Youth Civic Engagement:
An Institutional Turn

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YOUTH AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION: INTRODUCTION
PETER LEVINE AND JAMES YOUNISS

In 1790, Condorcet observed that every generation accuses itself of being less-civic minded that its predecessors.[1] Perhaps that concern is always appropriate, because citizens are made, not born; it takes deliberate efforts to prepare young people to participate effectively and wisely in public life. In any case, we have specific reasons to be concerned about youth civic engagement today, including low scores on assessments of civic knowledge, weakening social trust, dropping rates of membership in traditional organizations, low and falling efficacy, and a long decline in voter turnout from 1972 to 2002.

The papers in this collection were written by an interdisciplinary group to address two main questions: What conditions deter young people's involvement in politics and civic life? What reforms could enhance youth engagement? Most of the contributors met face-to-face in Washington, DC in March 2005 to discuss their papers and the general issue of youth civic engagement. The meeting was funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York through a grant to the Life Cycle Institute at Catholic University of America. CIRCLE (The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement) was a partner in planning the meeting.[2]

The following were some major themes in the papers and discussion. Although these points were not endorsed by everyone in the group, they provoked conversation and captured significant support.

1. AN INSTITUTIONAL TURN

Research, policy, and practice regarding youth civic engagement should consider not only direct efforts to change young people's civic skills, knowledge, and behavior (for example, through civic education or voter mobilization), but also reforms of institutions that might make participation more rewarding and welcome. The problem is not always inside young people's heads; sometimes they are right to avoid participation in the processes and institutions that exist for them. For similar reasons, it is important to study (and perhaps to change) their ordinary, daily experiences, assumptions, and expectations.

As we critically examine institutions and cultures, however, we should keep in mind William Damon's caution. Youth, he notes, tend to define "democracy" as a system of perfect equality where everyone is free to do as he or she likes. In fact, there are trade-offs between equality and freedom; and even taken separately, each value is utopian. Thus the goal is not to make institutions meet the sometimes unrealistic expectations of youth, but to hold them to reasonable standards.

2. COMPETITIVENESS AND CONTROVERSY IN POLITICS

Elections provide an important topic for institutional analysis. Data indicate that when elections are closely contested, the competition energizes political discussion and citizens' involvement. There is reason to think that the mobilizing effects of electoral competition are particularly important for young people. (See the papers by Gimpel and Lay and Galston for details.) However, in recent years, sophisticated drawing of electoral districts has reduced competitiveness and, consequently, diminished citizens' interest and involvement.

Electoral reform can be handled in many ways, ranging from nonpartisan districting commissions and the allocation of Electoral College votes on a proportional basis (as Galston advocates), to more radical changes such as proportional representation and multi-member districts. The law of unintended consequences applies to all such proposals. Thus how to reform elections in order to increase youth participation is a critical but unsettled question.[3]

Competition and debate mobilize people at the scale of states and electoral districts, where most participants do not know one another. However, as Diana Mutz shows, a diversity of opinions can

discourage participation in smaller associations, neighborhoods, and families, "in part because of the social awkwardness that comes from publicly talking a stand that friends or associates may oppose." One answer is deliberately to teach young people how to discuss controversial issues with civility. But, as Joel Westheimer argues, the general political climate is such that teachers and schools prefer to avoid discussion of controversial topics at the risk of removing politics from civics and losing opportunities for acknowledging diversity in a context where mutual understanding could be advanced.

Another response to the problem that Mutz describes is to make sure there are various forms of political engagement—some competitive and adversarial, others consensual and aimed at solving shared problems. Citizens should be able to choose among these forms of engagement at appropriate times. Together, all the forms should create a rich civic "ecosystem."

Some political engagement addresses major policy issues that are ultimately decided by legislative votes, court decisions, and referenda. In considering these issues (e.g., taxation, welfare, war, or the right to abortion), people fall into ideological groups that are represented by major organizations and parties. Voting is a citizen's main source of power. Debating, organizing, petitioning, and raising consciousness are important, but they count only insofar as they change votes. Free and fair elections are what make this level of politics democratic.

There is another level of politics—most common at the local level and within institutions—that involves direct participation in problem-solving. At this level, many of the people who will be directly affected by a decision should personally participate in deliberations about it. The same people who meet and talk about an issue can also implement their own decisions. For example, in Hampton, VA, as Carmen Sirianni describes, youth commissioners are involved in local deliberations, policymaking, and service. The same students who decide to build

a new Youth Center may also provide programs once it is built.

3. INDIVIDUALIZED RISK

Lewis Friedland and Shauna Morimoto have found that teenagers' "lifeworld"—their daily experiences and assumptions—involve an acute sense of individualized risk. Students see their choices and individual performance as having high economic stakes. Opportunities may have increased for many people over the last 30 years, but so have the consequences of failure. Adolescents may feel that they face these choices alone because of the relative weakness of families, neighborhoods, religious congregations, and voluntary associations.

As Junn argues, a competitive educational system teaches an "ideology of meritocracy, by grading on normal curves and assuring those who finish on the right tail that they will succeed because they deserve to." Contributors to this volume presumably disagree about that ideology. Some may see it as valuable, at least if opportunities to succeed are not distributed unfairly. Others argue that competitive meritocracy conflicts with civic goals. For example, in an economic system driven by choice and risk, young people may act out civic roles for instrumental purposes without an accompanying commitment. High school students are increasingly likely to volunteer, but Friedland and Morimoto find that the reason is often their sense that volunteering looks good on college applications.

A situation of pervasive choice, opportunity, and risk may also promote fluid identities, as individuals expect to move from one to another job or career, especially during formative years in the work force. This situation could account for well-documented increases in materialism and decreases in social trust among young Americans. It could help explain young people's preference for loose networks over disciplined organizations (see below). Finally, the drive to enhance students' individual value in the labor market may encourage schools to emphasize reading, math, and science at the expense of

social studies, civics, and participation in local communities.

One policy option that was discussed—although without resolution—was the idea of reorganizing American high schools (see Levine paper). When large, anonymous schools offer many courses, career tracks, extracurricular activities, and social cliques, they maximize competition and individual high-stakes choice for their students. An alternative worthy of consideration is to create small high schools—or multiple "learning communities" within high schools—in which students are encouraged to know one another and work collaboratively.

4. NEW ORGANIZATIONAL FORMS

Political and civic behavior continually seeks new forms. Just as televised debates between candidates replaced fireside chats on the radio, emergent forms of involvement are taking root today. For example, Dietlind Stolle is exploring the new consumer-based politics in which people organize to boycott or "buycott" (choose to purchase) goods such as food and clothing for normative and political reasons. Young people predominate in these efforts.

Consumer groups can be formed quickly through vehicles like the internet that connect geographically dispersed individuals on the basis of shared ethical and political purpose. The new groups may be marked by loose rather than tightly monitored networks; they are horizontal instead of hierarchically organized; they allow ready entrance and exit instead of demanding stable loyalty; and they may be transactional rather than ends in themselves.

The new forms of association raise important and unresolved questions. Do they replace or complement older forms? How much political power can they mobilize? What are their effects on political socialization? Joe Kahne suggests that the "new student politics" has its own ideologies and assumptions. We should listen to how young people define and defend their behavior, and then bring

normative democratic theory to bear in deciding whether their ideas are satisfactory.

Some argue that the new loose networks cannot overcome collective-action problems and influence political authorities, which remain important even in an age of globalized markets. Thus, Jane Eisner argues that youth would benefit from a relatively traditional lobby that represented their interests before the state and national governments: an "AARP for youth."

5. IMMIGRANT AND MINORITY YOUTH

Immigrant and minority youth settings pose still further challenges to engagement. They are infrequent targets of political mobilization and lack resources that other kinds of youth accrue by way of location or education. As Daniel Hart shows, poor young people often come of age in communities with strikingly low ratios of adults to youth, thus reducing the odds that they can receive adult guidance and support. Since political attitudes and an orientation toward civic life are often formed during youth, it is important to seek remedies that would lead to their inclusion.

An emerging body of research indicates that poor youth are amenable to direct political socialization through programs that offer political skills for addressing problems pertinent to their lives, for example, improving schools and local neighborhoods. Youth who otherwise appear uninterested gain political competence and begin to act collectively once they understand their interests and learn how to advance them in the public political debate. Jane Eisner and Jim Youniss describe successful efforts to organize youth that illustrate this potential.

As Constance Flanagan notes, the community college system is another underutilized avenue for instilling political skills and interests. By definition, community colleges reach a large segment of youth who decades ago might have been civically socialized on the job through union membership or work-related identity. Because community colleges are funded locally and are typically connected

to the economic engines of the surrounding jurisdiction, they have unique opportunities to integrate educational experiences with everyday life in an ethos of civic responsibility.

ENDNOTES

1 Cited in Dietlind Stolle and Marc Hooghe, "Emerging Repertoires of Political Action? A Review of the Debate in Participation Trends in Western Societies," paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions, April 13-18, 2004.

2 In addition to the authors of papers in this anthology, the following people contributed to the discussion at the Washington, DC meeting: Lene Jensen, Catholic University; Hugh McIntosh, Catholic University; Brendan Martin, an undergraduate student; and Judith Torney-Purta, University of Maryland.

3 For a recent collective analysis by 19 political scientists, see Stephen Macedo et al., Democracy at Risk: How Political Choices Undermine Citizen Participation, and What We Can Do About It (Washington, DC, Brookings Institution Press 2005).

WHAT SCHOOLS SHOULD DO TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR DEMOCRACY
WILLIAM DAMON

The institution that I shall discuss is the school, and the problem that I shall focus on is preparing students for constructive participation in a democracy. My comments are addressed to contemporary schooling generally rather to any particular context or grade level, since there are failures in citizenship education all throughout our society's institutions of learning.

Part of the problem is that there has been too little systematic discussion in the educational community regarding what young people must learn in order to function well in a democracy. Of course I am aware of the many current efforts to re-energize the teaching of civics, and there is some good work being done in related areas such as moral and character education. But work on citizenship education itself is piecemeal and poorly distributed across the educational landscape. Many of the essential concepts and habits that constructive democratic participation requires have been overlooked entirely. In addition, there has been little effort to reflect on the real problem of how ideological biases may affect such efforts, or even how the political views of teachers should be handled when such material is taught.

Among the concepts that have not been adequately addressed by education at any level in our society are: political freedom; equal rights under the law; the distinct nature of a democratic republic; the economic costs and benefits of political choices; the need for checks and balances; and the meaning and importance of patriotism. This is but a small selection of the essential ideas that underlie our particular social system: they are ideas that evolved over generations of struggle and debate and that are crucial to the preservation of our democratic way of life. I note these particular concepts here because in my own research I have found many of today's young to be ignorant of them.

What does democracy mean to young people today? If you ask this to a group of high school students, you will get the following answers (this is easily replicable - try it, it's fascinating to do). First of all, most students will say that a democracy is a place where people are equal. They will mean by this a wholly naive notion of equality. That is, they mean it quite literally: everyone is or should be equal in a democracy. This idea leads to the conclusion that a democracy is a place where people become equal. In fact, this becomes a kind of moral imperative for a democracy: it should make people equal. This, of course, is an idea that is not only unrealistic but would have bemused any of the Founding Fathers. The problem is that too few of our students have learned the kind of understanding necessary to realize that a successful democracy can make people equal under the law but it cannot make people equal in fact, and systems that attempt to do that usually stray from democratic principles.

Second, students may say that a democracy is a system where everyone has an equal say. Rarely will you find a student who knows that we live in a democratic republic, where in fact we do not all have equal say in the sense that the student assumes. Nor will the student be able to define what a republic is, or how a republic functions to implement democratic principles in a particular way.

Third, a lot of youngsters will say that a democracy is a place where people are free to do whatever they want as long as it doesn't hurt other people. A democracy is a place where people don't boss you around, where there is "self-governance." In this way, the notion of liberty comes in. But once again, this is a naive way of thinking, placing liberty in opposition to authority and assuming that self-governance literally means that everyone governs themselves. I have yet to see a course of instruction in American schools that explains the ways in which certain forms of authority are necessary for the preservation of liberty or that even discusses the central notion of legitimate authority and what it means.

Likewise with the other concepts that I have noted above. The economic understanding of American students is abysmal. Of course, so is that of adults - witness the way costly legislation is passed without accounting for the expenses in case after case. The problem clearly is that we are not preparing students to cope with economic realities. Recently I heard about a high school social studies class that "voted" to refrain from buying diamond jewelry and to ask their parents to do the same because of the poor working conditions of diamond miners. From what I could tell, there was no discussion of what costs these same miners and their families might bear if the diamond industry contracted - or even of how and when boycotts actually might work. Rather than dealing with the hard and complex realities of the economic principles at stake, the class had simply indulged itself in what might have seemed an emotionally satisfying protest - not exactly preparation for effective political participation.

The final, and most serious, problem that I will mention has to do with the capacity for positive feelings towards one's society, with a sense of attachment, a sense of affiliation, and a sense of purpose fostered by one's role as citizen. This is an emotional capacity that, since the time of the ancient Greeks, has been known as patriotism. This is not a familiar word in most educational circles. In fact, I would guess that patriotism is the most politically-incorrect word in education today. If you think it's hard to talk about morality and values in schools, try talking about patriotism. You really can't get away with it without provoking an argument or, at the least, a curt change of subject. Teachers too often confuse a patriotic love of country with the kind of militaristic chauvinism that 20th Century dictators used to justify warfare and manipulate their own masses. They do not seem to realize that it was the patriotic resistance to these dictatorships, by citizens of democratic republics such as our own, that saved the world from tyranny in the past century and is the best hope of doing so in the future.

In much of education today, American history and social studies are taught from a mostly critical perspective. Now there is nothing wrong with a critical perspective per se; and it is very important that young people come to know the failings and the mistakes that our society has made and how we can do better. But there are matters of context and development sequence that come into play: that is, placing criticism in a meaningful context and presenting it after one has properly explained the thing being criticized (including its virtues). Too many students today learn all about what is wrong with our society without gaining any knowledge of our society's great moral successes.

To establish a sound cognitive and affective foundation for citizenship education, schools need to begin with the positive, to emphasize reasons for caring enough about our democratic society to participate in it and to improve it. Schools need to foster a sympathetic understanding of the history and workings of our democratic republic - an understanding informed by all the facts and energized by a spirit of patriotism.

A MODEST PROPOSAL

WILLIAM A. GALSTON

As we know, voting among young adults rose significantly in 2004. While turnout was up across the board, it rose especially sharply in the "battleground" states. In fact, the gap between youth turnout in battleground versus non-battleground states was larger than the comparable gap for older voters.

The most plausible interpretation of these results is that young voters respond strongly to two principal electoral forces --- mobilization and competition. In practice, the two are linked: parties, candidates, and outside groups are more likely to devote resources to mobilizing voters when they believe that their efforts could make a difference. It follows, I believe, that young people would be more likely to participate in electoral politics if our elections were more competitive.

Many scholars have observed that in recent decades, many elections have become less competitive. Some of this reflects population shifts, as people who can choose where to live increasingly associate with others of like mind. In the 2004 election, fully 60 percent of all counties gave more than 60 percent of their vote to either the Democratic or Republican candidate, compared to 53 percent in 2003 and only 38 percent in 1996.

Declining competitiveness reflects, as well, the hardening of ideological differences. In the 2004 election, fewer than one-third of the states were actively contested. No one imagined that the Democrats could do well in Mississippi, or the Republicans in New York.

But this trend also reflects political engineering. Making use of sophisticated technology and data sets, the parties have become ever more skillful at drawing district lines for Congress and state legislatures so as to create safe seats for incumbents of both parties. In 2002, for example, incumbents ran for reelection in 50 out of the 53 California congressional districts. All 50 won. The least dominant incumbent won 58 percent of the vote. I call this the "perfect gerrymander."

I want to suggest a two-step strategy of institutional reform that could dramatically increase the competitiveness of US elections at both the state and national levels.

Step One. Today, there are more competitive congressional races in the tiny state of Iowa than in California and Illinois combined. The reason: Iowa took the redistricting process out of the hands of state legislators and placed it in a nonpartisan council dominated by retired judges. Recently, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger proposed the same system for his state, and others are following suit. If this became a new national norm, it would heighten competition and participation in national and state legislative races.

Step Two. At the presidential level, candidates and parties ignore two-thirds of the states because the winner-take-all method of awarding states' electoral votes reduces to political nullity the impact of the minority party's pockets of strength in states whose vote the majority party dominates in the aggregate. A simple constitutional amendment could change this. Suppose all states were required to do what only Maine and Nebraska now do --- award their two (senatorial) electoral votes to the majority or plurality winner, and the remainder of their electoral votes to the winner of each congressional district. In combination with redistricting along the lines of Step One, this constitutional change would transform areas of nearly every state into competitive battlegrounds, increasing incentives for mobilization and enhancing the prospects for participation, especially among mobilization-sensitive young adults.

YOUTH AT-RISK FOR NON-PARTICIPATION
JAMES G. GIMPEL AND J. CELESTE LAY

Our findings from Cultivating Democracy (2003)[1], and from our follow-up studies currently in progress, have reinforced much of the previous research that has identified poorly socialized populations.   Among those most at risk for non-participation are African Americans, Latinos, the poor and those living in single-parent households, the children of the foreign-born, women, those with low educational aspirations, those living in non-competitive or low-turnout political environments, the non-religious, those who are not attentive to news media, students who avoid or simply are not exposed to discussions of politics, and those who dislike their government-related courses and otherwise doubt that school authorities treat them fairly.   For the respondents who possess more than a few of these risk factors, the likelihood of nonparticipation as an adult is exceedingly high. For the respondents who possess only two or three of these traits, there is the possibility that the presence of positive forces in an adolescent's environment may neutralize or overcome the ones that diminish participatory impulses.

Imagine that each risk factor is a kind of weight that adds to the inertia holding one away from moving toward the goal of responsible citizenship (Plutzer 2002).   Those most heavily burdened may never reach the point where they even register to vote, much less volunteer for a campaign.   The most burdened citizens possess a sufficiently high number of risk factors that non-involvement is the most likely outcome.   Others may possess some of the risk factors, but positive forces in their environment, such as stimulating political campaigns, and adult models of participation, can help to overcome the factors that otherwise predict cynicism.

Mitigating these sources of poor socialization is a responsibility of parents. However, if parents were completely adequate to the task, we would not have such widespread non-participation among young adults in the first place.   Non-participatory

attitudes, like those favoring engagement, are intergenerationally transmitted. It is easy to argue that parents should assume more responsibility for civically educating their children, but getting from here to there is not a wide and straight path. One of the only places where good citizenship can be modeled for children who live in communities characterized by bad citizenship is school.   Several of the stimuli to good citizenship are directly manipulable by education policymakers, including social studies education content and aspects of school climate.   We believe that excellent classroom instruction about government and politics is critical for building knowledge.   But exposure to civics-related coursework is not enough to make more than a marginal difference for the vast majority of students. Far more important to predicting knowledge and discussion is whether students acquire a liking for the subject matter. Students who disliked the study of government scored as much as 20 points lower on our political knowledge test than others. School-based reforms directed at increasing students' exposure to social studies, but not directed toward reshaping the content of these courses to make them more stimulating, will not accomplish much.

Our research indicates that the educational policy discussion needs to be shifted from curriculum requirements toward the development of customized curriculum content and improvement of instructional style. Experiments with curriculum reform, mentoring, guidance, and instructional method may go a long way toward uncovering techniques for teaching government that can compensate for living in neighborhoods with poor involvement. Ensuring that social studies personnel have interest in and knowledge related to classroom instruction is still another means for ensuring better citizenship education.

Exposure to television news and the amount of political discussion about current events may also be subject to curriculum modification. News media exposure, we have learned, is a stimulus for political discussion, but does not contribute directly to the basic factual knowledge that we

were testing.   But news sources may be a source of information gains that we did not capture in our survey.   Several studies have documented that citizens do learn about politics from exposure to television campaign advertising (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995).   And discussion is causally linked to knowledge, so television news is not completely without value as a tool for learning via the medium of interpersonal exchange. We conclude that exposure to television news can compensate for aspects of an adolescent's environment that have a depressing effect on discussion and knowledge, such as living in a low-turnout area with no political party mobilization.

Along with others, we have also come to view bad political socialization as part of a more general problem of adolescent development and motivation.   Many students who suffer from poor school performance and low self-esteem exhibit the corresponding characteristics of low political efficacy and system support. At the same time, it is not inevitable that students with lower motivation and educational aspirations wind up badly socialized.   The answer to the problem of low civic engagement is not necessarily to make everyone want to go on to a four-year college and become a physician or a professor.   Many observers apparently come to believe that only people with college degrees are capable of making informed political judgments – that somehow good citizenship requires a certain requisite number of years of formal education.   This makes us wonder how all of those uneducated (albeit male) masses in 19th century America managed to get to the polls and be so civically engaged.

V.O. KEY WAS RIGHT

While there is undeniable evidence that education and knowledge go hand-in-hand, and that formal education greatly facilitates political choice and decision making, it is not necessary that more years in a classroom be the only ticket to good citizenship, or that what is learned that makes citizenship more likely must be packaged with ambitions for a prestigious profession.   Legions

of high school adolescents remain destined for perfectly respectable working lives as metro bus drivers, stay-at-home parents, food service workers, longshoremen and bank tellers.   If the only path to civic engagement is through formal education, we might as well give up on these citizens ever passing muster, to say nothing of those who wind up below them in society's socioeconomic strata.

Perhaps the connection between citizenship and formal education has been overemphasized – to the point where we fail to consider other avenues for achieving political literacy.   Much of what needs to be learned to exercise competent political judgment can be picked-up from sources outside school. If our visits to rural communities have taught us anything, they have shown us that high levels of political engagement can be found among populations that are not especially well-educated or wealthy.   Adolescents destined for full-time jobs after high school, and even high school drop-outs, can be politically active citizens providing that they grow-up seeing models of good citizenship, or experience political campaigns that remind them that their participation is worthwhile. School is important, but it is not everything.

Writing in the middle of the last century, political scientist V.O. Key pointed to the value of partisan diversity and high turnout as driving forces behind democratic governance.   The habit of nonvoting resulted in a shrunken electorate in one-party states.   The limited electorate, in turn, influenced the nature of factional politics within a single party "by practically eliminating from the voting population substantial blocs of citizens whose political interests and objectives, if activated, would furnish the motive power for important political movements and demands." (Key 1949, 508). Key went on to add that a government founded on democratic principles became some other sort of regime when large proportions of its citizens were non-voters.

Political party competition, and the associated mobilization efforts by parties and candidates, were

seen by Key to be the instrument of democratic restoration.   Notably, no mention is made in his landmark work of improving formal education in schools, although he does attack the anachronistic presence of suffrage restrictions in state law, which have since been ruled unconstitutional.

In the years leading up to the 2004 election, social scientists rediscovered the problem of low turnout, alarmed by the fact that in spite of the elimination of suffrage restrictions, and amazing improvements in the level of education over the course of the last century, participation rates had been steadily declining. Gerber and Green (2000) argued persuasively that turnout had dropped because people are no longer being asked to vote – and being asked face-to-face is really what counts. Party and candidate mobilization efforts were reinvigorated in advance of the 2004 election, and turnout surged to levels it had not reached since 1968.

What we have found is that adolescents' sense of political efficacy and level of political knowledge is greatly enhanced in politically active areas that exhibit partisan diversity and high turnout. While we doubt that there is a lot of door-to-door campaigning going on in the highly participatory neighborhoods we visited, what we do find are adults who are interested in discussing politics with young people, and modeling good citizenship behavior by voting regularly. Even if participatory behavior is not being modeled by a teenager's parents, the adolescent can still see relatives, neighbors and other adults in the community taking elections seriously.

THE RELEVANCE OF PLACE FOR POLICIES TO IMPROVE POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

We started under the conviction that places matter to the way young people are socialized, and we believe that our work establishes the relevance of the local political characteristics of the adult population on attitudes consistent with positive political socialization.   Our work shows that political socialization does not, and

should not be presumed to, work the same way everywhere, independent of contextual forces, or local distributions of opinion, that can either mitigate or aggravate individual risk factors that predict non-participation.   A one-size-fits-all social studies curriculum, and an accompanying test, will not work if socialization is really more locally contingent than we have been led to believe. Rather than adopting uniform state level or national standards, standards should be locally adapted to the challenges and needs of specific populations. To the extent that forces outside of school cannot be counted upon to properly socialize young people, schools will bear more of the responsibility for teaching the values consistent with good citizenship. This is likely to place more pressure on urban school systems to reform curriculum and experiment in search of effective instructional styles.   Too often we found the most creative and dedicated instructors in the schools that least needed them, where there were ample resources outside the schools that could teach the lessons of good citizenship.   Suburban youth are more resilient to the presence of bad teachers than inner city youth.   We need a policy initiative that will appropriately compensate and reward teachers for succeeding in the most challenging environments.

Schools in the most politically insular and isolated communities should be targeted by political party leaders of the minority party for visits that expose these students to different ways of thinking about politics and issues.   For Democratic party leaders, this would involve sending representatives to the most rural and heavily Republican locations, where the homogeneity of pro-GOP views is most likely to squelch local Democratic voices, and discourage more open classroom discussions. For Republican party leaders, this would involve dispatching speakers to the most urban school systems, where the student body is often greater than 90 percent minority, and perhaps just as Democratic in their political orientation.   Having a regular staff of speakers employed as part of the political party hierarchy who regularly visit schools where students tend to be of opposite political stripe will go a long way toward inculcating a respect

for political difference and disagreement that is entirely absent in locations where only one side dominates. As part of the socialization process, students need to learn that there are legitimate reasons for holding opposing viewpoints, and at the same time, can benefit by having to defend their policy positions to others and to themselves (Mutz 2002, 116). At locations where dissonant views do not surface as a natural product of local diversity, dissonance must be introduced through other means.

But the other point worth emphasis is that schools are not the only answer, or even the primary one in the long term, for elevating the level of informed participation. Political parties and candidates should be more actively involved in grassroots development initiatives as part of the electioneering process, but this requires that a modicum of competition be restored to local political jurisdictions. Steps should be taken to enhance the level of political diversity at least for offices extending down to the state legislative level. In the public interest, the courts should adopt new criteria for the drawing of political district boundaries, seeking to maximize political heterogeneity and diversity, rather than allowing political officeholders to create safe election districts secure from the threat of electoral sanction. Rules maximizing political heterogeneity should apply equally to urban, suburban and rural areas, to the extent feasible to meet relaxed standards of compactness and contiguity.

POLICY DIRECTIONS

We focus our recommendations in two basic areas: policies designed to enhance social studies education and curriculum; and policies designed to promote political diversity and activism in local environments. Some of these recommendations are familiar, others less so. Some are vague, pointing only in a general policy direction. We do not pretend to be experts at implementation. We do hope that some of these ideas are discussed and that it is not the most controversial ones that are highlighted at the expense of the others.

CIVICS INSTRUCTION AND CURRICULUM

Social studies instructors need to work within curriculum guidelines that are sensitive to the needs of diverse populations and students with distinctive psychological histories. Teaching government and politics is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. Rather than centralizing standards for performance, standards are probably best decentralized and tailored to the local school population, and even sub-populations within the school. To help with this, local and state politicians and party leaders should be regularly invited to high school classes to discuss their roles and views, especially if their views are contrary to those of local populations. At the same time, programs that get students involved in their local communities may also help teachers to cater their curricula to local affairs. Service-learning programs may help in this regard.

Immigrant youth and the children of immigrant parents are often at a disadvantage when it comes to learning about the American political system. In addition to other compensatory courses for new immigrants, such as ESL, immigrant children need compensatory education in civics and social studies. They are the least likely to receive information about American government from home, and they have not been socialized with the same symbols and history lessons that children born in the United States have.

Social studies instruction should highlight the central role of conflict and disagreement in the operation of American political institutions, while showing that these disagreements are soluble and manageable. Students must be assured that disagreement and diversity can be safe, that people need not take offense when others do not agree with them, that most disputes are subject to peaceful resolution and compromise, and that more persistent disagreements can be tolerated. In some schools, there are extra-curricular activities, such as mock trial or the debating team, that help adolescents learn the value of principled dispute.

However, relatively few students participate in these activities. Elements of debate and discussion should be incorporated into all social studies courses, and in many other areas of the curriculum, such as literature, philosophy, and history.

Political efficacy is as important, in many respects, as factual political knowledge. Social studies courses should not only teach the facts, but should build political efficacy. Course materials that present American political institutions and leaders as rigged and corrupt help to instill cynicism and negative attitudes about government. It is not necessary to portray American history without any of its flaws and shortcomings, but similarly, it does tremendous harm to portray it in a singularly negative light. American history and government are not "all bad" or "all good," and adolescents must learn to deal with shades of gray. Teaching the value of conflict and debate will also go a long way toward helping students learn to deal with both the positive and negative aspects of our history.

Social studies curricula should emphasize the meaning of party labels and assist students in making the connection between the major parties and the social groups that comprise the party coalitions. A critical threshold in the socialization process is crossed when youth learn which sorts of "social, economic and ideological groups affiliate with each party, while sorting out which group labels properly apply to themselves" (Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002, 137).

BOLSTERING POLITICAL DIVERSITY AND ENCOURAGING ACTIVISM

To the extent possible to meet relaxed standards of compactness and maintain contiguity, election districts should be drawn so as to maximize political heterogeneity and diversity rather than to protect incumbent officeholders.   Young people should be confronted with at least some elections that provide a serious partisan choice. In general, youth across many one-party locations are in desperate need of exposure to political diversity, partly to demonstrate that multiple viewpoints can coexist

peacefully and that disagreement is not intolerable.

One of the best instruments of positive political socialization is responsive government, or at least government that is not widely corrupt. Working to create less discriminatory policing and a more professional, service-oriented bureaucracy are means to this end. In addition, focusing on local government, rather than national government, may also help to show that government can be responsive to those problems that are often most salient to people. Often, social studies courses and current events courses depend heavily upon national media sources and on national political issues. Examining local problems, and local solutions, can help with the perception that government is responsive.

Residential integration of ethnic minorities and white populations is another instrument for building a positive socialization experience.   Conservatives would suggest that this goal is met by providing economic opportunity and upward mobility for those on the lower rungs.   Liberals would suggest that fair housing policy and affirmative action are instruments to the integration of minorities with whites. We are agnostic on these options, believing that there is more than one way to achieve the same goal. Real world policy problems can rarely be resolved from within a single party's ideology or dominant policy framework.

In addition to contributing to the policy discussions on these critical topics, we hope our work contributes to the resuscitation of political socialization research in the social sciences. The time is ripe for reconsidering the findings from earlier studies. Times are changing. During the next ten years, the Depression Era generation, those who came of age during the 1930s and 1940s, will make a final exit from the electorate through mortality.   The Baby Boom generation, the large post World War II birth cohort currently in its late 1940s and 1950s, will be entering retirement, and it too will begin to drop out of the electorate. Bracketing the other end of the population distribution is an enormous and

fast-growing population under age 25. These are the children, and among the youngest, the grandchildren, of the Baby Boomers.   In spite of the high turnout of the 2004 election, the outlook for their engagement is far from uniform. An overall decline in the level of voter participation with the passing of the Baby Boom generation would appear to lie ahead. Unless we come to a better understanding of the local forces that create good citizens, and do what we can to stimulate them in the places where they are not operating on their own, "small-d" democrats may one day be pining for the days when participation levels were at 51 percent.

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THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF POLITICAL CONFLICT

DIANA C. MUTZ

I. INTRODUCTION

Politics is a realm of conflict. In our system of government, this is as it should be. But from a very young age, children are encouraged to avoid conflict, to defuse it, and if all else fails, to walk away from it. Viewed from this perspective, it is no wonder that youth prefer forms of civic engagement that are less controversial. Participation in civic activities such as groups that help the homeless, feed the hungry, or even get out the vote, are all relatively uncontroversial relative to supporting a controversial candidate or cause.

My research suggests that people's reactions to conflict and their desire for social harmony can help us in understanding how the citizen approaches the political world. On the one hand, I am not convinced that political conflict and incivility are necessarily any worse now than in the past. After all, as Zell Miller reminded us, it has been a very long time since the last political duel. Nonetheless, the context in which citizens are exposed to political discourse is probably quite different from what it was in the past, and this may have implications for their contemporary reactions to the political world.

Although my research does not focus on youth in particular, it addresses the difficulties that people face in attempting to be tolerant, conflict-avoidant individuals while simultaneously fulfilling the role of good political citizen. My research addresses issues of conflict and incivility in face-to-face and televised exchanges of political opinion, and I provide a brief outline each of these programs of research below.

I. FACE-TO-FACE POLITICS: THE TRADE-OFFS

To what extent is it reasonable to expect youth to engage in the kind of political discourse that is often celebrated by advocates of deliberative democracy? My empirical work in this area has led me to believe that there are fundamental incompatibilities between theories of participatory democracy and theories of deliberative democracy. Although I began studying people's political discussion networks with the widely shared assumption that face-to-face exposure to differing political views is unquestionably something to be encouraged, my findings soon convinced me that things were not so simple as I had supposed. In my network-based studies of Americans, I found that although diverse political networks foster a better understanding of multiple perspectives on issues and encourage political tolerance, they discourage political participation, particularly among those who are averse to conflict. Those with diverse networks refrain from participation in part because of the social awkwardness that comes from publicly taking a stand that friends or associates may oppose.

When the desire to get along with one another on a day-to-day basis conflicts with the normative dictates of political theory, it should give us pause. Many conceptions of civil society blend participatory democracy with deliberative democracy in a seamless fashion, suggesting that the two goals are almost one and the same, with deliberation merely representing a subset of political participation more generally. But based on my findings, it is doubtful that an extremely activist political culture can also be a heavily deliberative one – at least not when political participation involves significant social costs.

The best social environment for cultivating political activism is one in which people are surrounded by those who agree with them, people who will reinforce the sense that their own political views are the only right and proper way to proceed. Like-minded people can spur one another on to collective action, and promote the kind of passion and enthusiasm that is central to motivating political participation.

Collectively, my results suggest that cross-cutting contact plays an important role in encouraging

democratic values by familiarizing people with legitimate rationales for opposing viewpoints and encouraging political tolerance. Interestingly, this impact is particularly pronounced among people who care about maintaining social harmony; that is, those who engage in cross-cutting conversations, but who would remain silent rather than risk conflict that might end the association altogether.

Thus social environments that include close contact among people of differing perspectives may promote a give and take of political ideas, but they are unlikely to foster political fervor. The prospects for truly deliberative encounters may suffer while the prospects for participation and political activism are burgeoning. There is an inherent tension between promoting a society with enthusiastically participative citizens, and promoting one imbued with tolerance and respect for differences of opinion.

Because both participation and tolerance are highly valued in democratic systems, there is no easy answer to how much political inactivity should be accepted in the name of greater tolerance; nor, conversely, how much intolerance of oppositional views should be accepted in the name of encouraging political activism. Homogeneous and heterogeneous social contexts serve two different, yet both important, purposes in this regard.

II. IN YOUR FACE POLITICS: CONSEQUENCES FOR POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

In an increasingly selection-driven social structure, how do Americans come to believe that reasonable people can disagree on a given political controversy? Contemporary social theory suggests that mass media, and television in particular, serve as an increasingly important source of exposure to views unlike one's own. But exchanges of political views on television tend to be qualitatively different from those occurring in face-to-face contexts. Does television familiarize viewers with rationales for oppositional political perspectives and thereby enhance the extent to which oppositional views are perceived as legitimate? What are the implications

of experiencing political conflict in an up-close, in your face fashion?

My research has examined the consequences of the way oppositional political views are presented on television, focusing on political television's propensity to provide unusually intimate perspectives on unusually uncivil exchanges of political views. Drawing on results from three experiments, I find that the "in-your-face" nature of political television is very important to understanding television's impact on the perceived legitimacy of the opposition, and on attitude toward politics and politicians more generally. In general, I find that people tend to respond negatively not to conflict per se, but to the way that conflict is experienced.

Across experiments, viewers watching the more uncivil versions of the political program featuring less polite interactions from an intimate camera perspective, consistently judged oppositional political arguments to be even less legitimate, and less legitimate than if they did not view anything at all. Likewise, the least-liked candidate was viewed even more negatively when candidates were viewed in close-up while interacting in an uncivil fashion. Further, incivility viewed for just 20 minutes from an "in-your-face" camera perspective lowered levels of confidence in our political institutions, levels of trust in government, and attitudes toward the respectability of politicians more generally

Unfortunately, the same violations of face-to-face norms for political discourse that make these kinds of programs entertaining and arousing to watch also discourage the kind of mutual respect for one another's arguments that might sustain perceptions of a legitimate opposition. The implications of television's unique perspective on conflict matter for the legitimacy of any multi-party, pluralist system. A willingness to acknowledge that there is something to be said for the other side, even when one's own views do not prevail, is essential to the kind of legitimacy that allows a democratic political system to remain stable.

These results also hint at possible historical changes in the way citizens respond to candidates in an age of televisual politics. The effects that we have observed appear to be dependent upon "gut-level," emotional reactions from viewers whose personal space is being "invaded" by someone whose views they find disagreeable. As anyone who has been cornered by such an individual at a cocktail party knows, this experience tends to be unpleasant at best. The natural reaction for most people is to want such individuals out of their faces as soon as possible. It is one thing if they are espousing their disagreeable views on the other side of the room, and quite another if they insist on doing so at close range. These findings suggest that viewing politicians up-close and personal rather than from a distance may have intensified citizens' negativity toward candidates they dislike. In the days when such intimate perspectives were not technologically possible, as when exposure to politicians was limited to newspapers, the intensity of our disgust for those with whom we disagree probably remained more muted.

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YOUTH AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS
JOEL WESTHEIMER

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUTH AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Several observations have guided my thinking in relation to youth and both formal and informal institutions aimed at strengthening democratic engagement in society. Among these, here are three that might be useful for our discussions and further action.

First, many of the ways traditionally used to describe political engagement have become either calcified and/or obsolete in describing contemporary youth attitudes, skills, and knowledge for democratic engagement. There is some limited research in this area, but many of our collective classroom experiences neatly and adequately reveal these trends. Ask a typical high school, college, or university class how many women consider themselves feminist. Ask students whether their ideas about taxes or low-income housing or war and peace derive from a "left" or "right" political value-system. Ask whether their generation's diminished voter participation signals apathy, cynicism, or disgust. Ask whether education is a process of indoctrination or of developing critical thinking and what the differences might be. Ask whether the public sphere or the private sphere are more appropriate arenas for grappling with intractable social problems such as poverty, teen-pregnancy, AIDS, social security. There will be some students, to be sure, who feel comfortable developing their own civic identities and their own political outlooks with reference to these kinds of questions and using a kind of discourse familiar and comfortable to many of us doing research on youth civic engagement and political participation. But there are others, perhaps a large number of other youth and young adults, who employ a different kind of discourse to describe their and their peer's forms of political learning, identity, engagement, and action. In short, many youth and young adults see themselves as politically thoughtful and politically active, but not in ways that hit the radar

of much research on civic engagement.

Second, the kind of value-neutrality obsessively nurtured by institutions (especially schools, but also many youth organizations, clubs, etc.) has wrought, perhaps, irreparable damage to the institutional capacity to influence youth in meaningful ways. In much of common parlance, for youth and adults alike, "being political" is a bad thing. Being political is tantamount to devaluing the public good for personal or party gain. The kinds of controversies, power-plays, social upheavals, movements, and networks that some youth avidly engage in outside of formal institutions are the same issues, ideas, and debates that are systematically stripped from the school curriculum. I wonder about a research and policy agenda that might restore "politics" to its rightful spot in formal and informal educational institutions. Harry Boyte described politics as the way people with different values and from different backgrounds can "work together to solve problems and create common things of value." It is the process by which citizens with varied interests and opinions can negotiate differences and clarify places where values conflict. How to move youth from a notion of politics as mud-slinging to politics as what Bernard Crick, in his work *In Defense of Politics*, called "a great and civilizing activity"?

Furthermore, while institutions that routinely claim to be developing critical thinking skills in students actively avoid content and pedagogy that could sharpen these skills, other sectors of society are already capitalizing on some young people's rather sophisticated understanding of critical analysis. Advertisers, for example, have become keenly aware of, and, in a strange way, respectful, of young adults' intelligence, critical-thinking abilities, and savvy. The new breed of advertising that effectively "targets" youth is what Douglas Rushkoff (*Coerced*, Putnam Publishing) calls "wink advertising" that recognizes the critical stance and media savvy of viewers. Advertisers know that young people pride themselves on being able to deconstruct and understand the coercive tactics of television commercials. By winking at

the audience, they acknowledge that you know how to think and not just be blindly influenced (e.g. Levi's parody of Calvin Klein's ultra-skinny, sickly supermodels in which Levi's juxtaposed healthy models with the caption: "Our models can beat up their models"). Instead of accepting curriculum and school practices devoid of political content, I wonder about our ability to research and advocate for curriculum that challenges youth to think critically about the social, economic, and political relations that surround them. What kind of institutional norms, programs, and policies could help to teach for a kind of democratic citizenship that recognizes ambiguity and conflict, that sees human conditions and aspirations as complex and contested, and that embraces debate and deliberation as a cornerstone of democratic societies?

My third observation, also made by many others, is that the language of individualism and privatization has so perversely invaded our common discourse that construing institutions as having collective purposes has become a difficult task. Any initiatives that we begin will have to grapple with the need to first provide a language of social interest and collective gain to the youth and institutions with whom we might work.

DILEMMAS

These observations raise at least three dilemmas or tensions worthy of exploration.

1. Can institutions nurture a counter-institutional sense that seems so necessary in substantial social change and in engaging youth in ideas that matter to them? Institutions are, by their very definition, resistant to challenges that threaten their stability. Everyone likes the idea of teaching critical thinking, but so few really want critical thinkers in their classrooms, clubhouses, meetings, and so on.

2. Pursuing a progressive democratic agenda in research and policy is almost invariably met

with the charge of indoctrination, sometimes rightly so. While avoiding indoctrination (i.e. inculcating set solutions or positions with respect to social issues), how can we, on the other hand, look towards institutional policies and practices and research on the possibilities for and effects of these practices without resorting to platitudinous reinforcement of a conservative, status quo agenda?

3. Youth have energy and insight that many other sectors of society do not. They also possess relatively little experience and expertise. What might programs look like that take this tension seriously?

DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

From these observations and accompanying tensions, I suggest the following directions for research and policy initiatives that may derive from the research.

1. I would be very interested in exploring how contemporary youth conceptualize politics, political participation, civic engagement, and activism. This research would likely employ mixed-method approaches. Surveys and broad-portrait investigations tell us a great deal about trends; thoughtful and rigorous qualitative investigations reveal much about the ways youth understand and respond to programs, curricula, and policies aimed at inviting and developing their participation in meaningful civic affairs. For example, voting as a goal of engagement rather than either a means or a measure of engagement seems problematic, especially given the various alternative ways youth claim to view participation. Certainly some youth might fit the Gen-X description of apathy, absence from the established political system, and so forth. But a significant population of youth activists have abdicated no such responsibility. They have, instead, searched—sometimes

ineffectively—for new ways to engage the political system, through the media, the internet, and, perhaps most significantly, through global networks that bridge youth interests across many nations. It seems critical to understand more about these developments.

2. I would also be enthusiastic about investigations that engage underlying values and orientations. How do youth view themselves engaging in civic life? The "Civic Mission of Schools," for example, might not have, as its endpoint, simply youth engagement. (Perhaps many youth are not even as disengaged as many think).   The question that captures me is this: towards what ends might youth engagement lead? What kind of society does the possibility of youth engagement predict? What various visions of this society compete among those who advocate civic engagement? Accordingly, I would like to ask many more questions how who students are rather than exclusively about what they do (do they vote? Do they work for a political campaign, and so on).

3. Finally, how does corporatization and privatization of an increasing number of our once-public institutions and collective, community practices affect the goals of civic engagement and political participation among youth?   How do these privatization trends – not only of long-time public institutions such as schools or prisons, but also of the language of democracy and citizenship itself – affect schools and other institutions?

SOME OVERLOOKED CONTEXTUAL FACTORS
PETER LEVINE

Karl Mannheim argued that people tend to form stable civic identities in their late teens. As adolescents emerge from the relatively narrow horizons of their families and neighborhoods, they confront the broader world of governments, ideologies, parties, and nation-states. They must adopt some stance toward this world, whether it is passive acceptance, alienation, enthusiastic embrace, or personal obligation. After people form a stance, the effort required to change their minds is too costly unless major historical events intervene and require a reassessment. Given the relatively low salience of public life, inertia tends to dominate for the rest of our lives.[1]

If Mannheim was even partly right, then it is important to ask how our institutions socialize young people for lifetimes of civic and political participation. The impact of these institutions is likely to change as their structure and behavior evolve. Thus a study of institutional change is crucial for our analysis of political development.

I suspect that the following are some of the most significant ways in which American institutions have changed their effects on political socialization over

the past 25 years:

- **Electoral politics:** Thanks to sophisticated gerrymandering, there is ever less competition for state legislatures and the US House. As a result, young people grow up without the experience of debate in their communities and may conclude that controversy is unnecessary or artificial, something that Washington political elites stir up for tactical reasons. The lack of competition also means that elected officials are relatively insulated from accountability and relatively uninterested in seeking young people's support. We know from the Green and Gerber experiments that young people often vote when asked. The decline in political competitiveness means that they are less likely to receive a request to vote.

  Meanwhile, sophisticated marketing strategies and technologies have allowed consultant-driven campaigns to focus their efforts on groups of people with known voting histories. Young people have unknown voting preferences and are relatively unlikely to participate. Thus they are usually left off target lists. To make

From Christopher Berry, "School Size and Returns to Education: Evidence from the Consolidation Movement, 1930-1970" (http://www.educationnext.org/unabridged/20044/56.pdf), p. 26

Average School Size, 1869-1999
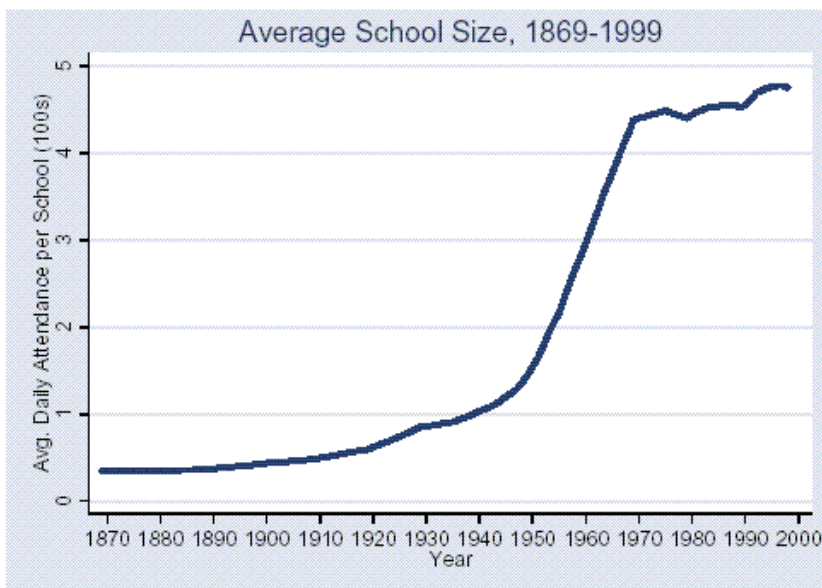
matters worse, their services as volunteers are not needed as much as in the past, because campaigns depend on expert consultants, mailing lists, and professionally produced advertising.

- **Civil society:** As Elinor Ostrom notes, "Some aspects of the science of association are both counterintuitive and counterintentional, and thus must be taught to each generation as part of the culture of a democratic citizenry." [2] Associations have incentives to recruit young people and teach them skills necessary for the organizations' maintenance. If associations recruit fewer members, that is bad for political socialization. Unfortunately, some important organizations that once recruited young people have lost membership. The most obvious examples are labor unions. In 2000, just 13% of 15-24s were union members, far less than fifty years ago. Religious congregations can also teach civic skills. But regular religious attendance among high school seniors declined from 41 percent in 1976 to 33 percent in 2003. [3] During this period, high school seniors did not show any major change in attitudes toward religion, but they became considerably less likely to participate in organized religious groups.

- **The news media:** The modern mass media are fragmented and allow people to opt out of news more easily than in the past. There also may be more sorting by level of knowledge; some newspapers provide highly sophisticated information to global audiences via the Internet, while other news sources (such as commercial web portals and music radio stations) provide extremely superficial coverage tilted toward entertainment. Organs that might serve diverse audiences, such as metropolitan daily newspapers, are endangered in the current market. Meanwhile, most people feel that news programs have become less civil, perhaps because they must compete more avidly for ratings. Diana Mutz and Byron Reeves have found that people are entertained by angry debates, yet such confrontations reduce trust in government and politics. [4]

Others who participate in the March meeting will be able to address these issues more expertly than I. Thus I would like to suggest some additional factors that are rarely mentioned in discussions of political socialization. In mentioning these factors, my main point is that our research should be broader than we usually think.

1. **School size.** Over the next five years or so, high schools will be the topic of the most interesting debates and reforms in all of education. For elementary and middle schools, we have a regime in place, as codified in No Child Left Behind (NCLB). There are frequent statewide tests; scores are disaggregated by race, gender, disability, and language background; and every group must make "adequate yearly progress" on the tests or else schools face penalties. Like it or hate it, this is the status quo for grades 1-8; only adjustments are possible.

The formula embodied in NCLB doesn't affect high schools nearly as deeply, yet there is widespread agreement that they should be thoroughly reformed. In particular, many people criticize huge, themeless, "shopping mall" high schools that offer long lists of courses and activities (as well as cliques and networks) for a wide variety of students.

The average size of American primary and secondary schools increased four-fold between 1940 and 1965, from 100 to more than 400.

Toward the end of that period (1959), James Conant identified small high schools as the single biggest problem in American education. He argued that they were economically inefficient, unprofessional, and unable to provide a wide range of equipment and specialized teachers. In addition to these arguments, other factors probably contributed to massive school consolidation in that era, including a tendency to close down historically black schools under court desegregation orders

(not to mention the desire to field better football teams).

The result was the creation of very large schools, especially high schools, in which students were seen as consumers who should be permitted to choose among a wide variety of offerings (curricular and extracurricular) provided by specialists. Students were presumed to have diverse interests and abilities. Thus it was right that some should choose student government and AP courses while others preferred "shop" and basketball.

If we hope to create effective, committed, and responsible citizens, huge schools have several marked disadvantages. Relatively few students—mostly ones who are already on a successful track—can possibly participate in the extracurricular activities, such as school government and scholastic journalism, that seem most likely to teach civic skills. Students in large schools tend to self-select into cliques and can avoid interacting with those different from themselves. Parents and other adults in the community have little impact on these large, bureaucratic institutions; so schools are rarely models of community problem-solving or active citizenship, nor can they create paths to participation in the broader world. Often, large schools occupy suburban-style campuses, set far apart from the adult community of work, family, religion, and politics. Even worse, some huge schools occupy prison-like urban blocks, secured with gates and bars.

We know that students who feel that they can have an impact on the governance of their own schools tend to be efficacious and interested in public affairs; but it is impossible for anyone to influence the overall atmosphere and structure of a huge school that is organized around private choice. "Shopping mall" high schools tend to have reasonably bad discipline and a general atmosphere of alienation.

Finally, young people become victims of their own choices. You can pick up civic skills (as well as other ones) if you attend a school with a wide range of offerings and equipment and you elect to take the honors classes and work on the school newspaper. But those assets are of no use unless you have the confidence, motivation, networks ties, and knowledge to use them. In a huge high school, there is little chance that any adult will try to steer a student who is on a mediocre track onto a more challenging one. Twenty years later, the student who chose easy courses and avoided clubs may still be paying a price, economically as well as socially and politically. It's fine to let students choose among competing schools. Some students will do better in a school oriented toward scientific research, or service-learning, or the great books. But the choice should be carefully made among coherent, purposeful communities, not "a la carte" off a miscellaneous list of courses and other experiences. Perhaps more important, almost all schools should be small, so that no student is overlooked or forgotten.

2. Living arrangements. Some 50 million Americans now live in some kind of community governed by an association: a condominium, cooperative, or a planned community with a board. Often a developer subdivides some land or constructs an apartment building and sells the units with deeds that (a) impose numerous rules on the buyer; and (b) create a board or other body that can legislate further and enforce existing rules.

These are voluntary associations: An adult is not required to buy a house or an apartment in any particular condo or planned community. However, children do not choose where they grow up. Residential associations act much like governments, taxing, regulating and fining residents and enforcing their decisions in courts. Indeed, they are more powerful than conventional governments, which are restrained by the Constitution of the United States. Residential associations can—and actually have—banned the display of signs critical of themselves, banned the sales of certain newspapers, even banned the private possession of materials they deem pornographic. The rationale for these rules is to increase property values, although the rules may also have other purposes, benign or malevolent.

What kind of political socialization will these living arrangements create? Will residents grow up thinking that government is unnecessary, since a private association provides for their needs? Or will they decide that security and prosperity depend upon pervasive regulation of private behavior? What conclusions will they draw from bans on political speech? If they learn to rely on regulation without political participation and individual rights, then they will be socialized for fascism.

3. The fortunes of major political ideologies:
When I was in college, in the late 1980s, I played a very small role in national discussions about how to increase opportunities for service. These discussions helped lay the groundwork for the Points of Light Foundation and then the Corporation for National and Community Service. Most of the young people in those discussions were left-liberals. For us, service seemed useful because it might sensitize people to problems like poverty and racism and lead to political action. However, service would be harmful, we thought, if it became an end in itself or a palliative. These were the explicit conclusions of a Wingspread retreat on service that I attended in 1988.

Thirteen years later, in 2001, Campus Compact brought a new group of college students to Wingspread to discuss civic engagement. These students said:

> For the most part, we are frustrated with conventional politics, viewing it as inaccessible. [However,] while we are disillusioned with conventional politics (and therefore most forms of political activity), we are deeply involved in civic issues through non-traditional forms of engagement. We are neither apathetic nor disengaged. In fact, what many perceive as disengagement may actually be a conscious choice; for example, a few of us … actively avoided voting, not wanting to participate in what some of us view as a deeply flawed electoral process. … While we still hope to be able to participate in our political system

effectively through traditional means, service is a viable and preferable (if not superior) alternative at this time.

I suspect that there was one major reason for the change in attitudes toward service among left-liberal youth: the Clinton Administration. In 1988, most young proponents of civic engagement, having grown up under Reagan, believed that a Democratic electoral victory was much more important than any form of direct service. In 2001, having experienced a Democratic presidency, idealistic young liberals were highly skeptical of government and politics as paths to social change. Note that a similar pattern of mobilization and disillusionment could easily affect conservative youth under different political circumstances.

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ENDNOTES

1 Mannheim, "The Problem of Generations" (1928), available in Essays on the Sociology if Knowledge, edited by Paul Kecskemeti (London, 1952), pp. 276-322, especially p. 300. Mannheim says (p. 298): "even if the rest of one's life consisted in one long process of negation and destruction of the natural world view acquired in youth, the determining influence of these early impressions would still be predominant." For a good summary of recent literature, see Constance Flanagan and Lonnie R. Sherrod, "Youth Political Development: An Introduction," Journal of Social Issues (Fall, 1998). The period between age 14 and 25 is identified as crucial in R.G. Niemi and M.A. Hepburn, "The Rebirth of Political Socialization," Perspectives on Political Science, vol. 24 (1995), pp. 7-16. Perspectives on Political Science, vol. 24 (1995), pp. 7-16.
2 Ostrom, "The Need for Civic Education: A Collective Action Perspective" (1998), p. 1.
3 Monitoring the Future data analyzed by Child Trends (http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/indicators/32ReligiousServices.cfm)
4 Diana Mutz and Byron Reeves have conducted fascinating experiments that demonstrate the serious effects of rudeness in our televised politics. (See "Videomalaise Revisited: Effects of Television

Incivility on Political Trust," Journalism and Mass
Communication Educator, Spring 2004, 59/1)

CITY DESIGNS: BUILDING MUNICIPAL SYSTEMS FOR YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

CARMEN SIRIANNI

While there are diverse strategies for enhancing youth civic engagement (YCE), I argue here that we should pay considerable attention to how city governments can play a key role in institutionalizing YCE. And while we should certainly employ good social science tools for thinking empirically, analytically, and practically about what models "work," or might be made to work and work better, we should also begin to think normatively: city government should institutionalize YCE within and across a range of its public functions and agencies in order to enhance democratic governance now and create citizens capable of self-government today and in the future. This might be seen as a normative requirement of complex urban democracy today. City government needs to systematically invest in democracy and develop strategies for transforming institutional cultures to engage and partner with citizens generally, including young people. Of course, city-sponsored strategies should be aligned as much as possible with the civic mission of schools, with other YCE efforts in the civic and nonprofit sectors (YMCAs, 4-H clubs, youth development agencies), and with local (especially public) colleges and universities. And government efforts should be responsive to outside challenges from youth organizing.

Before sketching one model for citywide, city-sponsored YCE (Hampton, Virginia), and then drawing some comparisons with other models (especially San Francisco and Boston), it is important to reprise some lessons of other city-wide systems of public participation. We have more experience here and much more developed scholarship upon which to draw, however imperfect this still is. Here is a quick summary of some key findings, lessons, and potential from several types of city-sponsored/citywide systems (neighborhood associations, neighborhood planning, community policing, local school councils). The city can:

- Universalize opportunities to participate: unlike many forms of local association, self-help, or advocacy, city-sponsored systems can create a structure for access to direct participation for all. The participation system can cover all neighborhoods (Berry 1993; Diers 2004), all police beats (Skogan and Hartnett 1997), and all public schools (Fung 2004). The city can make further efforts to ensure or mandate inclusiveness, so that typical middle class biases in participation do not easily prevail and so that disadvantaged and newcomer groups have access. The city can deploy organizing staff to build or strengthen their associations and their capacity to participate in city venues.

- Provide training in complex public problem solving for citizens and the staff with whom they interact. Instead of presuming that citizens obtain the requisite skills in school or through civic associations, churches, and community organizing groups, the city can assume responsibility for providing, complementing, and enriching the skills citizens need to engage in productive problem solving on specific kinds of issues: planning (Diers 2004), school governance (Fung 2004), public safety (Skogan 1999), neighborhood development (Sirianni and Friedland 2001), environmental restoration, sustainability, and risk prevention (National Environmental Justice Advisory Council 2003, 2004) . The city can also do this in a way that aligns with training for agency staff in collaborative, problem-solving methodologies, thus enhancing the "civic professional" practices (Sullivan 1995) of administrative staff. Democratic governance in complex systems is not possible without training from both directions, and can sometimes be done as co-training (Skogan 1999). And since effective problem solving often requires coordination of actions of multiple agencies, cities need dedicated staff who can provide the "relational organizing" assistance at the points where diverse

citizen groups and multiple street-level bureaucracies meet, as in the neighborhood planning design in Seattle (Diers 2004) and the community policing design in Chicago (Skogan 1999).

- Facilitate and monitor fair and effective deliberation. As Archon Fung (2004) has shown for both community policing and local school councils in Chicago, city offices can provide resources and oversight to improve citizen deliberation and problem solving and ensure accountability that procedural and substantive goals of reform are being met. Good city design, with the resources and political will to back it up, can "correct" many of the problems that some theorists see as typically arising from deliberative democracy.

- Manage conflict productively without co-opting independent citizen power. While urban regimes and local political cultures vary greatly on how responsive they are to independently organized groups (Weir 1999, Stone 2001), we have some good evidence that citywide systems of community representation do not necessarily coopt and demobilize independent groups, but can complement and catalyze them (Berry 1993; Thompson 1994; Skogan and Hartnett 1997; Gudell and Skogan 2003; Diers 2004). Cities also have available a much larger repertoire of models and methods for managing conflict productively than they did when "maximum feasible participation" was imposed on them by the federal government in the 1960s (Sirianni and Friedland 2001).

HAMPTON'S YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT SYSTEM

Hampton, Virginia (pop. 146,437)[1] has developed a most interesting model for citywide YCE, and in 2005 it received the Innovations in Government

Award from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard and the Council for Excellence in Government in Washington, DC. Of course, the model is imperfect, could be strengthened in various ways, won't reach its full potential without much more work over many years, and has arisen under circumstances different than those faced in other cities. And, of course again, we need further study of this and other models.[2] But the overall vision and strategy, as well as various components, are worthy of emulation. And we should think about the kinds of federal policy supports that might enable models like this to grow in other urban settings. Here I highlight a few key features:

- Citywide strategy. Hampton has committed to a strategy to build a "comprehensive system" for YCE. This was the result of a multi-year collaborative planning process in the early 1990s that: a) was generated by the local logic of reinventing government, in which flattening agency hierarchies led to greater employee participation and then spilled over to citizens in neighborhoods confronted with controversial land-use and planning decisions; and b) was supported by a federal grant ($320,000 over five years) that enabled the city to do ambitious outreach, visioning, and leadership development (75 task force members trained to facilitate forums, luncheons, house meetings; 5,000 citizens participating in these activities and other forms of public input). The grant from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) at HHS permitted, but did not require, such expansive participatory planning. The collaborative, multi-stakeholder planning process -- including parents, agency and school officials, nonprofits, and youth -- generated substantial public legitimacy and city-council sanction for the core mission of "empowering young people" to make real contributions to the life of the city and have a genuine voice in its decisions. This legitimacy then enabled the development of specific and complementary components of

the system in subsequent years.

- Nonprofit leadership. Hampton has benefited from the innovativeness of a nonprofit youth development agency, Alternatives, Inc. (originally a substance abuse prevention agency), which reinvented itself in response to: a) the voice of local young people, whom Alternatives convened as part of the collaborative planning process; and b) the problems it perceived in the usual delivery of services to passive clients through categorical programs. The "organizational learning" of Alternatives (self-consciously using Peter Senge and others) was enabled by an emerging national network of practitioners and theorists in the youth development field, which in the early 1990s developed various frames of "positive youth development," "community youth development," and "developmental assets." Alternatives, Inc., became an agency focused on YCE and related strategies and, with funding from the city, devoted itself to leadership development and "relational organizing" among young people and their adult partners on a rather substantial scale.

- Dedicated city office with a mission of institutional culture change. The key initial decision that resulted from the collaborative planning process was to make the Coalition for Youth (the loose organization that emerged to facilitate the planning) a permanent office of city government with the mission of helping to build "a comprehensive system of opportunities for youth to be involved in the life of the community." The Coalition for Youth is a small office (currently 3 full-time staff, plus a part-time office administrator) charged to "catalyze best practices" and "establish a learning community throughout government, not to run programs" (in the words of the former assistant city manager). The Coalition oversees the Youth Commission (see below), contracts for

training/leadership development services with Alternatives, and applies for national grants to help build new components of the system. It is a clearinghouse for best practices locally and nationally. The director sees her role as one of relational organizing across city agencies: building relationships that will help bring officials and staff on board in developing partnerships with young people and helping them understand how their own agency's culture can be transformed so that staff treat young people as contributing citizens with assets to be utilized for the good of the city and the agency, not just to help young people develop themselves (though this is also a goal), and certainly not just to serve young people as passive clients. This catalytic and relational organizing role for the Coalition has led to new partnerships and YCE practices in the school system, police department, parks and recreation, planning department, and department of neighborhoods. The city participates as one of 15 cities in the B.E.S.T. Initiative (coordinated locally by Alternatives), which is a national training program to upgrade the professional skills of youth workers, including their capacities to facilitate youth participation. Much still remains to be done to further transform agency cultures so that youth -- and citizens more generally -- are recognized as full partners and co-producers of public goods and services (Sirianni and Friedland 2005). And some agencies have been quite resistant and remain relatively untouched by YCE efforts. But many important steps have been taken and the culture change strategy has been institutionalized. The principle behind this strategy is that youth empowerment requires change of institutional cultures and professional practices.

- Youth commission. A Youth Commission, composed of 24 students from the four public and three private high schools serving

the city's population,[3] plays a highly visible role as the official representative of the voice of youth in pubic problem solving and policy. Commissioners serve two-year terms and are selected by current commissioners, youth planners, and adult partners (Coalition for Youth, Alternatives) after broad outreach to schools, neighborhoods, and youth groups (see "pyramid" below). New commissioners receive specific training during the summer preceding their service, which is provided in the manner that most training in Hampton occurs, i.e. "co-training" by adults and experienced youth leaders. During the school year, the youth commission meets twice per month, once in a work session and once in a large public forum convened in city council chambers, where they sit in the councilors seats to conduct business. Twice annually, the youth commission presents formally to the city council, which is televised, and to the planning commission. Commissioners commit to active outreach to involve a broad range of young people in commission deliberations, and efforts extend to school groups, friendship networks, and teachers (especially to offer extra credit). The large public forums take up important issues (race relations in schools, the rights of young people, infrastructure and planning for youth recreation and transportation) and typically involve lively breakout sessions for brainstorming problems and solutions. It is not unusual for these forums to have 150-250 young people, which overflows the official seating capacity of the city council chambers. The sessions are lively, involve serious deliberation and very concrete planning, and yet have an atmosphere of fun and spontaneous high-fives. The youth commission also funds youth/adult partnership projects ("youth philanthropy"), which can be proposed by various groups in the city. Youth commissioners receive advice and mentoring from adult staff from the Coalition for Youth, Alternatives, a senior

city planner, and the two "youth planners," who are the commission's paid (part-time) staff. The commission's role is advisory, but its formal proposals are generally adopted (new Teen Center co-designed by youth in the capital budget with building and land purchase now pending, bikeways system, creation of a citywide Neighborhood Youth Advisory Board). Its work with the Citizens Unity Commission on racial diversity has been substantial (they jointly planned a citywide youth summit, as well as a study circle process for youth and adults). This past May the youth commission designed a very successful candidates' forum for elections to city council and mayor, whose format other civic organizations then borrowed.

- Pyramid of YCE opportunities and structured pathways for leadership. The system is designed on the premise that youth need a wide array of opportunities to contribute actively to the community, from the relatively simple and episodic, such as tutoring a younger child after school or cleaning up a river on the weekend, to the increasingly complex, which might involve long-term planning, policy development, and problem-solving in partnership with other youth and adults (Carlson 2005). The simple tasks can elicit contributions from virtually everyone; they serve as a very democratic entry portal to community engagement and the development of a civic ethic. The more complex tasks can be intentionally designed as "pathways" (Irby, Ferber and Pittman 2001) to develop progressively higher civic skill sets needed to carry out more ambitious projects and to represent the interests of large numbers of youth, whether in a neighborhood, high school, or in the city as a whole. At the base of the pyramid are the usual array of community service activities, and (with a recent Kellogg Foundation Youth Innovation Fund grant) a planned service-

learning course for all 8th grade public school students. Moving up the pyramid of opportunities are: a) the principals' youth advisory boards in each public high school (and recently each middle school); b) youth representatives on some (but not all) neighborhood associations, as well as on the Citizens Unity Commission, Citizens Advisory Board of Parks and Recreation, and several other advisory boards; c) Neighborhood Youth Advisory Board (advising the Neighborhood Commission and Office of Neighborhoods); d) Superintendent's Youth Advisory Board (for high schools and now one also for middle schools); e) Youth Commission; and f) youth planners (two paid high school students, 15 hours each per week, limited primarily by budget considerations, with a director of planning who says he would welcome 6-8 youth planners). These youth planners develop quite sophisticated skills: statistically valid survey methods, computer-assisted planning tools, comparative city planning and transportation designs, plus facilitation of public forums and focus groups. They and other youth leaders have contributed substantially to the city's last two comprehensive plans.

- Substantial investment in training, relational organizing, and leadership development. The city invests in youth leadership development by its staff and by Alternatives, Inc. (through contracts with the Coalition for Youth and the school system). The staff of the Coalition for Youth mentor individual youth leaders over many months and even years as they move up the pyramid. The director of planning and a senior city planner mentor the youth planners during their two-year terms. Alternatives, Inc., likewise assigns staff to the youth commission, various neighborhood youth groups, and all the advisory boards (in each school, the superintendent's advisory, etc.). There is a neighborhood/youth college that

is part of the city's neighborhood college to help train local leaders. Alternatives has also recently trained 10 youth diversity trainers to follow up on work by the Citizens Unity Commission and Study Circles Resource Center. Formal training is complemented by continual feedback and advice. Alternatives also offers a 3-semester leadership course (summer, fall, spring) enrolling some 25-30 students from all high schools, with the requirements of team building in the summer and a field placement in a leadership position during the final semester. The direct investment by the city in terms of dedicated and contract staff is substantially greater than any city I know of -- though, of course, there are many other sources of leadership development, especially in bigger cities, and I have no comparative data on overall investment. But Hampton's investment is done very intentionally with an eye to ever higher levels of performance for those moving up the pyramid, and hence more effective decision making and problem solving on the city's various boards and commissions. The investment is also made in such as way that "relational organizing" remains at the heart of the city's strategy to transform institutional cultures and provides a continuous stream of leaders who will stay in the city or return after college. While we usually think of relational organizing in terms of faith-based community organizing (FBCO) in associations such as the Industrial Areas Foundation, Gamaliel, and PICO (Warren 2001; Wood 2002), Hampton demonstrates that some (but by no means all) of the core features of FBCO relational organizing can be made part of developing youth-adult partnerships within city government and its governance networks.

OTHER CITIES WITH YOUTH COMMISSIONS AND COUNCILS

Hampton is not the only city with a youth commission or youth council. And cities with

different political cultures and urban regimes (not to mention population size and diversity) could not necessarily follow Hampton's path. We thus need to learn from other models and come to a better understanding of the comparative issues that might foster or hinder innovation (San Francisco would be the richest comparative case for in-depth research). We also need to explore how federal policy might enable cities less well situated than Hampton to develop systems that support youth empowerment. A few things that characterize Hampton should be kept in mind:

- Hampton is a medium-sized city, which is also relatively compact geographically. Larger and/or more geographically dispersed cities and counties might have considerably greater difficulty getting the model adopted as (relatively) consistently and evenly as in Hampton.

- Hampton has no contentious community organizing groups, such as ACORN, or independent congregation-based organizing, such as IAF or PICO, or even community development corporations (though one may have recently been created). The presence of social movements, including identity-based youth organizing, seems low. In cities where independent community and social movement organizing were higher, it might be more difficult to get partnership among so many agencies and established leaders.

- Hampton has a nonpartisan city manager and council system with a weak mayor. In cities where elections were partisan and the mayor strong, it may be more difficult for a youth commission not to become politicized or overly dependent on the mayor.

- Hampton has relatively equal blocks of blacks and whites and lacks extreme economic differences. In communities

with greater multiculturalism and/or economic inequalities, there may be greater tendency for the youth commission to be more fractious.

- Hampton was an early leader in reinventing government. In cities that have not progressed very far in flattening hierarchies, introducing collaborative planning, and engaging citizens and neighborhoods, there may be greater resistance to giving youth a formal voice in governance.

- Hampton has one dominant youth services agency with a focus on youth engagement (Alternatives, Inc.), which has enjoyed a privileged relationship with the Coalition for Youth and other city agencies. It has earned its reputation over a long period of time. In cities with multiple agencies providing competing models of youth engagement, it may be more difficult for the city to work out consistent and complementary relationships among the various organizations. Hampton innovators, however, believe that the Hampton system could have accommodated more non-profit youth development agencies, had they existed.

San Francisco's Youth Commission has some of the same functions and advantages as Hampton's (an official voice, formalized access to political leaders, capacity for a coordinated strategy across agencies, training, public convening, issuing of formal reports). But it differs from Hampton in a number of ways:

- Independently organized youth movement. The youth commission was created as part of a grassroots movement, led by Coleman Advocates, and was established only after a citywide referendum. The Bay Area has a vibrant and very diverse youth movement,

including youth organizing through a variety of organizations.

- Strong policy review role. The mission of the youth commission is to advise the mayor and board of supervisors (who select youth commissioners) on children and youth issues. It assesses laws, policies, and regulations and any proposed changes in these. All bills affecting youth must be sent to the commission for review.

- No dedicated office for youth civic engagement. While there is a youth commission, there is not the same kind of office dedicated to catalyzing best practices across agencies. The youth commission staff of three is proportionally much smaller than the staff of the Coalition for Youth and Alternatives, Inc., in Hampton who devote themselves to YCE. However, the Citizens Advisory Committee of the Department of Children, Youth, and the Families (DCYF), which had three youth representatives, conducted a needs assessment in 2001 to fulfill the mandates of the new Children's Fund (from a dedicated tax of $.03 per $100 of assessed property valuation). In addition to various survey methods, the assessment involved facilitated dialogues with 400 citizens, half of whom were under 18; and Youth in Focus conducted a youth-led evaluation (Youth IMPACT) based on a survey of over 700 youth, as well as focus groups and participant observation. The advisory committee recommended greater emphasis on community building among youth, leadership development, and youth-led evaluation of all programs funded by the city. However, unlike the initial Hampton report in the early 1990s, the report contains no overall vision built around youth civic engagement.

Nonetheless, the long-time executive director of Coleman Advocates was recently named as the head of DCYF, which portends greater prominence for YCE. Coleman, under its new director (a youth organizer), remains committed to "the revitalization of local democracy."

Boston's Mayor's Youth Council. Composed of 34 high school juniors and seniors from each of the city's major neighborhoods, the mayor's youth council provides advice to the mayor. Unlike Hampton and San Francisco, there is no direct link to the city council/board of supervisors. The core design is promising in that it requires the delegates to build relationships with all the youth service agencies in their neighborhoods, including the community centers with adult youth workers and peer leaders. However, the staff of the council has been skeletal (one full-time adult staff). As a result, leadership development is much thinner than in the other cities (especially Hampton). The youth council co-sponsors a youth summit every spring (for the past 10 years of its existence), with more than one thousand youth in attendance. While there is much good work going on under the auspices of the youth council and other youth organizations in the city, there seems to be no coordinated strategy that penetrates very deeply into institutional cultures or professional practices. Some of the leading practitioners of teen empowerment in the city do not take the work of the youth council very seriously as a result of its minimal staffing and its direct dependence on the mayor.

Other Cities. Various other cities and counties now have youth commissions or councils (Grand Rapids, Marin County, San Mateo, Indianapolis, Kokomo, Boulder, Boise). There does not appear to be much research on these. A few interviews I conducted, as well as websites that I reviewed, reveal a range of activities: youth philanthropy, sponsoring youth issues and policy forums, advocating youth rights.

The National League of Cities has helped propagate youth councils and commissions with funding from MetLife, but the funding has been relatively modest. Nonetheless, NLC would be available for a much more ambitious campaign if further support were provided.

Federal policy design. We should explore the possibilities of a federal program that might: a) provide funding and guidance to help city governments build innovative, interagency systems for YCE; and b) help build the capacity of intermediary organizations like the National League of Cities, International City/County Management Association, National Civic League, and American Planning Association, as well as YCE intermediaries, to promote best practices, training, etc. (in much the same way that Learn and Serve grants have helped build the capacity of a broad range of service-learning intermediaries in K-12 and higher education). The policy design should contain incentives to make such municipal YCE systems as complementary as possible to the civic mission of schools (Gibson and Levine 2003), colleges, and universities, as well as to other city-sponsored systems for citizen participation. The YCE models of Hampton, San Francisco, and Boston, as well as other city-sponsored models in community policing, neighborhood associations, and community planning (and, indeed, other assets-based community development models), demonstrate that we are far beyond some of the conundrums of federally mandated "maximum feasible participation" (Community Action), "widespread citizen participation" (Model Cities), "consumer participation" (Health Systems Agencies), or "citizen participation" of much environmental legislation in the 1960s and 1970s (Sirianni and Friedland 2001; contrast Morone 1990). Keep in mind that the CSAP grant was critical to Hampton's capacity to innovate; U.S. Department of Justice (and Illinois state) funding has been critical to Chicago's community policing design and process of evaluation and continual improvement; and Community Action and Model Cities were critical to helping catalyze some of the best citywide neighborhood association models (Portland,

Oregon). We should, of course, not repeat the mistakes of these designs, or of ones like the Empowerment Zones (Gittell 2001). But we should explore municipal YCE systems as an important type of "policy design for democracy" (Ingram and Smith 1993) and thematize investments as part of the essential costs of democracy, parallel to how Holmes and Sunstein (1999) forthrightly address the "cost of rights." And we should begin to think of framing this in a way that might help develop a strategy among city governments and other potential supporters in the YCE field and beyond.

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ENDNOTES

1 Hampton's youth are 52% African American, 40% white, and 8% other, mostly mixed race.

2 I conducted fieldwork in Hampton in May 2002 and interviews with agency officials, youth development leaders, and young people between 2001-05. I have also examined documents dating back to 1990, when the collaborative planning process began, as well as several articles written on the Hampton experience by its leaders.

3 Two of the private high schools are located in neighboring Newport News.

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THE LIFEWORLDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
LEWIS A. FRIEDLAND AND SHAUNA MORIMOTO

This brief report outlines the key findings of a year and a half long-study of both the civic environment of youth and the broader lifeworlds which young people inhabit, the environment in which they make decisions about whether and how to engage in civic and political life. Our study has been ethnographic, based in observations and interviews in multiple settings: schools, civic and after school activities, informal places, political demonstrations, and one-on-one settings. We studied 100 young people in four high schools and various other settings in Madison, Wisconsin. We think that the problems and life-orientations that we uncovered could be found among significant numbers of youth in any city in America.

Our main finding is simple. While there were many issues that came up in our interviews, a single theme about the meaning of civic engagement appeared repeatedly: "resume padding." Young people told us, in various ways and registers, that while there was often some other reason that they were participating in a county youth board or school or community service program–helping others, creating change, having fun with friends–the one consistent theme was that participation was necessary to get into a decent college. Further, and we want to stress, this finding was not limited to those of the middle- or upper-middle classes. Young people of all class strata, races, and ethnic backgrounds told us that they needed "something" to put on their resumes, and this was so whether their goal was the local community college, a state school with quasi-open admission, the state flagship university, or a highly competitive private school.

We think this is important. The kind of pressure for college admission that we found was nearly universal. Very few young people, regardless of class, in our sample did not clearly and explicitly link their life chances to college admission. They recognized that their best chance in life was to go to college and believed, in some cases falsely, that to get into any college they required a relatively long and developed service resume. Clearly this pressure was generated by the larger competitive environment, the expectations of parents and significant adult others, and a more general uncertainty about the future.

Young people, like their parents, face a series of choices and constraints that make up an environment in which they make decisions about how to invest their time. But certain goals seem to press themselves most urgently–the desire to not slip down the class ladder; the hope of maintaining or improving on one's parents' position; the recognition that college is the most important means to attain either goal. From these goals, an ensemble of civic possibilities follow which leaves less room for choice and agency than the prevailing understanding of youth civic engagement would indicate.

Briefly, we found a range of types of engagement: highly engaged youth, bound for elite or upper level schools, who were training for leadership; youth oriented towards general volunteerism, sometimes with charitable orientations toward helping others; civic youth, engaging on county youth boards or in high school associations; political youth; and youth oriented towards their own communities, often minorities, who expressed a connection that went beyond helping others to helping their own local neighborhoods. None of these types of engagement can be reduced to resume padding. But, with the partial exception of the community youth, the need to demonstrate service for external and instrumental reasons was a major note for all.

We saw cross cutting currents for each group of young people that made up their lifeworlds, a term of art drawn from phenomenological sociology and used as a master term by Jürgen Habermas. At its simplest, the lifeworld is the lived environment of everyday culture that surrounds us (including language), that provides the deep background against which we carve out our assumptions about

reality, and through which we navigate the social world. The lifeworlds of the young people that we interviewed were saturated with several major sets of assumptions that shaped all of the other decisions that they made. First, as we have already said, are the assumptions about their future lives, and how they will confront them, about schooling and career, if they have been raised to think about these things, and, regardless, about money and the future. These form, as the sociologist Ulrich Beck has written, a horizon of risk or uncertainty that is palpable among all but the most secure (and even for these future leaders the extraordinary competition for elite college admission colors and directs their lives from ninth grade on). Of course, whether the students were upper-middle, middle, or working class greatly affected their orientations, as did whether they came from minority communities. But the calculation of chances was a thread that ran through each group.

The omnipresent status system of high school was the second major lifeworld environment, as was its corollary consumption of media and status goods. At one level this is obvious, but we think it has been greatly underestimated in the current understanding of youth civic engagement. The negotiation of personal identity for high school youth is, at least, a powerful three-headed hydra: the expectations of parents passed down as future orientations just discussed: the expectations of the high-school status system, which still powerfully replicates the experience of upper-, middle-, and lower-castes; and the pressures of the media system to consume, both the latest products of the media system itself and consumer goods that demonstrate status. These all cross-cut through styles of consumption in music and clothing that remain powerful markers of who one is and associates with, and who counts. And this intersection shapes both the space for deciding what kinds of "civic" activities to engage in and their meaning.

As self-evident as this all may seem–that young people face great pressure to succeed, that high school is stratified and often cruel, that young

people live in an increasingly media-saturated culture–it still seems that much research on youth civic engagement abstracts from it as if it did not exist, and that's the question we hope to put on the table for the conference. It may be true that programs can be designed to predict longitudinal effects of participation in similar programs as young people age. And best cases in local communities in which adults intensively focus on a small core of young people can produce remarkable examples of youth civic participation in community development, public work, or the environment. It also may be true that intensive marketing to youth, e.g. in the 2004 political campaign, can raise voting rates and produce higher click-through rates at youth-oriented civic web sites. But we are not sure that any of these phenomena addresses the possibility of a youth civic politics that begins to address the core lifeworld issues in which young people are ensnared: the paucity of viable career paths, the enormous pressure to succeed or risk slipping backward, the sense of being an object of constant marketing campaigns, the difficulty of building social and cultural community within the high school where one can be oneself.

This is consonant with our research. We found a number of cases of young people who tried to address these issues, even obliquely, and were shut down. Even in high schools where "civic engagement" was explicitly encouraged, students who worked to change the lunchroom menu were discouraged. Some students were concerned that particular classes being offered in the service-learning curriculum were good in theory, but they knew they were never going to actually happen. But they could do little to shape the rules of the larger curriculum. And these examples could be replicated throughout our study and, certainly, in almost any high school in the U.S. Students are allowed and even encouraged to engage civically with anything other than the institution that most directly shapes their lives.

In part, the difficulty in conceptualizing these problems as a part of youth civic engagement may be precisely because these are lifeworld issues,

part of the larger social and cultural environment. But it is possible that a more democratic youth politics may have to address these issues to be relevant. Our understanding of the civic and the political may be too narrow, framed in the terms of political science, rather than the politics of everyday life.   If Dewey was even remotely correct in his understanding of publics and how they form, if publics form around the real problems that citizens face and are shaped in the search for common solutions, then we may be looking in the wrong direction in thinking about youth political and civic engagement. We may have to build bridges between a more direct politics of the lifeworld of young people and the larger civic and political worlds we are asking them to engage.

THREE POINTS RELEVANT TO RESEARCH ON YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
JANE JUNN

I raise three points for consideration in anticipation of our discussion of strategies for enhancing youth engagement. My comments are less of an enumeration of the substantive issues at stake, and more of a theoretical and methodological précis for the forthcoming research agenda on the nexus between institutions and youth engagement.

1. Institutions should be both broadly conceived as well as scrutinized as potential impediments to the development of civic attitudes and behaviors among young people.

This seems like an obvious point, but I think it is worth reminding ourselves that even those institutions we think are good for civic engagement can have potentially devastating and debilitating consequences. Let me briefly delineate one such American institution: education. Among the most powerful institutions in U.S. society, education is of particular interest to scholars of political behavior because of the strong and positive relationship between educational attainment and political participation at the individual level. If there is a consistent refrain in the vast literature concerning education in America, it is that it is good – good for democracy, for employment, for social mobility, for building strong communities, and for democratic values such as political tolerance. Education is most often viewed as a resource that, when fairly distributed, can provide equal opportunities for individuals in society to succeed. This conception of education, however, is at odds with a seemingly divergent conclusion that places education among the most powerful stratifiers in modern post-industrial society. The very same data that pinpoint the critical importance of education to social, political, and economic outcomes and inform the position that more education is good, also simultaneously identify education as the main mechanism driving the maintenance of inequality and hierarchy where the outcomes are scarce. In these instances, rather than adding aggregate

value to society and economy, more education may have either no positive effect on enhancing equality or instead, a negative effect. Indeed, more education in American society over the last quarter century has not produced a commensurate rise in many social, economic, and political outcomes.

While formal education may encourage the development of cognitive ability and individual resources, it may also be the case that these skills are less relevant to one's placement in the hierarchy of American life. Instead, the important of education to stratification may be the role it plays as a powerful socialization device, teaching students who are successful and who progress through educational institutions to also become initiated into the hierarchical norms of commerce, politics, and social life. In short, education may be a particularly effective means of reproducing cultural, political, and economic practices. As one of the primary mechanisms behind social stratification, education can also be conceived as exactly the opposite from an equalizing force. Instead, education may reproduce and legitimate structural inequalities that in turn drive vast disparities in wealth, and nurture the persistence of the dominance of the in-group to the systematic disadvantage of out-groups. How can education be understood simultaneously as both an equalizing force and a stratification mechanism? Education both enables and restricts; it is a location for the development of both individual agency and structural constraint.

Disadvantaged groups stay that way not only by virtue of their relatively low placement in the educational hierarchy, but also because the legitimacy of this unequal structure is propagated in part by American educational institutions themselves. Rather than sitting outside of the political, economic, and social structures that reinforce inequality and domination, education is a part of it. Education plays two important roles in the maintenance of an ideology of meritocracy in the United States. In its sorting function, formal education confers certification, degrees and other scarce outcomes that places those with what are

defined as the best credentials at the top of the hierarchy, and those with lesser near the bottom. In its role as a powerful socializer, education teaches the ideology of meritocracy, by grading on normal curves and assuring those who finish on the right tail that they will succeed because they deserve to. The second role is critical, for it is necessary to have some mechanism which reliably reproduces the ideology that maintains the positions of power for those at the top who benefit from the system as it already exists. When outcomes are positional or scarce – when not everyone can be rich, and not everyone can be granted admission into a top school – the liberal democratic ideology must have an answer to its production of unequal outcomes. Merit can be used as a justification for inequality of outcomes in a system where the rules are supposed to be fair. Viewing education as an institution supporting both the development of both individual agency as well as and structural constraints is a gentle if unpleasant reminder that policies that seek to redress the consequences of political inequality cannot assume that providing more resources for competition in an unequal system will eliminate the inequality.

More concretely, civic education curricula often highlight how politics in the United States is a study in both conflict and cooperation between people, interests, and ideologies. In the texts accompanying these courses, government is most often portrayed as an arbiter in the process of struggle and accommodation between groups. Assuming a neutral and ostensibly fair democratic structure combined with a companion notion of equality of agency presents a set of perplexing inconsistencies for students when they are confronted with realities of injustice in America. As recently as fifty years ago, how could southern states use literacy tests at election precincts for selected individuals with questions such as: "How many bubbles are in this bar of soap?" How, in the greatest democracy in the world and under the leadership of one of the greatest Presidents in modern U.S. history, could the U.S. Supreme Court uphold the constitutionality of imprisoning

American citizens of Japanese ancestry during World War II? Yet for many students, particularly those of minority and immigrant backgrounds, these are not surprising or embarrassing anomalies whose practice have now been outlawed. Rather, from where these young people sit, discrimination is a norm of everyday politics that is felt palpably in economic, social, and civic life. Inequality and barriers to action structure rather than pepper their daily lives, and concepts such as freedom, fairness, equality, justice, and even democracy are far from unambiguous.

2. Frames of reference for drawing conclusions and recommending policy must be explicit and clearly delineated.

This caution is relevant for all kinds of group comparisons, including those within cohort by race, ethnicity, gender, and class, as well as for juxtapositions across groups of individuals in various stages of the life cycle, and between generations such as "baby boomers" versus "generation X." In particular, and when drawing conclusions about young people today, we need to be very careful to ground those observations about whether civic engagement is high or low, deep or shallow within the context of the behavior of contemporary groups and that of similarly situated groups at other points in time. Finally, and for research to make inferential progress, I recommend we consider privileging longitudinal studies that include a panel design. While cross-sectional data can be very illuminating, even multiple synchronic studies at distinct time points (with different populations) provide less analytical leverage to say whether and how things change over time, and which institutions and policies are most efficacious.

3. Research should attempt to go beyond the individual as unit of analysis, incorporating historical and institutional context where possible.

This is, of course, easier said than done. But one of the most problematic things about research on civic education interventions is that the focus of

evaluation is most often on the young person. In some regards, this is both logical and empowering; we want to see positive changes in the behavior of young people. But when there is either no change, or when there is change in the opposite direction (less engagement), what comes under scrutiny most often are the students themselves. Let me give you a hypothetical example of a civic education program valorizing units of the American federal justice system in the post-September 11 era. Try the program in a Detroit suburb where there is a heavy concentration of Arab-American residents, and in a socio-economically similar area of metropolitan Philadelphia with a small immigrant and non-white population. The results of a program evaluation are all too predictable. It does not work well in the former, and does better in the latter; post-intervention data make the Detroit students look like less desirable citizens for not demonstrating an increase in their support of democracy and trust in institutions compared with the mostly white students in the Philadelphia suburb. Well-intentioned though they may be in attempting to increase characteristics of good democratic citizenship and social capital such as trust, civic education programs that privilege one version of a true democratic creed can yield results that exacerbate rather than alleviate prejudice. Similarly, civic education curricula attempting to increase political activity and interest in politics through greater exposure and activity in current political issues and local electoral contests, for example, have a different but related problem. Popular strategies in this vein include connecting groups of students to candidates running for office, and organizing classrooms to lobby local officials about a community concern with the goal of empowering students to make a difference in the system. These semester- or year-long civic education programs have the best chance of producing measurable consequences for students who have the resources and structural incentives to work with and in the system to accomplish political goals. For them, the light bulb of political efficacy and significance of politics to their daily lives might indeed illuminate, and consequently motivate them to follow current events more closely and become

politically active as adults. But for others, the civic education curriculum is their political power, and while perhaps inspiring in its own right, that power is substantially diminished once they exit the classroom door and re-enter the reality of their lives characterized by a relatively low position in the social, economic, and political hierarchy. As a result, incentives for activity are diminished not only because money, time, and political motivation are scarce at home, but also because political responsiveness does not follow the resource-poor at the same rate it follows the advantaged. Mediating institutions such as political parties have not effectively mobilized new immigrant populations, and remain resistant to doing so, further diminishing the influence of marginalized groups. Post-intervention evaluations measuring a laundry list of good citizenship behaviors and attitudes such as interest in politics, efficacy, knowledge, and forms of political participation such as contacting officials, making campaign contributions, voting, and working with others in the local community, will likely demonstrate the strongest and most persistent effects in populations who already control democratic processes, and the weakest effects among disadvantaged populations. In politics as in economy, the rich get richer.

As far as civic education programs aimed at increasing youth political engagement are concerned, I suggest that modes of political participation such as voting or making a campaign contribution are implicitly acts in support of the maintenance of a political system which may not be in the best interests for people who benefit least from that system. Rather than assume the same set of conditions equally structures the costs and incentives of political activity, interpretations of findings need to provide space for the likelihood that strategic calculations among individuals categorized by race and ethnicity vary systematically as a function of the location of their group in the social and political hierarchy. Suspending the assumption that groups ought to see participation in the political system as desirable provides the opportunity to train the lens away from the failings of the curriculum or inactive

and apathetic youth, and instead focus scrutiny on the practices and institutions of democracy that may themselves inhibit the achievement of equality. A companion assumption accompanying the notion that individuals have equal agency in politics is one about representation – that more participatory input from citizens means that there will be more responsiveness from elected political officials, and consequently better policies. These are reasonable assumptions, neither of which I am in disagreement with in principle. At the same time, however, they are precisely that; assumptions about which research in political science provide little certainty.

The equality of individual agency assumption makes a lot of sense in that it is something we want to believe. One more semester of a particular civic engagement curriculum will garner the same increase in political engagement for whites as for Blacks. But if there is evidence that there is an interaction between antecedents to political activity – a set of structural constraints that present unequal contexts for opportunity among individuals classified by race and ethnicity – then the assumption becomes much more problematic. The same is true for the representation assumption. If it is the case that participation from disadvantaged populations receives the same attention and action as from those who can make substantial campaign contributions, then the assumption is justifiable. But if there is something in the political process that systematically advantages some to the disadvantage of other, it requires reconsideration.

The relevance of these two assumptions regarding equality of individual agency and the efficacy of participation for civic education lies in the ultimate aim of efforts to teach democracy to youth in order to increase political engagement and activity. In the current climate, advocating more citizen activity seems obviously normatively appealing. Expanding voice and deliberation, particularly in a time of growing diversity in the United States, should help to forward democracy and solve distributional inequities in social and political goods. In this view, more participation is especially important for

those traditionally disadvantaged and politically underrepresented, for more voice will create pressure to develop public policies that take their interests into account. Under circumstances of relatively modest rates of political activity among minorities, what falls under scrutiny for change are the individuals who supposedly influence the process of democratic government, rather than the institutions and practices themselves. But if we relax the assumption that the political process provides equality of agency for all, then the comparatively low rates of participatory activity among minority Americans can be interpreted in another way, as an indicator of the structural inequalities present.

RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBILITY-TAKING

DIETLIND STOLE
in collaboration with
MICHELE MICHELETTI and MARC HOOGHE

Citizens in advanced industrialized democracies, especially younger generations, prefer participating in non-hierarchical and informal networks, in addition to a variety of life-style related sporadic mobilization efforts. Membership in informal local parental groups, the tendency to consume politically, membership in advocacy networks, the regular signing and forwarding of e-mail petitions, and the spontaneous organization of protests and rallies are just a few examples of this phenomenon.

Although we are confronted with a large diversity in these new action repertoires, they have common characteristics with regard to: 1) their structure; 2) the substantive issues they address; 3) the ways in which they mobilize, and; 4) the style of involvement by individual members. First, these new forms of participation abandon traditional (that is to say formal and bureaucratic) organizational structures in favour of horizontal and more flexible ones. Loose connections, in other words, are rapidly replacing static bureaucracies.[1] Instead of collaborating in formal umbrella structures, these grassroots associations opt for co-operation in flexible and horizontal networks that are better adapted to the needs of information-driven societies.[2] This kind of network structure can also be found in various global organizations and mobilization efforts, which rely on loose contacts and electronic communication to co-ordinate their actions for reform in trade regimes, labour practices, human rights or environmental quality.[3]

Second, in general these new initiatives are also less concerned with institutional affairs, such as party politics, which brings them into sharp contrast with more traditional political organisations. Life-style elements are being politicized and although the actors no longer label their action as being expressly 'political,' these preoccupations do lead to political mobilization.[4] These new forms of participation clearly break the traditional boundaries between the public and the private sphere; some authors have heralded this transition as the advent of 'subpolitics,' where daily life decisions take on a strong political meaning.[5] For example, the participation in a recycling project can contribute to a feeling of connection with large-scale environmental issues, without requiring any formal memberships or ideological identification

Third, these new forms of participation tend to mobilize in a very characteristic way. On the one hand, they rely on apparently spontaneous and irregular mobilization. The signing of petitions, or participation in protests and consumer boycotts all seem based on spontaneity, irregularity, easy exit and the possibility of shifting-in and shifting-out. This is certainly the case with new, more emotion-driven forms of protest and mobilization. On the other hand, the rise of various check-book organizations implies that passive members will become more important than has been the case in traditional mass-membership organisations. Check-book activism does not rely on intensive and regular face-to-face contact between members, and the organizational model of these organizations no longer stresses voluntary participation in local chapters. Check-book membership organizations operate mostly on a national scale, with a professional staff relying on print and electronic media to stay in touch with their members.[6] Such memberships, too, allow for easy exit and spontaneous irregular involvement, which renders this type of network much more vulnerable to sudden fluctuations in its membership base and thus its income.[7]

Fourth and finally, new forms of participation are potentially less collective and group-oriented in character. This is the case even though they might be triggered by larger societal concerns (such as global injustice), organized and supported by advocacy networks and other loose organizations, and also have aggregate consequences (a change of corporate practices, for example). Despite

all this, the actual act of participation is often individualized in character, whether this involves the decision to forward a selected e-mail as did Jonah Peretti, who subsequently triggered a world-wide response to Nike's footwear production practices,[8] or whether it involves the decision to purchase a certain product for ethical reasons.[9] Such individualized acts do not necessarily lead to group interaction or face-to-face meetings of the kind we typically encounter in unions, voluntary groups, regular council meetings, and so forth. Passive memberships in check-book organisations are relatively individualised acts as well. This leads to a certain paradox: while this form of protest and participation can be seen as an example of co-ordinated collective action, most participants simply perform this act alone, at home before a computer screen, or in a supermarket.

WHAT ARE THE FACTORS BEHIND THE CHANGE OF CITIZENS' (PARTICULARLY YOUNG CITIZENS') ACTION REPERTOIRES?

Large-scale societal transformations explain this shift in political action repertoires. We use the growing interest in political consumerism and culture jamming among young people as an example here.[10] One could argue that the reasons for this shift in participation repertoires toward political consumerism are related to the changing ability to address issues of global justice. Transformations of the regulatory power of states, the new role of markets and consumers are helpful here in explaining this phenomenon.

We see this development embedded in changing notions of responsibility-taking. Traditional political responsibility is premised on the existence of strong state authority and easily identified targets of public policy reform that can be made to conform to the dictates of public law. It assumes that the state is sufficiently strong (has the authority) to regulate sectors of the economy and that its reach (the arm of the state) is sufficiently long for regulating corporate and other production-oriented practices.

It also assumes that problems can be avoided or solved by regulating production. Thus, identifying limits for corporate and institutional actions, finding the liable party, and holding them accountable for damages and so on has been the modern state's main way of asserting its supreme responsibility.

Globalization has weakened the effectiveness of the state as a responsibility-making institution. The "nation-state container" (Beck) of state authority suggests that one government's regulatory policy cannot reign over the policy and practices of another government. For example, the environmental and labor policy that governs (commands and controls) corporations nationally cannot hold them liable for their doings in another state's jurisdiction. Thus, wrong-doings in one setting may not be classified as such in another. Thus, the "nation-state" character of government regulatory policy as well as weaknesses in government authority in certain settings lead scholars, policy-makers, and activists to consider new models of political responsibility.

Markets also matter. They have undergone two dramatic changes in character over the past few decades. First, free trade policy has given corporations the opportunity to produce an increasing number of goods at lower prices in countries other then their retail market. Secondly, corporations that produce goods for the consumer market are increasingly buyer-driven, implying that they invest an ever-growing amount of resources into producing a logotype and corporate image and culture than in their physical means of production.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY-TAKING.

Finally, consumers' individualization and the desire to "over-consume" is accompanied by a growing awareness of the shaded environmental and social

justice costs of consumer goods produced by distanced commodity chains. Political, ethical, and green consumerism as well as fair trade are a few of the terms used to characterize consumer awareness about the negative effects of Western production and consumption practices globally. What is interesting is that political consumers also exhibit the first two characteristics. They want fashion and good quality at low prices, but they also give consideration to how manufacturing affects the environment and working conditions, and animal rights. They also tend to have a more negative view of the role of multinational corporations globally, and they believe that they can use their market decisions to affect change (survey materials confirm these assertions).

The lack of state capacity, the changing roles and actions of corporations, as well as consumers lead to new ways of "discovering responsibility" (Young). A variety of terms—stakeholder, audit society, transparency, accountability, and answerability—capture this development (Power).   Network-based transnational collective action is increasingly seen as an interesting problem-solving tool to create private political consumerist private governance.

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6 Wollebæk, Dag & Per Selle, 'The Importance of Passive Membership for Social Capital Formation,' in Marc Hooghe & Dietlind Stolle, eds., *Generating Social Capital* (New York: Palgrave, 2003), pp. 67-88.

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8 Peretti, Jonah and Michelle Micheletti, 'The Nike Sweatshop Email: Political Consumerism, Internet, and Culture Jamming' in Michelle Micheletti, Andreas Føllesdal and Dietlind Stolle, eds., *Politics, Products, and Markets* (New Brunswick: Transaction Press, 2004), pp. 127-144.

9 Micheletti, Michelle, Andreas Føllesdal and Dietlind Stolle, eds., *Politics, Products, and Markets: Exploring Political Consumerism Past and Present* (New Brunswick: Transaction Press, 2004).

10 Political consumerism is the choice of products and producesr based on ethical and political values, see more in Micheletti Follesdal and Stolle 2004. Culture jamming is one form of political consumerism often utilized by young people who criticize multi-national corporations using corporate images.

HOW STRUCTURES INFLUENCE THE POLITICS OF ENGAGEMENT: SOME POSSIBILITIES FOR RESEARCH
JOSEPH KAHNE

Much recent work argues that there is a "new student politics" – that young people think about politics differently (often with less trust of the political process and less interest in it) than other generations. This has prompted some to try to understand how institutions may help to shape levels of political and civic engagement and the ways such institutional structures may lead some youth to emphasize service rather than politics. This work is important. But it also seems important to understand the how institutions (and features of these institutions) can help shape students' ideological frames (their perspective on government, capitalism, unions, religion, multinationals…) that in turn shape young people's perspectives on issues (affirmative action, same sex marriage, taxes, environmental policy, etc.). To some extent, studying "the new student politics" by focusing on engagement with politics, but not on ideologies or political perspectives, takes the politics out of the study of "the new student politics"…

For a broad set of questions, I'd propose something like the following: How have major institutions (media, religion, political parties, the partisan qualities of communities, etc.) helped shape students' ideological perspectives? and Do ideological perspectives influence the amount and forms of student engagement? When/How?   In saying this, I don't mean to imply that the "new student politics" reflects a particular political orientation. I'd love to learn more about the factors that push orientations in varied directions and if/how those orientations relate to students' perspectives on political engagement.

Similarly, I would not expect that "the media" in its entirety or all "religious institutions" have a specific impact on young people. I'd be interested in the impact of particular forms of media or religious institutions or experiences with them….

Thus, it would be interesting to have a better understanding of the following kinds of issues:

- How do features of various institutions (campaigns, schools, media, religion, etc.) and the associated experiences students have with them shape both engagement and the ideological/political priorities students bring to this engagement?
- Are there particular experiences or arguments that students hear that lead to shifts in students' ideological perspectives? In turn, how do these perspectives impact decisions about whether/how to engage?
- If some experiences or arguments prompt shifts, what institutions foster such experiences or become forums for such arguments to be voiced?

To the extent possible, it would be helpful to frame these ideologies and forms of engagement in young people's terms rather than our standard frameworks – unless, of course, that's how they think/talk about them. In either case, it will also be important to make meaningful links between the ways they think about all of this and how their thinking differs from other age cohorts in terms of developmental theory. For example, if adolescents engage with authority figures differently than older cohorts, if they tend to care about different issues, and if their socio-political identities are in a greater state of flux than others, we might expect experiences with institutions to influence them differently than they may influence others. So there's a descriptive element to the study I'm proposing that would map these ideological frameworks around engagement and perhaps a few key issues. This would be coupled with an effort to understand the ways different institutions and features of these institutions have helped both create these frames and influenced the perspectives students take with respect to different political issues.

In doing this work, it would be important that our sample include different groups (social class, ethnicity, race, gender, recentness of immigration,

etc.) so that we can get a better sense of how/ when diversity matters – and doesn't.

To say that we should focus on the ways young people think and talk is not to say that we should necessarily affirm elements of the "new student politics." We might well want to discuss how their categories and perspectives relate to some conventional categories. We just shouldn't start with the conventional categories. In addition, we might well want to connect some of their perspectives on engagement to a normative democratic theory and discuss some of the strengths and possible weaknesses of particular orientations towards engagement from the standpoint of what's needed realize the promise of democracy.

If we identify institutional factors that shape both the development of ideological perspectives and factors that lead to changes in these perspectives, we may be able to develop a better sense of the connection between major institutions on the one hand, and the "new student politics" on the other.

PROPOSALS FOR SUSTAINING
THE TURNOUT SURGE
JANE EISNER

In the book I published last year, *Taking Back the Vote: Getting American Youth Involved in our Democracy*, I outlined the reasons for the low voting rates of young Americans and suggested ways that this meltdown in political and civic participation could be reversed. Since then, we've witnessed the gratifying surge of turnout in the 2004 presidential election and a new sense of excitement among many young people. Now it's time to pay attention to the institutional changes that must occur if this reversal is to be sustained. Here are some ideas and observations that I hope will be helpful as this discussion gets underway:

PENN LEADS THE VOTE.

At the University of Pennsylvania, I was fortunate to be involved in a marvelously successful, student-run get-out-the-vote campaign that could serve as a model for campuses across the country. The concept of "Penn Leads the Vote" drew upon the central message of the work of Donald Green and Alan Gerber – make it personal. We decided to work through the leaders of student organizations on campus, on the theory that students will be more receptive to a message if it comes from other students with whom they have chosen to affiliate.

Here's how it worked. During the summer of 2004, two student interns from the Fox Leadership Program identified and met with leaders from campus governance, religious, athletic, fraternal and ethnic organizations. The leaders of those organizations who chose to participate were given an afternoon of training during freshman orientation from a professional organizer whom we brought to campus for this purpose. The leaders were then made responsible for ensuring that the members of their organizations were registered to vote, encouraged to become informed, and then, on Election Day, actually went to the polls. Other members of the Fox Leadership Steering Committee followed up with the student leaders

through the semester as Election Day approached

In addition to this intense personal process, Penn Leads the Vote encouraged faculty members to talk about the election in class. It sponsored GOTV activities campus, handed out hundreds of wrist bands, manned booths to register students, and helped build excitement about the election. This was a bipartisan effort, supported by both Penn Democrats and Republicans.

And the result? By the most conservative estimates, turnout of Penn students increased from 2000 to 2004 by 230 percent. Penn Leads the Vote cannot claim all the credit for that surge in participation, but it does deserve a lot of it. The energetic and innovative way the students worked through existing campus organizations could serve as an easily replicated model for other colleges and universities. This kind of mobilization need not be confined to a presidential election year, and should be used to keep interest and momentum alive during other election cycles.

AARP FOR THE YOUNG.

As I spoke to young people across the country about my book, time and again I heard from an energetic soul who wanted to figure out a way to create an issues-oriented lobbying group for the young. Other nations have student unions or different kinds of broad-based groups to represent the concerns of younger citizens. I wonder whether we should try to help grow something like that in the U.S.

It could never have the power of the elderly lobby; young people don't have the money and, now anyhow, the political clout. But young people do have an enormous and so far untested resource in communication and organization: The Internet. Imagine if there were some way of linking high school and college students on, say, the issue of the rising cost of higher education – which, as far as I can tell, is a huge concern largely ignored by the political process. Or a think tank that would research and publicize nonpartisan "white papers"

on issues like how the change in Social Security would affect the young.

One of the debilitating consequences of low voter turnout among the young is the way their issues have been largely absent from public debate, facilitating the vicious cycle that leads to the disconnect between candidate and potential voter. This would be one way to reconnect.

REDUCING THE BARRIERS TO VOTING.

Many of the proposals now before Congress to encourage participation and ensure free and fair elections disproportionately affect young people. There should be a nationwide movement to do away with the vestiges of election rules that make it harder for young people, especially, to get to the polls. This movement should encourage same-day registration, longer and uniform polling hours, an end to the rules in some states that prevent first-time voters from voting absentee, easier absentee balloting procedures, etc.

High schools should be encouraged to make sure that every eligible voter is registered before he or she graduates. Colleges should make registration a prerequisite of finishing freshmen orientation.

This could be a separate effort, or woven into the mission of the nationwide youth movement mentioned above.

EDUCATING THE MEDIA.

I'm sorry to say that some members of my own profession did a poor job of reporting on the youth vote last fall, particularly in the first few days after the election. While some of that was driven by the outcome of the election, it was also clear that the GOTV leaders were not able to get their point across quickly enough to stem some of the initial damage.

And while the image of young people as caring about civic and political life did improve this last year, there is still a long way to go in matching that image with the reality. Truth is, this is a notably involved, civic-minded, communitarian generation. They need help in making sure more Americans see that.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN YOUTH FROM LOW INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS: THE INFLUENCE OF YOUTH BULGES, INSTITUTIONS, AND POVERTY
DANIEL HART

Youth from low income neighborhoods, in comparison to those from affluent neighborhoods, acquire less civic knowledge, volunteer less frequently, are less tolerant, and, upon reaching early adulthood, are less likely to vote. What mechanisms give rise to these trends? Should we be optimistic about improvement in the future?

Communities affect civic knowledge and civic participation through social influence. Knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors are shaped in daily interactions with others (Latané, Liu, Nowak, Boneventu, & Zheng, 1995). In our research, we have examined the effects of community demographics on social influence. Poor communities by definition have many families below the poverty line; little appreciated is that such communities tend also to have large populations of children and small populations of adults. An adolescent living in a community in which a large fraction of the population is composed of children and adolescents, a child-saturated community, will interact more often with peers, and consequently will be more influenced by them, than will an adolescent in a community with relatively few children and many adults, or an adult-saturated community.

Our research (Hart, Atkins, Markey, & Youniss, 2004, Hart, Atkins, & Youniss, 2005) suggests that child-saturation influences adolescents' acquisition of civic knowledge and civic participation. Because adults have more experience in their societies than youth, they should have more civic knowledge than do children and adolescents. In comparison to other communities, child-saturated communities have fewer inhabitants (i.e., adults) with high levels of civics-expertise that can be transmitted through informal contact to children and adolescents. Indeed, we have found that youth living in child-saturated communities know less about the political system than youth living in adult-saturated

communities.

If social influence operates as suggested, then child-saturated neighborhoods are better than adult-saturated ones for the acquisition by adolescents of any form of civic activity more common in adolescents than in adults. Voluntary community service is one such activity, as it is more common in American adolescents than among adults. Child-saturated communities are consequently more likely to offer models of involvement in volunteer activities than are adult-saturated ones. Our research (Hart, Atkins, Markey, & Youniss, 2004, Hart, Atkins, & Youniss, 2005) indicates that adolescents are more likely to volunteer in communities in which many others volunteer (child-saturated communities), than in communities in which volunteering is less common (adult-saturated communities), except in profoundly poor communities. Our research finds an interaction between neighborhood poverty and child-saturation, with the result that volunteering is very depressed in poor, child-saturated communities. This interaction suggests to us that poor communities may lack the institutions necessary to involve youth in constructive, civic activities.

Finally, child-saturation is probably related to involvement in delinquent activities. Our research suggests that adolescents living in child-saturated neighborhoods are more likely than youth in adult-saturated neighborhoods to be involved in delinquent activities. Involvement in delinquent activity can lead to conviction, which in turn can lead to disenfranchisement. As is well-known, conviction and disenfranchisement are more likely to affect minority, rather than white, men. Indeed, the Bureau of Criminal Justice Statistics projects that if 2001 incarceration rates occur into the future, 1 in 3 Black men will spend time in Federal or State penitentiaries, compared to 1 in 17 white men. One estimate is that at least 60% of Black, male, high school dropouts will be incarcerated (Pettit & Western, 2004), leading some analysts to suggest that America has introduced a new stage into the life cycle of Black youth: going to jail.

Currently, 13% of Black men are disenfranchised; that percentage is likely to grow in the future.

Community child-saturation should only influence qualities of civic development for which there are substantial mean level differences between youth and adult populations. Such differences exist for knowledge and volunteering, but not for other civic qualities such as tolerance for others' views. However, tolerance is clearly influenced by neighborhood factors and economic distress. We have found that youth living in poor neighborhoods to be lower in tolerance than adolescents in other communities.

There are reasons to be hopeful concerning the future. Analyses of 2000 Census suggests that concentrated poverty is declining from its peak in 1990, though there is still far to go. The population is aging, which should predict improved civic knowledge. However, there are still millions of youth living in contexts which do not support civic engagement. Moreover, trends in sentencing have profoundly negative implications for the civic engagement of minority men from low income backgrounds.

These trends, and others related to the civic engagement of youth from low income neighborhoods, demand our serious consideration.

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RESHAPING A DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY FOR POLITICAL-CIVIC DEVELOPMENT
JAMES YOUNISS

Recent studies on community service and youth development programs have produced results which urge us to alter our theoretical orientation to political and civic development. A case in point is seen in observations from a youth empowerment, out-of-school, program in Chicago with immigrant and minority youth in a low wealth neighborhood. In four months of observation, the researchers saw the following behaviors evolve. The youth identified inequitable administration of the school discipline code as a problem that interfered with their education. They validated their perception by mounting a survey which they administered to several hundred students. Once verified, they took their complaint to the superintendent's office and discovered how to get their voice heard. This effort, which included staging a rally and communicating directly with the superintendent, was successful as the code was altered and practices were changed. In addition, the students organized an inter-school demonstration which was aimed at stopping the introduction of a new system-wide high stakes test. The study ended while this campaign was still in progress.

Studies of this sort tell us much about political development in youth. 1. Youth who are ordinarily labeled "at risk," can be mobilized and educated in political strategic thinking. 2. These youth who are ordinarily viewed as uninterested in their education, can discover and articulate their interest in being educated and impediments to it. 3. These youth who ordinarily are considered focused on self-gratification can act collectively to work toward changes that benefit all students within the school system. 4. These youth who seem uninvolved in politics displayed behavior which is patently political and dealt with a public matter of just practices. And 5. These youth who are often characterized as having negative identities, seem during this study to have gained a political identity that brought them into the system rather than alienating them further from it.

As a developmental psychologist, I admit that these and related findings that began to emerge during the past decade challenge our traditional theoretical approaches of political and civic development. Most current theories are variants of a cognitive model which focuses on strategic thinking that emanates from an underlying development of cognitive competence. This competence is rather universal in scope as thinking is seen to apply to any content, be it scientific experiments, interpersonal relationships, or analysis of political situations. Because this competence is universal, it is somewhat disembodied, private, individual, and lacking in interest in the political sense. Although such a theory could be applied to the above example, the application would be loose and after-the-fact, as it would hardly predict the observed behaviors, especially in these kind of youth from an "inner-city, low wealth" setting.

I (and Dan Hart) suggest that an adequate theory of political and civic development would need to have the following features. A. Youth would be seen as having interests besides simply personal satisfaction or feeling comfortable cognitively or otherwise. B. This interest would be seen as shared with others, other students, members of one's ethnic group, or what have you. C. These interests would be seen as being in competition with other persons who have different interests; e.g., other student groups, the superintendent's office, et al. D. To advance one's interests in this context requires public behavior that is political and, therefore, entails argument, persuasion, and various tactics of confrontation, rethinking, and compromise. Sitting back and reasoning to the best solution is simply inadequate for the political domain. E. Effective action would in most instances demand collective action which involves the pooling of knowledge and skills by people who share an interest. F. All of this would operate in people who share an identity in the political process itself, including those who hold competing interests and are perceived as the opposition.

At present, I see no obvious candidate for a

developmental theory that has these features. Again, the dominant model from which most theories stem is a broad cognitive position that emphasizes individual reasoning that leads to right solutions. Consider how this model has been applied in the domain of morality. People are scaled from less to more moral maturity according to the reasoning they use to resolve a dilemma. As some commentators have noted, the person in question is treated quite abstractly, akin to a miniature philosopher who has no stake in the dilemma other than reaching the ideal solution. This moral reasoner is disembodied and lacking in interest other than being precise and consistent in approaching the issue.

Examples from real life abound. Recall the debate between the presidential candidates George H. W. Bush and Michael Dukakis when the moderator asked how they would react if a Willie Horton were to have raped their wife or daughter. Dukakis gave the answer that cognitive theory would endorse; he would let the law take its course. Bush answered as a person with an interest; he would seek the severest of retributive punishments. A similar example is seen in then-Senator Lowell Weicker's response to a reporter who asked whether his sponsorship of a bill to assist handicapped youth was prompted in part by the Senator's having a handicapped son. The Senator said he was offended by the question, implying that one's personal interest was irrelevant to right legislation. A third example comes from a real-life instance of Kohlberg's famous Heinz dilemma when in Nazi-occupied Poland, a Jewish husband who was being harbored by Christians faced the need for a drug to save the life of his ill wife. Unlike the hypothetical Heinz, this man went first to his friends, people who shared his background through years of simple reciprocation, to raise the money. He then went to his protectors, promising that he would return the "loan" once the occupation ended.
These examples are meant to highlight where this cognitive model leads and, by implication, why it is less than adequate as an approach to political development. It would seem, then, work toward a developmental theory which fits political and civic

behavior is well worth pursuing. The new model would have cognition in it, but the target person would have defined interests that are shared with others, which differ from interests of other groups, when resolution of the differences requires public-political behavior that follows rules of a system with which all sides identify. Such a theory would also help to overcome the emphasis on the acquisition of disembodied knowledge by theories of political socialization and practices in civic education which seek to promote civic development without dealing with politics.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES
CONSTANCE A. FLANAGAN

I argue that community colleges could play an important role in incorporating groups of young adults who are marginalized from the political process. I make four points:

1. that CCs are the higher education institution that equalizes opportunity and that 4-year institutions are increasingly becoming rubber stamps of social advantage
2. that because CCs respond to local training needs and are funded largely by state and local dollars, it is incumbent on their faculty and staff to be engaged in local community affairs and that CC students themselves have a vested interest in local community affairs
3. that experiments in place in many CCs may have civic pay offs and should be studied and
4. CC are challenged by financial pressures and also serve students who are overtaxed by competing role demands of job and family

Community colleges are the largest and fasting growing sector of higher education. The 1158 public two-year colleges enroll 45% of all U.S. undergraduates. The American Association of Community Colleges reports that 10.4 million students are enrolled in CC.

These colleges are the higher education opportunity institution for marginalized groups. They are the most affordable (average annual tuition of $2076), most accessible (there is a community college within a short distance of 90% of the population), and most egalitarian, serving more than half of all minority and first-generation college students. It is roughly estimated that 80% of community college students are the first person in their families to attend college.

Ethnically, CC students are a diverse population, far more diverse than the student population of 4-year

colleges. According to the American Association of Community Colleges, minority students account for 30% of all CC enrollments nationally. ESL courses are typical in community colleges, reflecting the fact that many of their students are recent immigrants. Thus, community colleges could be an institutional setting for recruitment into political life for these groups who now participate at lower levels.

Community colleges are financed in large measure (64% of operational revenues) by funds from state and local (often county) sources. In contrast, public 4-year colleges and universities derive funding from their state budgets and, increasingly, from donations, and grants and contracts generated by their faculties. Compared to 4-year institutions, community colleges are less likely to have large endowments or alumni bases of support.

The community college funding stream means that it is more incumbent on administration, staff, and faculty of community colleges to be connected with local civic institutions, politicians, and employers. In fact, the employment and training needs of communities drive decisions about training programs at community colleges. Community colleges prepare more than 60% of new nurses and other allied health professionals and 80% of first responders (EMTs, firefighters, and law enforcement).

Tenure and promotion in the community college rewards public service, service on community boards (even running for electoral office) and community outreach in contrast to the tenure system in universities where research (and the more esoteric and removed from practice the better) has disproportionate weight over teaching or outreach/service. In this sense, the faculty and staff of community colleges provide good civic role models for their students.

CC students reside in the communities where they attend school and are likely to continue residing there after completing their education. Most CC students are working while they attend school and

many have children. After completing their studies, they are more likely than their peers at 4-year residential colleges to remain in the area. Local and state politics have a direct and long term effect on their lives and those of their families. Thus, in principle, local and state politics should be of greater interest to them than it is to students at 4-year residential institutions.

Student retention and degree completion are major challenges for CCs. There are a number of experiments going on to address retention and it's conceivable that these also could serve as building blocks for overtures in civic engagement. One experiment is learning communities which structure classes such that groups of students, counselors from student services, and teachers work in teams. Thus, students have a chance to form bonds with teachers and fellow students, develop networks of social support, and may develop greater confidence in themselves, and trust in others. They may be more likely to identify with the institution and its mission and may get recruited into activities and groups within the institution and in the community where it is located. Other experiments such as the Bridge partnership (a project of the League for Innovation in the CC with participation of the National Association of Developmental Education) or dual enrollment/ 'middle college' (with large investments from the Gates Foundation) try to make a more seamless connection between high-school and college for students who otherwise would not continue on to college. Such programs try to demystify college, help students learn the ropes, and come to see college as a place where they belong.

There are clear human capital incentives for continuing one's education beyond high school. Some training or education beyond high-school is now considered essential for obtaining jobs that can support families. According to the Current Population Survey, annual earnings of people with a high-school diploma are $30,000 whereas those with an Associate's degree are $35,600. Trends in wages since the early 1970s points to precipitous declines especially for men (and Black men in

particular) with only a high-school diploma. The US Departments of Education and Labor are looking at community colleges to redress the declining competitive edge of the American workforce in the global marketplace. (Whereas the educational attainment of the Baby Boom generation was unsurpassed by any other nation, 25-34 year olds today have less education than their peers in Japan, Korea, Ireland, or Canada.).

Besides human capital, community colleges also might be settings where social capital accrues and where young adults who are disconnected from society get recruited into civic life. In 2002, according to the 2004 Kids Count Report, 3.8 million young adults aged 18-24 were disconnected from society—they held no degree beyond high school, they had no job, and they were not enrolled in school. This group had grown by 19% over the three prior years. CCs have the potential to be a setting where young adults who otherwise have no future get connected to economic opportunities. They also are a setting where large sectors of the adult population who are now left out of political life could be recruited.

The mission of community colleges also provides a stark contrast to the elitist trends and policies of 4-year public and private colleges and universities. According to Clara Lovett, president of the American Association for Higher Education, in a quest to improve their rankings, more and more colleges are spending their resources to recruit students with high SAT scores and other conventional indicators of ability or merit. This resource allocation is at the expense of funding students with greater financial needs. (In 2003 70% of freshmen entering a 4-year college came from families earning more than $50,000 (when the median family income was $43,000). Thus, rather than higher education serving to equalize opportunity (and political participation), it is increasingly reinforcing social advantage.

State budget constraints are pinching the capacities of CCs. In 2003, more than 200,000 students who applied to CCs in California and Florida were turned

away because there were not enough funds to schedule enough class sections. Plans for changing eligibility for Pell Grants will affect students' abilities to pay for school.

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