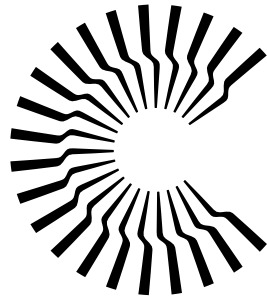


*The New Student Politics*  
*Curriculum Guide*



**Campus Compact**

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*The New Student Politics Curriculum Guide*

Table of Contents

Preface..... 2  
Forward ..... 2  
Part I: Further Exploration of Service Politics ..... 4  
Part II: How to Connect The New Student Politics to a Service-Learning Course..... 8  
Part III: Reflecting on Service and Politics ..... 11  
Onward ..... 17  
Appendices ..... 18  
Tools: Case Studies..... 18  
Tools: A Typology of Service Politics..... 24  
Tools: Reflection Questions ..... 27  
Resource List ..... 28

## **The New Student Politics Curriculum Guide: How to Introduce Reflection on Service and Politics into Service-Learning Courses Across the Disciplines.**

*The New Student Politics: The Wingspread Statement on Student Civic Engagement (2002)* can be assigned as a text in a political science service-learning course that has as an explicit course objective the exploration of contemporary conceptions of citizenship, or a sociology service-learning course that focuses on community building and social transformation. Additionally, the text can be incorporated in service-learning courses across the disciplines with the aid of *The New Student Politics Curriculum Guide*. The *Curriculum Guide* is designed to provide a structure for engaging students in reflection on their community service experiences in a way that allows for the exploration of the connections between service and politics, the purposes of their education and their work in community, and their role as participants in the civic life of American democracy. The structured reflection provided in the *Curriculum Guide* recognizes that all disciplinary competence is infused with an element of civic awareness and purpose, or as William Sullivan has written, there is "no viable pursuit of technical excellence without participation in those civic enterprises through which expertise discovers its human meaning."

The *Curriculum Guide* delves deeper into the concept of "service politics" introduced in *The New Student Politics*, provides a guide to including civic engagement reflection in service-learning courses, and includes concrete tools for reflection on student civic engagement.

### **Forward**

Robert Greenleaf observed that each generation casts its own version of democracy and develops tools with which it can fashion, activate and accommodate that democracy. If this is true, it is also a scenario of generational confusion and conflict. Typically, the older generation has the floor and controls the discourse; it then takes the younger generation to task for a lack of interest in politics, for taking paths to political involvement that are unconventional, and for doing politics differently.

Greenleaf's description of such generational differences may, in fact, account for much of the critique in the literature on student civic engagement that students are apolitical and lack interest in political engagement. We see this even in publications where the authors are well acquainted and familiar with student involvement in community service and service-learning. "They volunteer at the homeless shelter, but they don't vote," goes one complaint. Another statement of frustration is expressed, "The students seem to gain a lot from their experience at the shelter but they don't get the political or civic implications of their work." In short, the critique concludes, students won't move from service to civic engagement, from service to politics.

The civic dimensions of service have long been a concern and a goal of the service-learning movement. "Charity" forms of community service and service-learning have

been considered by some as a less substantive form of service than have the “justice” forms because the former lacks “politics” and the latter takes aim at systemic change. *The New Student Politics: The Wingspread Statement on Student Civic Engagement* (2002) makes it clear that faculty and other service-learning advocates may have misunderstood what students gain from their service experiences, how they understand politics, and how students see their service activity as a form of political action. From the voices of student leaders, we learn how students are engaged, mobilized, and activated.

Drafting this pamphlet afforded us the opportunity to talk together at length, to revisit many sources and prior conversations, and to arrive at our interpretation of “service politics.” We offer that interpretation here, not as a fully articulated argument, but as the product of our effort to, in J. Herman Blake’s wonderful phrase, “listen eloquently” to what students engaged in service-learning are telling us about their experiences, values and commitments. Although there is a tendency to segment these experiences into categories such as service activity and political activity, we often hear from students that they are trying to create a more whole description of what they are doing as persons. For this reason, we should look at the many dimensions of student experience and help students to see how these experiences fit together in their entirety.

This guide will provide tools and a theoretical context to make the connection between service and politics more deliberate and explicit for students, faculty and community partners. It links theories about learning with those about social change and the development of social change agents. This context is illustrated with lessons learned from student leaders—observations about their journeys to community engagement—as the discussion moves from the more abstract to more concrete. The final section of the guide features a set of tools that can be used in the classroom and in other settings to facilitate and enrich conversations about moving from and through the personal to the political.

We hope that our argument—and it is an argument under development—about student civic engagement and “service politics” will generate discussion and new thinking about the ways in which the current generation of college students understand democracy, politics and civic engagement.

## **Part I: Further Exploration of Service Politics**

### The Concept of Service Politics

Students who participate in community service are often unaware that their work is political, typically because they limit their definition of “politics” to electoral processes and interest group advocacy. And students do often shudder when they hear the word “politics,” as it conjures up images of inauthentic politicians and power corrupted. However, when students serve in their community, they recognize that they are changing that community, bridging differences, and altering its balance of power. They understand that, at this level of agency, their work is political. When politics is defined as the relational work of redistributing power and resources, negotiating differences, strengthening communities, and working together with others to influence or alter societal institutions, then the connections between service and politics can be made more readily.

While many students do see their service as an alternative *to* conventional political activity, we think that many students, especially those deeply involved, are also describing service as an alternative politics, an alternative *form* of political activity. Service, in itself, can be political. Whether it is changing communities through direct service or motivating someone to address community problems through more conventional political means, it is still a way to create change. And, most importantly, they are seeking, we think, a consistency across their experiences of direct service, inner reflection and political action. They reject as inauthentic calls to action at any level that violate this consistency – and for students deeply engaged in service, the touchstone of that integrity is their relationships with people in the communities they serve.

It is this idea that the participants in the Wingspread conference tentatively voiced as “service politics.” This concept parts ways with conventional critiques of student civic engagement by recognizing that participation in democratic life is not embedded in issues but in relationships. Service politics begins as students connect to people and places – communities. It entails inner reflection and expands to encompass community change – two linked steps in discovering how one’s self (discovered, articulated, in process) is located in larger communities of interests (also discovered, articulated, in process). Service politics leads to the examination of the power, relationships, assets, and needs in a community. One way service politics occurs, for example, is when a person serving in a community develops relationships with community members, learns about root causes and broader social issues that contribute to community problems (through reflection and/or service-learning), clarifies their own ideas, values and commitments, decides to address the problem(s) and works with those in the community to do so. It is not a process of moving from service to politics, but a way of connecting service and politics, of expanding the definition of each so that they become complementary.

### One student’s experience with service politics:

Sarah Long, one of the authors of this guide, graduated from Providence College in 2002 and describes her experience as illustrating this argument:

“During my sophomore year in college I was involved in a public service course called Community Service in American Culture. One day I asked my professor if I could miss class to attend a protest calling for the college to increase campus diversity by offering more scholarships to minorities and making changes to the core curriculum. To my surprise, my professor told me that I could miss class to attend the protest. He said that protesting is a form of service activity. This was the first time I recognized that service and politics were intertwined, and that service could be political and political activity could be service.

The following year, as part of another service-learning course, I began to do service at a local homeless shelter/soup kitchen. The structured reflection that was part of the course provided a context for my service and helped me to make connections between my service and broader social issues such as homelessness. The relationships I formed with the people at the shelter connected me to the community, and I became committed to addressing the deeper issues surrounding homelessness and poverty. I began to investigate why people became homeless in the city and worked with a group whose mission was to end homelessness and increase affordable housing. I attended demonstrations and petitioned the local government to address the housing crisis in the city.

One Saturday while I was serving lunch at the soup kitchen, I recognized a woman who had come in with her husband. She was an employee of the company that my college subcontracts with to employ the people that clean the buildings on campus. Seeing this woman at the soup kitchen deeply impacted me, and led to my involvement in a living wage campaign for the workers on campus.

Through reflection-based service-learning I came to realize that I could keep doing service at the shelter/soup kitchen, but unless I helped to address the problems of homelessness and poverty on a larger scale, I would have no chance of actually solving these problems. While my service addressed an immediate community need by providing shelter and food for homeless and low-income members of the community, it could not solve bigger societal problems. I had to go beyond my service and start looking at the root causes of these problems, addressing systems and trying to create structural change. At the same time, my service gave me an important connection to the “issues” and a basis for my judgments about everything I was hearing and being asked to do. I wanted my political work to benefit people I knew and cared about, and my definition of service expanded to involve political action on their behalf.

I chose to work on this curriculum guide as a way to further explore the concept of service politics, both theoretically and with regard to my own experiences. Once I articulated my own story, I realized that my service and political activity are indeed complementary. While reflecting on my experiences, I became curious about the work other students were doing nationally and internationally. While working as an intern at Campus Compact, I had the opportunity to read through essays written by students who were nominated for the Howard R. Swearer Humanitarian Award, which is given annually to five college students for their outstanding public service and provides

financial support toward their continued efforts to address societal needs. The stories these students told were powerful examples of service politics, although the students most likely had never heard the term. The students described how they became politicized and how their service activity impacted their communities.”

Other students’ experiences with service politics:

The following paragraphs include quotations taken from the personal essays of Swearer award nominees and summaries of these student’s stories.

While volunteering at a homeless shelter, Mary joined a coalition of community and faith-based groups from the state that united to fight for legislation that would help low-income citizens. In addition, she brought speakers to campus and organized around poverty issues. She also connected her interest in advocating for low-income members of society to her college coursework. During a month-long service-learning experience working with poor and low-income members of society, Mary reflected, *“I was challenged emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually to examine my belief system and the society in which we live.”* She also commented, *“I believe that building and nurturing relationships with the poor is essential for us as students to better understand the complexities of social justice. As we become more involved on a personal level, we will believe more strongly and feel more passionately about fighting for issues that matter most.”*

Susan was a student who volunteered at an arts center, spending most of her time fundraising for the organization. Motivated by her experiences at the arts center, Susan wrote a bill called the “Child Support Assistance Act” for a class she was taking. While telling her story, Susan wrote, *“Book learning and theory are interesting and beneficial, but it is the interactions with diverse people in different real life situations that accelerate the learning curve for me.”*

Jackie is an activist who bridges her service work with her academic interests. A major in Latin American Studies, she uses nonviolent protest to raise awareness of destructive military actions in Latin America that violate basic human rights. While interning at the Columbia Support Network national office, Jackie spent time in Columbia on a human rights fact-finding delegation. Reflecting on this experience, she writes, *“I spent time there meeting people who are being directly impacted by the war against drugs. I interviewed people whose food crops have been wiped out by aerial spraying aimed at eradicating coca. I met dozens of displaced people—the majority of whom were children—who have been driven off of their land by Columbia’s various armed groups...I had never before witnessed suffering like what I saw there, and I return to the US more passionate and motivated than ever to raise public awareness about the war and the human rights crisis.”* The emotional experiences and relationships Jackie formed while in Columbia strengthened her commitment to advocating for the rights of Columbians.

Lynda’s strong commitment working on to women’s issues at her college and in the community comes from her personal experience in an abusive marriage. Her work organizing around women’s issues on campus and her experience in a class she was

taking prompted her to become active politically in the local National Organization of Women's Political Action Committee. Her politics and service activity were shaped, in part, by her identity.

Eddie is the founder of an international service organization whose mission includes working "directly with small community groups and implementing a participatory development approach empowering participants to implement self-sustaining initiatives." His work is political because it changes communities and people. Eddie reflects on his travels in Africa and Nicaragua, writing, "*I have learned the most incredible lessons, witnessed unimaginable conditions, heard the sounds of hungry babies crying and elders dying, met and developed intense relationships with the most simple yet incredible people...*" The relationships Eddie formed during his travels reinforced his commitment to strengthening and supporting communities across the globe.

Although there are only brief excerpts included here, it is clear that the stories these students tell support the concept of service politics. The students are able to connect their personal and academic interests to their service activity, and their service activity enables them to form relationships with community members. Their desire to address social issues affecting the community is strengthened by their service experiences. They often use conventional political means to address these issues, or design their service activity to have the greatest positive impact on the community, creating change, which is political.

These stories help to explain the concept of service politics and can be used as mini-case studies to aid in discussion about *The New Student Politics*. A few characteristics that correspond with the concept of service politics can be found in these stories. Collectively, these characteristics emerged:

- The students formed strong relationships with the people in the community;
- The students reflected on their service and the issues facing their community;
- The students became committed to advocating for the people they formed relationships with and their communities;
- The students had a personal connection to an issue that their work addressed (which ties into the idea of identity politics discussed in *The New Student Politics*);
- The service experience of the student prompted their participation in "conventional" political activities;
- The service activity these students performed was political because it challenged power dynamics;
- The students connected their service to personal interests and to coursework at their college or university.

## **Part II: How to Connect *The New Student Politics* to a Service-Learning Course**

***“By civic engagement we mean exercising personal agency in a public domain.”***

Imagining how one might go about teaching civic engagement is enormously complex – dependent on the multiple variables of concept definition (what is the civic domain, what does it mean to be engaged, what are teaching and learning); space (what community, context or place is considered an appropriate domain for “civic” life?); time (how much time over how long a period); and relationship (what are the immediate and long-term consequences of failed or successful civic engagement to the people involved).

We are primarily interested in the correspondence of course-based community service and civic engagement; by civic engagement we mean exercising personal agency in a public domain; and we assume that becoming civically engaged is a developmental process characterized by growing facility with ideas, situations, skills and awareness. We believe that conceptual problems of time, space and relationship can be understood as dimensions of this developmental process: more or less time spent; larger or smaller domains; less or more complex relationships, with less or more at stake.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we are assuming, given the history of service-learning, that civic engagement means the practice of democratic values; more explicitly, it means the practice of direct, liberatory democracy of the type described by John Dewey (*The Public and Its Problems*), Paulo Freire (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*), Myles Horton (*The Long Haul*), and Jane Addams (*Democracy and Social Ethics*). That is, civic engagement as we understand the term places primary emphasis on personal, direct engagement in public issues, dialogue and decision-making.

### *Signs and symbols of things unseen*

Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Myles Horton, Jane Addams and many other exemplars of direct, liberatory democracy suggest that, at an individual level, being “engaged” is composed of three elements: direct, personal involvement with the problem or issue at hand; inner clarification; and political engagement. The practice of each of these three elements reinforces and clarifies the other two. We find this to be a useful way of thinking about what we mean by civic engagement, and of amplifying the concept of “service politics.” It is also, we believe, a useful way of entering into a discussion of service-learning and civic engagement. To be fully civically engaged means to have internalized the practice of direct involvement, inner clarification and political engagement.

The service element of service-learning, we want to suggest, is one element of the three necessary for civic engagement. It is direct engagement with a person, situation or problem that draws one into inner clarification and political engagement. That is, one does not move from service to politics, but one begins to use one’s direct experience to clarify values, commitments and political engagement. What makes “reflecting” on service and/or civic engagement is that it involves processing the service (what is

happening, really); one's ideas, feelings, values, beliefs and (provisional) conclusions about the situation one has experienced; and developing a way of thinking about how one's personal experience connects to larger systems, in such a way that you can become an actor in that larger, public world. In other words, one's personal experience, one's personal relationship to those one serves or is served by can become the ground for one's inner life and one's civic engagement. It is not a linear process, but an organic whole. What makes "reflection" complex is not the problem of "transforming experience into knowledge," but the simple truth that there is no single, linear way of structuring a growing, organic relationship among these three elements.

### *The Things They Carry*

*The New Student Politics* makes clear, we think, that students are not very interested in civic engagement as an abstract concept. Rather, they most often encounter it as a divisive and alienating concept that tells them that they should be doing something other than what they are doing. At the same time, the report describes a deep level of student engagement in community problem-solving in local, national and international contexts.

Our perspective on this disconnect is that civic engagement is a means and not an end. That is, as students see the situation, the goal is not becoming civically engaged, but resolving problems about which they are personally concerned. Political engagement is, for them, a way of stepping into a problem that they have become concerned about through direct service and inner reflection. Rather than moving from service to politics, they see themselves as extending their service to include political action.

In her biography of social reformer Elizabeth Cady Stanton, biographer Elisabeth Griffith describes Stanton as moving through a continuous cycle that took her from anguish to anger to analysis to action. Similarly, Lawrence Godwin, historian of the Populist movement, describes agricultural extension workers in the early 1900s that were jarred into political action by the suffering they encountered in the small farms they visited across rural America. Explaining their motivations, civil rights activists from the 1940s through the present tell stories of the anguish they felt when they experienced or witnessed racism and its consequences.

Students involved in service-learning often undergo an experience similar to that of Stanton or the extension workers or the civil rights workers. Anguish comes from the Norse, and translates roughly as "heart grief." Direct service brings many people into a direct experience of heart grief, and it is this experience that links direct service and political engagement as potentially authentic responses to the suffering of others. Students deeply involved in service reject out of hand the idea that they will leave their service behind as they mature into "civic engagement." Rather, their expression of "service politics" makes political engagement a partner with service in coming to terms with what causes them anguish.

One implication of this argument about the relationship between service-learning and civic engagement is that students need time and space to articulate and process what they feel, what they know and what they believe they are experiencing. This means that, in

addition to making deliberate decisions about the amount of time and space that will be given to the service component of a course, faculty have to consider how much time and space will be given to drawing out and using the experiences and knowledge that students bring to a class. Typically, as the amount of attention given to the service experience is increased, attention to what the students bring will also be increased. Addressing what the students bring is important in two ways: it increases and diversifies the intellectual resources available to the class; and it surfaces the assumptions, values, beliefs and feelings that will shape (and sometimes limit) the student's responses to their new learning. If part of the logic of service-learning is the judicious introduction of cognitive dissonance, it is important to know why and how that is being experienced. This is not to say that service-learning courses must give time and attention to this element; rather it asks us to acknowledge the personal, inner dimensions of learning that can take place and determine how central a part of the course this will be. Our argument, however, is that a decision to not pay much attention to this element will, in the long run, limit the students' "inner clarification," which we believe is a significant dimension of civic engagement.

### **Part III: Reflecting on Service and Politics**

The graph on the next page is intended to represent the dynamic relationship between service and reflection in a higher education setting. We have constructed the graph below to capture some of the dynamism of reflecting on service and civic engagement, trying to take into account the depth or “thickness” of the students’ service experiences; noting honestly the amount of time and energy given to processing those experiences; noting, too, which of the elements of reflection—service, inner work, political engagement—you are intending to emphasize.

The horizontal axis asks for consideration of time and focus: How much energy is put into the service element of a course, in how concentrated a fashion? How much attention does the service element receive in the class proper? Is the class deductive or content driven, using the service to illustrate general principles, or is it inductive, allowing learning and knowledge to grow inductively from the service experience?

The vertical axis argues that there is a correlation between the centrality or continuity of service in a course and the type of reflection that can be successfully used to move in the direction of practicing civic engagement. These modes of reflection might be thought of as accreting as time and focus allow. A course where service is somewhat peripheral, and where there is less time given to inductive methods of learning, might only use periodic discussions to raise questions about service and civic engagement; a curriculum composed of several courses taken over one or more years by students committed to a site or issue might evolve into a cycle of action and reflection – continuing to use discussions, case studies and skill development, but adding to these the conscious development of an action agenda.

Among the most common complaints of students in service-learning courses is a perceived disconnect between their experiences at a service site and in the classroom. The disconnect comes about, we think, in part because of the differing expectations that faculty and students bring to the table; and because the depth of the service connected to a course is out of proportion with the type of reflection being done. Students may perceive their service experience as too thin to support extended reflection; conversely, they may bring to a classroom lots of questions, jumbled feelings and a desire to spend a great deal of time thinking about what they are doing. While this problem cannot be managed completely – expectations will naturally diverge somewhat – it is nonetheless important to make clear to students at the outset the place of service in the course: it is more or less peripheral or central, and more or less attention will be paid to it.

*Service Learning and Civic Engagement Graph*

*Centrality and/or Continuity of Service*

Peripheral or episodic

Central or ongoing

Less engaged/  
complex

Discussion

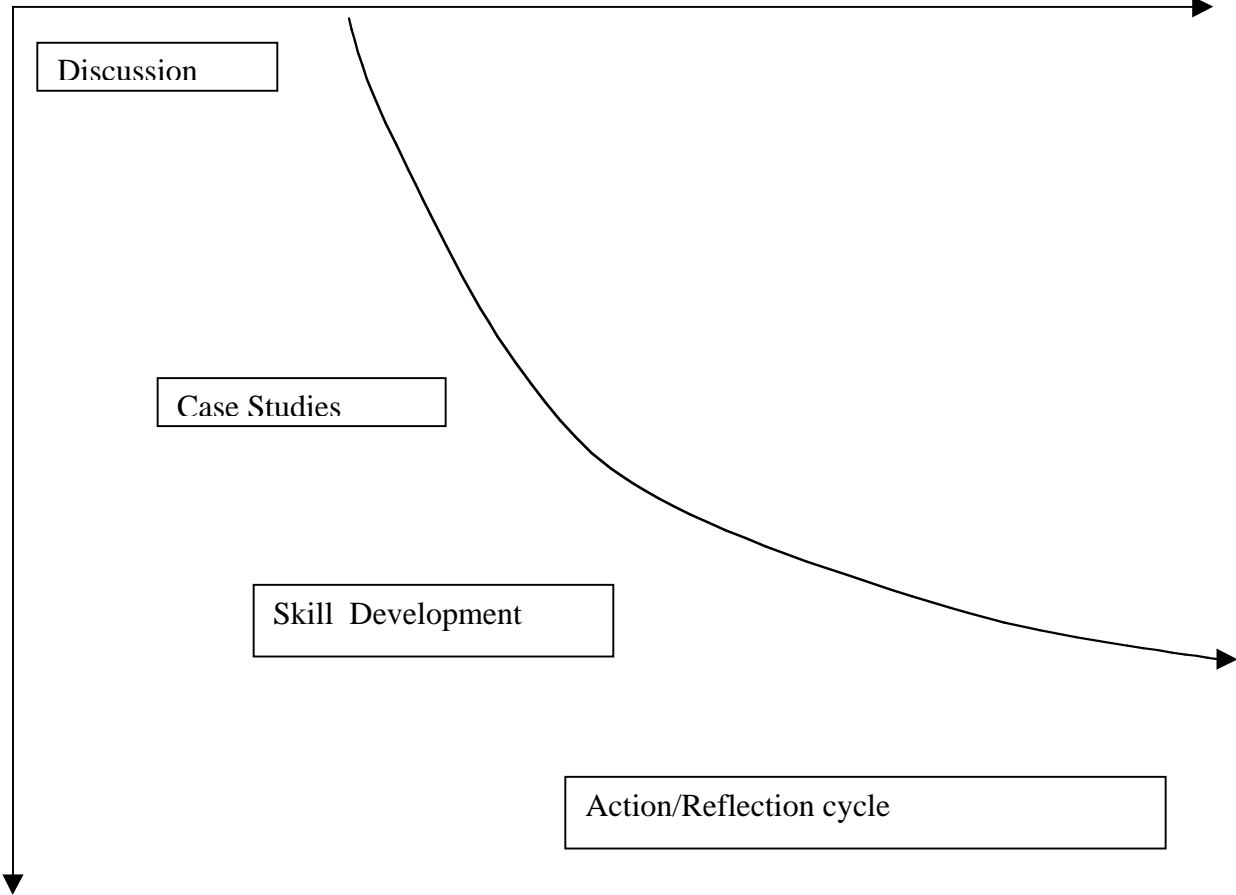
*Civic Engagement  
Reflection  
Processes*

Case Studies

Skill Development

More engaged/  
complex

Action/Reflection cycle



Similarly, it is important to make explicit the type of attention that will be paid to reflection, and why. Careful, extended reflection can draw out the complexity of apparently simple service. It is important for faculty to note this and, if reflection will play a limited role in a course, to make clear why this is the case. If, on the other hand, the course will be organized primarily around service and civic engagement, and the goal is to experience a deeper process of action and reflection, then this should also be made clear.

The following questions can be used throughout the continuum illustrated by this graph to reflect on direct service, inner work, and political engagement.

*Some preliminary questions about direct service*

Who are you serving?

What is the service you are providing?

Are you responding to an existential human need (a need that is caused by a natural condition of being alive such as famine caused by drought) or to a need that is caused by people?

If the need is existential, why are you responding?

If people cause the need, does your response in any way contribute to the problem?

If people cause the need, does your response do anything to mitigate the cause?

What do you know/not know about the situation you are encountering?

What would improve the quality of your contribution?

*Some preliminary questions about inner work*

Why is it important to you to respond this need, or these persons?

What about you matters in this relationship?

How will your service affect you?

How will it affect your relationships?

How will it affect your community?

How committed are you (or not) to what you are doing?

How does the community you serve perceive you?

How do you feel about what you are doing?

What engages you most? Troubles you most?

*Some preliminary questions about political engagement*

How does/will your service affect the person or persons you are serving?

What is their network of relationships?

How does your service affect their network of relationships?

How committed are you (or not) to what you are doing?

What resources does your service consume?

Where do they come from?

What do they cost?

Are the interests of the people you serve fairly balanced with those of other stakeholders?

How can you help the people you serve to change their situation?

## Modes of Reflection

### ***Discussion***

By discussion we mean making time and space to discuss the relevant service experiences of students in a structured manner. Typically, this presumes small-group or whole-class dialogue, but it can be carried out in list-serve or chat room formats, in structured journals shared only by a student and the teacher(s), or in papers turned in periodically. The objectives of the discussion are to increase students' capacity to articulate what they have experienced. A simple shorthand for discussion is a process described as "what, so what, now what."

### *What*

While there are many ways to initiate discussion, the fields of composition and ethnography have much to offer. A simple exercise borrowed from both is "the ladder of abstraction." It challenges students to continue moving their observations "down" a ladder of abstraction. Students might be asked, for example to take time out at a service site to do a sensory inventory: what do they see, hear, touch, smell and taste; and to then do a "brain dump" of specific details in a notebook. The goal is to have an observation like "bright colors" become "primary blues and reds painted in narrow stripes on two walls." A second step would be to search this data for patterns of information, and to compare the data and the patterns to their ideas about the place. This information can be used as the basis for a narrative report, journal entry, paper or in-class dialogue. It is difficult to prevent people from jumping to conclusions, and difficult to teach them to slow down and literally "re-search" a situation or experience.

This type of exercise has the merit of teaching basic skills of observation, description and critical thinking; it also has the merit of teaching a fundamental element of civic engagement: basing ideas and judgments on accurate, concrete information.

This process can also be used to help students assess their "inner" responses to service experiences: how they feel, what their feeling have to do with what they think, what their feelings and ideas have to do with their interpretations or judgments about a site or experience.

If the course is more focused on disciplinary content than the service experiences of students, this part of the discussion can be used apply the particular methodology of that discipline: how does one generate accurate measures of contamination in a pond, assess prejudices, write an accurate historic description....

### *So what*

A second element of discussion has to do with context: understanding the broader social ecology of their experience. In brief, this has to do with beginning to describe the web of relationships surrounding their site and experience. Given how complex these webs are, it is likely that attention will be selectively focused on particular threads. Useful intellectual resources for pursuing this type of discussion can be found in political science (political economy); management (organizational analysis and leadership studies); sociology (studies of bureaucracy and institutional power). The objective in exploring this social

ecology is understanding the history and interests that have led to and maintain the situation in which a student finds him or her self serving.

Quite commonly, people take a social context as given; the objective of “so what” is to understand how and why a situation is socially constructed. If the service experience is somewhat more peripheral, it can be useful to ask about the civic dimensions of the methodology and knowledge of the discipline. What are the civic and public dimensions of the ways in which the various disciplines “know” the world? What are the implications of these ways of knowing?

#### *Now what*

As a final element of discussion, students can be invited to consider what comes next. The goal here is to articulate a range of options based on their analysis of their service experience, and to explore (at least in theory) the consequences of pursuing those options. It can be useful, at this stage to have students research and role play the various interests they have identified; interview stakeholders they have identified in order to identify options and learn something of the history of what has been tried. The options can work at the personal and global scales: what will I (you) do next? What could be done institutionally? What could be done globally?

#### ***Case Studies***

“Case studies” may be a misleading or too formal designation for what we mean to describe. The term as we use it is meant to describe using complex or “thick” descriptions that parallel the experiences of students in significant ways, and serve to draw out and amplify elements of that experience. A case study, therefore, might be excerpts from the journals of students who have served in the past at the same or a similar site. Case studies might also be extended stories that argue for certain interpretations of a related experience or describe dimensions of the social ecology that students might otherwise miss. Case studies might describe conflict situations requiring resolution, to be worked through individually or in small groups. Depending on how they are selected or processed, case studies can be used for reflecting on all three dimensions of civic engagement: direct experience, inner clarification and political work.

Students can read prepared case studies, or they can work to develop their own, using other case studies as guides. The goals, in any case, are improving skills of observation, learning to recognize decision points, recognizing and interpreting the political economy implicit in a situation, articulating a range of options and theoretically testing the implications of those options.

While these case studies can be used to simply provoke or enhance discussion, we are suggesting that they be chosen to teach particular interpretive skills; and that the skills they teach be intended to lead the students in the direction of greater agency in through their service experiences. For example, students serving meals at a soup kitchen might begin to “follow the money,” by looking at the budget of the organization; examining the rules, if any, that determine eligibility; exploring the sources of food; estimating the cash

value of their service to the organization; describing the typical economic situation of guests or clients served, and so on. Where do the resources come from? Why are they organized as they are? Who controls the resources? Who benefits?

Case studies can also provide a useful way for students to explore “forced choice” decisions intended to help them examining their core values. Perhaps the best resource available to faculty in this regard is colleagues in student affairs with professional backgrounds in student personnel development.

Case studies might be selected to illustrate historic context: biographies and autobiographies of persons or groups doing related work; histories of particular moments in local history, the history of a serving organization, the civil rights movement, the Populist movement, labor history or the emergence of the non-profit sector; all turning on the insight that “individual experience leads to social action.”

You can also have students articulate their own “service” biography.

*Three case studies can be found in the Appendix.*

### ***Skill development***

While similar to case studies in purpose, skill development adds an intentionality of purpose and assumes that the goal is supporting further action. It can be aimed at developing particular skills necessary to enhancing performance at a service site, and it can be focused more explicitly on describing the connections between a student’s direct experience and his or her potential political work. It imagines that students will develop a political dimension in their community work that complements their direct service experience and their inner life, and it proposes to help the students successfully make this connection.

As we understand it, skill development can be thought of in (at least) three ways: the development of discipline related skills that help express the public contributions of that discipline’s knowledge and ways of knowing; skills that concentrate generally on developing insight and interpretation of power and political context; and skills that are aimed at teaching students particular ways of working in a particular community context. Some of these skills, in some way the goals of a liberal education writ in the language of public application, are critical thinking, public deliberation, public problem-solving, collective action, and organizational analysis.

In the context of service-learning, what distinguishes skill development from discussion or case studies is the development of explicit skills that they can use and teach in community settings. Among the skills that we have found particularly helpful to develop are identifying stakeholders and understanding their interests; examining carefully the concepts of self-interest, and relationship (how people and interests are connected); learning to distinguish between public and private contexts; defining, stepping into and learning to work with diversity (identity diversity based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual

orientation or age; and interest identity based on class, faith, ideology, experience); power mapping; conflict resolution and negotiation; relationship building; action research.

### ***Action/reflection***

What distinguishes an action/reflection model of service-learning is that it places a particular set of community relationships or a particular set of experiences at the center of the learning process, and uses discussion, case studies and skill development to assist the class in entering more and more deeply into those relationships or experiences. That is, it uses many of the same reflection tools as other forms of service-learning, but is fundamentally organized around the experience of the students. It presumes, as well, the students' interest in the relationships or issues at hand, presumes that they bring relevant experience and knowledge, and presumes a continuity of relationship with the community partners. It begins with recognition that learning is action oriented –directed toward sustained direct involvement *and* clearer, more effective political engagement. And, as it is directed toward the democratic political change of the conditions that require direct service, it places emphasis on dialogue/deliberation as primary modes of learning; is directed toward the shared creation of knowledge as a product of its process; makes explicit a process for shared decision making/leadership; and it establishes a deliberate openness to being transformed by what is experienced/learned.

## **Onward**

*The New Student Politics Curriculum Guide* is a tool to help facilitate classroom discussion and reflection on community-based experiences. It is an expansion of the concept of service politics, and we intend it to be a living argument. We encourage feedback from faculty and students regarding both the curriculum guide and the concept of service politics.

We also hope to keep expanding the resource list that accompanies this document, to add more discussion questions, case studies, skill development activities, and action reflection activities. For this reason, we encourage you to send us the resources you use with your students, and let us know what you think about the resources we have provided. You can submit your feedback at [www.compact.org/students](http://www.compact.org/students)

## APPENDICES

### Tools: Case Studies

#### **Moving Tanya from Charity to Justice**

This case study was written to provide an expanded social context for an experience that students were likely to encounter, and to move their deliberations regarding that experience from the realm of theory to the realm of a forced choice decision. It is organized around a handful of immediate stakeholders, who are guided by different perspectives and different constraints. The story also seems to require a nearly instantaneous decision - drawing people new to service into an attempt to solve it by making the “right” decision. As I have used this exercise over the last six years, the most complex responses have identified an immediate course of action and a longer-term course of action – typically drawing on the strengths of different stakeholders for each. It is a useful story, I think, because there is no right answer to it; and for students it asks them to consider deeply the dimensions—and limits—of their relationships to the people they serve through structured programs of schools or non-profit organizations. I personally like this story because it raises many questions about the relationship of charity and justice—deep charity and real justice. Deep charity, I have come to believe, is to be fully present to another person, and to provide witness to their suffering. It is being present. What does it mean to be present to Tanya? And real justice, for Tanya, might be to have for her a whole community—and what, given the situation described, could bring this about for her? I usually introduce this exercise by having people read it individually; write a brief response; share their responses in pairs and then in a larger group. I ask them to articulate and differentiate between their emotional and intellectual responses, and to figure out what they do and don’t know about the institutional dimensions of such situations—such as legal obligations and bureaucratic processes. The discussions often lead to many stories of similar situations—responding to panhandlers, to adults hollering at or shaking a child, to turning to authorities for assistance. The goal of the exercise is not arriving at a decision, but at learning to analyze a complex situation with multiple stakeholders, reflect on one’s own experience and values, and discuss in a group how one would act.

“Moving Tanya from Charity to Justice” was written by Keith Morton in September 1995.

## **Moving Tanya From Charity to Justice**

Keith Morton

Here's the deal: leaving a community meeting at an elementary school about five in the afternoon, on a chilly March day in a New England city. The school, situated in a poor, immigrant, transitory neighborhood bisected by a highway, is 1970s-institutional and hasn't aged well. About 20 people have been meeting to plan a community garden project - including a quarter acre next to the school - for the coming spring. The project is intended to create some green space, provide opportunities for families to do something together, and even to generate a small business for eight high school students.

I am on the faculty of a nearby college. A student with whom I am beginning to work closely has joined me at the meeting, and we are returning now to the campus. I am feeling good about the progress we have made, the bureaucratic obstacles we have overcome, the hope that is bubbling up. I am feeling good that some things talked about in class presented themselves in the meeting. I am also late picking up my two children, five and two, from daycare, so we are walking fast.

On a corner one long block from the school, next to a storefront evangelical church serving Central American immigrants, and just as the early spring sun is flattening back into winter light with no shine, an eleven year-old girl approaches us. I know she is eleven because I recognize her from the school, from her fifth grade class. She is tall for her age and pudgy, squeezed into a too-small orange sweat suit and black sneakers. Her hair is done up in two short, stubby braids that are escaping their rubber bands. Snot has dried under her nose, white against her brown skin, and the wind has caused and dried small tears in the corners of her eyes. Her shoulders say she is cold. "Spare some change?" she asks. There is not another person on the street as far as can be seen in any direction.

What is the right thing to do?

It is more complicated than the cliché: do you give money or not? I am pretty sure her mom has a drug habit and she needs to raise \$10 or so before she can go home. What options are there? Talk to the girl, find out her name. Talk to her teacher. Or go back to my office and call Bobby Fitzpatrick, the nice new cop who does juvenile in the neighborhood. Or call a social worker at the Department of Children, Youth and Families. Or walk her home and meet her mother. Or blow her off, "Sorry, not right now."

And I am with a student: it crosses my mind, even then, that I have a second moral problem, modeling a response. She is waiting, standing at the center of the intersection, about ten feet away from us. I remember her name. "Hey, Tanya." She looks at us for the first time and, pulling on her sweat shirt, nods twice, searching in her memory for my face.

What does it mean, in this context, to move from charity to justice?

**How Susie Bayer's T-Shirt Ended Up on Yusuf Mama's Back**

**George Packer**

**New York Times**

**Magazine Desk**

**March 31, 2002, Late Edition- Final, Section 6, Page 54, Column 1**

The case study that accompanies this article was developed by Sandra Enos.

In this article, George Packer tracks the journey of the T-shirt donated by Susie Bayer in Manhattan to a small town in Uganda where it is purchased by Yusuf Mama for the price of one dollar. Packer's article can be read on many levels and as such presents a rich source for reflection. Packer traces how an act of charity becomes a commodified product in the market economy. He links the act of charity—donating a used T-shirt in New York City—to the undermining of local economies in underdeveloped countries. He also tells the story of the desire for Western goods. Because Packer uncovers a system of charity and re-distribution of our discarded clothing of which few of us are aware, the article serves as an effective jumping off point for discussions about the meanings and ends (intended and unintended) of charity and service, about the political, social and economic bases of our actions in a globalized world, and of the requirements to look deeply and extensively into the relationships that underlie our work.

### **Starfish Hurling and Community Service**

This brief essay was written to provoke dialogue about conventional attitudes regarding community service. At its core, it argues for being deeply connected to place and relationship; it argues, I think, for commitment to place and relationship as an alternative to have/have not or need-based models of service. The essay asks us to step back and look carefully at the stories we choose to tell about the work we do—and to examine those stories and that language for its assumptions and implications. This essay was written after hearing the story of the starfish one too many times. I usually ask if people have heard the story before; I ask them to respond emotionally and intellectually. Usually, the essay angers readers; but, when pressed, they most often find themselves in agreement with the five points it argues. I ask them to explain where this dissonance comes from.

“Starfish Hurling and Community Service” was written by Keith Morton.

## **Starfish Hurling and Community Service**

Keith Morton

One of the most popular stories in community service events is that of the starfish: a (fill in your description, usually young) person is running, hurling starfish deposited on the beach by a storm back into the sea. "What are you doing," asks a (fill in your description, usually old) person, "you can't possibly throw all the starfish back. Your effort makes no difference." "It makes a difference to this one," replies the first person, who continues off down the beach.

The usual conclusions drawn from this hackneyed tale are about the importance of making a difference where you can, one person or problem at a time; about not being put off by skepticism or criticism or cynicism. The story acknowledges the relief that comes when we find a way to relieve suffering. A somewhat deeper reading is that there is merit in jumping into a situation and finding a way to act - the first step in determining what possibilities for action might exist.

But the tale is, ultimately, mis-educative and I wish people would stop using it. First, it is about a problem - starfish cast up by a storm - that is apolitical (unless you stretch for the connection between pollution and el Nino that might have precipitated the storm). There is seldom any hesitancy or moral complexity in responding to a crisis caused by natural disaster. It is the one circumstance in which charity can be an unmitigated good. The story suggests that all problems are similarly simple - that there is a path of action which is right and can avoid the traps of politics, context, or complex and contradictory human relationships.

Second, the story is about helping starfish and not about helping people. It avoids, therefore, the shadow side of the service, the sticky problem of who deserves our help. The starfish are passive; they have no voice; they cannot have an opinion about their circumstances, at least not that we can hear. This one is much like that one. Their silence coincides with the fact that they can have done nothing (the story suggests) to deserve their fate. In most of the situations where this story is told, service is about people working with people: people with histories, voices, opinions, judgment, more or less power.

Third, the story avoids the possible complexity of ecology: it might be that the starfish are part of a food chain that is being interrupted as they are thrown back - birds might go hungry at a critical time of year, for example; or it might be that the starfish have been released by a storm from the ocean bottom because they have outgrown their habitat. It is never smart to intervene in an ecosystem without understanding how all of its parts are interrelated.

Fourth, the tale suggests that we should work from emotional response and not our heads, even though the problem is, in this case, a knowable one. As "overwhelming" as the miles of beach seem, the dilemma of the starfish is finite and knowable - this many

starfish on this stretch of beach; a bit of advance organizing could result in enough volunteers to return all the starfish to the sea.

Fifth, the story privileges random, individual acts of kindness. It avoids questions of community (and we claim "community service" as our ground after all). It avoids questions of working with others. It polarizes the relationship of the two actors: how different would the story be if the second person joined in with the first?

In short, the story does nothing to teach us about community or service. This in itself is not necessarily a problem; it could be an entertaining tale, and that could be enough. What makes it a problem, however, is that the tale of the starfish pretends to teach us something about community service, even as it misdirects our sympathies, our intellects and our sense of purpose.

Don't go charging out to help. Talk, listen, build relationships, know your self, your environment; work with others where they and the situation itself can teach you how to act with more and more knowledge and effectiveness. Stop hurling starfish.

## **Tools: A Typology of Service Politics**

The chart on the next page represents typology of service politics. This matrix can be used as a tool for reflecting on the students' service experience. For example, after providing students with this chart, ask them which of the descriptions best describes the community service they undertake. Students can then be asked to share their findings and discuss why they located their service where they did.

Out of this chart comes a series of discussion questions about civic engagement, which we believe are useful in guiding general discussion about *The New Student Politics*.

New Student Politics	<b>Conventional Politics</b>	<b>Community Service</b>	<b>Service Politics</b>
<b>Student Role</b>	Voter; Consumer	Volunteer	Public problem-solver
<b>Purpose</b>	Provide policies, laws, and services, guarantee rights	Seek to alleviate immediate social needs	Connect individual acts of service to broader framework of systemic social change
<b>Government is:</b>	For the people	Of the people	By the people
<b>Political Conception</b>	Politics	Alternative to politics	Alternative politics
<b>Goal</b>	Promote individual interests	Address community needs	Promote community interests
<b>Required Skills</b>	Political knowledge, critical thinking, relationship building, negotiation	Relationship-building, reflection	Awareness-raising, public problem solving, relationship and coalition-building, community organizing, reflection, negotiation
<b>Focus</b>	Allocation of scarce resources	Geared towards symptoms (immediate needs, lack of community)	Looks at systems (structural change) and root causes of problems

### Discussion Questions about civic engagement

1. How do you define civic engagement?
2. How do you relate to conventional politics?
3. Do you see service as an alternative form of political action?
4. How do you translate your personal interests and issues into civic engagement?
5. Do you consider democracy to be inclusive and accessible? If not, how could it be?
6. How has service-learning bridged your service work with politics?
7. Are the activities and the mission of your campus aligned with the values of inclusion, justice, reciprocity, community building, and participatory democracy?
8. What kind of input and agency do students on your campus have in shaping civic engagement on campus?
9. Are students on your campus seen as active producers (as opposed to consumers) of knowledge and democracy?
10. Do you view your service activity as political in nature? Is your service an example of service politics? If so, how? If not, why not?

**Additional Questions**

11. Why do you participate in community service?
12. In what ways has your service increased your commitment to addressing particular social issues and to the community in which you serve?
13. Do you see a disconnect between your campus and the community that surrounds it?
14. If you wanted to make a change on campus, how would you go about doing so?
15. If you wanted to address an issue or policy that affects your community, how would you do so?

## **Tools: Reflection Questions**

### *Some preliminary questions about direct service*

Who are you serving?

What is the service you are providing?

Are you responding to an existential human need (a need that is caused by a natural condition of being alive such as famine caused by drought) or to a need that is caused by people?

If the need is existential, why are you responding?

If people cause the need, does your response in any way contribute to the problem?

If people cause the need, does your response to anything to mitigate the cause?

What do you know/not know about the situation you are encountering?

What would improve the quality of your contribution?

### *Some preliminary questions about inner work*

Why is it important to you to respond this need, or these persons?

What about you matters in this relationship?

How will your service affect you?

How will it affect your relationships?

How will it affect your community?

How committed are you (or not) to what you are doing?

How does the community you serve perceive you?

How do you feel about what you are doing?

What engages you most? Troubles you most?

### *Some preliminary questions about political engagement*

How does/will your service affect the person or persons you are serving?

What is their network of relationships?

How does your service affect their network of relationships?

How committed are you (or not) to what you are doing?

What resources does your service consume?

Where do they come from?

What do they cost?

Are the interests of the people you serve fairly balanced with those of other stakeholders?

How can you help the people you serve to change their situation?

## Resource List

Addams, Jane (1902, republished 2002) *Democracy and Social Ethics*, Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

This volume serves to remind readers that Addams' settlement house was not an experiment in service, but rather an experiment in creating and maintaining democracy in the urban, industrial context of modern America. As she does in the briefer "subtle problems of charity," Addams argues that the need for large-scale social services is evidence of economic and social inequality that harm democracy. It is an eloquent, and in many ways poignant, reminder of the intended relationship between service and democracy. It is a useful tool for helping students understand the relationship between their service and the larger public.

\_\_\_\_\_ (1899) "The Subtle Problems of Charity," *Atlantic Monthly* (83) 496, 163-178. Written midway between the founding of Hull House and its twentieth anniversary, this essay asks the hard questions about the ethics of inequality, balancing power between servant and served and theorizing about community betterment based upon individual experience, all in the context of a passionate faith in democracy. It moves brilliantly between personal narrative and formal analysis, a masterpiece of reflection. The language is late-nineteenth century and not always accessible, but readers can easily imagine themselves in Addams' place.

Barber, Benjamin R. and Battistoni, Richard M., editors. 1993. *Education for democracy: citizenship, community, service : a sourcebook for students and teachers*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Pub. Co.

Quite well known in service-learning, this volume includes a large number of well-organized excerpts from primary texts that explore the role and meaning of citizenship. The sourcebook is organized into sections - and each section, as well as each excerpt, are annotated with discussion questions.

Berry, Wendell. (1987) "Does Community Have a Value," *Home Economics: Fourteen Essays San Francisco*, North Point Press.

This essay is useful for challenging wishy-washy notions of community and arguing that community is something tangible, with economic value. Berry argues that community is composed of place and relationship, and that by artificially separating economic power and decision making from the rest of community life, we have ceased to actively value genuine community. It is helpful for talking about the connections between service directed toward individuals, and service directed at strengthening community.

Boyte, Harry C. (1989) *CommonWealth : a return to citizen politics*. New York : Free Press.

Boyte, a prolific author and founder of The Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, has an interest in citizen democracy spanning more than 30 years. Boyte has narrated stories about grassroots citizen action for years (beginning with *The Back of the Yard*, *Revolution*, and *Community is Possible*). He has also worked closely with the Industrial Areas

Foundation, exploring their successful organizing and leadership training. In this book, Boyte distills the lessons he has gleaned over the years into a coherent theory of citizen action, paying particular attention to what actually draws people into public life and such knotty concepts as community, self-interest, power and diversity.

Breuer, Rebecca and Nelson, F. (1992) *Building Ownership: a Coach's guide to Teaching Politics*. Minneapolis, Project Public Life.

Based on the authors' experiences in starting Public Achievement (a program of The Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University of Minnesota/Minneapolis), a youth development program aimed at engaging young people in community problem solving, this short booklet contains a series of very doable and productive exercises for exploring concepts such as power, self-interest and diversity in the context of community problem solving. The exercises lend themselves easily to brief introductions and extended reflection.

Couto, Richard A. (1982) *Streams of idealism and health care innovation : an assessment of service-learning and community mobilization*. New York : Teachers College Press.

A long time civil rights activist and educator, Couto's experience with service-learning began in the 1960s and continues through the present. A political theorist, Couto is interested primarily in how members of poor communities gain access to basic resources, such as health care, and what students and faculty can contribute to the efforts of those communities.

Cruz, Nadine I. and Dwight E. Giles, Jr. (2000) "Where's the Community in Service-Learning Research?" *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* Special Issue Fall 2000: 28-34.

This useful essay raises important questions about the equity of relationships between campus service programs and community, and argues that we would do well to take seriously the fundamental human and justice dimensions of that relationship, beginning with seeing campus and community as co-equal in solving problems shared by their communities.

Dewey, John. (1927,1954) *The Public and Its Problems*, Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press.

This book, or more likely selections from it, remains useful in helping students grasp the concept of "public" and the shifting terrain of ideas, values and relationships that it represents.

\_\_\_\_\_ (1916) *Education and Democracy*. The Middle Works of John Dewey. Vol. 9, Jo Ann Boydston, ed. (1980). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Our assumptions about the relationship among service, education and democracy often remain unstated. Because of this, experiential education and service-learning are often viewed as techniques rather than as preparation for participation in democratic culture. In this volume, Dewey makes an explicit argument that learning from experience is a fundamental perspective and set of skills that students need to develop if they are to become active citizens in a democratic society. These arguments are particularly illuminating for faculty who are thinking about their pedagogy; they are useful as well in

helping students understand the relationship between their private role as student and their public role as citizen. Equally important, they provide the background for Apollonia as later arguments that if we are to have power in a democratic culture you must first be able to describe the world as we experience it, and as we wish it to be.

Eyler, Janet, Dwight E. Giles Jr. and Angela Schmiede. (1996) *A Practitioner's Guide to Reflection in Service Learning: Student Voices and Reflections*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University.

This book is useful not only for researchers with similar interests, but also for students and teachers who would like some normative (even if provisionally so) benchmarks against which to measure their experience. It is a good combination of stories and analysis.

Freire, Paulo. (1994) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 20th anniversary edition*. New York: Continuum.

This book is perhaps the Ur-text (the foundation text) of liberatory education, arguing (often in high theory) that the first political act is to imagine the world that one lives in. The oppressed, in Freire's argument, are those who accept a worldview that is inimical to some or all of their interests. It is an important book for provoking questions about the relationships among knowledge, education, power and social change.

Goodwyn, Lawrence. (1978) *The Populist moment: a short history of the agrarian revolt in America* New York : Oxford University Press.

The introduction to this careful history of the Populist movement for those interested in how service might cause people to expand their interests to include political action. In brief, Goodwyn argues that agricultural extension agents traveling through poverty stricken rural America at the turn of the last century were deeply moved and angered by what they witnessed; frustrated by the inability of existing political parties to address their "people's agenda," they organized a third party – a party that nearly succeeded in challenging the two dominant parties for power. The extension agents – experts entering new communities to help by sharing information, technology and processes – had experiences paralleling those of college students deeply engaged in community service. Students can compare their experiences to those of the agents; they can discuss the analytical and organizing processes the agents went through; and they can talk about the emergence of a "people's politics" in the United States.

Griffith, Elisabeth. (1984) *In her own right : the life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton*. New York: Oxford University Press.

While Stanton's story is interesting in its own right, what is most helpful for those interested in linking service and civic engagement is Elisabeth Griffith's theory about what drew Stanton into the public domain: she moved, Griffith argues, from anguish to anger to analysis to action in long, slow, recursive cycles. This book, or excerpts from it, are useful in opening discussions of what draws people into public life, and how one moves from individual experience to social action.

Horton, Myles with Judith Kohl and Herbert Kohl. (1998) *The Long Haul: an Autobiography*. Teachers College Press.

The Highlander Folk School in rural Tennessee was an intellectual home to many labor organizers in the 1930s, and to many civil rights activists from the 1940s through the early 1970s. In this book, based on interviews done by the Kohls, Highlander's founder describes his theory of adult education - explicitly grounded in ideas of democracy and empowerment. Of particular use to higher education are the discussions of what constitutes useable knowledge, how collective knowledge is derived from individual experiences, and the centrality of relationships in both intellectual and social life.

Hutchings, Pat and Wutzdorff, Allan. (1988) "Experiential Learning Across the Curriculum: Assumptions and Principles," *Knowing and Doing: Learning Through Experience*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

This chapter carefully outlines a theoretical description of how experiential education happens in practice, arguing for the central place of "cognitive dissonance" in that process. It is useful to people designing and processing experiential learning "situations."

Illich, I. (1968, 1990) Kendall, J.C. and Associates, eds. "To Hell with Good Intentions," *Combining Service and Learning*. Raleigh: NSIEE v1, 314-320.

Based upon a critique of international service efforts by first-world volunteers, Illich spins out Saul Alinsky's "iron rule" (never do for someone what they can do for themselves); challenges the hubris that allows a volunteer ignorant of local culture and context to come in "change" things, and raises issues of unintended consequences. All of this is done in the context of a profound hope for social justice. It is a useful essay, too, for opening conversations about the place and utility of anger in advocacy.

Kretzmann, John P. and John McKnight. (1993) *Building Communities from the Inside Out: a Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. Chicago: ACTA Publications.

This book is a practical expression of the theories McKnight has been expressing for years - learning to identify and work from strengths, based upon resources that are sustainable, indigenous to the community. It is a good beginning for learning to "map" communities in a variety of ways: public institutions, mediating institutions, social capital, human relationships. The theory is helpful in many situations, and the practice, while harder, can serve as an exercise or the foundational process of a community-based course. As Kretzmann and McKnight were particularly interested in convincing large-scale institutional players to adopt this approach (notably, they have succeeded with the United Way), this how-to book considerably softens McKnight's earlier critiques of need-based service.

McKnight, John. (1995) *The Careless Society: Community and its Counterfeits*. New York: Basic Books.

This collection of essays previously published applies McKnight's critique of need-based service to nearly every sector of the public and non-profit service sectors. The chapter on the politics of healthcare seems particularly timely to many readers. It is a useful book for

talking with service providers about how they can be in more authentic relationships with the communities and people they serve.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1989. "Why Servanthood is Bad" *The Other Side* 25(1) 38-42.

An early, brief and provocative version of McKnight's thesis.

Mendel-Reyes, Meta. (1995) *Reclaiming democracy : the Sixties in politics and memory*. New York : Routledge.

The student activism of the 1960s is often held up to today's students as a gold standard. Popular interpretations of the 1960s call attention to protest politics, civil rights advocacy and the anti-war movement. Today's students often feel little connection to the '60s and don't see what it has to do with their lives. Mendel-Reyes does a good job interpreting the youth movement of the 1960s as an attempt to reclaim democracy. In this brief book she combines careful theoretical work on citizen democracy with compelling stories that make the 1960s accessible to today's students and emphasize the threads of continuity between then and now.

Palmer, Parker. (1990) "Community, Conflict and Ways of Knowing." *Combining Service and Learning, a Resource Book for Community and Public Service*. Raleigh: National Society for Internships and Experiential Education. v1 105-113.

This essay is particularly useful for two purposes: discussing the role that dialogue plays in learning from experience; and arguing that knowledge is contested and conflictual. It describes a process for classes and groups wanting to reflect together that has roots in the clearness committees of the Religious Society of Friends and the process philosophy of Charles Saunders Pierce. It is in community, Palmer argues, that we articulate what we know, compare it to what others say and argue our ways to conclusions that we think we can trust. It is this community of knowledge that we arrive at new insights and are simultaneously held accountable for our ideas.

Rogers, Mary Beth. (1990) *Cold Anger: a Story of Faith and Power*. Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press.

This book is a biography of Ernie Cortes, an organizer for the Industrial Areas Foundation. It describes how Cortes and the IAF work with ordinary community people to organize power and implement a change agenda. It explores concepts of self-interest and power, and argues that most people only turn to political action when they are angry about or afraid of things that threaten them. In describing Cortes' success in organizing in San Antonio, it also provides a description of how one can learn about the many interests in a community.

Thomashow, Mitchell. (1995) "Ecological Identity and Healing," *Ecological Identity: Becoming a Reflective Environmentalist*. Cambridge: MIT Press. 141-168.

While he is particularly interested in ecology, Thomashow, a long-time experiential educator, recognizes the intimate connection between people's self-identity and their political engagement. If they are to act politically to protect the environment, he reasons, then they have to understand themselves as part of an ecosystem. This book is Thomashow's careful description of how he goes about this process as a formal educator

– an introduction to reflective learning. Of immediate use is an exercise Thomashow has developed in which students draw and discuss their political lineage.

Troppe, Marie. (1994) *Participatory Action Research: Merging the Community and Scholarly Agendas*. Providence RI. Campus Compact.

This pamphlet was written as an introduction to participatory action research for faculty engaged in service-learning, arguing that one powerful way for higher education to serve communities is by developing research agendas based on the interests of communities, who will also share in developing that agenda as it unfolds.