How Young People Develop Long-Lasting Habits of Civic Engagement

A Conversation on Building a Research Agenda

Sponsored by the Spencer Foundation, June 24-26, 2008

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Table of Contents

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Introduction

An Opportune Moment

In 2008, the Spencer Foundation was in the process of defining a new research initiative to learn how young people develop a life long commitment to civic engagement. (The Spencer Foundation is uniquely devoted to funding research about education.) During this same year, from February through June, Elizabeth Hollander was invited to come to the foundation as a residential fellow. Hollander, formerly the ten year Executive Director of Campus Compact, has a deep interest in this subject. She sought to use part of her fellowship to assist the Foundation in gaining knowledge about what the field of youth civic engagement already knows, and needs to learn, about educating students for life long civic engagement.

Because of rapid growth in the field of youth civic engagement over the last 20 years, Hollander felt that this was a very opportune time to reflect on the "state of field", particularly regarding research on outcomes of various educational strategies. Hollander also thought it would be helpful to gather both researchers and sophisticated practitioners, who want to demonstrate outcomes, to gain their perspective on what research is most needed and how the Spencer initiative could help to move the field.

The Spencer Foundation regularly organizes small "thinking" meetings at their offices in Chicago and was generous in supporting the travel and lodging and meeting logistics of two meetings, back to back in June of 2008

This document captures the major themes and issues that surfaced through the conversations at both meetings. However, rather than read this as a recapitulation of conclusions drawn by an august group, we hope that this summary provokes and stimulates more conversations, questions and actions. Our goal is to include you, the reader, as a partner in advancing our collective understanding of how to better use theory, the work of practitioners, and a variety of research methods to advance our knowledge about creating life-long civic engagement.

We start with an overview of the meeting's purpose and structure. This is followed by an examination of the issues that arose in response to the meeting's framing questions. These sections end with implications and challenges for the field. It is through the implications and challenges we hope to offer a starting point for more conversations among researchers, practitioners, foundations, and others who care deeply about this work.

Purpose and Structure

The purpose of the meetings was to create a five to ten year research agenda that would advance our understanding of how "young people" (defined roughly as kindergarten through 21, both in and out of school) develop long-lasting habits of civic engagement. The meeting goals included:

1) developing a sense of how useful current theories are regarding how to develop young people's commitment to the common good, and how widely these theories are realized in practice;
2) identifying what is known and what still needs to be learned about how to educate young people for life-long active citizenship, and to suggest priorities for a research agenda to move the field;
3) suggesting strategies for increasing knowledge sharing between researchers and practitioners.

This was not the usual mix of people that a research-oriented foundation such as Spencer brings together to discuss creating a research agenda. The participants were an intentional mix of researchers, practitioners, and young people representing k-12, higher education, out-of-school programs, and foundation staff. There were two conversations, each lasting approximately a day and a half that focused on K-12 grade and non-school youth, and on higher education and college age young adults.

The conversations were built around five questions, and some participants were asked to write brief "memos to field" in response to these questions. The memos were sent to participants in advance, as a way to both inform and provoke. The questions were:

- What is current theory in the area of "civic engagement" and where are the intersections with theory about youth development, student success, and long-term civic engagement? What major approaches (e.g. civic curriculum, service learning, organizing) are associated with what outcomes?

- To what extent are program practices anchored in/informed by theory? Can we identify programs that demonstrate the link between quality civic engagement and specific outcomes (e.g. positive youth development, increased sense of agency)?

- At the same time, what cutting-edge program practices are informing theory? What current innovations and initiatives are being evaluated with regard to new outcomes (e.g. K-12 student organizing)? Does community service lead to other forms of civic engagement (other than volunteering) over time?

- What else do we need to know? For instance, do we know what developmental pathways contribute to individuals developing the commitments, dispositions, and sense of agency to participate long term (if episodically) in civic ways? What about family, income, class, religion, community, race/ethnicity, immigrant status? What environmental factors (e.g. political climate, school mission, quality and duration of community engagement experiences) contribute to the same characteristics?

- How do we use what we know? How do practitioners, researchers, and funders make research accessible and share promising practices? What approaches to funding will most effectively advance research and practice? Are there ways to leverage existing longitudinal studies?

The conversations started with what we - practitioners, researchers, and intermediaries like foundations - currently know about the theoretical roots of civic engagement, and how that knowledge informs current practices and programs.

Current Status

Theory of Civic Engagement: There is not one theory of civic engagement. And there is still not yet one definition of civic engagement. Rather, theories about learning, development, political engagement, and identity are used to try to explain civic engagement.

What follows is a brief sampling of theory and theorists associated with civic engagement based on the discussion and "Memos to the Field." This is by no means a definitive list, but rather is offered to illustrate the range of theoretical perspectives that have been brought to bear on this work. One group of theories grows out of education and learning. John Dewey's writings on the connection between actions directed toward the welfare of others and academic and social development have been used by many in the formulation of a theory of service-learning. David Kolb built on the work of Dewey, and proposed a model of learning that relies on a cycle of experience, observation and reflection, the formation of abstract concepts and testing in new situations. Thus learning can occur for students in a community based setting that includes the opportunity for action and reflection.

There are also *intersections* between *civic engagement* and *student development* and *learning theories*. The following are drawn from the conversation and memos.

1. In the realm of student development, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) state that "cognitive readiness is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for development" (p. 44); and that cognitive dissonance is critical to development. Astin's "input-environment-output (I-E-O) (1993) model underscores the importance of entering (i.e. college) student characteristics and previous experiences and beliefs (the *inputs*).

2. Peter Levine's recent book offers a more nuanced definition of civic engagement and a helpful discussion of related issues (Levine, 2007). The civic vocation or civic identity framework still requires the development of skills, knowledge, dispositions, and habits, but integrated into "a *holistic practice*" that "becomes a *deliberately chosen and repeatedly enacted aspect of the self.*"

3. Hart, Donnelly, Youniss, & Atkins' (2007) study of service-learning using the National Educational Longitudinal Survey (NELS) also finds a positive relationship between service-learning and both voting and volunteering.   Although there are fewer studies, most of which are qualitative, examinations of youth organizing highlight similar outcomes.

4. The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) data show that participating in a service-learning course had numerous positive effects in both academic and civic arenas. Pre-college beliefs and values, though, were also strong predictors of values; most studies do not account for students' values and pre-college experiences, and thus make some incomplete, if not erroneous, conclusions about the impact of particular program.

5. Positive Youth Development 5C markers of competence, confidence, character, connection and caring and their relationship to a 6th C, contributions to self, family, community and the institution of civil society provides a useful theoretical framework for analyzing youth development.

6. There are sources, not specific to civic engagement that, but that can contribute to our understanding of civic identity. These include: transformative learning (Mezirow and others), experiential education (Kolb and others), moral development (Kohlberg, Gilligan), as well as cognitive development, psychosocial development, identity development, and career development.

7. As part of the AAC&U's five-year initiative, *Greater Expectations: Goals for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*, Caryn McTighe Musil worked with a team that developed the Civic Learning Spiral, a new model of civic learning that is intended to be applied from elementary school through college. Like many of the theories or constructs cited above, the spiral captures the elements of a journey of self-development that moves from a focus on the self to an understanding of the self in relationship to a larger, more complex world, and eventually to an understanding of obligation to make moral choices and act on behalf of the common good. Further, Youniss and Yates state that, "gaining a sense of agency and feeling responsible for addressing society's problems are distinguishing elements that mark mature social identity."

8. The idea of "civic vocation," used to describe a particular calling and commitment, is linked to theories of learning as self-authorship, moral development, practical reason (professional life and learning), development of spiritual identity, identity formation and the practice of activities that lead to and fuel this identity.

The theoretical/research explorations above represent the proverbial tip of the iceberg. It is not that we don't have theories that underlie civic engagement oriented curricula and experiences; it is that they tend to be implicit rather than explicit.   And the preponderance of these theories tends to come from our understanding of both human development and social change. Many of the "theoretical models" associated with civic engagement are really hypotheses or propositions, since as yet they are not linked to our understanding of engagement through empirical testing or research. Perhaps they are best considered theoretical constructs or paradigms, but to call them "theories of civic engagement" at this stage may be premature.

Implications:
   1. At the very least, unarticulated theory can have practical consequences. We may be making assumptions about what theories researchers and practitioners are using in their work. This has implications for the research, practitioners and funders. If, for example, a researcher is using a different theory of change than a youth development organization, the discussion and interpretation of the results may not accurately convey what that organization does for young people, which in turn may be detrimental for that organization's continued

funding and existence.

2. Civic learning is a life long experience and studies of the effect of higher education and student development need to be informed by the civic history of students prior to their college experience.

3. The richness of the current state of our theoretical base leads only to more questions. How can we take what we currently know about socio-cognitive development, moral and ethical development, social change, organizational development, and political change, and use those as the building blocks for theories of civic engagement? Is it best to delineate a theoretical framework for civic engagement that is *distinct from* or that is an *extension of what we know* about how humans learn and societies change?

4. To explore the relationship between student development theory and civic identity requires that we redirect our attention from instrumental outcomes (such as voting) to personal transformation (e.g. sense of efficacy), and that we examine if that personal transformation leads to instrumental outcomes.

Challenges for the field:
1. Have intentional conversations regarding a developmental theory of engagement.
2. Find out what mechanisms exist (or create mechanisms) to make connections across theories, e.g., civic identity as a part of identity development.

What do we need to know?

We need to know more about youth who are not enrolled in college and their civic engagement. We need to understand the impact of context. We need to explore civic engagement as a process.

Understudied Youth

We know that roughly one-third of youth will drop out of high school and only about one-half will attend college in their early adulthood. We also know that these youth are disengaged from politics and civic life, as compared to their college-bound peers. Schools can not have an impact on civic development once teenagers have left them. Thus we badly need research that identifies ways of enhancing the civic agency of young people who are not enrolled in school or college. Relevant alternative institutions include unions, trade schools, community colleges, political parties, workplaces, entertainment media, the military, and prisons and programs that encourage the civic development of youth. These include Presidential campaigns, City Year, Public Allies, Youth Build and other AmeriCorps programs, Generation Engage, working associations, and even the volunteer programs of employers.

In addition to youth who are no longer in a school setting, there are also youth whose civic development is understudied because of their group status. These groups include immigrant youth, children of immigrants, young minority males, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender youth.

We also need to make sure that we are asking the right questions to understand the civic experience of particular groups of youth. A growing body of research suggests that traditional measures of civic knowledge (such as specific knowledge of the

branches of government) may be inappropriate for assessing civic engagement among youth in poor communities. Civic engagement among youth in low-income communities of color can be conceptualized through a broad range of activities that include at least four familiar points of entry: (1) community service (2) volunteering, (3) civic activism, (4) youth organizing. But the politicizing activities themselves may be less familiar to researchers and include things like hip hop events, rap, graffiti and poetry. And rather than focus on society, these youth may be more likely to engage in solving the problems of their own families and neighborhoods.

What does this mean for research? We will know remarkably little about how young people develop long-lasting habits of civic engagement if we assume that school settings are the only vehicle for teaching youth civic skills. We can build on the knowledge we have by drawing on scholarship in a range of academic disciplines and interdisciplinary fields that address such related topics as moral development and social movements, and by focusing on non-school youth and other groups of understudied youth.

Implications:
1. We are not going to develop a full understanding of youth civic engagement if we omit the experiences of youth who are not in school, or who are part of groups involved in self advocacy (e.g., poor urban youth, gay lesbian youth).

Challenges for the field:
1. What methodologies will be required to study these youth? What types of partnerships are needed in order for higher education-based researchers to access non-school youth?
2. How do we identify non-students' pathways to civic engagement?
3. How applicable are our current definitions and indicators of civic engagement to a broad range of youth organizing experiences?

Institutional Context
The issue of institutional context was raised in the higher education discussion. Most institutions of higher education profess to have some sort of civic engagement agenda for their students. We now must ask what are the different models of civic engagement that are actively being promoted by higher education institutions and how can we ascertain the variable impact of these different models? The higher education formula for developing civic commitments by students typically looks something like the following:
College Student + (specific curricular and community experiences) + (campus environment) + (larger life, social and world experiences) = entire college experience and a civically engaged young person.
What we still need to identify are the academic and co-curricular elements that most impact student civic engagement and long term commitment to civic engagement.

Colleges and universities generally strive to equip their students for engagement by using strategies like service-learning to enable them to develop the skills necessary to participate in civic life (e.g. voting). The goal is often participation rather than social change. Yet it is sometimes the inconsistencies between institutional rhetoric and action that have motivated young people to mobilize for change, as evident in recent campaigns against sweatshops and investments in Sudan or on behalf of low paid

campus workers. The interactions between institutional ideas about engagement and individual action seem well worth exploring.

Research on the community impact of civic engagement initiatives in higher education is unfortunately even more limited than research on student impact. What elements most engage the community in desiring to start and continue to work with our students?

All of the research questions raised so far need to be considered with attention to three dimensions: *quantity*, *quality*, and *equality*. Quantity is important because very small scale or rare programs often do not have social impact. Quality is essential because it is possible to offer a well-intentioned course or community-based experience that has no positive effect or that is even counterproductive. And equality is crucial because it is very easy to design policies or programs that actually exacerbate political inequality by enhancing the civic and political skills of students who are already advantaged while ignoring the development of the civic capacity of community partners.

The Process of Civic Engagement
We have tended to study outcomes rather than the process of transformation. We need to redirect our focus from studying instrumental activities like voting to researching individual civic transformation and the development of a sense of civic efficacy.

We also need to better understand the developmental experiences, and the interactions (e.g., teacher and youth, peers, youth and family, youth and organizations) that influence the efficacy of civic teaching-learning experiences. This requires a more holistic look at what experiences in schools, colleges, and students' lives is shaping youth civic engagement. How does youth service tie into their conception of that they want to do? What is the connection between civic experiences and life goals?

Understanding the process of civic engagement includes understanding the effect that poverty, race, and school environments have on civic organizing, and the development of a young person's civic identity. For example, consider the instance of students who are in a "toxic" school, organize *against* the school, and try to change it. How do we examine and document the process that people use to improve the quality of their own lives, and through that process become more engaged? Can we develop research that will enable us to identify what precursors relate to which civic outcomes, and how youth conceptualize their own engagement?

Implications:
1. If we broaden the context of research beyond individual outcomes, to also include community impact, it will necessitate that we articulate the desired social results of civic engagement.
2. If campuses support engagement because they think it is a superior path to academic learning or student retention, then the institutional research priorities won't include students' civic development or community change. Research on outcomes may not be a priority if campuses think it is acceptable to profess a civic mission and focus on inputs, without being accountable for achieving positive outcomes in both students and communities.

Challenges:
1. Studying civically engaged youth (e.g. attitudes, civic skills) is not the sole focus of a broad civic engagement research agenda. How can practitioners and researchers better understand the root causes of youth engagement, community outcomes related to youth engagement and the impact of institutional contexts on youth engagement within youth defined contexts?
2. How do we use research on institutional context, community outcomes, and youth engagement to better understand and articulate *why we* want youth to be engaged?
3. Are schools really the place for civic engagement? As long as civic engagement is not political, can we develop engaged citizens who will organize for change?
4. Should we also focus on issues of equity and justice in addition to of civic education in order to advance democracy?

What are the intersections between theory and practice?

Within the youth development and education fields, there is growing awareness of the importance of research-based programming. The rise of the variety of evidence-based programs in the field supports such a mindset.

Intermediary organizations, such as CIRCLE, make quality youth civic engagement research available to practitioners. Certain sub-fields within the broader field of civic engagement —particularly service-learning — have benefited from an ongoing refinement of theory and assessment of practice. At least in the area of service-learning, the field has begun to develop standards, measures and expectations for what constitutes quality programs.

Some funders and policymakers actively use research and a strategic theory of change to inform and direct their grant-making programs. By incorporating key principles of promising practices into their funding guidelines, and by collaborating with other funders to develop shared sets of evaluation indicators, funders are able to subtly infuse aspects of a research-based theory of change into the programs they support.

However, although quality research is becoming more accessible to practitioners, there is still a gap in practitioners' ability to translate that knowledge into practical tools, activities and program approaches.

Implications:
1. If there are going to be intersections between theory and practice, then more communication must occur between researchers and practitioners.

Challenges to the field:
1. How do we close the gap between theory and practice through research? How does research inform both theory and practice?

2. How do we create ways for practitioners and researchers to interact in more than just superficial ways?

Creating a Research Agenda

A research agenda that will advance our understanding of how young people develop life long habits of civic engagement will itself include more youth voice, action research methodologies, increased attention to how research is used to inform both theory and practice, and how it is used by multiple stakeholders.

Civic engagement research has been restricted by a narrow conceptualization of political and civic life among youth. There are perhaps two categories of innovative program practices that hold the promise for theory development. First is youth organizing, which focuses on changing oppressive community conditions; and second, civic activism, which is a civic strategy that focuses on identity development and political education. These lead to questions that include new questions about the impact of the civic life of youth.

In what ways does civic engagement promote health and well-being? What new forms of social capital are created from youth organizing and civic activism? Emerging research has examined the relationship between community engagement and wellness. These studies are concerned with the ways in which participation in civic affairs facilitates a sense of well-being, hopefulness, optimism and efficacy among young people.

We need to develop research questions that take an asset based approach to looking at questions of youth civic engagement. Rather than ask how we create active and engaged citizens (which assumes a deficit, or lack of caring by youth), we need to ask how to change our institutions so that young people can act on their civic interests and passions.

Global citizenship requires that we expand our research agenda. We want to develop questions about how we frame this work within a global context. We also have problems that are global in scale. What theory of change is employed with students acting on these issues? How does our research incorporate international students?

Approaches to engagement should also include civic vocation, which is different from civic activism, and is a fairly strong tradition at faith-based campuses -- Cabrini College has revised its curriculum to include a required course sequence in the Common Good, the College of St. Catherine has required undergraduates to take classes on The Reflective Woman and The Global Search for Justice and has centers on women and specific public issues. There are multiple legitimate frameworks for engagement, civic agency and civic identity, and a good research agenda will recognize that.

Implications:
1. The cutting edge programs that participants discussed, including youth organizing, positive youth development, and civic activism, were not aligned with traditional civic engagement research. Additionally, action research, a method that has the potential to engage youth in examining and solving community issues as co-collaborators, is not universally seen as valid research.
2. Longitudinal, multi-site research may not be financially feasible without multi-

foundation funding

3. Many of the civic outcomes we are most interested in (e.g., career choices, civic dispositions and habits) require longitudinal approaches.

4. We have to be aware of our language and how it impacts our research. We have an American-centric approach, "the arts of democracy," that we may want to expand.

Challenges for the field:

1. What obligations do researchers of democracy have in aligning their subject (democracy) with their research questions and methods? In order to advance democracy, we must focus on issues of equity and justice instead of civic education broadly, which requires a significant shift in research inquiries and methods. Traditional civic engagement research does not represent low-income minority youth, and rarely from an asset-based perspective. How do we change this?

2. Separate research and program evaluation, but make practitioner and youth participation a valid part of research. Connect research and researchers to organizations that are equipped to translate research into practical tools, activities and program approaches and disseminate it to practitioners.

3. Can we create a research agenda that includes multiple definitions of engagement? What does it mean to have a definition that instills particular values, attitudes, skills and behaviors versus one that aims to draw out people's distinctive civic identities or vocations that emerge from their own passions and backgrounds?

Action Research and Other Methodologies

A variety of research methodologies are required in order to fully answer the questions that were raised in these conversations, including methodologies that are themselves community-engaged or participatory as well as traditionally rigorous. Action research with young people is increasingly used to engage youth in addressing pressing community and school-based problems. Borrowing from Paulo Freire's (1993 citation) concept called praxis, a cycle of reflection and action, participatory research engages youth in critical literacy and social and political analysis through critical scientific inquiry. It results in building both a research and praxis agenda.

Other strategies for a research agenda include:

- Larger, more rigorous research initiatives that include multi-site and longitudinal designs
- More depth in each field
- Examining the impact of core disciplines together with co-curricular experiences
- Using cohort-based research over self-reporting
- Adding new engagement questions to other established, larger assessments
- Support for replicating promising research
- Building in support for measurement development
- Opportunities for researchers to discuss effective research methods and ways they were used (including participatory action research)

- Documentation of the different ways practitioners conceptualize and use this research

Multi-institutional research projects will be important for documenting the effects of multiple types of programs, considering program structures (service-learning in single courses and learning communities, community-based research, community service work-study positions, co-curricular volunteerism and advocacy, service requirements, etc.) and guiding philosophies or conceptual frameworks (social justice, participatory democracy, asset-based community development, public work, cultural preservation, social entrepreneurship, etc.), as well as their community outcomes.

Funding for research has to be de-coupled from program development funds and evaluation efforts. And while funders should expect quality and rigor, they should be open to funding research that can maintain those standards using methodologies that include participatory action research and community based research designs.

Youth Voice
The research agenda, like these conversations, must include youth voice. At the very least it forces us to ask how democratic it is for a researcher to define democratic values? If we know that youth may have a different conception of their own civic agencies, then there must be efforts to understand the values as determined by students.

Young people's sense of meaning is different. When asked to review the wording of survey instruments, youth have responded "We'd never ask questions that way!" Ideas about engagement and the words that are used need to be defined by the people who are being asked. In this case, that requires youth as partners in this research. We also know that who asks the questions matters, again making the case for youth as part of the research process.

What are the ways in which community perspectives can inform research design and be a part of the research agenda? The research agenda will include a range of methods. Youth voice will be included in design and process, and the validity of findings by researchers who merely "parachute" into communities needs to be questioned. Questions will be informed by both theorists and practitioners *before* the instrument is created. This will require widening the research network.

Research out of practitioner context (i.e., lack of community or youth voice, preconceived ideas about outcomes) can have serious consequences and damage effective programs. Foundations and federal agencies are not immune to prevailing political climates and base their program and organizational funding on research results. One way to change our research habits is to require doctoral students (many of whom will become future researchers) to spend a year in an internship in an applied setting.

Implications
1. New ways of structuring funding are needed. Fund research partners in addition to the "researcher."
2. Validity includes evidence of practitioner and community/youth voice in shaping the research questions and methods, and how outcomes will be used and communicated.

3. Support research that puts context at the center. How does context shape, limit, and support?

Challenges for the field
1. In what ways can doctoral programs make the link between theory and practice as it trains researchers?

Practitioner Voice

Practitioners and researchers need support in order to collaborate, and practitioners need support and resources in order to be partners in the research. It is time to broaden our current emphasis on studies that evaluate program impact, and begin to ask about how practitioners implement this work. How do practitioners put the results of research into practice? We simply don't know enough about implementation and scaling up good programs. As one practitioner participant noted, "It's nice to know what 'good' looks like, but we're still slogging though implementation." Practitioners need to know which program activities relate to which civic outcomes.

There are structural barriers between researchers and practitioners. Researchers are not rewarded for responding to practitioners. There is also a distinction between evaluation and research, and practitioners are more often part of the former and not the latter.

This research agenda needs to include the intentional targeted dissemination of findings. The next phase includes discussions like one that asks "given what we know about civic engagement, how do we get the information into new civics textbooks, how do we build this into how we teach teachers and create open classrooms?" There needs to be support for the "translation" of research driven theory into practice, including the development of databases, toolkits, and activities to spread ideas and indicators.

Challenges for the field:
1. How do we teach researchers how to disseminate research?
2. Identify theories practitioners use to inform their work to better research the outcomes of specific interventions. In order to mitigate the damage of research out of practitioner context, practitioner voice must be part of the formulation of research questions and notions of intended outcomes.

Creating Inclusive Communities of Research

This research agenda needs to include intentional mechanisms for the creation of more inclusive communities of research. This conversation at Spencer, with the inclusion of researchers, youth, practitioners, is all too infrequent. Potential mechanisms for creating inclusive communities include: ongoing cross-disciplinary reviews of research, interdisciplinary research agendas that are derived from discussions within disciplines, communities of practice and mentorship for emerging scholars, creating learning groups like this one that have the opportunity over a two to three year time frame to reflect on what we are learning, what would improve practice, and what is still needed.

In creating an inclusive community of research we need to understand that different stakeholders prioritize the answer to "Civic engagement for what?" differently (e.g., end oppression, decrease dropping out, etc.) Research agendas have to be explicit in

their purpose.

Intermediaries, such as Foundations, play a critical role as conveners, disseminators, and supporters of broader research communities. They can create connections between major stakeholders, including researchers, practitioners, and policy makers. Several examples of this exist including the Surdna Foundation that sponsors a collaborative of senior and junior scholars involved in activism, Macarthur networks, and the Ford youth leadership Development Initiative. Foundations have the capacity to use and identify points of leverage, including using seed grants and match requirements to bring more people to the table.

Challenges for the field:
1. How can practitioners and researchers create joint research agendas that are seen as rigorous and valid by peers, policy makers and funders?

Final thoughts

In reviewing this conversation, the authors are struck by the complexities of the research agenda, going forward, including questions of definition, impacts of context, the need to reach non school youth, and the need to include youth and practitioner "voice". We are equally struck that these complex questions are an indication of the maturing of the field of civic engagement over the last twenty years. The field has come very far from simply measuring "service hours" or voting percentages and is increasingly wrestling with how to engage "all" young people, how to conceptualize and define democratic engagement, including organizing, advocacy and political engagement, and how to recognize powerful educational experiences, in and out of the classroom.

The richness of the conversation when diverse perspectives are brought together is also striking. We are grateful to the Spencer Foundation for making this possible and we encourage all who read this report to continue that conversation and seek opportunities to bring researchers, practitioners and young people together.

WHAT DO WE KNOW? ISSUES AROUND THEORY AND APPROACH

What do we know? What is current theory in the area of "civic engagement" and where are the intersections with theory about student development, success and long-term civic engagement? What major approaches (e.g., service-learning, civic leadership, deliberative democracy, public work programs) are associated with what outcomes?

The questions posed for this memo are 'gianormous' as my youngest would say, and more than a bit daunting to address in five pages.

There are theoretical underpinnings and working assumptions as to what civic engagement is and why creating civically engaged citizens is important, though I know of no actual theory of civic engagement. Defining the civically engaged citizen is a matter of some contention –there are definitions which lean toward expressly political engagement and those that equate *civic* more broadly with working toward a public good. In this memo I am referring to the broader notion. Education scholars, in general, have conducted research that likewise tends to focus on *civic* as public, studying various indicators reflecting knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behaviors of individuals working to address various areas of public concern.

Student Development and Success*.* The association between educational attainment and civic engagement is clear and positive: education is associated with higher levels of civic participation. There seems to be general agreement among educators that being engaged civically is a 'good thing' and an important part of our democracy. We assume that schools and higher education have a significant role to play in strengthening civic engagement, and in fact a historical goal of schooling is to educate for participation in the democracy. We agree that an individual's disposition & knowledge can shape actions, but within higher education, theories of student development and learning do not currently play a strong role in shaping learning environments in general, including educating for civic engagement.

Nevertheless, there are multiple intersections between civic engagement and student development and learning theories. I want to address in particular what theories say about the development of more complex systems of reasoning, which are a cornerstone of civic engagement. I will also argue that the particular approach is less relevant than the actual quality of the experience and aligning critical elements of any approach with the intended outcome.

Theories of student development tend to focus on traditional-age (18-24 years old) college students, as does much of the research on college impact. This is an important limitation– research doesn't adequately explore the complexity and diversity of our college student population, and there is scant work on the non college-going population. Although I hope the following overview of theory is helpful as framework to understand some assumptions and possible directions for civic engagement study, I note at the outset that this area is dynamic, and the development theories are constructively challenged against the experiences of previously under-studied populations of students. Still, the theories describe a general process of maturation

from which we can see that certain conditions need to be in place for complex activities such as those fostered by civic engagement to take hold.

Student Development Theories. Traditional student development theories fall into multiple categories (psychosocial, typology, cognitive, etc.). Though there are many distinctive features as theories attempt to explain differing aspects of development, there are similarities that can be described, both in substance (*what* is developed) and in process (*how* development happens). These similarities highlight the places where we see civic engagement intersect with student development theory.

In their extensive review of college impact research, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) provide a succinct summary of connections between developmental theories. They note a general increase in self-understanding during the college years, and that "externally originated controls on behavior slowly give way to internal controls" (p. 42). Importantly for our understanding of civic engagement, a second commonality is "the emergence of an understanding and appreciation of the roles of and obligations to other people in one's life" (p. 43). The highest stages of development are marked by increasing complexity and integration.

Pascarella and Terenzini also summarize common aspects of process across the theories. First, they note that "cognitive readiness is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for development" (p. 44); individuals must also recognize the complexity in their world, and then actual development "originates in a challenge to the current state of development" (p. 45). In other words, a cognitive dissonance is critical to development.

Understanding the impact of college constitutes the other major aspect we need to understand as we discuss civic engagement among young adults. Though some argue that the models don't constitute theory per se, they shed light on the role of environment in shaping change and development. Astin's "input-environment-output (I-E-O) (1993) model underscores the importance of entering student characteristics and previous experiences and beliefs (the *inputs*). The college *environment* – the size, control, and diversity of the institution, as well as the collective beliefs and values of the faculty and students at the institution – mediate the inputs to shape the *output* – the student's values, beliefs and behaviors.   This model underscores the importance of longitudinal studies which take into account the values, attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of students as they enter college in order to fully understand the impact of college experiences.

In addition to pre-disposing characteristics and experiences, student (academic) engagement or involvement has been shown to predict success. In this case, success is defined in terms of persistence and satisfaction, as well as other positive gains during the college years (Astin A. , 1984 (republished 1999)). Involvement refers to academic involvement, but also more broadly to faculty-student interaction, participation in college activities, student government and the like. The conceptual framework of the National Survey of Student Engagement also rests on this notion of engagement, as it seeks to assess good educational practice (Kuh, 2003). Although civic engagement is not the same thing as academic engagement, it is reasonable to conclude that the principle applies: the amount of effort students put into an experience will impact their own personal development and success.

Absent from theoretical writings, but emerging in civic engagement work, is the notion of student voice. The term 'student voice' has been used to capture an important

democratic practice of "deliberative, open dialogue" (Raill & Hollander, 2006). Student voice has also been used to articulate student roles in designing and evaluating service-learning projects among youth (Billig, Root, & Jesse, 2005). Though these are two different conceptualizations, they both speak to a sense of student ownership of a process that is not addressed in traditional theories.

Learning Theories.[1]   A widely known theory of learning that speaks to civic engagement is that of experiential learning. John Dewey long ago theorized the connection between learning and doing, particularly in civic and community-based contexts. Kolb (1984) suggests that we have individual preferences for learning, but we learn best when four things happen in a cyclical way (the cycle can begin at any one of the four areas): Concrete experimentation, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation.   These theories have provided the underpinnings for experiential education generally, as well as service-learning, with its emphasis on course knowledge, community-based experience and reflection.

Advances in neuroscience underscore the important role of experience, but also suggest that moving from novice to expert in a particular area is about learning *meaningful* patterns of information, the organization of that knowledge, and the ability to efficiently transfer relevant knowledge to new problems (Bransford, 2000). Bransford and the National Research Council go further to say that knowledge transfer needs more than 'time on task,' although time is very important; learning "transfer is enhanced by helping students see potential transfer implications of what they are learning" (p. 60). The group cites several studies that connect higher motivation, which "affects the amount of time people are willing to devote to learning" (p. 60) with knowing that one's work will have an impact on the local community (see p. 61).

Student development and learning theories both provide support for the kinds of hand-on, stereotype challenging, critical reflection kinds of activities that have become associated with service-learning, diversity work, and more broadly with civic engagement.   But clearly the engagement needs to be part of a coherent set of learning activities that takes into account the learner's own development. Like other kinds of learning, developing civic engagement 'experts' needs to be an intentional, progressive effort. This is where I think our efforts need the most attention.

Civic engagement is concerned not simply with 'getting involved' in organizations but with the outcome of such engagement: addressing public issues by working collectively towards community goals, being an active leader and participant in one's community, staying informed about issues, voting, etc. These are clearly the kinds of complex skills and problem-solving dispositions that need to be intentionally developed.   The 'good news' is that the kinds of skills and dispositions that are commonly connected with civic engagement are common to liberal education in general.   The 'bad news' is that undergraduate education is not particularly well-organized to meet this challenge.

We know quite a bit about student development, and good practice stemming from theory has been articulated. Drawing on developmental theories and research, Chickering and Gamson (1987) posit that good undergraduate education practice 1) encourages contact between students and faculty, 2) develops reciprocity and cooperation among students, 3) encourages active learning, 4) gives prompt

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[1] Learning theory is not limited to the college-going population, and so it is noteworthy that it tends to reinforce the general patterns noted above.

feedback, 5) emphasizes time on task, 6) communicates high expectations, and 7) respects diverse talents and ways of learning.

These elements of good practice are not well-incorporated in the system of higher education in general, and thus we see calls for re-conceptualizing higher education emerging from groups such as AAC&U and others who argue that current practice is not meeting goals for liberal education within this diverse democracy. Efforts such as those undertaken by the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities and described in the "Returning to Our Roots" reports have been instrumental in helping institutions reconnect with their mission and ideals. Though good practice should prevail, we are agreed there is not a single solution for all institutions. And this brings us to the assessment question: Just what are we working towards, anyway?

Understanding the Impact of College: The Assessment and Accountability Questions. My own research at the UCLA Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) on the long-term effects of college on civic engagement outcomes underscores the importance of students' pre-college values, beliefs and experiences. In 1998, when we first looked at the impact of service-learning on the 1994 entering cohort of college students, we found that participating in a service-learning course had numerous positive effects in both academic and civic arenas. Pre-college beliefs and values, though, were also strong predictors of values (such as helping others, commitment to promoting social & political change, self-efficacy) four years later. When we surveyed the same cohort again in 2004, with an emphasis on post-college civic engagement behaviors, those pre-college values remained strong predictors of post-college values, and it became difficult to discern the impact of any individual college experience. I will say more about what we did find in a moment, but my point here is that most studies do not account for students' values and pre-college experiences, and thus make some incomplete, if not erroneous, conclusions about the impact of particular programs. The fact is that students with pre-existing dispositions toward engagement and social /political change are going to self-select into institutions, academic majors, and college experiences that provide opportunities to intellectually explore and practically engage with these issues.

Second, beyond taking into account pre-disposing characteristics, the HERI study examined the impact of a number of college activities and environment on multiple measure of civic and political engagement. The kinds of activities in college that 'predict' post-college civic engagement are dependent upon the particular outcome measured, but in general the findings support the value of being exposed to different perspectives and ways of thinking. In some ways, to see any impact in the HERI study is powerful, since we had no way of knowing what learning goals professors were teaching toward, or whether students were intentionally exposed to a developmental set of experiences. This is the assessment issue – we need to not only define but collectively agree upon just what students are supposed to be learning, and then commit resources to get it done in an intentional way.

There are examples of programs, departments, and institutions engaging in the hard work of aligning resources and activities with civic engagement learning goals. In both Educating Citizens (2003) and Educating for Democracy (2007) , the researchers explore the nature of the specific outcomes, as well as ways to accomplish them. AAC&U has coordinated many gatherings and provided substantial leadership in the area of civic engagement and more broadly the improvement of undergraduate liberal education. But for most higher education institutions, change is measured in terms of

inputs – new offices, new initiatives, new courses and academic majors – or in terms of how many students graduate in four or six years, or maybe even where graduates work, rather than in terms of what graduates know and can do. New offices and programs are important as they speak to institutional values and culture, but they don't automatically translate to learning and development for students.

The increased pressures for accountability in terms of undergraduate student learning will continue to be both an opportunity for higher education and a challenge. As institutions take on the task of defining what their graduates should know (often in the context of accreditation self-studies), there is tremendous opportunity to connect student development and learning with curricular learning and the entire college experience. We know that learning happens outside the classroom, yet in general there continues to be an almost bizarre disconnect between classroom learning and 'co-curricular' learning – the latter being relegated to Student Affairs and seen as separate and less important. But the dispositions and efficacy called for in educating students for civic engagement suggests we need to understand and value both the co-curricular learning that happens among peer groups, in activities on and off-campus, and curricular learning as part of the our students' development and learning. If higher education is to develop engaged citizens, we need to pay attention to all elements: values, knowledge, skills, efficacy and commitment to civic engagement (Eyler & Giles, 1999). We also need to think much more holistically about what it means to be educated. There is a tremendous opportunity to teach students what we want them to learn, but understanding the educational experience from a developmental perspective suggests a culture shift in higher education to a much more connected, intentional, holistic experience.

What approaches are associated with what outcomes? This question can be answered in part by the previous discussion on teaching to the (intended) outcome, and by aligning pedagogy and assessment appropriately with the learner and intended outcome. I have focused mostly on student-level outcomes, and will continue to do so, with the acknowledgement that choosing the faculty, the community, or the institution as the unit of measurement can also shape the choice of approach. The student learning that is desired by most advocates of civic engagement is developmentally higher-level complex thinking, along with motivation, and a set of dispositions (for example the belief that one can make a difference, a commitment to the importance of considering multiple perspectives, to name but two). If one considers the approaches (service-learning, public work, etc.) as a means-to-an-end, then it matters what the intended outcome is, and the intended outcome in turn should drive elements of the approach.

Thus, service-learning, public work, and deliberative democracy work *can* strengthen self-efficacy among students, and this kind of development can happen whenever the student is (developmentally) 'ready.' Such learning happens to most of us throughout life, and it is why some are skeptical of the impact of a particular program or course or institution. We wonder 'would students have learned that even if there were no program?' or 'I learned that from a life-situation not at all related to college.' And there is a risk that we equate *experience* with *development*, without considering the underlying elements such as our own 'readiness' for such a change.

If we want students to develop these higher-order skills, then we must help them make sense of the cognitive dissonance occurring in their lives already, and/or create some dissonance, along with a reflective, supportive environment that can help them learn from the experiences. In our HERI study we found that college experiences such

as 'enrolling in an ethnic studies course' have a positive effect on civic outcomes, most likely because such courses provide new perspectives on the world for students – some cognitive dissonance, if you will.

Similarly, if we want students to learn civic knowledge, then any approach can strengthen such knowledge, but if a course or experience is not designed and assessed with that outcome in mind, then we might not see civic knowledge strengthened. My own experience has been that courses and programs are designed with the best of intentions, but there is an assumption that service-learning, for instance, *will* strengthen civic knowledge, simply because students do a community-based project. This alignment of outcomes, process and assessment is critical.

Thus we come back to the proposition of not only agreeing upon what college graduates should know and be able to do, but identifying just how and where students are to develop the skills, knowledge and dispositions in the course of their education. Developmental and learning theories, and principles of good practice suggest elements that need to be incorporated across approaches if we are to support civic engagement outcomes.   In this way there is room for multiple approaches and multiple civic engagement outcomes.

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Memo to the Field: *What do we know?*
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What is current theory in the area of "civic engagement" and where are the intersections with theory about youth development, student success, and long-term civic engagement? What major approaches (eg curriculum, service learning, organizing) are associated with what outcomes?

I have begun almost every one of my papers during the past few years with a plea for the critical importance of the development of civic engagement. Functioning as a citizen in adult life is as important as performing a job or raising a family. Whereas we have an enormous amount of research on cognitive development and schooling as preparation for work and on social development as a precursor to family formation, we have, an increasing amount, but still far less research on the development of civic engagement. One might even consider doing a job well or being a good parent as aspects of civic engagement so that it should be the overarching or more important topic. Civic engagement is almost never covered in child development textbooks, and the sessions at professional association meetings such as SRCD are in the single digits. Furthermore, civics education should be of the same national priority as math and science education, since citizenship contributes as much to our national status and economic productivity as the endeavors that relate to math and science. Not only is civic education not of the same priority, but NCLB has actually undermined social studies (including civics) because it is not tested. There is a small piece of this legislation that relates to character and civics, and as a result the DOE has funded numerous school-based character education programs, but the foci of these programs is more often values and hence related to religiosity rather than to citizenship.

Having stressed the importance of civic engagement (which is probably unnecessary in this audience), I must add that research falls short in regard to each of the questions presented here. First, there has been relatively little theory generation around the development of civic engagement. Much research is descriptive or in more limited cases explanatory, which is usually correlational. I have however always viewed civic engagement to be a form of social cognition, around which there is considerable theory and developmental research. There are several other theoretical frameworks, which I will describe, that are relevant to the development of civic engagement. I think that we need to relate research on civic engagement to these theories and develop theory around its development. In this way we might use research on civic engagement to contribute to the refinement or even generation of more general developmental theory. Its importance would be greatly enhanced if research on civic engagement could offer broader contributions to developmental research in addition to providing an understanding of civic engagement.

Social cognitive developmental research borrows from the general cognitive developmental theory first proposed by Piaget. Specific empirical research on moral reasoning by Kohlberg, on empathy and perspective taking by Higgins D'Alessandro and colleagues, and on understanding of psychological causality by Selman and others, is relevant to the development of civic engagement and this relevance needs to be further explored. However these areas might also benefit from research on civic engagement as yet another example of social cognition like moral reasoning. One of my students, Jim Lauckhardt, is working on a Kohlbergian type measure of civic engagement, and we are considering doing a chapter for the Handbook I am co-

editing with Judith Torney-Purta and Connie Flanagan. This is an example of one approach to research on civic engagement that is needed in order to connect it to developmental theory and to generate new theory.

There are two theoretical approaches (rather than outright theories) that have been important in my thinking across the years; they are a life span or life course approach and a biosocial science approach. A life span approach first and foremost advocates that the potential for growth and change continues throughout the full life span, unlike the grand theories of development as offered by Piaget or Freud who present development as ending in early adolescence.   Second, a life span approach allows for both multiple paths and multiple endpoints in development, again in contrast to the grand theories that articulate a single path to a single endpoint.   Third, a life span approach argues for multiple influences on development: age-graded ones, that are typically studied by developmentalists; history-graded ones, which reflect the impact of living in a particular place and time; and non-normative events, or the chance occurrences that happen throughout life.   Each of these components of a life span view are relevant to the development of civic engagement so that a life span approach might guide research, but research on civic engagement might in turn contribute to the further development of this approach.   Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory incorporates several aspects of a life span approach.   From this theoretical viewpoint, research on civic engagement is an important contributor because it forces attention to the outer circles and to the need to examine interactions across the four systems. Both imply that the field must be multidisciplinary, an essential feature of research on civic engagement.

A biosocial approach builds on evolutionary science. Recognizing that biology changes more slowly than the environment, it emphasizes that we carry a genetic heritage selected for earlier and much different environments. As a result, it is imperative that we consider the organism's range of reaction to its current environments. One of the best examples of this is the historical development of the female reproductive lifeline. The reproductive lifeline of !Kung females, presumably similar to our ancestors, is very different than that of the modern woman. Modern women, for example, experience ten times more menstrual periods. The biosocial approach asks what is the range of reaction of the human female to this dramatic change in reproductive lifeline—in regard to, for example, health issues such as cervical or breast cancer, displeasure from menstrual periods, and so forth. It is relevant to civic engagement in that civic loyalty represents a form of group affiliation which has an evolutionary past and biological base. One may ask, for example, is nation too large a group to elicit this type of group affiliation, or what are the factors that promote a loyalty to the larger polity.   September 11 demonstrated that an attack does it, again pointing to a possible biological base.

Finally the most relevant theoretical approach is also the most recent: Positive Youth Development (PYD). The PYD approach has two central ideas: (1) development is promoted by developmental assets, both internal and external, and (2) individuals, communities, and societies vary in the qualities that promote the development of these assets. PYD focuses on positive development instead of risks or deficiencies. It also conceives of the individual as a dynamic organism that acts and is influenced by those actions, thereby emphasizing the bidirectional interaction between organism and environments.   In this way, the individual becomes a producer of their own development. The PYD approach also emphasizes the importance of cultural and transnational comparisons. Globalization and media access open up new worlds to youth all over the world.   Finally, it focuses on the whole individual, viewing socioemotional development as equal in importance to cognitive development. This

holistic view is best reflected in the five C's: competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring; a sixth C, contribution, has also been identified as resulting from the first five. These represent its direct relevance to civic engagement which is of course contribution. However the other C's are equally important. We have proposed the diagram in Figure 1 as an illustration of the different forms of civic engagement and their relationship to each other.

I have little space left to address the second question. I will say that we need much more research on this question. We have much good research that identifies childhood and youth precursors of adult civic engagement. Examples of earlier precursors are civics education, community service, school extracurricular activities, having active parents. However the only specifically defined link we have is that knowledge relates to voting, and even here we do not understand the mechanisms that underlie this relationship. We need research that demonstrates specific relationships between individual precursors and specific examples of later civic engagement. And we need to understand how they relate and why. For example, one might think that doing school government would relate more directly to later civic engagement than working for the yearbook, but we have very little research that addresses such questions. In order to design effective educational curricula in civics as well as programs and policies that have an impact, it is essential that we understand the mechanisms that link earlier precursors to later outcomes.

Figure 1: Components of Civic Engagement
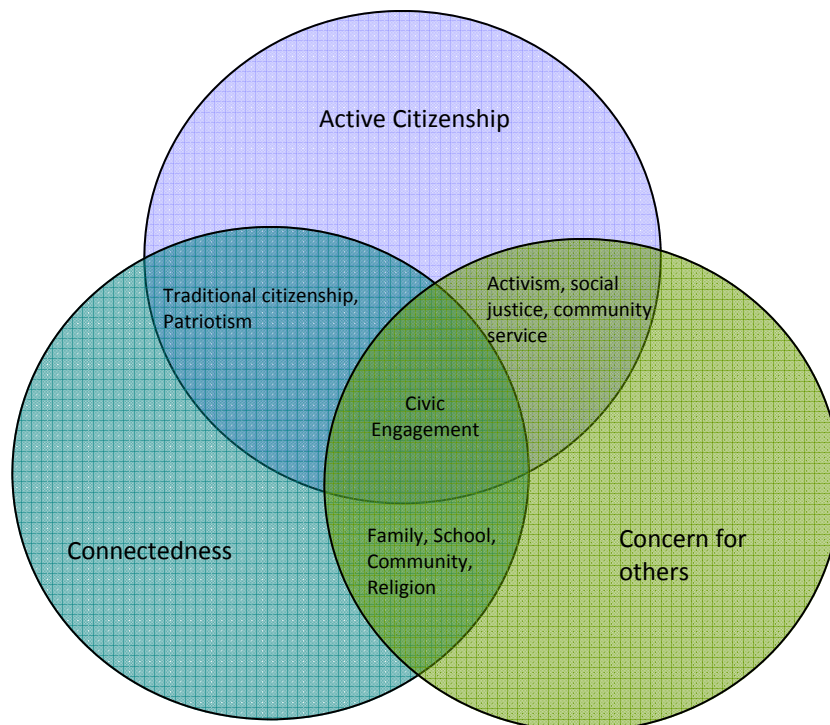
THOUGHTS ABOUT THEORIES AND OUTCOMES FOR EDUCATING STUDENTS FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

I found it somewhat daunting to draft these thoughts to start our conversation related to the two questions I was asked to address:

1. To what extent are program practices anchored in/informed by theory?

2. Can we identify programs that demonstrate the link between quality civic engagement and specific outcomes (e.g., student retention, career choice, post-college civic behaviors)?

There is no doubt that these questions are important ones for our discussion and for the field. However, I wonder if there aren't critical questions that need to be addressed first, such as: Are there theories that undergird our practice of educating college students for civic engagement? What do we know about learning outcomes both generally and specifically related to civic engagement that could inform our discussion?

Let me first briefly review how I collected the information included in this paper. First, I searched for theories and outcomes frameworks that might be relevant to educating students for civic engagement. I then reviewed the most prominent practice-based literature in the field for examples of good practice grounded in theories and outcomes. I sought input from colleagues, including those at Campus Compact, CIRCLE, AAC&U, and TRUCEN (The Research Universities Civic Engagement Network). I also queried chapter authors for *Civic Engagement in Higher Education* (B. Jacoby and Associates, Jossey-Bass, in press) and others who are knowledgeable about these issues.

Here are a couple of typical responses to the first question: "I don't believe we have theoretical models, although we have lots of programmatic frameworks." "It's my impression that many, if not most, experiences… are not anchored in or informed by theory." I received more positive responses to the second question about learning outcomes for civic engagement, although little regarding the intentional development of specific outcomes for specific programs, direct assessment of the degree to which students achieve the outcomes in both the long and short term, and well-planned use of the assessment results in programmatic improvement.

Theories that Undergird Our Practice of Educating College Students for Civic Engagement

There are several theories that can be used to inform the practice of educating college students for civic engagement. However, it should be noted that none is based on empirical research. They include:

- **The Service Learning Model (**Delve, Mintz, and Stewart, 1990). This model has been used in the design of many cocurricular service-learning experiences for nearly 20 years. It describes five phases of students' development that

result from engaging in various forms of community service and service-learning experiences. The model is based on four key variables: intervention, commitment, behavior and balance. Its five phases are: exploration, clarification, realization, activation, and internalization.

- **Faces/Phases of Citizenship** (Musil, 2003). Caryn McTighe Musil's six faces/phases of citizenship are, like the phases of the Service Learning Model, developmental "levels." The faces/phases are: exclusionary, oblivious, naïve, charitable, reciprocal, and generative. The latter two phases require civic end societal knowledge, analytical perspectives, understanding of diversity and inequality, democratic arts, ethical reflection, and the ability to apply knowledge to solve complex social problems.

- **Charity, Project, and Social Change** (Morton, 1995). Morton challenges the use of the *continuum* of service from charity to project-based work to social change as a sequential and hierarchical developmental model. He suggests that perhaps a more appropriate use of the three elements of the continuum in educating students for civic engagement (my words, not his) is to consider them as *paradigms*, each of which can potentially be executed with integrity and depth.

- **Conceptual Framework for Civic Education** (Battistoni, 2002). Rick Battistoni provides resources for faculty across disciplines who seek to use service-learning as a pedagogy for civic engagement. He proposes a typology of conceptual frameworks for civic education, together with their orientations to civic engagement, associated civic skills, and disciplinary affinities. The five frameworks are: constitutional citizenship, communitarianism, participatory democracy, public work, and social capital.

- **Social Change Model of Leadership Development** (Higher Education Research Institute, 1996). The Social Change Model encompasses seven outcomes, or values, that are organized within the three components of the model: individual values (consciousness of self, congruence, commitment), group values (collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility), and societal/community values (citizenship). This model is used as the basis of numerous leadership development programs that are based on preparing students for social change.

- **Positive Youth Development** (National Academy of Sciences, 2002). Although this approach is more geared towards pre-college adolescents, Peter Levine of CIRCLE suggested Positive Youth Development as a broad, holistic view of helping youth realize their full potential. It replaces the focus on preventing problems with the creation of a larger framework that promotes positive outcomes for young people. PYD includes engaging with caring adults; community service programs; developing a sense of security and personal identity; and learning the rules of behavior, expectations, values, morals, and skills needed to move into healthy and productive adulthood.

- **Learning Theories Not Specific to Civic Engagement.** Several colleagues I contacted suggested that learning theories not specific to civic engagement are indeed applicable to it. These include transformative learning (Mezirow and others), experiential education (Kolb and others), moral development (Kohlberg, Gilligan), as well as cognitive development, psychosocial

development, identity development, and career development. For more on how such theories relate to civic engagement, see Marylu McEwen's chapter in *Service-Learning in Higher Education* (B. Jacoby and Associates, 1996). In the Spring 2008 issue of *Diversity & Democracy*, Lee Knefelkamp incorporates these theories into the concept of civic identity. According to Knefelkamp, the essential characteristics of civic identity are: (1) it develops over time through engagement with others; (2) it is not the same as, but is deeply connected to, intellectual and ethical development; (3) it requires the integration of critical thinking with the capacity for empathy; and (4) it becomes a deliberately chosen and repeatedly enacted aspect of the self.

In summary, my admittedly very limited attempt to learn from the literature and directly from colleagues about the extent to which civic engagement programs and practices are anchored in or informed by theory resulted in very little concrete information. I look forward to an engaging discussion of this topic at the upcoming meeting in Chicago.

Civic Engagement Learning Outcomes

My years of perusing the literature and attending conferences on civic engagement lead me to believe that many programs are geared towards certain "outcomes" for students.   However, few clearly articulate these outcomes, intentionally organize learning around them, assess the extent to which the outcomes are achieved, and use the assessment results to improve programs.

Generally speaking, learning outcomes are statements that specify what a learner will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity. They are often expressed as knowledge, skills, or attitudes. Good learning outcomes are stated using action verbs. They are observable and measurable. Ideally, learning outcomes are measured using direct assessment methods (e.g., tests, instruments, portfolios, capstone projects, performances/creations, visual representations, case studies).   They can also be assessed indirectly through self-report data from surveys, focus groups, and interviews, although these methods are not viewed by experts to be as definitive. Once the assessment results are compiled, they should be entered into a "continuous feedback loop" that uses the results to improve the programs so that more students will achieve the outcomes to a greater degree.

What do we know about student learning outcomes related to civic engagement? For starters, there are many studies on service-learning that indicate that student participants in service-learning experiences report that they have achieved various outcomes, including: greater understanding of social issues; strengthened sense of social responsibility; increased appreciation of diversity; enhanced cognitive, personal, and spiritual development; and sharpened abilities to solve problems creatively and to work collaboratively.   However, in a broad and thorough literature review, Seanna Kerrigan (2005) observes that nearly all these studies rely on self-reported data and assessed short-term outcomes (i.e., outcomes measured while the students were still in college).

In *Educating Citizens* (2003), Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, and Stephens note that outcomes-based curricula require students to master learning outcomes including analytical and critical thinking; moral and civic skills and capacities; social, civic, and global knowledge; self-knowledge, reflective judgment; and ethical reasoning.   In

Educating for Democracy (2007), Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, and Corngold conducted pre- and post surveys of the student participants in the outstanding political engagement programs they profile. The survey scales include political knowledge and understanding, political interest and media attention, civic and political skills, political identity and values, political efficacy, and civic and political involvement. There are also numerous "lists" of civic behaviors or habits. CIRCLE advances 19 measures of civic engagement as part of their 2006 National Civic and Political Health Survey, including voting, volunteering, protesting, addressing community problems, boycotting, fundraising, and persuading others to vote.

It is exciting that AAC&U has been very active in advancing more intentional, developmental, and integrated student learning outcomes for liberal education and, more recently, specifically for civic engagement (*College Learning for the New Global Century*, 2007). As part of AAC&U's five-year initiative, *Greater Expectations: Goals for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*, Caryn Musil worked with team that developed the Civic Learning Spiral, a new model of civic learning that is intended to be applied from elementary school through college. The spiral, whose origins are in the learner, has six elements, or braids, within each full turn: self, communities and cultures, knowledge, values, skills, and public action. The civic learning outcomes for the six braids of the spiral for the purposes of integration into a wide range of courses and co-curricular experiences are:

Outcomes for civic learning about the self:
- Understanding that the self is always embedded in relationships, a social location, and a specific historic moment.
- Awareness of ways one's identity is connected to inherited and self-chosen communities.
- Ability to express one's voice to affect change.
- Disposition to become active in what a person cares about.
- Capacity to stand up for oneself and one's passionate commitments

Outcomes for civic learning about communities and cultures:
- Appreciation of the rich resources and accumulated wisdom of diverse communities and cultures
- Understanding how communities can also exclude, judge, and restrict
- Curiosity to learn about the diversity of groups locally and globally
- Willingness to move from the comfort zone to the contact zone by transgressing boundaries that divide
- Capacity to describe comparative civic traditions expressed within and by different cultural groups

Outcomes for civic learning about knowledge:
- Recognition that knowledge is dynamic, changing, and consistently re-evaluated
- Understanding that knowledge is socially constructed and implicated with power
- Familiarity with key historical struggles, campaigns, and social movements to achieve the full promise of democracy
- Deep knowledge about the fundamental principles of and central arguments about democracy over time as expressed in the United States and in other countries
- Ability to describe the main civic intellectual debates within one's major

Outcomes for civic learning about skills:
- Adeptness at critical thinking, conflict resolution, and cooperative methods
- Ability to listen eloquently and speak confidently
- Skills in deliberation, dialogue, and community building
- Development of a civic imagination
- Capacity to work well across multiple differences

Outcomes for civic learning about values:
- Serious exploration of and reflection about core animating personal values
- Examination of personal values in the context of promoting the public good
- Espousal of democratic aspirations of equality, opportunity, liberty, and justice for all
- Development of affective qualities of character, integrity, empathy, and hope
- Ability to negotiate traffic at the intersection where worlds collide

Outcomes for civic learning about public action:
- Understanding of, commitment to, and ability to live in communal contexts
- Disposition to create and participate in democratic governance structures of school, college, and the community
- Disciplined civic practices that lead to constructive participation in the communities in which one lives and works
- Formulation of multiple strategies for action (service, advocacy, policy-change) to accomplish public ends/purposes
- Planning, carrying out, and reflecting upon public action
- Development of the moral and political courage to take risks to achieve the public good
- Determination to raise ethical issues and questions in and about public life. [Musil et al., in press]

I decided not to include particular programs that are based on learning outcomes in this paper, with the one exception of the following example. Many such programs are described in *Educating Citizens* and *Educating for Democracy*, as well as in the forthcoming *Civic Engagement in Higher Education*. That said, I wonder how many of these excellent programs formally state their outcomes in "learning outcomes language," include assessment efforts that directly and thoroughly evaluate the degree to which the outcomes are achieved, and implement the "feedback loop" that applies the assessment results to improvement of the programs.

At the risk of falling back on "show and tell" from my campus, I offer this example of integrating civic engagement outcomes in the English 101 curriculum at the University of Maryland. Maryland's Coalition for Civic Engagement and Leadership, which reports jointly to the Provost and the Vice President for Student Affairs, developed a set of student learning outcomes for civic engagement intended for use by faculty and staff in designing curricular and co-curricular learning experiences. The outcomes can be found at: http://www.terpimpact.umd.edu/content2.asp?cid=7&sid=42. Two years ago, members of the Coalition worked with the director of freshman writing to reframe the English 101 curriculum, a rhetoric-based course, around civic engagement. Working together, we determined which civic engagement learning outcomes related best to the course, developed a proprietary textbook of readings and writing assignments related to civic engagement, and designed and implemented instructor training and development. The general learning goal for civic engagement selected for English 101 is: "to enhance understanding of civic engagement, why it is an integral

aspect of a college education, and opportunities for students to learn about and practice civic engagement."

The extent to which students achieve this outcome is assessed by administering a short writing assignment at both the beginning and the end of the semester. A random sample of the papers is analyzed by skilled raters using a rubric that identifies three specific outcomes and three levels of achievement for each. The outcomes are: (1) demonstrates a nuanced understanding of civic engagement, (2) identifies specific opportunities for civic engagement, and (3) articulates a clear and persuasive argument for civic engagement as an critical aspect of a college education by integrating or connecting evidence. In the assessment of the student responses for the fall, 2007 semester, students demonstrated highly significant growth in all three areas. In addition to this direct assessment, two focus groups were conducted with English 101 students and two with instructors to gather additional data to be used to improve both the curriculum and instructor training.
 I hope that this paper will serve to stimulate thought and discussion on how theory and learning outcomes can enhance education for civic engagement. I look forward to learning from the experiences of my fellow participants in the upcoming meeting at Spencer and to a lively discussion of these important topics.

Memo to the Field: *Practice and Theory*
Wendy Wheeler
Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development

The Spencer Foundation commissioned this memo to address two questions:

1. To what extent are program practices informed by and anchored in theory, and

2. Can we identify programs that demonstrate the link between quality civic engagement and specific outcomes (e.g., positive youth development, increased sense of agency, etc.)?

The simple answers to these questions are, somewhat and yes, respectively. There is a nascent body of research and program evaluations that could be identified and reviewed for submission to existing evidence-based databases. The same research could also be synthesized into practical knowledge, tools and other applications that could be adapted into program contexts by practitioners.

Yet, while this identification and synthesis of knowledge is possible and would be useful, there are cautions and constraints to address. Synthesizing existing knowledge into practical tools and best practice would identify what is known from the work of those programs that have had the privilege of resources to conduct quality program evaluation. It may miss, however, the rich lessons and experience to be gleaned from the many good programs that do not have access to resources needed to conduct quality program evaluation. Further, as this brief paper will discuss, many youth civic engagement programs and practices are playing out in contexts and under conditions that challenge the limits of "tried and true" approaches to evaluation and developing best practice. Keeping up with the dynamic nature of the field and its incredible breadth will challenge the limits of our assumptions and practice. It is an exciting challenge and an opportunity that this paper will explore in the following pages.

Envisioning the Possible

Imagine if all of America's youth engaged in developmental opportunities that resulted in their acquisition of long lasting habits of civic engagement. Imagine a time when all youth civic engagement programs would be informed by theory and principles of practice that lead to quality outcomes. Envision a field that can both recognize and capture the dynamic, diverse and evolving nature of youth civic engagement—when promising practices from diverse youth civic engagement programs would be rapidly informing research and, in turn, producing research accessible to a broad range of programs and practitioners.

If this vision is worth pursuing, what is the current reality *vis a vis* this future? How can we bring this vision closer to our current reality?

The "Bright Spots"

The good news is that there is increasing awareness in the field of youth civic engagement of the importance of strengthening the practice-research interface.

- Well-resourced national organizations are investing in their capacity to develop, implement and evaluate evidence-based programs. Organizations such as City Year and Girl Scouts of the USA have embedded research and evaluation

functions into their national operations. These organizations increasingly have the capacity to assess program quality, outcomes and the integration of theory into program development.

- Within the youth development and education fields, there is growing awareness of the importance of research-based programming. The rise of the variety of evidence-based programs in the field supports such a mindset.
- Intermediary organizations, such as CIRCLE, make quality youth civic engagement research available to practitioners.
- Certain sub-fields within the broader field of civic engagement—particularly service learning—have benefited from an ongoing refinement of theory and assessment of practice. At least in the area of service learning, the field has begun to develop standards, measures and an expectation for what are quality programs.
- Some funders and policymakers actively use research and a strategic theory of change to inform and direct their grant-making programs. By incorporating key principles of promising practice within their strategic guidelines and by collaborating with other funders to develop shared sets of evaluation indicators, funders are able to subtly infuse aspects of a research-based theory of change into the programs they support.

The Not-So-Bright Spots

Despite these promising developments, there are barriers.

- Most youth civic engagement programs do not have the luxury of devoting resources to research and evaluation.
- Although quality research is becoming more accessible to practitioners, there is still a gap in the practitioners' ability to translate that knowledge into practical tools, activities and program approaches.
- The youth and adult staff of youth civic engagement programs (teachers, youth workers, community organizers, volunteers, etc.) are stretched incredibly thin, faced with competing and multiple program and/or organizational priorities. For the most part, few have the time, inclination or resources to identify and incorporate new research-based practice into their work.
- Few if any mechanisms exist for practitioners to easily inform research agendas or to connect with emerging scholars who could perform low-cost research and evaluation to inform program practice.
- Implementation of quality, evidence-based programming requires not only quality program materials, but trained staff to deliver the program as intended. Staff training opportunities, especially among the unaffiliated youth and community organizations, are scarce.

The Missing Pieces

On the surface, youth civic engagement can be a deceptively simple and compelling idea -get more young people involved in civic life. In practice, youth civic engagement is a complex and often labor- and resource-intensive effort, a change strategy used to achieve different types and levels of outcomes. Bring together a diverse cross-section of practitioners to discuss the purpose and outcomes of youth civic engagement, and an amazing number of divergent views, interchangeable language and meanings, and assumptions will emerge. Youth civic engagement can be used to strengthen youth in their development, to strengthen adults, to build organizations and communities, to enrich the field of practice, to build a new generation of youth activists (in any number

of issue areas) and to strengthen democracy. As an example, the field of informal science education embraces youth civic engagement as a strategy to promote math and science achievement; others have done so to promote positive youth development. Latina organizations look to youth civic engagement to improve health outcomes and inform policy. This richness and complexity represents a challenge and an opportunity—yet too often both the diversity and complexity of youth civic engagement programs are overlooked.

Youth civic engagement requires significant organizational commitment and investment. At the organizational level, effective youth civic engagement requires careful execution of a long list of factors: clarity of purpose, deliberate positioning within organizational structures, strategic actions, cross-organizational commitment and collaboration, ongoing learning among youth, adults and the organization as a whole, a reward system that supports innovation and risk-taking, and continuous evaluation of results. Finding all of these elements in any one program or organization is rare. In actual practice, the needed intentionality and program rigor is underdeveloped, for reasons outlined above. How then do we effectively document and research experiences and promising practices that emerge under less-than-ideal conditions? How do we capture the best of those efforts that have the potential to enrich the research and strengthen principles of practice?

One place to focus is on that factor critical to success—the degree to which civic engagement programs have clearly articulated and developed goals and purposes. Again on its surface, youth civic engagement appears compelling and relatively simple. Yet we must push to answer the fundamental questions that are essential to implementing a successful program. What is needed to ensure that these youth civic engagement efforts achieve their intended outcomes? What are those outcomes? What indicators will measure success and document progress? What are dangers and unintended outcomes that may result from these efforts? How do we anticipate and prepare for them?

Exceptions exist within some subfields of youth civic engagement such as service learning or civic education. These areas have for a variety of reasons developed a consistency of language and relatively refined indicators and theories. Yet when one considers the field as a whole and includes all the pathways for the development of habits of youth civic engagement (youth activism, governance, leadership, informal education, etc.) the clear understanding of purpose, approach, language or underlying theory is underdeveloped.

Adapting to the Pace of Change

On the ground, in communities, the practice of youth civic engagement is evolving almost faster than it can be understood, not to mention documented and evaluated. Emerging technology, shifting social norms, evolving demographic trends, social entrepreneurialism and rapidly changing world events are expanding and challenging how the field must view and understand youth civic engagement.

One example: Facebook, once a promising social network site that could support youth civic engagement is now "old school." Twitter is the latest real-time, mobile tool to support civic engagement. Many such examples abound. Rapidly emerging technology makes the communication skills and methods of civic engagement of today's youth almost unrecognizable to their elders.

Shifting social norms redefine not just the responsibilities of civic engagement, but civic engagement itself – what it is and who can engage. Equity of participation within civic life and equity of outcome become every day better understood by and more important to today's civic activists. Increasingly new forms of civic participation – such as "buycotts" – emerge as a means to ensure this equity. As civic engagement continues to evolve to include all people, and as these civic activists leverage mechanisms of involvement (social networking, youth media, etc.) that can include those traditionally excluded from full participation in civic structures and processes, immigrants, minors and the disenfranchised will have a greater and more powerful voice in redefining what we experience as civic life and what we consider habits and indicators of active civic engagement.

In practice, youth workers live the reality of this rapidly shifting landscape. For example, the intersection of technology, demographics and world events has suddenly transformed the understanding and use of "mash-ups" into a core civic engagement competency. (The concept of a "mash-up" originated in the hip-hop industry – music producers first used the term to refer to the practice of mixing two or more songs in a single audio track.) Over time, the meaning of the term has evolved to refer to the simultaneously overlay of multiple sources of data – such as air quality samples, census track data, and school achievement. And, now mash-ups have become an important fixture in the field of youth civic engagement; consider the popularity of Google Earth's partnership with the United States Holocaust Museum to create a mash-up that documents and tracks real-time genocide geographic data and satellite images. Yet for the youth civic engagement worker, what evidence-based practices and tools exist to help them develop the critical thinking skills and media literacy savvy to effectively use "mash-ups" as a tool or principle of civic engagement?

Danger and Opportunity: Identifying Evidence-Based Programs That Work

As noted in the introduction, there are many good programs and pathways for youth civic engagement that do not have access to the resources required for a quality program evaluation. Without the identification of a practitioner-informed strategic research agenda for the field – an agenda that identifies not only promising aspects of program approaches that merit investigation, but also evaluations of programs that align with the diverse context of young people's lives and civic engagement interests, and "just in time" research, the collective knowledge surfaced risks the danger of being seen as definitive and "fixed". It may miss the promising practices that can be gleaned from a more immediate analysis of emerging new practices, as suggested above. From a practical viewpoint what we know regarding youth civic engagement is still relatively biased to the interests of researchers, funders and well-resourced, relatively privileged programs.

The opportunity the field faces is to build and expand from this relatively small base of quality programming as we know it, into a broad, inclusive knowledge base of best practices of youth civic engagement as it could be, and as it is emerging.

Questions to Ponder

In this spirit of inquiry and reflection, I end with a few questions to stimulate discussion.

- How can we embrace the opportunity to "walk the talk" of civic engagement by leveraging Web 2.0 tools - which have the potential to engage a broad network

in co-creating a product or agenda - to engage practitioners and youth in the development of a comprehensive research agenda?

- Given the dynamic nature of the youth civic engagement movement, what are effective, approaches to quickly, continuously and rigorously "mine" – i.e., document and access – emergent knowledge and practice to facilitate rapid utilization?

- How can we create research and evaluation approaches that capture and respond to the multi-layered and complex reality of youth civic engagement? Can we identify research and evaluation approaches that mirror the "mash-up" of practice?

This meeting, a mix of researchers and practitioners, is focusing on college age youth and what we know and need to learn about how they develop long-term civic attitudes and behaviors. A series of questions have been developed so that meeting participants can explore the ways in which theory informs practice and practice informs theory. One set of questions addresses research and evaluation and how current program practices inform theory:

> *What cutting edge program practices are informing theory? What current innovations and initiatives are being evaluated with regard to new outcomes? How is community service related to the development of other civic dispositions and habits over time?*

To be honest, as I think about writing something that addresses this, I begin to feel overwhelmed by the sheer number of examples of programs that *I* think are cutting edge, and that articulate a link to student outcomes like leadership development, civic skills, academic achievement, career goals, and more. And, depending on the researcher, evaluator, or program manager, there is sometimes an articulated link to a theoretical framework. I get captivated by the plastics engineering students that, at the request of the zoo (a community partner of the college), spent the semester working with zoo personnel and animal behaviorists in order to create a prosthetic horn for the rhinoceros that lost his. Or the education students at a local urban community college who worked with female rival gang members who when asked what they wanted to learn, answered, "To knit." And so, through knitting, have conversations about sex, violence and ultimately, strategies for survival. Then there are the university students who worked with local high school students in developing and carrying out community based research projects in the high school students' community, which later resulted in opportunities for these same students to distribute grant funds to community groups in order to address the problems they had previously studied. I have been privy to the evaluation of these programs and know that these experiences had various positive impacts on some aspect of the civic skills, attitudes, and or behaviors of the participants. But can I take this to the next level and ask if these programs and the evaluations influenced theory? Sadly, no.

The Challenges

See if this sounds familiar to you. There is a service learning program and the college students who are involved are supposed to show gains in civic outcome X by the end of the project. The college students take a pre-survey at the start of the project and three months later, at the end of the semester, take a post-survey. Analysis is done to see if there are statistically significant differences between the responses on the two surveys. If there are, and it looks like students are showing gains in outcome X, there is a sigh of relief, some sense that the program structure is working, and a potential way to justify future funding. A report is written that includes these results, and it is sent to the funder and key stakeholders. Then the cycle of project planning, recruitment of the next group of students, and conversations with the community partner begins anew.

I am not being cynical. Actually, I am seeing a field that has exploded in the last 15 years, and those of us who are engaged in research are having a hard time keeping

up. I can not think of a discipline or institutional type that is not engaged in some form of service-learning or community based/engaged learning, directed at a whole host of civic outcomes. There has been enough variety and longevity of programs that civic outcomes get combined with others like student retention, leadership, reduction in risk behaviors, moral development, and critical thinking to name a few. The reality of the majority of these programs is that they are carried out by individual faculty members as part of their courses, and in the best cases, with the help of a campus civic engagement office. Community members interact with the higher education institution in a variety of ways. The whole enterprise is typically under resourced. Creating an experimental design, finding a comparison group, and developing a survey instrument with a computed Cronbach coefficient alpha[2] are luxuries that most of the faculty and staff closest to the programs simply do not have.

Let's start with something as fundamental as research design, something that enables us to say with some confidence that what we are seeing happening with students is not serendipity. There are multiple challenges. One is determining what outcomes can reasonably be expected in a semester-long or year-long project. Many of the civic outcomes we are most interested in (e.g., career choices, civic dispositions and habits) require longitudinal approaches. While there are large longitudinal data collection efforts that have enabled us to see, for instance, how freshmen values have changed over time[3], most single institutions have not had the resources to engage in these efforts. The "cutting edge practices" that we are looking for will likely be found at one or two institutions, and thus will not be captured through standardized national surveys.

Research designs have to account for enormous variation across and between institutions with regard to the terms and language used to describe civic engagement activities. I can use my own institution, Brandeis University, as an example. Faculty colleagues in Arts and Sciences use the term "community engaged learning" while my colleagues in the Heller School use "service-learning."   Thus, a Brandeis undergraduate in a course with "community engaged learning" would likely check "no" or "not applicable" in response to a question describing projects within the community as "service-learning." A researcher at a nearby urban campus asked students there about their "community service" only to learn the phrase was connoted with the term "court imposed punishment." Needless to say, she did not obtain an accurate picture of these students' experiences. How can we measure the impact of a service-learning/civic engagement experience if we can't even agree on how to describe it? It is simultaneously necessary and vexing to develop survey instruments and interview protocols that can be used with students in different institutions, or even with students in different parts of the same institution.

Research designs aimed at measuring the impact of service-learning experiences often do not adequately address variation in prior student preparation, program duration and intensity.   How much time did students spend on this project, including in preparation? Did a student carry this out alone or with others? Was the student in a leadership role or was s/he a marginally involved team member? Was this activity a course requirement or did the student choose it from among other options? What prior experience did students have in this area, including through earlier k-12

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[2] This is a way to estimate the reliability of items on a scale.
[3] See the Higher Education Research Institute's (HERI's) CIRP Freshmen Survey or the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

programs? Too often these distinctions in program structure and student experience are not taken into account when studying the impact of a particular program.

My own experience and that of other researchers and evaluators with whom I have worked, is that much of research design is determined by the financial support that is available. An elegant multi-site design on paper quickly gets scaled down when the cost of incentives or tracking participants gets factored into the budget. Simply put, there are few sources of funding for research on civic outcomes. Funders tend to support programs and include some resources for evaluation. Many practitioners can not, or are not interested in, leveraging funded program-specific evaluations into research projects. And while evaluation is an important tool to both "prove and improve" programs (as we like to say at my center), it is different than research. Evaluation results are program specific, often answering narrowly constructed questions, with limited audiences. Sometimes the programs themselves are so specific (think rhinoceros) that the generalizability of the results is nearly impossible. There are too few resources available to those who want to engage in research to answer questions about the relationship between specific program elements and outcomes.

The Hope

In spite of the challenges, research is being conducted that establishes the link between theory and practice and advances the field. One of the most hopeful signs is the increase in dissertations dedicated to examining the impact of service-learning on students. The Corporation for National and Community Service Learn and Serve America program's Service-Learning Clearinghouse has been tracking dissertations on service-learning. In the nine year period between 1990 and 1999 they counted 110 studies. Contrast that with the two year period, 2001 to 2003 in which they counted 127. By the 2004 to 2006 period the number of dissertations increased to 144.[4] Of the most recent dissertations about a quarter used quantitative methods and twenty-percent used mixed methods. Of the quantitative, 15% did experimental research while 38% employed quasi-experimental designs or non-experimental analysis of existing conditions. I take heart in the increased numbers of doctoral candidates engaging in this area of research, and the knowledge that many of these new scholars will be carrying their research agendas with them into the academy.

Besides those who are engaged in research, there are others whose work it has been to improve the quality of the research in this area. I use the term "improve the quality" to include not only the research design and methods used, but the ways in which the results are linked to both theory and practice. For instance, there is Robert Bringle at Indiana University-Perdue University Indianapolis who co-authored *The Measure of Service Learning: Research Scales to Assess Student Experiences*.[5] Bringle and his colleagues have sought to provide other researchers with multi-item scales that can be used in research about students in service-learning classes. Sherril Gelmon at Portland State University co-authored, *Assessing Service Learning and Civic Engagement: Principles and Techniques*, a handbook aimed at encouraging high quality assessment of service-learning programs.[6] Many of the other researchers who

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[4] Smith, Liberty and Martin, Heather J. Eds., Recent Dissertations on Service and Service-Learning Topics: Volume IV, 2004-2006. Scotts Valley, CA: National Service Learning Clearinghouse, 2007.
[5] Bringle, Robert; Phillips, Mindy; Hudson, Michael. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2004.
[6] Gelmon, Sherril; Holland, Barbara; Driscoll, Amy; Spring, Amy; Kerrigan, Seanna. Providence, RI: Campus Compact, 2001.

are engaged in these efforts are on the list of attendees of this meeting. My point is, in addition to the research itself, there are collective peer-oriented actions aimed at sharpening research questions, methodologies, and outcomes.

The research is getting shared. There is the long-time peer-reviewed, *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* and the more recent peer-reviewed *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*. The International Research Conference on Service-learning and Community Engagement is dedicated to this type of research. Other established conferences, like the American Educational Research Association (AERA), provide opportunities for researchers to present their service-learning research or to participate in special interest groups dedicated to the topic. Disciplinary conferences increasingly have opportunities for service-learning researchers to report on their work.

In 2006 and 2007 the Johnson Foundation sponsored two Wingspread meetings comprised of representatives from various higher education national organizations, centers, and groups who are working on civic/community engagement as either all or some part of their missions. The goal of the meetings was to create a network that at the very least could keep the affiliated entities informed of things going on related to civic and community engagement at the national level, and ideally could respond to opportunities where collaboration could advance the field. As a result of these meetings HENCE (Higher Education Network for Community Engagement)[7] was born and is sustained through a series of workgroups. The workgroups were created in response to perceived need. Not surprisingly one formed around "Measurement" and focused on the ways in which the resources and interests of the various groups that were represented at the meetings might be leveraged to improve research on civic outcomes.

I know that I am taking the glass-is-half-full approach in talking about each of these. However, taken together, these efforts (including this meeting for which I am writing this memo), are indicative of having reached an opportune moment in which to advance research in this area, and the connection between theory and practice. There is a critical mass of researchers investigating the impact of civic engagement experiences. There are practitioners who have moved beyond setting up experiential learning programs, and who are keen to understand what is needed to foster student development, college and post-college success and life-long civic engagement. And there are communities who seek to be partners in the production of knowledge that can be used to help solve our pressing social problems. Intermediaries, such as private and public funders that can support this type of research, can be both the catalyst and connection.

Where We Go From Here

I'll close by suggesting two strategies that would go a long way in answering:
> *What cutting edge program practices are informing theory? What current innovations and initiatives are being evaluated with regard to new outcomes? How is community service related to the development of other civic dispositions and habits over time?*

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[7] HENCE, as of this writing, is still in its infancy. Founding documents and lists of participating organizations can be found on the website: www.henceonline.org.

The first is to fund research on the impact of service-learning/civic engagement programs on students, and the second is to provide support for longitudinal research projects.

In spite of the growth in the number of researchers, institutions that support this work, and communities invested in the outcomes, there is not enough direct support for research that can answer questions about the impact of these experiences on students. Funding for research has to be de-coupled from program development funds and evaluation efforts. And while funders should expect quality and rigor, they should be open to funding research that can maintain those standards using methodologies that include participatory action research and community based research designs. Further, support has to include ways to get knowledge back into the field, beyond academic conferences and peer-reviewed journals. This requires an expanded definition of "field," not just aimed at other researchers, but dissemination strategies aimed at community partners and practitioners as well.

Finally, the words "over time" are key in the framing question above. Longitudinal research is necessary if we are to answer questions about the impact of these service-learning and civic engagement experiences on college students' later lives. Lori Vogelgesang and her colleagues at the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA are undertaking a longitudinal study of student outcomes on the national level.[8] On the campus level, The Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University is currently engaged in a multi-year outcomes study "designed to examine the link between students' experiences at Tufts University and the development of their civic and political attitudes and activities over time. Data sources include an annual survey, periodic in-depth interviews, and data from other student surveys. The study is scheduled to cover the classes of 2007-2010, during their four years of college and two years after graduation."[9] These studies offer us the promise of understanding the long term impact of civic engagement pedagogies and co-curricular act ivies, and are rare because among other things, this type of research is so costly.

We, researchers and practitioners, have managed to create an impressive body of work "against all odds." It is my hope that the results of our conversation enable us to deepen and expand the ways through which we learn what we need to do to create life-long civic actors. Our future depends on it.

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[8] See HERI's project on "Understanding the Effects of Service Learning: A Study of Students and Faculty"
[9] Tufts University, Tisch College web site: http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/?pid=17

Recent Research on Practices that Promote Civic Engagement

Forty years ago, at the end of their influential assessment of high school civic education, Langton and Jennings (1968) frame the challenge confronting those committed to the democratic purposes of education. "If the educational system continues to invest sizable resources in government and civics courses at the secondary level – as seems most probable – there must be a radical restructuring of these courses in order for them to have any appreciable pay-off"(867). Rather than working to specify what such a "restructuring of courses" might involve, scholar's interests, for the most part, shifted elsewhere -- leading to what Timothy Cook (1985) described as the "Bear Market in Political Socialization." And this situation, Neimi and Junn (1998) write, lasted well into the 1990's[10]. When returning to this "long-interrupted tradition of research," William Galston (2001) argues that "unlike a generation ago, researchers cannot afford to overlook the impact of formal civic education and related school-based experiences."

Fortunately, for the past decade or so, researchers have followed Galston's suggestion. The civic mission of schools has received much more attention as have studies aiming to specify how and, to a lesser extent why, intentional efforts to promote civic outcomes can succeed (see, especially Gibson and Levine, 2003).

In this brief memo, I summarize some major studies and findings regarding factors that influence civic outcomes. I then highlight some areas where additional research might prove particularly helpful. Of course, this brief review will not cover all the relevant research. Hopefully, it will highlight some important work and help frame some key issues for the discussion at the meeting.

Recent studies testify to schools' potential to advance civic and political development. Often civic educators and those who study civic and democratic education provide a list of best practices when answering this question. Below are some prominent strategies.
- Exposure to role models
- Learning about problems in society
- Learning about ways to improve one's community
- Working on community projects
- Learning about current events
- Participating in simulations
- Open classroom climate
- Influence on how school is run
- Topics in school relate to student interests
- extra-curricular activities

This list of strategies reflects an emerging literature (see Gibson and Levine, 2003). For example, large scale cross-sectional studies such as the IEA Civic Education Study of 14 year olds in 28 countries found that many of these curricular features are associated with civic outcomes that include interest in politics, the ability to apply knowledge accurately, and a range of civic and political commitments (Torney-Purta,

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[10] The work of Judith Torney-Purta and several others are exceptions to this rule.

2002; Torney-Purta, Amadeo, & Richardson, 2007). Similarly, Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, & Jenkins (2002) and Verba, et al., (1995) conducted large scale surveys of high school students and find that students who report having particular experiences (debating issues in class, being taught civic skills, undertaking service learning) are more likely to also report being committed to and involved in various forms of civic and political engagement. Drawing on panel data, Kahne and Sporte, 2008 examined many of the civic learning opportunities noted above and controlled for students' prior civic commitments as well as a host of academic and demographic variables.   We found that these civic learning opportunities were strongly related to the development of high school students' civic commitments (and the longitudinal study I'm conducting in CA with Ellen Middaugh is coming to similar conclusions).

These findings have been reinforced by a number of well controlled quasi-experimental studies of particular curricular initiatives. Michael McDevitt and Spiro Kiousis (2004) studied Kids Voting USA and found positive effects, relative to non-participants, in news media use, discussion, knowledge, opinion formation, and civic participation (for a similar study of a HS Gov't curriculum, see Kahne, Chi, & Middaugh, 2006). Edward Metz and James Youniss (2005) studied the impact of a high school community service requirement. They found that those who were less inclined to serve showed larger gains than similar students who were not required to serve with respect to future voting, future conventional civic involvement, and civic interest and understanding. Hart, Donnelly, Youniss, & Atkins' (2007) study of service learning using the National Educational Longitudinal Survey (NELS) also finds a positive relationship between service learning and both voting and volunteering (also see Billig, 2000 for a review).   Although there are fewer studies, most of which are qualitative, examination of youth organizing highlight similar outcomes (Rogers, Morrell, & Enyedy, 2007; Hart and Kirshner, Forthcoming, for review). Finally, it is important to note that studies highlighting the impact of civic education are not universally positive. Some studies that control for prior commitments find significant effects only for "high quality" service learning, for example (Billig, Root, & Jesse, 2005; Melchior, 1998).

A Theoretical Model: Developing an Identity Committed to Civic Participation

Research highlighting practices that promote desired outcomes is more common than studies demonstrating why these changes occur. Youniss and Yates (1997) provide a valuable framework that addresses this gap. Drawing on Erikson's writing in *Identity, Youth, and Crisis* (1968), Youniss and Yates argue that a prime task of late adolescence is the development of a social identity that embraces an orientation towards civic and political participation. As they write, "Gaining a sense of agency and feeling responsible for addressing society's problems are distinguishing elements that mark mature social identity" (36). They also identify three kinds of opportunities that can spur such development: opportunities for Agency and Industry, for Social Relatedness, and for the development of Political-Moral Understandings. Similarly, Watts, Armstrong, Cartman, and Guessous (2007) study of youth civic and political participation. They find that youth's sense of agency was key to whether social analysis undertaken by youth led to youth political action. Finally, Ellen Middaugh and I are just now analyzing panel data on youth in California that examines the relationship between the core civic learning opportunities noted above and the development of high school students' civic capacities, commitments, and connections. Our notion of civic capacity aligns with Youniss and Yates' description of civic agency, civic connection aligns with their description of social relatedness, and civic commitment aligns with their description of political and moral understanding. We find that the civic learning opportunities that civic educators believe are desirable

foster these components of identity and that, in turn, the development of these features of identity are related to a more global set of civic commitments and interests.

Big needs:

1. **Theory**: Most empirical studies relate varied learning opportunities to outcomes. A few use such data to examine theories of civic and political development. Much more work in this area is needed.
2. **Long term outcomes**: Much research in this area focuses on near term outcomes (the development of commitments to engage civically) rather than on actual engagement. Adolescents who express greater commitment to civic and political engagement are more civically and politically engaged as adults than adolescents who express less of a commitment to act (Ajzen, 2001; Fishbein, Ajzen, and Hinkle, 1980; Oesterle, Johnson & Mortimer, 2004; Theiss-Morse, 1993). Still, studies that follow samples of young people over time (the kind of work done by Jennings and Stoker) and that focus directly on the relationship between particular interventions or exposure to specific civic learning opportunities and varied outcomes would be very helpful.
3. **Experiments and tight controls**: Studies that are either experimental or that have high quality controls and that follow youth and their commitments over time are needed to give us a clearer picture of factors that have an impact.
4. **New Civic Experiences:** It makes sense to examine practices (such as engagement with digital media) that are relatively new and forms of participation (such as blogging or buycotts) that are not considered in many earlier studies of political socialization.
5. *Relevance of Diversity:* It is important to examine the ways students from differing economic, racial and ethnic backgrounds experience and respond to civic education and discussions of democratic institutions. Much research on civic education assumes that civic learning opportunities influence groups of students in similar ways.
6. **Goals:** Since conceptions of desirable citizenship in a democratic society vary, it's important to examine the relationship of these varied goals to a range of learning opportunities, contexts, and demographic groups.

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Youth Activism and Civic Engagement: Building Theory and Expanding Practices

This memo responds to three questions regarding innovation and theory building related to civic engagement among youth. Based on prior research on youth civic participation, the paper addresses the following questions. First, what do we know about current theory and practice in the area of civic engagement? Second, how can we better understand the ways in which cutting edge practices are informing theory? Third, what current innovations are being evaluated in civic engagement with regard to new outcomes?

Framing Civic Engagement

In order to better understand innovation in regards to civic engagement practices and theory building, it is important to note that measuring of civic engagement is not "one size fit all". Contextual factors such as social history, unemployment, and poverty, as well as identity shape the contours of what constitutes civic life and community participation. A growing body of research suggests that traditional measures for civic participation (such as specific knowledge of the branches of government) may be inappropriate for assessing civic engagement among youth in poor communities (Lang 1998; Sanchez-Jankowski 2002). Youth who have histories of experiencing racial discrimination and exclusion from mainstream civic activities such as student government or participating in citywide youth councils have different strategies for engagement that often are over looked by social scientists. Martin Sánchez-Jankowski (2002) argued that civic engagement for minority youth is a function of their ethnic group's history, social class and the social context in which they live. Often, civic participation among minority youth is reflected in activities that address quality of life issues they view most important in their lives, the lives of their families and their respective communities (Yates and Youniss 1999; Delli Carpini 2000). Such activities might include addressing police harassment when coming and going from school (Fine, Freudenberg et al. 2003), encouraging their school to purchase heaters for their classrooms during cold winters, or advocating for free bus passes for transportation to and from school for students who receive public assistance (Institute for Education and Social Policy 2001; Gold, Simon et al. 2002).

Civic engagement among youth in low-income communities of color can be best conceptualized as a broad range of activities that includes at least four points of entry, (1) community service (2) volunteering, (3) civic activism, (4) youth organizing. These activities can be conceptualized along two dimensions. First "locus of change" axis highlights the range of potential change outcomes. The locus of change axis ranges from civic activities that are status quo and directed at changing individuals without changing systems, to activities designed to produce social change by transforming policies, systems and institutions. Second, the "locus of benefit" axis illustrates the extent to which individuals or communities benefit from particular civic activities. I suggest that when we frame civic activities along these axis we gain a more nuanced understanding of what constitutes civic engagement and deeper theoretical knowledge of the social, historical, and contextual factors that shape civic life.

Civic Engagement Continuum
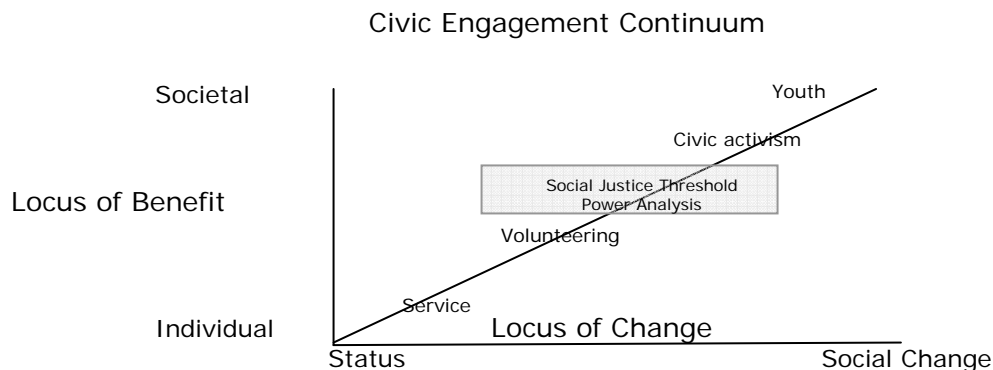
This continuum allows for a range of activities that can allow for a more complete picture of what constitutes civic engagement. Researchers have argued that in spite of generally low levels of traditional civic interests, young people of color engage in a wide variety of civic and political activities (White, Bruce et al. 2000). Research suggests that participation in civics courses, student councils, service learning or volunteering are important but incomplete measures of civic behavior. This is particularly the case among youth that have been excluded from traditional forms of civic engagement yet are often involved with activities that address day-to-day quality of life issues in their communities. Cohen's Black Youth Project surveyed 1,590 Black, White and Hispanic young people between the ages of 15 and 25 about their civic behavior and feelings about politics. Despite prior research that suggests that Black and Latino youth are disconnected from civic activities, Cohen's study suggest that 48% of black, 54% Latino youth engage in civic activities (Cohen 2007). Similarly, the majority of Black and Latino youth believe that they have the skills and knowledge to make changes in their communities. What we need to better understand is the nature of these civic and political activities and a broader discussion of what constitutes civic engagement.

What We Know From Prior Research

Our knowledge of civic engagement among youth has led researchers to three important conclusions about civic and political engagement. These conclusions are as follows:

- *Civic engagement research has been restricted by a narrow conceptualization of political and civic life among youth.*

Conclusions about civic and political engagement among youth have narrowly focused on conventional forms of political knowledge, civic attitudes and voting behavior as measures for understanding and assessing civic and political behavior (Sapiro 2004). This focus has restricted our understanding of other potential forms of civic life particularly among youth of color. For example, researchers found that civic education that occurred informally was more effective in supporting civic and political knowledge than formal civics education courses (Conover and Searing 2000). Similarly Yates and

Youniss (1998) also argue for a broader understanding of how less formal social settings and historical context influences civic and political participation among African American youth. These might include using You Tube to document and expose poor school conditions, or organizing peers to walkout of school using My Space.

- *Youth from low-income communities are less likely to engage in traditional civic and political activities.*

Emerging research has suggested that social settings and structural disadvantage impede youth of color from participating in traditional forms of civic knowledge and service learning activities(Hart and Atkins 2002). Drawing on data from the 1989 Detroit Area Study, Cohen and Dawson (1993) examined the impact of neighborhood poverty on political participation. They found both that poor blacks tend to hold more nationalist views about social issues, and that African Americans in extremely poor neighborhoods are often isolated from voluntary associations and other resources that provide political opportunities. The conclusions from this body of research suggest that civic and political participation for youth in urban communities is shaped by a broad array of economic, political and social factors. Systemic discrimination in courts, daily negative experiences of racial profiling by the police, and media portrayals of youth in low-income communities have directed civic and political activity inward towards ethnic and racial solidarity. Consequently, the ways in which youth in low-income communities engage in civic and political behavior is often not recognized as such, and thus has been under-theorized.

- *Civic socialization and engagement are more likely to occur through participation in politically engaged, activist community-based organizations.*

Research has demonstrated the role that civic and voluntary associations play in the development of political and civic life (Yates and Youniss 1998; Ginwright 2007). But the organizations that may fill this function vary across different communities. In African American communities, researchers have examined political behavior by understanding the resources and networks in black communities that spawn political and civic behavior (Verba, Schlozman et al. 1993). Cohen and Dawson (1993) noted that "It is through these networks that the intergenerational transmission of African American political values, mores, and beliefs occurs" (p. 290). They found that neighborhoods with severe poverty had fewer social and civic organizations and that residents of these areas experienced greater detachment from organizational ties and greater civic isolation. These studies provide an analysis of key mediating factors of civic engagement among youth in black communities, with community-based, church or mosque related groups, and activist organizations fostering civic and political engagement. They illustrate the central role of organizations in facilitating rich forms of civic and political life among African American youth.

What we need to better understand about civic engagement: The cutting-edge program practices that can inform theory

Despite the bodies of work summarized above, there remains a dearth of theoretical understanding about how youth in general and youth of color from low-income communities, in particular, participate in civic affairs, and how they participate through non-conventional civic behavior. Research has not sufficiently explored the

range of activities that, if better understood, could yield new theory and inform practices about how young people conceptualize civic involvement and, therefore, engage in civic life. Furthermore, social scientists agree that the study of civic engagement remains rather unsubstantiated and lacks a strong empirical basis, especially with respect to ethnic and minority populations (Eccles and Gootman 2002). For example, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in September 2005 served as a catalyst that encouraged unprecedented giving and volunteering among black communities. Similarly, the racial events that triggered up to 20,000 adults, high school and college students to gather in Jena, Louisiana to protest the racially biased charges of six black teenagers is evidence that civic engagement for youth of color is often shaped by perceptions of social injustice. In March 2006, nearly 500,000 Latino protesters (many were youth) marched in Los Angeles, 50,000 in Denver and nearly 100,000 in Phoenix to voice their opposition to proposed federal crackdown on illegal immigration.

These forms of civic engagement all point to the role of intersection of identity, collective action and social justice (Ginwright and Cammarota 2007). Despite the presence of these important forms of civic and political engagement among youth, our theoretical understanding, as well as our knowledge-base of program practices, are rather thin. There are perhaps two categories of innovative program practices that hold the promise for theory development. First is youth organizing, which focuses on changing oppressive community conditions; and second, civic activism, which is a civic strategy that focuses on identity development and political education.

- *Understanding the role of youth organizing among other forms of civic engagement.*

Youth organizing is an integrated youth development and civic engagement strategy that trains young people in community organizing techniques in order to change conditions or address issues in their schools and communities. Blending youth development practices with a social justice orientation, youth organizing trains young people in community organizing and advocacy, and assists them in employing these skills to alter power relations to create meaningful institutional change in their communities (Ginwright and James 2002; Ginwright 2003). Often, youth organizing involves *analysis* of community issues, *action* to change the issue, and *reflection* about the results of the action taken. One important—though under-theorized—aspect of youth organizing is how participation in addressing pressing community problems provides meaningful engagement in community life and fosters agency among young people.

- *How does civic activism contribute to new forms of civic life for low-income youth?*

Civic activism refers to a range of activities that focus on both individual youth development outcomes as well as broader community change activities. As a youth development and community change strategy, civic activism often uses collective identities (racial, ethnic, gender, sexual identity) as ways to mitigate the impact of structural inequality on every day life. These identities are central to building a sense of efficacy, as well as fostering political analysis of the root causes of community and social problems. While civic activism may include youth organizing, many of the activities promote political education through the arts, workshops and identity-based programming. For example Youth Speaks, an arts based nonprofit located in San

Francisco California, trains youth in spoken word poetry as a way to engage in political expression. Similarly, Brotherhood Sister Soul in Harlem, New York fosters black youth identity to counter negative images of black youth in the media. They also use aspects of hip hop culture to foster political ideas and provide young people with social messages about community and social change.

What current innovations are being evaluated in civic engagement with regard to new outcomes?

Broadening the terrain with which we conceptualize civic engagement among youth also extends the opportunity to consider currently under-theorized outcomes. More recent research on civic engagement among urban youth suggests at least two outcomes; we are beginning to address the questions, first, in what ways does civic engagement promote health and well-being? Second, what new forms of social capital are created from youth organizing and civic activism?

- *Healing, well-being and community health; Alternative Civic Engagement Outcomes.*

Emerging research has examined the relationship between community engagement and wellness (Morsillo and PrillenItensky 2007). These studies are concerned with the ways in which participation in civic affairs facilitates a sense of well-being, hopefulness, optimism and efficacy among young people (Watts, Williams et al. 2002; Morsillo and PrillenItensky 2007; PrilleItensky and Fox 2007). Differentiating between individual and community level changes, Morsillo and PrilleItensky (Morsillo and PrillenItensky 2007) found that psychological changes we more easily achieved than actual political transformations. These findings however, encourage more research about various "entry points" into civic life that can also contribute to health and well-being. Shifting from theory to practice, community groups are also exploring how spiritual practices can inform civic life and affect social justice efforts in communities. For example, Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice located in the Bronx borough of New York places spirituality and social justice at the center of their model of social change. They believe that healing and wellness are fundamental to their understanding of civic life because through activism, youth become agents of individual, community and social change.

- *Critical consciousness and resistance through youth action research*

Action research with young people is increasingly used to engage youth in addressing pressing community and school-based problems (Cammarota and Fine 2008). Borrowing from Paulo Freire's (1993 citation) concept called praxis, a cycle of reflection and action, participatory research engages youth in critical literacy and social and political analysis through critical scientific inquiry. The collective research process embraces young people's intimate knowledge of community and school settings, fosters political consciousness, and gives young people the opportunity to develop solutions to school and community problems. This practice is widely used among youth development practitioners. There is emerging empirical evidence about how this process cultivates notions of political resistance and sustains civic and political engagement (Morrell 2002; Ginwright 2007; Hamilton and Flanagan 2007; Cammarota 2008). One example is the Social Justice Project in Tucson Arizona, which trains Latino youth in ethnographic research methods in order to document issues they want changed in their schools. By developing a critical consciousness of school

and community problems, young people learn new ways to reframe, respond and address issues that matter most to them.

Conclusion

There is a steady concern that America is experiencing dangerously low levels of civic, community and political participation, particularly among urban youth. Despite the widely touted political apathy among youth, we see growing evidence that youth are participating in civic and political activities in ways the fly underneath the social science research radar. By broadening our notions of what constitutes civic participation, we can better understand new forms of engagement and how to better invest in these important aspects of community life for young people. These activities hold the promise of fostering greater democratic participation and building robust community life. More importantly, our answers to questions regarding what it means to be engaged, what constitutes healthy civic life, and what it means to be a citizen in America, are questions that lie at the heart of democratic ideas.

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Civic Engagement and Issues Related to "Knowing"

Thank you for inviting me to offer a reflection on the topics of your meeting on "How Young People Develop Long Lasting Habits of Civic Engagement." I truly regret I cannot be with you, but I hope I can offer some observations and questions that may contribute to the dialogue.

This paper is not an academic analysis. I offer reflections on the key questions that frame your meeting with a special focus on international views of civic engagement and possible directions for comparative research. To accomplish that goal, I begin by telling you a story about my current international experience. Then I will use that platform to suggest some research questions and directions that may help strengthen the link between civic engagement and education for global citizenship.

Not everyone at the Spencer-hosted meeting will know my story, so just let me say that my career choices have been consistently influenced by a desire to strengthen the connection between the intellectual assets of higher education and the issues and opportunities presented by communities and society. After many years in institution-based roles leading the implementation of engagement, and conducting research on its impacts, my career evolved toward a national perspective and now an international experience, always focused on questions relevant to your planned dialogue: What is the relationship between higher education and a healthy, stable, equitable, productive and civil society? How can education help people develop a commitment to civic engagement and the creation of public good? And perhaps more complex: How must higher education institutions transform their traditions, cultures and structures to make such a relationship possible?

Currently, I am Pro Vice Chancellor-Engagement at the University of Western Sydney (don't ask me what the Pro means – I don't have a clue and I'm embarrassed to ask – it is surely something imitative of England!). UWS has six campuses serving 35,000 students, all spread like a letter C around the western suburbs that surround the core of Sydney. People ask me where my office is, and I answer: my car!

UWS has been a member of the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities since 1991, three years after the founding of the Coalition which now has more than 85 members from five nations. Consistent with the CUMU mission, UWS sees itself as an "institution of opportunity and excellence." UWS attracts largely first generation students and our faculty work in an environment that expects a balance of attention to teaching and research. Our campuses serve what is called Greater Western Sydney, an area of about 2m people from more than 150 nations; they live and work in a region that is the third largest economic hub in Australia. Media pundits say that GWS is "the crucible that will forge the future of Australia" because of its multicultural, global character and its economic role. Yet at the same time, GWS has about half the level of educational attainment as Sydney city, is home to the largest number of indigenous people outside the Northern Territories, and is increasingly challenged by cultural segregation and conflict, obesity, drug/alcohol addiction, violence, environmental degradation, and underemployment. As one of the most "global" areas of Australia, civic engagement is relatively scarce across the populace as a whole. As

the region's own university, UWS seeks to contribute to changing that dynamic into a successful model for the future.

So why in the heck am I here instead of back at the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse and IUPUI? OK, I'll admit Sydney is a beautiful and fabulous by all measures and a great place to live, but I'm also really far from home, colleagues, friends, family. What's up? Being here is an opportunity to observe and perhaps contribute to another nation's exploration of the link between education and civic engagement, and the role of education in transforming an Anglo-European nation into a country that embraces and celebrates both its indigenous traditions and its new global characteristics and relationships. It's a chance to see how the idea of civic engagement plays out in a nation with a different history, different political traditions, and different global relationships. While here, I am working with colleagues to create a national benchmarking scheme to measure the impacts of engagement, developing key performance indicators for engagement with my own university, and investing about $1M this year in various engagement initiatives relating to educational attainment, climate change, intercultural understanding, and small-medium business development.

Since 2002 I have made one or two visits a year to Australia, attended conferences on engagement, helped advise on the formation of a national alliance for community engagement and met with a lot of political leaders as well. Australians are keen to learn from other nation's experiences. As I learned about the nation's issues and the approach to education policy it was clear to me Australia had a chance to change a whole educational system to embrace the concept of civic engagement. Somehow, the gap between the role of education and the knowledge needs and assets of society seemed more conspicuous in a smaller nation; more obviously wrong and wasteful.

When I first came in 2002, I started speaking and discussing the idea of a link between education and civic engagement. At that time, people quickly said: "Oh no, political and civic apathy is an American problem. Voting is mandatory here and our government and politicians are very accessible. We don't think higher education engagement is about civic responsibility at all. Engagement is about community and economic development."

In 2004 both the US and Australian elections returned leaders to office who had low levels of public approval. Suddenly, the dialogue about engagement in Australia changed. People understood that even if voting is mandatory the true mark of civic involvement is to vote thoughtfully and intentionally. Many Australian educators were shocked at both the lack of critical thinking among voters about their choice, but also at the rising rate of the number of people who met the requirement to vote (the fine for not voting is $250) by defacing their ballot and dropping it in the box. This phenomenon was particularly prevalent among voters 18-25. When I returned to visit in 2005, the idea of exploring education's role in fostering the development of civic responsibility was suddenly on the agenda.

I've been working here full time since June 2007. I've witnessed an election that changed the government for the first time in 11 years and its very first action was a national apology to indigenous peoples harmed by past policies for removing children, seen the growing strain in relationships with the US and an expanding desire for strong partnerships across Asia. This has also been a time of a booming economy – literally a gold rush as the nation becomes wealthy through the sale of its vast mineral assets. That wealth, success, and optimism masks a number of emerging and

troubling trends similar to the US: the impact of baby boomer retirement; difficulty in funding access to health care; the growing diversity of language, culture and faith across communities; a high rate of employment but also a declining rate of educational attainment and an expanding gap between rich and poor; anxiety about the supply chain for food, water, energy, and so on. Sound familiar?

The advantages of the Australian context include the fact that in a small country these problems are obvious and people tend to recognise them and organise to respond:
- under the new administration this time of wealth is being invested in improving critical infrastructure systems including education;
- the country is already profoundly affected by climate change and everyone is united in taking productive action;
- we have begun to walk a path toward to reconciliation with our indigenous peoples; and,
- a dialogue about the importance of civic engagement, democratic values, innovation and social capital is beginning.

My focus is to help my own institution be a leader in these crucial civic developments, especially to participate in a national dialogue with schools, community and state leaders and the higher education sector in articulating a role and an approach for education's involvement in enhancing civic and social capacity. While the advanced experience of the US provides a useful reservoir of research and practice literature, Australians are keen to interpret engagement into their own context. To date, my observation is that higher education here is comfortable and eager to focus on what they call "community engagement," an approach that links teaching and research activities to partnerships in each institution's region that address critical public issues and opportunities. The motto of UWS is: "Bringing Knowledge to Life" and this is reflected in the strategic priorities for improvements in research, teaching and engagement quality. Engagement is incredibly well integrated into the daily language of the institution; we have more work to do on implementation!

The national higher education association for engagement is called the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance, and its annual forum and journal focuses primarily on issues of economic and community development with a rich smattering of papers on student involvement in experiential learning activities that resemble what we would call academic service-learning or community-based learning. Yet direct observation reveals a rich and vast commitment to a wide array of experiential learning strategies across higher education with learning goals ranging from career development to service-learning and volunteerism programs.

On the other hand, through my involvement with the state departments of education in New South Wales, Queensland, and Western Australia I observe that it is the schools that are keen to take up a more direct approach to linking student learning to issues of civic responsibility, social responsibility and a commitment to a lifetime of community service. A national program on "values education" that was released several years ago articulates specific ways that education should be contributing to the uptake of personal, social and civic values that were described as essential to the Australian character. Each of the states has taken a unique approach to interpreting this agenda into schools but all are using some form of experiential learning based on concepts of service and partnership with community, enriched by reflection.

While here, I've also been in dialogue with engagement scholars from Africa, the Middle East, India, Southeast Asia, China, Japan, the Philippines, and the Pacific

Islands. When the International Partnership for Service Learning holds its 2009 conference in Hong Kong, all those nations and regions will be richly represented to discuss civic and community engagement. I encourage you to consider attending, for you will observe there the many different ways "engagement" is being interpreted to meet the social, civic, political, cultural, and economic goals and needs of diverse nations. To grossly overgeneralize, most of the countries in this part of the world see community engagement – the involvement of education in community and public issues through community-based learning and research partnerships – as a means to some of the following ends:

- Creating a new cultural value for volunteerism and/or philanthropy
- Building a stronger non-governmental sector to address societal needs
- To foster pro-social behaviors, particularly empathy for others
- To reduce racial and ethnic divisions and achieve reconciliation
- To raise educational attainment and literacy levels
- To enrich educational experiences beyond mere preparation for a career

That these end objectives don't necessarily speak directly about democracy, citizenship or civic engagement as we would in the US is obviously because the Asia/SW Pacific region is an area with many diverse government and political structures many of which only thinly link to concepts of democracy. While all of us obviously know that very few countries share the US conception of democracy that places high value on participation, debate, citizen voice, volunteerism, community service, social justice, equal opportunity….we sometimes seem to want to or at least assume we can export a particularly American version of education for civic engagement. The Tailloires Declaration and its network is perhaps the most ambitious and successful effort to date to create an international collaboration among universities and colleges exploring engagement as an educational priority. The newsletters, regional conferences, and teleconferences it hosts have greatly advanced awareness that engagement is truly a global initiative. Their work has been enormously helpful in our part of the world.

Your meeting is an extraordinary opportunity to reflect on what we in the US might learn by considering the diverse interpretations of engagement in educational systems around the world. The concepts of community engagement, scholarship of engagement, service-learning, community-based research, etc., have been widely adopted around the world, yet there are important, essential and legitimate differences in the design, expectations, and outcomes. I would argue that despite these differences in goals and models, at the essence of their work the vast majority of these nations are focusing on the same core principles and practices of "engagement as we know it – principles of partnership, mutual benefit, reciprocity, reflection, participation, knowledge exchange. The key issues facing America – dramatic changes and challenges related to climate, income, class, religion, race/ethnicity, security, education, opportunity, health/nutrition, and so on – are global issues that call for greater levels of engagement. How can we reach across international boundaries to learn from others, to test and refine our assumptions, to use a wider base of knowledge and practice to strengthen the foundational standards of engagement as a key role and objective of educational systems? To enhance legitimacy, funding, and policy support for engagement as a valid and useful form of learning and development for contemporary youth and young adults?

When I read the précis for this meeting Spencer is hosting, my mind became focused on the use of the word "know" in the document. Many of the questions posed to the participants in the meeting and those of us asked to provide provocative commentary,

include the word "know" in one tense or another. This resonates powerfully with my own sense of the state of the field of engagement, both in the USA with its particular desire to use engagement to enhance civic responsibility and in other nations who see engagement as a way to build strong communities in their own political, often not-so-democratic context. What do we need to know? How can an international perspective contribute to what we know?

In the rest of this reflection memo to you, I want to explore the issues of and attitudes toward "knowing" in relationship to community and civic engagement especially as it impacts on the commitments, dispositions, and capabilities of youth and young adult learners.

For example: Do we "know" why learning strategies oriented to civic engagement are expanding in application across schools and higher education institutions around the world?

The origins of the civic engagement movement trace to passionate individuals who believed that the link between education and democracy needed renewal, and that the core purposes of engaged learning (service-learning most often) were to inspire students to a love of democratic practices, active citizenship, and a commitment to social justice and volunteerism. As observation and evaluation began to examine the impacts of engagement on students, positive and unexpected effects were reported on academic learning, recruitment, retention, and healthy, pro-social behaviors especially among students with risk factors.

Tensions persist across the field of practitioners and advocates about these perspectives and purposes. Some people "know" that models of civically engaged such as service-learning are only legitimate if the focus of the activity is on social justice, equity, citizenship. Yet the evidence base for engagement's ability to transform text-messaging, I-pod deafened students into future Peace Corps Volunteers is unconvincing to most academics because of weaknesses in research design. On the other hand, some academics "know" that most of the growth in implementation of engagement programs arises from observed academic learning and retention benefits, many of which could contribute to a greater sense of social responsibility. Their research is marginally better only because institutions have vast experience at collecting recruitment, retention and learning data.

Can we design research that will begin to isolate the causal relationships between models of civically engaged learning and various learning objectives? Must the goal of civic engagement always be primarily "civic?" You may rush to say yes, of course, because logically we can appreciate the potential for multiple learning benefits for students. However, the emotional conflict between these two camps is quite real and is off-putting to many administrative and academic leaders who distrust the value and purpose of civic engagement as an educational activity because it may be more political than academic (see Stanley Fish).

I think we "know" a great deal about the features and practices of learning experiences that contribute to an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. I think we know very little about what specific features and practices produce the observed effects and outcomes. However, not to get too existential, perhaps we should talk about the political and strategic issues related to what does "knowing" really mean? Who will use any new knowledge about civic engagement and to what ends? Do we expect that new knowledge address the concerns and questions raised by both

practitioners and skeptics? To what end are we looking for a stronger theoretical foundation or an evidence base that demonstrates benefits? Isn't it interesting that novel ideas like teaching in ways that might promote civic engagement are held to a high standard of proof that many of our current teaching methods could not measure up to themselves?

Every year, Learn and Serve America fights for its programmatic life and is told by politicians and government officials that it can only be saved by "evidence – prove that it works, show us the research." Yet what evidence would meet expectations in a political context? Any evidence that is provided can easily be met by a request for more evidence. The evidence itself is routinely called into question because much of the engagement research to date is quite vulnerable to criticism for its quality. The current administration (and Congress has largely bought in to the model) has succeeded in setting the standard of proof for evidence as "scientific research using randomized assignment control group studies on a large scale." It is not necessary to list the problems inherent in such a restrictive model because the purpose is blatantly political. Decisions on programmatic investments are based on a competition, and to date civic engagement has not been a successful competitor in the Federal realm. We need a different approach to research and evidence if engagement is to gain formal policy and financial support from government or within educational institutions.

Whether the questions come from politicians or academic skeptics, my suspicion is that the calls for better evidence aren't really about "prove that it works to produce better learning or more civically-minded individuals" although that would be a great help. The calls are more about proving what it is about civic engagement that produces the obvious positive effects on student learning and attitudes – is it duration or the nature of the activity or the interaction with others or the experience of making a difference that produces the improvements we routinely see in students? Perhaps a consequence of a history of lots of positive rhetoric and rapid growth without a strong evidence base makes skeptics feel that engagement sounds like a magic pill that solves all learning problems. Our future research on engagement needs to be more detailed, more critical, more detached. And a large scale, longitudinal, control group study wouldn't be bad either!

The challenges and criticisms of engaged learning models are often fair given the lack of quality evidence. As the entire education system struggles to provide basic instruction in an increasingly constrained financial and physical infrastructure, what do we have to "know" in order to say that civic engagement, which can be both labor and time intensive, is worth the investment? Sadly, much of education policy and strategy does not facilitate the adoption or recognition of new approaches that in the short run seem to be expensive, when in the near term the innovation might likely produce leveraged benefits and ultimately a potential for savings or revenue. What would policymakers have to "know" in order to step across the risky divide between the traditional models and designs of the past and the dynamic and effective models emerging from service-learning and other engagement innovations? Education has become powerfully politicized which makes it easy to paint it in broad stereotypes and generalizations. Such a context ensures that innovations can easily be hidden, suppressed, criticized as flukes or fads. We do need more scientific research that establishes a more detailed view of the causality between pedagogy, experience, and the outcomes of civic engagement. Beyond better research on student learning and development through civic engagement, what do we need to "know" about academic organisations to create a capacity for risk-taking in educational institutions and systems (and political leaders!)?

I believe that introducing greater attention to international models of civic and community-engaged learning will help broaden our perspective and enhance our ability to look at our own approaches and outcomes more critically and objectively. Such is the historic intellectual purpose of comparative research across nations.

Civic, or more often community engagement learning models are being adopted in democratic and non-democratic countries for quite different reasons. Research in these nations will challenge and diversify our views and, I suspect, help us focus more specifically on linking engagement to established theories of student learning styles, cognitive development, social development, moral and ethical development.

From my own experiences and interactions with engagement scholars and practitioners from countries that most of us would not think of as democratic, the goals and objectives they attach to their implementation of community engagement as a teaching and learning strategy include:

- Academic benefits – they have largely been convinced by US evidence of impacts on recruitment, retention, attainment
- Resonance with the needs and styles of indigenous learners; addressing reconciliation; meeting needs of indigenous communities
- Developing employability skills, especially in students from populations not previously well-represented in the workforce
- Encouraging students toward particular fields through experience
- Fostering new cultural values regarding
  o Philanthropy
  o Volunteerism
  o Social responsibility/empathy
- Encouraging growth in the NGO/Community sector
- Addressing issues of reconciliation from past wars
- Addressing issues of climate change, water quality, food supply, community health, housing, etc.
- Intergenerational mentoring

The point is not whether or not we see these issues as relevant to civic engagement but can we learn to learn from the experiences and models used by others to achieve goals important to their societies and contexts. Outside the US, the word civic often has limited application, but the practices, challenges, and expectations associated with engagement strategies are quite similar. I do believe attention to international perspectives can sharpen and enhance our research directions in ways that will meet some of our issues with "knowing" why engagement does or does not produce learning and developmental benefits for students.

For example, a major engagement objective across the Asia/SW Pacific region involves partnerships with indigenous communities. Vanderbilt University and Tulane University have approached me to discuss international exchange relationships that would involve learning, service, and research activities for US undergraduate and graduate students collaborating with indigenous communities and students here in Australia. Recently a world conference on Indigenous Family Strengths was held in Australia and nearly every dialogue and session was speaking to issues of civic engagement between and within academic institutions and indigenous communities. There is a growing desire to facilitate international exchange among indigenous peoples and to involve them in conducting research on how engagement can address the long-time challenges and problems of indigenous communities, making it possible to heal

differences and work together in productively engaged partnerships. There are extraordinary opportunities for research inherent in these international activities

A second example is that Australia and many neighboring nations have a long tradition of cooperative education or other forms of work-integrated learning. To the extent that engaged learning models such as academic service-learning have been taken up has been facilitated by that context. In the US academic culture, engaged learning tends to be seen as a somewhat separate activity and many institutions are challenged to embed it in core aspects of the curriculum. In other countries, a long-time commitment to career-oriented external learning experiences for students created a natural door for service-learning to enter the mix. It is largely seen as a form of experiential learning defined by its particular learning objectives regarding civic and social responsibility in partnership with community. An important question for all of us: Is service-learning growing because this generation of students resonates with many forms of out-of-classroom active learning? Does the apparent benefit to students arise from the experience itself or from the form it takes?

Has engagement truly made progress in shaping productive citizens of the future or linking education to social and political (democratic goals) in the US or elsewhere? Or is it the tip of an iceberg that is revealing the contemporary importance and appeal of experiential, practical learning that prepares new generations of students for life in a globally connected, knowledge-driven, idea-fueled world economy? We need to "know" the answer because we also need to prepare these students to be motivated and prepared to act productively in a world society!

As I said above, I believe we really do "know" a great deal about the positive effects of well-designed civic engagement learning activities on student learning and development. But so far our "knowing" is largely observational, anecdotal, engaged, and experiential. And frankly, it is quite self-referential to the US experience in particular. Perhaps we would be wise and strategic to separate our knowledge needs into two agendas:
1.What does the field want to "know" to advance the quality, sustainability, and impact of the work?
2. What do we need to "know" to garner support, influence policy, or obtain funding from others?
I have come to doubt that the same research will serve both purposes. We may want to become more radical and global in our view because global citizenship is a high priority for most academic institutions. One of the ways civic engagement has spread across education is that advocates wisely associated its potential benefits with other strategic priorities of their educational institution. Given the economic and social imperative to develop American students to be knowledgeable, interested, and motivated to interact with the rest of the globe, research on international engagement seems a logical next step.

My suggestion regarding research approaches would be similar. Rather than try to continue conducting research on engagement outside traditional academic designs and strategies (write a grant, wait for approval, do the research, write the book, publish it in the journal of not very interesting stuff), let's think about jumping forward to the emerging research models: transdisciplinary research – a network, dynamic, evolving view of research that brings knowledge discovery processes into interaction with potential knowledge users. This kind of research raises questions that require many different kinds of expertise and wisdom at different stages; participants in the research can be networked electronically, be in any country, maybe never actually

meet but still work together; each discovery or revelation may change the direction of the research or spin off a new idea or study (See the works of Michael Gibbons from the UK). Given the nature and values of civic engagement itself, it seems natural that we would adopt new methodologies that will advance intellectual knowledge and practice knowledge. Doing so will also enhance the probability of attracting funding, not just from the US but other nations as well.

I will be thinking of you all, and wish you well in your dialogue. Your work could do much more than inform and improve civic engagement as a field of study and a teaching and learning practice. Given the need to build global citizens and turn our intellectual strengths to critical world issues, your dialogue on these topics just might change the world!

What We Still Need to Know—and Explore and Discuss—About How Young People Develop Long-Lasting Habits of Civic Engagement

What else do we need to know? For instance, do we know what developmental pathways contribute to individuals developing the commitments, dispositions, and sense of agency to participate long term (if episodically) in civic ways? What about family, income, class, religion, community, race/ethnicity, immigrant status? What environmental factors (e.g., political climate, school mission, quality and duration of community engagement experiences) contribute to the same characteristics? These are questions our conveners have really posed to all of us. I offer some initial comments from the perspective of one convinced that we need to engage not only in more collaborative, sophisticated research but also in more reflective, inclusive dialogue, bringing together scholars, practitioners, and community members to explore fundamental questions that stand between us and our ultimate goals (varied as those goals may be). Since I work specifically with higher education institutions committed to students' civic development, that is the focus of my comments, but it's important to note that many college students are not "young people," and significant educational disparities by race and class mean approximately half of all young people do not attend college.

What types of knowledge matter?

The limitations of existing research on service-learning and related civic engagement initiatives within higher education have already been outlined in numerous articles, speeches, and research agendas by prominent scholars in the field. We know remarkably little about how young people develop long-lasting habits of civic engagement if we assume that, in order to know something, we must have quantitative research that:

- tracks individuals' experiences, attitudes, and behaviors over many years;
- collects data that are not only self-reported;
- analyzes the interactions of multiple variables, including individual characteristics, program qualities, and environmental factors;
- uses experimental methods to create comparison groups and avoid the distortions of self-selection; and
- has been replicated to show that findings are not limited to a particular program or context.

We can claim to know more if we accept other types of quantitative and qualitative research projects and evaluations of particular higher education institutions' initiatives. We can also learn a great deal by drawing on scholarship that addresses such related topics as moral development and social movements. Presumably these findings and sources are summarized in another memo.

I agree with the calls for more sophisticated research designs that disaggregate data, identify mediating factors, and otherwise build on the studies done to date. That work would be valuable for informing civic engagement practitioners, advocates, and skeptics alike—and for challenging us all to support more consistently high-quality engagement efforts. Yet I would add another recommendation: to pursue future research in ways that are themselves community-engaged or participatory as well as

traditionally rigorous. Bringing diverse perspectives to bear on the development of research questions and methods and the analysis of results would probably yield richer insights into the complex

What "counts" as civic engagement?

Among the many definitional questions inherent in the framing questions (e.g., how do we define the long term? where is the line between habitual and non-habitual episodic participation?), perhaps the most persistent and important concerns the nature of civic engagement. Without a clear and appropriate definition of what it means to "participate . . . in civic ways," we cannot effectively study the pathways and factors supporting engagement.

Civic engagement is often defined through lists of activities: voting, volunteering with nonprofit organizations, participating in protests, attending community meetings, and so forth. This approach allows for relatively straightforward measures of young people's behaviors, and for those concerned with participation rates in certain areas—say, voting and electoral politics—the resulting research findings may prove useful. I am concerned, however, that this approach misses some actions that are considered civic by the actor and can have a significant positive impact on our society: setting up a medical practice or small business in an underserved area, for instance, meeting with others one-to-one as part of a community-based organizing campaign, or studying an endangered indigenous language that previous generations were forbidden to speak in school. If we define participation simply by the type of action taken, without regard to the intended or actual outcomes of that action, we may also advance a weak vision of civic responsibility. Contacting an elected official to request assistance expediting one's own passport request is not the civic equivalent of contacting the official to advocate a policy position with broader potential benefits.

Peter Levine's recent book offers a more nuanced definition of civic engagement and a helpful discussion of related issues (Levine, 2007). I am nonetheless intrigued by civic vocation or civic identity as an alternative framework for understanding and realizing people's full potential for civic participation—and thus for moving towards a more just, democratic, and sustainable society. This framework still requires the development of skills, knowledge, dispositions, and habits, but integrated into "a *holistic practice*" that "becomes a *deliberately chosen and repeatedly enacted aspect of the self*" (Knepfelkamp, 2008). Considering civic vocation an end point (as opposed to a step on the developmental pathway to particular civic actions) would mean conducting research on how young people develop this coherent sense of identity and commitment, growing out of their distinctive interests, values, experiences, traditions, philosophies, and community connections, as well as critical analysis of what's going on in the world and what strategies for social change are most promising. An approach that focuses on drawing people out instead of realizing an externally defined ideal might be especially promising today given young people's widely reported sensitivity and resistance to manipulation.

Consensus on what constitutes civic engagement ultimately seems both less important and less feasible than ongoing dialogue about it. In this field, we emphasize critical reflection as an essential element of student engagement but rarely devote adequate time to it ourselves. We proclaim the importance of multiple kinds of knowledge and reciprocal partnerships, but we too seldom listen deeply to stakeholders outside higher education—or even on-campus colleagues and students—and too often allow white middle-class norms to dominate as if they were universal. Whether we identify as practitioners or scholars, as long as we're human, our views of what is civically

effective and ethical will be shaped by our backgrounds and contexts; robust discussion about what types of engagement "count" and why is in itself a vital civic activity.

How do individual outcomes interact with community outcomes?

In order to understand young people's civic development more fully, we must consider their specific experiences of civic engagement as well as their political, social, and economic environments. According to James Youniss and Miranda Yates, there is "strong evidence for the notion that political practices acquired during youth can effectively result in identity-forming political habits that, thus, become part of the individual's self-definition and shape the individual's relationship to society" (Youniss and Yates, 1999). In making that point, they cite two studies that compare young people who participated in the civil rights movement with peers who did not and find that the participants were still significantly more engaged decades later. Would the long-term impact be equally powerful for people who participated in movements that were less successful in changing policy and/or transforming social relations? How might their commitments and sense of efficacy differ?

Colleges and universities strive to engage their students at least in part for purposes other than social change; while they proclaim a commitment to preparing responsible citizens, they also value engagement for possibly improving community relations, students' academic performance and persistence, satisfaction with school, career success, alumni giving, and other non-civic outcomes they deem desirable. In part as a result of that dynamic, research on the community impact of civic engagement initiatives in higher education is unfortunately even more limited than research on student impact. More research is needed not only to fulfill engaged campuses' ethical responsibility to do no harm (at the very least), but also to reveal the interactions between community outcomes and young people's attitudes and future actions.

How do civic engagement program characteristics and larger institutional contexts affect young people's civic development?

Multi-institutional research projects will be important for documenting the effects of multiple types of programs, considering program structures (service-learning in single courses and learning communities, community-based research, community service work-study positions, co-curricular volunteerism and advocacy, service requirements, etc.) and guiding philosophies or conceptual frameworks (social justice, participatory democracy, asset-based community development, public work, cultural preservation, social entrepreneurship, personal and social responsibility, etc.), as well as their community outcomes. I suspect that multi-year programs will prove to be relatively successful at fostering a life-long commitment to civic engagement; among other strengths, deliberately developmental programs are likely more able to encourage young people wrestling with outrage at systemic problems or disappointment about their own limited impact to learn from their experiences and to continue seeking powerful ways of addressing public issues.

The impact of conceptual frameworks may be more complicated. Attention to that topic would benefit the field by encouraging practitioners to clarify their often unspoken assumptions and by exploring how well various approaches support and recognize a diverse student population's civic development. The predominance of white women in many civic engagement programs suggests we have not yet created

expansive cultures of engagement that address privilege and contribute to more inclusive communities. As noted above, students may be engaged in civic life in many ways outside college- or university-based programs, but they may also be prevented from participating in such programs by avoidable—and undesirable—cultural or financial barriers. Both research and dialogue will be critical for identifying the changes necessary to ensure that all young people have access to meaningful opportunities for civic engagement and that campus engagement efforts reflect the full array of civic traditions.   More effectively integrating campuses' diversity and engagement agendas can help meet multiple goals, enriching intellectual work, enhancing students' civic skills and commitments, and deepening the integrity of institutions' commitments to a strong democracy.

The broader institutional contexts in which civic engagement programs exist is another factor that likely influences the nature of those programs and students' civic development. The research agenda published in "Higher Education: Civic Mission & Civic Effects" calls for research with a

> focus on relevant characteristics of institutions: not just size, type, mission—for which data are easily available—but also campus culture; policies (such as promotion and tenure criteria, allocation of the faculty to first-year courses, campus work-study allocations, and financial-aid policies); institutional leadership at all levels from the department to the university as a whole; and the array of civic engagement opportunities provided across each campus and community for full- and part-time students and for students in different fields of study (Carnegie Foundation and CIRCLE, 2006).

This list of characteristics prioritizes campus culture and policies as they pertain to student life. I would suggest that future studies also take into account cultures, policies, and practices as they relate to the campus as an employer, landowner, and consumer. Civic engagement practitioners, advocates of institutional reform, and others would benefit greatly from knowing more about whether and how the nature of a campus's operations beyond its educational mission affects its efforts to prepare students for life-long involvement in civic affairs. Given Americans' declining trust in major public institutions and leaders, it may be important for colleges and universities to be perceived as civically responsible and responsive themselves, if they want to succeed in developing engaged citizens. On the other hand, inconsistencies between institutional rhetoric and action sometimes motivate young people to mobilize for change, as evident in recent campaigns against sweatshops and investments in Sudan. The interactions between individual and institutional engagement seem well worth exploring.

What can we do to make what we know matter more in terms of practice?

Civic engagement is clearly a complex phenomenon, and while researchers have begun to unpack some of the complexities, much more remains to be learned. At the same time, existing knowledge is less influential on individual and institutional practices and policies than we might wish. Lectures remain prevalent in college and university classrooms, for example, despite the fact that the scholarship of teaching and learning clearly documents the greater effectiveness of other pedagogies. Thus while advancing knowledge through research about young people's civic development, we must also identify and implement strategies for communicating and applying knowledge to support the actual civic development of young people.

Through my position at Campus Compact, I hope to make valuable research widely accessible by inviting both established and emerging leaders to synthesize relevant findings in a series of research briefs that will be posted online. Individual practitioners—faculty as well as campus and community partner staff and student leaders—simply cannot keep up with the burgeoning literature on civic engagement, which is now published in the journals and presented at the conferences of dozens of disciplinary and interdisciplinary associations, in addition to the increasing number of journals and conferences focused on engagement. Recognizing public dissemination and engagement in hiring, tenure, and promotion policies would certainly provide a valuable incentive for faculty to reach out to broader audiences. There's also deeper work to do, however, building a sense of common purpose and mutual respect among practitioners and researchers of engagement. Judith Ramaley, president of Winona State University, has observed that engaged scholars often

> move from "I'm doing work that might be useful to the public" to "I will interpret my work in order that others may understand its value" [or] "I know things the public ought to know and I will teach it to them," to a very different approach that builds upon a deep collaboration with people in the broader community. I think it is a continuous movement toward, "I will work with the public to generate the kind of knowledge that will be useful to all of us" (Ellison and Eatman, 2008).

It may require substantial effort, but developing a collaborative culture of inquiry that connects colleagues across campus, as well as community members, will enrich both our knowledge and our practice of civic engagement. I look forward to working with all of you toward that end.

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In preparation for the June 25-6 meeting, I have been asked to address two major questions.

1. What do we need to know?

We have many studies that show positive effects of specific programs in which young people are "civically engaged" (e.g., they conduct service, discuss social issues, create news media, conduct research on their communities, organize advocacy campaigns, manage voluntary associations, or advise on institutional policies). We often find positive effects from these experiences on civic motivations, values, skills, and knowledge. Sometimes these experiences also contribute to other desirable outcomes, such as staying in school or avoiding pregnancy. The large AmeriCorps longitudinal study released in May 2008 is the latest in a series of such program evaluations.

In short, we know that high-quality programs work. It is now much less important than it was 10 years ago to make the basic case that civic activities are beneficial. We could still learn more about specific *elements* of programs and how they affect various specific outcomes. For example, it is controversial whether service-learning projects must be chosen by young people and whether they must include "reflection" activities such as discussions or journal-writing. Studies that investigate such elements of program design are welcome.

It would also be useful to compare various types of active civic engagement so that we knew more about their relative advantages and disadvantages. For instance, it would be helpful to compare community service and political advocacy. Such research will probably not instruct us to pick one type of program over the other. More likely, we will find that each has different impacts on different populations.

Although it is useful to compare types and elements of programs, I believe it is a mistake to imagine that a body of research (no matter how voluminous and rigorous) will ever yield a conclusive list of do's and don'ts for practitioners. There is too much variation in the populations served, motivations of youth, community assets and problems, purposes of programs, political and institutional constraints, and backgrounds and goals of the adult teachers or leaders. Decisions should be based mainly on local circumstances and opportunities, guided by local experience. There are limits to any general research findings about program design.

Thus I recommend the following research priorities that go beyond program design:

i. What are the effects of major educational experiences that are *not* civic programs?

We can hypothesize that youth will develop very different civic identities if they attend, for example, a large, well-funded, clean, and safe suburban high school with numerous academic "tracks" and social cliques and an emphasis on football, versus a small charter school in a poor urban neighborhood that has been founded because the main school system is considered a failure and the charismatic founder has a strong ideological orientation.

Those are only two examples of educational contexts that are created by social environments, educators' choices, and public policies. The full spectrum of educational contexts is enormous. It would be useful to isolate the aspects of these contexts that matter most for civic development (building on studies of school-level effects by Gimpel et al, Torney-Purta, Bryck at al, Campbell, Kahne and Sporte, and others).

For example, what are the civic impacts of the following?

- High-stakes testing across the curriculum;
- Tracking students, versus mixing students of different academic backgrounds;
- Giving students a wide choice of courses (not only in civics, but across the disciplines), versus requiring them to take a common curriculum;
- Neighborhood schools, versus schools that draw from a wide geographic area;
- Charter schools;
- Small schools;
- Schools that are integrated by race, ethnicity, and class versus schools that are *de facto* segregated;
- Spending more (or less) on school facilities.

ii. What are the effects of various public policies on civic outcomes?

Even if it is clear that high-quality civic experiences have good outcomes, we do not automatically know which policies to adopt at the school, district, state, or national level. For example, high-quality service-learning promotes civic identities. But that does not mean that service-learning should be required or even dramatically expanded with additional funds. Quality might fall as scale increased. Thus the effects of policies require separate investigation. It is important to consider a wide range of policy options including:

- mandatory outcome measures (such as exams) with various kinds of stakes for students, teachers, or schools;
- mandatory experiences, such as specific courses or programs that everyone must take;
- mandatory provision of opportunities (such as a rule that every school must have a student newspaper);
- funding for programs in and out of schools, for teacher education and professional development, or for curriculum development;
- other rewards, such as prizes or citations for civic engagement;
- policies not directly concerned with civics, such as charter schools, vouchers, desegregation plans, changes in funding formulas.

Some of promising options have never been tried in the real world, so they cannot be studied empirically. In those cases, research will have to rely on analogies to other areas of educational policy and general findings about how policies affect schools.

All of the questions raised so far should be considered with attention to three dimensions: *quantity*, *quality*, and *equality*. Quantity is important because very small-scale or rare programs do not have social impact. Quality is essential because it is perfectly possible to offer a well-intentioned course or experience that has no positive effect or that it is even counterproductive. And equality is crucial because it is very easy to design policies or programs that actually exacerbate political inequality by enhancing the civic and political skills of students who are already advantaged. Kahne and Middaugh's recent paper for CIRCLE basically found that civic opportunities in

California are reasonably common, have good effects, but are reserved for the most advantaged students. Thus California's schools meet the test of quantity and quality but fail on equality to a profoundly troubling degree. Similarly, student governments are most common in affluent and successful schools and draw successful students within those schools. They probably decrease the equality of civic agency in the United States even as they benefit those who participate.

2. Where should we go from here?

In order to advance our understanding of educational contexts (not just discrete programs) on civic development, I would like to see large longitudinal studies that ask about civic outcomes and about many types of educational experiences, not just civics courses and extracurriculars. Ideally, these studies would combine quantitative information derived from students, quantitative information derived from official records, and qualitative assessment. The last is essential, because there is an enormous range of quality in most experiences. For example, classroom discussions of issues, as Diana Hess shows, vary greatly in their degree of ideological diversity, use of information, and topics. Thus asking students whether they discuss issues is not enough; such data should be complemented by observations that allow us to classify the nature of these discussions.

Because large longitudinal studies are expensive, a promising idea is to make studies of civic development part of larger studies that also investigate, for example, the effects of school policies on academic success.

In order to address the issue of equality (raised above), I think we have to assume that our educational systems will continue to fail many students for the foreseeable future. Roughly one third will drop out of high school and only about one half will attend college in their early adulthood. We know that these youth are disengaged from politics and civic life, compared to their college-bound peers. Schools cannot compensate once teenagers have left them. Thus we badly need research that identifies ways of enhancing the civic agency of young people who are not enrolled in school or college. Relevant institutions include unions, trade schools, community colleges, political parties, workplaces, entertainment media, the military, and prisons. A starting point is to find out where some non-college young people get political and civic information and ideas and where they congregate and work together.

The questions raised so far require relatively ambitious research designs and will not yield results rapidly. We should also prepare for short-term opportunities. The pending change of administration in Washington and the debate about reauthorizing No Child Left Behind may create openings for researchers and practitioners to advise policymakers. We cannot wait for the studies that we would most like to conduct, but should be ready to offer ideas that are *reasonably* well supported by experience and research. Choosing those recommendations is a topic worthy of discussion.

- *What do we know (and need to know) about the developmental or educational pathways characterizing individuals who have the commitments, dispositions, skills, and sense of agency or efficacy that lead to the intention to participate and then to actual participation in civic activities?*
- *What is the role of characteristics of individuals such as gender, social and educational background, race/ethnicity, and immigrant status?*
- *What is the role of contextual factors and processes, such as the participatory atmosphere of the school, opportunities for meaningful and respectful discussion in the classroom, curriculum and text materials that are motivating for students, and experiences of volunteering that are linked to study of the community?*

In answering these questions I will draw upon several sources. First, is long-term research that began with my interdisciplinary collaboration in studying political socialization in the 1960s. Second, is my recent experience in coordinating the IEA Civic Education Study (CIVED) of 90,000 14-year-olds from 28 countries tested in 1999 and 50,000 16 to 19-year-olds from 16 countries tested in 2000. I summarize secondary analysis conducted since the basic IEA report was released in 2001 and incorporate findings from other research. Third, I have been exploring Lave and Wenger's situated cognition model in order to systematize conclusions from research. This framework emphasizes ways in which learning in and outside of school involves young people in communities of practice. These groups share common goals and situate learning for their members in the areas of meaningful knowledge and skills, identity, participatory orientations (efficacy or sense of agency) and participatory practices. One problem may be that there are few communities of civic practice successfully engaging young adults.

I believe that prescriptions and programs have too frequently been built on research that: lacked an adequate conceptual framework or theory, used poorly designed questionnaires, ignored the context or situation influencing political and civic pathways, generalized results inappropriately, or paid little attention to gender and socioeconomic differences.

The IEA CIVED Study did not solve all of these problems, but with its psychometrically strong questionnaire and nationally representative samples it does provide a useful basis for answering the questions framing this paper.

What do we know about civic participation and political efficacy or agency?

There are <u>multiples modes</u> of participatory behavior. <u>First, willingness to vote</u> and obtain information about a candidate and issues are important. Voting has both symbolic and instrumental meaning. It is the way in which adults relate to conventional political institutions. However, it appears from the IEA and other research that voting practice does not relate to other types of participation and cannot be used as a proxy for them. A <u>second</u> type of participation is <u>planning to join a political party;</u> few young people plan to do this (in most European countries as well as the U.S.). A <u>third</u> type of participation is <u>as a volunteer in the community.</u> About 50% of U.S. 14-year-olds in the IEA CIVED study said they were members of

volunteer groups, the highest proportion for any of the 28 countries. A large proportion said they planned to volunteer as adults. However, in most cases this activity does not connect to current or future political activity or to keeping up with political issues. <u>Fourth</u>, there is the potential for <u>protesting</u>. This activity is likely to express the resistance that characterizes alienated youth and is usually not a principled protest against injustice. The civil rights protests of the 1960s are not models for the current generation of young people, in other words.

In addition to civic participation, there are a variety of other attitudes and values that schools promote: support for the rule of law, a sense of the efficacy of citizens in the political process, a sense of trust in government-related institutions, a feeling of national pride, and attitudes supporting rights for groups experiencing discrimination (including immigrants, racial or linguistic groups, and women). In order to examine the attitudes that characterize different pathways to citizenship, we recently performed a cluster analysis of the 14-year-olds in the United States tested by IEA in 1999.[11] The two positively oriented cluster groups were those who believed in <u>conventional citizenship norms or values</u>, such as trust in institutions, and those who were strong supporters of <u>social justice</u>, including positive attitudes toward minority group rights. Each of these two clusters comprised about 30% of the 2800 ninth-graders tested. Thirty-five percent of the students formed a third cluster characterized by <u>indifference</u> to political and civic norms. There was also a small <u>alienated</u> group (about 4%) who held very negative attitudes toward immigrants and minority groups, expressed a belief that it was not important to obey the law, and were willing to engage in illegal protest activities.

The two groups who are committed to conventional civic participation and to social justice also report that they expect to vote, engage in other electoral activities, and volunteer in their communities. The problem is that many of these young people will fail to act upon these norms and beliefs when they become adults.

The third group of adolescents, those indifferent to both conventional and social justice oriented citizenship, is similar in its relative size to groups of indifferent young adults found in other studies. Some of these young people may be brought into the process as adults when they are mobilized by an attractive candidate or a specific issue, for example. The fourth group of alienated youth (primarily males and many of them potential high school dropouts) presents a problem that cannot be ignored. Even a small group with virulent attitudes can create serious problems.

<u>Efficacy</u> is a frequently studied concept in this field. Psychologists define the sense of self-efficacy as confidence in one's abilities to understand something or take a certain kind of action. A distinction can be made between self-efficacy and collective-efficacy (which entails action taken as part of a group). Some political scientists use concepts and measures from National Election Surveys designed decades ago, but scholars have recently been making distinctions between three types of political efficacy: 1) *diffuse internal political efficacy*, 2) *diffuse external political efficacy*, and 3) *contextual political efficacy*. While diffuse internal efficacy is a general self-evaluation (e.g., our perceived ability to understand "politics and government"), diffuse external efficacy is an evaluation of the overall responsiveness of non-specific targets of political action (e.g., our belief about whether public officials, in general, care what "people like me" think). The third, and recently recognized category is contextual political efficacy. It

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[11] Torney-Purta, J., Barber, C., Wilkenfeld, B., & Homana, G. (2008). Profiles of civic life skills among adolescents. *Child Indicators Research, 1,* 86-106.

represents situation-specific evaluations of our capacities for political action and the effectiveness of such actions in specific contexts (e.g., how hard or easy it would be to raise awareness of a political issue in a community or to influence a state budget decision). This third type of efficacy is close to the concept of political agency .

This three-part conceptualization of political efficacy is especially appropriate for studies of young people, whose political engagement often occurs in specific contexts and using a range of strategies. It was developed as part of the Political Engagement Project conducted with college students (Beaumont, et al.). That project concluded that a long-term inclination toward civic engagement depended to some extent on the individual having a certain threshold level of internal and external political efficacy but also depended on the individual possessing contextualized political efficacy (including the skills for judging a context and choosing strategies likely to be effective for a particular problem).

In summary, important distinctions need to be made – between different types of participation (e.g. voting and volunteering), between conventional and social justice orientations, between alienation and indifference, between generalized efficacy and contextualized efficacy. A later section addresses what is known about how personal attributes and characteristics of context relates to these differentiated outcomes. It is clear that more research is needed to explore different pathways or trajectories. This should include analysis of existing data sets as well as collection of new data using multiple methods (with longitudinal designs as part of the overall plan).

What do we know about civic *skills*?

The focus in research and programs should be on skills that can be related to contextualized efficacy and to the types of participation in which we want young people to be engaged when they are adults (voting, volunteering, finding and interpreting information about a political issue in order to formulate effective action, being ready to discuss issues with others, and being able to exercise their political voice on-line or in face to face groups).

The IEA Civic Education Study measured skills in interpreting political information (e.g., leaflets and cartoons). These are important in getting information related to elections, issues, and contexts for social action and they are related to the ability to understand differences in point of view, for example, between candidates or between those supporting different policies.

Those who study adults often concentrate on skills in being part of, mobilizing, or leading a group which might take political or social action. Such skills include getting others to vote or volunteer and managing conflict. Retrospective measures of experience in school and in community or work groups are often used. A considerable literature from political science, psychology, education, and communication also deals with skills in participating in discussion/deliberation or problem solving among individuals of all ages. This includes groups where people have diverse views on matters of social importance.

In summary, a variety of types of skills (including interpreting political information and participating in or leading a group discussion) are valuable. Research with a psychological dimension on all the topics is especially needed.[12]

What characteristics of individuals should be considered?

Results from CIVED and other studies show gender differences in civic outcomes. Females across countries are less likely than males to feel efficacious in understanding politics and participating in political discussion. However, females are more likely than males to associate citizenship participation with environmental organizations or volunteering, to believe that governments should provide for the social welfare of individuals, to possess attitudes supportive of social justice, to say they are likely to vote, to say they are likely to collect money for charity or other social causes, and to say they are likely to collect signatures for a petition. Females are much more likely than males to support women's political rights. Many of these gender differences held across the 28 countries testing 14-year-olds and in the 16 countries (not including the United States) where older students (16-19) were tested. However, there has been little attempt to explore how the pathways into participation in young adulthood may differ for males and females.

In the IEA CIVED study differences by home literacy background and by expected further education (educational success) are substantial in the United States for knowledge, skills, likelihood of voting, and sense of internal efficacy. About twice as many students who expect to complete college intend to vote as students who only plan to graduate from high school. There has recently been a long-overdue attempt to study the SES gap in civic knowledge and engagement.

Differences between racial and ethnic groups are relatively large. For example, a recent secondary analysis found considerable gaps in civic knowledge and in educational experiences for Latino students in the United States. There are also notable differences between native-born and immigrant students in the United States. Native-born students have higher civic knowledge and skills scores and are more likely to say they will vote. However, immigrant students are more likely to discuss international politics with teachers, family, and peers, and to read international news in the newspaper than are native born students.

In summary, researchers have a great deal to contribute to further studies of these individual-level (or person-centered) characteristics. There may be differing developmental and educational paths to a sense of agency and to the likelihood of civic engagement and participation for males and for females, for students from different racial or ethnic groups, or for those who grow up in more impoverished neighborhoods (compared to those raised in wealthier circumstances).

What contexts and processes (especially in educational institutions) make a difference?

The IEA CIVED results (and those of follow-up analyses) suggest that schools play an important role in fostering civic engagement.[13]

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[12] There is also considerable research on civic content knowledge, which is correlated with but not the same as civic skills. Because of space constraints, this research has not been reviewed here.

[13] These generalizations are based on analyses which hold constant a variety of other factors, thus ruling out a number of alternative explanations.

- *First,* civic knowledge and skills, largely learned at school, are positively related to the expected likelihood of voting (in all countries for both 14-year-olds and 16 to 19-year-olds in the international IEA analysis).
- *Second,* the IEA study finds that students who study civic topics more frequently do better on the knowledge/skills test. Countries that emphasize a hands-on approach in their curricula, such as the United States, Australia, and Sweden, have 14-year-olds students who excel in civic skills. Further research has shown that it is possible to prepare text material to be more motivating to students than current textbooks.
- *Third*, having a classroom in which there are high standards for learning the material makes a difference in both civic content knowledge and civic skills acquisition.
- *Fourth,* an explicit emphasis on the importance of elections and voting in the school curriculum is related to students' expectation that they will vote.
- *Fifth,* an explicit emphasis on learning about community problems is related to the likelihood of volunteering and also to the likelihood that young people believe in the efficacy of bringing public attention to issues and of collaborating in finding solutions (contextualized efficacy or agency). In the United States studying about the community in school boosts the civic effectiveness of the experience individuals have when they volunteer outside of school.
- *Sixth,* teachers who have experienced in-service training have students who have higher knowledge scores and who are more likely to expect to vote.
- *Seventh*, experiencing a school climate in which student groups (both student councils and informal groups) are perceived to be effective is positively related to the expectation of voting and of volunteering. This confidence in the value of school participation also relates to contextualized political efficacy.
- *Eighth*, experiencing a classroom climate characterized by respect for the opinions of others and discussion of issues (including those on which there are differences of opinion) is related to civic knowledge/skills, to the expectation of voting, and to internal political efficacy.

School-based correlates of knowledge are similar for high-resource and low-resource schools in the IEA study. Creating more empowering school environments or more open climates for classroom discussion or higher expectations for learning would benefit students regardless of their home background. An open climate for classroom discussion also contributes to lessening (though not eliminating) the gap between immigrant and non-immigrant students' civic knowledge and skills. In contrast, discussion with parents had a positive impact on civic knowledge only in homes with high levels of educational resources; it had no significant impact for students from low-resource homes.

Schools are the public arenas in which nearly all young people spend substantial amounts of time in the first two decades of their lives. It is not realistic to think that youth organizations are able to pick up all the slack from the recent reduction in social studies and civic-related education. However, evidence from IEA CIVED and other studies show that organizational participation makes a small but significant difference in enhancing several types of political/civic participation. There are youth organizations, after-school programs, tutoring, religious and service groups, performance-oriented troupes or teams, and environmental organizations offering adolescents experience in leadership in non-hierarchically organized groups and motivating them to gain information about issues and better their communities.

Finally, it is short-sighted to ignore the informal peer network. The peer group "situates" learning and engagement for young people. Young people's participation in political discussion is shaped by expected peer reactions (especially anticipated ridicule by the popular students). These influences have been intensified by the technological innovations of the last several years (such as social networking sites and cell phones).   Climates of intolerance of different races or religions present problematic settings for fostering short- or long-term civic engagement.

In summary, two decades of research have shown the effectiveness of multifaceted school programs (courses with strong and explicit civic content, a classroom climate for respectfully discussing issues, and a school climate where students are respected and empowered). However, policy makers and educators have not confronted the next steps – how can teachers and other adults be prepared and supported to provide sufficient preparation for civic engagement starting in elementary school and becoming increasingly involving so that by the age of 14 or 15 years students see citizenship as part of their identity? How can supportive communities of practice be developed for later adolescents and young adults? As important, how would it be possible to reduce the civic gap between students of different races or those from more and less advantaged socioeconomic and educational backgrounds?

HOW YOUNG PEOPLE DEVELOP LONG-LASTING HABITS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
(HIGHER ED GROUP)

JUNE 24-25, 2008

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How Young People Develop Long-Lasting Habits of Civic Engagement

Higher Education Group

June 24-25, 2008

Spencer Foundation

MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, June 24

2:30 – 3:30 pm   **Welcome, Introductions and Meeting Overview**

3:30 – 4:15 pm   **Laying the Groundwork – What do we currently know?**
                          Panel:
                          Memo authors: Lori Vogelgesang and Julie Plaut
                          Respondents: Laura Stoker and Charles Strain

4:15 – 5:30 pm   **What are the intersections between theory and practice? Part I**
                          Panel:
                          Memo author: Barbara Jacoby
                          Respondents: Dilafruz Williams, Bruce Mallory, and Gail Robinson

6:00 pm   **Dinner** *(mk restaurant, 868 N. Franklin Street)*

Wednesday, June 25

8:00 am   Hot breakfast available

8:30 – 9:45 am   **What are the intersections between theory and practice? Part II**

                          Small group discussion:
                          How do we currently use what we know? What do we still need to learn?

9:45 – 10:00 am   **Break**

10:00 – 12:00 pm   **Setting a research agenda**
                          What research investments can advance theory and practice around how
                          young people develop an understanding of the public good, a belief that
                          they can contribute to the public good, and a long term commitment to
                          doing so?

                          Overview: Memo author, Cathy Burack

                          Small group discussion facilitated by Andy Furco and Ande Diaz

12:00 – 1:00 pm	**Lunch**
1:00 – 1:45 pm	**Communication across stakeholders**
	What are the vehicles that allow multiple stakeholders to learn and communicate about research and practice? How do we make use of resources that are currently available? What are the challenges?
1:45 – 2:00 pm	**Wrap-up and Adjourn**

How Young People Develop Long-Lasting Habits of Civic Engagement

K-12 Group

June 25-26, 2008

Spencer Foundation

MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, June 25

4:00 – 5:00 pm	**Welcome, Introductions and Meeting Overview**
5:00 – 6:00 pm	**Laying the Groundwork – What do we currently know? (Part I)** Panel: Memo author: Lonnie Sherrod Respondents: Jim Youniss and Fran Rudoff
6:30 pm	**Dinner** *(Topolobampo/Frontera Grill, 445 N. Clark Street)*

Thursday, June 26

8:00 am	Hot breakfast available
8:30 – 9:30 am	**Laying the Groundwork – What do we currently know? (Part II)** Panel: Memo authors: Joe Kahne and Judith Torney-Purta Respondents: Dorothy Stoneman and Mark Lopez
9:30 – 11:15 am	**What are the intersections between theory and practice?** Panel: Memo author: Shawn Ginwright Respondent: Shelley Billig Small group discussion: How do we currently use what we know? What do we still need to learn?
11:15 – 11:30 am	**Break**
11:30 – 12:30 pm	**Setting a research agenda (Part I)** What research investments can advance theory and practice around how young people develop an understanding of the public good, a belief that they can contribute to the public good, and a long term commitment to doing so? Small group discussion facilitated by Andy Furco and Carolyn Pereira

12:30 – 1:30 pm	**Lunch**
1:30 – 2:30 pm	**Setting a research agenda (Part II)**

Group discussion continues: What research investments can advance theory and practice around how young people develop an understanding of the public good, a belief that they can contribute to the public good, and a long term commitment to doing so?

2:30 – 3:15 pm	**Communication across stakeholders**

What are the vehicles that allow multiple stakeholders to learn and communicate about research and practice? How do we make use of resources that are currently available? What are the challenges?

3:15 – 4:00 pm	**Wrap-up and Adjourn**