

Worrisome trends in the vitality of American democracy – the decline in participation

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Statement of the problem

American democracy is in many ways¹ more vital than ever before. But worrisome trends exist. Millions of Americans are drawing back from involvements with community affairs and politics. Voters stay home; public officials grapple with distrust or indifference; and people are less likely to cooperate on behalf of shared goals. Scholars across the spectrum of opinion agree that it is vital to determine what is happening and why-so that Americans can take well-informed, effective steps to to increase civic engagement and culture. Ostrom (1996) would have us believe that “The erosion of civic culture and the decrease of civic engagement is ‘a serious and shocking question’ that concerns the future of American democracy”. The works of Putnam (2000), Hooghe (2004), Ladd (1996), Paxton (1999), Robinson and Jackson (2001), and Costa and Kahn (2003), are ample evidence that civic engagement is on a decline amongst US citizens over the last 5 decades and thus a decline in healthy democracy².

¹ <http://www.brookings.edu/press/Books/1999/civicameric.aspx>
Civic Engagement in American Democracy
Morris P. Fiorina and Theda Skocpol, Brooking Institution Press c. 548pp.

² <http://www.econ-pol.unisi.it/quaderni/513.pdf>

Maurizio Pugno: “Did the Decline in Social Capital Decrease American Happiness?”

A Relational Explanation of the Happiness Paradox n. 513 – Agosto 2007”

SOLUTION?

Briefly speaking, there are three significant ways to address the problem of declining civic engagement.

First of all, “reinventing community” (Coleman, Putnam and Fukumaya). The fact “community means more than a collection of individuals” (McClenaghan)³.

In *The American Prospect*, Robert Putnam argues that what residents in American ghettos, poor farmers in the Third World, and parents everywhere need is a healthy dose of civic enagement [“The Prosperous Community,” *TAP*, Spring 1993], and that civic engagement in America is dangerously on the decline [“Strange Disappearance of Civic America,” *TAP*, Winter 1996].

The popular view (Coleman, Putnam and Fukumaya) now portrays civic engagement as wholly beneficial with no significant downside. The implicit consensus is that civic engagement is important because it allows people to work together by resolving the dilemmas of collective action. Why this is actually so, however, is obscure. Indeed, the more civic engagement is celebrated for a growing list of wonderful effects, the less it has

³ Link

<http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?articleId=4943> Unsolved Mysteries: The Tocqueville Files II

any distinct meaning. Civic engagement now appears poised to repeat the experience suffered by other promising social science concepts in the past: from intellectual insight appropriated by policy pundits, to journalistic cliché, to eventual oblivion. It deserves better. Any rescue effort requires examining what has gone wrong with the idea and its use in recent public debate.

Ethnic groups are, of course, not the only ones that use civic engagement for economic advantage. Adam Smith complained that assemblages of merchants inevitably end up as "conspiracies against the public." The "public" are all those excluded from the networks and mutual support linking insiders. In place of "merchants" in Smith's phrase, substitute white building contractors, ethnic union bosses, or immigrant entrepreneurs and you get the picture.

In industries with strong social ties, newcomers often find themselves unable to compete, no matter how good their skills and qualifications. A particularly poignant example is that of African American contractors attempting to carve a niche in the white- and immigrant-dominated construction industry. As one such entrepreneur in New York City put it: "I think that the reason I haven't taken the next step—to having steady big contracts . . . is because I'm not in the social circles where those kinds of deals are made. . . . I can't play golf or go on boats with people." Lacking the requisite social connections, African American contractors depend mostly on the public sector.

For instance, the call for higher civic engagement as a solution to the problems of the

inner city misdiagnoses the problem and can lead to both a waste of resources and new frustrations. It is not the lack of civic engagement, but the lack of objective economic resources—beginning with decent jobs—that underlies the plight of impoverished urban groups. Even if strengthened civic engagement and community participation could help overcome the traumas of poverty, no one knows how to bring about these results.

Undoubtedly, individuals and communities can benefit greatly from social participation and mutual trust, but the outcomes will vary depending on what resources are obtained, who is excluded from them, and what is demanded in exchange. As the examples of African American construction contractors in New York show, solidarity among some groups can create impassable barriers for others that only deliberate government intervention can overcome. As the example of Evangelical converts in the Andes suggest, the benefits of community may come at too high a cost in terms of human freedom or the suppression of the individual entrepreneurial spirit.

Secondly, through service learning civic engagement can be enhanced (Barber and Battistoni 1993, Putnam 2000⁴).

The notion that civic engagement in the U.S. has been in decline for the past forty

⁴ http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/0/8/3/9/7/p83973_index.html

Is Civic Engagement Really in Decline? A Qualitative Assessment of the Dynamics of Voluntarism and Social Capital in the United States

years has received much attention, in part produced by the scholarly debate fueled by Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone: the Decline and Renewal of Community in America* (2000). The paper tests a new thesis that challenges the assumption that National trends provide an accurate portrayal of civic engagement, focusing instead at the level of community. Putnam amasses a wealth of indicators at the national level, including patterns of declining involvement in political activity, religious affiliation and participation, voluntary activity and social engagement.

While Putnam's data demonstrates clearly that civic engagement in formal political institutions and processes has declined, does this also hold true for community involvement at the local level? Is it instead possible that the dynamic activity of a sprinkling of small groups are the key to civic engagement and activity in the larger community?

Voluntarism, labor activism, and social engagement are found to be quite active, and run counter to the trends depicted in *Bowling Alone*.

The broad national picture captured by the lense of aggregate data becomes quite different when the lense is focused on the micro level of local communities around the country.

Thirdly, “service learning supports the idea that the university can help produce/increase civic engagement through community based service learning programs” (Dufour 2005).

There are classroom learning opportunities that are active, service- focused,

community-based , mutually beneficial, and integrated with students’ academic programs

. Students who participate in service-learning contribute their time, energy,

and unique talents to nonprofit organizations, schools, hospitals, health care

facilities, government agencies, and advocacy groups in ways that help to meet

community needs.

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTION

This study has three main purposes

- a.) Purpose of this research is to study the impact of service learning on community building
- b.) What is the impact of service learning on building civic engagement?
- c.) The role of American universities in community building.

SO WHAT?

Understanding the interrelation of service learning and increased civic engagement can contribute to improved civic education programs, thereby ameliorating the problem of civic erosion. Moreover, it can serve to strengthen the role of universities in community building.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

- 1.) We must sort out the dimensions of civic engagement, which clearly is not a unidimensional concept, despite language that implies the contrary.
- 2.) Civic engagement as conceptualized among present and past scholarship;
- 3.) The theoretical and empirical studies in the field;
- 4.) Contribution of service learning on building civic engagement as presented in past research

Literature Review

Coleman, Putnam and Fukumaya lament the decline in civic engagement and argue for the urgent need of reinventing community...They argue that Community as more than a collection of individuals – it's the interactions of among people, the institutions, the relationships, the attitudes the vales that create a sense of “civic” responsibility. According to McCleghan (1999) the positive associations between community identifications (i.e.) civic participation) “provide a powerful rationale for the development and support of learning and educational systems which can demonstrate their ability to enhance this valuable collective asset. One of the proposed solutions advocated by many, including Putnam and Barber and Battison is civic education – in particular service learning ... service learning fosters the development of attributes that are necessary to participate and maintain community. And to go even further, Dufour (2005) “service learning supports the idea that the university can help produce and enrich civic

engagement through community based service learning programs ... and that the service learning programs can help to alleviate young people's alienation and cynicism."

Erosion of civic engagement

Robert Putnam

First of all, according to Robert Putnam many students of the new democracies³ that have emerged over the past decade and a half have emphasized the importance of a strong and active civil society to the consolidation of democracy. Especially with regard to the postcommunist countries, scholars and democratic activists alike have lamented the absence or obliteration of traditions of independent civic engagement and a widespread tendency toward passive reliance on the state. To those concerned with the weakness of civil societies in the developing or postcommunist world, the advanced Western democracies and above all the United States have typically been taken as models to be emulated. There is striking evidence, however, that the vibrancy of American civil society has notably declined over the past several decades.

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Journal of Democracy 6:1, Jan 1995, 65-78

As featured on National Public Radio, The New York Times, and in other major media, we offer this sold-out, much-discussed *Journal of Democracy* article by Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone." The *Journal of Democracy* is at present scheduled to go online in full text in the third year of Project Muse (1997). You can also find information at DemocracyNet about the *Journal of Democracy* and its sponsor, the National Endowment for Democracy.

Secondly in the opinion of Robert Putnam that ever since the publication of Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, the United States has played a central role in systematic studies of the links between democracy and civil society. Although this is in part because trends in American life are often regarded as harbingers of social modernization, it is also because America has traditionally been considered unusually "civic" (a reputation that, as we shall later see, has not been entirely unjustified).

Thirdly, Robert Putnam says that when Tocqueville visited the United States in the 1830s, it was the Americans' propensity for civic association that most impressed him as the key to their unprecedented ability to make democracy work. "Americans of all ages, all stations in life, and all types of disposition," he observed, "are forever forming associations. There are not only commercial and industrial associations in which all take part, but others of a thousand different types--religious, moral, serious, futile, very general and very limited, immensely large and very minute. . . . Nothing, in my view, deserves more attention than the intellectual and moral associations in America."

Fourthly, Robert Putnam thinks that recently, American social scientists of a neo-Tocquevillean bent have unearthed a wide range of empirical evidence that the quality of public life and the performance of social institutions (and not only in America) are indeed powerfully influenced by norms and networks of civic engagement. Researchers in such fields as education, urban poverty, unemployment, the control of crime and drug abuse, and even health have discovered that successful outcomes are more likely in civically engaged communities. Similarly, research on the varying economic attainments of

different ethnic groups in the United States has demonstrated the importance of social bonds within each group. These results are consistent with research in a wide range of settings that demonstrates the vital importance of social networks for job placement and many other economic outcomes.

Fifthly, Robert Putnam would have us believe that a seemingly unrelated body of research on the sociology of economic development has also focused attention on the role of social networks. Some of this work is situated in the developing countries, and some of it elucidates the peculiarly successful "network capitalism" of East Asia.² Even in less exotic Western economies, however, researchers have discovered highly efficient, highly flexible "industrial districts" based on networks of collaboration among workers and small entrepreneurs. Far from being paleoindustrial anachronisms, these dense interpersonal and interorganizational networks undergird ultramodern industries, from the high tech of Silicon Valley to the high fashion of Benetton.

Sixthly, Robert Putnam asserts that the norms and networks of civic engagement also powerfully affect the performance of representative government. That, at least, was the central conclusion of my own 20-year, quasi-experimental study of subnational governments in different regions of Italy.³ Although all these regional governments seemed identical on paper, their levels of effectiveness varied dramatically. Systematic inquiry showed that the quality of governance was determined by longstanding traditions of civic engagement (or its absence). Voter turnout, newspaper readership, membership in choral societies and football clubs--these were the hallmarks of a successful region. In

fact, historical analysis suggested that these networks of organized reciprocity and civic solidarity, far from being an epiphenomenon of socioeconomic modernization, were a precondition for it.

Seventhly, Robert Putnam indicates that no doubt the mechanisms through which civic engagement and social connectedness produce such results--better schools, faster economic development, lower crime, and more effective government--are multiple and complex. While these briefly recounted findings require further confirmation and perhaps qualification, the parallels across hundreds of empirical studies in a dozen disparate disciplines and subfields are striking. Social scientists in several fields have recently suggested a common framework for understanding these phenomena, a framework that rests on the concept of *social capital*.⁴ By analogy with notions of physical capital and human capital--tools and training that enhance individual productivity--"social capital" refers to features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.

Eighthly, Robert Putnam says that for a variety of reasons, life is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital. In the first place, networks of civic engagement foster sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity and encourage the emergence of social trust. Such networks facilitate coordination and communication, amplify reputations, and thus allow dilemmas of collective action to be resolved. When economic and political negotiation is embedded in dense networks of social interaction, incentives for opportunism are reduced. At the same time, networks of

civic engagement embody past success at collaboration, which can serve as a cultural template for future collaboration. Finally, dense networks of interaction probably broaden the participants' sense of self, developing the "I" into the "we," or (in the language of rational-choice theorists) enhancing the participants' "taste" for collective benefits.

Ninthly, Robert Putnam does not intend here to survey (much less contribute to) the development of the theory of civic engagement. Instead, he uses the central premise of that rapidly growing body of work--that social connections and civic engagement pervasively influence our public life, as well as our private prospects--as the starting point for an empirical survey of trends in social capital in contemporary America. He concentrates here entirely on the American case, although the developments I portray may in some measure characterize many contemporary societies.

Erosion of civic engagement

Ladd (1996)

Other scholars and critics are suspicious of the documentation supporting the decline of civic engagement and the decreased membership of voluntary associations. Everett Carl Ladd⁴ debates Putnam's position in *The Ladd Report* (1999). Ladd challenges

⁴ **Globalization and After**

By Samir Dasgupta, Ray Kiely
 Globalization and After: the turning of the tide / Barry K. Gills Introduction / Samir Dasgupta and Ray Kiely
 Globalization or the age of transition? : a long-term view of the trajectory of the world-system / Immanuel
 Wallerstein Neoliberal globalization / Jan Nederveen Pieterse Business as ...

By Samir Dasgupta, Ray Kiely

Contributor Samir Dasgupta, Ray Kiely

Putnam regarding diminishing group membership and the lack of communal ties. While Putnam refers to “striking evidence” of the decline in membership, Ladd assesses empirical records of American trends in civic engagement, finds no such decline and concludes that ...if the country’s civic life isn’t declining, but rather churning, transforming itself to meet modern conditions without losing positive energy, we should acknowledge this and get on with the task of building upon the new. An insipid nostalgia, which looks to a past that never was and laments the absence of a perfect present which can never be, can only detract from constructive effort. (Ladd 1999: 4).

However, Ladd was writing prior to the marshalling of evidence in *Bowling Alone* (Putnam 2000). In many respects, Ladd's central thesis was undermined by the data assembled by Putnam.

Ladd (1999) points out that “joining face-to-face groups to express shared interest is a key element of civic life. Such groups help resist pressure toward “mass society.” They teach citizenship skills and extend social life beyond the family” (p. 16). People who participate in voluntary organizations have more civic trust (Moyser, 1997, p. 43).

Secondly, Now Everett Carll Ladd⁵, the executive director of the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, has offered a different answer. In The Ladd Report, a thoroughgoing collection of data on American life, he argues that social capital and civic engagement never really withered at all. They may have disappeared from the clumsy maps with which Putnam and the punditry examine the country, but they never disappeared from the country itself.

Thirdly, Ladd stresses that his book is not a direct response to Putnam's essays, that Putnam is simply "one among many voices making similar claims." But all those voices make the same mistake: They all assume that, because one set of institutions is declining, no other groups are picking up the slack. Bad assumption. "In case after case where a group that's been important in the past now finds itself losing ground, or at least struggling to maintain its place, investigation shows that the main cause is simply strong competition," writes Ladd. For example: "The Elks and the Boy Scouts are less prominent and active now than they were half a century ago, but the Sierra Club is much more so. Bowling leagues are down, but U.S. Youth Soccer has emerged de novo and engages more than two million boys and girls, together with an army of adult volunteers."

Fourthly, those might not be the best examples in the world, at least for those of us

⁵ http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1568/is_4_31/ai_55343569/pg_1?tag=artBody;col1

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The Ladd Report - Review

who often differ with the Sierra Club and prefer bowling to soccer. But then, property-rights groups are also growing (a trend Ladd ignores), and it's not as though soccer has supplanted bowling. More people are bowling than ever before, and if they aren't doing it in leagues, that hardly means, contra Putnam, that they're "alone." They bowl in informal groups, with family and friends, and there's no reason to assume they're any less engaged for it.

Fifthly, nor are we exchanging our concrete attachments for membership in "paper" organizations. Here too, Ladd breaks with Putnam, who claimed that groups like the Sierra Club may have long membership rolls but offer few opportunities for face-to-face contact. "For the vast majority of their members," Putnam wrote, "the only act of membership consists in writing checks for dues or perhaps occasionally reading a newsletter.... The bond between any two members of the Sierra Club is less like the bond between two members of a gardening club and more like the bond between any two Red Sox fans (or perhaps any two devoted Honda owners)."

Against this, Ladd offers the words of survey analyst George Pettinico: "In fact, a closer examination of the green movement in the United States reveals a vibrant, grassroots culture involving countless individuals who are actively engaged in their communities. On almost a daily basis, a plethora of meetings, social gatherings, hikes, bike trips, clean-up projects, rallies, nature workshops and the like are held in communities across the nation by local chapters of national environmental organizations, as well as ad hoc community groups." That's more than can be said for most American

labor unions, yet the decline in union membership is, for Putnam, evidence of social disengagement.

Seventhly, often, the new groups are more tightly rooted in their communities. The PTA's membership has indeed fallen since its early-'60s high (though it has actually been increasing, albeit slowly, since 1982). But membership in local parent-teacher groups has sharply increased. Some of the new groups were once chapters of the national PTA but seceded, usually so they might keep a greater portion of their dues for local use.

Not only are more people joining groups, but they're joining more groups per person: The "density" of association is increasing. Face-to-face interaction is still strong, with a record proportion of the country volunteering. But people are opening their wallets and signing their names as well: Even adjusted for inflation, charitable giving nearly tripled from 1960 to 1995.

The churches, too, are thriving. The mainline faiths are losing members - a result, one suspects, of excessive bureaucracy and changing times. But new institutions, from tiny worship centers to "megachurches," have more than filled the gaps. Not everyone is enamored with the superchurches' shopping-mall/rock-show ethos; as Ladd admits, "some of it is undoubtedly both crass and superficial." But even if you hate everything about the new temples, or the old ones for that matter, you must admit that they're a telling argument against Putnamism: "little of it fits a picture of Americans retreating into more solitary pursuits, finding their cultural substance primarily through the tube."

On one level, the very idea of measuring civic engagement is ridiculous. There is no simple index of sociability. There isn't even a complex one. Community spirit is intangible, and therefore unmeasurable in any but the most indirect, unsatisfying ways. Metrics can be misleading: Some numbers obscure more than they illuminate.

On a national scale, the measurement problem gets worse: Neither anecdotal nor statistical evidence seems capable of creating a complete map of community life, especially since the civil society that really counts takes place on a level so local as to be almost invisible to outsiders. Changes, too, can be hard to observe; when an institution fades, it's not always obvious where to look for its successors. The best Ladd can do is gather all the relevant evidence he can: telephone surveys, membership rolls, census reports, government files. The result is a wall of data, and if it's patchier than one might prefer, it's still pretty overwhelming - not a knock-down argument, but an impressive stack of counterevidence nonetheless.

There are, however, a few holes in Ladd's analysis - places where, unmoored from the data, he starts to get a little too speculative for his own good. It can't be said with certainty that it's "easier to be an engaged citizen in the Information Economy than in an Industrial Economy," partly because such suspicious sweeping categories and partly because his basic argument - that industrial jobs leave less time for civic life - forgets that routine, labor-intensive work is hardly limited to rust-belt factories. Nor is his defense of American exceptionalism very convincing, mostly because he essentially

redefines it as the belief that there is anything at all distinctive about American history and culture.

Ladd's section on "social trust" is found to be disappointing. Against Putnam's citation of a survey showing that Americans have less faith in each other, Ladd simply posits a poll that came to different conclusions. And he buries that datum in a chapter on Americans' trust in social institutions, swamping us with information that may be interesting but doesn't really address the issue.

Despite all that, The Ladd Report is enough to change the terms of the debate, to force the civil socialites to consider more than the declining fortunes of a few fetishized institutions. The issue now is not why civil society is dissolving, but why it's changing – and why so many people have been so quick to assume it's simply fading away.

In some libertarian quarters, the alleged decline of community was read as a sign that the state was crowding out voluntary associations. Why, the argument went, would people affiliate for mutual gain if the same advantages could be had through the state? Ladd's reply is that democratic governments are different from totalitarian states. The latter have to make war on independent institutions. The former, he claims, do not.

This isn't much of a reply, if only because so many democratic governments have made war on any association that stands in the way of public policy. "Urban renewal" and "redevelopment" schemes, for instance, have wiped out entire neighborhoods, and with

them the little civic ties that kept those places alive. Cops and principals across America have targeted teenage subcultures, harassing kids in goth makeup or trench coats out of misplaced fear that their chosen means of mutual engagement will lead them to mass murder. And anyone who thinks it takes a totalitarian to crush a community group hasn't paid much attention to the nation's zoning boards, whose inflexible rules have often made it impossible for neighborhood churches, among other groups, to set down roots.

The mechanistic argument against the welfare state - the idea that every dollar the government spends reduces Americans' ability to cooperate on their own - is insulting and wrong. But it's also true, as Ladd admits, that when nonprofit groups get hooked on government grants, they tend to lose both their independence and their roots in the communities they're supposed to serve, adopting a more centralized and "professional" style. This has happened to charities, to art centers, to community radio stations; it may be a reason why several of the groups Putnam tracks are in decline. (The same fate, of course, can befall groups that depend on private foundations. Conversely, many civic groups have enjoyed close relations with ultra-local levels of government without losing their civic base.)

Better answer is simply that people are creative and sociable, that affiliation is in our nature, and - thank goodness - that we don't take our cues from Washington. Who'd have guessed it? It turns out that we don't need any brow-furling pundit-talk about "civil society" to keep civil society alive.

Erosion of civic engagement

Paxton (1999)

Thus civic engagement does not seem to be in serious decline, based on the available evidence (Paxton 1999). Paxton 1999⁶ and Friedland 2001; Wuthnow 2004), in many cases focusing on the ways that Americans do engage civically—via professional organizations (e.g. Skocpol 1996; Skocpol and Fiorina 1999; Skocpol et al. 2000), and religious groups (e.g. Wuthnow 1991b, 2004).

In fact, some studies have found that Americans' disengagement is overstated (e.g. Paxton 1999). In her multiple indicator approach to social capital in the United States, for example, Paxton finds that, although Americans' trust in individuals declined between 1975-1994, their levels of trust in institutions and associations did not wane (1999). In the words of Skocpol, "Americans are finding new ways to relate to one another and accomplish shared tasks" (emphasis in original, 1999: 499; see also Skocpol et al. 2000; Sirianni and Friedland 2001).

More recently⁷, attention has shifted to how levels of social capital have changed

⁶ http://74.6.239.67/search/cache?ei=UTF-8&p=Paxton+1999+civic+engagement&y=Search&fr=yfp-t-501&u=civicyouth.org/PopUps/WorkingPapers/WP26Fisherpdf.pdf&w=paxton+1999+civic+engagement+engaged&d=LXf51_ReRcyb&icp=1&.intl=us

⁷ Advance Access publication March 1, 2005

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Macro Measures and Mechanics of Social Capital

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over time. One of the important contributions of later research has been to study a possible a decline in a variety of indicators of social capital in the United States (Putnam 1995a, 1995b, 2000; Paxton 1999; Costa and Kahn 2001). Focusing on how a society moves from one level of social capital to another over time requires better macro measurement of social capital. Current analyses of the decline of social capital rely not on an over-time index of social capital but on inspection and analysis of a wide variety of disparate trends in empirical indicators, such as club memberships, voting, attendance at public meetings, volunteering, time spent visiting friends, whether one trusts strangers, and other survey items. While such evidence may connote a general decline, it is also possible that only particular indicators are declining, whereas others might have moved not at all or even in the opposite direction. If social capital is an empirical phenomenon with multiple indicators, we should be able to solve for and observe the common social

capital dimension over time. Moreover, unified measures of social capital will also allow for tests of how movement in social capital over time affects political and societal phenomena.

Though rooted in distinct paradigmatic assumptions, there was a shared notion of the erosion of community in modern society (Paxton, 1999).

Erosion of civic engagement

Hooge (2004)

According to Hooge (2004)⁸ there are ample evidence that civic engagement is on a decline amongst US citizens over the last 5 decades and thus a decline in healthy democracy.⁹

⁸ Media, Culture & Society, Vol. 26, No. 6, 785-801 (2004)
DOI: 10.1177/0163443704045509

Political talk radio and democratic participation: caller perspectives on Election Call ⁵

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⁹ <http://www.econ-pol.unisi.it/quaderni/513.pdf>

Maurizio Pugno: "Did the Decline in Social Capital Decrease American Happiness?"

Erosion of civic engagement

Robinson and Jackson (2001)

Putnam's finding¹⁰ has been carefully scrutinised Robinson and Jackson (2001) "On balance, civic engagement has been confirmed as declining in the US, although not so dramatically as Putnam claimed." All these studies are focused on the USA since similar research asks for a generous data-base and the US General Social Survey (GSS) offers a long lasting temporal data-series. Consequently, we don't have much informations about what has happened in other countries in the same period. For that reason the question we would like to give an answer is: "how is doing Europe?". Until now this topic received poor attention, but it would be really interesting to understand what happened in other countries: is the erosion of civic engagement a general trend of modern societies or is it a characteristic feature of only some of them? To our knowledge only a few authors payed attention to this aspect since there are only a few generous data-set useful to establish a clear long-term pattern.

Erosion of Civic Engagement

Costa and Kahn (2003) **Costa, D. L. & Kahn¹, M. E. (2003) Understanding the**

A Relational Explanation of the Happiness Paradox n. 513 – Agosto 2007”

¹⁰ <http://ob2006.altervista.org/2008.html>

American Decline In Social Capital, 1952-1998. *Kyklos*, 56, 17-46. Dora L. Costa and Matthew E. Khan examine the widely perceived phenomenon of social capital decline within the United States, arguing that the claim that social capital is in decline has been over-stated. The authors examine how social capital is generated; consider how characteristics such as ethnicity, age, gender and income influence community participation; and outline how their empirical study measures the changing trends in social capital in America between 1952 and 1998. Costa and Khan conclude by stating that the decline in social capital that has occurred has been both inside the community and family home, and has been primarily associated with the entry of women into the labour force. The authors also cite growing income inequality and ethnic heterogeneity as responsible for declining rates of social capital within America.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AS DISTINGUISHED FROM POLITICAL INVOLVMENT

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT¹¹

Civic engagement has long been believed to be at the core of a successful and flourishing democratic society. The classic description of America as a successful civil society appears in Alexis de Tocqueville. In his classic, *Democracy in America*, de Tocqueville was struck by the willingness of Americans to join associations: "In the United States, political associations are only one small part

¹ <http://www.elections.org.nz/study/researchers/litrevs-biblios/youth-civic-part-biblio.html>
Youth civic participation - annotated bibliography

¹¹ http://www.firstmonday.org/Issues/issue5_8/resnick/index.html

of the immense number of different types of associations found there. Americans of all ages, all stations in life, and all types of dispositions are forever forming associations. There are not only commercial and industrial associations in which all take part, but others of a thousand different types -- religious, moral, serious, futile, very general and very limited, immensely large and very minute".

Tocqueville claims that the success of the democratic project depends upon this feature of American life: "In democratic countries knowledge of how to combine is the mother of all other forms of knowledge; on its progress depends that of all the others" . He warns that "if they did not learn some habits of acting together in the affairs of daily life, civilization would be in peril."

Interestingly enough, acquiring these habits requires participation in civil life: "feelings and ideas are renewed, the heart enlarged, and the understanding developed only by the reciprocal action of men one upon another" . I doubt that life online, however useful, can in the long run be as effective in providing such experiences as interaction among people in the real world.

Tocqueville not only insists that the habit of participating with others in civil society is necessary for the flourishing of modern democracy, he also claims that our democracy is continually challenged by another deep tendency in American society. He fears that it might be undermined by American individualism which he defines as "a calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows and withdraw into the circle of family and

friends; with this little society formed to his taste, he gladly leaves the greater society to look after itself ". He also points out that individualism is combated by the doctrine of self-interest properly understood. As he says, "it gives them pleasure to point out how an enlightened self-love continually leads them to help one another and disposes them freely to give part of their time and wealth for the good of the state" .

This doctrine of self-interest rightly understood is in constant tension with self-interest understood very narrowly and individually. Tocqueville suggests that this doctrine is frequently a way of justifying actions that really stem from altruistic and disinterested motives. It is often more a matter of emotions than rational calculation, "the Americans are hardly prepared to admit that they do give way to emotions of this sort. They prefer to give the credit to their philosophy rather than to themselves" . It is not really reason that provides a good part of the motivation to engage in collective action; rather, it is the habits of the heart. Democratic citizens require an education not just in the philosophy of democracy. They must be habituated to its ways and their emotional life must also be molded to support it. This too can be called higher education.

POLITICAL AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Political and Civic Engagement¹⁷

Putnam demonstrated that on a range of indicators of civic engagement including voting, political participation, newspaper readership, and participation in local associations that there were serious grounds for concern. It appeared that America's social capital was in decline. First in the realm of civic engagement and social connectedness he was able to demonstrate that, for example, over the last three decades of the twentieth century there had been a fundamental shift in:

Political and civic engagement¹⁸. Voting, political knowledge, political trust, and grassroots political activism are all down. Americans sign 30 per cent fewer petitions and are 40 per cent less likely to join a consumer boycott, as compared to just a decade or two ago. The declines are equally visible in non-political community life: membership and activity in all sorts of local clubs and civic and religious organizations have been falling at an accelerating pace. In the mid-1970s the average American attended some club meeting every month, by 1998 that rate of attendance had been cut by nearly 60 per cent.

In *Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital* (Journal of Democracy, January 1995, Volume 6, Number 1) Putnam surveys the decline of "social capital" in the United States of America since 1950, which he feels undermines the active civil engagement a strong democracy required from its citizens. Putnam discusses ways in which Americans have disengaged from political involvement including decreased voter turnout, public meeting attendance, serving on committees and working with political

¹⁷ http://www.infed.org/biblio/social_capital.htm

¹⁸ http://www.infed.org/biblio/social_capital.htm

parties. Putnam also cites Americans' growing distrust in their government. Putnam accepts the possibility that this lack of trust could be attributed to "the long litany of political tragedies and scandals since the 1960s" (see paragraph 13 of the 1995 article), but believes that this explanation is limited when viewing it alongside other "trends in civic engagement of a wider sort" (par. 13).

Putnam notes the aggregate loss in membership of many civic organizations and points out that membership has not migrated to other organizations. To illustrate why the decline in Americans' membership in social organizations is problematic to democracy, Putnam uses bowling as an example. Although the number of people who bowl has increased in the last 20 years, the number of people who bowl in leagues has decreased. Since people bowl alone they do not participate in social interaction and civic discussions that might occur in a league environment.

Putnam then contrasts the countertrends of ever increasing mass-membership organizations, nonprofit organizations and support groups to the data of the General Social Survey. This data shows an aggregate decline in membership of traditional civic organizations, proving his thesis that the social capital of the US has declined. He then asks the obvious question "Why is US social capital eroding?" (par. 35). He believes the "movement of women into the workforce" (par. 36), the "re-potting hypothesis" (par. 37) and other demographic changes have made little impact on the number of individuals engaging in civic associations. Instead, he looks to the technological "individualizing" (par. 39) of our leisure time via television, Internet and

eventually "virtual reality helmets" (par.39).

Putnam suggests closer studies of which forms of associations can create the greatest social capital, how various aspects of technology, changes in social equality, and public policy affect social capital. He closes by emphasizing the importance of discovering how the United States could reverse the trend of social capital decay

Literature Review

QUALITY OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Scholars and practitioners who are interested in the effectiveness of civic engagement programs¹⁹ to think about results in quantitative, "head count" terms. We talk about how many people vote, or participate in political parties, or join in community improvement campaigns. There is less attention to the quality of those engagements

There are at least two reasons for this focus on quantitative measures. One is that quantity is much easier to define and measure than quality. It's far easier to find out how many people attended a meeting than to assess the quality of the discussion that took place, or the quality of individual contributions to the discussion. It's easier to find out

¹⁹ http://www.compact.org/20th/read/measuring_higher_educations_commitment_to_civic_engagement
Measuring Higher Education's Commitment to Civic Engagement: The Importance of Attention to Quality, Not Just Quantity

how many of a college's graduates lead civic organizations than to find out how good they are as leaders. This is a perfectly good reason to track these quantitative measures and indeed there is good reason why we should want to see numbers like these go up. High levels of democratic participation, whether in voting, in community affairs or in political activity are good for society and low levels of participation can put democracy in jeopardy. But of course the fact that quality matters, doesn't mean it is all that matters.

There is a second reason for the focus on the "countable", one of a very different kind. This is a sense that focusing on the quality of civic engagement is itself undemocratic and unacceptably elitist or judgmental. It's easy to feel this discomfort: imagine a discussion not of whether somebody voted, but of "how well" they voted — or claiming that college graduates are not only more likely than others to vote, but that they actually vote "better". John Stuart Mill in fact argued that persons with more education should get more votes than those with less — a proposition that to modern eyes appears (rightly) both self-serving and shockingly undemocratic.

Yet if we limit our appraisal of civic engagement to head counts, we miss out on something important. After all, if college is, in important measure, about expanding students' capacities for critical thinking, analytical reasoning and effective expression, we should be concerned that those qualities show up in the public lives of our students, and not only in their work lives and private leisure. And when we think about designing programs in colleges that aim to promote civic engagement, I think we want those programs to encourage the application of these developed capacities to problems

and issues of civic life.

If these more qualitative dimensions of civic engagement are to be pursued purposefully by colleges, there are two big problems to address. First, we have to find ways to appraise the quality of civic engagement that are, so to speak, "content neutral" that don't simply define quality in terms of our own particular political values or prejudices. And second, we have to find constructive ways to "operationalize" these qualitative aspects — to actually measure how well colleges promote high quality civic engagement.

Neither of these problems is easily solved. Let me turn first to this issue calling "content neutrality" or "impartiality", bracketing for now the question of whether we can observe or measure the qualities I am going to describe. Tempting as it may be, we can't simply say that voting for the "wrong" candidate is *ipso facto* low-quality civic engagement. To begin to get a purchase on quality, we have to somehow get behind the bare act of voting (or of showing up at a political rally) to learn more about the basis for the act undertaken. I think we can identify three elements that contribute to the quality of a civic or political action or decision (of which the third is controversial). In shorthand, these are information, reasons, and empathetic imagination.

Information is easiest. What is the informational basis of the voter's choice (or of the participant's contribution at a community meeting)? What did she know about the candidates' positions, past voting records, honesty? What was the informational basis of her intervention at the community meeting? Had she read the newspaper articles on the

matters under discussion; were the claims she made in her remarks consistent with the known facts?

Yet facts alone are not enough. It's possible to have a great deal of information and still reason poorly. To be sure, judging the quality of a person's reasons for his or her position is less of a black-and-white matter than judging knowledge of relevant facts (which admittedly is not itself entirely free of dispute). We are less likely to encounter pure logical fallacies in people's political arguments than we are matters like overgeneralization, excessive weighting of particular pieces of evidence, reliance on claims that are poorly supported by evidence, and so on. Rather than simple mistakes, these are failures of judgment. Some might argue that we cannot fairly evaluate the quality of reasoning in cases where the evidence is not dispositive, but I don't think that is right. Indeed, as Derek Bok argues in *Our Underachieving Colleges*, teaching students to arrive at reasonable conclusions in ambiguous cases is one of the most important things for colleges to do, and one at which they often fail badly.

It is more controversial to suggest that "empathetic imagination" is a proper standard for appraising the quality of civic engagement.¹ Good measures of the quality of political reasoning and especially of empathetic understanding are considerably harder to envision. It would be hard to get them from pencil and paper surveys or multiple choice questions, which can be useful in learning what information citizens know. The most plausible way to gather evidence about these dimensions of civic activity would be through extended interviews or possibly through observation of people participating in

civic and political discussions. It is conceivable that such inquiry could be conducted on a scale that would shed some light on the distribution of quality of political reasoning in a broad sample of the American population, but it doesn't seem very likely. It is much more plausible that an individual college or universities, or a group of colleges, could engage with groups of current students or alumni to learn something about how their college experiences influenced the ways they came to political judgments and to decisions about action.

Judgments about the quality of civic engagement can in principle be made in defensible ways and to suggest that such judgments could and should play a role in the evaluation of college's efforts to promote civic engagement. In saying this, one doesn't mean to downplay the worth of quantitative measures of civic engagement.

Literature Review

Democratic theory

1.) Experiential learning opportunities²⁰ such as internships and service learning are valuable for teaching students the relevance of political science courses to their future careers and to their lives as citizens. Courses in political theory, however, present unique challenges for convincing students of this relevance. As instructors in political theory we

²⁰ <http://www.apsanet.org/tlc2007/TLC07Dale.pdf>

teach the history of political thought with the aspiration of convincing students that these ideas can influence their own critical thinking and engagement in politics.

2.) Feminist theory²¹ can be understood as a kind of "hermeneutic of suspicion," and hence it largely operates as a critique of existing theories and practices, including political theory and practice. It aims at showing the kinds of contributions -- not just critiques -- that feminist theory brings to political thought, especially now that political philosophy is well past the realpolitik thinking of much of the twentieth century. Until about twenty years ago, most political thinkers reduced politics to a practice of individuals' maximizing their own self-interest through rational calculations, or as a province of warring parties trying to take hold of the reins of official government. In contrast, over the past two decades, there has been a resurgence of theorizing about democratic theory, the public sphere, and civic engagement. An increasing number of political theorists have been thinking about the role of citizens, about nongovernmental spaces of common problem solving, and about the ways in which diverse individuals could develop a common will -- a truly public opinion -- that might provide normative direction for public policy and hold governments more accountable.

3.) The problem of civic and political participation²² in the postcommunist context from

²¹ <http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/hypatia/v022/22.4mcafee.html>

²² <http://www.ceeol.com/aspx/issuedetails.aspx?issueid=b3c64e5f-90b6-46a8-9616-1b84b6f24a8d&articleId=dc1c3377-b917-4864-bbe9-cf1846fe4388>

the perspective of contemporary democratic theory, the concept of democratic consolidation, and the thesis of the "weakness of civil society in post-communist countries." It argues that the institutional approach to democratization and participation does not provide a full answer to the question of how democratic systems become consolidated and thus it needs to be supplemented by the cultural approach. The analysis of the patterns of democratic participation in post-communist countries, however, is further complicated by their background conditions, the burden of the communist past, and the model of democratization that they have undergone. Although it seems that a participatory, civil-society centred type of democratic politics would revitalize and strengthen democracy in post-communist countries, two questions-addressed in this article-arise. First, whether contemporary democratic theories shed enough light on the processes involved when it comes to a democratic change and democratic consolidation in the post-communist context, and second, whether a weak civic sphere is a major impediment to the development of a truly democratic system.

4.) Teaching civic engagement²³ is facilitating a way of talking about politics that sets to work the student's skills, whether gained in the classroom or on the street, with the objective of producing commitment and enthusiasm for independent engagement. Civic engagement is a pattern of beliefs that represent a synthesis of other taught skills. The task of teaching civic engagement is not equivocal to the task of teaching public administration or teaching the history of political thought. The project of teaching civic engagement is the project of using education as therapy politics. The Concept "Civic Engagement" Our understanding of civic engagement in the context of tertiary education in Hong Kong relates conceptually and methodologically to the assessments of civic

²³ http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/2/6/7/7/0/pages267703/p267703-3.php

education, civic participation and collaborative policy making in emerging democracies popularized by authors such as Finkel (2002), Lipset (1959), and Hajer and Wagenaar (2003). Following Lipset, we recognize that Hong Kong represents a “deviant case” of democracy. But, the roots of the difference do not lie with merely the relationship of the SAR to the PRC. Instead, HK democracy is problematic for more social scientifically verifiable reasons. First is the tenuous nature of economic prosperity in Hong Kong. The Asian Financial crisis of 1997 coupled with the downturn following the SARS outbreak in 2003, are parts of recent memory, not bygone days ill-remembered. While Hong Kong's recent prosperity would seem to lead to the possibility of greater democratic engagement, this prosperity is fragile and (unfortunately) dependent on the mitigation of sundry economic shocks coming at the region from all corners. Given the necessity of stable economic prosperity, we must attenuate any pronouncements of success of democracy with the stipulation that these are more open to reversal from sudden shocks than may be the case in other nations. Secondly, we follow Lipset to argue that a greater level of citizen perception of political legitimacy is necessary for broad participation. Legitimacy in Hong Kong is also shaky and subject to reversal. For example, neo-colonial leaders in Beijing stymied efforts to increase legitimacy when they announced they would delay approval of competitive, open elections for the Chief Executive until 2017 and the Legislative Council (LegCo) until 2020. This is a 5-8 year delay (functionally one more CE term) that puts off universal suffrage, rather than allow it to be brought forth in 2012 as citizens repeatedly agitated for. 2 Citizen's perceptions of political legitimacy are not high if we measure it (as Lipset does) as groups believing that the government's values fit in with their primary values (1959, 87). Instead, the threat of

reversal of political decisions by the PRC, a persistent pervasive distrust of “mainlanders” and participation by mainland party elites, and continued reliance on the approval from the political oligarchy (i.e., functional constituencies) for decision making, all work in concert to reduce perceptions of government legitimacy. However, taking another cue from Lipset, perceptions of efficaciousness in the Hong Kong government are consistently high. Though it has become a trope used by politicians, civil servants, and students alike to justify the technocratic patterns embedded in HK politics, the phrase “administrative or executive led government” has some positive resonance. Specifically, the HK government enjoys a perception of competence. In fact, the authors suspect that universal suffrage will be put off indefinitely to ensure a smoother reintegration of HK to the mainland in 2047.

5.) Though some might argue against the observable validity of this perception, if social construction holds true, then the government is broadly efficient. Abiding by Lipset's indicators, we find that 2 indicators point away from the possibility of greater democratic engagement in Hong Kong, while one (effectiveness) points towards engagement. That structures permit democratic participation does not necessarily mean that widespread civic engagement as a mode of participation will emerge soon. Civic engagement, as Finkel points out ties into other non-political modes of participation found in non-political or apolitical organizations. Civic engagement, more than democratic participation, requires avenues for commitment in the private sphere. While opportunities exist for private participation (i.e. churches, clubs), the HK working environment mitigates against the use of these opportunities. For example, only in the last six months

have all public (and many private) converted to a five-and-a-half- day rather than six-day workweek. Additionally, given the international character of many jobs, individuals often work odd hours to match international times, not the HK environment. The university classroom, unlike the primary or secondary school classroom and more like a venue for adult education, is where group mobilization processes may occur. For students, public universities fulfill a public role, it is our contention that the individual classroom operates like a "secondary group", away from the glare of the full public. In the university classroom, students may combine into groups that have otherwise political and non-political agendas, allowing for direct, indirect and conditional responses to the civic engagement message (Finkel 996-998). Regarding direct effects, the classroom itself may become a platform for consequential engagement as students probe the meanings of contemporary political acts and seek

6.) Teaching Democratic Theory... Democratically²⁴

The author, Mark Mattern of the Department of Political Science, Chapman University describes the process and outcome of an experiment in 'democratic education'. The premise of the experiment was that students taking a course on **democratic theory** " ... could gain insight about democracy by critically analyzing and reflecting upon experiences within the classroom."

7.) The reasons people do not get involved in communities²⁵ are as varied as the reasons

²⁴ http://teachpol.tcnj.edu/conference_papers/_manuscripts/mma96a.pdf

²⁵ Cheryl Jacobs

that people do choose to become involved. Some researchers believe that civic involvement has been declining at an alarming rate over the past 50 years, and that is having an impact on communities all across the United States. One reason cited for decline in civic engagement is a lack of trust within communities. An attitude of “us versus them” has caused a decline in involvement by individuals who feel disenfranchised by the systems that should be working together with them in communities. Another reason blamed for the decline is the time deficit caused by lifestyle changes. Families today include more dual wage earners with both parents working outside the home, and more single parent families. Their busy lives leave little room for time spent on civic activities. Sometimes barriers to civic involvement are based on who we are. Age, race, gender and social class can also have an impact on whether we

choose to engage in civic activities. Community norms and past history can indicate whether people feel welcome in the conversation of civic issues. Barriers to civic involvement can have a great impact on rural communities, particularly in an era where Civic engagement is based on the basic concepts of democracy. Engaged citizens understand that communities will prosper when they are governed by “the many” rather than “the few.” Civic engagement is crucial for community leaders to be able to identify issues and to make good decisions. Civic engagement can include serving in a public office, but also includes ordinary citizens that want to be involved in determining the future of their community. Logically, communities that have high levels of civic engagement fare better and experience fewer declines than communities where apathy and disenfranchisement are the norm.

Civic engagement can take many forms and can be an individual decision for every

citizen and every community. A community's character is perceived through qualities that may be difficult to measure, or are some-what intangible, such as pride, community spirit and values. Although they may be hard to quantify, these characteristics are the very motivators of individuals in a civically engaged society.

Civic engagement can take these and many other forms:

- Being involved in associations, civic clubs and groups.
- Serving on boards such as townships, school boards, or city councils.
- Volunteering and giving; monetary donations, donating blood, volunteering time, etc.
- Holding public office, voting, involvement in political campaigns.

Individual citizens have the power to cause change in communities²⁶—both positive and

negative. Recognizing how participation in civic issues can have a far-reaching impact on a community may help some

²⁶ <http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/WorkingPapers/WP06Kirlin.pdf>.

people dissolve these barriers to Civic engagement.

Fostering Civic engagement in a Community

There are four components to increasing Civic engagement for individuals and

communities

- Knowledge and Education – Learning more about civic involvement through leadership

training, reading the newspaper, attending city council or school board meetings, etc.

- Skill Building – Learning about and practicing conflict management skills,

organizational skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills, etc.

- Participation – Participating in civic organizations, serving on boards, donating

resources such as time and money, volunteering, voting, etc.

Civic engagement in a community Knowledge & Education

Skill

Building

Participation

Engagement

9.) “Our schools should foster the knowledge, *skills*, and virtues our young people

need to become good democratic citizens...(including)... age-appropriate instruction in

civic knowledge and *skills*...” (National Commission on Civic Renewal 1998, pg. 2).

“

Schools achieve the best results in fostering civic engagement when they rigorously teach

civic content and *skills*...” (Torney-Purta 2002 pg. 203). “The process of political

mobilization involves a growth in the number of supportive associations, an

organizational construct, which promotes a greater *skill* and competence among the

association members” (Miller 1982 pg. 83). “It makes focal those opportunities young

people have to experience membership in local groups, organizations, and institutions

and to practice the *skills* that citizens in a democracy need” (Flanagan 2003 pg. 259)²⁷.

Only two of the four authors identify what they mean by the term “skill.” Moreover, one

refers to “skills” both in the abstract for the article and again in the conclusion but never

²⁷ www.civicyouth.org

provides a definition or measurement of skills in the empirical work reported in the article. These examples demonstrate the wide use of the term and the surprising lack of information about what civic skills are, how to measure them, and when they begin to be developed. As we will see, the idea of a set of skills, usually called civic skills, which are required to effectively participate in civic and political life, is integral to many concepts of political participation. This literature search is designed to investigate what is known about civic skills empirically and theoretically including how they are defined and measured, and what relationship they have to political participation.

10.) THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THINKING ABOUT CIVIC SKILLS

Civic skills do not exist in a vacuum; they are part of a larger set of ideas about what is believed to be necessary for citizens to be engaged in public life. The notion that, in addition to knowledge, some type of “skills” are required in order to effectively

participate in public life makes intuitive sense. The logic of civic skills as an important factor in political participation has found its way into many disciplines, particularly political science, education and developmental psychology. In each of these disciplines, the idea of civic skill development is related to other requirements for developing citizens. Suggested requirements regarding civic skills vary in part because of the disciplinary starting points and in part because of differing definitions of “good

Briefly, most political science literature suggests that civic skills are part of a larger package including knowledge, motivation or interest, connections to networks of engaged people, and resources (time and money) (Verba, Scholzman and Brady 1995). Educators have focused attention on a framework that includes civic knowledge, cognitive skills, participatory skills and civic dispositions (Patrick 2003). Developmental psychology conceptualizes civic skills within the framework of the family and social life of young people, and “the formation of identity, values, and social ties to others”

(Flanagan 2003 pg. 257). Only the political science literature has attempted to empirically pinpoint the role of civic skills within the larger framework of political socialization or participation.

Westheimer and Kahne (2002) point out that there are several constructs of “good citizen” each with different implications for participatory expectations. Drawing on political theory and educational programs promoting democracy, they identify three broad types of citizenship: “personally responsible”, “participatory”, and “justice oriented” citizens. Implications for participatory expectations vary with the three different conceptions of citizenship and range from having good character and obeying the law (personally responsible), to participating in established community structures (participatory), to questioning systems and structures when they produce injustices (justice oriented). For this review, we are most interested in the approaches seeking

to promote citizens who are participating in community structures designed to improve the collective good, closest to the “participatory” framework that Westheimer and Kahne (2002) identified.

Much of the early work on civic skills occurred in the 1960’s and 1970’s as researchers tried to sort out questions about political participation. Writers began exploring the concept of skill acts (such as writing to a member of congress) and inferring a role for civic skills (Erbe 1964; Bendix and Lipset 1966; Verba and Nie 1972; Otto 1975; Milbrath and Goel 1977). By the early 1980’s researchers were discussing the linkage between civic skill development (through religious and associational activities) and political participation (Beane, Turner, Jones and Lipka 1981; Hanks and Eckland 1978; Nagel 1987; Martinson and Wilkening 1987; Legee 1988). A key early article is “Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Participation” (Brady, Schlozman and Verba 1995)

where the authors define civic skills as capacities that are essential for political

participation. The authors' argue that civic skills are learned beginning in adolescence

and developed into adulthood. The above is expanded further in the seminal work Voice

and Equality (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995).

Schools achieve the best results in fostering civic engagement when they rigorously teach

civic content and *skills*..." (Torney-Purta 2002 pg. 203).

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associations, an organizational construct, which promotes a greater *skill* and competence

among the association members" (Miller 1982 pg. 83). "It makes focal those

opportunities young people have to experience membership in local groups,

organizations, and institutions and to practice the *skills* that citizens in a democracy need"

(Flanagan 2003 pg. 259).

Literature Review

The Role of Civic Skills in Fostering Civic Engagement

1.) Civic engagement, an important area left unattended by many others. Here again there is an interest in civic skills but the idea is rarely developed beyond the passing reference. Finally, we explored the psychology literature, looking at authors whose work has crossed between developmental psychology and political socialization and is related to skill development. This field has few people addressing the issue but they provide important contributions.

One conclusion of this search is also the major challenge confronted: the dispersion of the literature and the almost total lack of cross over work. Disparate fields seem to be doing important work, with significant overlap in findings and observations, but most

authors seem to be almost oblivious to the existence of related literature outside their own discipline. Many authors stay largely focused on their own disciplinary predecessors, not venturing deeply into other disciplines to inform their work. Developmental psychologists are an important exception and two authors write broadly in psychology, education, sociology and political science venues.

Some definitions and exclusions are important to discuss at this point. This review is focused primarily on those skills that are most clearly connected to civic behaviors, for example, writing persuasive letters. This focus on behaviors is in contrast to authors who focus on values and normative beliefs while calling them skills. The very nature of democracy includes normative concepts such as tolerance of opposing viewpoints but we have tried to clearly distinguish skills that include a normative perspective. For example, rather than using tolerance of opposing viewpoints as a skill, we have identified the

civic skill of the ability to work with others with differing viewpoints to come to a consensus.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THINKING

ABOUT CIVIC SKILLS

Civic skills do not exist in a vacuum; they are part of a larger set of ideas about

what is believed to be necessary for citizens to be engaged in public life. The notion that,

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pinpoint the role of civic skills within the larger framework of political socialization or

can be acquired in several organizational environments, but there has been particular

interest in the role of churches and civic (nonpolitical) organizations in developing civic

skills. Verba, et al found “...the workplace provides, by far, the most opportunities for the exercise of civic skills, but does so in the most stratified manner. The chance to practice skills on the job rises steeply with family income, much more steeply than it does in organizations. In contrast, there is no systematic relationship between family income and the exercise of civic skills in the church” (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995, pg. 319). Schwadel (2002), however, finds that within individual religious congregations, civic skill developing opportunities are stratified according to income. Other researchers have noted the relationship between church participation and civic engagement although only two specifically studied civic skills (Djupe and Grant 2001; Schwadel 2002). Djupe and Grant (2001) find that the relationship between church acquired civic skills and political participation is complex, suggesting that church participation may in fact develop civic skills but that the culture and history

of different religious traditions influence whether or not individual parishioners chose to utilize their civic skills in a political environment.

This is consistent with Verba, Schlozman and Brady's (1995) finding that Protestants have more opportunities than Catholics to practice skills, a finding they believe to be related to the differing governance structures rather than to membership composition. Specifically, Protestants typically include more roles for congregants than Catholics do, a finding that contributes to the idea of the primacy of organization structure in teaching civic skills (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995).

Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) have made critical contributions to our understanding of civic skills providing definitions, empirical measurements, and helping to explain the relationship of civic skills to other components necessary for active political participation. In addition, they have helped to clarify the role of organizations

in providing training grounds for civic skill development. Ultimately, "...acquisition of skills depends upon the level of skill opportunity provided by the domain; the extent to which involvement in the domain is socially structured; and the extent to which opportunities for skill development are socially structured among those affiliated" (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995, 320).

LITERATURE REVIEW

CIVIC SKILLS IN THE CIVIC EDUCATION

1.) Researchers interested in civic education also find a place for civic skills, but these researchers discuss civic skills in the context of the requirements of a civic education experience in a school setting rather than with an explicit participatory interest (although participation is often one of several Role of Civic Skills in Fostering Civic Engagement education goals). Educators commonly approach the subject from a normative stance, what should students know, and an empirical stance, what do students

know? Both are important, but turn out to be somewhat

LITERATURE REVIEW

Civic Engagement and democratic theory²⁸

1.) It would seem inconsistent with the concept of an opinions page not to acknowledge that today is, in fact, the special election for the State of California. Government and politics are not foreign to editorial writers.

On a humorous note, it should be said that in our politically tumultuous state, we require at least one election every year. Starting with the recall election of 2003, both the primary and general election of 2004, the special election of 2005 and, again, the future primary and general election of 2006. But the election today is not centered on candidates or notable personality. It's centered on propositions and measures, which are basically policy measures. And that's really not that sexy. But as a youth-dominated institute of

²⁸ -

Patrick McFawn's column "Realistically Speaking" runs Tuesdays. To comment on this article, e-mail dtrojan@usc.edu or call (213) 740-5665.

Link

<http://media.www.dailytrojan.com/media/storage/paper679/news/2005/11/08/Opinions/Voting.Is.An.Oppor-tunity.Civic.Duty-1049100.shtml>

higher education, that shouldn't matter. Everyone registered to vote should head out, hit the polls and voice their opinions on the issues confronting the electorate today.

The democratic principle, whether you agree with the initiative process, is not a civic duty to accept carelessly. And, contrary to a few ill-formed opinions, this column is not going to tell one how to vote. Widespread civic engagement trumps the concept of having only limited, motivated groups of individuals show up at the polls. Such is not the concept of increased democracy and, thus, is opposite the goal of the initiative process.

It is the youth vote, ages 18 to 25, which carries the most flack. You've heard it before. Voter turnout among the newest members of the electorate is always lower than that of the average voter turnout. It is even lower than that of the retired generation, as they tend to be the most mobile block of voters in the state and country.

The generally accepted belief is that many youth find that today's issues are not relevant to their lifestyle or beliefs. But if the youth vote were not as low as it currently is, policy makers would address issues concerning 18- to 25-year-olds in an effort to gain more electoral support. Higher voter turnout translates into a better representative voice for issues concerning new voters. It is a simple case in representative democracy.

Let's look at some of the numbers. In the election of 2004, the average voter turnout rate among all registered voters, according to the U.S. census, was 58.3 percent. Broken down among sexes, there was a 56.3 percent turnout rate for men and a 60.1 percent turnout

rate for women. Per the stereotype, the higher the education, the more likely one is to vote. Within the voting population, turnout increases by each class of education, topping off at a turnout rate of 77.4 percent for those with advanced degrees. That number is 75.8 percent for men and 79.3 percent for women.

For the youth vote, ages 18 to 25, the overall turnout rate was 41.9 percent. Between the genders, men in the lowest age category had a turnout rate of 38.8 percent and women 44.9 percent. Among segmented education classes, voter turnout peaks not at an advanced degree of education, but at the level of a bachelor's degree at 62.1 percent, with a turnout rate of 58 percent among men and 65 percent among women.

There is a clear trend to these numbers: The youth vote, even broken down among gender and education, is lower than the average voter turnout rate in every category. It's an old trend. Youth does not vote as frequently as other voter segments.

As an institute of higher education, it is necessary for the reputation of a school that students vote. Voting translates to an understanding of the issues, even if in a small degree. An understanding of the issues is to arise from education and engagement, both of which are to occur at college, especially among a globally recognized university such as USC.

There are polling locations on campus. Even if you are registered in another county, as many local students from Ventura and Orange County are, you can vote provisionally at a Los Angeles County polling location here on campus. Your vote would count pending the

verification of your registration in California. Since the special election concerns only propositions, voter turnout will not be nearly as high compared to regular general elections. Each vote cast today will count more than votes cast in elections past. Take advantage of the opportunity.

Deliberative Democracy

Deliberative democracy

The most widely debated conception of democracy in recent years is deliberative democracy--the

idea that citizens or their representatives owe each other mutually acceptable reasons for the laws

they enact. Two prominent voices in the ongoing discussion are Amy Gutmann and Dennis

Thompson. In *Why Deliberative Democracy?*, they move the debate forward beyond their influential book, *Democracy and Disagreement*.

What exactly is deliberative democracy? Why is it more defensible than its rivals? By offering

clear answers to these timely questions, Gutmann and Thompson illuminate the theory and

practice of justifying public policies in contemporary democracies. They not only develop their

theory of deliberative democracy in new directions but also apply it to new practical problems.

They discuss bioethics, health care, truth commissions, educational policy, and decisions to

declare war. In "What Deliberative Democracy Means," which opens this collection of essays,

they provide the most accessible exposition of deliberative democracy to date. They show how

deliberative democracy should play an important role even in the debates about military intervention abroad.

Why Deliberative Democracy? contributes to our understanding of how democratic citizens

and their representatives can make justifiable decisions for their society in the face of the fundamental disagreements that are inevitable in diverse societies. Gutmann and Thompson

provide a balanced and fair-minded approach that will benefit anyone intent on giving reason and

reciprocity a more prominent place in politics than power and special interests.

Link

<http://press.princeton.edu/titles/7869.html>: Why Deliberative Democracy? Amy Gutmann & DennisThompson

Deliberative democracy, also sometimes called **discursive democracy**, is a term used by some political theorist, to refer to any system of political decisions based on some tradeoff of direct democracy and representative democracy that relies on citizen deliberation to make sound policy. In contrast to the traditional theory of democracy , which emphasizes voting as the central democratic institution of democracy, deliberative democracy theorists argue that legitimate lawmaking can only arise from the public

deliberation of the citizenry.

The term "deliberative democracy" was originally coined by Joseph M. Bessette, in "Deliberative Democracy: The Majority Principle in Republican Government," in 1980, and he subsequently elaborated and defended the notion in "The Mild Voice of Reason" (1994). Others contributing to the notion of deliberative democracy include Jon Elster, Jürgen Habermas, David Held, Joshua Cohen, John Rawls, Amy Gutmann, John Dryzek, James Fishkin, Dennis Thompson, and Seyla Benhabib.

Joshua Cohen, a student of John Rawls, most clearly outlined some conditions that he thinks constitutes the root principles of the theory of deliberative democracy in the article "Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy" in the book *The Good Polity*. He outlines 5 main features of deliberative democracy, which include:

An ongoing independent association with expected continuation.

The citizens in the democracy structure their institutions such that deliberation is the deciding factor in their creation and that they allow deliberation to continue.

A commitment to the respect of a pluralism of values and aims within the polity.

The participants in the democracy regard deliberative procedure as the source of legitimacy and as such they also prefer those causal histories of legitimation for each law be transparent, and easily traceable back to the deliberative process.

Each member and all members recognize and respect each others' having deliberative capacity.

This can be construed as the fact that in a deliberative democracy, we "owe" one another,

in the legislative process, reasons.

Cohen also goes further than deliberative democracy as a theory of legitimacy and forms a body of substantive rights around it based on achieving "ideal deliberation":

It is free in two ways:

The participants regard themselves as bound solely by the results and preconditions of the deliberation. They are free from any authority of prior norms or requirements.

The participants suppose that they can act on the decision made, the decision through deliberation is a sufficient reason for compliance with it.

It is reasoned: parties to deliberation are required to state reasons for proposals, and proposals are accepted or rejected based on the reasons given, as the content of the very deliberation taking place.

Participants are equal in two ways:

Formal — anyone can put forth proposals, criticize, and support measures. There is no substantive hierarchy.

Substantive — The participants are not limited or bound by certain distributions of power, resources, or pre-existing norms. "The participants...do not regard themselves as bound by the existing system of rights, except insofar as that system establishes the framework of free deliberation among equals."

Deliberation aims at a rationally motivated consensus: it aims to find reasons acceptable

to all who are committed to such a system of decision-making. When consensus or something near enough is not possible, majoritarian decision making is utilized.

Link

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deliberative_democracy: Deliberative democracy

The aggregative model of democracy is problematic for a number of reasons. It undermines the ideal of democracy because it fails to give sufficient attention to the emphasis on effective participation and enlightened understanding, two criteria which deliberative democrats believe are vital for achieving a more just polity. According to the aggregative model of democracy citizens participate in the decision-making process primarily by making their preferences known through voting. Voting is thus conceived of as the primary political act. But deliberative democrats reject this narrow conception of participation. To fully participate in the decision-making process, argue deliberative democrats, one must participate in *authentic deliberation* and not simply express one's preferences. Such deliberation requires that parties abandon the strategic behaviour characteristic of the aggregative model of democracy and strive instead to reach a *consensus* among free and equal participants. To participate in this discursive practice is very different from participating in the decision-making process of the aggregative model of democracy. Deliberative democrats characterize participation in the democratic process as a *transformative* process. "Through the process of public discussion with a plurality of differently opinioned and situated others, people often gain new information,

learn of different experiences of their collective problems, or find that their own initial opinions are founded on prejudice or ignorance, or that they have misunderstood the relation of their own interests to others' (Young, 2000: 26).

Let us consider the following example to illustrate the differences between these two conceptions of democracy. Though the example utilises a trivial decision- where to eat dinner- it does reveal many of the concerns that deliberative democrats have concerning the shortcomings of the aggregative model of democracy. Imagine that five friends have to decide where to go for dinner. They cannot agree on a restaurant so they decide to resolve this disagreement democratically. They believe that that is the only fair thing to do. The "show of hands" approach of the aggregative model of democracy declares that the majority decision is the right decision and thus the friends need only indicate what their preferences are and the group should accept the preference of the majority. If three of the friends, for example, want Chinese food then that is where they should go and the two dissenters must simply accept that decision because democracy means the majority wins.

But if these friends are deliberative democrats they may not be satisfied to resolve the disagreement in this way. Before having a vote they decide that each person should have the opportunity to express their concerns for or against any of the restaurants that people have initially suggested. Each friend will then reconsider their preferences in light of those considerations. Perhaps one friend cannot afford to eat in a Chinese restaurant or is allergic to Chinese food. As a friend you may (and I hope would!) find these kinds of concerns pressing and thus they may lead you to change your initial preference. You

may decide that your preference for Chinese food is less important than accommodating a friend in the kind of circumstances just stipulated. Under these circumstances you may be willing to rank an alternative restaurant as your first choice, one that is more affordable or compatible with the dietary requirements of everyone. Engaging in a deliberation about something as trivial as where to go for dinner with some friends could be a transformative process as you begin to shape your own preferences in light of the concerns of others. The friends participate in this democratic process not by simply raising their hands and expressing their existing preferences in a majority wins vote, but by listening to the concerns of others and being willing to change their minds in order to accommodate those concerns.

The more expansive conception of democratic participation that deliberative democrats endorse thus ties in well with the third criterion of democracy Dahl identifies—gaining enlightened understanding. A process of aggregating existing preferences precludes enlightened understanding as there is no attempt to understand, let alone accommodate, the concerns of one's fellow citizens. But deliberative democrats believe that their vision of democracy fosters enlightened understanding among citizens because it embodies the principle of reciprocity (Gutmann and Thompson, 1996) or the dispositions of reasonableness (Young, 2000). Elaborating on the former Gutmann and Thompson argue that reciprocity entails mutual respect. Mutual respect is a form of agreeing to disagree.

It consists in an excellence of character that permits a democracy to flourish in the face of fundamental moral disagreement. This is a distinctively deliberative kind

of character. It is the character of individuals who are morally committed, self-reflective about their commitments, discerning of the difference between respectable and merely tolerable differences of opinion, and open to the possibility of changing their minds or modifying their positions at some time in the future if they confront unanswerable objections to their present point of view.

(Gutmann and Thompson, 1996: 79-80)

By engaging in deliberation with those we disagree with we are expressing a willingness to listen to others, to take their concerns seriously and to find some common ground so that a just compromise can be achieved. Gutmann and Thompson consider a number of contentious policy issues, ranging from abortion and trade policy to welfare policy, to illustrate how the deliberative process fosters enlightened understanding and moral accommodation. But mutual respect does not mean that we must always accept the claims of those we disagree with, but it does require that we listen to their concerns and that we justify our decisions by appealing to reasons we genuinely believe all reasonable persons could accept. Gutmann and Thompson provide an example from public education to illustrate this point. In 1983 the board of education in Hawkins County, Tennessee adopted a basic reading series that was to be used in all public schools. The aim of this reading curriculum was to teach both reading skills and the values of democratic citizenship. But a group of fundamentalist Christian parents asked that their children not be required to use the books on the curriculum. The books conflicted with their religious convictions and the parents did not want their children to be exposed to other ways of life that conflict what the Bible says.

Literature review

Service Learning

Institutions of higher education are increasingly called upon to prepare graduates for lifelong civic participation. In response, many campuses have created structured

opportunities for students to become engaged through service-learning, public dialogues,

action research, and community based learning. As contemporary American life becomes

more complex, graduates are also expected to use an internally generated meaning-

making system that guides their thinking and feeling, and their relating to self and others.

The development of this internal belief system, or capacity for self-authorship (Kegan,

1982, 1994), has become a central goal of higher education.

Although educators are not in agreement about how students learn best, considerable

attention in the past decade has focused on student-centered or learner-directed kinds of

learning. Service-learning experiences impacted students' social awareness and civic

engagement as they served the homeless, providing writing students with real situations and real audiences to dialogue with, reflection, and write about what they had read and researched about homelessness. Journal questions were proposed under the constructs of social awareness and civic engagement and for each recursive phase of Delve, Mintz, and Stewart's (1990) student development model that identified the five phases of involvement in servicelearning: exploration, clarification, realization, activation, and internalization.

Findings indicated that as service learners became more socially aware of issues such as poverty, social injustices, and homelessness, they often experienced a transformation of preconceived biases and judgments into a shared community of civically involved participants. Themes that emerged from students' lived experience were as follows: discovering the plight of the homeless, becoming more socially aware of preconceived

biases and judgments, transforming experiences, personally identifying with the problems of the homeless, and growing more civic-minded on behalf of the homeless. Data was interpreted and analyzed using Delve et al.'s model and other authors who have written about the benefits of service-learning. The evidence led to a more holistic understanding of humanity with regard to social awareness and civic engagement.

Universities are increasingly criticized for not taking an active role in contributing to the improvement of the communities surrounding them and for not instilling a sense of civic responsibility in students. The pedagogy of service-learning addresses both of these issues by involving both faculty and students in the local community as students do relevant community service as part of their academic coursework. However, there is not a clear understanding of how to best coordinate service-learning at large public research universities.

Service-learning is valued and that the studied program is the appropriate authority to coordinate this activity within the institutional environment. This study has not confirmed that service-learning programs located in student affairs or jointly located in both academic affairs and student affairs suffer from a lack of organizational legitimacy as measured by program budgets, number of classes taught, percentage of faculty teaching classes, or community organizations offering student service opportunities.

However, the culture of the studied service-learning programs was different in student affairs versus academic affairs administrative locations. Institutional theory predicts that organizational legitimacy would be higher for service-learning programs that report to an upper-level administrator. In this study, this is somewhat supported by the financial data, but not by results on stakeholder participation. The data indicate that for

these institutions organizational history continued to influence organizational structure

and function. Programs that were originally inspired by students continued to have

stronger student leadership and involvement and support from student fee sources.

Programs that had specific funding sources as the catalyst were supported more heavily

by donations and endowment funds.

Service-learning has emerged as a familiar trend at many institutions of higher education,

and has grown significantly in the past decade. Service-learning is a teaching

methodology that ties service to classroom learning so curricular outcomes are met for

the student and reciprocal gains are attained for the service recipient. Further, service-

learning is a vehicle for revealing and highlighting issues of social justice.

Service-learning is defined as a credit-bearing methodology that combines community

service and classroom instruction, which allows the student to take what they have

learned in the classroom to the community, thus fulfilling their civic responsibility

The findings identified three prevailing barriers to integrating service-learning in the

curriculum: (1) lack of institutional support, (2) faculty reluctance to shift in their

teaching orientation from teaching to learning, and (3) the misconception of community

college faculty in regards to the level of scholarship associated with service-learning

pedagogy.

Service-learning has strong ties to the pedagogical roots of Dewey, Freire, Piaget, and

Kolb and provides students with authentic learning experiences. Studying undergraduate

students' perceptions of their learning communities while engaging in their service

learning experiences is important. Understanding the pedagogy of service-learning and the definitions of learning communities has implications for universities and colleges, for undergraduate students, and for communities.

Aside from its connection to an academic course, service-learning is distinguished from volunteerism through reflection on the service performed. A common observation of service learning faculty, however, is that some students exhibit real difficulty in reflecting on the learning they should be experiencing through their service. Solomon (2003) suggests that while service opportunities abound, lessons about why social problems exist may not be accompanying them. Marullo and Edwards (2000) adopt a more critical stance, stating that if service-learning's primary objective is to respond charitably without addressing the root causes of social problems, the problems continue.

Service-learning has been utilized in education for over twenty years with many positive

student benefits cited: self-esteem, personal and social responsibility, diversity

awareness, tolerance, civic awareness, and overall content knowledge. Although service-

learning experiences seem to flourish within the field of education, few studies exist in

the realm of physical education teacher education (PETE).

Service-learning programs are gaining popularity around the nation as providing multiple

benefits to student participants.

Service-learning blends community service and academic learning. In graduate counselor

education programs, the use of service-learning prior to practicum training is rare.

However, given counseling's values, mission, and ethics, service-learning seems

amenable to graduate counselor training.

Service-learning is a rapidly growing teaching innovation.

Service-learning connects theoretical concepts in the classroom to meaningful service

Experiences in the community through the act of reflection. While there has been an

explosion of service learning course offerings nationally in recent years, little research

has been done to explore the impact of service-learning on participants post-graduation.

In recent decades, service-learning has emerged as a powerful teaching tool in academic

settings within colleges and universities. The benefits of service-learning may be

similarly abundant when this pedagogy is implemented as a judicial sanction

Service-learning programs are becoming increasingly integrated into formal education

curricula around the United States. These programs vary in location, age of participants,

length, and type of service; however the principle objective is shared: that students

provide a service that meets a need through an encounter with a reality other than their

own while integrating their service experience into the academic curriculum.

Service-learning is defined as an educational methodology that incorporates student

preparation, service to the community, and reflection, with links to the academic

curriculum (Billig, 2002).

Service-learning is becoming a significant curricular component of American colleges

and universities. It is used as pedagogy across a wide variety of disciplines and institution

types. According to the 2002 National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) report,

80% of the undergraduate students from 366 liberal arts colleges reported having

participated in some type of community service. Community service can range from one-

time community service experiences to more extensive service-learning projects.

While most service-learning involves individual students in a particular course

volunteering time and effort to a non-profit organization

Throughout our nation's history, education has been linked to the promise of democracy.

Yet over the past century this connection has too often been narrowed to the school as its

sole vessel. This is harmful to education—it puts too much pressure on a single

institution. It is also harmful to democracy—it ignores the role of the many institutions that educate, along with the connections between these institutions. This study unearths and examines rich models of learning in which multiple institutions collaboratively play a role in promoting civic education. Using historical and ethnographic case study analysis, this thesis addresses the research question: What is the role of community in civic education?

Service learning borrowed from the field of experimental education and sought to connect contemporary social problems to the curriculum. This encouraged reflection and analysis.

According to Dewey, “experimental learning...transforms the individual, revises and enlarges knowledge, and alters practice ... it affects their perceptions and interpretations of the world (Stanton) ...Through the integration of community projects into the academic curriculum, lessons in the classroom serve as a basis for reflection and examination of the citizen’s role in the community”.

The role of service learning in higher education has become of particular interest as a

means of improving community. Boyer stresses that the university needs to be a collaborative partner.

Barbara Jacoby focuses a lot on trying to tie the theory of service learning to higher Education's tradition of service. "From the beginning, the American college was cloaked with a public purpose, with a responsibility to the past and the present and the future." Jacoby continues to argue that service learning, fits more clearly into higher education's mission than volunteer or community service programs and service learning is the most effective means of achieving higher education's stated mission.

Service learning provides opportunities for students to develop the necessary cognitive skills needed to apply to academic knowledge.

Service learning programs are capable of involving students in the collaborative learning, enhancing student development and contributing to the future of civic involvement. The adoption of service learning programs in universities is a "good choice" (Bringle and Hatcher 2000). It augments not only student achievement but the role of community in civic education.

Just as there are a myriad of social capital definitions, there are a myriad of different Service learning programs...and there is not one normative model.

The argument contends that this is a significant question in the struggle for legitimacy and limited resources. Systematic data are needed to answer this question.

SERVICE LEARNING RESEARCH

Selected Literature in Service Learning

Author	Perspective	Sector	Interest
Campbell, David E (2000)	Local	Political Science	Service Learning & social capital
Cruz and Giles (2000)	Local	Public Administration & Organizational Development	Process and outcome of service learning
Dufour, Claude (2005)	Local	Political Science	Service Learning & Social Capital
Driscoll et. al (1996)	Local	Education, Urban, health	Service Learning Impact Model
Dorado and Giles (2004)	Local	Management and Education	Service learning partnerships
Gelmon, Holland et. al, (1998)	Local	Health	Impact on Community
Eyler, Janet (2000)	Local	Education	Impact on student learning

Kahne, Westheimer Rogers (2000)	Local	Education	Impact on Citizenship
Keith (1998)	Local	Urban Education	Community building
Kendrick, Richard J. Jr.	Local	Sociology-Anthropology	Student Impact
Koliba, Christopher J. (2000)	Local	Behavioral Science	Citizenship
Meyers-Lipton, Scott (1996)	Local	General	Impact on racism
Moley, McFarland, Miron, (2002)	Local	Educations/ Psychology/ Sociology	Impact on attitudes and Mercer, Illustre intentions for Civic Involvement
Osborne, Hammerich & Hensley (1998)	Local	Psychology	Impact on

studnets

Literature Review

Recent research on service learning

There have been many studies on service learning in the recent years²⁹

1.) The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Education

This dissertation examined the possible influence of the M-Fuge workcamp upon a

participant's desire to contribute volunteerism or future career leadership in either

community service or mission service.

The findings can be useful to churches and mission organizations interested in the role a

²⁹ dissertations service learning

http://www.servicelearning.org/library/lib_cat/index.php?library_id=7542

workcamp or similar mission experiences can play in promoting missions education and action. Recommendations have been made concerning how this research can be extended for further study.

2.) Rutgers The State University of New Jersey - New Brunswick Urban Planning and

Policy Development

University-community partnerships afford a unique opportunity to provide resources to Urban communities. Despite the growth and proliferation of such partnerships, most studies focus on project outcomes, and the complex issues surrounding the formation and structure of partnerships have received far less attention. This study adds to the literature through an investigation of the formation of university-community partnerships. It is guided by the following principal research questions: How are university-community partnerships initiated and formed? How are community needs, university resources, and partnership projects identified? And what contextual factors appear to influence these

processes?

The research revealed that potential partners depend on two key factors to guide them through partnership initiation and formation: previous relationships and access to existing data. Previous relationships with community members shape every part of the process, from the decision to enter into a partnership to the choice of a target area, and therefore influence what information is used to determine community needs and partnership activities. In addition, relationships within universities and colleges ultimately dictate the choice, knowledge and availability of university resources, far outweighing the mere presence of those resources themselves. The conclusions of this study underscored the importance of previously existing data on communities.

3.) Cleveland State University

Urban Education

Two Ohio high schools, each of which had been using service-learning for at least 10

years and was recognized for its exemplary service-learning program, participated in a multi-site case study. The purpose was to explore the possibility that successful implementation of a teaching technology such as service-learning had effected a change in the culture of each school and, further, to explain the presence or absence of change in relation to identified elements that characterize an organization's culture (values, beliefs, norms, sense of purpose, processes, behaviors, interactions, rituals, and the meaning of events) and factors that provide support for an organization's culture (administration support, adequate funding, awareness and familiarity, and faculty involvement).

Findings indicated that service-learning could change the culture of a classroom, making a difference in relationships between teachers and their students, students with other students, and students and teachers and their community sponsors and partners. However, it was not demonstrated that service-learning changed the culture of either school. For a

service-learning program to effect a change in a school or district culture, it would need to be integrated across the organization and considered a normal way for a school to perform its function of teaching, to address its mission of education.

4.) Assessing student learning outcomes in health professions service-learning courses

Service-learning is a pedagogical method that is currently on the rise in health professions schools as a method of meeting "Healthy People 2010" objectives

(Narsavage, Lindell, Chen, Savin & Duffy, 2002). The intended result for participating

students is an increased awareness of health care issues, civic responsibility, and course

content in this learning experience. However, there is no clear assessment documentation

that shows health professions students are meeting the intended learning outcomes. Eyler

(2000) indicates that outcomes in service-learning have not been "well studied and

relatively little attention has been given to defining learning outcomes that would be

expected to be enhanced by service participation" (What we know, para. 1). The purpose

of this study was to examine how health professions program faculty assess students in their service-learning courses and if students achieved intended learning outcomes. In this qualitative study, the researcher conducted interviews with health professions faculty and analyzed documents including their course syllabi.

This study revealed that faculty were the main individuals responsible for the assessment of the learning outcomes in service-learning courses, and that the outcomes identified on course syllabi were mainly cognitive.

5.) Developmental outcomes of service-learning pedagogies

This study explored the psychosocial development outcomes of service-learning from

Three distinct models: ongoing continuous service throughout a semester in co-curricular

Service learning; one time, intensive week-long spring break service-learning trips; and

ongoing service through a semester of academically-based service-learning.

The findings indicated that there were significant developmental differences among the three service-learning pedagogies.

6.) Florida International University

Higher Education

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that motivate nursing faculty to use service learning. The use of a community based curriculum also had a positive influence on intention, and faculty with tenure status were more likely to have positive behavior beliefs (attitude) towards service-learning.

7.) Pepperdine University

Institutional Management

The purpose of this study was to assess the service-learning (SL) efforts currently in place at a two-year community college in Los Angeles County, California. The study identified the characteristics of SL and ascertained the extent to which these characteristics aligned with best practices of SL and recommended strategies for

increasing SL at this college. This study concluded that SL is driven by faculty committed to community service, student success, and teaching by putting theory into practice.

8.) Bennett, Jeffrey V.

Community-based learning and social support in the Midwestern District High School

Internship Program: Relative influences on seniors' occupational and citizenship

engagement orientations. Educating youth for socially and economically productive adult

roles is essential to sustaining a strong, democratic society, and central, many argue, to

the role of high school and the mission of public education. This study examined the

efforts of the large, urban Midwestern School District to provide socially productive

community-based learning experiences for all of its high school students through

community service and work-based internships.

Findings from this study suggested that programmatic experiences alone are insufficient

to produce the desired outcomes unless social support for student efforts accompanies

them. The Internship Program of the Midwestern District exemplifies the phenomenon of a well-intended educational reform policy that faltered without the necessary formal structures, planning, and knowledge to adequately accomplish their objectives.

9.) Serving to learn, learning to serve: A phenomenological study of service-learning Urban Studies Program counselors' service-learning experience. In the program's 11 years of existence, there had not been an investigation or interpretation of the Chicago counselors' experiences and the long-term influence on the counselors. The purpose of this study was to understand the lived meaning of the service-learning experience and to discover the extent of the long-term influence of service-learning on the girls' Urban Studies Program participants. This study contributes to the qualitative service-learning literature. This is a phenomenological study conducted to understand the meaning and essence of service-learning from the Urban Studies Program counselor's perspective using the Colaizzi method of analysis. The statement of identification is: Experiencing

the meaning of service-learning, counselors developed leadership skills as they taught and learned from both campers and counselors, which strengthened their insight and appreciation for their own lives and the diversity of other's and gave them a desire to continue serving and making a difference.

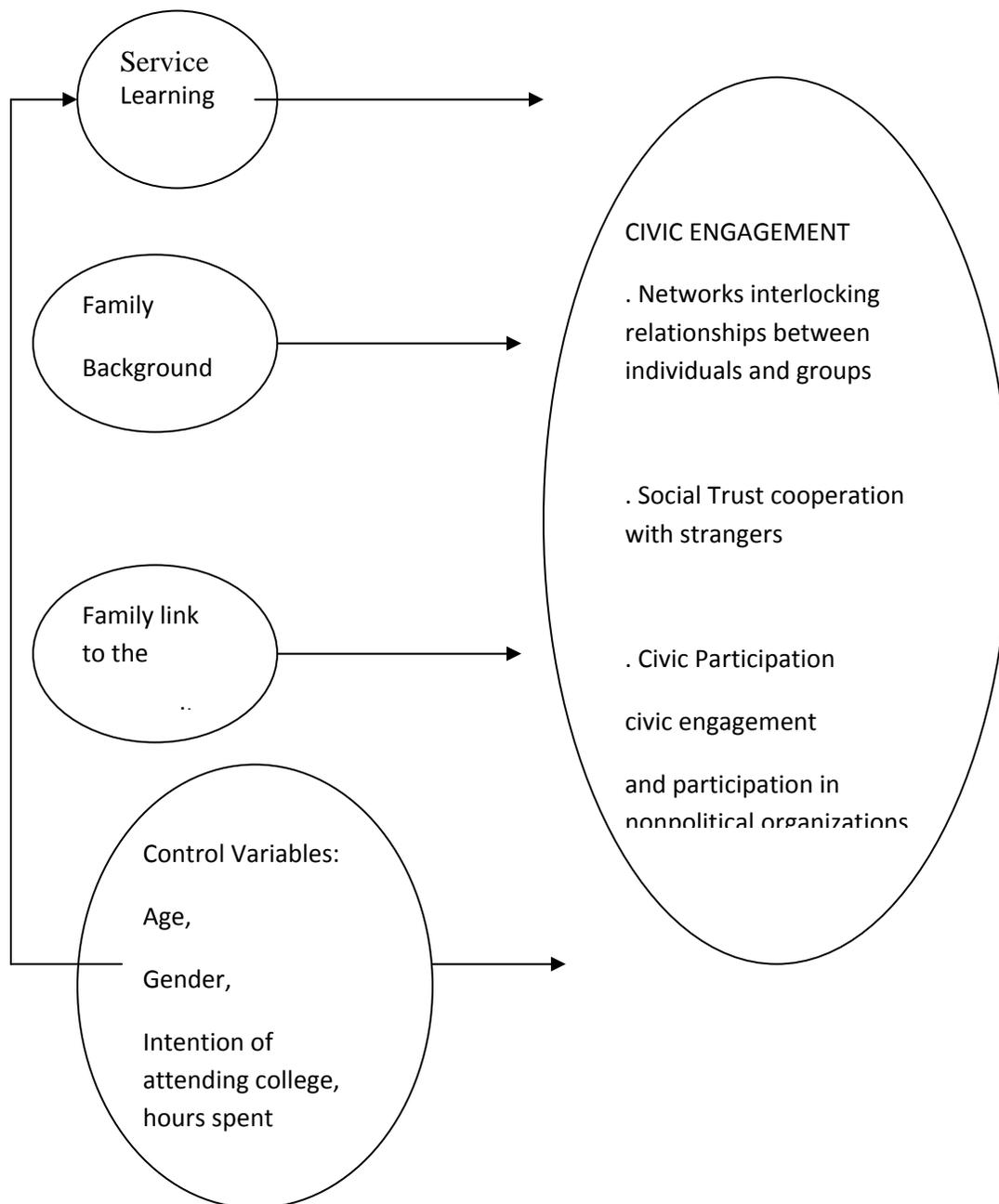
10.) Learning from practice: A constructive-developmental study of undergraduate service-learning pedagogy. Institutions of higher education are increasingly called upon to prepare graduates for lifelong civic participation. In response, many campuses have created structured opportunities for students to become engaged through service-learning, public dialogues, action research, and community based learning. As contemporary American life becomes more complex, graduates are also expected to use an internally generated meaning-making system that guides their thinking and feeling, and their relating to self and others. The development of this internal belief system, or capacity for

self-authorship (Kegan, 1982, 1994), has become a central goal of higher education.

This qualitative study examined the experiences of eight undergraduate students who enrolled in a course on civic engagement and democratic practice. The findings suggested that students with a more self-authored perspective were better equipped to meet the demands of the course. Integrating the findings with two established frameworks for promoting adult and college student development, this study concluded with recommendations for educators who wish to provide experiences that optimize the balance between challenge and support to meet students' varying developmental perspectives. It concluded with examples of how developmentally integrative pedagogy can be structured to support self-authorship.

Study design

INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES



DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Civic engagement is defined as the extent to which service learning program contribute to:

- 1.) Building networks;
- 2.) Civic participation;
- 3.) Political participation.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Networks are defined as more or less interlocking relationships between individuals and groups (Portes 1998; Putnam 1993; Woolcock 1998; Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988). Individuals in isolation engage less in civic activities. The network of relationships is the result of an “endless effort at institution” (Bourdieu 1986). Individual or collective investment strategies (intentional or not) that establish new relationships or associations create a network of relationships (Bourdieu 1986; Fukuyama 1995). The independent variable attempts to capture the building and maintenance of relationships between individuals (Bringle and Hatcher, 2002) and groups.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Service learning is defined as a comprehensive structured learning experience (CASE). CASE extends the principles of active-learning and civic engagement. These principles are incorporated into a course curriculum in diverse disciplines for a 14- week semester (Case Website).

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

- (a) which course (s) that they followed has a CASE component,
- (b) was service-learning mandatory,
- (c) if not why did they choose to participate in the CASE component;
- (d) were there other non-case sections of the course offered at the same time. For example,
 “did you participate in the CASE component of the course?”
- (e) Possible responses, based on a nominal scale are, yes=1 and no=0

This variable will be measured by former service learning participants’ answer to survey questions asking, for example:

- (a) which courses that they followed had a CASE component,
- (b) was service-learning mandatory,
- (c) if not why did they choose to participate in the CASE component;
- (d) were there other non-case sections of the course offered at the same time. For example,
 “did you participate in the CASE component of the course?”
- (e) Possible responses, based on a nominal scale are, yes=1 and no=0.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Family background seeks to account for the civic engagement that exists within the family. In this study, family background, consists of two components: 1.) Financial capital and 2.) Cultural capital (Coleman 1988, Stone 2001, Bourdieu 1985).

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

“Did your parents help you with homework?”

Possible responses, based on a nominal scale are, yes=1 and no=0.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Family link to the Community (civic engagement in locality) is defined by the social relations that exist among parents and with parents' relations with institutions in community (Coleman 1988).

“How often did you change schools as a result of moving as a child?” Ordinal measures will be used to develop a scale of possible responses. These include 1=0 times, 2=1-4 times, 3=5-8 times, 4=9 or more times.

This variable will be measured by respondents' answers to survey questions. The questions relate to: 1.) the mother's involvement in community(i.e. church friends, school, and extended family), 2.) family mobility, that is, the number of times the family has moved, 3.) the neighborhood as a place to grow up, friends' educational expectations and the quality

HYPOTHESIS

Service Learning

Hypothesis 1a: If students complete a service learning course, then there will be a higher level of civic engagement.

Family background

Hypothesis 2a: If service learning students have a high level of family background then there will be a higher level of civic engagement

Hypotheses

Family link to the Community

Hypothesis 3a: If parents have a high link to the community, then there will be a higher level of civic engagement.

Hypothesis 3b: If parents have a high link to the community, then their children will be more likely to participate in a service-learning course.

Hypotheses 3c: If parents have a high link to the community, then there will be a higher degree of civic engagement.

METHODOLOGY

What is the impact of service learning on building civic engagement?

- a.) Survey Research, including open-ended and close ended questions;
- b.) Comparison group;
- c.) Interview or focus groups

SAMPLING, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Population

- a.) Rutgers University CASE students.
- b.) Non – CASE students.

Sampling

- a.) Case students, random probability.
- b.) Non CASE, stratified sampling.

Sample size

- a.) 260-360 completed surveys

Logit Analysis

Methods

What is the impact of service learning on building civic engagement?

- a.) Survey research, including open-ended and close-ended questions;

- b.) Comparison group;

- c.) Interviews or Focus groups.

In an effort to answer this question, survey research will be used. According to Babbie

(1990) there are three general objectives when using survey research: description,

explanation and exploration. Survey research will be used to make descriptive assertions

about whether service learning programs contribute to the building

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