

Consistently, in interviews and written assignments, students demonstrated their understanding of a collective rather than individual vision for effecting change. After listening in class to the song “We Who Believe in Freedom,” by Sweet Honey in the Rock, one young man wrote that “whether the struggle is big or small it should be everyone’s responsibility together. . . . Movements are not about me, they’re about us.” Another student—a football player—observed that there was “a lot of camaraderie on the field, but in the classroom, it seems like everyone works as an individual to better themselves. In this class, we’re working as a group to better everything around us.”

Thus, in contrast to programs that seek to teach that “one person can make a difference,” Bayside students emphasized the need to address social problems collectively.

The Political Significance of Different Conceptions of Citizenship: Some Comparisons

Both Madison County Youth in Public Service and Bayside Students for Justice were effective in achieving goals consistent with their respective underlying conceptions of citizenship. Yet our qualitative and quantitative data regarding these programs demonstrate important differences in impact. The Madison program appeared to have a powerful impact on students’ capacities for, and commitments to, civic participation. Students could detail the skills they had used (conducting polls, interviewing officials, making presentations, reading legislation), as well as the knowledge they had gained about how government works. Survey measures of the students’ sense of personal responsibility to help others, their vision of how to help, and their leadership efficacy show significant changes (see Table 4). Especially notable in both the survey and interview data was the change in students’ confidence that they had the knowledge or “social capital” to make things happen in the community. Interviews, observa-

Table 4
Educating for Different Kinds of Citizenship

Factors	Change from pretest to posttest	
	Madison County Youth in Public Service	Bayside Students for Justice
Personal responsibility to help others	.21*	.09
Knowledge/social capital for community development	.94**	.17
Leadership efficacy	.31**	.12
Interest in politics	.03	.33*
Structural/individual explanations for poverty	-.10	.28*

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

tions, and examples of student work all reinforced the survey finding of a dramatic (+.94) increase in students' sense that they had knowledge of what resources were available to help with community projects and how to contact and work effectively with community organizations to mobilize those resources. This confidence grew out of their involvement in substantive projects that required frequent interaction with multiple community actors and agencies.

In addition, Madison students spoke extensively during interviews about the micro-politics and technical challenges associated with their projects. "I thought there was cooperation amongst the departments," one Madison student told us, "but then, the more we got into it, the more I realized Person One is in charge of A, B, and C, and Person Two is in charge of X, Y, and Z." Students were frustrated with various departments that did not work well together and with what they identified as "turf issues." Many noted a poor working relationship between the county and the city.

We did not, however, see evidence that the Madison program sparked interest in or conveyed knowledge of broad social critiques and systemic reform. As noted in the discussion of the politics of participatory citizenship, Madison students tended to downplay or ignore explicitly political or ideologically contentious issues. They were not able to talk about how varied interests and power relationships or issues of race and social class might be related to the lack of consensus on priorities and the inability of varied groups to work effectively together. For example, Mark, a Madison student explained:

A lot of people have preconceived notions that [community work] is so political . . . that . . . everything [is] divided between Republicans and Democrats, [but] people don't realize that . . . what your political agenda is doesn't really matter because when you're helping out in the community, you're not helping a party, you're helping a person.

Because structural and individual causes of poverty were not discussed as part of the curriculum, it is not surprising that students' perspectives on such issues did not change as a result of their participation. Nor did their interest in talking about or being involved in politics change.

To a much greater degree, the Bayside students talked about the need for forms of civic involvement that addressed issues of social justice and macro-level critique of society. When asked whether violence prevention programs such as the Manalive/Womanalive retreat could eliminate violence, Desiree eagerly praised the program but then added:

There's some things that you see out there, the struggle [when] people are trying to do their best but still they're being brought down by society, and I think that's very troublesome.

Other students also emphasized the need to address root causes of problems such as poverty, governmental neglect, and racism. After telling the class

about his cousin who was arrested for carrying a weapon, Derrick wondered aloud to the class about how best to proceed:

It would be great if nobody had weapons, but where does [the violence] begin? If the police are discriminating [and] if I can't get a job, . . . there's going to be a lot of anger. . . . The police aren't going to act better because [I'm] trying to make my neighborhood better.

And Tamika put it this way: "Lots of people want to be nice, [but] if you don't got food for your kids, how nice is that?"

Thus, in comparison with students from Madison, students who took part in the Bayside Students for Justice curriculum appeared to emphasize social critique significantly more and technocratic skills associated with participation somewhat less. For example, students were more likely at the end of the program than at the beginning to posit structural explanations for social problems (stating, for example, that the problem of poverty resulted from the shortage of jobs that pay wages high enough to support a family rather than from individuals' being lazy and not wanting to work). They were more likely than their Madison peers to be interested in, and want to discuss, politics and political issues, and they were more likely to seek redress of root causes of difficult social ills. As one student told us after several months in the Bayside program, "when the economy's bad and people start blaming immigrants or whoever else they can blame, they've got to realize that there are big social, economic, and political issues tied together, that it's not the immigrants, no, it's bigger than them."

To the extent that Bayside students learned about participatory skills, they focused on extragovernmental social activism (such as community organizing or protesting) that challenged existing norms rather than reinforcing them. Evidence from observations, interviews, student work, and surveys of Bayside students did not show an increase in students' knowledge about particular community resources. Unlike their Madison peers, Bayside students' sense of being effective community leaders (knowing how to run meetings, for example) remained unchanged. Nor was there any increase in students' sense of *personal* responsibility to help others (as opposed to their inclination for collective action for change that was frequently expressed during interviews).

Thus programs that successfully educate for democracy can promote very different outcomes. Some programs may foster the ability or the commitment to participate, while others may prompt critical analysis that focuses on macro structural issues, the role of interest groups, power dynamics, and/or social justice. And these differences often are politically significant. Indeed, answering the question "Which program better develops citizens?" necessarily engages the political views that surround varied conceptions of citizenship, because the question leaves open the definition of a good citizen. Educators who view civic participation as of primary importance would likely view the Madison County Youth in Public Service program as extraordinarily effective.

Alternatively, those who believe that students should learn how to examine social structures and deliberate about principles and practices of justice might prefer that participants in the Madison program couple their community action with talk about the need for structural change, about methods used historically to bring change about (those employed by various social movements, for example), or about social injustice.¹⁵

The social context and political norms of a given community can also shape curricular decisions and the impact of curriculum on students. The Bayside and Madison programs, for example, were located in very different communities. It may well be that Bayside's urban school environment exposed students to more forms of injustice and rhetoric related to injustice than the Madison students encountered in their largely homogeneous and middle-class community. The exposure of the Bayside students, in turn, may have made it more likely that they would gravitate toward justice-oriented themes.¹⁶ The differing political climates certainly influenced the teachers' options. This was evident, for example, in the reaction of the Bayside director to the focus on social critique by Bayside students and other groups (who met three times during our study to discuss their programs with each other). She told us, "If my superintendent or board heard me saying what you all are saying, I'd be fired." When it comes to politically contentious topics, context matters. The ways that contexts shape both the constraints placed on teachers and the curriculum's impact on students clearly deserve extensive study.

Conclusion

Proponents of the democratic purposes of education, especially advocates of participatory and justice-oriented goals, frequently complain that they are fighting an uphill battle (Wood, 1993; Cuban & Shippis, 2000; Goodlad, 1979; Clark & Wasley, 1999). Traditional academic priorities and the current narrow emphasis on test scores crowd out other possibilities (Meier, 2000; Noddings, 1999; Ohanian, 2002). Given public schools' central role in helping to shape citizens, this conflict clearly is worthy of attention.

But what kind of citizens are the schools trying to shape? As educators interested in schooling's civic purposes, we maintain that it is not enough to argue that democratic values are as important as traditional academic priorities. We must also ask what kind of democratic values. What political and ideological interests are embedded in or easily attached to varied conceptions of citizenship? Varied priorities—personal responsibility, participatory citizenship and justice-oriented citizenship—embody significantly different beliefs regarding the capacities and commitments that citizens need for democracy to flourish; and they carry significantly different implications for pedagogy, curriculum, evaluation, and educational policy. Moreover, because the ways that educators advance these visions may privilege some political perspectives regarding the ways problems are framed and responded to, there is a politics involved in educating for democracy—a politics that deserves careful attention.

Our study of Madison County Youth in Public Service and Bayside Students for Justice demonstrates the importance of distinguishing between programs that emphasize participatory citizenship and those that emphasize the pursuit of justice. Although each program was effective in achieving its goals, qualitative and quantitative data regarding the programs demonstrated important differences in their impact. The study indicates that programs that champion participation do not necessarily develop students' abilities to analyze and critique root causes of social problems and vice versa (see Kahne, Chi, & Middaugh, 2003, for a study that comes to a similar conclusion). Although people who are committed to the democratic purposes of education may extol the value of linking priorities related to participation and justice, our study indicates that links between participation and justice not guaranteed. If both goals are priorities, the people who design and implement curriculum must give explicit attention to both. Similarly, as noted earlier, related research has found that initiatives that support the development of personally responsible citizens may not be effective in increasing participation in local or national affairs. In fact, efforts to pursue some conceptions of personal responsibility appear to further a politically conservative vision of the role of government and of the need for structural change. Indeed, there are some indications that curriculum and education policies designed to foster personal responsibility undermine efforts to prepare both participatory and justice-oriented citizens.

From the standpoint of research and evaluation, the implications for the development of democratic values and capacities are significant. Studies that fail to reflect the varied range of educational priorities in relation to democratic values and capacities will tell only part of the story. Moreover, because the desirability of many politically relevant outcomes is tightly tied to one's political preferences, consensus among scholars regarding "right" answers or sometimes even "better" answers to many relevant questions may be hard to achieve. Knowing, for example, whether a student now places greater emphasis on recycling or on environmental regulation does not enable us to say that a program was effective. However, it does help us understand the program's effects.

In acknowledging a lack of "right" answers, we do not mean to imply a sense of neutrality with respect to varied conceptions of democratic values. Instead, we mean to emphasize that politics and the interests of varied groups are often deeply embedded in the ways that we conceptualize and study efforts to educate for democracy. Politics and the interests associated with the varied conceptions therefore require close attention. We can focus on whether a given curriculum changes students' sense of personal responsibility, government responsibility, or employer responsibility, for example. If we ask only about personal responsibility (and if discussions of personal responsibility are disconnected from analysis of the social, economic, and political context), we may well be reinforcing a conservative and often individualistic notion of citizenship. Yet this is the focus of many programs and of their associated evaluations. If citizenship also requires collective participation and critical analysis of social structures, then other lenses are needed as well.

Clearly, highlighting the political significance of curricular choices must be done with care. Such dialogues may help to clarify what is at stake, but raising these issues can also lead to dysfunctional stalemates and may deepen differences rather than prompting more thoughtful inquiry. Yet not all discord is problematic—when the stakes are high, conflict is both likely and appropriate. Indeed, thoughtful analysis requires that those who design curriculum and those who study its impact be cognizant of and responsive to these important distinctions and their political implications. The choices we make have consequences for the kind of society we ultimately help to create.

Notes

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¹Our desire to respond to prominent educational theories related to democratic ideals and to develop a framework that practitioners would find both clear and meaningful led us to modify our categories in several ways. For example, we began this study by emphasizing a distinction between “charity” and “change.” We had used this distinction in earlier writing (Kahne & Westheimer, 1996). Through the course of our work, however, it became clear that the distinction did not do enough to capture some major currents in the dialogues of practitioners and scholars regarding democratic educational goals and ways to achieve them. In addition, once our three categories were identified, we found that some of our rhetoric failed to clearly convey our intent. For example, we had initially titled our third category *social reconstructionist*. As a result of dialogues with practitioners, this was changed to *social reformer* and finally to *justice-oriented citizen*.

²We should note here that although adherents to the political philosophy of John Rawls also use a language of justice, their perspective is different from (though not necessarily in conflict with) what we describe as the justice-oriented citizen. For Rawlsians, the State’s respect for different conceptions of the good and refusal to endorse particular conceptions of the good are matters of justice.

³The strongest proponents of this perspective were likely the Social Reconstructionists, who gained their greatest hearing between the two world wars. Educators such as Harold Rugg (1921/1996) argued that the teaching of history, in particular, and the school curriculum, more generally, should be developed in ways that connect with important and enduring social problems. George Counts (1932) wrote, *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* He wanted educators to critically assess varied social and economic institutions while also “engag[ing] in the positive task of creating a new tradition in American life” (p. 262). The Social Reconstructionists believed that truly effective citizens needed opportunities to analyze and understand the interplay of social, economic, and political forces and to take part in projects through which they might develop skills and commitments for working collectively to improve society.

⁴For a discussion of the distinction between indoctrination and education for justice-oriented citizenship, see Westheimer and Kahne, 2002 and 2003.

⁵Moreover, those with libertarian leanings sometimes argue that the practice of civic virtue and responsible behavior can diminish the need for democratic governance and that such personal qualities will enable democratic governments to work effectively.

⁶Personal responsibility need not be framed in individualistic and conservative terms. Henry David Thoreau, for example, conceptualized personal responsibility in ways that

were not conservative. And one could also imagine visions of personal responsibility that embodied commitments to collective action. However, as put forward in most current public discussions related to citizenship, the focus is conservative and individualistic in that it emphasizes charity, personal morality, and the efforts of individuals rather than working to alter institutional structures through collective action.

⁷We highlight these two programs because, of the four high school programs in the sample, these two were the most clearly aligned with the two perspectives that we wished to investigate (participatory and justice-oriented). The other two high school programs, although compelling for several reasons, embraced a broader and less specific democratic vision.

⁸During the 2nd year of our study, we also administered pre and post surveys to two control classrooms from the Madison program. These classrooms were also 12th-grade government classrooms, served students of similar academic ability, and were taught by the same two teachers. An appropriate control classroom was not available in the case of Bayside.

⁹For a discussion of the 1st-year experience and findings, see Kahne and Westheimer, in press.

¹⁰As an indicator of personal responsibility, we used a scale named "Personal responsibility to help others." It included items that measured students' individual commitments to recycle, for example. Our measure of participatory citizenship was called "Commitment to community involvement." We also had three scales related to social justice: One assessed students' interest in political affairs, another assessed students' understanding of "structural vs. individual explanations for poverty," and a third assessed students' desire to work toward justice by, for example, examining root causes of problems and legislation or social policies that perpetuate injustice.

Our measures of commitment to community involvement, personal responsibility, volunteering, and vision, were adapted from the National Learning Through Service Survey developed by the Search Institute. Some of those measures, in turn, were adapted from instruments developed by Dan Conrad and Diane Hedin (see *Instruments and Scoring Guide of the Experiential Education Evaluation Project*, 1981, Center for Youth Development and Research, University of Minnesota, St. Paul). Items related to social capital and leadership efficacy draw on a leadership measure developed for the Community Service Leadership Workshop (contact Jim Seiber, Issaquah School District 411, Issaquah, WA 98027). For a list of all items associated with each scale, please contact the authors.

¹¹The descriptions that follow were captured from field notes and audiotapes. The quotations are verbatim. The names of schools, students, and teachers are pseudonyms.

¹²In one case, for our measure of civic efficacy, we did not find a statistically significant difference ($p = .22$). Thus, although our data indicate statistically significant gains in civic efficacy for students who experienced the Madison curriculum, it is not clear that those changes were different from those experienced by students in the control classrooms.

¹³Students in the Bayside program also expressed skepticism of corporate-sponsored civic initiatives (Coca Cola's sponsoring of Earth Day activities, for example, or Phillip Morris initiatives to "build our communities"). In interviews, they reported that, in general, it was unwise to count on businesses to set the tone for improving communities or solving difficult problems that do not have "making money" or advertising as a goal. A number of classroom discussions also focused on the differences between political or legislative approaches to environmental regulations and those voluntarily promoted by private corporations.

¹⁴The distinctions that we draw between participatory and justice-oriented citizenship assume a predisposition to the basic mechanics of legislative democracy common to many school-based programs. For example, the Bayside Students for Justice curriculum takes seriously the notion that critical analysis can be fruitful only in a democratic culture. To teach the fundamentals of the democratic process, Franconi had her students engage in exercises such as planning a class party by the same means that Congress uses to pass a bill. Madison teachers conducted similar activities.

¹⁵From responses on our pretest surveys, we know that youth in the two communities started in different places on several relevant measures. As detailed in Tables 2 and 3, for example, Bayside students were far more likely to offer structural explanations for

poverty than Madison youth, and Madison youth were much more likely to express confidence in their knowledge related to community development. What is particularly interesting about our posttest survey results is that they demonstrate that, beyond these initial differences, Bayside's curriculum led students to support structural explanations even more strongly, and Madison's curriculum led to students to hold even greater confidence in their knowledge related to community development.

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