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# Reinventing citizenship as public work

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REINVENTING  
citizenship  
as public  
work

Citizen-Centered Democracy  
and the Empowerment Gap



**HARRY C. BOYTE**

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A STUDY FOR THE KETTERING FOUNDATION

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## **Kettering Foundation**

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## A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

**D**URING A RECENT MEETING AT THE KETTERING FOUNDATION, a Chinese scholar observed that for the first time in its long history, China now has citizens. What that means isn't completely clear yet, but it is a momentous change in how people in China think about themselves and the roles that they play in public life. This new essay by Harry Boyte looks at the possibility that for the first time in its history, the United States is in danger of losing the meaningful concept of citizenship. That would be sadly ironic. In a sense, this country was born with the writing of the Declaration of Independence. I have a particular moment in mind, however. In a draft of the document, Thomas Jefferson had written the word *subjects*. Later, he expunged the word, smearing the ink and carefully overwriting it with another word—*citizens*. He did it so artfully that experts have only recently discovered the word that had been so carefully erased. This finding reveals an important shift in the Founders' thinking: the people's allegiance was to each other, not a distant King.

In this piece, Boyte has written over today's common definition of citizens as customers and replaced it with producers. This rewriting, too, could have momentous implications—not just for students in civics courses but for all of us. One of the best opportunities the next generation has of learning about the work of citizens as producers may be from citizens who are producers—citizens making things that benefit all of us. Boyte shows that, for all the dangers to meaningful citizenship, these examples are all around us as well.

*David Mathews, President*  
Kettering Foundation

## AGAINST THE CURRENT— BUILDING POWER FOR CITIZEN-CENTERED DEMOCRACY

*“What is today’s most significant political movement? Although it flies below most radar screens, I would pick the quest for a democracy in which citizens have a stronger hand in shaping the future... a strong, citizen-centered democracy.”<sup>1</sup>*

—David Mathews, 2013

*“To broaden the scope of democracy to include everyone and deepen the concept to include every relationship.”<sup>2</sup>*

—Septima Clark, *Vision of the  
Citizenship Education Program, circa 1960*

**T**HE FATE OF DEMOCRACY IS INEXTRICABLY TIED TO THE WORK OF EDUCATORS, as well as to the meaning of citizenship and the practices of civic education. If we are to create a citizen-centered democracy—with citizens capable of tackling the mounting challenges of our time—we must revisit conventional ideas. We will have to reinvent citizenship as public work, for the sake of ourselves as educators, as well as for our students and for the democracy itself.

Public work is sustained, largely self-directed, collaborative effort, paid or unpaid, carried out by a diverse mix of people who create things of common value determined by deliberation: work *by* publics, *for* public purposes, *in* public. The capacity *for* public work, or civic agency, is mainly learned *through* public work.

Kettering Foundation president David Mathews’ recent essay, “Higher Education and Har Mediggo,” from which his introductory quote is taken, shines a light on the political movement for a stronger, more participatory democratic society—a citizen-centered democracy—long in the making. Its wellspring is the view that *citizens* are democracy’s agents. As the introductory quote from Septima Clark suggests, this view of democracy recalls the Civil Rights Movement, which schooled me as a college student in the 1960s. Clark was an architect of the citizenship schools that formed the little known foundations of the Civil Rights Movement. A close reading of Martin Luther King Jr’s speeches and writings makes clear that King shared her views. In “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” for instance, King highlights the South’s “real heroes,” everyday citizens who were “bringing our nation back to those great wells of democracy which were dug deep by the founding fathers.”<sup>3</sup>

King’s eloquent invocation of “the great wells of democracy” was informed by educators in the Citizenship Education Program (CEP) like Esau Jenkins, Miles Horton, Septima Clark, and Dorothy Cotton and nourished by the experiences of CEP participants. From 1961 to

1968, CEP, directed by Dorothy Cotton, trained more than 8,000 people at the Dorchester Center in McIntosh, Georgia. They then returned to their communities and trained tens of thousands more in community organizing and nonviolent change-making. The focus was not only on skills but also on shifts in identity from victim to agent of change, as described in Cotton's book, *If Your Back's Not Bent: The Role of the Citizenship Education Program in the Civil Rights Movement*. "People who had lived for generations with a sense of impotence, with a consciousness of anger and victimization, now knew in no uncertain terms that if things were going to change, they themselves had to change them." Cotton calls citizenship education "people empowering." King often spent time with participants, energized by those he met. They showed him that even savagely oppressed people can discipline and direct anger in ways that make them constructive agents of democratic change and civic role models for the nation.<sup>4</sup>

This is a vital history of empowering civic learning and education to build upon. But Mathews' argument that today's movement for citizen-centered democracy "flies below most radar screens" is also an understatement. Defining democracy as free elections and largely the activity of government is taken as a given. Many years ago, Seymour Martin Lipset advanced the definition which remains dominant: "Democracy in a complex society, is a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials, and a social mechanism which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among candidates."

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Lay citizens share the view of academics and opinion elites that choosing the right leaders is the way to fix our country's problems—even if it repeatedly fails to do so. Where they end up is feeling hopeless. In conversations across the country before the 2010 and 2012 elections, Joe Klein heard feelings of powerlessness voiced again and again. "Topic A is the growing sense that our best days as a nation are behind us, that our kids won't live as well as we did, that China is in the driver's seat." Citizens voice frustrations that recent elections, in which "insiders" are voted out and "outsiders" voted in, have failed to halt national decline.<sup>5</sup>

Nonetheless, Mathews is on to something—a quickening in practice and theory of citizen-centered democracy. To cite a few examples, the Obama 2008 campaign, with its theme of "Yes We Can," showed possibilities for introducing civic agency on a large scale by integrating community-organizing methods into its field operation and found enthusiasm for his message. The Arab Spring generated a "sense of empowerment and civic duty," as the *Financial Times* put it.<sup>6</sup> In scholarly terms, signs of citizen-centered democracy include the awarding of the Nobel Prize for Economics to Elinor Ostrom for her work on citizen-centered governance of common-pool resources like fisheries and forests.

Civic agency movements are appearing with growing frequency—and disappearing rapidly. What will create foundations for sustaining them? Thinking about democracy as a society—not simply elections—is essential. This means democracy created by work with public qualities, informed by empowering civic education. Educators who are themselves powerful citizen teachers will play crucial leadership roles.

Calls for revitalization of civic education and civic learning are multiplying, but notions of work as a site of citizenship—for “citizen teachers” or “citizen faculty members,” for example—have largely disappeared. This paper begins with an overview of the dominant approaches to civic education and learning: “civics” (study of government) and “communitarian” (service and voluntarism) frameworks. Both have strengths. But neither explicitly addresses civic empowerment nor work as a site of citizenship. The result is that civic engagement and citizenship are not taken very seriously, public identities, such as the “citizen as customer,” which undermine robust, productive citizenship, continue to spread, and educators are under attack, with insufficient political resources to respond.

This essay focuses on a third, emerging framework. In 2007, a group of engaged political and social theorists was convened by the journal of political theory, *The Good Society*. The group, which included Ostrom, Steve Elkin, Peter Levine, Jane Mansbridge, Rogers Smith, Karol Soltan, and myself, created *The New Civic Politics*, a framing statement for a new civic engagement approach based on civic agency and citizens as co-creators, and informed in part by theories and practices of public work developed by the Center for Democracy and Citizenship (CDC) and its partners.<sup>7</sup> Here, I expand the argument that work and workplaces need to be brought in as sites of citizenship if we are to see a revitalization of education as a civic vocation, civic learning, and a citizen-centered democracy.

## SOUNDING ALARMS AND PROPOSING REMEDIES

**IN RECENT YEARS, CALLS FOR CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION HAVE MULTIPLIED IN RESPONSE** to widespread lack of civic and political knowledge, and the degradation of public culture. The approaches come chiefly in two forms: improving civics education and increasing service and volunteerism (communitarianism).

Recent statements on civic education and learning strike notes of alarm. “I was dismayed and horribly discouraged when I read that more than 70% of Americans could name all three of the Three Stooges but that barely 20% could name all three of the branches of our Federal government,” wrote former senator Bob Kerry, in *Huffington Post* in 2012. “That troubling fact led me to realize that, to an alarming extent, we have entered an era of civic unawareness.” Retired Supreme Court justice Sandra Day O’Connor, who has made revitalizing civic education her personal cause, cites studies showing that only about a third of American adults can name all three branches of government. A third can’t name any. Fewer than a third of eighth graders can identify the historical purpose of the Declaration of Independence. “It’s very disturbing,” said O’Connor. “I want to educate generations of young people so we won’t have the lack of public knowledge we have today.” O’Connor’s efforts have prompted a new civics education law in Florida and pending legislation in Kentucky and Tennessee. Her curriculum, iCivics, emphasizes knowledge about government.<sup>8</sup>

iCivics illustrates the form of citizenship education most commonly taught in schools and in programs like Youth in Government, YouthVote, Street Law, and others. There are close connections between the civics view of citizenship education, focusing on ignorance about government, and what is called the liberal framework in political theory. Thus, writing in the *New York Review of Books*, Jeremy Waldron touts Alan Ryan’s *On Politics*, a recent two-volume history of political thought from Herodotus to the present. “*On Politics* works,” he writes, “because of its steadfast focus on government and institutional arrangements for government.” The word *citizen* does not appear in Waldron’s review, and concepts of citizens as the central actors in politics are nowhere to be found in Ryan’s work.<sup>9</sup>

The problem is that the underlying paradigm of citizenship (voting) and democracy (government-centered) in civics does little to address powerlessness. Its assumption—that citizens are voters who act like customers in choosing from alternative packages of benefits and promises—finds clear parallel in a “school reform” movement which also sees citizens—students, parents, communities—as customers. The movement calls for accountability through high-stakes, standardized testing and other measures. The effect is to centralize power among managers, experts, and sometimes for-profit corporations, and undermine the power and authority of educators, schools, and local communities.

Educational scholar Diane Ravitch, Assistant Secretary of Education during the first G.W. Bush administration and once a leading supporter of “No Child Left Behind,” has described this dynamic, in the process confounding the educational establishment in which she was once a central figure. In a series of books and articles as well as in her blog, Ravitch has voiced her changing views, which grow from an ongoing conversation with democracy educator Deborah Meier as well as from her reading of the mounting evidence.

Ravitch, once a supporter of high-stakes testing, charter schools, standardized curriculum, external evaluations of teachers, and other approaches in what is called “the accountability movement,” is now a fierce critic of such measures, which she views as being pushed by large business and technocratic interests. “The new breed of school reformers consists mainly of Wall Street hedge fund managers, foundation officials, corporate executives, entrepreneurs and policy makers, but few experienced educators,” she writes. She notes the irony of the fact that the

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“reform” movement praises schools in Finland, which has one of the highest performing school systems in the world according to the Programme for International Student Assessment. Yet the reality is that “Finland disproves every part of their agenda.” In Finland, “no individual or school learns its score. No one is rewarded or punished because of these tests. No one can prepare for them, nor is there any incentive to cheat.” Finnish schools are based on enhancing the power of educators (rather than eroding such power), through “improving the teaching force, limiting student testing to a necessary

minimum, placing responsibility and trust before accountability, and handing over school- and district-level leadership to educational professionals.”<sup>10</sup>

Knowledge of government is useful—when used by citizens and citizen workers (including teachers) who are the central actors of democracy. Otherwise, the focus on democracy as a state-centered system does little to generate the sense of agency and larger civic imagination needed to transform centralizing dynamics. There is widespread opposition to standardized tests and other “accountability” measures. But as community organizer and political theorist Luke Bretherton has observed in the parallel case of Great Britain, teachers who feel under siege most often translate opposition into protest politics, not action for democratic alternatives.<sup>11</sup> In the United States, we have, to date, seen little of the broad civic vision once evident in the Civil Rights Movement.

The other main framework of civic learning and education reflects the communitarian challenge to liberalism. It has emerged over the last generation, birthing the service movement, programs on voluntarism, and new attention to moral and character education. But, communitarianism neglects the civic possibilities of work. It is also not enough to overcome the spreading culture of consumerism and resultant citizen powerlessness.

Communitarian approaches address moral discontents, in particular what civic educators and scholars see as the unraveling of civic ties and the cultural degradation reflected in school shootings, rampant consumerism, incivility in public life, political hyperpolarization, and the like. While solutions for civic ignorance mainly emphasize classroom learning, remedies for civic and cultural crises stress experiences in civil society where young people can develop a sense of responsibility and care for others. Thus two widely endorsed reports on America's civic condition, *A Nation of Spectators: How Civic Disengagement Weakens America and What We Can Do About It*, and *A Call to Civil Society: Why Democracy Needs Moral Truths*, both issued in 1998, embody communitarian ideas like social capital, focusing on "norms, networks, and trust," and emphasize strengthening civil society.

The National Commission on Civic Renewal, which authored *A Nation of Spectators*, also created a Civic Health Index to measure the civic condition of communities and the nation. Adopted by the congressionally-chartered National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC), the Civic Health Index, conducted with the US Census, expresses the prevailing frameworks about citizen-

ship, combining both civics and communitarianism. It includes more than 40 indicators of civic health, such as voting, voluntarism, membership in voluntary associations, charitable contributions, having family meals, and working with neighbors on problems. No indicators in the Civic Health Index are related to work or the workplace, though the recent "working with neighborhoods on problems" intimate public work, and the NCoC has begun to explore, separately, civic contributions of businesses through efforts like voluntarism.

*A Call to Civil Society*, produced by the Council on Civil Society, chaired by political theorist Jean Elshtain, was animated by concern for how students can learn to couple "responsibilities" with "rights." *A Call* had signatories from Cornel West on the left to Dan Coats, Republican senator from Indiana, on the right. "We come together as citizens of diverse beliefs and different political affiliations to issue an appeal for the renewal of the American experiment in self-governance," it begins. The council worked from the premise that "the possibility of American renewal in the next century depends decisively upon the revitalization of our civil society and our rediscovery of the American idea." Citing survey data showing that Americans are "alarmed and overwhelmingly agree

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about the problems of moral decline” and “deeply troubled by the character and values exhibited by young people today,” the authors of *A Call* propose that “the core challenge facing our nation today is not primarily governmental or economic” but rather the crisis in morality. “As our social morality deteriorates, life becomes harsher and less civic for everyone ... and we lose the confidence that we as Americans are united by shared values.” Moreover, “as we become an increasingly fragmented and polarized society, too many of our fellow citizens are being left behind.” The authors hold that “institutions of civil society are nothing less than the seedbeds of civic virtue,” and propose new initiatives to strengthen families and their efforts to resist materialistic pressures, promote moral and character education through faith communities and schools, and strengthen the nonprofit sector.<sup>12</sup>

Both liberal and communitarian approaches address real issues. But for all their successes in generating initiatives like iCivics, programs on voluntarism, service learning, and character education, civic learning remains an afterthought in education and the standing of those who do civic education continues to decline. Thus, as Ravitch observes, “In response to the federal and state pressure to raise test scores, school districts across the nation have been reducing the time available for the arts, physical education, history, civics and other nontestable subjects.”<sup>13</sup> In higher education, according to the 2013 Survey of College and University Chief Academic Officers, conducted by the Gallup Poll for Inside Higher Education, only 19 percent of the leaders of public institutions believe their schools are “very effective” in “preparing students for engaged citizenship,” while a still modest 38 percent of those in private schools see their institutions as “very effective” in such education.<sup>14</sup> Dominant approaches neglect a more general malady, widespread feelings of powerlessness.

It is better to talk about the “empowerment gap” than the “achievement gap.”

## CITIZEN POWERLESSNESS

**I**N THE UNITED STATES, STATE-CENTERED DEMOCRACY HAS GENERATED THE MAJOR STRAND OF LIBERALISM in the last century, “mass politics,” which stresses universal claims, distributive justice, individual rights, and a consumer view of the citizen. As I argued in *Civic Agency and the Cult of the Expert*, mass politics crystallized in the mobilizing approaches to issue campaigns and elections that emerged in the 1970s, using advanced communications techniques based on a formula: find a target or enemy to demonize, develop a script that defines the issue in good-versus-evil terms and shuts down critical thought, and conveys the idea that those who champion the victims will come to the rescue. This formula has origins in progressives’ efforts, often successful, to protect advances in environmentalism, consumer protection, affirmative action, and progressive taxation from the 1960s, which they correctly perceived were under siege. But it creates unintended collateral damage, feeding into the fragmentations and polarizations in society. Today, people feel disgust at conventional politics.<sup>15</sup>

Mobilizing techniques can also be seen as a signature of “mass society” as a whole, which conceives of people as frozen into categories and market niches. The pattern of one-way, expert interventions, inattentive to the cultures and individual stories of communities, has spread across the sweep of civic life. As early as the 1920s, for instance, YMCAs began to trade in their identity as a movement of citizens served by civic-minded “secretaries” for a new identity—institutions comprised of huge buildings and scientifically trained exercise professionals who provide “programs” for paying members. More generally, schools, colleges, businesses, congregations, and government agencies lost civic roots. What were once anchoring institutions through which people developed a sense of agency in the world have turned into service providers for customers and clients.

In theoretical terms, mass politics, taking shape over the 20th century, is based on what labor historian Steven Fraser called the concept of the “new man” which was championed by labor intellectuals themselves, especially after World War II. The new man was seen as “existentially mobile, more oriented to consumption than production, familiar with the impersonal rights and responsibilities of industrial

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due process.” Mass politics, Fraser observes, “was inconceivable apart from a political elite in command of the state, committed to a program of enlarged government spending, financial reform, and redistributive taxation, presiding over a reconstituted coalition in the realm of mass politics.”<sup>16</sup>

It may seem hard to imagine that such deep-rooted trends can be reversed. But it is also increasingly obvious that professionals, including teachers and faculty members, need to revitalize civic identities and practices in their own self-interest, forming political relationships with parents, communities, and others.

Limits on our civic imagination as well as the actions we take are also connected with conceptual frameworks that take work and workplaces off the map of citizenship. These warrant examination.

## CITIZENSHIP SEPARATED FROM LABOR AND WORK

**D**OMINANT UNDERSTANDINGS OF CITIZENSHIP DESCEND FROM THE GREEKS. For Aristotle, “a citizen is one who shares in governing and being governed . . . in the best state he is one who is able and chooses to be governed and to govern with a view to the life of excellence.”<sup>17</sup> Aristotle also defined *democracy* as “the form of government when the free, who are also poor and the majority, govern,” calling it a “perversion of constitutional government.”<sup>18</sup>

Aristotle’s skepticism about democracy was tied to his scorn for labor, which he saw as antithetical to citizenship. Labor, in his view, teaches all the wrong lessons. As he put it, “Menial duties . . . are executed by various classes of slaves, such, for example, as handicraftsmen, who as their name signifies live by the labour of their hands—under these the mechanic is included.” In his opinion, “the good man and the statesman and the good citizen ought not to learn the crafts of inferiors.” Maintaining the distinctions between free citizens concerned with governance, and activities of laborers was crucial. “If [good citizens] habitually practice [such crafts],” Aristotle argued, “there will cease to be a distinction between master and slave.”<sup>19</sup> In Sparta, matters were simpler—citizen-warriors were barred from working. Judith Sklar has argued that the Greek philosophers saw “productive and commercial work as so deeply degrading that it made a man unfit for citizenship.”<sup>20</sup>

Modern intellectual traditions which offered alternatives to the Greek view and championed work as a site of democratic activity and citizenship, from the “workplace democracy” proposed by intellectuals like John Dewey to guild socialism and others, are now largely forgotten. Today, the intellectual tradition of political thought that is most invoked contrasts civic activity with labor and work.<sup>21</sup> This is true even for 20th-century participatory democratic theorists who haven’t shared Aristotle’s condescension toward “the people.” Thus the great theorist Hannah Arendt viewed work as part of the apolitical world. She saw “manual labor” as an undignified realm of necessity, “herdlike,” while “work” was more creative and important, the activity of *homo faber*, or “man, the maker of things,” the builder of the world. Yet Arendt still believed that work did not belong in the public arena of “deeds and action,” and specifically of politics. She held that the worker’s “public realm is the exchange market, where he can show the products of his hand and receive the esteem which is due him.” Producers remained “private,” or isolated: “homo faber, the builder of the world and the producer of things, can find his proper relationship to other people only by exchanging his products with theirs because these products themselves are always produced in isolation.” Arendt argued that the thought and manual art that produce craft—the creation of a “model” or idea in one’s mind which one then reproduces through shaping materials of the world—necessarily requires isolation. Only

apprentices and helpers are needed, she proposed, in relations that are based on inequality.<sup>22</sup>

It is important to note the profound pessimism about the modern condition operating below the surface in Arendt's thinking. Thus, she levels ferocious criticism at the ways in

which the modern world deforms and degrades work. Under the forces of automatism—her term for the forces which turn human beings into things—“the defining features of homo faber are in jeopardy,” she writes, as distinctions between ends and means disappear, standards of use and beauty are destroyed, acts of fabrication are swallowed up in consumption, and the driving impulse of work, “the conscious human effort to enlarge material power,” evaporates.<sup>23</sup> Richard Sennett begins his recent book, *The Craftsman*, with a vivid account of how Arendt, his teacher, encountered him on a windy day in

New York during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. Shaking him, she insisted he understand the ineluctable instrumentalism of modern institutions, which makes “work” only a means to predetermined ends, stripping it of ethical purposes. Sennett wrote his splendid book as a counterargument.<sup>24</sup>

The separation of work from citizenship is embodied in the concept of civil society, today's map of civic life.

**ARISTOTLE'S SKEPTICISM ABOUT DEMOCRACY WAS TIED TO HIS SCORN FOR LABOR, WHICH HE SAW AS ANTITHETICAL TO CITIZENSHIP. LABOR, IN HIS VIEW, TEACHES ALL THE WRONG LESSONS.**

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## OFF THE PLAYGROUND OF CIVIL SOCIETY

*“The world is deluged with panaceas, formulas, proposed laws, machineries, ways out, and myriads of solutions. It is significant and tragic that almost every one of these proposed plans and alleged solutions deals with the structure of society, but none concerns the substance—the people. This, despite the eternal truth of the democratic faith that the solution always lies with the people.”<sup>25</sup>*

*Saul Alinsky, 1946*

**T**HE IDEA OF CIVIL SOCIETY VIVIDLY ILLUSTRATES THE POWER OF FRAMING THEORETICAL CONCEPTS TO STRUCTURE RESOURCES AND TO DEFINE CIVIC LIFE. Major foundations have civil society divisions that allocate hundreds of millions of dollars to volunteer activity. Government agencies give time off to their employees so they can “do citizenship.” In 1998, all living American presidents gathered at a Summit on Volunteerism to praise the idea. The concept of civil society structures civic education and civic learning, which hold civic identities and practices to be activities detached from work. A story illustrates this pattern.

When the CDC recently partnered with the City of Falcon Heights, Minnesota, to organize and moderate a “citizen town hall” exploring citizen-based approaches to gun violence, the audience of 25 or so in the town hall included the mayor, the police chief, the city manager, teachers, a local principal, social agency workers, four students, business entrepreneurs—and two elderly residents. The residents expressed regret that “there are so few citizens.” No one from any of the worksites in the community raised any questions about their definition, although when CDC staff raised questions it prompted a lively conversation.<sup>26</sup>

We also discovered the pattern of eroding civic identities in work when the CDC and coordinated the “Reinventing Citizenship” project with the Clinton administration to analyze the gap between citizens and government. Carmen Sirianni, our research director, found that a key problem was the erosion of civic identities of government workers themselves. As Jerome Delli Priscoli, senior policy analyst for the Institute for Water Resources in the Army Corps of Engineers put it, “we lost the civil in civil service.” He said that the most successful government partnerships always involved reversing that pattern, “putting the civil back in civil service.” Paul Light, a leading analyst of governmental and civil service practices, described the trends. “It was only in the fifties that an administrative view, descending from scientific management, completely took hold. Civil servants lost their flexibility. In government, a notion was that narrow spans of control are the only way to organize human endeavor.”<sup>27</sup>

Civil society in its current usages reflects such real-world developments as well as the experiences from recent social movements, such as the democracy movements in the Soviet bloc in 1989. The concept, as now advanced by democratic theorists of such movements, couples a critique of the overweening government with ideas of “publicness” and public communication.

Building on the work of Jürgen Habermas, Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato’s 1992 book, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, set the pattern of taking work off the civil society map. Cohen and Arato propose a revision of the classical notion of civil society descended from the Scottish Enlightenment and Hegel, where the concept did not include the family and did include

large institutions and commerce. They argue for “a reconstruction [of the concept] involving a three-part model distinguishing civil society from both state and economy” as the way to “underwrite the dramatic oppositional role of this concept under authoritarian regimes and to renew its critical potential under liberal democracies.” They define civil society as “a sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements, and forms of public communication.” They “distinguish civil society from both a political society of parties, political organizations, and political publics (in particular, parliaments), and an economic society composed of organizations of production

and distribution, usually firms, cooperatives, partnerships and so on.”<sup>28</sup>

Benjamin Barber, the prominent theorist of strong democracy, drew on Cohen and Arato to create the definition that was used by the Council on Civil Society and more generally in the United States. Civil society, according to Barber, includes “those domains Americans occupy when they are engaged neither in government (voting, serving on juries, paying taxes) nor in commerce (working, producing, shopping, consuming).”<sup>29</sup>

Civil society theory can be seen as an effort to sustain an enclave of free action—what we call free spaces—in an increasingly technocratic world. And many things associated with the concept have merit. Volunteers and service projects often make important civic contributions. Moreover, in broad-based community organizing, civil society perspectives have incubated a renewed pluralist, democratic politics, beyond ideology, with a central focus on citizenship education, or development of people’s public skills and leadership capacities. These groups are seen as “universities of public life,” in the evocative phrase of the organizer and public intellectual Ernesto Cortes.

“A KEY PROBLEM WAS THE EROSION OF CIVIC IDENTITIES OF GOVERNMENT WORKERS THEMSELVES. AS JEROME DELLI PRISCOLI, SENIOR POLICY ANALYST FOR THE INSTITUTE FOR WATER RESOURCES IN THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS PUT IT, “WE LOST THE CIVIL IN CIVIL SERVICE.”

But the concept of civil society also creates problems. Most important, it consigns citizenship and civic action to the “voluntary sector” separated from government and from work, work routines, and the workplace, in ways that largely remove huge arenas from the possibilities of democratization. The arguments of Barber and Cortes, despite differences, illustrate the point.

Barber is a powerful and effective critic of consumer culture as well as a leading theorist of stronger, more participatory democracy. In his view consumer culture inculcates habits of “choice without consequence.” As he put it, “Decades of privatization and marketization have obscured not only what it means to be a public . . . but also what it means to be free.”<sup>30</sup> When Barber turns to remedy, however, he eliminates workplaces and businesses and governmental institutions as sites of citizenship, thus significantly limiting the resources for transforming the threats he identifies.

In *A Place for Us: How to Make Society Civil and Democracy Strong*, Barber accepts the argument of Jeremy Rifkin that work is disappearing before the inexorable advance of technology and the market and that its civic overtones are irretrievably lost. Barber proposes that the voluntary sector is a setting for democracy unhampered by the coercion of government and the commercialism of the market, “a space . . . for common activities that are focused neither on profit nor on a welfare bureaucracy’s client services . . . a communicative domain of civility, where political discourse is grounded in mutual respect and the search for common understanding even as it expresses differences and identity conflicts.” Barber’s location for citizenship is also fatalistic. He believes “work once had the sense of public work and was understood to contribute to strong democratic life. But that has changed . . . work [today] is what the rest of us do in the private sector to earn a living.”<sup>31</sup>

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Fatalism also replaces a sense of larger possibilities for institutional change in the writings and practices of Ernesto Cortes, whose central concern is people power. It is important to begin with a sketch of his contributions to the field of community organizing.

In the early 1970s, Ernesto Cortes had been trained by community organizing pioneer Saul Alinsky, in his Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) network. Shortly after Alinsky’s death, a group of priests invited Cortes and the IAF to help organize the Mexican community of San Antonio—Cortes’ hometown. Cortes brought with him the organizing skills he had learned and a zeal to see his own people gain power and a new dignity. He also brought innovations. Alinsky had worked with churches and church leaders and as Luke Bretherton has discovered from a close reading of Alinsky’s correspondence, he had deep interests in theological ques-

tions.<sup>32</sup> But by the end of his life, few who worked with him knew of these, and his public presentations were often caustic toward religious questions.<sup>33</sup> Cortes was strongly influenced by a conversation he had had with Cesar Chavez, that organizing among Mexican Americans would be superficial unless it drew explicitly on the religious language and stories of the people. Thus he helped the IAF to broaden its understandings of people's motivations. While organizing in the IAF mold stressed the importance of self-interest—beginning with the immediate, visible, and pressing concerns of people—it also began to distinguish between “self-interest” and “selfishness.” In this view, people's basic concerns are not only financial or narrowly personal but also embrace intangibles, such as the happiness of their families, the well-being of their neighbors and friends, the vitality of their faith, and their own feelings of dignity and worth. A rich understanding of a populist politics has emerged from such insights, and they

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have proven centrally important to building what are called “broad-based community organizations” through which poor and middle income people develop substantial power over time. In San Antonio, the Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS), which Cortes and community leaders organized in 1973, continues today, a leader in bringing literally billions of dollars in infrastructure improvements and economic development into the low-income areas of the city.<sup>34</sup>

From a vantage point that appreciates the survival of civic agency in a technocratic world, the “universities of public life,” community organizations descending from COPS, have been vitally important. But there is a defensive quality about them as well. As Cortes has said more than once, he sees such groups as “monasteries of democracy, surviving the dark ages of a degraded culture.”

The fatalism about institutional change is embodied in the theory of power in such organizing. “Power . . . comes in two basic forms, organized people and organized money,” argues Mike Gecan, director of New York Metro Industrial Areas Foundation. By putting “organized people” in touch with political leaders and “organized money,” citizen groups develop highly interactive patterns of power.<sup>35</sup> Yet this framework fails to acknowledge power based on control over the flow of information, communications, professional practices, and cultural productions—what might be called knowledge power. If knowledge power operates everywhere, it is a central factor in shaping the cultural apparatus where it is often in tension with concentrated money, the power of capital. The cultural apparatus includes institutions such as higher education and schools, entertainment and communications industries, professional associations, and the intellectual life of a society.

The theory that voluntary associations are the only serious vehicles through which democratic change can occur is put forward by Cortes and others. Thus in an important article in *Lettering Review* in 2006, “Toward a Democratic Culture,” Cortes claims the tradition of “associative democracy,” with civil society features. “Recent decades have witnessed an erosion of the institutions Tocqueville thought were so important to associative democracy: family, neighborhood organization, political party, congregation, labor union, and mutual-aid society,” Cortes argues. He sees broad-based organizations and their affiliates as the new centers of associative democracy.<sup>36</sup>

The focus on associational life is virtually universal among community organizers, despite other differences in approach. But associative democracy takes substantial institutional transformation off the map, ruling out the possibility of re-invigorating the public cultures and purposes and work practices of institutions such as higher education, professional systems, businesses, and government. Such problems are evident in the previously quoted statement by Saul Alinsky, a key architect of the modern community organizing movement. Alinsky’s challenge to “the world deluged with panaceas” shows the strengths of the politics that emerge from broad-based community organizing with its intense focus on “the people” and their civic learning, as central to “the democratic faith.” But by separating the people from the structures of power, such organizing also dramatically limits the possibilities for democratic change.

**WORKPLACES ARE STILL THE ONLY ENVIRONMENTS WHERE MOST PEOPLE ARE LIKELY TO HAVE SUSTAINED ENCOUNTERS WITH PEOPLE OF DIFFERING RACIAL, CULTURAL, AND IDEOLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS.**

Fatalism about the civic dimensions of work and workplaces is challenged by the careful studies of legal scholar Cynthia Estlund. In earlier writings and extensively in her path-breaking book *Working Together: How Workplace Bonds Strengthen a Diverse Democracy*, Estlund brings together a wealth of theoretical perspectives with a large body of social science research and examples from popular culture in order to remedy what she sees as the neglect of work and the workplace by communitarian and civil society theorists who focus on associational life. Estlund studies many different kinds of workplaces and notes their wide variation, from “social capitalist” settings which seek to facilitate civic connections across differences to low-wage and often highly coercive settings, where job security is nonexistent. For all the differences, she makes a compelling case that, despite continuing patterns of hierarchy and discrimination and major needs for change, workplaces are still the only environments where most people are likely to have sustained encounters with people of differing racial, cultural, and ideological backgrounds. They also engage in such experiences with relative civility, and

around practical, goal-directed tasks, making them fairly conducive to sustained experiences of collaboration. Her evidence shows that these features of work and workplaces enable people to develop enhanced respect for others, reduce their prejudices and stereotypes, build trust, develop civic skills, and create cross-group networks. Estlund observes that “it is not just the friendship potential of workplace relations that makes it a promising source of interracial contact.” The work process itself “is generally cooperative and directed toward shared objectives; much of it is sustained, personal, informal, and one-to-one.” Workplaces further democratic equality by “convening strangers from diverse backgrounds and inducing them to work together toward shared objectives under the aegis of the societally imposed equality principle.”<sup>37</sup> She concludes with a strong challenge to civil society theorists:

Contrary to the thrust of much of the growing literature on civil society, civic engagement, and associational life, work-place ties do many of the things that civil society is supposed to do. Those ties provide a medium for the cultivation of empathy and a sense of belongingness, of “social capital” and habits and norms of cooperative and reciprocity, of civic skills of participation, communication, and compromise, and of conversations that enrich public discourse. The fact that they cultivate all these qualities, skills, habits, and feelings in an environment of relative diversity and even compulsory integration makes the workplace a central and uniquely important component of civil society.<sup>38</sup>

Estlund also shows how movements such as union organizing, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, and the feminist movement of the 1970s and 1980s made the workplace more open and public. Thus, Section 7 of the Wagner Act, in part the product of New Deal reform and organizing, created “a kind of rudimentary system of civil liberties within the workplace” which in turn allowed further organization and action by workers. The equal-protection-of-the-law provision, enshrining in words “the notion that people should not be segregated or subordinated on the basis of their race or certain other immutable traits” was the result of civil rights efforts.<sup>39</sup> Though the effort is not completed, it offers possibilities for further democratic change.

## TRADITIONS OF CITIZENSHIP AS PUBLIC WORK

**A** CHALLENGE TO CONCEPTIONS THAT CONTRAST CITIZENSHIP WITH WORK, common among leaders of the American Revolution who had little use for work (and condescended toward working people), developed through the colonial experiences and early years of the nation.<sup>40</sup> The actual labors of settlers who had cleared lands, built towns and villages, wells, meeting halls, and roads, generated what the historian Robert Wiebe has called America's portable democracy,<sup>41</sup> and cultivated a democratic assertiveness among the people. "Experience proves that the very men whom you entrust with the support and defense of your most sacred liberties are frequently corrupt," wrote a group of artisans in Philadelphia during the Revolution. "If ever therefore your rights are preserved, it must be through the virtue and integrity of the middling sort, as farmers, tradesmen, & etc."<sup>42</sup> Benjamin Franklin spoke and wrote in the same vein. The Leather Apron Club, which he founded in Philadelphia in 1727, included tradesmen, artisans, and shopkeepers—those whom he lauded as "the middling people"—who combined hard work and civic commitments. The club discussed civic and political topics of the day, developed plans for self-improvement, and created a network of citizens committed to "doing well by doing good." Members generated a myriad of civic projects, including a street-sweeping corps, volunteer firefighters, tax-supported neighborhood constables, health and life insurance groups, a library, a hospital, an academy for educating young people, a society for sharing scientific discoveries, and a postal system.<sup>43</sup> In a similar vein, Franklin proposed education that combined practical and liberal arts, a union that was to reappear in the country's land-grant colleges.

The connection between work and citizenship further developed in the early years of the new nation. "When [ideals of disinterested civic virtue] proved too idealistic and visionary," writes Gordon Wood, Americans "found new democratic adhesives in the actual behavior of plain, ordinary people."<sup>44</sup> Several interrelated, interacting traditions of citizenship as public work emerged, worth identifying as foundations for citizen-centered democracy:

- *Community-building*, the collective labors (paid and unpaid) of solving public problems and building and sustaining shared resources in communities;
- *Vocation and civic professionalism*, callings to careers filled with public purpose; and,

- *Democratizing public work*, work that deepens and expands democracy.

*Community-building.* David Mathews has described pithily the tradition of practical community building in his treatment of the emergence of institutions such as public schools. “Nineteenth-century self-rule . . . was a sweaty, hands-on, problem-solving politics,” Mathews writes.

The democracy of self-rule was rooted in collective decision making and acting—especially acting. Settlers on the frontier had to be producers, not just consumers. They had to join forces to build forts, roads, and libraries. They formed associations to combat alcoholism and care for the poor as well as to elect representatives. They also established the first public schools. Their efforts were examples of “public work,” meaning work done by not just for the public.<sup>45</sup>

Such public work drew on traditions of “the commons,” lands, streams, and forests for which whole communities had responsibility and in which they had rights of use, and also goods of general benefit built mainly through citizen labors, like schools, libraries, community centers, wells, roads, music festivals, and arts fairs. All were associated with the term, *the*

*commonwealth*. Indeed, for many immigrants, America represented a chance to re-create the commons privatized by elites in Europe. As the historians Oscar and Mary Handlin observed about the Revolutionary generation of the 1770s, “For the farmers and seamen, for the fishermen, artisans and new merchants, commonwealth repeated the lessons they knew from the organization of churches and towns . . . the value of common action.”<sup>46</sup> Such community-building traditions of communal labor can be found around the world. They create rich founda-

tions for a normative ideal of citizenship as collective, self-directed labors, citizenship which is practical and hands-on, and which bridges divisions of status, income, and other differences for the sake of community benefit.<sup>47</sup>

*Vocation and civic professionalism.* Collaborative work that solves public problems and creates common resources for communities is one current of public work citizenship. Work filled with public purpose is another. This concept draws on the rich theological idea of vocation. As John Budd observes, “When Martin Luther translated biblical verses such as ‘Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called’ from the original Greek into German . . . he used the German word for ‘occupation’ for ‘calling.’ Thus, Luther initiated a radically new

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perspective in which all are called to employ their gifts, ‘something that fits how we are made, so that doing it will enable us to glorify God, serve others, and be most richly ourselves.’”<sup>48</sup>

The connection between vocation and education has recently resurfaced in undergraduate education. Liberal arts colleges like Augsburg, the new institutional home of the CDC, illustrate the recall of vocation and have the potential for significant impact since they are “upstream” centers, shaping the identities and practices of thousands of civic leaders. In its educational vision, Vocation, Access, and Excellence, Augsburg highlights the concept of vocation, integrated into its core curriculum, as “a fertile seedbed for the democratic ethos”:

This view of vocation both stresses the importance of education and clarifies its role. One does not seek education for either self-advancement or as a way to reach salvation. Its proper role is in helping persons determine and develop their abilities in preparation for investigating and celebrating God’s creation, for probing the mysteries of the human condition, and ultimately for furthering the well-being of society. As Luther said, God doesn’t want a cobbler who puts crosses on shoes; God wants a cobbler who makes good, reliable footwear.<sup>49</sup>

Augsburg’s view of vocation has potential for helping to bridge the sharp divide in higher education between professional studies, on the one hand, and liberal arts and civic learning, on the other.

A sense of calling or vocation is associated with the rise of professions. Though professions are often understood in terms of the emergence of a disinterested ethic tied to positivist theories of knowledge and detached from politics and self-interests, an alternative tradition of “citizen professionalism” contributes especially to American democracy. William Sullivan identifies a central tension in professionalism in the United States since the colonial period, “between a technical emphasis which stresses specialization—broadly linked to a utilitarian conception of society as a project for enhancing efficiency and individual satisfaction—and a sense of professional mission which has insisted upon the prominence of the ethical and civic dimension of the enterprise.”<sup>50</sup>

Scott Peters has detailed extensive practices of such civic professionalism in the land-grant college tradition especially before World War II. Land-grants combined “practical arts” with “liberal arts” and sought to develop professionals with a strong sense of their civic responsibilities. “Our colleges should not be content with only the training of outstanding agriculturalists, or engineers, or home economists, or teachers, or scientists, or lawyers, or doctors, or veterinarians,” declared John Hannah, president of Michigan State College in 1944. “The first and never-forgotten objective must be that every human product of our educational system must be given the training that will enable him to be an effective citizen, appreciating his opportunities and fully willing to assume his responsibilities in a great democracy.”<sup>51</sup>

William Doherty and his colleagues at the Citizen Professional Center have pioneered the practices and theory of such citizen professionalism. Adapting broad-based organizing practices

and public work concepts to family and health professions, their citizen-professional model begins with the premise that solving complex problems requires many sources of knowledge, and “the greatest untapped resource for improving health and social well-being is the knowledge, wisdom, and energy of individuals, families, and communities who face challenging issues in their everyday lives.” The Citizen Professional Center has generated multiple partnerships including suburban movements of families working to untangle overscheduled, consumerist lives; an African American Citizen Fathers Project seeking to foster positive fathering models and practices; a new project with Hennepin County to change civil service practices into public work; and, a pilot project with Health Partners Como Clinic, called the Citizen Health Care Home, which stresses personal and family responsibility for one’s own health and opportunities for patient leadership development and co-responsibility for health.<sup>52</sup>

**“THE FIRST AND NEVER-FORGOTTEN OBJECTIVE MUST BE THAT EVERY HUMAN PRODUCT OF OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM MUST BE GIVEN THE TRAINING THAT WILL ENABLE HIM TO BE AN EFFECTIVE CITIZEN, APPRECIATING HIS OPPORTUNITIES AND FULLY WILLING TO ASSUME HIS RESPONSIBILITIES IN A GREAT DEMOCRACY.”**

including suburban movements of families working to untangle overscheduled, consumerist lives; an African American Citizen Fathers Project seeking to foster positive fathering models and practices; a new project with Hennepin County to change civil service practices into public work; and, a pilot project with Health Partners Como Clinic, called the Citizen Health Care Home, which stresses personal and family responsibility for one’s own health and opportunities for patient leadership development and co-responsibility for health.<sup>52</sup>

*Democratizing public work.* The work of making democratic change is a third tradition of citizenship, overlapping and intertwined with community-building work and civic professionalism. Union and community organizers, civil rights workers, suffragists, and others created a

strong tradition of work for democratic social change, mingling with the very idea of “work” itself as a wellspring for change. Thus the iconic bookends of Martin Luther King’s career were the unforgettable images of thousands of domestic workers walking to their jobs in the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 to protest segregated buses, and the signs of Memphis garbage workers declaring “I Am A Man,” demanding recognition and dignity, in 1968.

Changing-making through professional work played a pivotal role in the African American freedom struggle. Gerald Taylor has argued that after the collapse of the Populist Party in the 1890s, the black community turned to “knowledge artisans”:

While millions of property owners and artisans sinking into debt peonage, or forced into wage labor, formed the populist movement, the rising professions, what could be called collectives of “knowledge artisans,” offers a contrasting story of the search for independence among both whites and blacks, using a different set of strategies in an effort to consolidate control over productive property, work products, tools, and vocational training and accreditation. . . . These intellectual artisans, accountants, doctors,

lawyers, engineers among others, gained control over what we now call the professions. The professionalization of these groups provided the ability to negotiate contracts but retain control over their workplaces, their tools and their schedules. They controlled decisions about the learning and application of their knowledge of these intellectual crafts, the formation centers that prepared them and the terms by which they could enter the professions.

Taylor notes that “by the early 20th century, these professional guilds had organized national organizations, stabilized and expanded the income of their members and welded significant economic political and cultural influence.” In the African American community, knowledge artisans provided leadership in the continuing freedom struggle by building centers of independent power, ranging from schools and congregations to businesses and beauty parlors.<sup>53</sup>

Parallels can also be seen among European Americans in the 1920s and 1930s who created foundations for civic change. These included many who saw schools and other educational sites, such as settlement houses, as being at the center of democracy. John Dewey, drawing on his experiences in Hull House settlement in Chicago saw it as an important model for schools as “community centers.” As John Rogers, Joseph Kahne, and Ellen Middaugh describe Dewey’s work, his “normative vision recasts ‘vocation’ in democratic terms” in ways that provide resources for contemporary civic education and learning.<sup>54</sup> Dewey was especially aware of power dimensions of knowledge, the aura of infallibility that those armed with “science” or “expertise” could assume. “The dogma worked out practically so as to strengthen dependence upon authority,” he wrote. “Just as belief that a magical ceremony will regulate the growth of seeds to full harvest stifles the tendency to investigate . . . so acceptance of dogmatic rules as bases of conduct in education, morals, and social matters lessens the impetus to find out about the conditions which are involved in forming intelligent plans.”<sup>55</sup>

Dewey’s basic argument, profoundly democratic in its implications, is that all knowledge—“academic” no less than “practical”—is social knowledge, the product of interplay between experience, testing and experiment, observation, reflection, and conversation. All have the capacity and right to participate in knowledge-creation. Recognizing the social nature of knowledge is essential to an accurate account. “Consider the development of the power of guiding ships across trackless wastes from the day when they hugged the shore,” wrote Dewey.

The record would be an account of a vast multitude of cooperative efforts, in which one individual uses the results provided for him by a countless number of other individuals . . . so as to add to the common and public store. A survey of such facts brings home the actual social character of intelligence as it actually develops and makes its way.<sup>56</sup>

Dewey’s view of knowledge as a “public and common store” shaped his view of democracy. Inspired by the living examples of diverse citizens solving problems and educating themselves

at Jane Addams' Hull House, his belief in the social and practical nature of knowledge, and his democratic faith in the values and capacities of ordinary people, Dewey developed a rich and dynamic vision of education for democracy. Democracy was "a way of life" (using a formulation by T.V. Smith), not simply a form of government. In Dewey's view, a commonwealth of knowledge comes into being when all work is understood in terms of its educative capacities and human and social properties. It is, in short, a mistake to separate "work" from either education or citizenship. "In the democracy of the future, goods will be made not primarily as a means to private profit, but because

**"IF WORK WERE MADE A MORE EFFECTIVE PART OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIAL LIFE . . . THE DEMAND FOR SHORTER HOURS WOULD BE FAR LESS INSISTENT."**

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of their service to enriched living. . . . Not only the value of the product for those who use it, but the process of production itself will be appraised in terms of its contribution to human welfare." Challenging those who focused simply on reducing the work week, Dewey argued in his essay, "A Free Teacher in a Free Society," that "the quality of the work experience" rather than the number of hours worked was the key question. "If work were

made a more effective part of the democratic social life . . . the demand for shorter hours would be far less insistent."<sup>57</sup>

Finally, Dewey saw higher education as well as K-12 schools as playing a central role in democracy. Indeed, their public function was their essential justification. In response to an editorial in the *New York Times*, which argued the University of Pennsylvania's right to fire the economic reformer Scott Nearing because the trustees disagreed with his views, he argued in a letter:

You apparently take the ground that a modern university is a personally conducted institution like a factory and that if for any reason the utterances of any teacher, within or without the university walls, are objectionable to the Trustees there is nothing more to be said. . . . [But] the modern university is in every respect, save its legal management, a public institution with public responsibilities. [Professors] have been trained to think of the pursuit and expression of truth as a public function to be exercised on behalf of the interests of their moral employer—society as a whole.<sup>58</sup>

For Dewey, a professor's public function was the justification for tenure and the rationale for the founding of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), which he helped organize.

I believe Dewey was right: schools at every level have enormous power, but it operates largely invisibly, shaping identities, assumptions, and ways of looking at the world. In the case of higher education what was true in the first half of the 20th century is far truer in the 21st. Higher education shapes the fabric of our society in a myriad of ways. It creates credentialed knowledge, including educational approaches in K-12 schooling. It generates and diffuses the conceptual frameworks that structure work practices of all kinds. It socializes professionals. It is a resource for economic and community vitality. In the public forums we conducted at the University of Minnesota in the early 2000s as part of our civic engagement process, the power of higher education was better understood by ordinary citizens from all sorts of backgrounds than by faculty within the institution.

Yet Dewey was much too sanguine about professors being trained “to think in terms of their public function.” His lapse is part of a wider problem in the way he conceived of politics. While Dewey’s theory of knowledge-creation and learning adds to our conception of democracy, he focused on knowledge in too apolitical a fashion, in ways that disregarded the conflicts and negotiations among particular interests, values, power, and viewpoints at the heart of politics. Dewey was part of a generation of progressive intellectuals who narrowed the realm of politics to the state, separating it from “civil society,” the realm Dewey called “community.”<sup>59</sup>

To realize the democratic possibilities which Dewey envisioned for education and the world of work requires a look at how we can bring the politics of knowledge—and with it, public work—back together. Here, new developments are opening up enormous possibilities for the political movement for a citizen-centered democracy.

## CIVIC LEARNING THROUGH PUBLIC WORK

 **OUR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT WORK THROUGH THE CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP** began in 1987 with an argument that communal labor traditions nourished a “commonwealth” politics throughout American history.<sup>60</sup> Working with partners, we sought to translate methods and ideas of broad-based community organizing, themes of the commonwealth, and principles of self-organized governance articulated by Elinor Ostrom and her colleagues, into other settings, with a particular focus on education in schools, communities, and higher education.

As we sought to democratize educational institutions it soon became apparent that institutional organizing requires a shift in framework. Rather than seeing such institutions in conventional ways as fixed and static, defined by structures, procedures, rules, and regulations, we have to reconceive of them as living and dynamic communities, with norms, values, leadership, and cultural identities. Maria Avila, a former Mexican American organizer with the IAF who directed the Center for Community-Based Learning at Occidental College, has given a vivid account of what this means. “The medicine for our predicament [in higher education] requires efforts to restructure the way we think, act, behave toward each other, and the way we act as a collective to restructure power and resources.” Avila argues that organizing focuses on culture change before structural change. “Culture changes [come] first, leading to structural changes later.” Change is relational, tied to organizing and power. “For academic institutions to partner with community groups, institutions and organizations for a better society [requires] countless opportunities for conversations and organizing campaigns with community partners engaged in power restructuring.”<sup>61</sup>

Work is at the heart of self-interest in all institutions, including schools and colleges. Democratizing the politics of knowledge and making such politics explicit has to be an essential strategy. Seeing institutions as communities, building public relationships, undertaking intentional changes in their cultures to make them more public, and thinking in political terms about knowledge, as well as other power sources, highlights the dynamics of work routines, incentives, norms, and identities. A public work approach to organizing differs, in significant respects, from conventional liberal and communitarian approaches to civic engagement, both of which have strong normative frameworks. Public work avoids exhortations about what teachers, students, staff, or institutions should do. Rather, public work connects individual and institutional interests to citizenship and the public good by inviting people to “make work more public,” more interactive, collaborative, visible, and filled with public purposes. We saw

this early on, for instance, in the efforts of a group that sought to spread active learning practices in education, called The Collaboration for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. Lesley Cafarelli, director of the consortium, explains:

In 1991, . . . [the consortium] began an intensive effort to raise the frequency and level of campus conversations about teaching. This effort, funded by The Bush Foundation, was a response to our observation that the culture of privacy around higher education's most public activity—teaching—serves to obstruct both individual and collective efforts to strengthen student learning. How can faculty strive to improve their teaching, for example, if there are few opportunities to observe and learn from other professionals or to wrestle intellectually with colleagues about ways to cope with both common and surprising difficulties in teaching? How can colleges and universities fulfill their public responsibility if there is little or no collective knowledge of how teaching is practiced, sharing of expertise, or joint exploration of teachers' impact on student learning? An academic culture that preserves the privacy—even secrecy—of the classroom fosters professional isolation and stifles improvement.<sup>62</sup>

Nan Kari and a group of faculty, staff, and students at the College of St. Catherine, working with the CDC, addressed the challenge of “making teaching and learning more public” by adapting community organizing methods like those of Cortes. Their work significantly informed the CDC's general theory of citizenship as public work. Building on such partnerships, public work created the framework of the 1999 *Wingspread Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Research Universities*, which I coauthored with Elizabeth Hollander on behalf of a group of higher education leaders.

The concept of public work also informed an initiative in schools, called Public Achievement, which was begun in those years, to revitalize the empowering civic learning of the Citizenship Education Program of the Civil Rights Movement. Teams of young people—typically ranging from elementary through high school students but more recently also involving college students, and sometimes older adults—work through the school year on public issues of their choice. Members of the team are coached by adults who help them develop achievable goals and learn political skills and political concepts. At St. Bernard's elementary school in St. Paul, Minnesota, Public Achievement became the centerpiece of the culture in the early and mid-1990s through the leadership of then principal Dennis Donovan, who insisted that all forms of work in the school, including teaching, have public and empowering dimensions. Public Achievement at St. Bernard's was closely linked to the concept of “citizen teacher,” an idea that seems especially important in an era in which high-stakes testing and technocratic measures of accountability threaten the foundations of teacher autonomy and creativity. Since

its founding in 1990, Public Achievement has spread to several hundred communities and schools in the United States as well as to Poland, Northern Ireland, Gaza and the West Bank, Israel, and elsewhere.

Skills and habits of civic politics include relationship building, tolerance for ambiguity, ability to deal with conflict constructively, and the capacity to act in open environments with no predetermined outcomes. These are not part of normal higher education curricula or scientific or other conventional academic or professional disciplines. The capacities for civic politics and civic professionalism have to be learned mainly in practice, and they also entail unlearning

**IT USUALLY TAKES TWO YEARS OF LEARNING AND UNLEARNING FOR MOST PROFESSIONALS TO DO EFFECTIVE PUBLIC WORK.**

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tendencies such as the bent for hypercompetitive individualism, the posture of intellectual certitude, and the stance of outside observer learned in conventional graduate education. Our colleague Bill Doherty estimates that it usually takes two years of learning and unlearning for most professionals to do effective public work.

There are also other, parallel and sometimes allied efforts in education to make work more public. These include especially the deliberative pedagogies in K-12

schools and higher education supported by the Kettering Foundation and the National Issues Forums Institute. In higher education, such deliberative pedagogies have now a demonstrated track record for generating agency and action in settings such as Wake Forest University. In K-12 education, research by Stacey Molnar Main shows that teachers who use deliberative pedagogies report an enhancement of their own sense of citizenship as teachers, as well as notably more active, engaged citizenship among their students.<sup>63</sup>

Such efforts to make education more public found some support from populist elements within the Obama administration. At the White House on January 10, 2012, the Office of Public Engagement and the Department of Education hosted a national gathering of civic and educational leaders called “For Democracy’s Future—Education Reclaims Our Civic Mission.” Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced the addition of a “third C,”—*citizenship*—to the department’s commitments to preparation for *college* and *career*.

At the White House event, education groups undertook new initiatives to strengthen civic learning and education. The Association of American Colleges and Universities released a report, *A Crucible Moment*, calling for civic learning to become “pervasive” in colleges and universities. And the American Commonwealth Partnership (ACP) of educational groups and institutions was launched, created by invitation from Jon Carson, Director of the White House Office of Public Engagement.<sup>64</sup> ACP aimed at marking the 150th anniversary of the Morrill Act, which established the first land-grant colleges, by developing new strategies to strengthen the civic identities of colleges and universities, as part of the larger movement for a citizen-centered democracy which Mathews describes.

ACP grew out of the Civic Agency Initiative, part of a coalition of state colleges and universities called the American Democracy Project, which spread and adapted empowering pedagogies from Public Achievement. A group of colleges and universities, including Lone Star Community College, Western Kentucky University, Georgia State College and University, the University of Colorado at Boulder, Winona State University, Augsburg College, Syracuse University, and more recently the University of Washington, Bothell, began to work together on these themes. In several places—especially Northern Arizona University and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County—concepts of civic agency and public work became the foundation for large-scale institutional innovation in curriculum and cocurricular life.

ACP also created a context for highlighting outstanding examples of education as public work. For instance, at the White House meeting we spotlighted the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, a public school on a 78-acre farm in the southwestern corner of the city, where students learn math, science, English, and writing through the processes of planting, harvesting, marketing, and selling vegetables. Juniors and seniors enroll in a class that focuses on the city’s flower garden show, learning horticulture, animal science, agricultural mechanics, economics, food science, communications, and business. Guided by teachers, the students also have a good deal of space for organizing and initiating their own projects.

“Connecting work and academics makes a huge difference in terms of ways students look at education,” says Lucille Shaw, assistant principal. “Through all of their academic classes as well as technical studies students can blend and apply concepts.” Students also learn “we’re all in this together,” Shaw says. “What is this going to do to better my life, and help someone else?” With a student body more than 60 percent African American and Hispanic, the Ag School has won national attention for its success in college preparation and student achievement—87 percent graduate and go to college. Fifty-nine percent meet or exceed average scores on the Prairie State Achievement exams, which test for reading, English, math, science, and writing, compared to 28 percent in the Chicago district as a whole.<sup>65</sup>

ACP deepened the theory of public work, including the framework of “civic science,” an effort to rethink the nature of science, its role and relationship to society, and the identity of scientists through the lens of civic agency and public work. The CDC had worked on civic science, with the Delta Center, a world-renowned center for infant development science for some years. ACP created a context to deepen the idea and develop relationships on civic science with leaders in climate science, sustainable agriculture, Science and Technology Studies, and other fields. Civic science highlights the political—though not partisan—nature of science, science as a powerful source of knowledge for action in the world, rather than an outside description of the world. In this sense, science itself is a resource for helping to negotiate a shared democratic way of life. Civic science stresses that scientists are also citizens, who come together with nonscientists to solve real-world problems in the course of building a democratic society. Civic science addresses what can be called “the knowledge war” that feeds a bitterly divided, hy-

perpolarized society.<sup>66</sup> The Delta Center launched a new initiative based on civic science, called Get Ready Iowa, to bridge the professional educator- and policymaker-parent divides, and ACP created an organizing team for a new international civic science initiative.<sup>67</sup> ACP also incubated an initiative called “Citizen Alum,” led by Julie Ellison of the University of Michigan. Citizen Alum’s concept is that alumni should be partners and resources for higher education’s reinvigorated public mission—“doers, not only donors.” It has signed up more than 30 colleges and universities and shows promise of being a key strategy and strategic site for reintegrating institutions back into the life of places, and illuminating examples of alumni work filled with civic and public purposes.

Overall, the American Commonwealth Partnership generated the realization of the need for a reform movement across all of education to put public work, work with explicit civic dimensions, back into the center. This means bridging the gap between liberal education and civic learning, career and workforce preparation, thinking and acting in terms of the economies and civic ecologies of local communities. We need a broad reform effort to “integrate the three C’s” of college, career, and citizenship, for the health of our communities and our democracy, for the viability of our educational institutions, and for our careers as professionals.

## AGENTS OF CHANGE, NOT OBJECTS OF CHANGE

**A**S THE POLITICAL THEORIST AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZER ROM COLES HAS OBSERVED, it is hard for many to believe that such democratic innovations add up to much more than “oases of democracy” in an expanding desert of a technocratic and market-driven culture.<sup>68</sup> What makes it possible to imagine that wider change is possible?

Feeding the discouragement of many, a recent story from *Inside Higher Education* dramatizes the possibility that higher education will become reengineered in narrow ways that eviscerate the liberal dimensions of learning entirely. “North Carolina governor joins chorus of Republicans critical of liberal arts,” read the headline in *Inside Higher Education*.

Governor McCrory’s comments on higher education echo statements made by a number of Republican governors—including those in Texas, Florida and Wisconsin—who have questioned the value of liberal arts instruction and humanities degrees at public colleges and universities. Those criticisms have started to coalesce into a potential Republican agenda on higher education, emphasizing reduced state funding, low tuition prices, vocational training, performance funding for faculty members, state funding tied to job placement in ‘high demand’ fields and taking on flagship institutions.<sup>69</sup>

But such developments also create openings. The first populist movement among small farmers, black and white, grew from the threats to farmers’ civic autonomy. As Taylor observes, professionals of all kinds experience analogous threats to their autonomy as knowledge artisans, in environments where “outcome measures” become increasingly narrow, from standardized tests in K-12 to HMO efficiency measures. Like farmers “who contested the loss of control over the means of their work and the intellectual and physical products of that work”<sup>70</sup> faculty, staff, students, and other stakeholders are faced with the prospect that they will either be the architects of change or they will be its objects. There is a need to move from protest and resistance to the constructive identities of architects of change, rebuilding public relationships and alliances with many others in American life.<sup>71</sup>

This challenge requires empowering civic education and many sites that are citizenship schools for knowledge societies. It calls for a revitalization of education itself as a great and animating civic vocation. Public work for citizen-centered democracy will be central to the process.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> David Mathews, "Higher Education and Har Megiddo," *Higher Education Exchange* (2012): 75.
- <sup>2</sup> Clark quoted in Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 1965), 68.
- <sup>3</sup> Martin Luther King Jr, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," April 16, 1963, quotation from [http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles\\_Gen/Letter\\_Birmingham.html](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html), accessed January 30, 2013.
- <sup>4</sup> Dorothy Cotton, *If Your Back's Not Bent: The Role of the Citizenship Education Program in the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Simon and Schuster/Atria Books, 2012), 135. Eubanks quoted 102.
- <sup>5</sup> See <http://swampland.time.com/where-in-the-world-is-joe/>; quote from Joe Klein, "On the Road," *Time*, October 18, 2010, 38.
- <sup>6</sup> Borzou Daragahi, "Cairo's Voters Shrug at Poll Upheaval," *Financial Times*, April 20, 2012. Daragahi also reports its fading—evident long before the recent bitter clashes between the Marsi government and its opponents.
- <sup>7</sup> See <http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/circle/summer-institute/summer-institute-of-civic-studies-framing-statement/>.
- <sup>8</sup> Bob Kerry, "Becoming Aware of Civic Unawareness," *Huffington Post*, May 26, 2012; Howard Blume, "Sandra Day O'Connor Promotes Civics Education," *Los Angeles Times*, December 27, 2011.
- <sup>9</sup> George Packer, "The New Liberalism," *New Yorker*, November 17, 2009 (accessed February 8, 2013); Jeremy Waldron, "How Politics Are Haunted by the Past," *New York Review of Books* Vol. 60, No. 3 (2013): 40.
- <sup>10</sup> See Sam Dillon, "Scholar's School Reform U-Turn Shakes Up Debate," *New York Times*, March 2, 2010; and Diane Ravitch, "The Myth of Charter Schools," *New York Review of Books*, November 11, 2010; and Diane Ravitch, "Schools We Can Envy," *New York Review of Books*, March 8, 2012; quotes from "Schools We Can Envy," (accessed April 11, 2013) <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/mar/08/schools-we-can-envy/?pagination=false>.
- <sup>11</sup> Luke Bretherton, e-mail correspondence, April 17, 2013.
- <sup>12</sup> The Council on Civil Society, *A Call to Civil Society: Why Democracy Needs Moral Truths* (Washington DC: Institute for American Values, 1998), 5, 6.
- <sup>13</sup> Ravitch, *Ibid*.
- <sup>14</sup> Scott Jaschik and Doug Lederman, eds., *Inside Higher Ed Survey of College and University Chief Academic Officers* (2013), 27, <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/survey>.
- <sup>15</sup> Harry C. Boyte, *Citizenship and the Cult of the Expert* (Dayton: Kettering Foundation, 2009).
- <sup>16</sup> Steve Fraser, "The Labor Question," in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order: 1930-1980*, edited by Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, 70 (Princeton University Press, 1989).
- <sup>17</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, edited by Stephen Everson, 71 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 86, 83.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 57.

<sup>20</sup> Judith N. Shklar, *American Citizenship: The Quest for Inclusion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 68. John Budd has also well summarized this ethos for Greek intellectuals “Free men use things, they do not make them.” *The Thought of Work* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).

It is worth noting that work, opposed by the “philosophers of antiquity,” was not necessarily seen in such a fashion by ordinary Greeks. Victor Hanson has argued that work, in particular practices of individual small farms, worked by fiercely independent and ingenious farmers who cooperated out of practical self-interests, generated the ethos and practice of public life. In Hanson’s terms, “The rise of independent farmers who owned and worked without encumbrance their small plots at the end of the Greek Dark Ages (1100–800 BC) was an entirely new phenomenon in history. . . . The material prosperity that created the network of Greek city-states resulted from small-scale, intensive working of the soil, a complete rethinking of the way Greeks produced food and owned land, and the emergence of a . . . person for whom work was not merely a means of subsistence or profit but an ennobling way of life, a crucible of moral excellence in which pragmatism, moderation, and a search for proportion were the fundamental values.” Victor David Hanson, *The Other Greeks: The Family Farm and the Agrarian Roots of Western Civilization* (New York: Free Press 1995), 3. The hard and unpredictable nature of family farming, according to Hanson, also created a deep sense of the tragic dimensions of human life and politics, missing from much subsequent political theory, which holds out utopian hopes for ending all conflict. Such tragic qualities of politics are explored in Derek W. M. Barker, *Tragedy and Citizenship: Conflict, Reconciliation, and Democracy from Haemon to Hegel* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2009).

<sup>21</sup> For rich treatment of alternative work-centered intellectual traditions which treat the civic and democratic possibilities and practices of work, see John W. Budd, *The Thought of Work* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), and Luke Bretherton, *Resurrecting Democracy: Faith, Citizenship, and the Politics of the Common Good* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

<sup>22</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 161-162.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted from Mary Dietz, “‘The Slow Boring of Hard Boards’: Methodical Thinking and the Work of Politics,” *American Political Science Review* 88, No. 4 (1994): 873-886; quote from 874, 876.

<sup>24</sup> Richard Sennett, *The Craftsman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

<sup>25</sup> Saul Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals* (New York: Random House, 1946), 40.

<sup>26</sup> Boyte notes on Falcon Heights Town Hall Forum on Gun Violence, January 30, 2013. It should be noted that when I questioned this definition of *citizen*—pointing out that the multiple workplaces represented could potentially become civic centers in the city—it generated a lively discussion.

<sup>27</sup> Delli Priscoli quoted in Harry Boyte and Nan Kari, *Building America: The Democratic Promise of Public Work* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 198; interview with Paul Light, Minneapolis, May 1, 1995, Harry Boyte.

<sup>28</sup> Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), ix.

<sup>29</sup> Benjamin Barber, “The Search for Civil Society,” *The New Democrat*, No. 7 (March/April, 1995): 4. Jean Elshtain used Barber’s definition in framing the work, which produced *A Call to Civil Society*. See Elshtain, quoted in “Institute, University of Chicago to Form Council on Civil Society,” *Family Affairs*, Vol. 7, No. 1-2 (Spring 1996): 3.

- <sup>30</sup> Benjamin R. Barber, "Civic Schizophrenia," *Kettering Review* (Summer 2006): 10.
- <sup>31</sup> Benjamin R. Barber, *A Place for Us: How to Make Society Civil and Democracy Strong* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 44, 41, 42.
- <sup>32</sup> See Bretherton, *Resurrecting Democracy*.
- <sup>33</sup> Boyte interview with Father John Egan, South Bend, Indiana, August 2, 1980.
- <sup>34</sup> This history of Cortes' innovations is adapted from Harry C. Boyte, *Community Is Possible: Repairing America's Roots* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), Chapter Five, "Empowerment."
- <sup>35</sup> Michael Gecan, *Going Public: An Organizers' Guide to Citizen Action* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004), 35.
- <sup>36</sup> Ernesto Cortes, Jr., "Toward a Democratic Culture," *Kettering Review* Vol. 24, No. 1(2006): 48.
- <sup>37</sup> Cynthia Estlund, "Working Together: The Workplace, Civil Society, and the Law," *Georgetown Law Journal* 89 (2000): 25.
- <sup>38</sup> Cynthia Estlund, *Working Together: How Workplace Bonds Strengthen a Diverse Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 138-139.
- <sup>39</sup> Estlund, "Working Together," 85.
- <sup>40</sup> See Harry C. Boyte and Nan Kari, *Building America*.
- <sup>41</sup> Robert H. Wiebe, *Self-Rule: A Cultural History of American Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).
- <sup>42</sup> Quoted from Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 9.
- <sup>43</sup> See Walter Isaacson, "The America Ben Franklin Saw," *Washington Post*, November 21, 2012.
- <sup>44</sup> Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1991), ix.
- <sup>45</sup> David Mathews, *Reclaiming Public Education by Reclaiming Our Democracy* (Dayton: Kettering Foundation Press, 2006), vii.
- <sup>46</sup> Oscar Handlin and Mary Handlin, *Commonwealth: A Study of the Role of Government in the American Economy, Massachusetts, 1774-1861* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 30.
- <sup>47</sup> See Boyte, "Constructive Politics as Public Work," *Political Theory* Vol. 39, No. 5 (2011): 630-660.
- <sup>48</sup> Budd, *Thought of Work*, 167.
- <sup>49</sup> *Vocation, Access and Excellence: The Educational Vision of Augsburg College* (Minneapolis: Augsburg College, 2012) (accessed January 30, 2013) <http://www.augsburg.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/EducationalVision12-2012.pdf>.
- <sup>50</sup> William Sullivan, *Work and Integrity: The Crisis and Promise of Professionalism in America* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995), 28.
- <sup>51</sup> Scott J. Peters, "Educating the Civic Professional: Reconfigurations and Resistances," *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* (Fall, 2004): 47-58; Hannah quoted from 47.
- <sup>52</sup> William J. Doherty, Tai J. Mendenhall, and Jerica M. Berge, "The Families and Democracy and Citizen Health Care Project," *Journal of Marital & Family Therapy* (October 2010).
- <sup>53</sup> Gerald Taylor, "Prometheus Unbound: Populism, The Property Question, and Social Invention," *The Good Society* Vol. 21, No. 2 (2012): 224-225.

- <sup>54</sup> John Rogers, Joseph Kahne, and Ellen Middaugh, “Multiple Pathways and the Future of Democracy,” in *Beyond Tracking: Multiple Pathways to College, Career, and Civic Participation*, edited by Jeannie Oakes and Marisa Saunders, 164 (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2008).
- <sup>55</sup> John McDermott, ed., *The Philosophy of John Dewey* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 357; see also Laura M. Westoff, “The Popularization of Knowledge: John Dewey on Experts and American Democracy,” *History of Education Quarterly* Vol. 35, No. 1 (1995): 27-47.
- <sup>56</sup> Dewey, *Philosophy*, 382.
- <sup>57</sup> John Dewey, *The Teacher and Society* (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1937), 335.
- <sup>58</sup> Dewey quoted in Harry C. Boyte, “A Different Kind of Politics: John Dewey and the Meaning of Citizenship in the 21st Century,” *The Good Society* Vol. 12, no. 2 (2003): 7.
- <sup>59</sup> Dewey’s definitional mistake can be found in his address on Social as Social Centre. Despite its luminous vision—and its consequences, helping to spawn a movement for schools to become centers of community life across the nation—he articulated a faulty distinction between *politics* and *society*. “I mean by ‘society’ the less definite and freer play of the forces of the community which goes on in the daily intercourse and contact of men in an endless variety of ways that have nothing to do with politics or government,” Dewey argued. Dewey proposed that citizenship needed to be defined more broadly, “to mean all the relationships of all sorts that are involved in membership in a community,” and that the range of school activities related to citizenship education was wide. But his definition took the political edge off citizenship. Quoted from Harry C. Boyte, “A Different Kind of Politics: John Dewey and the Meaning of Citizenship in the 21st century,” Dewey Lecture, University of Michigan, November 1, 2002, reprinted in *The Good Society* Vol. 12, No. 2 (2003).
- <sup>60</sup> See Harry C. Boyte, *Common Wealth: A Return to Citizen Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1989) [http://www.bupedu.com/lms/admin/uploaded\\_article/eA.251.pdf](http://www.bupedu.com/lms/admin/uploaded_article/eA.251.pdf).
- <sup>61</sup> Maria Avila, “Transforming the Culture of Academia: An Organizing Based Model of Civic Engagement” (draft in author’s possession, August 11, 2003).
- <sup>62</sup> Lesley Cafarelli, *Dilemmas in Teaching: Cases for Faculty Reflection* (Minneapolis: The Collaboration, 1998), excerpts in author’s possession.
- <sup>63</sup> For evidence in higher education, see John Dedrick with Laura Grattan and Harris Dienstfrey, *Deliberation and the Work of Higher Education: Innovations for the Classroom, the Campus, and the Community* (Dayton: Kettering Foundation, 2008); Stacey Molnar Main’s report is forthcoming from the Kettering Foundation.
- <sup>64</sup> See Acknowledgements.
- <sup>65</sup> The account of the Chicago Ag school and its successes is taken from Harry C. Boyte, “For Democracy’s Future,” *Huffington Post*, November 9, 2012, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harry-boyte/for-democracys-future\\_b\\_2088408.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harry-boyte/for-democracys-future_b_2088408.html); for parallel evidence that consequential work tied to education is a powerful motivator for low-income student success, see Peter Levine et al. CIRCLE, “Pathways Into Leadership: A Study of YouthBuild Graduates” (2012), <http://www.civicyouth.org/released-today-at-the-white-house-circle-study-shows-youthbuild-builds-leaders/>.
- <sup>66</sup> See Harry Boyte and John Spencer, “Civic Science – Beyond the Knowledge Wars,” *Huffington Post*, May 31, 2012, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harry-boyte/civic-science-action-\\_b\\_1556076.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harry-boyte/civic-science-action-_b_1556076.html).

<sup>67</sup> CRAFTS: Civic Engagement Minor, plan for NAU January 30, 2013; for a detailed discussion of organizing and culture change in and around Flagstaff and NAU see Rom Coles, “The Promise of Democratic Populism in the Face of Contemporary Power,” *The Good Society* Vol. 21, No. 2 (2012): 177–193, and (see for a student video on the contrasts with conventional schooling, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NarLowOLLQo&feature=youtu.be>).

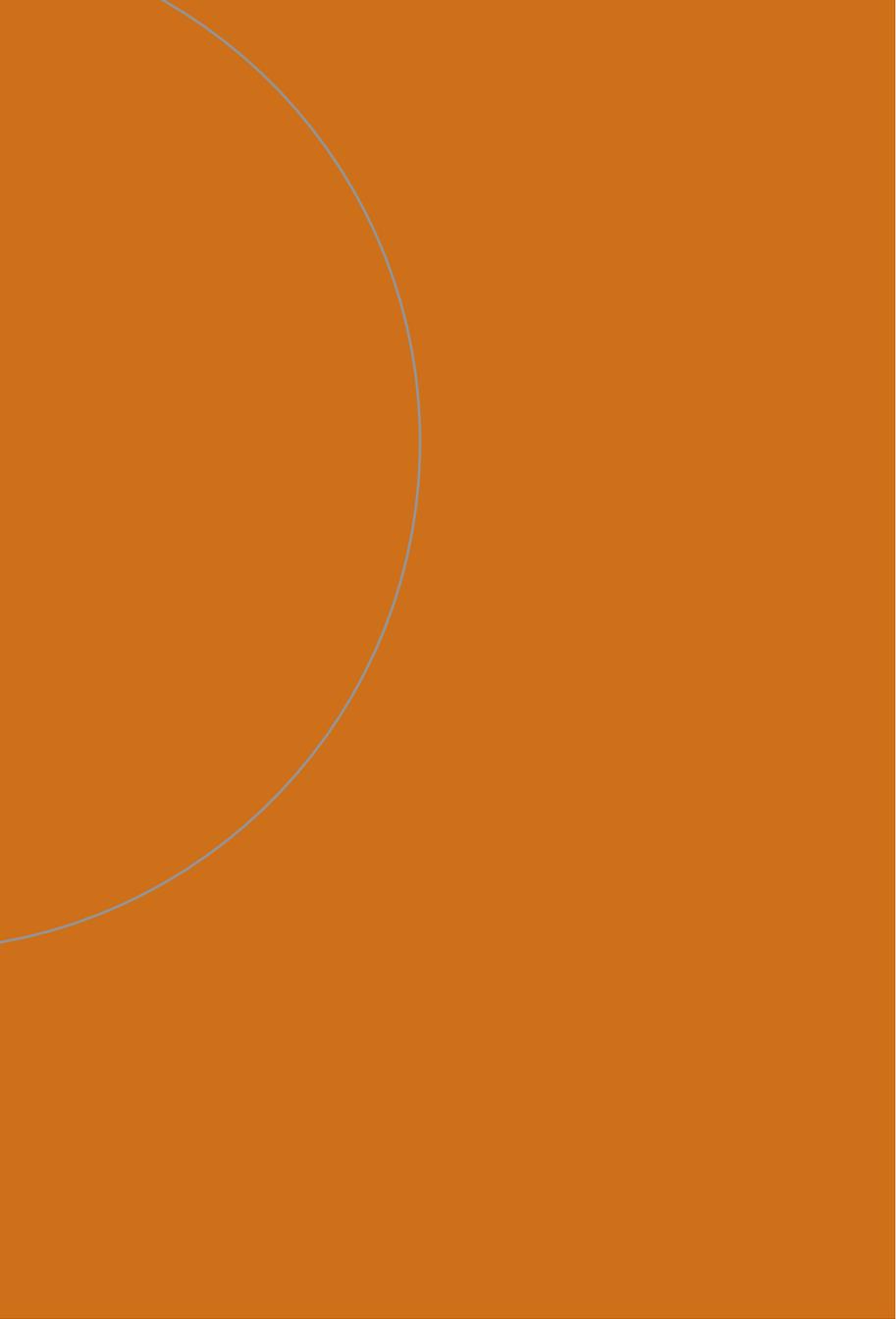
<sup>68</sup> Rom Coles, “Of Tensions and Tricksters: Grassroots Democracy Between Theory and Practice,” *Perspectives on Politics* 4, No. 3 (Fall, 2006): 547-561.

<sup>69</sup> Read more: <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/01/30/north-carolina-governor-joins-chorus-republicans-critical-liberal-arts#ixzz2KaesXYRR> .

<sup>70</sup> Taylor, “Prometheus Unbound,” 226.

<sup>71</sup> For the summary of *The Good Society* issue on Reclaiming Democratic Populism (2012), which includes Taylor’s article and others making the case that an Information Age populist movement is beginning to appear, see Harry C. Boyte, “Reclaiming Democratic Populism,” Basic Facts, Scholars Strategy Network, March 2013, [http://www.scholarsstrategynetwork.org/sites/default/files/ssn\\_basic\\_facts\\_boyte\\_on\\_reclaiming\\_populism.pdf](http://www.scholarsstrategynetwork.org/sites/default/files/ssn_basic_facts_boyte_on_reclaiming_populism.pdf).





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