

Is Civic Education Dead?

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Abstract

Civic education has taken various forms throughout U.S. history, but it has frequently sought to promote patriotism, unity, and pride. Today, such education is being questioned, as teachers and writers push for a frank reckoning with the nation's past. Where does this leave us? Should we be trying to reinvent civic education to make it more honest and uncomfortable? Or should we consider dispensing with it altogether? This track paper traces the development of civic education in the United States, discusses the difficulties of measuring civic knowledge, and asks what civic education might look like in the future. It argues that "culture wars" over civic education are useful because they foreground the importance of civic values. Although broad agreement on such values seems fanciful, it is not impossible, and universities can play a key role in cultivating common ground. However, I argue that this potentially constructive role is not being fulfilled, particularly when it comes to creating a culture of free debate. The burden thus falls on faculty to take up this crucial civic cause.

The Crisis of Civic Education

Americans know almost nothing about the country in which they live and they seem to be getting more ignorant over time. This, at any rate, is the picture captured in the carefully designed surveys that political scientists cherish. Many Americans do not know that there are three branches of government or what those branches are, they do not know what is written in the First Amendment, and they still do not, after all these years, really understand how the U.S. Congress is different

from the British Parliament.¹ If the “founding fathers” were here to see this, they would not know whether to laugh, cry, or repudiate the Declaration of Independence.

I have made these observations before and I usually get one of the following answers. From the East Coast liberal with an exaggerated estimate of their own intelligence: “You’re right, we are so stupid, it’s so sad, I wish I could move to Canada.” From the conservative: “Well, we used to teach proper civics, but the hippies took over and now it’s all about Big Bad America.” From the disgruntled political scientist: “You’re right, we are so stupid, but that’s what happens when you have all these crazy Republicans running state governments.” From the political scientist who is yet to lose all hope: “Well, that might be true, but look at the growing activism and voter turnout among young people.”

I have not found any of these answers very satisfying. Starting with that rare breed – the optimistic political scientist – I can see at least three problems. First, activism and voting sounds lovely, but what is impressive about protests and ballots from people who do not, according to the data, know the first thing about government or citizenship? Second, when and under what circumstances is marching down the street and yelling “Fuck the Police” or some other, nicer slogan, really “civic engagement”? Could it not equally be an indication of an uncritical herd mentality? Third, is improved voter turnout a product of a more thoughtful citizenry or, instead, a product of fear – of the bad orange man, the crazy Democrats, or something in between?

The disgruntled political scientist who has no hopes for the world and blames Republicans for gutting state civics curricula might be on to something, but they need to explain why basic civic knowledge is relatively terrible nationwide.² The conservative is correct that good old-

¹ Annenberg Civics Knowledge Survey: <https://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/political-communication/civics-knowledge-survey/>

² See Sarah Shapiro and Catherine Brown, “The State of Civics Education,” *Center of American Progress*, February 21, 2018. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/state-civics-education/>

fashioned patriotic civic education – where you learn why America is the greatest country that ever existed despite all the compelling evidence to the contrary – is being challenged by scholars and teachers who are calling for greater attention to the dark and shameful aspects of American history, an alternative narrative about American identity, and assertive civic engagement which often requires protest and collective action.³ But much (if not all) of the conservative response to this challenge has been crying, complaining, and the declaration of yet another national “culture war,” in which conservatives claim that they are only (as usual) acting in self-defense.

And yet despite the grim survey data, the sorry state of civics teaching in much of the country, and the polarization surrounding what should be taught, all is not lost. The hopeful political scientist, usually so wrong about so much, is right about one crucial thing: our measures of civic knowledge are impoverished, and there is much more to civic education than knowledge and rote memorization. While it is both sad and amusing to watch people confuse the British Parliament with the U.S. Congress or forget who the president is, this may not mean that they are hopelessly incapable of acting like an informed citizen. Indeed, facts may not be the best gauge of knowledge: someone might not know that there are two houses of Congress while knowing that they need to raise Hell, somehow, when their local park is bulldozed to make way for a motorway. More fundamentally, someone who is lacking in civic knowledge could be brimming with civic values. If, for instance, civility and open-mindedness are important civic values, then they are probably just as if not more likely to be found in a cheap sports bar than in political organizations that are often run by the loudest, most ideologically inflected voices in the room.⁴

³ For example, Nikole Hannah-Jones, Caitlin Roper, Ilena Silverman, and Jake Silverstein (eds.), *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* (New York: One World, 2021).

⁴ On the latter, see Jo Freeman, “The Tyranny of Structurelessness,” *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* (1972): 151-164.

This begs the question: what are “civic values”? How are they related to “civic knowledge” and “civic engagement”? How, if at all, should political scientists promote these values? In the following sections, I identify competing conceptions of civic values in “patriotic” and “critical” models of civic education. I then argue that three values may command widespread public support: civility, appreciation of diversity, and support for civic action. I conclude by evaluating the degree to which universities have embodied these values.

What are “civic values”? Or, what’s the point of civic education?

Former Supreme Court Justice and Harvard Law Professor Felix Frankfurter fondly recounted an educational experience that we would now regard as abhorrent. When Frankfurter moved to the United States from Austria at the age of twelve in 1894, he could not speak a word of English. He attended school on the lower east side of Manhattan with many other German-speaking immigrants, but his teacher (he always remembered her name: Miss Annie E. Hogan), “threatened the other children in Frankfurter’s class with corporal punishment if they ever spoke to him in his native German.”⁵ For Frankfurter, Miss Hogan – who was of Irish descent – was a harsh but authentic embodiment of civic education, instilling a single American creed in young people of various backgrounds.

This vision of civic education has deep roots in American schooling. Horace Mann, the “founding father” of modern American education, believed that “there are but two methods of curbing or subduing the unlawful propensities of men: either by an external or an internal power; either by the law of force or the law of duty.” While the “law of force” predominated in Europe – with “the horse-guard, the gendarmerie, and the Siberian mines” – the “preventive system” should predominate in the United States. “Universal education is our theoretical substitute for standing

⁵ Brad Snyder, *Democratic Justice: Felix Frankfurter, the Supreme Court, and the Making of the Liberal Establishment* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2022), 9.

armies. Instead of policemen, traversing every road and street, we propose the early inculcation of virtuous principles upon the minds of the young. School-houses are the republican line of fortifications.”⁶

When the United States Supreme Court declared that even non-denominational, voluntary prayers led by teachers were unconstitutional in public K-12 classrooms, it made clear that the same standards could not and would not apply to the pledge of allegiance, the national anthem, or other “patriotic or ceremonial occasions” that contained references to God.⁷ The ostensible rationale was that these rituals had a primarily secular purpose and the Constitution only prohibits “the Establishment of religion.” The reality was – and is – that patriotic indoctrination is (to borrow a phrase from more recent Supreme Court opinions) “deeply rooted in this Nation’s history and tradition.”⁸

Some values are coming to the surface here. We have, in one form or another, obedience to the law, integration into an Anglo-Saxon, Western culture, and national pride. Although some of these values are now either non-existent or heavily diluted in even the most conservative models of civic education, they undoubtedly still exist. Recent books and articles – mainly but not exclusively from American conservatives – want to revive appreciation for the nation’s founding and its founders. Such appreciation, according to Mark Bauerlein, was absent from a recent high-profile civic education initiative: the Educating for American Democracy Roadmap, which was launched by a variety of historians, political scientists, and other educators in 2021. “In its 39 pages,” Bauerlein protests, “the Roadmap mentions the word [founding] 12 times... Basic references to the principles and ideals of the Founding make up only four of those 12. The other

⁶ Horace Mann, *Thoughts Selected from the Writings of Horace Mann* (Boston, H.B. Fuller, 1867), 208.

⁷ *Engel v. Vitale*, 370 U.S. 421, 437 (1962).

⁸ *Washington v. Glucksberg*, 521 U. S. 702, 721 (1997); *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* 597 US _ (slip opinion, p.5) (2022).

eight tie the Founding to social and political matters that cast doubt on its merits,” including “territorial expansion,” “U.S. national self-interest and power,” and “how different groups of people could express their political will.”⁹ A fuller appreciation of the founding may not require blind veneration of it, but, at a minimum, a recognition of the American Revolution as a significant and inspiring historical event and an understanding of the “founding fathers” as part of the Western Enlightenment.¹⁰

Second, and relatedly, a core component of what we might call the “patriotic model” of civic education is appreciation of the U.S. Constitution. Although this often overlaps with the founding, it can also involve – particularly in more liberal visions of civic education – a narrative of progress over time. As Mary Dudziak has documented in her history of *Cold War Civil Rights*, this narrative of constitutional and legal progress was energetically promoted by American diplomats and political leaders as the Supreme Court and Congress chipped away at the Jim Crow system through *Brown v. Board of Education*, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.¹¹ The central idea is: the United States, like any country, is flawed; but, unlike many countries, it has the capacity for self-critique and change through democratic processes.¹²

This idea has a rather obvious implication which reveals a third feature of patriotic civic education: civic engagement requires patience, civility, and the use of conventional institutional channels. Conservatives have contrasted this gradualist outlook with the alleged rise of “action civics,” which they see as a false, dispiriting, and divisive rallying call for radical challenges to a supposedly racist and classist *status quo*. The prospect of teachers supporting student strikes and

⁹ Mark Bauerlein, “Always be Founding,” *City Journal*, May 7, 2021, <https://www.city-journal.org/civics-education-initiative-implicitly-rejects-american-founding>

¹⁰ See, for example, Civics Alliance, *American Birthright: The Civics Alliance’s Model K-12 Social Studies Standards* (New York: National Association of Scholars, 2022).

¹¹ Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

¹² See, for example, Wilfred M. McClay, *Land of Hope: An Invitation to the Great American Story* (New York: Encounter Books, 2020).

political protests from a young age embodies conservative fears of progressive propaganda masquerading as civics. Civic education, from this perspective, ought to be focused on formal and traditional modes of engagement, including voting, running for office, and petitioning. Protest should not be discouraged but it also should not be fetishized, and it should always be strictly non-violent. Meanwhile, values of self-reliance and individual accountability should remain central priorities of civic education.¹³

On the other hand, what we might call “critical civic education” emerges from a deep concern with what it sees as dishonest jingoism. There is nothing new about this. Black scholars, activists, and intellectuals, in particular, have long challenged rose-tinted visions of American history and identity, perhaps most famously through Frederick Douglass’s simple yet piercing question: “What, to the American slave, is *your* Fourth of July?”¹⁴ Recently, Nikole Hannah-Jones’s “1619 Project” has become the subject of fierce public debate because of its direct challenge to the founding myths of the United States and its claim that, in 1619, “No aspect of the country that would be formed here has been untouched by the 250 years of slavery that followed.” The Pulitzer Center has since developed a 1619 Project Education Network, which, by May 2020, had reportedly reached “some 4,500 classrooms since August 2019,” with “tens of thousands of students in all 50 states engaged with the curricular resources, which include reading guides, lesson plans, and extension activities,” with “five school systems adopt[ing] the project at broad scale:

¹³ Stanley Kurtz, ““Action Civics” Replaces Citizenship with Partisanship,” *American Mind*, May 26, 2021. <https://americanmind.org/memo/action-civics-replaces-citizenship-with-partisanship/s>; Stanley Kurtz, “Responding to Defenders of the Federal Civics Bill,” *National Review*, August 1, 2022. <https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/responding-to-defenders-of-the-federal-civics-bill/>

¹⁴ Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” July 5, 1852, <https://www.americanyawp.com/reader/democracy-in-america/frederick-douglass-what-to-the-slave-is-the-fourth-of-july-1852/>.

Buffalo, New York; Chicago; Washington, DC; Wilmington, Delaware; and Winston-Salem, North Carolina.”¹⁵ The “Network” has continued to expand into 2022 and 2023.¹⁶

Contrary to the claims of former President Trump and several Republican state legislatures, the “1619 Project” is not, in any real sense, taking over American schools.¹⁷ The curricula created by the Pulitzer Center are simply resources for reading, teaching, and interpreting the “1619” collection in the *New York Times* magazine; they are supplementing, rather than supplanting, existing civics and history education. All the same, the “1619 Project” is significant not only in its frank attempt to re-frame the founding, but also in its declaration that “as much democracy as this nation has today, it has been born on the backs of Black resistance.”¹⁸ This has an important implication for civic engagement which stands in stark contrast to the gradualism of the patriotic model: America has only improved through bitter struggle. From this perspective, civility, patience, and self-reliance could be viewed as either over-rated or counter-productive civic values, representing a ploy by the old guard to keep historically oppressed groups in their place.¹⁹

What values would this more critical model of civic education promote? Unsurprisingly, critical – perhaps, adversarial – thinking is high on the list. While such thinking may lead to cynicism and despair, it may also lead to the conclusion that American history and society is “more beautiful and more terrible” than previously imagined.²⁰ Appreciation of diversity and inclusion –

¹⁵ Pulitzer Center, “Nikole Hannah-Jones Wins Pulitzer Prize,” <https://pulitzercenter.org/blog/nikole-hannah-jones-wins-pulitzer-prize-1619-project>

¹⁶ Pulitzer Center, “Meet the 2022 Cohort,” <https://1619education.org/1619-community/1619-education-network/meet-2022-team-pages>

¹⁷ Sarah Schwartz, “Lawmakers Push to Ban ‘1619 Project’ From Schools,” *EdWeek*, February 3, 2021, <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/lawmakers-push-to-ban-1619-project-from-schools/2021/02>

¹⁸ Nikole Hannah-Jones, “America Wasn’t a Democracy, Until Black Americans Made It One,” *New York Times Magazine*, August 14, 2019.

¹⁹ For an overview and critique of these arguments, see Richard Boyd, “The Value of Civility?” *Urban Studies* 43, no. 5-6 (2006): 863-878.

²⁰ Jeanne Theoharis, *A More Beautiful and Terrible History: The Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2018); James Baldwin, “A Talk to Teachers,” October 16, 1963, <https://www.zinnproject.org/materials/baldwin-talk-to-teachers>

now ubiquitous words across all levels of American education – is also emphasized. And in various forms, “action civics” – elevating the importance of “motivation,” “participation,” and “empowerment” – is rooted in a dissatisfaction with supposedly stale and boring old-school fact-heavy civics.²¹

So, at one pole we have a vision of civic education that is about pride, patience, and love of country; at another, we have self-criticism, multiculturalism, and activism. On the surface, these are arguments about what should be taught, but they are really arguments about why it should be taught. In this sense, the arguments are healthy: they recognize the centrality of values in civic education.

Of course, they have trouble finding common values, despite the fact that the broader public seems to agree on some. Public opinion polls show strong support for civility and respectful disagreement across the United States.²² Respondents might say this and not really believe it, or believe it in the abstract and then not really practice it, but they do say it. Opinions are more divided on the concept of “diversity,” but, again, we can observe positive attitudes in polling data and, indeed, among conservative thinkers who are highly critical of racial classifications in college admissions, ethnic affinity groups, “diversity, equity, and inclusion” trainings, and “diversity statements” in job applications, but who nonetheless celebrate America’s history and identity as a land of immigrants.²³ And despite the fact that “action civics” has been harshly criticized by some conservative writers, the reality is that American conservatives are arguably some of the best

²¹ Alexander Pope, Laurel Stolte, and Alison Cohen, “Closing the Civic Engagement Gap: The Potential of Action Civics,” *Social Education* 75, no. 5 (2011): 265-268.

²² See, for example, Institute of Politics and Public Service, “Battleground Civility Poll: New Poll Shows Near Universal Concern Over Level of Political Division and High Levels of Self-Segregation,” July 28, 2022, <https://politics.georgetown.edu/2022/07/28/battleground-civility-poll-new-poll-shows-near-universal-concern-over-level-of-political-division-and-high-levels-of-self-segregation/>

²³ See, for example, Juliana Horowitz, “Americans See Advantages and Challenges in Country’s Growing Racial and Ethnic Diversity,” *Pew Research*, May 8, 2019. See also McClay, *Land of Hope*; David E. Bernstein, *Classified: The Untold Story of Racial Classification in America* (New York: Bombardier Books, 2022).

practitioners of “action civics” in the country. While it is tempting to label participants in movements like the Tea Party and recent campaigns for local school boards as dupes for the Koch Brothers, proper scholarship on these conservatives reveals a meaningful current of grass-roots, diligent, and assertive civic action.²⁴

Civic Education in the University

Various organizations are fumbling around for a vision of civic education that clarifies, enlivens, and teaches shared values. An incomplete list would include the Roadmap for American Democracy (mentioned above), the American Bar Association, the National Constitution Center, and the Annenberg Public Policy Center.²⁵ Political scientists are involved in much of this work, but I am not sure how often we think of civic education as an integral part of our job. While, in recent years, we have devoted significant resources and energy towards de-colonizing our syllabi, making our classrooms more inclusive, and bringing activism into our scholarship, terms like “civic education” and “civic values” are rarely mentioned, while “civic engagement” tends to be framed as an extra-curricular activity.

If this is true, it might not be a problem. We teach political science, not civics, and we should not delude ourselves into thinking that we can make, improve, or even understand civic values. On the other hand, if civility and respect for disagreement are core civic values, then the

²⁴ See, for example, Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

²⁵ Beth K. Whittenbury, “The State of Civic Education in America,” *Human Rights Magazine, American Bar Association Civil Rights and Social Justice Section*, 47:2, 2022, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/the-state-of-civic-education-in-america/the-state-of-civic-education-in-america/; National Constitution Center, “Justice Stephen Breyer on the Importance of Civics Education,” October 6, 2022, <https://constitutioncenter.org/news-debate/americas-town-hall-programs/a-conversation-with-justice-stephen-breyer>; Annenberg Public Policy Center, “Annenberg Civics Knowledge Survey,” <https://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/political-communication/civics-knowledge-survey/>.

university – which cannot survive or function without at least some embrace of these values – is well placed to cultivate them.

Here, there is some evidence to suggest that universities are falling short. A recent Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) survey of 44,847 students across 208 colleges found that “more than three-in-five students (63%) expressed worry about damaging their reputation because of someone misunderstanding what they have said or done, and just over one-in-five (21%) reported that they feel a lot of pressure to avoid discussing controversial topics in their classes. Twenty-two percent reported that they often self-censor.” Three out of five reported that they were reluctant to “disagree with a professor about a controversial topic or expressing an unpopular opinion to their peers on a social media account tied to their name. Just under half of students (48%) reported they would feel discomfort expressing their views on a controversial political topic during an in-class discussion.” The topics that students described as most difficult to discuss openly were abortion (49%), “racial inequality (48%), COVID-19 vaccine mandates (45%), transgender issues (44%), gun control (43%), mask mandates (43%), and police misconduct (43%).” Finally, “opposition to allowing controversial conservative speakers on campus ranged from 59% to 73% of the students surveyed, depending on the speaker” and “opposition to controversial liberal speakers ranged from 24% to 41%, depending on the speaker.”²⁶

The United States probably has the strongest legal regime for free speech in the world, but these findings suggest that we do not have a robust culture of free speech in the institutions where we are supposed to learn new things. Perhaps this is nothing to worry about: the FIRE surveys may encourage students to exaggerate their perceptions of censorship, and conservative students, in

²⁶ Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE), “2023 College Free Speech Rankings,” <https://rankings.thefire.org/rank>

particular, may be parroting the Tucker Carlson view of universities as bastions of liberal indoctrination.

However, I think there is a problem when, for instance, 42% of students who identify as conservative (compared to 13% of liberals and 23% of moderates) report that they regularly censor themselves.²⁷ This is, on one level, a problem for those conservative students, who might react by keeping quiet, joining a “Trigger the Libs” type of organization, or – best case scenario – absorbing and understanding a flood of arguments and ideas that push against their preconceptions. But the problem is much worse for students on the left, who are rarely exposed to serious arguments that run against their preconceptions. Sure, professors – who are themselves overwhelmingly liberal²⁸ – can try to present conservative arguments in class, but this is not the same as hearing them from an actual conservative. When liberal students enter liberal universities and only really encounter liberal ideas, they are unlikely to develop an appreciation of respectful disagreement and intellectual pluralism.

What, if anything, can we, as political scientists, do about this? First, we would have to acknowledge it as a problem and make some noise about it. We have done this in many areas, such as diversity, equity, and inclusion, and these areas have become major priorities of college administrations across the country. Second, we would have to work harder and more consciously to create a culture of debate on campus. This might involve taking stronger stands in defense of free speech when students or administrators – or other faculty members – seek to silence voices that they find abhorrent. It might also involve taking steps to uplift unpopular opinions on campus. For many of us, this must involve supporting the growth of serious conservative organizations.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Scott Jaschik, “Professors and Politics: What the Research Says,” *Inside Higher Ed*, February 27, 2017, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/02/27/research-confirms-professors-lean-left-questions-assumptions-about-what-means>

The word “serious” is important here: “Trigger the Libs” groups like Turning Point USA are mainly interested in provocation and reaction, not debate. A better model is the Federalist Society, which has, for more than forty years now, brought conservative voices into relatively liberal law schools through a combination of its own networking events and public-facing conversations that frequently include liberals and progressives.²⁹ Any group like this that promises to challenge the prevailing consensus on campus ought to be welcomed.

To be sure, the promotion of free debate on campus could come into conflict with other values that we – and much of the country – consider to be civic, such as an appreciation of ethnic, racial, and gender diversity. The Governor of Florida’s recent proposal for “elevating civil discourse and intellectual freedom in higher education” makes this conflict explicit, calling for an end to “indoctrinating” DEI programs and “political loyalty oaths” such as diversity statements in the hiring process.³⁰ The primary goal of proposals like these is probably publicity rather than “intellectual freedom.” Still, we cannot hide from the fact that if we truly embrace free debate on campus, we would have to welcome criticism of campus diversity programs and other programs that aim to create an inclusive campus.

If such criticism is thoughtful, it would have to acknowledge that the concept of diversity, equity, and inclusion has a strong civic theme in itself. The idea of “elevating and centering historically marginalized voices” has now been repeated in so many mass emails from college presidents – not to mention the PR of great fighters for justice like Lockheed Martin, Wells Fargo, and Facebook – that it has become an object of ridicule. But its original meaning is simple,

²⁹ Steven M. Teles, *The Rise of the Conservative Legal Movement* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

³⁰ Governor DeSantis Elevates Civil Discourse and Intellectual Freedom in Higher Education,” January 31, 2023, <https://www.flgov.com/2023/01/31/governor-desantis-elevates-civil-discourse-and-intellectual-freedom-in-higher-education/>

important, and emphatically civic: open up the public sphere. In this sense, intellectual diversity and demographic diversity should be seen as complementary, rather than conflicting civic values.

What, then, of civic action and engagement? Here, I would argue that we have the least work to do. When Benjamin Barber wrote about the “Civic Mission” of the university in 1989, apathy was one of his major concerns.³¹ Today, the main issue is probably not apathy, but, rather, large amounts of real but incoherent enthusiasm. Giving this enthusiasm direction should be easier than trying to generate it from scratch. Civic engagement programs of various kinds are widespread across universities, particularly in and through political science departments. So far as I can see, these programs are not, as critics allege, vehicles for liberal indoctrination.³² If they are guilty of anything, it is leading us to believe that civic engagement programs are, one way or another, civic education. But engagement means little without values, especially in an era where images of protest and activism are rather fashionable. Engagement for the sake of social media attention is not necessarily bad, but it may represent an uncritical herd mentality as much as a genuine commitment to political action.

Using our Unique Opportunity

To the extent that there is a “culture war” about civic education in the United States, it brings positives, as well as the many, well-documented negatives. Above all, it reveals how civic education is inextricably linked to civic values. The values I have discussed in this paper are not revolutionary. This might make them unappealing. Similarly, the role of political scientists in civic education might better be kept within current, ongoing projects regarding K-12 curricula and civic engagement.

³¹ Benjamin R. Barber, “The Civic Mission of the University” *Civic Engagement*. 32. (1989).

³² See David Randall, *Making Citizens: How American Universities Teach Civics*, A Report by the National Association of Scholars, January 2017.

However, if the university has a “Civic Mission,” then it should not shy away from embracing civic values. For most of us, civic education is not part of our job description. I venture that it should be. K-12 civics reaches children and adolescents who have scarcely begun to consider what it means to be part of a society or a polity; we reach young adults for whom such a concept is vaguely – and, perhaps, increasingly – within grasp. We should not let the opportunity go to waste.