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UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
JUNE 14-16, 2007

**Chapter 3: Service-Learning and the Obligations and Rights of Citizenship<sup>1</sup>**  
**DRAFT: PLEASE DO NOT CITE OR REPRODUCE WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR.**

Prior scholarship on youth service-learning and civic life largely uncritically accepts definitions of citizenship as a form of obligation to the state and a set of social mores. In the previous chapter, I argued that macro-structural changes in contemporary American society represent a generational shift, and I investigated the repercussions of this break on youth civic life. Through an in-depth, ethnographic study of high school students in two towns, in this chapter, I look at service-learning as a form of education for American citizenship with a focus on how theoretical understandings of the rights and obligations of citizenship impact youth civic and political life.

As an early advocate of education reform and experiential learning, John Dewey argued that democratic participation was key to solving community problems (Dewey 1906). That is, the process of defining problems and working toward their solutions results in the constitution of a democratic society. Thus teaching citizenship means young people learn about the relationship between work in the world and their impact on the world. This is the foundation for and ensures the reproduction of a vibrant and healthy democratic civic life.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is a *preliminary* draft of chapter 3 of my dissertation on service-learning and youth civic engagement. It is prepared such that it can be read as a stand-alone document specifically for the CIRCLE Emerging Scholars conference, June 14-16, 2007.

In this paper, I suggest that Dewey's formulation is valuable, but incomplete for young people becoming citizens in contemporary American society. I suggest that issues of political activism, identity and power also contribute to young people's constitution of the American polity. These issues are not addressed through the reproduction of civic life, but give rise to separate questions concerning the changing lifeworld of young people<sup>2</sup>. My task here is to uncover how youth civic life, as understood in the Dewian context, constrains and enables youth democratic participation.

Specifically, I consider the ways that service-learning, as an experiential pedagogical approach, generates the expansion of Dewian civic life. At the same time, I suggest that, for young people today, despite their hyper-volunteerism, some concerns go unaddressed. My goal is to account for the space where young people participate – whether that participation is civically or politically minded – and examine how this participation generates democratic citizenship. Service-learning itself often leads to civic outcomes, and sometimes results in both civic and democratic outcomes. However, I find that under certain conditions, civic and democratic outcomes within service-learning programs may conflict.

In this chapter, I first briefly review literature on the rights and obligations of citizenship before discussing civic life as a theoretical basis for service-learning. I next discuss the sociological literature that posits participatory democracy as a route to successful democracy. By considering link between citizenship and democracy as a political one, I examine what this means with respect to experiential learning. Next,

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<sup>2</sup> The specific issue of how and why the youth lifeworld has changed is addressed in chapter 2, above.

through an examination and analysis of qualitative data, I consider young people's perspective on citizenship with respect to their service-learning experiences.

I find that young people often cannot reconcile service-learning with political participation. A sense that they are making a difference and having an impact through their volunteer work provides a crucial link between their volunteer service and their sense of citizenship. For many youth, volunteerism is enjoyable and rewarding, but they are also frustrated by their lack of power to create change. Accordingly, I suggest that issues of youth civic power are inadequately addressed through their civic engagement and volunteerism. I conclude with some possibilities for reconceptualizing citizenship and youth civic engagement as opportunities for empowering the work of young citizens.

#### *Rights, Obligations, and Theory of Citizenship*

On a theoretical level, citizenship is generally analyzed in terms of rights and obligations (Janoski 1998). Those who consider citizenship in terms of rights emphasize what the state can and should provide for individuals and groups. In the former case, rights of citizenship are inherent in the literature on the sociology of law (see Nielsen 2004. For a discussion of democracy and rights, see Schudson 1998), while aggrieved groups are studied as part of social movement research (cites). TH Marshall spearheaded this liberal view of citizenship with his argument that the current era of "social citizenship" establishes rights under the welfare state (Marshall 1949; Mann 1987). For Marshall, citizenship categories arose historically, in part, out of a response to class struggle. Eighteenth century civil citizenship allowed for individual freedoms followed by political citizenship, which established voting rights and access to political

institutions. Social citizenship, as a product of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, established the rights to education and a social safety net.

Marshall rests his framework on the rights that are granted to members of the state in a post-Marxist, capitalist society. However, as Turner (1990) argues, Marshall's concept does not recognize citizenship as consequence of social struggles over resources. In addition, Marshall's work stops in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century with the development of the welfare state – an era from which we are now shifting away.<sup>3</sup>

Alternatively, in a framework where obligations of citizenship are central, scholars from Tocqueville to Putnam and Bellah emphasize social obligation and commitment to community; they are concerned with civic engagement and associationalism. Under this republican view of citizenship, being a good democratic citizen means being involved in civic or volunteer activity. This formulation posits citizenship as an activity or practice, not a status membership, and suggests that civic activity is an end in itself (Arendt 1958; Bellah 1985). Moreover, as Putnam (1993, 2000) and others in the civic republican tradition argue, when people are engaged in voluntary associations, they develop trust. This trust is the grease of a healthy democracy: it allows civil society to flourish, mitigates state control and manufactures the preconditions to democratic political action.

Civic republicanism provides the impetus - although often implicitly - behind service-learning. With its foundations in the work of John Dewey, one basis of the service-learning “movement” is that, through high quality service-learning programs, young people will gain citizenship skills (Billig 2000). Quantitative analyses of

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<sup>3</sup> An exploration of the shift from the welfare state to a contemporary postindustrial era of increasing risk is discussed in detail in Chapter \_ above.

longitudinal data show that students who engage in service-learning are more likely to vote (Yates and Youniss 1997; Billig 2004) and more likely to develop an awareness of the connections between their service work and the social problems in their communities (Eyler and Giles 1999; Yates and Youniss 1997; for a qualitative study of Catholic school service-learning, see Youniss and Yates 1997). Service-learning is also reported to impact young people's sense of civic responsibility, make them feel more civically connected and effective, and increase young people's desire to contribute to their communities (Billig 2000, Youniss and Yates 1997).

In an effort to foster these civic goals, the National and Community Service Act of 1990 includes funding for school based service-learning programs (Kielsmeier 2000; Keith 1994). Under the umbrella of the Corporation for National Service, local governments have begun instituting service programs for students and school districts are rapidly incorporating service as part of the curriculum. Various school districts including those in Chicago, Philadelphia and Green Bay, WI all have made student advancement or matriculation contingent upon completing a specified number of service hours or performing service projects (Education Commission of the States 2001). As of 1999, almost 50% of schools reportedly offer some form of service-learning to the student body (Dept of Education cite).

With the movement toward service-learning in American high schools has come an increase in young people's volunteerism. These programs seem to make a tremendous difference in the rates of service participation among the nation's youth. Shumer and Cook (1999) report that between 1984 and 1997, the number of high school students involved in service related programs has jumped from 900,000 to over six million.

Service-learning is a major factor in this increase, with its rates of participation skyrocketing from 81,000 students in 1984 to almost 3 million students in 1997. (more recent data here) Metz and Youniss (2003) further find that required service increases young people's volunteerism.

Yet, the success of service-learning still leaves many questions about citizenship and youth democracy unaddressed. Critics of civic republicanism argue that being involved in voluntary associations is not sufficient for democratic citizenship. For example, scholars object to Putnam by pointing out that social clubs differ significantly from political organizations and that a sense of political efficacy accounts for much civic activity (Levi 1996; Edwards and Foley 2001). Similarly, Etzioni (2001) argues that social connection is a necessary, but not sufficient component of a good community (see also Lichterman 2006, Theiss-Morse Hibbing 2004).

To address these issues in the context of service-learning, I consider the literature on citizenship that emphasizes that association itself is not enough to ensure democratic ideals. I argue that participatory democracy and civic renewal scholarship points to important aspects of becoming citizens that are missing from the service-learning programs. Scholars of participatory democracy advocate a form of citizenship wherein "state structures afford those associations or their constituents a greater share in the exercise of public power" (Fung 2003, 532). The key to a democratic citizenry is not just engagement with the public, work in voluntary association or pursuing rights against the state. Instead, these scholars examine whether and how ordinary citizens are empowered, not just active. Power becomes the primary mechanism through which citizenship is

realized and civic activity is effective (Fung 2003, Cohen and Rogers 1992, Fung and Wright 2001).

In addition to participatory democracy, there are a wide range of actions and activities that are fundamental to democratic citizenry (Warren 2001). Burgeoning scholarship on civic renewal, for example, demonstrates that citizenship can be multifaceted while stressing the importance of organization and social involvement (Siriani and Friedland 1999; Warren 2001; Boyte and Kari 1996; Fullinwider 1999). Nie, Junn and Stehlik-Barry (1996) suggest that developing citizenship skills depends on education, and the mechanism through which such skills are developed are political and intellectual. “Education is the driving force in the development of citizenship qualities through two distinct pathways – the first to political engagement through network centrality, and the second, to democratic enlightenment through cognitive proficiency” (6) To be a citizen, one needs to be educated in both ideals of democracy and the rules of engagement.

Rosenblum (1998) suggests a similar take on associationalism: “[B]y itself, the simple *existence* of a dense array of associations-whether congruent with the public norms of liberal democracy or incongruent, alien and adverse-may contribute little to the moral uses of pluralism....The possibility of shifting involvements among associations-*the experience of pluralism* by men and women personally and individually-is what counts” (17). For Rosenblum, then, the much touted ideas of republican associationalism do little good without attention to pluralism, participation and acting on and according to the freedom to associate.

Smith (1997) argues that contemporary citizenship involves what he terms “a multiple traditions approach [in which] the major political parties and actors will offer varying civic conceptions blending liberal, republican and ascriptive elements in different combinations and that important conflicts will occur over these contrasting elements.” (8) While he believes that these elements can and will have differing, and in some ways normative contradictory implications for policy and ideological stances, to him the single important aspect of citizenship is to give members of a state a sense of nationhood and identity as a “people.” By considering citizenship empirically, I hope to demonstrate how citizenship is lived and thus points to how the nuances described by Smith get glossed over for young people today. The result leaves them questioning the value and purpose of their service work, particularly where it relates to their sense of citizenship.

Scholars of service-learning recognize that theories of citizenship are underdeveloped (Westheimer and Kahne 2004; Giles and Elyer 1994). While Barber and Battistoni (1993) urge a “decoupling” service and citizenship, Flanagan and Galloway (1995) argue that “[v]olunteer work in itself does not produce the skills of citizenship” and that, for young people to gain civic knowledge through service-learning, they must work with their peers and the community on understanding and solving social problems (38). Billig, Root and Jesse (2005) similarly found that student gains from service-learning vary with the quality of the service program (see also Galston 2001).

Warren (2001) argues that the democratic potential of associations depends on the form of the association. That is, association alone does not ensure a vibrant democracy. In civic education in which service is a primary component, differences in association matter for the education students gain. Following from Zaff, Malanchuk, Michelsen and

Eccles (2003) who argue that social and cultural context is critical to understanding youth civic engagement, I suggest that citizenship does not simply follow from service-learning and issues of power and context must be considered here as well. Society is too complex to fit this simple formula and young people recognize this complexity.

At the same time, however, experiential learning offers many benefits to students and teachers alike. The difficulty comes in making the connection between service work and its larger social and political implications. This is especially so in an era where issues of power and identity are central to the lives of young people.<sup>4</sup> In this chapter, I look at empirically where and how young people are able to make these connections with respect to their service-learning experiences, and in what instances they fail to do so. In this regard, I hope to articulate service-learning in terms of the youth lifeworld, laying the foundation for a more realistic and thereby stronger and richer concept of youth agency.

#### *Data and Methods*

This chapter employs qualitative and ethnographic data collected from the spring of 2003 to the spring of 2004. Research for this study was conducted in Basktown and Point Place, two towns in a midwestern state.<sup>5</sup> Basktown is racially relatively homogenous while Point Place is a bit more diverse. In Basktown approximately 90% of the residents are white, 4% are African-American, and the remainder are of other races. Point Place is 83% white, 7% Hispanic, and the remainder are of other races. Basktown has a population of just over 200,00 and is a relatively affluent, with a median annual household income of just over \$50,000. Point Place is smaller, with a population of 108,000 and more working class, with a median household income of \$38,800.

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<sup>4</sup> Issues of citizenship and youth racial and ethnic identity are more fully discussed in chapter 4 below.

<sup>5</sup> All names of locations, organizations, schools and participants have been changed.

All of the respondents were high school students, between the ages of 14 and 19. My sampling strategy was to sample from different schools, representing diverse student populations. Each of the students interviewed for this chapter attended a school that required service-learning. Within each site, I sampled activities, or types of engagement, in addition to seeking out a broad range of students with varying interests and conforming to various cultural “types.”

My two primary schools in Basktown were Sacred Heart High School (n=8), a predominantly middle- and upper-middle class Catholic school with strong service learning requirements and Little (n=7) an alternative public high school, with students who can not or choose not to fit in to traditional high school life. In Point Place, my sample came from the more affluent and predominantly white Consolidated High School on the south side of town and the more working class and racially mixed Point Place High in the west.

With each participant, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured and open-ended interviews, allowing students to discuss a range of topics related to their school, civic and social lives. In addition, I asked specific questions about their ideas of citizenship and social responsibility and how these ideas related to their high school experience. I also observed civics or social studies classes where they were accessible to me, observed meetings of civic youth groups and organizations and reviewed documents and student reflection statements relating to high school volunteer and service programs.

All interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed for emergent patterns in the data, including repeated rationales, understandings, remarks, activities and themes stated by or observed of informants.

*Service Learning and Civic Identity*

For many students involved in service-learning, there is a clear path between their service work and their civic disposition. Jared, for example, is a junior at a school that requires students to do service work in the community rather than just volunteering within their school. He chose to work at as a teacher to fulfill this obligation. He discusses his work and his commitment to it as follows:

I'm a reading mentor at L\_\_\_\_\_ Elementary School. I'm like a first, second or kindergarten schoolteacher in the summers. This will be the 3rd summer I'm doing it... and I'll probably continue to do this because it's not like hard. I think it's just more about giving back to the people that have helped you.

Jared's civic commitment clearly comes through in his statements demonstrating that building trust and investing in the community are important aspects of his volunteer work. Sadie, a student at Point Place's Consolidated High School who was just awarded a Presidential Service Award expresses a view similar to Jared's:

I think it's good to give back to the community. At first it was just for the service hours and then...I just went over the limit...I just kept doing it because my mom said....ummm, she was in service league and she just thinks it's really important to give back to the community.

Elizabeth is another civically minded student who attends Sacred Heart High School. She is involved in many extra-curricular and volunteer activities, including working with children and volunteering at the local hospital. Sacred Heart has a service-learning requirement of 100 hours of service activity for graduation. Elizabeth has easily exceeded this, having performed over 270 hours of service. She explains her views on being required to participate in service-learning as follows:

Well, I'd say maybe sometimes people can get a little too caught up in what's going on in their own lives and just focus on that a lot – but,

especially people that come to [Sacred Heart] – should realize that there’s a lot of people out there who have a lot less and just the littlest thing can help someone a great deal. And, I dunno, I think it’s a very good character builder, and it’s important that way. And if you start now, it’s easier to keep doing it in college, and once you are exposed to it, you realize how beneficial your work can be for other people.

Elizabeth thus captures the importance of a sense of commitment to others and the community and also talks about building character. Moreover, she thinks of service as an important habit to form as a young person so she and her peers will continue to perform service in the future. Elizabeth is not only building a sense of social trust, she also articulates Dewian ideals concerning her specific place in the community and her impact on the wider environment.

Like Elizabeth, her classmate Virginia is also very invested in volunteer work and she is close to having 300 hours of service activity in her senior year. Although Virginia is aware that she is *supposed* to articulate the importance of altruism and the community, her honest assessment of service-learning emphasizes the social aspect of her volunteerism. Asked why her school requires service elicits the following conversation with Virginia:

A: Probably because they think it’s a good thing for us to get involved in the community and think about others... (Laughing, shrugging)

Q: What would you say is the main reason you do service?

A: To help others...? (Laughing, shrugging) I don’t know...I guess the main reason I [volunteer as a counselor at a Catholic summer camp is that] I really like little kids and usually I’m working with little kids, so it’s fun and meeting a whole bunch of people while you’re doing that seems like less service and more, fun.

Q: So it’s more kind of like the whole experience...?

A: I guess I wouldn’t really do it if I wasn’t with people that were fun.

The civic model of a healthy democracy clearly comes through in the comments of all of these young people. Each student emphasizes the importance of community and

their feelings of obligations to others. Although the extent to which they are truly committed to these ideals varies from Jared's and Sadie's steadfast statements about giving back to the community to Virginia's more halting reply, each student has internalized the idea that part of being a citizen includes participating in that community. Moreover, they are clearly building the social trust that civic scholars argue is critical to healthy democracy and civil society. This comes out particularly clearly with Virginia's emphasis on the social enjoyment she gets through her volunteerism over and above the altruistic value of her service work.

*From Civic Republicanism to Democratic Participation*

Despite articulating civic ideas about service or being contributing members of their community, the students mentioned above do not feel comfortable in the domain of public policy or political matters. Sadie finds politics confusing and out of her reach. She explains her view of politics as follows:

I don't like politics....I just...it's really confusing.. All of the economics and government and all the laws and stuff you have to go through to get anything done. I just think it's confusing.

When political activity or change is framed in terms of her community, in which she is clearly invested, Sadie also demurs:

Q: What do you think about your community?

A: I don't know. I've always lived here, so I don't think too much. I just like it.

Q: Anything you would change?

A: Probably just more things to do. There's not a lot to do. But more...if I could, I'd clean up the lakes so they could put more beaches in. that would be nice in the summer

Although she is not politically minded, Sadie indicates she definitely intends to vote. In this sense, she is quite similar to Virginia who explains her political awareness and activity as follows:

Um, I read the paper, like, right before I vote – like the section of the paper that talks about them [the candidates]. That’s about it. I don’t really follow it that closely.

For Sadie and Virginia, service-learning is very successful at building civic trust and associational ties. In this sense, they are upstanding examples of civic citizens and offer the promise to perpetuate numerous benefits of a healthy American civil society. And although they vote (or plan to) their civic education does not address the concerns raised by Nie, Junn and Stehlik-Barry (1996), Rosenblum (1998) or others who argue that citizenship is both about obligations and political *engagement* or the *experience* of pluralism.

Jared and Elizabeth more closely approach a model where their civic ideals inform their political beliefs, although they still express some discomfort with politics. Elizabeth votes and forms opinions, but she is reluctant to express her opinions. She says the following:

I follow what’s going on, but I tend to be one of those people who don’t form like really, uh, I dunno, I don’t speak my opinion very much, like when we debate in class or whatever, just because there’s always someone who either does or thinks they know more than you and then they’ll just shoot you down and I don’t like that [laughing].

Jared explains that, while closely following and voting in local elections is important to him because he feels that he can have an impact, larger political campaigns and issues are out of reach and therefore not relevant. In this sense, Jared sees politics exclusively at the local level and most of his political activity is limited to voting.

*Politically Minded, but Civically Disconnected*

Of course, many young people talked about politics on a broad scale, discussing their concerns about issues ranging from economic discrimination to social and racial justice issues to the war in Iraq. Indeed, students who tended to be more activist in their ideology brought up the war quite frequently. Rebecca, a student at Little High School, describes her involvement with the peace movement and her longstanding commitment to activism:

I was really into the peace protests this time around....I grew up doing protests. Those little kids who are picket signs. That was me. I have been really lucky to understand that unity. And so it's not a big enough deal that I want to go and get arrested for it. And I'm not going to take it that far. Ever.

Rebecca's peer Jason is also quite politically minded. He participated heavily in the anti-war movement, explaining:

I've been pretty active in political demonstrations for a couple years now. I went to most in the past few months around here. I went to the student walk-out. That one was pretty big; we pretty much stormed the capitol. I was part of a couple anti-war groups. One when I was in Detroit called the Detroit Anti-War Network, or DAWN and then the Detroit Coalition for Global Justice. Both those were pretty anti-war groups and I was an active member.

Jason also takes local issues seriously and is distraught that he misinterpreted a ballot question the first time he had the opportunity to vote.

Basically it said, it was the last thing on the ballot. It said, "Should people have the right to fish, hunt or trap game?" and I'm thinking, oh yeah sure whatever...But it turns out that what it actually was were these people that were trying to pass a vote that would put it into a state constitution and what it would end up doing was just make it more difficult to make protection laws for [endangered] animals...And it passed by 80% and I'm guessing only because people read it as it was on the ballot and it wasn't in the news or anything like that so nobody knew what it really was about. So I feel real bad about that.

For Rebecca and Jason, their identities are very much tied to their political beliefs. Moreover, they are informed about the war and put a great deal of energy and effort into working to stop it. Jason has also learned that he needs to be educated for the democratic process to work as he believes it should. In contrast, Emily, who attends Sacred Heart, is much less of an activists, but indicates that the events of 9/11 made her reflect – somewhat critically – on patriotism and American citizenship. She offered the following reaction to the wave of patriotism that followed the bombing of the Twin Towers:

It was definitely like um, I want to say almost, not too much, but maybe too much. I want to say that because now it's like gone. And it's kinda sad because I think it's great that you're patriotic, I think it's great that we can say the pledge of allegiance here and everything but I think there's definitely um somewhere were you can't just be patriotic, it was too much because it was just all at once. You need to be more like a solid constant. Not too much, but solid constant would be nice....And now it's like, um, some people still have the flag and are like that, but it's like most people [are] forgetting about it.

Although unlike Jason and Rebecca, Emily is not out in the streets fighting for what she believes, she questions the rhetoric around the terrorist attacks and, unlike Elizabeth, is willing to express her critical views.

Rebecca, Jason and Emily all also participate in service-learning, but their political beliefs and service work do not coincide. More importantly, they do not see service-learning as an obligation of citizenship or a way to help the community. Instead, service-learning is part of school and a requirement that will help them with matriculation and advancement. The lessons of civic republicanism go unlearned by these more politically oriented students. For Emily, service-learning is important for building her resume for college. She explains:

Well, it's beneficial. They definitely look for that on your college thing....So I think really any high school should have a thing because

colleges look at that and if you want to get into a good college you might as well do it. You might as well have it. It's the same thing as having to have math.

Rebecca also discusses service-learning more in terms of her need to complete it, rather than her gaining a sense of community from her work, saying she “would not do it if I had my free choice.” This is particularly noteworthy since, in the context of anti-war activism, she states that she “understands unity.” Moreover she indicates that others at her school share her attitude and it is more important to get credit for service work than reflect on its value, the benefits of service to the community or the meanings of citizenship.

It's a big service learning school so we do a lot of service....I like it. And I like that we reflect on it. But...a lot of times people will say that its service learning class and then you won't ever get to the service part of it. Which is a problem. Like I don't want that credit if I didn't do it. And credit is a big thing here. Teachers will give you a quarter credit for stupid things like driving for their class. You didn't do anything.

For Jason, despite his political activism, he succinctly states that for him service is “a why not? type of thing more than I really believe in helping people out.” He explains that he has selfish motives for getting involved, such as joining an anti-hunger campaign so he can “hang out” in the city. He is much more passionate and connected in talking about his political activism than his school-based service.

Emily, Rebecca and Jason thus cannot connect their political selves or activist's ideas to service work. Service is connected to school requirements and they do not see building the community or volunteerism as a part of their political ideology or identities.

*Combining the Civic and the Political: Questions of Power*

Thus, many of the service-learning students interviewed for this study fall into one of two categories: they are civically involved and invested, but politically removed,

or they tend to be politically activist, but lack connection to their community and find little meaning in service work. Of course a few students, like Donna, manage to combine these two forces. Donna explains her feelings about service-learning, and how she connected it to other issues of discrimination that were important to her:

See, I don't really differentiate much between what classes are service learning and what aren't. Cause, class is pretty much class. And some people out here do stuff and some don't. But, um, I had a lot of fun in Ideology of Discrimination Teaching for Kids. It was real cool....Everybody kind of had an issue and they had a book about their issue, and then they read the book to the kids and then they had a game or activity.

In addition to fighting discrimination through service-learning, Donna takes on the issue of housing discrimination outside of her classroom environment. Low income housing is important to her so she works hard to change the current policy:

I'm real big on low income housing right now because I need some. I've definitely been voting for representatives that are all about the low income housing. And like, writing letters and shit.

In this way, Donna is exceptional among her peers. Importantly, however, she notes that she does not like her current service-learning project because it does not conform to her values or concerns:

This computer class I take is a service-learning class, somehow. I don't see what we are doing as much of a service....It's uh, a horrible waste of time and resources. My class is creating a virtual tour of the governor's mansion. And this is somehow being a service to the community and I really don't like this idea but our teacher is having us do this anyhow.....I think this is a waste of resources where we could be doing something really helpful. And instead it's sort of bourgeois crap.

In this situation, Donna is frustrated by her lack of agency in her service-learning classroom despite previously indicating that she enjoys service-learning when the

projects map on to her ideology. Many students, whether they are political activists or invested in the civic community through service-learning, felt they lacked power to change their situation. This is clearly reflected in Rebecca's comments about the start of the Iraq war:

The best thing I've come up with to do is the first day the bombing started, I was going to go work out and get all my aggression out and I went to the gym and I couldn't do it. I was like, "this is horrible. People are at war. And I am in my American life at the...gym. No. No." So I went and folded paper cranes at [a local coffee shop] and just laid them out on a table and let people take them if they wanted them. Just things like that are making me feel better. I know they're not helping anyone else. I can't change Bush's mind.

Justin says that he would like to make a difference, but is frustrated by his class service-learning project because he fears that it is doomed to failure:

Well, my algebra class is a service-learning project....We're trying to get [the city] to recycle plastics one through six, not just one and two....It's not going to fly at all.

### *Conclusion*

Janoski argues that political theory fails to develop and balance questions of *rights and obligations* within a theory of citizenship (Janoski 1998). This creates a construction of citizenship where rights and obligations are treated as separate analytical categories. Analytically opposing republican beliefs in the power of associationalism and liberal advocacy of the pursuit of rights dichotomizes citizenship into rights-based claims and social movements on the one hand, and associational-based causes and civic action on the other. From the perspective of policy, the democratic process is either reduced acts of altruism that do not problematize the status quo or glorified as sixties-style social protest (see, for example, Baiocchi, 2003). On an empirical level, studying citizenship means tallying social capital as a quantitative public good rather than a qualitative

process of creating connections and forming social trust (see, for example, Lichterman 2005; Kaufman 1999), or considering social movements as the quintessential form of collective action. Accordingly, it is easy to see the relationship between citizenship and the civic and citizenship and the political, but difficult to trace how the civic and the political mutually make up the citizen who, in turn, sustains democracy. This has implications for both what high school students *do* as young citizens, and what they *learn*, with respect to becoming citizens.

I suggest that service-learning is hampered by this analytic dichotomization. Service-learning is grounded in the assumption that there is a consensus about what it means to be a good citizen resulting in *any* form of civic activity “counting” as good citizenship. That is, being involved in a community is equated with engaging the politics or debate of that community. The impact on young people specifically is that they are struggling to “opt-in” to debate in the public or civic sphere, but are not engaged in the struggle to change or reshape it.

Following from Sampson et al (2005), I suggest that new forms of collective social action need to be considered for the current era. Sampson and colleagues suggest that both Putnam’s definition of social capital and most social movement theory are too narrow. This results in “the civil society debate [being] waged on the potentially misleading perceptions, memberships, and behaviors of individuals as opposed to truly social, or collective, action” (p. 675). I argue that the individual and group levels of analysis are both useful, and the key is to create a dynamic way of understanding citizenship that takes both individuals and groups into account.

Put another way, I wish to include the individual in the analysis that Sampson et al removed from their concept of “blended social action.”<sup>6</sup> In doing so, we can see how the individual citizen becomes active both in terms of their rights *and* obligations to the state. Examined in this way, rights and obligations are no longer opposing, but dynamic and interrelated concepts used to investigate the actions of young people as citizens. Accordingly, the framework for service-learning shifts from one with an emphasis purely on civic republicanism to a broader notion that fosters the complex relationships between civic and political involvement.

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<sup>6</sup>Sampson et al define blended social action as any type of civic or political activity, including, but not limited to political action, volunteerism and working for altruistic causes.

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