Almond: Mancur Olson, can you tell us why this is?

Mancur Olson: Yes, I think so. Individuals and firms in stable societies inevitably form dense networks of collusive, cartelistic, and lobbying organizations that make economies less efficient and polities less governable. Countries that have had democratic freedom of organization without upheaval or invasion the longest will suffer the most from growth-repressing organizations and combinations. The solution to this state of affairs is a democratic state with sufficient regulatory authority to control the growth of special interest organizations.

Almond: We have just heard, especially from Professors Friedman and Olson, that democratic politics tends to reduce productivity and hence welfare. I tend to disagree because all of the advanced industrial democracies are welfare states. So, let's consider whether democracy fosters capitalism. Peter Flora, you have some ideas on this.

Peter Flora: Yes. It can be argued that had capitalism not been modified in the welfare direction, it might not have survived. There is a close relationship between the development and spread of capitalist industry, democratization in the sense of an expanding suffrage and the emer-

gence of trade unions and left-wing political parties. This relationship led to the gradual introduction of the institutions and practices of the welfare state.

There were serious confrontations between the upper- and middle-class leaders and the trade union movements. These upper- and middle-class leaders decided that the concession of a welfare state was cheaper than the losses that would be incurred from strikes by unions that bring production to a halt or the costs of suppressing the union movement. Without this welfare adaptation, it is doubtful that capitalism would have survived, or rather, its survival, "unwelfarized," would have required a substantial repressive apparatus. The choice would have been between democratic welfare capitalism and repressive undemocratic capitalism.

Almond: Let's conclude with a summation from Moses Abramovitz.

Moses Abramovitz: The democratic welfare state is a pragmatic compromise between the competing virtues and defects of decentralized market capitalism and encompassing socialism. Its goal is to obtain a measure of distributive justice, security, and social guidance of economic life without losing too much of the allocative efficiency and dynamism of private enterprise and market organization. It seeks to retain for

most people that measure of personal protection from the state which private property and a private job market confer. At the same time, it seeks to obtain for the disadvantaged minority of people through the state that measure of support without which their lack of property or personal endowment would amount to a denial of individual freedom and capacity to function as full members of the community.

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About the Author

Delmer Lonowski is an assistant professor of political science at South Dakota State University. The idea for writing this play had its origins in a workshop on accelerated integrated learning.
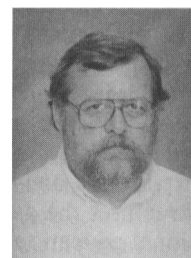
Civic Education as Public Leadership Development

Harry C. Boyte, *University of Minnesota*

In the last several years, many critics have observed the erosion of Americans' commitments to politics or participation in the public world (Dionne 1991). Such erosion is connected to the virtual disappearance of any active idea of "public life" in recent America. Politics has largely become an unpopular spectator sport. The public world, in many people's view, is the arena dominated

by politicians or simply the rich and famous. When ordinary people enter a pubic environment, they do so as *privatized* individuals, as claimants, or as righteous crusaders, with little of the sort of responsible exchange, development, or problem-solving that conveys serious public agency. Single issue advocacy, call-in talk shows, or Phil Donahue-style intimacies are the norm.

Over the past four years, Project Public Life, a theory-building experiment in civic education, has developed a framework called "citizen politics" to redress the civic disaffection of students and of a variety of other constituencies, in different institutional settings.[1] Project Public Life is part of the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University of Minnesota. Its framework of

citizen politics recasts civic education as developing students' capacities for leadership in politics. Politics is here regarded as the everyday, demanding, and open-ended work of dealing with the issues of our common existence.

The framework explicitly addresses the social context of multiple, often fractured, communities and large institutions where invocation of the ideal of "community" has a fuzzy and ethereal, if evocative, character. It integrates liberal and communitarian themes with a rendering of practical politics that sees citizenship as a public-spirited contribution and that understands politics as the work of public problem-solving. Such an understanding of citizenship means acknowledging differences in interest and power and working alongside people with whom we might disagree deeply about moral issues. It means recognizing that no one perspective or interest usually suffices for adequate resolution of public problems.

The citizen politics approach traces civic marginalization especially to the spreading pattern of expert-client relationships throughout our society. This pattern puts most people, as clients, outside of decision-making and problem-solving processes, while it strips expertise of political skills and larger civic meaning. A narrow understanding, perceiving the expert's role out of context and the expert as a one-directional actor, structures the assumptions of professional education and professional practice (Bernstein 1976, 1983; Schon 1983). Such professionalism, denuded of civic meaning and political skills, has hollowed out the public dimensions of many institutions (Boyte 1991).

The citizen politics approach holds that students, like others, will only come to a robust understanding of themselves as *citizens* through practical acquaintance with a repertoire of political and civic mapping concepts that enable them to understand their specialized disciplinary and professional training within larger categories of public deliberation and the work of public problem solving. Such conceptual learning enhances professionalism understood as a civic craft, while it also allows students to claim and develop a larger, interactive civic identity on the public

stage. It offers resources for reconstituted professional education and practice, based on a continuously evaluated, context-attentive, interactive and generalist approach, that has been outlined in leading calls for reform (Schon 1983; Pew Health Professions Commission 1993). It also opens up innovative possibilities for civic revitalization of institutions.

The Public Philosophy of Politics as Public Work

In American society, recent years have seen the consolidation of a professional, technical, managerial group whose lives are insulated from most Americans (Reich 1992). The growth of expert-dominated, technocratic, and therapeutic institutional cultures has eroded understandings of politics that take account of the inevitably messy, intractable, often tragic quality of human experience (Lasch 1991). Ironically, the social movements of the late 1960s, despite democratic creativity, also contributed to this process, producing a penchant for personalized, utopian, and geometric thinking that advocated "for" the dispossessed and powerless even while professionals sought to bypass the compromises and ambiguities of mainstream institutional practices (Berger and Berger 1976).

For instance, in electoral politics, a new generation of politicians and officials came of age at every level motivated by 1960s' idealism, concerned about issues such as civil rights, feminism, or environmental activism. They took on local power structures and backroom maneuvering across the country, with sometimes striking successes. Yet they also faced the paradox of growing isolation from their constituencies and gridlock in decision making as they dismantled institutional ties between officials and the citizenry at large whom they saw as corrupt and complicating (Ehrenhalt 1991).

These dynamics create particular obstacles for strong citizenship and civic education, both for college students training for future professional careers and for the population as a whole. For instance, the characteristic use of personal development

vocabulary in community service tends to mystify the civic and political aspects of public environments. One recent study of high school community service programs found that educational objectives typically include such aims as "developing self-esteem," "a sense of personal worth," "self-understanding," and "capacity to persevere in difficult tasks" (Conrad 1989). Learning "politics" or central political themes like interest, power, and strategic thinking is absent. In settings like this, students may become "politicized" about the larger social problems and policies of the issues they confront in individual terms, but their resulting activism tends to be highly moralistic, personalized, and anti-institutional, not informed by any deep understanding of the complexity of problems.

Against this background, the civic challenge is not so much to generate ever larger number of experts, to find moral consensus, or to develop capacities for emotional self-revelation and social bonding as it is to design conceptual frameworks and cultivate the public leadership skills that allow people to work productively with others, whether or not they like or agree with each other. Students become best re-engaged in the public world through a learning process that teaches them how to understand and embed their professional and disciplinary knowledge within a repertoire of civic concepts. The use of such a repertoire of concepts, adapted from observation of what makes for the most effective civic action in low income community organizations of recent decades (Boyte 1990), differs from approaches to civic education which mainly stress bodies of knowledge, discrete skills, reflection on civic values, or experiential education.

A conceptually based civic education teaches students to map their political environments and understand their own activities in multidimensional and civic terms. The citizen politics approach uses a constellation of concepts including politics—understood as a practical, public-spirited craft—interest, power, and public space.

Politics as Public Work

In the first instance, practical civic education begins with a view of politics in which citizens are strategic actors. Today, most people distance themselves from "politics" even in everyday environments ("office politics" or "university politics"). They also make moralized judgments in which politics is seen as sleazy, corrupt, and cynical, and they imagine themselves as innocent outsiders. As a result, most people lose the middle ground of public action where the point is neither vindication nor talk but rather engagement in the complexity of creating the social world.

By way of contrast, a view of politics as the public work of problem-solving, full of ambiguity and practical tasks (Weil 1973; Crick 1972; Pitkin and Shumer 1982), allows students to recognize their inevitable complicity in creating their environments. It highlights the ubiquitous nature of politics. Teaching such an understanding of politics begins by developing students' capacities to map the political, civic dimensions of different settings. This can be done through service projects, but also by other means. I assign teams to use concepts like power, interest, and accountability to report on diverse settings from neighborhood groups to bureaucracies.

To develop a strong sense of citizenship, the problem-solving craft should not be seen in narrow terms. Public problem-solving needs attention to connections among problems and also to the long-term implications of any course of action. It is also a deeply responsible form of activity, through which people come to see themselves as serious, accountable public actors: citizens, not simply experts, clients, protestors, or voters.

Interest and Power

Modern society has seen an extraordinary elaboration in the pattern of elite and technical domination of policy making that Max Weber (1958) noted in detail. Weber proposed that authority in industrial societies was shifting to those who organized and controlled scientific and technical knowledge and who exercised control over interpreting and applying such knowledge. At the center of this is the emergence of specialized languages and methods through which experts define problems, identify remedies, and evaluate success. The distinctive feature of professionalized language is the effort to remove professionals from the context and thus to pose interventions in neutral, objective terms. The claim, "I'm

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only here to help you," is the foundation for expert-dominated interactions in which most people become clients, and experts relate to settings in narrow, highly scripted terms.

The growth of expert language cloaked in humanitarian terms of helping, caring, and concern greatly complicates any civic invocation of the term "service" that does not involve systematic exploration of dynamics of power, interest, and politics. In turn, concepts of interest, understood broadly, not narrowly, and power, understood in interactive terms, allow civic education to make explicit normally hidden and mystifying dynamics.

Self-interest is distinguishable from selfishness or from selflessness. It is different from the self-sacrifice and loyalty that characterize personal relations and space (one might give up all for one's child, for instance). But it also differs from the conventional equation of self-interest with its narrow calculation of individual gain. Self-interest (from the Latin, *inter esse,* meaning to be among or between) grows from the passions, history, and meanings that move people to public action (Hirschmann 1977; Boyte 1989; Kari and Michels 1991). Exploring self-interest means recognizing that one's concepts of "self" and "interest" are dynamic, changing over time. In the case of students, self-interest typically involves not only personal motivations but also evolving identifications with various communities of identity, like "teacher" or "journalist."

Moreover, students need to think well about the contours of power in the modern world. This includes but goes beyond views of power as a set of largely zero-sum, one-directional interactions based on scarce resources (capital, position), where one party "has" power and the other "lacks" it. Power analysis involves a more interactive, dynamic view that recognizes the reciprocal and mutually transformative dimensions of power interaction even in situations of considerable inequality. It also entails attention to the way many institutions are organized around professional expertise and information resources, and challenged by assertions of communal authority, or moral appeal by dispossessed and powerless groups. These dynamics are inevitably complex and multidimensional (Scott 1986; Evans and Boyte 1992; Boyte 1989).

Acknowledging self-interest and power relations—that the assertion of knowledge claims always involves power-laden acts—shatters the norms of service. In service and information systems, the relations of power and interest within them are customarily concealed and buried. In service systems, experts define and diagnose the problem, generate the labels for talking about it, propose remedial techniques, and evaluate whether the problem has been solved. Yet, helpers present themselves simply as caring, objective people, whose only interest is in serving the client. For students—often apprentice service providers—denial of their interests and power creates a pose of altruistic

care that they are likely to carry with them. When providers' deny their own stake and power, it is difficult for low income and other care recipients to resist being infantilized.

The Public Arena

To make most effective use of the concepts of interest and power, students need to learn to think about civic aspects of their environments. Here, the concept of public as a pluralist, heterogeneous social space of many different interests, viewpoints, and community histories (Arendt 1958; Boyte 1992; Evans 1993) allows professional knowledge to be re-embedded in the processes of public deliberation and action.

Today, the spread of a vocabulary of care and helping and the forms of activism which emerged from the 1960s have all contributed to a radical personalization of politics. Having been raised in therapeutic environments that stress self-esteem and emotional expressiveness, young people take everything in public life personally. In my graduate classes I find that students preparing for careers in public service combine a morally charged vocabulary about issues with striking vulnerability. Students vigorously argue for their positions, but they also feel personally assaulted if other students disagree with them. They look upon arguments as a sign that others don't think they are a "good person" rather than as indications of different histories.

The result of the intimate quality of professional work and volunteer citizen activism alike is that people have few notions of how to work with those with whom they might disagree on important issues or of the larger civic and public consequences and implications of their activity. A concept of the public arena gives students a conceptual framework to address this dilemma.

Public spaces are environments that are open, accessible, and include a mix of different people and groups. In such settings, principles of civic action involve political arts of developing political relationships, collective problem-solving and strategic thinking, listening and speaking well, understanding power,

negotiating and bargaining, practicing judgment, holding participants accountable. The aim of politics is common action on public problems, not bonding or agreement.

Principles of public action are distinguishable from the capacities developed in both private life and community. In communities of identity or personal relationship, for example, one assumes similarity of outlook and belief. In the public world it is more effective to assume dissimilarity and to investigate others' interests and values. In private, we want love, intimacy, and loyalty. In public, principles such as respect, recognition, understanding, and accountability are more workable bases for democratic action.

None of this can be neatly cate-

The aim of politics is common action on public problems, not bonding or agreement.

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gorized: every environment includes some mixture of public and private and communal aspects. Nor can much more be communicated in a single course than an outline, or mapping, of a view of politics and political arts that require life-long learning for true proficiency.

Yet a course on these themes can move students to reflect on their lives and careers in ways that teach them to understand their public agency in civic terms, not mainly in terms of narrow professional roles. Public work in this vein develops students' sense of themselves as contributors on a civic stage. It retrieves a practical, multi-dimensional concept of citizenship and adapts it to our world.

Course Syllabus and Class Description

The Public Philosophy course, for advanced undergraduates and graduate students, will look at changing understandings of public life, politics and public philosophy over time, especially through the course of American history. It will explore the restrictive ways in

which conventional understandings of "public" have been regularly challenged by racial and cultural minorities, women, and lower class groups. It will provide tools for mapping and analyzing the political cultures of different settings within which "citizenship," understood in active, practical fashion, takes place. And it will explore strategies for reinvigorating, especially, the civic and public dimensions of service and information-based environments where narrowly structured client-expert interactions are now largely denuded of civic identities.

The course focuses especially on four themes—power, interests, concepts of public space, and different meanings of politics—that are often neglected in writings about public life and citizenship. Goals for the course include preparation of participants

- to gain familiarity with the main ways "public" has been conceived historically, in practice and theory;
- to read more skillfully the patterns and modes of politics and power in different environments;
- to understand the main alternative views about "public affairs" and citizenship, their conceptual foundations, strengths and limits;
- to develop an overview of practical political skills and capacities.

Week One: Introduction, What Is Public Philosophy?

Class 1: Goals for course, survey of student interests

Class 2: "Public Philosophy, Practical Theory, and Public Space," lecture, discussion

Required Readings: Harry Boyte, "Practical Politics," in packet; Robert Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart,* Chapters 1 and 7; Hannah Arendt selection from *The Human Condition,* in packet.

Week Two: The Classic Tradition in Political Thought

Class 1: "Republicanism and Power," lecture, discussion

Class 2: Discussion of readings; one-page report on the politics of a familiar environment due

Required readings: Thucydides, "The 'Funeral Oration' of Pericles," in *History of the Peloponnesian War,* in packet; Ralph Ellison, *The Invisible Man*; Aristotle, *Politics,* Books I, II, and IV

Additional readings:
Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* Chicago: University of Chicago, 1958)
Benjamin Barber, *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*

(Berkeley: University of California, 1984)

Jürgen Habermas, *Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Boston: MIT, 1989)

Week Three: The American Adaptation of Public Life

Class 1: "Was There a Public Sphere—and if so, How Would We Recognize It?" Lecture, discussion of journal entries

Class 2: Discussion of readings, one-page report on "Star Trek: The Next Generation" due

Required readings: James Madison, "Federalist Paper 10," in packet; Sara Evans and Harry Boyte, *Free Spaces,* Preface, Chapters 1 and 2; Bellah, Chapter 2

Additional reading:

Frances Moore Lappé, *Rediscovering America's Values* (New York: Ballantine, 1989)

Sara M. Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America* (New York: Free Press, 1989)

Mary Ryan, *Women in Public* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1990)

Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: MIT, 1991)

James Kloppenberg, "The Virtues of Liberalism: Christianity, Republicanism and Ethics in Early American Political Discourse," *Journal of American History,* Vol. 74, No. 1 (1987), pp. 9-33.

Gordon Wood, *Creation of the American Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1969)

Gary Nash, *Race, Class and Politics: Essays on American Colonial and Revolutionary Society* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1986)

Week Four: Democracy in Industrializing America

Class 1: "The Public World and the Populist Adaptation," lecture, discussion

Class 2: Discussion of readings (continuing week before)

Required readings: Gianna Pomata, "A Common Heritage: The Historical Memory of Populism in Europe and the United States," from Harry C. Boyte and Frank Riessman, eds., *The New Populism,* in packet; Sara Evans and Harry Boyte, *Free Spaces,* Chapters 3 and 4; Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*

Additional readings of interest:

Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment* (New York: Oxford, 1978)

Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism* (New York: Oxford, 1983)

Harry C. Boyte and Frank Riessman, eds., *The New Populism: The Politics of Empowerment* (Philadelphia: Temple, 1986)

Joseph Kling and Prudence Posner, *Dilemmas of Activism* (Philadelphia: Temple, 1990)

Week Five: Progressivism and the Culture of Professionals

Class 1: "The Rise of Technocratic Liberalism," lecture, discussion

Class 2: Discussion of readings

Required readings: Bellah, *Habits,* Chapter 3; Joseph Schumpeter, "Democracy as Elite Competition"; James Carey, Journalists Just Leave: The Ethics of an Anomalous Profession"; Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion,* all in article packet

Additional readings of interest:

Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribner, 1958)

Barton Bledstein, *The Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976)

Andrew Polsky, *The Rise of the Therapeutic State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991)

Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World* (New York: Basic Books, 1977)

Christopher Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven* (New York: Norton, 1991)

Linda Gordon, *Heroes of Their Own Lives: The Politics and History of Family Violence* (New York: Viking, 1988)

Harry C. Boyte, *CommonWealth: A Return to Citizen Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1989)

Week Six: Work Week

Class 1: The Rise of Therapeutic Culture

Class 2: Work group organizing day

Required readings: Bellah, *Habits,* Chapters 4 and 5; William Schambra, "The Quest for Community and the Quest for a New Public Philosophy"; Polsky, excerpts from *Rise of the Therapeutic State,* in packet

Week Seven: Democratic Countercurrents

Class 1: Presentations on free spaces papers

Class 2: "Citizen Action and Public Philosophy in the Great Depression," lecture, class discussion

Required readings: Simone Weil, "The Iliad"; The Poem of Force," in packet;

Saul Alinsky, Selections from *Reveille for Radicals,* in packet; Evans and Boyte, *Free Spaces,* Chapter 5

Additional readings of interest:

Larry May, ed., *Recasting America* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1988)

Saul Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals* (New York: Random, 1946)

Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest* (New York: Knopf, 1982)

Week Eight: Public Life and the 1960s

Class 1: "The 'End of Ideology' and Active Democracy in the Sixties," lecture

Class 2: Discussion of readings

Required readings: Martin Luther King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," "Port Huron Statement," both in packet

Additional readings of interest:

C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford, 1956)

James Miller, *"Democracy Is in the Streets": From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987)

Todd Gitlin, *Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam, 1988)

Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the Age of King* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988)

Henry Kariel, *Frontiers of Democratic Theory* (New York: Random House, 1972)

Week Nine: Liberalism in Crisis

Class 1: "Democratization of the 'System World,' " lecture, discussion

Class 2: Discussion of the politics of service and information environments

Required readings: Bellah, Chapters 8, 9, 10; John Brunner, *The Shockwave Rider* (New York: Ballantine, 1975); Daniel Yankelovich, "How the Public Learns the Public's Business," in packet

Readings of additional interest:

Richard Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1985)

Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame, 1981)

Michel Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982)

Harry C. Boyte, *The Backyard Revolution: Understanding the New Citizen Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980)

Jane Mansbridge, *Beyond Adversary Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980)

**Week Ten: Politics,
Practical Theory and Public Life**

Class 1 and 2: Project presentations

Additional readings of interest:
Bernard Crick, *In Defense of Politics*
(Chicago: University of Chicago, 1972)
Hannah Pitkin, *Fortune Is a Woman*
(Berkeley: University of California,
1984)
Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision*
(Princeton: Princeton University Press,
1960)
Mary Dietz, *Between the Human and the
Divine: The Political Thought of
Simone Weil* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman
& Littlefield, 1988)
E. J. Dionne, *Why Americans Hate
Politics* (New York: Simon & Schuster,
1991)

Last Session: Project reports due

Required readings for course:
Aristotle, *The Politics* (New York: Pro-
metheus, 1986, or some other transla-
tion—check with me)
John Brunner, *The Shockwave Rider*
(New York: Ballantine, 1975)
Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter
and Forgetting* (New York: Penguin,
1981)
Sara Evans and Harry Boyte, *Free
Spaces* (Chicago: University of
Chicago, 1992)
Robert Bellah, et al., *Habits of the
Heart* (New York: HarperCollins,
1986)
Ralph Ellison, *The Invisible Man* (New
York: McGraw, 1960)
Article packet (pieces by Alinsky, Arendt,
Boyte, Carey, King, Lippman,
Madison, Pericles, Polsky, Schambra,
Schumpeter, SDS, Weil, Yankelovich

Course assignments: The Public Philoso-
phy, Boyte

The grades for the course will be based
on four elements:
(1) Public life journal (30% of grade).
Each participant is expected to keep a
"public life" journal combining *reflec-
tions on readings* and *observations drawn
from experience* (with at least four pages
each week). What is the central argument
of each work? What is your evaluation of
the persuasiveness of the arguments?
Relate insights in the piece to mapping
the politics of environments you know
from your life. In addition, every
Wednesday each participant should bring
a short (no longer than one page) set of
observations drawn from the readings or
class discussion, in enough copies to col-
late for the whole class, for discussion the
following Monday. For the first, bring
home an example of political "mapping"
in a setting you know; for the second

week, please focus on the politics of
"Star Trek."
(2) Participation in class discussions
(25% of grade). Each participant is
expected to discuss the themes, ideas, and
projects in the class. Ten percent of the
course grade will be based on the work
of the class as a whole in "public
argument."
(3) A five-page paper, whose argument
you will present for the class, that
describes a "free space" (15% of grade).
Free space is here understood as a rela-
tively, open, public arena that has a com-
munity location and ownership, that
functions as a place for discussion of
important issues, questions, problems,
and that is characterized by more or less
"relational" operations of power. (Don't
worry: these concepts will be clear after
the first two or three weeks of class.)
Describe how the space is created, sus-
tained, why people participate, what are
its limitations from a "public" point of
view, what threatens it, whether it is
important, and why.
(4) A seven-page paper and class pre-
sentation that describes in some detail a
public setting/environment/organization
in the Twin Cities area, based on direct
observation (30% of grade). Here, stu-
dents are encouraged to focus on groups
which are different from their interests or
political outlooks, work in groups of
three or four, developing strategy for
interviews and observations, meeting reg-
ularly throughout the class to talk about
what they are learning. Observations and
descriptions will especially be attentive to
political mapping along lines of power,
interest, political culture, the existence or
absence of "free space" and other major
themes of class analysis. Such settings
may be one of three types: an official
public body (city council, library board,
county commissioners, etc.); a commu-
nity-based nonprofit; an area civic asso-
ciation. Each work group will present.
As an alternative, individual students
may choose to write a 15-20 page paper
that explores the meaning of "public" in
a major American political tradition or
the writings and activities of a major
American political thinker or actor.

Note

1. I use the citizen politics framework in
my Public Philosophy course; part of the
core curriculum at the Humphrey Institute of
Public Affairs. We have also adapted it for a
range of other college, K-12, community, and
institutional settings, from 4-H clubs to nurs-
ing homes and low-income parent groups.
I co-direct Project Public Life with Peg
Michels. Our framework has been developed
by an interdisciplinary team including
Rebecca Breuer, Dorothy Cotton, Sara M.

Evans, James Farr, Pamela Hayle, Kathryn
Hogg, Carol Johnson, John Kari, Nancy
Kari, Anthony Massengale, Miaisha Mitchell,
and Carol Shields. It has been enriched by
sustained commentary from many colleagues,
including especially Richard Battistoni,
Benjamin Barber, Steve Clift, David Cohen,
Mary Dietz, E. J. Dionne, Edwin Fogelman,
Alan Isaacman, Juan Jackson, Paul Light,
Gregory Markus, Paul Martinez, David
Mathews, Suzanne Morse, Harold Saunders,
and Gerald Taylor.

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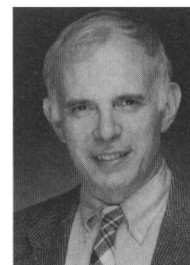
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