas, in the fall of 1999. This was not the first meeting of these representatives, but the content of the meeting was certainly pivotal in relation to my awareness of the need to enliven the voices of students. The topic of engaging students was so compelling to me that we chose to host a meeting at Miami University in the fall of 2000 involving international headquarters representatives and undergraduate students. We approached this via a fish-bowl process where headquarters' leadership were asked to listen to student voices and vice versa. The honesty and frustration that emerged in these conversations was truly boundary breaking. It became very clear that fostering honest, real conversations was essential in order to have any hope of positive change. I've written elsewhere that "change and improvement would not come just because administrators wanted it."

Brown: And then what?

Roberts: The conclusion of these two meetings was that the lack of grassroots student and alumni participation was undermining all the things being undertaken by campuses and headquarters. Another contributing factor was the belief that fraternal organizations had not updated their views of leadership and had not adopted beliefs and practices that fostered shared leadership.

Brown: Whose beliefs are you talking about?

Roberts: Judy Rogers and I authored a chapter in *The Administration of Fraternal Organizations on North American Campuses: A Pattern for the New Millennium* (Gregory, 2003) that challenged Greek staff and headquarters to critically analyze if their leadership models were effective. Our proposition was that, if fra-

ternal organizations were to be transformed into organizations that could survive on modern campuses, a new and shared view of leadership would have to be considered.

"Fraternal leadership models and practices were inadequate for the times."

The combination of frustration over declining conditions in fraternal organizations and realizing that fraternal leadership models and practices were inadequate for the times caused me to look for ways to enliven participatory engagement at the chapter level of these groups. The Kettering Foundation seemed a natural place to look for processes that activated grassroots involvement.

I became familiar with the NIF deliberation process soon after I moved to Ohio. I found the process of exploring difficult issues through deliberation very different than most of the conversations I had with students and colleagues. I was very attracted to the sequence of starting with what is important about a question to us, moving on to the costs and benefits of three or four responses, exploring what makes the issue difficult, and concluding with what we want to do. The point of such a process is that it is designed to address problems that have no easy solution—adaptive questions where many perspectives have to be explored and considered. This is precisely the kind of question we faced in regard to fraternal organizations on college campuses.

Brown: And then what?

Roberts: As I looked at the NIF booklet topics and used them with Miami students, I began to wonder if the topics were really the kind with which students would most connect. I knew that fraternal membership was very central for many of our students so I proposed that perhaps taking deliberation to a more personal level with students would be more effective.

Brown: As I understand, funding initially promised was not realized for what was then called the "Transforming Fraternal Leadership" initiative.

Roberts: When the idea of transforming fraternal leadership emerged, we originally thought of creating a web-based learning initiative that alumni and students could explore to get a better understanding of leadership in contemporary environments. The initial research on this indicated that it would probably take hundreds of thousands of dollars to create and support such a web-based model. When this research emerged, those campuses and headquarters that had originally expressed interest in supporting the effort evaporated.

It seemed to me that campuses and headquarters weren't necessarily convinced that fostering grassroots leadership would help to address the problems fraternities faced. The fact is, most of these organizations, like many other student organizations, function on an industrial or hierarchical model, and those who favor this approach are not inclined to consider alternatives. Their reluctance can be explained from a variety of perspectives—some political, others knowledge-based, and still others that simply reflect natural resistance to change.

"The fact is, most of these organizations function on an industrial or hierarchical model, and those who favor this approach are not inclined to consider alternatives."

We are in the midst of a paradigm shift in our understanding of leadership. This is happening throughout higher education in course-based work and co-curricular programs of all sorts. During such a period, there will be those who hang on to old ways of thinking about leading and leadership. Even though there will continue to be programs for positional leaders in fraternal and other types of organizations, the problem is the lack of opportunities for all students to explore their leadership capacity.

Brown: So they remain wedded to the "positional" leadership model and not a "shared" leadership one?

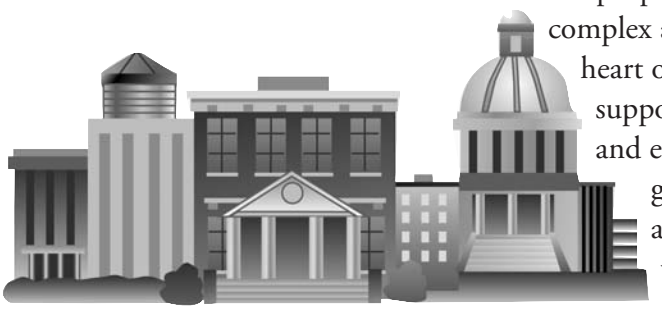
Roberts: Most fraternal leadership models are at their core very conventional. Even if they espouse shared leadership, the leadership development opportunities are usually offered to positional leaders. The notions of heroic and charismatic leading embedded in these programs undermine true shared leadership. An exception to this generalization is Beta Theta Pi, a fraternity founded at Miami in the nineteenth century. It is the only example that I'm confident demonstrates the emerging and future wave of leadership understanding. Beta Theta Pi committed itself to providing pervasive leadership learning opportunities to its members through a variety of programs for men who held executive positions in the fraternity, as well as for the broader membership. They aspire to touch every one of the men who affiliate with Beta Theta Pi. I recently attended a dinner celebrating their progress in meeting this goal. Over the last 4 years, they have increased their participation in leadership programs provided by the fraternity by almost 400 percent. In addition, they launched a fund-raising campaign that raised 20 million dollars for an endowment to support these efforts.

Brown: But with the exception of Beta Theta Pi, what is it about the history and practices of fraternal organizations that make them resistant to a shared leadership model even as many in the corporate world have moved in that direction?

Roberts: There are a variety of factors that reinforce the continued use of conventional models. First and foremost, these organizations were established in the nineteenth century and still retain much of the character of that period. The business, politics, and social sectors of the nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries assumed that bureaucratic and hierarchical models were the way to get things done. Fraternal organizations, although founded on democratic principles, have very controlling structures —controlling the behavior of undergraduate members and reducing the potential for risk and liability.

Another factor is the intergenerational nature of these organizations. Alumni are very involved in fraternal organizations at the national and local levels. These alumni have not studied, nor have they been exposed to more contemporary models of leadership; they advocate for structures and processes that are more characteristic of industrial or bureaucratic leadership.

Campuses and the headquarters that oversee fraternal organizations have tried many things to bring alumni back to their core purposes. The modern college or university cannot afford to have organizations that do not help the institution achieve its core purposes of enhancing learning in a complex and challenging world. In our heart of hearts, those of us who are supporters of fraternal organizations, and especially those who are not, have grown weary of trying new approaches that seem not to work in any sustainable way.



Brown: Have sororities responded more positively to the shared leadership model than fraternities?

Roberts: While you might expect that women's organizations would have a different approach to leadership and shared responsibility, I have seen little evidence of this. In fact, some of the women's organizations have more controlling systems than men's groups. These were created originally to establish equity and

fairness among the various women's groups. Particularly when it came to recruiting members, the women's groups have had many, many rules and structures that reinforce conformity. These are breaking up a bit now, but there is still a lot of structure to women's groups.

Brown: It occurred to me that your change strategy may be too dependent on administrative staff rather than on the students themselves? Is this endemic to the professionalization of administrative staff in which their training and orientation makes it hard for them to step back and expect students take the lead?

Roberts: It is true that Fraternal Futures was stimulated by administrators' and Greek professionals' concerns but with the full realization that students had to be encouraged to take responsibility for their own affairs.

Brown: And from your experience, have they?

Roberts: The evidence we've gleaned from the Fraternal Futures deliberations is that students express greater willingness to take responsibility. We have not been able to document that this led to action and change. In order to stimulate action, deliberation on fraternal purposes would likely need to be sustained over a period of time and become part of the culture in these organizations.

Brown: You have said that there is a good chance that fraternal organizations "will not survive unless they pursue deep and sustained conversations that renew them as not only part of, but essential to their campuses." I would have thought that for fraternal organizations with alumni support and independent financial means, which indirectly help institutions with other budget priorities, survival would not be an issue?

Roberts: There is every possibility that fraternal organizations could continue to exist, but as independent entities. The point is that colleges and universities spend a great deal of their resources dealing with problems in fraternal organizations. This investment is not justified unless the organizations cooperate and help the institution achieve its goals. I don't view this in any way as punitive or unresponsive. It is simply a matter of reality that institutions support those entities that support their core mission and help improve their effectiveness. Fraternal organizations are sometimes so caught up in their affairs that their members lose sight of the ultimate objective of higher education: to develop an informed

citizenry capable of contributing to workplaces and communities alike.

Brown: Has the Fraternal Futures initiative and its deliberative practices crossed over to other unrelated groups on the campuses where it has been used?

Roberts: Our research has not addressed the question of whether or not deliberative practice related to fraternal organizations spills over into other topics. We presume that this is happening to a degree but we are not sure. We do know that our peer facilitators talk glowingly about the skills they've acquired in moderating Fraternal Futures forums. Some have reported that prospective employers see their moderator training and deliberation experience on their resumes. When they notice it, employers almost always ask about the experience, and it becomes a distinguishing characteristic for these students.

Brown: If a fraternal organization chooses its new members for their compatibility with whatever homogeneity already exists in the organization, isn't this a serious limitation for those expected to deliberate with others outside their circle?

Roberts: Yes, I would have to agree that the homogeneity of fraternal groups is likely to limit the success of these deliberations. If these students can learn deliberative practice in safe settings with close peers, then using it elsewhere is likely to be enhanced. We have not tested this question.

Brown: Do a few people remain critical to sustaining the Fraternal Futures initiative or have many "custodians" of the enterprise emerged?

Roberts: The fact that many of the students affiliated with these groups appear to be running from one activity to the next with little time for reflection on their experience is a serious drawback. Unfortunately, my emerging belief is that these organizations foster frenetic activity to bond their members and to gain visibility on campus. They do this in order to survive. The tragic part of this is that over-involvement can actually reduce the learning outcomes that these organizations purport to achieve.

Brown: Does that mean that the Fraternal Futures initiative may not be sustainable with so much else going on?

Roberts: Competition for students' time makes reflective and deliberative practice difficult. However, I'm still convinced that deliberative practice is best learned in areas of innate, personal interest to students. I originally thought that Fraternal Futures

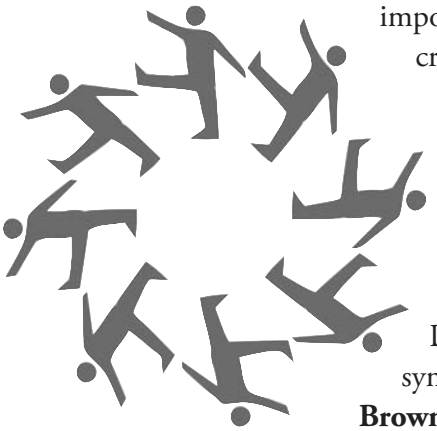
"Competition for students' time makes reflective and deliberative practice difficult."

would take deliberative practice to a ground that students valued —their student organizations and living groups. If the topic were something of great value to them, it makes sense that students would connect and that they would sustain their commitments. An impression that I've gathered is that some students actually don't care that much about their fraternal affiliation; it has become a trivialized social outlet and networking mechanism. For those students who take fraternalism seriously, the years of disempowerment they have encountered results in a sense of hopelessness. The combination of lack of deep commitment and hopelessness means that it is difficult to achieve traction in deliberative processes.

Brown: Turning to your recent book, *Deeper Learning in Leadership*, does it relate to your Fraternal Futures work?

Roberts: I've worked on this book in my head for over a decade. It is a combination of an update of *Student Leadership Programs in Higher Education* that I edited in 1981, and my commitment to recognize and restore the voice of Dr. Esther Lloyd-Jones as a pioneer in higher education and student affairs work. My belief is that the explosion in interest in leadership development over the last 30 years is wonderful but that it has only begun to scratch the surface of the issues that we really need to address.

In the book, I've chosen to summarize and integrate theory, curricular and co-curricular ideas, and organizational models that have the potential to deepen the impact of these very important programs. In this book, I serve as an internal critic—attempting to raise the bar so that we can accomplish in higher education what needs to be done in leadership learning. Lloyd-Jones' view of learning and how to foster it in students is directly descended from John Dewey's notions of democratic education. Thus, Dewey's ideas that make their way into deliberation and Lloyd-Jones' translation of Dewey into enhancing learning find an extraordinary symmetry in the Fraternal Futures work.



Brown: How did you get involved in all this work in the first place?

Roberts: I've had a passion for understanding the student experience for as long as I can remember. My first and deepest commitment is to understanding leadership. My second is to understanding community. These two are related in profound

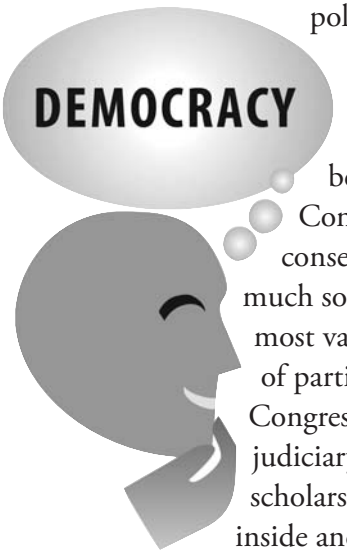
ways, and I am constantly looking for the relationship between forms of shared leadership and how that impacts the development and presence of healthy communities. Healthy communities have carrier genes that protect individuals by strengthening the systems and relationships that are available in the community. I'm curious about many things and that is the nature of student affairs work. We are interdisciplinary thinkers who have students' welfare at the center of our work.

Brown: Thank you, Denny.

DOES AMERICAN DEMOCRACY STILL WORK?

By Alan Wolfe
Kenneth A. Brown, Reviewer

Over the course of the past decade, there has been a fundamental shift in the style and tone of the country's politics and governmental affairs, Alan Wolfe argues in his recent book *Does American Democracy Still Work?* Moderation and collaboration have given way to a passionate hyper-partisanship that serves neither leaders nor citizens well. Less than half a century ago, the threats to the environment from pollution and over development were so great that the country was in desperate need of an environmental protection movement. Today, at the start of a new century, he argues, the threats to our democracy from this new style of government are so great that we are in no less a need of a democracy protection movement. Inside and outside of government, the rancor and ruthlessness of modern American politics is unraveling some of our most cherished and valuable democratic traditions—modes of thought and conduct that not only make our democracy more fair but also more effective. At fault, he argues, are not just American politicians but the American public, whose lack of interest in public affairs gives leaders an all but free hand in framing current policies and shaping the future direction of the country.



Critiques of public ignorance and political invective, of course, are nothing new these days. Written after President George W. Bush's 2004 re-election and before 2006 mid-term elections which transferred Congress to Democratic control, Wolfe's anger against both conservatives and the public alike is almost visceral—so much so that it often overshadows what is perhaps the book's most valuable insight—the broad and often destructive reach of partisanship in our public affairs. His focus is not just Congress or the White House, but democracy writ large—the judiciary, media, interest groups, foundations, think tanks, scholars and others—the institutions and individuals both inside and outside of government that have traditionally

provided a sense of fairness and insight into the conduct of our national affairs. So pervasive is the force of this new partisan ethos in government today, he suggests, that it has changed not just the style and tone of our democracy, but its practice and substance as well.

In the 1950s, Democrats were the dominant political party in the United States, champions of the middle class, while Republicans were largely seen as the party of the elite. To maintain their power, Democrats reached to new voters among minorities and the poor, while Republicans worked just as eagerly to minimize both their participation and the government programs designed to aid them. Between these two extremes, the day-to-day realities of governance and public policy were driven largely by consensus and a search for the political middle ground—at least as Wolfe sees it—with political and professional elites largely setting the country's agenda.

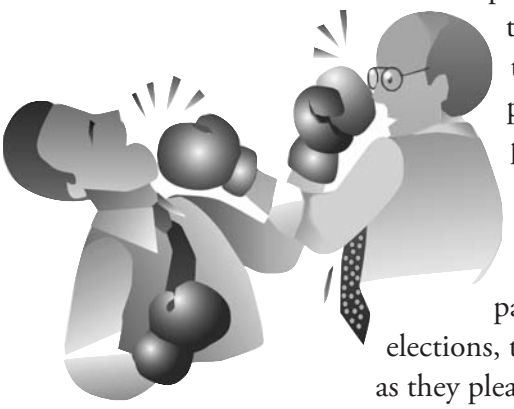
Today, some 50 years later, that balance of power and interests have been turned almost completely on its head. Democrats are dismissed as liberal elitists while conservative Republicans are seen as champions of the middle class. Elites and their moderating influence, in turn, have all but disappeared from the scene. "The New Left's call for participatory democracy shattered the traditions and practices that enabled elites to run most of America's institutions relatively unchecked. Within the course of one generation's experience, the United States went from imagining itself as a democracy in theory to becoming one in practice," Wolfe writes. "Yet if the original democratic energy came from the left, it would more than spill over to benefit the right. Over the longer haul, conservatives simply out-hustled the liberals. They won important wars of ideas. Their sense of purpose was stronger and their determination remarkable. If they could not take over institutions dominated by liberals and moderates, they created their own run by conservatives," he explains.

That transformation of traditional non-governmental institutions has been a serious blow to democratic life as Wolfe sees it. Deregulation and the rise of media conglomerates have crippled the press, with time and space once given to covering political issues increasingly giving way entertainment and celebrity news. Grassroots civic and business groups that once provided an effective link between officials and the public, in turn, have been replaced by so-called "Astroturf" organizations linked more to a particular ideology than any real public. The high courts, in par-

ticular the Supreme Court, Wolfe argues, have become increasingly political as well. This decline of impartial outside observers have left today's political leaders free to do largely as they please—and what they have done, Wolfe argues, is consolidate their hold on power.

Rather than mobilize voters, politicians today increasingly seek to manipulate them. Polls and focus groups are used not as tools for developing public policy, but as sophisticated tools for selling an already agreed upon ideological policy to an increasingly gullible and inattentive public, Wolfe argues. Rather than voters choosing their elected officials, he suggests, elected officials today increasingly choose their voters through creatively drawn legislative districts and carefully orchestrated outreach campaigns. The technique, he argues, has become so effective that by 2004 more than three-fourths of all seats in the U.S. House of Representative were considered "safe" for incumbents. With no need to worry about the political middle, those in Congress became increasingly concerned with cultivating the partisan views of their base—conservatives in particular. From the war in Iraq to tax and economic policies that Wolfe believes have dramatically expanded the gap between the rich and poor, the results have been catastrophic.

Bolstering his arguments with facts and figures about the increasing gridlock in Congress, the growing gap between public opinion and public policy, and the increasing tendency of the former Republican majority to exclude Democrats from the legislative process, Wolfe paints a disturbing picture of politics in Washington—and many state capitols as well.



In Wolfe's analysis, however, the real culprits behind all of this are the public. By paying too little attention to candidates and elections, they have given officials the freedom to do as they please. To bolster his argument, Wolfe cites a variety of well-worn figures from recent political science research: the fact that a majority of Americans cannot identify a single member of the Supreme Court, nor have any clear idea about the limited amount the country spends on foreign aid. Statistics about the public's perceptions about the impact of recent tax cuts or its belief in a link between 9/11 and Iraq are no less troubling.

Others, of course, have argued that facts are not everything when it comes to evaluating the public's ability to reason, and Wolfe spends some time discussing the ideas of fellow scholars like Benjamin Page, Robert Shapiro, and others which suggest that the public's judgment in aggregate is often surprisingly rational and stable, but then just as quickly dismisses them—arguing that the public's lack of attention to detail makes them too easy to manipulate and mislead.

The insights of deliberative democracy are also discussed—in this case through the lens of Jim Fishkin's experiments in deliberative polling. While they are seen as a promising indication of the public's potential for grappling with difficult public and political issues, in Wolfe's view the promise of deliberative democracy represents little more than wishful thinking because of the public's instinctive distaste for politics. The very things that make democratic politics possible—negotiation and compromise—he argues, are the very things Americans dislike.

"In Wolfe's view the promise of deliberative democracy represents little more than wishful thinking."

"When it comes to politics, Americans rely on their cynicism to escape from their obligations then trust their naïveté to counter their ignorance. Their views about politics seem more appropriate for spoiled children than for mature adults," he writes. The hope, he suggests, is that "Americans, in short, may eventually tire of the new politics of democracy. Fed up with vituperation, polarization, and endless domestic warfare, they may return to their traditional ideological centrism and begin to look for leaders capable of bringing them together rather than tearing them apart."

For those disappointed with the current state of politics in America, that is a promising possibility. Yet while Wolfe's book serves as a useful overview of how and where American democracy has perhaps gone wrong in recent years, his own not inconsiderable anger makes it unlikely that it will help resolve any of the hyper-partisanship he is so critical of.

To illustrate what he sees as clear-cut public ignorance and irresponsible conservative extremism, for example, Wolfe spends no small amount of time presenting evidence about the inequalities and inequities of recent tax cuts. Yet however unfair or irresponsible one might think those proposals might be in light of the nation's growing deficits and growing income disparities, there is no getting around the fact that many conservatives—and many Americans—are deeply committed to cutting taxes for a host of personal and philosophical reasons. The difficulties and challenges

of resolving that issue will be solved not by presenting more data, but by learning to understand and respect the values and beliefs of those we disagree with and work toward some common ground.

No less disconcerting is Wolfe's almost complete lack of history. In the midst of a sharp critique of the current Bush administration, for example, Wolfe pauses to lament the passing of the more "genial" Reagan years. However genial Reagan himself might have been, his administration's policies in Central America and dismantling of both the country's environmental legislation—to say nothing of our programs to aid the poor and underprivileged—was anything but cordial or centrist. So too is Wolfe's pervading sense of a golden era of American democracy in 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s—almost as if the McCarthy era, the Vietnam War, and Watergate had never happened. Past errors, of course, do not excuse present errors, but it does help to have an accurate assessment of where we have been as a nation.

Given the increasing partisanship of politics in general and Congress in particular over the past decade or so, it will be interesting to see how much the incoming and newly Democratic Congress takes ideas like Wolfe's to heart with regards to developing a truly bi-partisan direction on the country's future. "Americans deserve to feel better about both themselves and about their society," he writes."But it is clear that any turn away from the new politics of democracy will be a difficult one to achieve.... One should not conclude that the system works simply because new faces have come to town," he cautions. "Americans will know their democracy is on the road to recovery when their leaders take them seriously enough to pose difficult choices, provide disquieting information, challenge their assumptions, and elevate their sights."

AFTERWORD

By David Mathews

David Brown gave me a launching pad to introduce these reflections by quoting from the piece I wrote for the upcoming book on the *Higher Education Exchange*. My chapter is based on the premise that democracy is now facing fundamental challenges and that higher education is accountable for the role it plays in meeting these threats. Given that premise, I went immediately to the review of Alan Wolfe's timely *Does American Democracy Still Work?* Wolfe raises the right question. The modern version of democracy, which relies largely on the machinery of government, is in trouble. I am not talking about troubles within democratic countries, such as natural disasters; I am talking about the systemic problems of democracy—the megachallenges—that endanger self-rule.

As is true of everyone writing for this issue of the *Exchange*, we have our own interpretation of why democratically elected governments are in trouble. I've been concerned about the role of the public—specifically about what scholars have described as the "sidelining" of citizens. In recent issues of the *Kettering Review*, I note that while a multitude of reforms have been proposed to address the problems of democracy, the role of the public in those reforms varies, as do notions of what the public is. The variations don't concern me, but I am troubled that the concepts of the citizenry in the reforms are seldom explicit; they are almost always implicit—you have to dig them out.

In the 2006 *Exchange*, Derek Barker reports on five distinctly different notions about the public in five academic initiatives that all fly under the flag of public engagement. I am not proposing that we should come to one definition of the public, only that we tell one another what we mean by the term and what role we see for the public. The question of what the public is, is like the question of democracy itself: it is always open to debate. Vincent Colapietro, one of the authors for the fall 2006 *Review*, points out that the issue of what citizens should do lives within the

irresolvable question of democracy. Still, if we could make our assumptions about the public more explicit, we could learn more from one another. Globally, we are in the midst of a serious reconsideration of what democracy is. And I have argued in the *Review* that while future generations may find that ours was shortsighted, unrealistic, or just plain wrongheaded, they should not find that we didn't examine the consequences of our assumptions about the public.

In making this proposal, I am not implying that the role of the public be determined by an intellectual examination of definitions. What the public comes to mean in twenty-first century democracy will be settled by what citizens come to expect of themselves. And these expectations are being set today as people decide how to respond to the problems that threaten their collective well-being. In summing up the contributions of 25 years of National Issues Forums, I've come to the conclusion that the most important decisions made in these deliberations haven't been about which government policies are best or what civic actions people should take. They have been about what people will demand of themselves as citizens.

Although those of us who write for publications like the *Exchange* won't have the final say, I do hope that our ideas will have some impact. You probably know that my own conception of the public is of a citizenry-at-work making shared decisions about the collective actions needed to address common problems. Naturally, I have used that definition as a lens for reading this issue of *HEX*. I wanted to find out how the work of the academy affects the ability of citizens to do their work. I don't believe the academy can do this work for people or even empower them, yet I think academics can better align what they do as scholars and teachers with what citizen-as-citizens do. By "align," I mean that their work can be compatible with and perhaps reinforce the work that citizens must do.

An example from journalism may help clarify what I mean by aligning academic routines with the work of the public. The late and much respected Cole Campbell argued that those in his profession should go about doing the things that they do normally so as to contribute to the knowledge that citizens need to govern themselves. Cole's concept of what the public does is such that simply giving people accurate information isn't enough,

even though some journalists see their responsibility to the public as simply presenting the facts - period. The work of citizens, as Cole saw it, requires people to make sound judgments about the actions they should take in their collective interest (or the actions their representatives should take). And sound judgment about what should be, he believed, requires what he called "public knowledge," which is socially constructed in public deliberations. From this perspective, journalists are accountable for the impact that their definitions of problems and the frameworks used in their stories have on deliberations among citizens. Cole didn't propose a special project or provide a technique for journalists to use; instead, he offered a democratic standard for evaluating everything a news organization does.

Cole brings me to John Gastil's article, because Cole's proposal to align journalistic routines with the creation of public knowledge strikes me as being close to John's call for public scholars to facilitate public action. Like Cole, John's proposal implies that citizens are producers, not simply consumers, and that producing is more than giving consent to others to act on behalf of the public.

Mary Ann Murphy takes on another popular definition of the public—citizens who volunteer to help others. Wasn't it Theodore Roosevelt who pointed out that "fellow-feeling" is essential to democratic citizenship? Who wouldn't want to live among people with such sympathies? As I read the interview with Mary Ann, however, I noticed reservations about reducing citizenship to "random acts of kindness." She advocates students producing something of value, which would make them a citizenry-at-work—if what they produce comes from their collective efforts and not just individual initiatives. If that is the case, conversations at Pace University might continue to connect usefully with conversations in the *Exchange*.

Denny Roberts spoke about leadership, and as I read his interview, I asked myself what concept of the public is implied in the different kinds of leadership he mentioned. Some theories of leadership seem to imply that the public is no more than a body of followers. I have heard it said (more than once) that our country needs better leaders, suggesting that what the citizenry does is of little consequence; leaders are the folks that actually get things done! I recall a leadership organization that declined to support public forums on the grounds that if people could make good

decisions on their own, there wouldn't be any need for leaders. Maybe this organization thought of leaders as those who hold positions of authority, which they might be willing to share on occasion.

Other theories of leadership seem to focus on functions rather than individuals. From this perspective, leadership is initiative, and anyone taking an initiative is providing leadership. For the work of citizens to go forward, however, the initiators would have to engage the other people who are usually needed to solve a problem. And these "others" would have to be producers, not just followers. That makes the initiative-engagement dynamics essential to understand. These dynamics might become the basis for a democratic theory of public leadership, a subject worth pursuing in future issues of the *Exchange* because of the host of leadership programs that have sprung up on college campuses.

Barbara Nesin's article strikes me as one-of-a-kind. I find it both intriguing and challenging because of my limited understanding of what goes on in the world of visual art. Fortunately, my colleague in writing, Paloma Dallas, is more informed and tried to help me. In attempting to understand the notion of the public that was implied in Barbara's article, my instinct was to ground myself first in the primary meaning of "aesthetics." The Indo-European root of this word has to do with perceptions and feelings, and this original meaning has stayed with us in the word for the antithesis of aesthetic, "anesthetic," without feeling. Visual art, I assumed, involves changing perceptions to change feelings. So, does that imply the public is simply a body of spectators?

If the public has to do more than observe—if it has to be a citizenry-at-work—then the question is, how does art affect people doing the work of citizens? If, as Cole argued, the work of citizens is centered in making sound judgments, what does art contribute? In some ways, this is a trick question because making sound judgments requires dealing with what people hold dear—as well as with the considerable differences that arise over what is truly important to our collective well-being. So the better question is, what can art do to enable people to work through their differences in a way that enables them to make sound collective decisions?

Various arts have been used in politics to promote a point of view or to challenge the dominant orthodoxy. The arts can capture common feelings and evoke negative emotions. But can it do more? In politics, our feelings come from the things we hold dear.

If a course of action brings us closer to achieving what is most important to us, we are pleased. If it doesn't, we are displeased; we are frustrated, perhaps angry. The difficulty in politics is that a good many things are important to our collective well-being. To report an illustration often used, we value our security, and we value our freedom. And in given situations, our feelings often conflict because what makes us secure may curtail our freedom or vice versa. What we feel most of all is tension. It is useful to know when that feeling is shared because we are able to recognize the source of our differences is not between people, who have different values, but among and even within individuals who have the same basic concerns but weigh them differently. This realization fundamentally changes the way we approach problems. It combats the polarization that Alan Wolfe describes.

So can the arts bring us to a similar insight about our differences? Paloma tells me they can and do. Theater is particularly good at presenting tensions that we can recognize in ourselves. The implied public is not a collection of individuals locked into their own private feelings; it is a citizenry connecting to the feelings of others by sharing personal dramas. That is another kind of fellow-feeling, which is different from sympathy. In politics, however, the goal is more than mutual understanding. Sharing stories has to serve a purpose, which is to make sound decisions about actions that need to be taken.

As you can see, I was quite taken with Barbara Nesin's article; it led me in a number of directions. For instance, it made me recall previous essays on the liberal arts, which have implications for how people learn to be citizens and function as a public. Bernie Murchland and Peter Levine have each written about the close connection between the liberal arts and civic arts in the *Exchange*. They pointed out that the original liberal arts were designed to prepare people for their role as free citizens. The subjects were practices used in public life, such as logic and rhetoric. The curriculum also included music, perhaps because collective music making builds a collective identity.

There are recent indications that liberal arts colleges may be returning to their civic roots, which have implications for the role of the public. The new president of nearby Antioch College, Steven Lawry, has proposed just that. Maybe the *Exchange* will also return to the subject.

My reason for raising issues for consideration in future issues should appeal to our editors. They have found that the *Exchange* has become rich enough to justify a book. Perhaps we all should be looking ahead to the topics for a second volume. Obviously, I would recommend further explorations of the way academics are using their disciplines and professions to affect whatever they consider to be the public. That could clarify our assumptions about the public, not by comparing abstract definitions, but by understanding the public that is implied in the work of academics.

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