Journal of Higher Education Outreach & Engagement

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Reflective Essays

The purpose of this essay is to argue for the use of narrative inquiry as a distinctive methodological approach in the study of college student experiences and outcomes in service-learning. The author reflects on a recent narrative study of college men in service-learning programs to highlight how narrative scholarship can illuminate the messiness and complexity of service-learning. A participant narrative from the recent investigation is utilized in order to highlight the key tenets of narrative inquiry. Suggestions for high-quality narrative scholarship in service-learning are also offered.

The purpose of this study was to identify actual and perceived barriers and benefits of engaging in service-learning and volunteering activities as identified from the unique perspective of international students. Through the identification of barriers and benefits, we can provide more informed training to international students and provide a foundation for best practices to the community-based organizations that host them as volunteers and service-learners. We gathered data through focus groups and short online surveys of both the study population and community partner-based organizations. The findings of this study providing the authentic experiences and perspectives of international students, can assist service-learning institutions and organizations worldwide to better prepare international students for a service-learning experience and reduce the number of barriers faced. Practices and services are recommended to help international students complete their volunteer/service-learning endeavors, and to

provide a more welcoming atmosphere for this student population to engage in their communities through service-learning.

Research Articles

Grace Ngai, Stephen C. F. Chan, & Kam-por Kwan
Hong Kong Polytechnic University

What makes service-learning effective? This article examines key factors influencing student service-learning outcomes in higher education. We studied 2,214 students who had completed a credit-bearing service-learning course in a large public university in Hong Kong. The students were asked to rate the course and pedagogical features, as well as their attainment of the intended learning outcomes of the course. Multiple regressions were then performed to identify and compare the relative contribution of the individual course and pedagogical elements. Results showed that students' attainment of the different service-learning outcomes is influenced to varying degrees by different course and pedagogical elements. Specifically, we found that the most positive outcomes are associated with challenging and meaningful tasks, interest in the subject/project, perceived benefits to people served, preparation for service, and appreciation of the service by the people served. We discuss implications of the findings for theory, practice, and further research.

Lisa R. Brown
Ursuline College

This mixed-methods research examined civic engagement in Chilean public and private for-profit universities and its representation among study volunteers. Focus groups of graduate students along with in-person interviews with university administrators were conducted. The study also used an online survey, which was completed by 202 participants who had at minimum completed their *título* (first university degree). The mean age of participants was 32.5 with a standard deviation of 7.1 years. The theoretical framework in this study, spiral dynamic theory (SDT), helped guide the research as data was organized by worldview categories. Findings were that civic engagement, broadly conceptualized, was not well integrated into the Chilean higher education mission. Additionally, the key civic engagement study variables were statistically lower among the participants within the for-profit university environments. Participants also evidenced

more higher order thinking and individualism at the for-profit universities based on the SDT memetic indicator classifications.

Engaging undergraduate students in community-based research (CBR) offers rich benefits to both students and communities *(Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoeker, & Donahue, 2006)*. Finding ways to expand its application promises to multiply those benefits. Senior capstone courses represent a promising vehicle for that expansion, as they are also generally research based and extremely common in contemporary higher education *(Hauhart & Grahe, 2015)*. However, CBR and capstones each have multiple goals and present significant challenges, raising questions about the feasibility of merging practices. This research presents a case study of a capstone sociology course organized around group-based CBR projects. The case demonstrates that CBR-focused capstones, if intentionally designed, are feasible. Assessments by students and community partners provide evidence that the course also achieved the goals of capstones and of CBR. Discussion addresses steps taken since the initial case study to sustain and institutionalize the practice, including measures to assist instructors.

BraveHeart Center for Place and Purpose (BraveHeart CPP) is a comprehensive post-high school, inclusion-focused partnership of university, faith, and local communities. This new initiative aims to address unmet needs of the vulnerable and underserved population of young adults with disabilities through a community-in-community inclusion (CICI) model. The CICI model was specifically designed to support opportunities for individuals with disabilities, especially those with moderate to severe challenges, to empower and increase their presence and level of participation in the community. This strengths-based model operates with a high level of respect and sensitivity for diversity and supports and enhances social skills, cognitive skills, self-esteem, creativity, and work skills for young adults with developmental disabilities. This article explains the CICI model

and reviews the goals, activities, and outcomes of BraveHeart CPP's first year of operation.

From the Editor...

Looking Forward, Looking Back, and a Remembrance . . .

*A*s we close out a productive year with *JHEOE's* final issue of 2018, it's a good time to take a look forward to plans and changes to expect in 2019 as *JHEOE* continues to grow and evolve, update readers and supporters on the current state of the *Journal*, and take a look at the highlights from articles in this, the last issue of volume 22.

Looking Ahead and Future Directions

In 2019, longtime readers of *JHEOE* will see some significant changes to *JHEOE's* publication schedule and can look forward to some exciting special issues. Our editorial team has looked closely at addressing production issues and bottlenecks related to publishing four issues per year, and we have decided to alter our publication schedule moving forward. For the first time, *JHEOE* will move to publishing *three issues* per year rather than four. Readers and authors can expect issues with potentially more articles and longer page lengths, which our online, open access format fortunately provides the flexibility to handle. Our reasoning for this significant change is that publishing four issues per year—particularly given the constraints of the academic calendar in the summer months—was causing significant production issues. *JHEOE* is not fully staffed from June through August, and it is consistently difficult to find reviewers during this time period, as many reviewers understandably prefer not to review manuscripts during their summer breaks. For these reasons, our new publication calendar will be February, June, and October to address these long-standing production issues. We believe this will allows us better to serve our contributing authors and readers and improve the overall quality and experience during the publishing process.

Looking ahead, readers can look forward to two special issues in 2019 that address important gaps and hot topics in the field. In February, Lina Dostilio, University of Pittsburgh, will serve as guest editor for special issue 23(1) on "Exploring the Work and Influence of Community Engagement Professionals." As many of our readers and authors represent the diverse and often misunderstood ranks of these professionals, this issue will add significantly to the conversation and scholarship around the competencies that

have emerged as community engagement professionals become a recognized career track in higher education.

In addition, 2019 will culminate with issue 23(3) which will be helmed by guest editors Andy Furco and Kateryna (Kate) Kent, University of Minnesota, focused on "Non-U.S. Based Engagement Efforts." Andy has served as *JHEOE's* associate editor for research articles for several years and is ably assisted by Kate in this endeavor, and has been part of ongoing conversations amongst editorial board members and editors of *JHEOE* to actively expand the international reach of the *Journal* as well as the representation of non-U.S. scholarly voices and international contexts for community engagement. This forthcoming special issue represents a natural outgrowth of this conversation, as does the publication of research articles in the current issue of *JHEOE* by Brown who presents a study of civic engagement understanding of graduate students at Chilean public and private for-profit universities. Also in this issue, Ngai, Chan, and Kwan examine the student service-learning outcomes of 2,214 students in a university in Hong Kong. Ngai is no stranger to the pages of *JHEOE* as she served as lead guest editor for *JHEOE's* issue 20(4) in 2016 which focused on service-learning in Asia. We are pleased to see more submissions of research from non-Western and non-U.S. contexts appearing in issues of *JHEOE* regularly and look forward to a concentrated focus on this important topic in issue 23(3) in 2019.

Early 2019 will also see the publication of a coedited volume by former editor Lorilee Sandmann and former managing editor Diann Jones based on *JHEOE's* 20th anniversary issue, *Building the Field of Higher Education Community Engagement: Foundational Ideas and Future Directions* is being published by Stylus, and contains reprints of *JHEOE's* top 11 articles of the past 20 years and updated commentaries, but with new features that include the following topics: provocative discussion questions after each of the chapters; a new section of prospective essays by next generation scholars (nominated by the *JHEOE* board); and a synthesis of these future directions by Judith Ramaley. This is an exciting contribution that will significantly expand the impact of the seminal work published over two decades in *JHEOE* to a new generation of scholars.

State of the *Journal*

While we are always looking ahead for future directions of research and ways to keep the *Journal* relevant and serving our

readership and the field at large, the current state of the *Journal* continues to be robust and supported. As we close out another year, I am indebted to our associate editors, managing editors, editorial board, and reviewers who do a great deal of work to keep the *Journal* on track and moving forward. *JHEOE* is supported by five associate editors, 34 members of the editorial board, two managing editors, a freelance copyeditor, and a large pool of guest reviewers and peer-reviewers. In addition, I would like to say a special thanks to our publisher Jennifer L. Frum, Vice President for Public Service and Outreach at the University of Georgia, who has provided leadership and essential resources for continuing *JHEOE's* long legacy as the oldest, continuously published journal in the field of higher education outreach and engagement. I am also grateful for the Engagement Scholarship Consortium, one of our key sponsors, for their support and for the opportunity to publish the ESC focused special issue 22(3) this year based on the scholarly work presented at the 2017 ESC annual conference. This is an important partnership for the *Journal* that keeps a pipeline of high quality scholarship flowing to *JHEOE*, and we look forward to continued collaboration in 2019.

Along with these supporters and their intellectual and advocacy work on behalf of *JHEOE*, our annual report issued in October 2018 highlighted some interesting statistics illustrating that the *Journal* is thriving. From October 2017-October 2018, we received 121 manuscript submissions and published 39 articles during this time period with a 32% acceptance rate. Articles from the issues published during this time period were viewed 14,488 times, and downloaded 5,768 times, demonstrating the reach of the *Journal*. We also had over 25,000 visitors to the *Journal* website, representing a significant amount of traffic to our fully accessible archive from 22 years of community engagement research.

Current Issue Overview

Our current issue 22(4) is also well worth a look. Along with the internationally focused research articles I have highlighted, this issue also features two reflective essays that are engaging thought pieces. Foste's essay presents an overview of narrative inquiry's potential and application in service-learning research as a methodology. Kwenani and Yu examine the implications for practice and outline the support services needed through the examination of a study of international students engaged in service-learning and volunteerism, and make valuable suggestions for ways institutions

can engage and support this important and often marginalized part of our campus communities.

Articles in the "Projects with Promise" section feature in-process engagement work, often with preliminary findings that present a current snapshot of what is happening at the practitioner level of community engagement work. Downey's article focuses on application and practice related to engaging undergraduate students in community-based research in senior capstone courses using a case study of a sociology senior capstone course that includes suggestions for instructors teaching and developing these high impact experiences at other universities. Werner and Burque focus on engagement work happening from the community context with a discussion of the community-in-community inclusion (CICI) model and its implementation at the BraveHeart Center for Place and Purpose, a university-community partnership serving young adults with disabilities. This will be a useful theoretical framework that has been put into practice for others working to build partnerships with goals that include fostering an inclusive community.

This issue culminates with the book review section that presents two pieces that represent highlights of this issue for very different reasons. First, we are privileged to publish Kelly Ward's review of Dolgon, Mitchell, and Eatman's book, *The Cambridge Handbook of Service Learning and Community Engagement*. Kelly passed away suddenly in July 2018 after a horse riding accident, and she leaves a tremendous void in our field. What we found with her book review, which was accepted before her untimely death, is truly a gift. Not only does she provide a thorough review of this important handbook, but she also introduces the review with a reflection on her own development as a champion and leader in community engagement, beginning with her time with Montana Campus Compact, and culminating with her role as vice provost for faculty development and professor of higher education at Washington State University. It is an honor to recognize and remember Kelly Ward in these pages. The *JHEOE* community joins her family, friends, and colleagues in celebrating and remembering her many achievements as a community engagement scholar and practitioner.

For our final piece of this issue, Hickmon, Clayton, and Stanlick provide a provocative and critical book review essay of Stoecker's (2016) *Liberating Service Learning and the Rest of Higher Education Civic Engagement*. In an opening note, Burton Bargerstock, *JHEOE* associate editor for book reviews, comments on the form and purpose of a book review essay saying, "this form of writing calls on reviewers to offer broader reactions to books under review and

fuller contextualization of them within the literature" *(p. 163)*. It is exciting to read such an in depth and rich reaction and attempt to spur dialogue on a recent book in the community engagement field, and it is our editorial team's hope that contributors will continue the thoughtful conversation begun by these authors.

There is much to digest in the articles that we have been privileged to publish throughout volume 22 of the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* this year. I thank all of our readers, supporters, and those engaged in the day-to-day work of the *Journal* for their support as we simultaneously end and begin the scholarly work that is at the heart of *JHEOE*.

Shannon O'Brien Wilder
Editor

REFLECTIVE ESSAYS

Exploring the Methodological Possibilities of Narrative Inquiry in Service-Learning: Reflections from a Recent Investigation

Zak Foste

Abstract

The purpose of this essay is to argue for the use of narrative inquiry as a distinctive methodological approach in the study of college student experiences and outcomes in service-learning. The author reflects on a recent narrative study of college men in service-learning programs to highlight how narrative scholarship can illuminate the messiness and complexity of service-learning. A participant narrative from the recent investigation is utilized in order to highlight the key tenets of narrative inquiry. Suggestions for high-quality narrative scholarship in service-learning are also offered.

Keywords: Qualitative Research, Narrative Research, Service-Learning, College Students, Student Development, Civic Engagement

Introduction

Scholars and practitioners alike can attest to the characterization of service-learning as "messy, complex, and rarely predicable" (*Cooks & Scharrer, 2004, p. 52*). Engaging undergraduates in service-learning typically involves placing them in communities that are vastly different from their own. Course content that supplements experiences in the community can often challenge closely held beliefs and assumptions that have been inscribed by trusted friends, family members, and teachers. Additionally, the close proximity to community members and their real life struggles makes matters of social injustice and oppression anything but abstract and distant (*Keen & Hall, 2009*). In fact, as a participant explained to me in a recent investigation of college men in service-learning programs, engaging members of the community at a service site was akin to being up close and personal in a theater. Rather than watching action unfold on a television, where a screen separated him from the action, he likened his work to watching a drama unfold right in front of his very eyes (*Foste & Jones, 2018*).

This comment illuminates the complexity of the student experience in service-learning. Consequently, research on service-learning courses and programs requires methodological

approaches that account for the complexity and messiness inherent in the process. Brandenberger *(2013)*, writing about student development in service-learning, noted that much more is known about the final product than the process of learning and development itself. He explained, "It is not sufficient to survey students at the start and end of a course or program. What first caught students' attention about a social concern, and how did students' thinking begin to change?" *(Brandenberger, 2013, p. 149)*. These are questions that narrative inquiry is especially well suited to explore, given its focus on the temporal and contextual nature of experience *(Chase, 2010; Gubrium & Holstein, 2009; Riessman, 2008)*.

The purpose of this essay is to explore the potential of narrative inquiry for offering new layers of depth and meaning to research on undergraduates in service-learning. This essay is in many ways a reflection of my own experiences as the primary investigator conducting a narrative study of college men in service-learning programs *(Foste & Jones, 2018)*. First, I examine why service-learning scholars should consider narrative inquiry as a methodological approach in their research. In doing so I underscore the major tenets of narrative inquiry. Having established a foundational understanding of narrative inquiry, I then offer an example from the recent study to stress the potential of this methodological approach. Drawing on an individual participant's narrative, I illustrate how class and gender intersected to inform his motivations to serve and how he experienced his time in a service-learning course. I then review how the major tenets of narrative scholarship, introduced at the outset of the essay, influenced the construction and interpretations of the participant narrative. Finally, a number of design considerations for high-quality narrative inquiry are offered.

Major Tenets of Narrative Inquiry

The purpose of this essay is to argue for greater use of narrative inquiry as a methodological approach to studying college student experiences in service-learning programs. Qualitative researchers are well suited to identify a methodology for such work, since the methodology will serve as the guiding framework for a number of subsequent design considerations, including sampling, data collection, and analysis *(Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014)*. A review of qualitative scholarship on service-learning underscores a lack of methodological clarity (Jones & Foste, 2017), *leading to a critique that much of this work* is "more similar to journalism than to scientific research" *(Bringle & Hatcher, 2005, p. 35)*.

Using Dewey's *(1916)* notions of experience, continuity, and time as a foundation, scholars of narrative inquiry take "as a premise that people live and/or understand their lives in storied forms, connecting events in the manner of a plot that has a beginning, middle, and end points" *(Josselson, 2011, p. 224)*. The tradition of narrative inquiry is guided by the eliciting of stories that reveal insights into the human experience. A great deal of confusion exists regarding what constitutes narrative scholarship. Indeed, the term narrative has been used in a variety of ways in regard to qualitative research *(Josselson, 2011)*. Some refer to individual stories participants offer as narrative, whereas others contend that any account is itself a narrative. For the purposes of this essay, I rely on Riessman's *(2008)* definition that places the narrative at three different locations. She explains that narratives occur at three overlapping levels:

> stories told by research participants (which are themselves interpretive), interpretive accounts developed by an investigator based on interviews and fieldwork observation (a story about stories), and even the narrative a reader constructs after engaging with the participant's and investigator's narrative. *(Riessman, 2008, p. 6)*

Drawing on Riessman's conceptualization avoids the confusion that can result when discussing what constitutes narrative scholarship as a distinct qualitative methodology.

Although a complete review of narrative scholarship is beyond the scope of this essay *(see Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 2008)*, it is important to highlight some of the essential elements that make narrative inquiry a distinct methodological approach: the temporal nature of narratives, the focus on a construction and presentation of self through language, and the relationship between researcher and participant in constructing a coherent narrative *(Chase, 2010; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Elliot, 2012; Josselson, 2011; Riessman, 2008)*.

Temporal Nature of Narratives

Because this approach is concerned with the individual and the process of change over time, narrative inquiry gives particular attention to temporality *(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 2008)*. Events are seen "not as a thing happening at that moment but as an expression of something happening over time. Any event, or thing, has a past, a present as it appears to us, and an implied future" *(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 29)*. Put otherwise, individuals are always in the process of becoming *(Nixon, 2011)*. For instance, when

a student shares a story about his semester's work at a food pantry, this experience cannot be understood outside his earlier experiences with poverty. These may include early messages he received from parents about the poor or prior volunteer experiences in a high school student group or local community organization. For others, as occurred frequently in our study *(Foste & Jones, 2018)*, experiences were considered in light of spiritual and faith communities that were instrumental in early service memories. As detailed below, what one student in our study experienced working at a local community house could not be understood without the prior context of his working-class upbringing.

Central to this point, then, is that verbal accounts of experience are always given meaning in light of previous experiences. Discerning meaning is a hallmark of qualitative research broadly and narrative work in particular. It is the interpretive task of the researcher to link stories together in a way that produces a coherent narrative *(Gubrium & Holstein, 2009)*. Rarely do participants offer stories in a linear fashion, providing a beginning, middle, and end point. This is the work left up to the researcher.

Presentation of Self

Because narratives are always understood as a recapitulation of events for particular audiences, scholars are interested in the ways individuals structure a narrative. How a researcher interrogates this presentation depends in large part on the paradigm underlying the investigative approach: Constructivists largely rely on the words of the participants, whereas critical theorists of performance and dialogue search for meaning within language *(Jones et al., 2014; Riessman, 2008)*. Regardless of approach, narrative scholars tend to agree that language is never a neutral pursuit and that the choice of words is always to some extent a political act. This focus on the structure of narratives, how they are told and for what reasons, distinguishes narrative inquiry from other modes of qualitative inquiry. Narrative researchers consider how people want to be known and understood in a given social context *(Riessman, 2008)*. In this sense narratives are an active process, a doing of something. As socially and historically situated performances, narratives offer an excellent means of understanding identity *(Chase, 2010)*. Scholars are less concerned with whether the account is 100% factual. Instead, there is an interest in the structure and organization of stories. How are they sequenced? What language is used? From this perspective narrative scholarship cannot produce a confessional tale, because the interview setting provides a social context that in itself produces

certain motives. But it is not the factual confessional the narrative scholar is after; rather, it is a deeper understanding of how the participant organized and made sense of an experience, how they wish to be known and understood in relation to that experience, and how their perception of the experience is ordered and sequenced over time *(Chase, 2010; Josselson, 2011; Riessman, 2008)*.

For instance, narrative scholarship has been particularly instrumental over time in illuminating how individuals make sense of illness *(Patton, 2015)*. In this type of work the focus is not so much the factual recounting of the illness, but how individuals found new sources of meaning in living with an illness that drastically changed their lives *(Riessman, 2008)*. Narrative scholars have noted that these stories are an especially potent means by which individuals repair a damaged sense of self, particularly in relation to experiences such as breast cancer or other life-altering illness. In my own research, I have documented how White college students construct narratives to guard against or repair the perceived damages that result from any accusations of racism *(Foste, 2017)*.

Coconstruction of Narratives

Narrative scholarship pays special attention to the relationship between researcher and participant. Although qualitative researchers generally hold this focus *(Jones et al., 2014; Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 2015)*, those operating from the narrative tradition pay special attention to the researcher as a narrator *(Chase, 2010)*. Those preparing to engage in this type of work must consider their own autobiography, or their narrative, before entering the field.

Clandinin and Connelly *(2000)* refer to this process as composing narrative beginnings. Consistent with their notion that the narrative is a three-dimensional space, they recommend that researchers recognize how previous experiences influence their current standpoint, the ways in which the personal and social converge, and situate their narrative reflections within particular times and places. In turn, the researcher's engagement with any narrative must be understood in relation to their own standpoint *(Josselson, 2011)*. Interviews are not natural forms of talk, but a unique form of discourse *(Miczo, 2003; Mishler, 1986)*. Participants tell the stories they do because the researcher has identified them as important and prompted such a telling. Further, because narratives are used in a variety of ways, including to entertain, justify, or explain, participants can often attempt to pull the researcher into the narrative in a way that exacts a high level of engagement *(Riessman, 2008)*.

The narrative researcher must then be mindful of this relationship and pay particular attention to autobiographical considerations. As it relates to service-learning, scholars must consider their own assumptions, biases, and expectations about service, volunteering, and civic engagement prior to entering the interview setting. As I entered each of my interviews, I frequently reflected on my own biases, most notably my personal frustrations that resulted from White, middle-class students' desires to be understood as morally good and virtuous in my service-learning courses.

Examples From a Recent Investigation: Jackson's Narrative of Class and Gender

Having established some of the unique features of narrative inquiry, I now introduce Jackson, a participant from a recent exploration of college men in service-learning programs *(Foste & Jones, 2018)*. Given that college men tend to be underrepresented in service-learning programs *(Chesbrough, 2011; Sax, 2008)*, there was much to be gained from engaging those men who did participate in service work. Under the guidance of my doctoral advisor, I looked to these men for insight into their motivations to participate in service and how gender structured and informed their time in such programs. In doing so, we took up Chase's *(2010)* call to view participants not as individuals prepared to answer a predetermined set of questions, although we had those, but as people with complex stories of human experience to share. As the primary investigator and individual responsible for conducting interviews, it was my responsibility to create an interview context that would allow those stories to emerge.

Jackson's narrative illustrates how gender structured and informed both his motivations to engage in a service-learning course and how he experienced his time in the course. In particular, it provides a nuanced account of how gender and social class intersect to form an approach to service that is fundamentally gendered and classed. Jackson's narrative is temporal in nature and sensitive to multiple contexts. One can begin to understand how he interprets and makes sense of service work by looking backward in time to his rural, working-class, single-mother roots and the role they played in shaping perceptions of masculinity. These are the experiences that help us contextualize Jackson's sense-making around service-learning in the present. As Gubrium and Holstein *(2009)* noted, "no item of experience is meaningful in its own right. It is made meaningful through the particular ways in which it is linked to other items" *(p. 55)*. Consistent with the tenets of narra-

tive inquiry, it was our responsibility to account for how Jackson assembled his narrative within multiple layers of context, including social class, single-parent households, and larger societal narratives of working-class masculinity and gendered notions of "the man of the house." This approach incorporates a number of experiences throughout the lifespan *(Gubrium & Holstein, 2009)* and opens up our inquiry beyond the immediacy of his service work in college. As Riessman *(2008)* explained, this interpretive work requires imposing order on disparate and oftentimes fragmented stories.

"Man of the House": Looking Backward to Interpret the Present

Jackson's narrative begins in rural Appalachia, as the son of a working-class single mother providing for two young boys. After his father left the family early in his life, Jackson recalled feeling an intense pressure to serve as the "man of the house," noting, "I had to be able to make tough decisions. I had to be able to kind of console my mother when she needed it. I had to be like sound mind, a role model for my little brother." Such responsibilities meant that Jackson had to forgo many of the experiences his peers enjoyed. Without a father in the home, Jackson felt that he grew up much quicker than his friends. He explained:

> I think I skipped a few years in comparison to kind of all my friends around me. They would be 15 but I would feel like I was 18 or 20 because I just had to be the man of the house and I had to take care of my mom and I had to take care of my brother. . . . I had to be this stone wall, nothing really fazed me. I couldn't show emotion.

Both of these passages offer a considerable insight into Jackson's understanding of what constitutes appropriate manly behavior. When his father left the home, Jackson found it critical to replace the gendered labor, both physical and emotional, his dad previously carried out. It becomes clear that Jackson's understanding of manhood is greatly influenced by dominant narratives that suggest men are wage earners, emotionally distant, and protectors of the family *(Coltrane, 2010)*. In many ways these early experiences seem to contribute to Jackson's later interest in service.

Coming to college was the first time Jackson exhibited an awareness of his social class, a sense of self that would later become critical to his understanding of service and notions of giving back. Given the relative homogeneity of social class statuses in his home

Appalachian community, Jackson had rarely interacted with people who had more wealth and resources than his family. Matters of class, money, wealth, and status were relatively invisible to him. This all changed when he arrived on campus. He was now faced with a constant barrage of status symbols that reminded him of his working-class, single-parent roots:

> When I came to State University I didn't recognize it. Obviously I grew up and I didn't recognize what social class was because everybody was pretty much the same and nobody really talked about money and fiscal problems. It wasn't a big thing where I was from. I kind of never really thought about it until I came here and I was introduced to all of that stuff.

This is an important component of Jackson's biographical account, for it is this increased salience of a working-class identity that contributes to his interest in service. When Jackson left home for college, he was no longer able to provide for his family on a day-to-day basis as he had in North Carolina. Providing for his family was central to the construction of his identity prior to coming to college. Jackson recalled that once he was in college, multiple states away from North Carolina, that "I physically couldn't do anything for my mother and brother . . . but after weeks go by then I'd realize like, oh shit, I should probably check on them or call them. . . ."

"These are My People": Motivations and Meaning

Although Jackson could no longer provide for his family, he soon shifted his attention to his work in a service-learning course. Enrolled in a service-learning and leadership course, Jackson selected a local community house as his site of service for the term. The possibility of working with and mentoring children in poverty was incredibly appealing to Jackson. What other students understood as a requirement in order to pass a course, Jackson saw as a means of giving back in order to help children avoid the pitfalls he had faced earlier in life. In many ways it was an extension of his provider status in his North Carolina home. Jackson was particularly passionate about working with children to succeed despite the lack of resources necessary to apply to college. During his own high school career, he knew nothing about the SAT until the year he was expected to take the exam. Jackson described this as a real "slap in the face." He reflected on the ways in which his working-class roots served as a catalyst for his service:

> Growing up I recognized that the education system where I came from wasn't always the best and we didn't have all of the resources and all the different opportunities that other places . . . so I've always had that interest of just kind of helping kids realize that college is an option and give them the information or knowledge.… A lot of us had to go out of our way to research schools and figure out how we were going to pay for it and stuff like that. It wasn't a topic of conversation in my area. . . . I didn't know what to do about college until it was like a slap in the face my junior year.

Jackson saw his work at the community house as much more than service. In fact, he would go on to explain that the work he was doing did not feel like service at all. His work at the service site, similar to his time with his family in North Carolina, was understood as a means of providing for others. That is, Jackson's motivations to serve cannot be understood outside his working-class roots, notions of giving back, and a gendered perception that men should serve as providers. His motivations were defined by a "passion to provide . . . the passion of like, not wanting people to go through the same experience that I went through where I was in the dark. . . ." Jackson differentiated the work he was doing from other tasks that he might have considered service. These tasks included assisting in the construction of new homes or picking up trash on the side of the road. This work at the community house, however, was different. It was rooted in a fundamental belief that he needed to give back and provide a sense of mentorship to children in poverty, those children that looked like him. He explained that tutoring and mentoring children at the community house wasn't service because "it didn't feel like work."

This distinction was further highlighted when Jackson discussed the differences between his service site and the service-learning classroom. Social class was a frequent focal point of course discussions. These discussions only heightened the salience of Jackson's social class identity and, consequently, of his feeling at home at the community house. He quickly tired of the savior narrative that he felt permeated the class, insisting that students were out to save those in poverty:

> Then going into the service classes where it's like, "oh we work with lower social classes or we work with working class (people)." I'm just like, well I'm in the working class

> and I don't feel like I need anything from somebody
> else. . . . So it's like when you introduce social class in
> like college courses and you have to think about the
> people that come from kind of that lower or working
> class that I guess myself being a first generation
> student. . . . We take the issue differently. . . .

His peers' constant commentary that defined communities
through the lens of poverty prompted Jackson to reflect on his
own upbringing. He shared his frustration about the ways other
students spoke of the working class:

> It kind of makes me think was me growing up like this
> an issue? Would my family require help, would my
> family benefit from help? Like I said, I don't think so. I
> don't think that we needed help by any means, but that's
> kind of what I've gotten from courses here at State U is
> that middle, upper class people have to turn around and
> kind of drag (the) working class out of (the) lower class.

Jackson's experiences in both his service-learning course and at
the community house led to an increased emphasis on social class
in the construction of his own identity. He described feeling frus-
trated that his peers failed to comprehend the experiences of those
who live in poverty, explaining these students were blinded by their
social class privilege. It was at his service site where he felt most
at home. It was in the faces of clients, volunteers, and community
members alike that he saw his working-class background in rural
North Carolina. Jackson pointedly noted that when he went to the
community house, "those are my people. Those are the people that
I know because it doesn't seem different . . . we all know where we
come from."

What Can We Learn From Jackson's Narrative?

For the purposes of this essay, I singled out one narrative in
order to illustrate the potential of narrative inquiry in illuminating
the complexity and messiness inherent in service-learning. At its
core, narrative research is concerned with how human beings inter-
pret and give meaning to a variety of life experiences through the
act of storytelling. As Chase *(2010)* noted, narrative work is less
interested in locating an objective truth but rather takes "an interest
in the other as a narrator of his or her particular biographical
experiences as he or she understands them" *(p. 219)*. As such, "any

narrative is significant because it embodies—and gives us insight into—what is possible and intelligible within a specific social context" *(Chase, 2010, p. 226).* Jackson provided one of 10 narratives in our study on college men's experiences in service-learning. I utilized his narrative for this essay because of its complexity and richness, particularly as it relates to working-class masculinity and the increasing salience of social class to Jackson's sense of self. Now we can consider what exactly a reader might learn from Jackson's narrative, and how narrative investigators' interpretive work maps to the tenets of narrative scholarship introduced at the outset of this essay: temporality, focus on presentation of self, and the coconstruction of knowledge.

First, attention to the temporal nature of Jackson's narrative reveals considerable insight into his service-learning experience. It underscores an evolving awareness of social class and the ways early experiences prior to college shaped an understanding of working-class masculinity. In this context, one cannot understand Jackson's time in a service-learning course without accounting for these prior experiences. As his narrative makes clear, Jackson rarely gave attention to matters of social class prior to college. Upon coming to college, however, Jackson became vividly aware of his social class against a backdrop of wealth and status on campus. His working-class roots would become instrumental in motivating his service work. As he described during our interview, the work he performed at his service site never felt like service, but rather a process of relationship building and mentoring.

Moving back in time to Jackson's early understandings of masculinity also provides additional layers of complexity to his sense-making of service-learning. His narrative highlights how growing up in a working-class, single-mother household shaped his conceptualizations of manhood early in life. It also illuminates a sense of class solidarity he experiences with those for whom he worked at the community house. This attention to social class identity also provides the context for Jackson's feelings of alienation and distance from his peers in the service-learning class. Our study set out to understand how college men experienced service-learning courses as gendered beings *(Foste & Jones, 2018).* Although it is easy, and even tempting, to universalize the experiences of all men, Jackson's narrative illuminates the role of social class in defining a sense of manhood. Gubrium and Holstein *(2009)* noted the importance of narrative linkage, or the process in which multiple experiences are linked together and considered in light of one another. Utilizing narrative inquiry required that as researchers we employ a great

deal of interpretive authority in exploring how Jackson assembled a coherent narrative of the self in service-learning. A consistent theme that emerged is the way Jackson constructed stories around providing and giving back, both as "the man of the house" in North Carolina and at the community house for his service-learning course.

This recurring theme of providing and giving back highlights how Jackson wanted to be known in the interview setting. Scholars have emphasized the need to interrogate how participants assemble an account and their motivations for doing so *(Chase, 2010; Mishler, 1986; Riessman, 2008)*. That is, participants typically have some reason for telling a story in a particular way. They do so in part because the stories participants share are always situated within a broader social context. In the case of Jackson's narrative, his story could not be separated from larger societal narratives about gendered labor and the role of men in heterosexual households.

Although less apparent in Jackson's narrative than the first two tenets, the accounts provided in this essay cannot be understood without some attention to the relationship between the researcher and the interviewee. That is, Jackson offered the stories he did only because he was prompted to do so in the interview setting. One limitation of the presentation of data in this essay is that it does not include the researcher in the display of the narrative. Put otherwise, there is no trace of the researcher as an active part of a lively exchange. Narrative researchers frequently advocate for scholars to include their line of questioning in any presentation of data. Rather than simply providing an extended quote from the participant, many narrative methodologists believe it to be important for readers to see what types of questions were asked. Jackson provided the answers he did only because he knew the context of the study. He entered the interview setting, which itself is a unique form of communication *(Mishler, 1986)*, knowing the topic of the research was college men in service-learning programs. Had the interview questions been asked differently, or perhaps sequenced differently, Jackson's narrative would likely look very different.

Recommendations for High-Quality Narrative Inquiry in Service-Learning

Narrative inquiry holds great promise in revealing the complexities of student experiences in service-learning. This methodological approach has the potential to illuminate evolving conceptions of service, highlight the role of social identities in motivating

students to serve, and complicate understandings of learning and development in service-learning. When crafted with a careful eye toward a number of design considerations, narrative inquiry offers an incredibly useful means of enriching understandings among administrators, faculty, and policymakers alike. This is especially true because human beings are storytelling creatures *(Josselson, 2011)*. It is through stories that individuals interpret and impose meaning on experiences. As a result, narrative inquiry can speak to key stakeholders in a way that statistical analysis, or even more postpositivist qualitative approaches, likely cannot. Although findings from narrative scholarship should not be generalized to the broader population, they offer a useful means of enriching understanding within the context of one's own practice. Jackson's narrative offers a number of useful implications for conducting high-quality narrative scholarship.

Sampling

Qualitative researchers must make a number of decisions about sampling criteria so that readers have an understanding as to why some individuals were selected as participants and other individuals were not *(Jones et al., 2014)*. Although qualitative work is not intended to be generalizable to the broader population, researchers must still provide justifications for their samples. Our research was motivated by the fact that men tend to be underrepresented in collegiate service-learning programs *(Sax, 2008)*. The lack of men available for the study made participant recruitment difficult. Although it would have been easy to stray from our initial sampling criteria, we knew that doing so would jeopardize the trustworthiness of the study *(Jones et al., 2014)*. We sought men who had participated in a service-learning course during the previous six semesters. The courses had to have an explicit focus on matters of social justice and inequality and provide strong connections between service and academic content. An additional requirement was that the participants be especially reflective about their experiences. This was a judgment we left up to the faculty and staff who nominated students for our study. We specifically required students to be reflective of their service experiences because narrative inquiry relies on participants to be storytellers who can offer rich and descriptive accounts of experience. Interviewing for narrative inquiry cannot be a simple questionnaire that asks a series of one-off questions. Instead, narrative interviews should produce rich accounts of experience. Allowing anyone who had participated in service-learning courses, without a recommendation from an

instructor, could have left us with students who had very little to say in the interview context.

Data Collection

The researcher's approach to data collection is one of the major areas in which the distinctions between narrative inquiry and other qualitative methodologies become most apparent. As the primary data collector for our study, I began to notice an evolving understanding of the narrative interview as I moved through data collection. Perhaps most important in this evolution of understanding was the way in which interview questions were constructed and presented to participants. It quickly became apparent that research questions were not reaching their full potential in opening up stories. As noted previously, coconstructing accounts of experience is fundamental to narrative scholarship *(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 2008)*. The implication of this assumption is that participants offer the accounts they do only because they are prompted to tell certain stories in the context of the research study.

Gubrium and Holstein *(2009)* describe a process of narrative activation in which researchers construct questions that invite detailed accounts of reality that have a temporal quality. They explain that narratives are not a collection of facts and memories stored away within the individual waiting to be told, but rather are constructed in the very specific context of the interview. Gubrium and Holstein position participants as architects of their own story, building and assembling the particulars of an account, but note that this process is performed through interaction with others, particularly the interviewer, in attendance.

Reflecting back on the present study, as the primary data collector I gained increasing familiarity with narrative scholarship as the study progressed. Most notably, follow-up questions shifted to inquiries about specific times and places, providing a certain level of structure for participants in offering up stories *(Riessman, 2008)*. For instance, when a participant explained that he felt service providers required the men to do physical or manual labor while their female peers worked directly with community members, follow-up questions would ask for specific examples. These questions were phrased in a way that attempted to invite a larger story, in turn providing insight into how the participant made sense of that experience. Language such as "Can you take me back in time to a particular experience when . . ." or "Tell me what happened when

. . ." was especially useful in inviting stories rather than formulaic answers.

Mishler *(1986)* has described the importance of regarding the interview as a process of eliciting meaning rather than the traditional stimulus-and-response approach to data collection. This is an important distinction that service-learning scholars should consider when designing interview protocols. A number of narrative scholars have documented the importance of opening up interview questions in a way that elicits topically centered and temporally ordered stories *(Elliot, 2012; Riessman, 2008)*. Our study was certainly enhanced with this increasingly complex understanding of narrative approaches to data collection.

Data Analysis

As has been noted throughout this essay, narrative scholars hold a great amount of interpretive authority in the presentation of participant narratives. Ochberg *(1996)* explained that this interpretive work "reveals that what one (the narrator) might say if only one could speak freely, but we can see this only if we are willing to look beyond what our informants tell us in so many words" *(p. 98)*. The predominant method of analysis within qualitative work tends to be grounded theory, where researchers break data into small chunks through line-by-line coding. While valuable, this approach is largely inconsistent with narrative inquiry's focus on holistic, coherent narratives and attention to meaning-making *(Riessman, 2008)*.

Entering the study, I was largely familiar with grounded theory approaches to qualitative analysis. For the purposes of this research it became imperative to gain increasing comfort with narrative analysis. Service-learning researchers who wish to utilize narrative inquiry would be wise to do so as well, for the approaches can yield very different interpretations of the data. Riessman *(2008)* offers a conceptual roadmap for analyzing narratives. Her work was instrumental in our study, as it moved analysis beyond traditional conceptions of coding. Although a full review of her approach to data analysis is beyond the scope of this essay, I briefly highlight two approaches we believe service-learning scholars might find useful in their own work.

One approach Riessman *(2008)* offers is thematic analysis. The thematic approach, perhaps more than any other analytic approach within narrative inquiry, honors the words of the participants. Although prior theory is used to interpret and make

meaning of participants' accounts, thematic analysis is concerned with how participants experience and interpret a given phenomenon *(Riessman, 2008)*. The goal is to create a clean and coherent plot line that is structured temporally, offering a beginning, middle, and end. Thematic analysis involves examining stories and exploring commonalities and differences in the construction of identity. Preserving the sequence of stories, narrative scholars theorize across a number of cases by "identifying common thematic elements across research participants, the events they report, and the actions they take" *(Riessman, 2008, p. 74)*.

Thematic analysis was utilized in our study of undergraduate men in order to ascertain motivations for participation in service-learning. Using this approach, we uncovered three major motivations for service: social identities, a desire for structure and accountability, and social networking. This is a typical approach to thematic analysis, as the method is frequently used to create typologies of experience *(Riessman, 2008)*.

Whereas thematic analysis is concerned with the told, a structural analysis of narratives is focused on the telling *(Riessman, 2008)*. Utilizing structural analysis offers insight into how a participant constructs and assembles a given account. Drawing on Labov *(1982)*, Riessman *(2008)* encourages narrative researchers to consider six elements that form a complete narrative.

The first is an abstract. This serves as the summary or "so what" of the story. One might think of it as the larger point. Second, a narrative has an orientation, which offers context in terms of time, place, characters, and situations. Third is the complicating action. This serves as the turning point or main concern within the drama as told by the participant. Fourth, an evaluation of the events within the narrative occurs. In the evaluation the narrator steps back "from the action to comment on meaning and communicate emotions—the 'soul' of the narrative" *(Riessman, 2008, p. 84)*. Narratives end with a resolution, or the outcome of the plot, and a coda that ends the story and brings the conversation back to the present. Using this framework, the researcher codes clauses within the larger narrative based on these elements. The strength of this approach lies in the ability to examine who and what the narrator identifies as significant, the organization and sequence of such significant experiences, and an attention to other characters in the plot, no matter how minor. Both thematic and structural methods of analysis highlight the very different possibilities that exist within narrative scholarship.

Trustworthiness

Service-learning scholars wishing to utilize narrative inquiry must be able to convey some level of confidence in their findings *(Jones et al., 2014)*. It is critical that narrative researchers highlight the centrality of meaning to their work as opposed to notions of generalizability. Transferability often takes the emphasis away from claims of generalizability *(Jones et al., 2014)* and instead invites considering the researcher's work within the reader's own local context. Meaningful narrative inquiries "are judged to be important when they bring literary texts to be read by others not so much for the knowledge they contain but for the vicarious testing of life possibilities by readers of the research they permit" *(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 42)*. Or, as Josselson *(2011)* notes, quality narrative inquiry allows the reader to explore a range of nuances and relationships in a way that enables the reader to consider them within the context of other situations.

Such trustworthiness can be reached largely through the use of rich, descriptive data *(Chase, 2010; Josselson, 2011; Patton, 2015; Riessman, 2008)*. Narratives are always partial and incomplete *(Riessman, 2008)*. Of the utmost importance is that the narrative researcher illustrate that they or their participants did not make up the stories presented and that inquiry was guided by adherence to a methodological and theoretical guide. The researcher ought to provide enough data to allow the reader to make their own informed interpretation and rendering of the narrative *(Riessman, 2008)*. Direct speech, or what we might consider raw data, offers a space for the reader to consider what is happening and draw their own conclusions that may be similar to, or different from, those of the researcher. Additionally, one can boost trustworthiness by illustrating areas of both convergence and divergence within the data *(Riessman, 2008)*. One might "identify points where individuals' accounts converge thematically (creating a community of experience), and other points where they split apart" *(Riessman, 2008, p. 191)*. The idea of highlighting divergence is similar to what others describe as the search for negative or discrepant cases *(Maxwell, 2014)*. Jackson's narrative underscored an approach to service that was uniquely informed by his working-class identity and thus very different from most of the other men in our study. These cases should not be written off, but rather probed for their own meaning and distinctive features.

Reliance on rich and descriptive data will not satisfy all academics, however. It is thus critical that the researcher provide a detailed trail leading up to the conclusions presented *(Maxwell,*

2014; Riessman, 2008). It is the responsibility of the researcher to be transparent, making every point of research design and data collection visible and accompanied by a corresponding rationale. This was particularly important in our own study, as we initially struggled to find participants who met our sampling criteria. As noted earlier, although it would have been tempting to revise our initial sampling criteria, we were patient in the recruitment process so that we stayed true to our initial intent.

Conclusion

The purpose of this essay was to illustrate how understandings of student experiences in service-learning might be enhanced through the use of narrative inquiry. A shared goal among most qualitative researchers is to uncover the role of context in people's lives. Maxwell *(2013)* explained that a major contribution of qualitative scholarship is in "understanding the particular contexts within which participants act, and the influence that this context has on their actions" *(p. 30).* As Jackson's account illustrates, narrative approaches to qualitative research firmly locate our participants in particular contexts. The temporal focus of narrative research reveals additional layers of complexity to the ways Jackson makes sense of his time in service-learning *(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).* That is, it becomes clear that in order to understand how Jackson makes meaning of his service-learning experiences, we must account for his precollege environments, most notably his working-class roots and his gendered understandings of providing for others. The contribution of this approach, then, is in its potential to enrich, and even to complicate, our understandings of how students experience and make sense of service-learning programs. By opening up the interview context as a space for storytelling, Jackson offered a number of accounts that illuminated the meaning he made of his time in a service-learning class. Although Jackson's narrative is not in any way intended to be generalizable, this should not be considered a weakness or limitation. Rather, his account offered a departure from the other nine participants in our study, illustrating how gender and class intersected to uniquely inform the ways in which he moved through his semester of service. In this regard, Jackson's narrative underscores how narrative inquiry might open up new possibilities to understanding the complex and messy nature of service-learning in higher education *(Cooks & Scharrer, 2004).*

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About the Author

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Maximizing International Students' Service-Learning and Community Engagement Experience: A Case Study of Student Voices on the Benefits and Barriers

Deidre (Farwick) Kwenani and Xi Yu

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify actual and perceived barriers and benefits of engaging in service-learning and volunteering activities as identified from the unique perspective of international students. Through the identification of barriers and benefits, we can provide more informed training to international students and provide a foundation for best practices to the community-based organizations that host them as volunteers and service-learners. We gathered data through focus groups and short online surveys of both the study population and community partner-based organizations. The findings of this study providing the authentic experiences and perspectives of international students, can assist service-learning institutions and organizations worldwide to better prepare international students for a service-learning experience and reduce the number of barriers faced. Practices and services are recommended to help international students complete their volunteer/service-learning endeavors, and to provide a more welcoming atmosphere for this student population to engage in their communities through service-learning.

Keywords: International students, Community engagement, Diversity, Internationalization

Introduction

*T*he number of international students entering universities in the United States has seen a consistent increase over the past 10 years. These students provide a rich diversity of thought and skills to our learning environments and our workforce. However, they also experience unique barriers to learning and engaging on and off our campuses. Community engagement among international students has been shown to have a variety of positive outcomes for both the individual and the community at large. International students who have higher levels of contact with their local communities perform better academically and socially (*Furnham & Alibhai, 1985*), display lower stress levels *(Redmond & Bunyi, 1993)*, and report increased satisfaction *(Noels, Pon, & Clément,*

1996). Conversely, when a community engages with international students, it helps its members develop social consciousness and overall cultural intelligence *(Parliament of South Australia, 2006)*.

This study was conducted at a large research university in the Midwest (United States), where we are dedicated to fostering community engagement among our own international students. In order to achieve that, we need to understand the unique barriers and challenges these students face when becoming engaged in their host communities. For this study, we chose to focus on community engagement in terms of service-learning and volunteering. The university's Center for Community-Engaged Learning works with a wide range of students, organizations in our community who host students as volunteers or service-learners (we call them "community partners"), and university departments and their faculty members who elect to incorporate a service-learning component into their curriculum. The overall goal of this work is to provide meaningful volunteer experiences to the student population and to facilitate reciprocally rewarding experiences for community partner organizations and the service-learning participants placed within them.

In recent years, the Center for Community-Engaged Learning has seen a significant increase in the number of international students seeking volunteer advising appointments. These peer-led advising appointments gauge a potential student volunteer's interest in particular areas of volunteering (for example, volunteering with youth, animals, in nature, or in a health facility) and subsequently match them with several different placement options. During the sessions, the prospective volunteer or service-learner is given the contact details of the potential community-based placements, the different roles available within each placement, and a few other logistical details (background check requirements, pre-service training requirement, hours available, location, etc.).

Regardless of this increase in advising appointments, colleagues in the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) office have noted that international students are lacking appropriate experience for their résumés. Thus, the desire and/or requirement for international students to volunteer (or fulfill a service-learning requirement) as a way to gain experience is present; however, following through with volunteer activities and being able to note the experience on a résumé remains a challenge for international students. After hearing directly from several international students about the barriers they face in initiating and completing volunteer activities, the Center for Community-Engaged Learning decided

to place more emphasis on ensuring that international students have additional training opportunities and resources for community engagement, volunteering, and service-learning in hopes of reducing the number of barriers faced when engaging in their new communities and fulfilling the required volunteer hours if they are enrolled in a service-learning course at the university. Therefore, we engaged international students in focus group interviews in order to explore what their distinct barriers were (or what they perceived as barriers if they had not yet engaged in volunteering), as well as the actual and perceived benefits. Our purpose was to then use this information to enhance our training and share this research-based information with our community partners who host the volunteers, as well as other institutions working with international students in a community engagement/service-learning capacity, so they too can provide appropriately designed volunteer opportunities, training, and services to ensure international students are facing fewer barriers, are engaging more in their host communities, are completing their service requirements, and are having a more positive experience while doing so.

As previously mentioned, we can acknowledge the many challenges involved with being an international student. Some of those challenges include actual or perceived difficulties in securing student visas, rising tuition costs in the United States, and perceptions that international students may not be welcome in the United States *(Obst & Forster, 2005)*. However, according to Thoits and Hewitt *(2001)*, the act of volunteering positively impacts the well-being of the volunteer in a variety of ways, including happiness, life satisfaction, sense of control over life, physical health, and reducing depression. All these factors could possibly negate some of the challenges, and essentially give international students a feeling of connectedness to their new communities. Because of the feedback we received from ISSS and international students themselves, as well as these statistics indicating the significant benefits of engaging in volunteer activities, we want the experience of community engagement to be accessible, enjoyable, and beneficial to university students, regardless of national origin.

Overview of International Students at the University

An increasing number of international students are coming to the United States to pursue their education. In 2015–16, international student enrollment increased 7.1% to 1,043,839 students in total *(Open Doors, 2016)*. These international students include

nonimmigrant international students in the United States on temporary visas.

During the 2015 fall semester at the university, 6,438 international students were enrolled; they represented over 130 countries and accounted for 13% of the entire student population on campus. The total international student population consisted of 43% undergraduate students, 48% graduate and professional students, and 9% non-degree-seeking students *(ISSS, 2016)*.

Nationwide, international students have contributed to the U.S. economy three times what they did 15 years ago. In 2013–14, international students contributed over $27 billion to the U.S. economy in tuition, books, room and board, travel, and other costs *(Open Doors, 2014)*. Beyond their economic contribution, international students are viewed as an asset. "There can be no global citizenship without considering people from other countries and, in this case, without foreign students being a part of this," as stated by Mestenhauser *(2011, p. 275)*, who was emphasizing the value international students will contribute to the internationalization of U.S. higher education, as well as the fostering of intercultural competency development among students, staff, and faculty across campus in postsecondary education settings.

Given the large population of international students at the university, and in consideration of their vast contributions to our broader society, we felt the need to give a voice to them, and to hear what they had to say about community engagement in the form of volunteering and service-learning.

Methodology

Research Design and Participants

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the university. The confidentiality of human subjects was strictly protected, and the process of conducting this study strictly followed proposed protocol. The study population for this focus group research was derived from interested international students at the university. The International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) program was instrumental in helping to identify and inform students who would potentially be interested in participating and who met the student population criteria for our study: degree-seeking students who were currently enrolled at the university and whose origin was from a country other than the United States (identified as international students by the university's standards).

Participant Recruitment Approach

As previously mentioned, we partnered with ISSS to both identify potential participants and reach out to them. ISSS has a particular approach for recruiting students, and we used this same practice for our recruitment purposes. After we identified the entire population of potential participants, a general e-mail about the opportunity to participate in our focus group was sent out. If interested, students were requested to respond to a short online questionnaire to help us generate maximum diversity among participants. The questionnaire requested the name of the student; e-mail address; identified gender (optional); age range; country of origin; declared or anticipated major; if they had previous experience volunteering in the United States; and if they declined participation, wanted to join the focus group, or needed more information about the research before they could decide. From those responses we confirmed interest, grouped students, and invited them to one of the planned focus groups.

Demographics of the Selected Student Population

Out of the 62 students who answered the brief online questionnaire and showed initial interest, we selected 28 students to invite to our focus groups. Five of those students had something unexpected occur the day of the focus groups and could not attend, so our total focus group participants numbered 23. We divided these students into four different focus groups, electing to balance gender, country of origin, and reported volunteer experience (or lack thereof).

As indicated, there were a handful of questions asked in prescreening stages that allowed us to identify initial interest. From those initial screening questions, we asked the students to identify their preferred gender. Although this was an optional question, all students chose to answer. Therefore, we know that 14 participants identified as female and 9 participants identified as male. Below is a breakdown of other demographics, including reported age (Table 1), previous volunteer experience (Table 2), country of origin, and declared areas of study (Table 3).

Table 1. Participant Age

Age Range	Number
18–20 years	9
21–23 years	8
24–25 years	5
26+ years	1

Table 2. Prior Volunteer Experience

Number Reporting Prior Experience (*N* = 23)	% of Total
Yes = 13	56.5%
No = 10	43.5%

Countries of Origin

The countries represented in this study include (in alphabetical order) Belarus, China, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Mexico.

Table 3. Declared/Anticipated Focus of Study

Declared Major by College	Number of Participants in Each
College of Liberal Arts (CLA)	7
College of Science and Engineering (CSE)	7
Carlson School of Management	1
College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences	1
Graduate School	3
Combination of CLA and CSE	4

Findings

To start our focus group discussions, we asked the participants several lead-in questions. These questions were designed to gauge their understanding of and experience with the terms to be later discussed, mainly *volunteering* and *service-learning*. In the beginning stages of the focus groups, we asked three questions: What does volunteering mean to you? Have you ever volunteered? Have you participated in service-learning? All participants knew of or had engaged in volunteering, but less than half of the participants knew of or had engaged in service-learning. Below is a collection of the thoughts expressed when asked the introductory questions, as well as the remaining focus group questions.

Please note that throughout the entirety of this research analysis, the terms "students," "participants," and "focus group/study participants" will be used interchangeably, as the study group criteria dictated that all participants in the study must also be degree-seeking students enrolled in either undergraduate or graduate courses.

What Does Volunteering Mean to You?

When international students were asked what volunteering meant to them, the main themes articulated revolved around several different ideas. They thought volunteering was overall less formal than a job or an internship and was something to be done without pay. They also mentioned it was a contribution of their knowledge, skills, and/or time. They said it was an opportunity for personal growth and to learn new things and get new ideas. Some thought it was part of their responsibility in life- that they were "giving back" or participating in "work of goodwill." Many also viewed it as a social opportunity: a chance to make friends and participate in activities/events that were different from their typical life/activities on campus. Some of the previous volunteer activities mentioned by the students included tutoring, helping the homeless population, assisting the elderly, constructing housing, working at an animal shelter, and volunteering in a hospital. These examples were a combination of volunteer experiences the study population had experienced abroad and in the United States.

Perceived or Actual Benefits

Skill development. This was the most vocalized theme, as many participants felt that volunteering or engaging in their host communities helped them gain knowledge and develop a variety of skills, including communication skills, social skills like empathy, team-building skills, and time management skills. In the words of one student, "You get a lot of knowledge and you kinda, you sympathize, you [become] more human."

These participants connected the skills gained from volunteering with further benefits that included help in finding a job or being accepted to graduate school, improving English-language skills, increasing self-confidence, and gaining added awareness regarding future career choices (for example, identifying through volunteer experience which populations they would like to work with in the future).

Interaction/connection/friendship. Being able to connect with other students, form friendships, and work as a group were very important benefits of volunteering that international students expressed; in fact, it was the second most articulated theme with respect to benefits. Engaging with others, exchanging ideas, having a social experience, networking and getting to know more people, and achieving balance (having more activities outside the classroom/studying) were key factors they deemed very important aspects of volunteering. "It's kind of helpful for myself to participate and engage in the community so I can have more identity and belonging and feel like I'm actually learning more about the community," declared one participant. Another international student who had previous experience volunteering in the United States said, "I always have a strong feeling, a strong sense of belonging where I volunteer and I feel like it's easier for me to make friends with people who volunteer with me. . . ."

A change in perspective. It was also very notable that international students felt that volunteering helped to change their perspective. One participant reported, "I think volunteering widens my perspective, it's a good chance to meet people from all over the world . . . this is a good way to give the world our work, just a little bit." One student contrasted the limited television and movie portrayals of America with the reality visible just off campus: "You see that it's not all big houses and upper middle class." Another said, "I was talking to a retired man last Saturday [while volunteering]; we were trimming some trees together and were together for four hours and he was sharing his point of view of the current United States and I don't get to hear anything like that in the office."

Reciprocal reward. A participant in one focus group said the benefits of volunteering and service-learning go beyond the constructs of monetary gain. Seeing the positive outcomes of your volunteer work "makes me feel good and proud of myself." The reward is that you get to contribute to society, but the contribution is more of an exchange: "I didn't teach them [adult learners who were immigrants preparing to take the U.S. citizenship test], I learned with them." The words "sacrifice" and "service" were mentioned by participants, and were used in a positive light: "For volunteering, some people say you get nothing, but I think at least you gain some happiness or [life] lessons."

Other benefits. There were two other themes mentioned in the focus groups, and those included "self-confidence" and "organizational knowledge" (for purposes of knowing an organization and having "insider information" before electing to work or participate

gainfully with them). Participants expressed that they could gain more confidence in their abilities, particularly those pertaining to language, communication, and belonging, as well as their talents and their physical abilities. As one student said,

> I think another thing is we also know more, grow more of things that we didn't know before, like I never try to build a house before but I volunteered at Habitat [for Humanity] and it was so amazing that I can actually help to build the house!

Perceived or Actual Barriers

Going into this research, we anticipated that language and transportation would likely be the two most common barriers to volunteering for international students. These were, in fact, among the top five barriers identified, but surprisingly, there were several others we hadn't anticipated that posed a more significant level of hesitation among the participants. The top five themes that emerged collectively during the focus groups included the following: lack of time to devote to volunteering, logistics/rules involved in the process of volunteering, transportation (or lack thereof), cultural considerations, and language/communication barriers. Among the less common, but still noteworthy, barriers were a lack of self-confidence, ignorance of volunteer opportunities, safety and security issues, the absence of group opportunities, lack of monetary compensation, and a perception that there would be bias toward them. Below is a breakdown of each theme.

Time constraints. The issue of time materialized in each of the four separate focus groups. However, there were a few different ways in which the focus group participants described how time negatively impacted their ability or desire to volunteer, including time management and/or competing commitments—which would indicate the students were juggling multiple commitments and were not able to effectively incorporate volunteering; limited time or the absence of "extra time"—students reported their coursework was difficult and they did not have time outside their studies and other obligations to participate in volunteer activities; and time commitments required by the volunteer site—suggesting the amount of time they knew or thought organizations would require of them (daily/weekly/monthly) did not appeal to them or they were unable to commit.

Logistics/rules limitation. The complexity of the American volunteering system came up as a major theme in one focus group. The participants mentioned the tedious process of becoming a volunteer, which involved background checks, long applications and reference forms, many rules (for example: "You can't give a gift to a child"), lessons and trainings before you can begin, and potentially the requirement of previous volunteer experience. This discussion also involved a comparison between several of the participants' volunteer experiences in their country of origin and their experiences in the United States. One student stated, "Back home I could literally show up and say, 'I want to volunteer' and they let you help."

Transportation challenges. There were a few different aspects of transportation that posed a threat to the prospect of community engagement through volunteering and service-learning as articulated by the focus group participants. Those aspects included transportation in general, the public transportation system, and the weather interfering with viable modes of transport.

Our specific university has student learning facilities located on two separate campuses. Much of the school year falls during the winter season, and certain modes of transport can be unpleasant, if not dangerous, when the temperatures plummet, the roads and sidewalks become icy, and/or the snow accumulates. International students, who rely primarily on walking, biking, or using the campus circulator (a train and bus system that transports students between campuses), are generally unable to freely and comfortably access their "go-to" modes of transport when these undesirable weather conditions exist. In addition, when students volunteer for an organization that is not located near campus, they must rely on the public transport system or carpooling with another student or faculty member who is volunteering at the same place and time as them.

Cultural considerations. Focus group discussions also addressed variations in the way cultures around the world view and execute volunteering. For example, one participant said, "In the U.S., volunteering is part of the culture, whereas in other countries it may not be that way. People might ask, 'Why do you need to do that?' and I might need to have an excuse to do it." Another explained, "At home, people are used to foreigners coming to volunteer, but not natives; so when you are a native showing up to help, people are confused." Examples of different approaches to executing volunteering were represented in statements such as "[Where I live] most volunteer opportunities were related to helping the poor, but here we actually have different kinds of volunteering . . . that can

actually help you instead of helping someone else" and "In the U.S., volunteering is more organized and therefore more sustainable."

The participants also mentioned that in the United States there were people of all ages volunteering; there were opportunities in a variety of settings; there was more training offered or required before engaging; there are universities helping to facilitate the process of volunteering, as well as websites and contact numbers so the opportunities are more publicized; volunteering as an individual is more common than volunteering as a group (as several mentioned was more common in their countries of origin); and the time commitment in the United States is often much greater.

Although this was not explicitly stated in each of the focus groups, we surmise that students who perceive a large variety of volunteer opportunities in the United States had the opposite experience in their home countries: limited options. Likewise, for those who expressed the tediousness of the U.S. volunteer system, they found volunteering in their native country less bureaucratic. In another example, students who reported that volunteering in the United States often required a large time commitment may have experienced volunteering abroad as more flexible and less time intensive.

Language/communication barriers. We know that communication is often tricky among people of the same mother tongue. There is opportunity for misunderstanding in every conversation based on context or lack of consistency with accompanying nonverbal communication. Therefore, it wasn't surprising to us that communication and/or language surfaced in each focus group as a common concern/barrier. Some students elaborated, saying they were concerned about others not being able to understand their accent: "I am afraid that my English is not good enough for kids."

Other barriers. "Before I go, I was think[ing] about will they accept me because I'm an international student, will they treat me differently, and there are other volunteers, maybe they are all American and will they want to get along with me." This statement is a mutual reflection of perceived bias and potential lack of confidence, both of which were areas of concern for some of the participants (lack of confidence in one's own abilities having been mentioned three times during the collective focus group activities, and perceived bias having materialized as a concern twice).

Along with the aspects of potential bias mentioned above, the issues of lack of knowledge of volunteer opportunities and safety were also mentioned as concern areas twice during the focus group

sessions. Even though international students verbalized that volunteer opportunities in the United States are more promoted, they still found it somewhat difficult to find those they could engage in. And even if they were aware of volunteer opportunities, either they or members of their families were concerned about safety. One participant commented, "My parents are worried about me going to strange places to volunteer."

Statistically of least concern, but still noteworthy, is that our focus group participants also named "lack of group volunteer opportunities" and "no monetary gain" as barriers for them. Even though different groups identified the absence of pay as a factor that most significantly defined volunteering and service-learning, it appeared as if the inclusion of some form of pay could have resulted in increased motivation to engage. Likewise, students in a few different focus groups mentioned they would be more comfortable and therefore more willing to participate in community engagement activities if they were able to do so with friends or in a group, instead of individually.

Retention or Reenrollment

The question "If you have volunteered before, will you do it again, regardless of the challenges?" was asked during each of the four focus group sessions; it followed the discussion of barriers. One student stated, "It's always good to learn new things while volunteering," and another mentioned they would check to see if transportation was provided. The overall consensus, however, was yes, the participants would volunteer regardless of the challenges. It should be noted that two barriers seemed to pose a more serious threat to the students' ability/desire to volunteer, and those were time and transportation. The other barriers—communication, language, lack of confidence, and so on—may cause a bit of anxiety but didn't necessarily negate all perceived or actual benefits.

Previous Volunteer Experience (Including Service-Learning)

As indicated above, 13 students reported having had previous volunteer experience on their answers to the initial online questionnaire, whereas 10 reported not having had any volunteer experience prior to the focus group. This online questionnaire did not differentiate between volunteering in their country of origin versus volunteering in the United States, nor did it differentiate between volunteering and service-learning as part of a curriculum.

However, during the focus group conversations, the participants were asked about their previous volunteer experience, with further inquiry to determine where it took place and what type of institution it was with, as well as who had participated in service-learning.

Students who reported volunteering in the States described opportunities that included spring break service trips, ESL tutoring, animal shelter assisting, building for Habitat for Humanity, various services at the American Cancer Society and homeless shelters, food packing services at Feed My Starving Children, and outdoor activities, including maple tree tapping. As described by the students, volunteering in their countries of origin involved opportunities primarily in schools, museums, orphanages, homes for the elderly, churches, and hospitals. Overall, students reported the depth and breadth of volunteer opportunities as being greater in the United States.

Of the 23 focus group participants, only five outwardly expressed having been involved in volunteering specifically as part of a course, or what we consider "service-learning." During one focus group, it was clear there was limited understanding among the participants with respect to what service-learning entailed. For those who had previous experience with it, they reported having participated as part of the following courses: Cultural Psychology, Public Health, and ESL.

The focus group participants were also asked where and/or with whom they were most interested in engaging in volunteer activities, and here are their responses (in no particular order): children, health care, refugees, animals, politics, media, environment, social justice and human rights, and equality. In comparison, among the organizations where Americans chose to volunteer, religious organizations tend to be the most popular. In terms of volunteer activities, American volunteers most often participated in fundraising (26.6%); collecting, preparing, distributing, or serving food (23.5%); engaging in general labor or providing transportation (20.5%); and tutoring or teaching (19.0%) *(Corporation for National and Community Service, 2010)*. Therefore, it would appear that international students have different interest areas when it comes to volunteering, as well as unique barriers and skills they provide.

Best Times for Volunteer Events and Best Modes of Communication

Our aim with this question was to determine the best means of communication for international students, as well as times when

they were most available and willing to engage in volunteer activities, so we, in turn, could make recommendations to agencies who recruit volunteers. However, we received conflicting information, which suggests personal preference is a significant factor when it comes to receiving information relating to engagement opportunities or events. Although one focus group said they would like to see flyers posted in public areas, another stated it was bad for the environment to generate paper material to advertise. The same group that was in favor of flyers said they would also be accepting of e-mails, phone calls, social media messages (if they were up to date), word of mouth, service-learning courses, and face-to-face interactions like information sessions. Another focus group said that e-mails would be acceptable but that multiple e-mails about the same event or opportunity were unwelcome, as it overwhelms the recipient and causes them to discontinue checking e-mails from that source. This group recommended department calendars or newsletters as an alternative.

With respect to the time and day that lent itself to the most availability or willingness to engage, we received more consistent responses from focus group to focus group. The majority said that weekend activities were most desirable because they have more time to focus on extracurricular activities during that time. Two groups mentioned that evenings were also acceptable if they weren't taking night classes. And one focus group mentioned that blocks of time, like summer or winter breaks, would be a time they were free and willing to volunteer.

Discussions

We have already established that international students bring a richness to our communities, our schools, and our economy. They represent diversity of thought and contribute to aspirations of a global society where we can work together to achieve common goals and prosperity. For those reasons, and many more, we feel it's both our privilege and our responsibility to assist in breaking down barriers faced in terms of community engagement. Therefore, we present a few important observations that we emphasize in hopes that universities and community partner organizations worldwide will take the necessary steps to facilitate this change process.

One important aspect that international students brought to our attention was the desire to pair community engagement activities with friendship and relationship-building. We knew going into this research that time, transportation, and language were likely

going to be barriers to engagement, and these factors, along with many others, were confirmed. However, from a learning perspective, one of the most helpful pieces of information we received was that of relationship-building. In all the focus groups there were one or more participants who acknowledged the social aspect of volunteering/service-learning as a benefit, and several international students articulated feeling more confident and comfortable engaging when group volunteering was an option.

Through this research, we also learned that the process of community engagement can often be daunting for international students. We fully comprehend the need for volunteer organizations to have safety as their main priority. We also understand that safety measures involve ensuring the volunteers' backgrounds are free from criminal activities (especially if the client population is composed of vulnerable people, as most are). However, it is worthy to note that international students have already gone through a lengthy background check just to enter the United States and furthermore to be admitted to study in this country. Therefore, assisting potential international volunteers with the logistical process of becoming a volunteer, while not compromising the safety of served populations, will certainly prove beneficial for all involved.

Finally, in speaking with our study group population, we have identified common perceived and actual benefits of volunteering. These include skill development, gaining new perspectives, fulfilling a responsibility to serve others, increased confidence, organizational knowledge, and development of new connections and friendships. A study conducted by Smith et al. *(2010)* provides a large-scale international survey comparing university students in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States who identified the following as benefits of volunteering: job/career experience, reference for employment or college, leadership skills, professional networking, service requirements (which all fell under the theme "instrumental/career-related"), self-satisfaction, opportunities to learn new things, building trust among people in society (part of the "altruistic/value-driven" category), social contacts, and recognition from friends/colleagues (indicated as "social/ego"-related reasons). Additionally, a study of university students in England found that respondents gave a variety of reasons for volunteering: to help someone in their community, to learn new skills, to respond to their needs or skills, and to help gain experience to benefit their future career *(Holdsworth, 2010)*.

Therefore, it appears there are altruistic, social, and operant benefits associated with volunteering, as identified by students from a variety of nations worldwide. However, although these countries represent geographic diversity, they share some commonalities in their volunteer sectors, as well as political, social, and cultural histories *(Smith et al., 2010)*. With this in mind, we encourage communities and organizations who are hosting international students to focus on the similarities shared by international and domestic students alike while trying to alleviate some of the distinctive barriers faced more overtly by the international student population.

Community Partners' Perspectives on Hosting International Student Volunteers and Service-Learners

Through conducting a short, four-question online survey with our community partners, we learned that there was overall a high level of satisfaction with having international students be part of their work. After sending out the survey link to each of the community partner organizations who receive our newsletter, we collected information from over 40 respondents. In the brief survey, the following questions were asked: How many international students do you work with each semester? What assets do they bring? What is the major challenge you face as you host international student volunteers? What can our center do to help address any concerns/questions you, as a community partner, have when working with international students?

In total, 42 of our community partner organizations had a representative from their organization answer the online survey questions. When asked how many international students they work with each semester, the majority noted it was between one and three, with that majority accounting for over 57% of our community partners. Almost 20% of the 42 partners do not work with international students at all; close to 12% work with four to six international students each semester; and the remaining 12% work with seven or more each semester.

Of the 20% who never work with international students, the reasons were not directly specified, but in the comments section some agencies noted that the topic of their work could have been off-putting to international students, or they imagine international students felt very uneasy about their own skills when volunteering for them. For example, if the only position available is that of a tutor, international students may not have enough confidence in

their language skills to fulfill that role and therefore would not opt to volunteer within that organization.

Not surprisingly, when it came to inquiries about the barriers in working with international students, community partners mentioned a language barrier being the most common issue, which accounted for 70% of responses. The second most common barrier was that of transportation issues, which represented 40% of responses. Nine and eight respondents respectively chose "limited understanding of how to connect with international student" and "cultural considerations (female students not being able to work with males and vice versa, clothing, dominant role practices, eye contact or lack thereof, etc.)," which accounted for just over and just under 20% respectively.

Within the topic of barriers in this short survey, our center wanted to broach the topic of bias or discrimination against or by international students. The questions were not intended imply that this was happening, but we wanted to provide a space for our community partners to discuss this if it was a reality. Furthermore, we wanted to gauge how big an issue this might be so we could respond accordingly. Interestingly, around 7% of respondents said international students faced bias and/or discrimination perpetrated by the populations served at their organization (the clients, service recipients, members, etc.), but none of the community partners responded that bias and/or discrimination against international students was perpetrated by other student volunteers or by staff at their organizations.

Jill Suttie *(2016)* has suggested several ways to reduce bias, namely creating cross-cultural friendships and developing empathy:

> When people see cross-group friendships working out in positive ways, they tend to be more willing to engage in cross-group friendships themselves. In addition, positive cross-group friendships can have contagion effects in other people within social groups, turning whole communities into warmer, more receptive spaces for cross-group interactions. . . . Developing friendships can be one of the best ways to break down barriers of prejudice, and it's more easily done when people have some common interests. *(Section 4, paras. 3–5)*

In addition, actively engaging in empathy decreases the likelihood of falling prey to stereotyping others *(Suttie, 2016)*. Given this

information, we can then assume an opportunity for growth in the next question we posed. In their responses, over 21% of community partner respondents acknowledged having limited understanding of how to "connect" with international students. This certainly makes relationship-building difficult.

Perhaps the most interesting conclusions from this brief survey came from responses to the question "What assets do international students add to your organization or the work you do with the community?" The options available to respondents included the following, and they were not limited to selecting only one answer: genuine interest in the work you do or the populations you serve/work with; a new/different perspective that helps your agency grow; a familiar face for your clients/members/learners/service recipients to connect with (if the volunteer is from the same country of origin as the service recipient is); a new/different skill-set needed within your agency; dependability; adaptability; competence. For this question, 29 of the 42 respondents, almost 70%, said that international students' biggest asset was a genuine interest in the work that was being done or the populations that were being served. In addition, 57% said they came with new and different perspectives that helped the agency grow; 45% said they added a familiar face for the population receiving services; and almost 24% of the respondents said international students had a new or different set of skills that were needed to support the agency.

Finally, our center wanted to know how we could best address some of the concerns our community partners have with respect to working with international students. Our community partners thought the most valuable service would be to develop and facilitate a training that would be available to them once per semester. According to 45% of community partner respondents, developing and distributing material on the topic would be useful, as well as including "helpful tips/strategies" in our monthly electronic newsletter.

Recommendations and Conclusions

The authentic experience of international students analyzed in this study has broadened the understanding of international students' true challenges and concerns participating in service-learning and community service. After this study, the university, which was already implementing preparatory trainings for service-learning students, started to implement trainings specifically for international students that addressed their unique barriers. These

trainings were often evaluated highly by the attendees, who indicated it was helpful in preparing them for their volunteer/service-learning experience.

Recommendations for the University and Staff Supporting International Students

Here are some recommendations to be included in student training/preparation for university and relevant staff to better support international students to navigate the service-learning and volunteering process from start to finish:

1. Acknowledging the core benefit of service-learning is the reciprocal reward; highlighting that service-learning opportunities are designed to enhance the student's classroom learning by connecting the theoretical with the practical, while also addressing community needs. Additional benefits include skill development, résumé-building, gaining knowledge of community organizations, and meeting other students with similar interests.

2. Conceptualizing local community engagement: for example, according to the Corporation for National and Community Service, the level of volunteering in our Midwestern university community is considered typical, in that more than 40% of the population has reported volunteering *(2010)*, and college-aged students are engaging with their communities at rates similar to the general population—38.3% *(2015)*.

3. Explaining the service-learning process, step by step, including the online process and the peer-led advising appointments. This can include mock advising appointments, in-person demonstrations, or online modules designed to clarify the process.

4. Exploring how to connect with organizations, including example questions to ask the organization and questions the organization may ask the student.

5. Identifying how to address the need for references and background checks (specifically, which documents suffice in the absence of a Social Security number).

6. Accessing public transportation, including etiquette/rules, and going through the online process of determining cost and route.

7. Giving examples of what to expect while they are volunteering, including scenarios that student volunteers have

experienced, how to respond, and whom to contact for help.

8. Offering take-home material, for example, an *International Student Guide to Volunteering* that outlines additional pertinent information.

The preparatory trainings (one for students with little to no volunteer experience and one for students who have much volunteer experience) that were already offered at the university for service-learning students prior to this study, and were not specific to international students, included the following elements: introduction of the training (the purpose of the training is to develop skills of observation and reflection in order to identify how the service-learner is meeting a need in the community as well as enhancing their corresponding classroom learning); introduction of the students; discussion of goals and perceived challenges in service; case scenarios (group discussions regarding how to handle diverse volunteer situations); discussions regarding how we frame our perceptions; and exercises to broaden perspectives of common issues faced by the populations the students may work with during service.

During preservice training, students with vast volunteer experience are asked to reflect in greater detail about the impact that community work has had on them and on others. Some examples include discussions about deep versus shallow service experiences and reflections on the meaning of service and how others/society may perceive service (i.e., does everyone deserve to be helped? Is community service always good?). Again, students responded favorably to these trainings and evaluated them as highly beneficial.

Recommendations for the Agencies Hosting International Students

We would also like to encourage the volunteer host agencies to do any of the following in order to facilitate a better engagement experience for international students:

1. Create new opportunities within your organization for international (and all) students to volunteer as a group. Allow volunteers time for chatting and getting to know each other before they jump into their volunteer roles. If student volunteers are developing relationships among themselves, they will become more interdependent within the volunteer circle and less dependent on the staff within the organization.

2. Elicit an international student volunteer to contribute to your newsletters or internal communications. Include an introduction of the student, whether they have previous volunteer experience, what they are most looking forward to, and what they are nervous about. In doing so, your audience (most likely those who will be working with the student) will feel as if they are "getting to know" this student; they may develop a connection to the similarities between themselves and the student; and it will hopefully decrease any potential ambivalence there might be in working with international students.

3. If you have strict policies regarding the recruitment and acceptance of volunteers, consider that international students have already gone through a rigorous background check in order to enter and study in the United States. As an organization hosting international volunteers, perhaps consider offering advice and support for the background check process. Students may be unfamiliar with the reasons why this is necessary (although at our university preservice trainings we do mention the purpose of background checks), so offering extra assistance in this matter may increase a student's interest in your agency.

4. If you are part of an organization that has only one position (for example, a tutor) that could possibly be considered off-putting to an international student, try thinking outside the box and come up with a project that an international student could head where the students are using skills other than language or communication to help in your organization. These things take a bit more time up front, but doing so might not only attract more international students to your organization, but also cause them to stay for a longer period, which is something that the majority of organizations desire: long-term volunteers.

5. Finally, truly consider how your organization might be able to engage with international student volunteers in ways that are more meaningful to them and in ways that address the unique barriers they face.

It's our hope that this combined information, from both students and community partners, will help our center, centers like ours globally, and our partners in the community who are hosting international students in a variety of ways. For our audience, the international students themselves, the information likely to be

most valuable will lie within addressing the issue of self-confidence. When international students become aware that they are valuable for the vast variety of reasons mentioned above, perhaps we can help to facilitate more engagement in the mutually beneficial activities involved in volunteering and service-learning. After all, at the heart of the service-learning pedagogy is the component of reciprocally rewarding experiences and relationships.

Future Research Directions

During the compilation of this essay, we strove to be inclusive of relevant data already collected by researchers in the field, as well as to present new findings from our unique research study. However, in the process, we discovered gaps in both our research and previous research. Therefore, our essay has some limitations that offer opportunities for future research. Below are some of the areas we have identified for future research opportunities.

First, there is an opportunity for research comparing the desire for more socialization in volunteering among domestic versus international students—is it truly unique to international students? We did not explore the aspect of socialization in volunteering within the domestic student population, nor did we find previous research in this area, so a comparison was not possible. Another opportunity for comparative research lies within the concept that barriers are unique to international students. Since we did not do a comparison of barriers expressed by international students versus domestic students, nor did we find prior research on the topic, this would be another important area for clarification.

Although we did find current research regarding domestic and international student views on the benefits of volunteering, which included a study conducted with a variety of international and domestic students examining their perceptions of the benefits of volunteering, this study did not compare international and domestic student views of benefits. Therefore, we know the expressed benefits of international and domestic students *collectively* but not in comparison to one another. This presents an area of opportunity.

Additional research can also be performed surrounding preference for volunteer activities among international students and domestic students. Although our study loosely defined interest areas, it did not address preferences of international students, nor were we able to compare specific volunteer activity categories, as they were different from study to study. Finally, more in-depth

research can be focused on the types of bias and discrimination faced by international students from a community partner perspective; similarly, opportunities exist for a comparison between the bias and discrimination faced by international volunteers versus domestic volunteers.

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RESEARCH ARTICLES

Challenge, Meaning, Interest, and Preparation: Critical Success Factors Influencing Student Learning Outcomes from Service-Learning

Grace Ngai, Stephen C. F. Chan, and Kam-por Kwan

Abstract

What makes service-learning effective? This article examines key factors influencing student service-learning outcomes in higher education. We studied 2,214 students who had completed a credit-bearing service-learning course in a large public university in Hong Kong. The students were asked to rate the course and pedagogical features, as well as their attainment of the intended learning outcomes of the course. Multiple regressions were then performed to identify and compare the relative contribution of the individual course and pedagogical elements. Results showed that students' attainment of the different service-learning outcomes is influenced to varying degrees by different course and pedagogical elements. Specifically, we found that the most positive outcomes are associated with challenging and meaningful tasks, interest in the subject/project, perceived benefits to people served, preparation for service, and appreciation of the service by the people served. We discuss implications of the findings for theory, practice, and further research.

Keywords: service-learning, higher education, learning outcomes, course and pedagogical features

Introduction

*S*ervice-learning is an experiential pedagogy that integrates rigorous academic study with meaningful community service and critical reflection. It has been widely recognized as a high-impact educational practice in higher education *(Kuh, 2008)* and an essential component of promoting civic engagement *(Waters & Anderson-Lain, 2014)*. Worldwide, service-learning is increasingly being adopted as a pedagogical approach to achieve a multitude of student learning outcomes across a variety of disciplines, educational levels, and universities *(Kenworthy-U'Ren, 2008)*.

Although there is strong evidence to suggest that service-learning can be an effective pedagogy to achieve a wide range of cognitive and affective outcomes (e.g., *Celio, Durlak, & Dymnicki, 2011; Novak, Markey, & Allen, 2007; Warren, 2012; Yorio & Ye, 2012*), students do not automatically learn from just participating in service-learning. Rather, how and what students learn depends on

the quality of their learning experiences *(Billig, 2007; Chan, Ngai, & Kwan, 2017; Metz & Youniss, 2005; Pancer, Brown, Henderson, & Ellis-Hale, 2007; Riedel, 2002; Taylor & Pancer, 2007)*. Melchoir and Bailis *(2002)* therefore urge that we "look carefully at the quality of the experience we offer young people and . . . pay more attention to program design and implementation (inputs) in our research as well as to outcomes" *(p. 219)*.

There is no lack of suggestions on how to design an effective service-learning program. The National Service-Learning Cooperative, for example, identified 11 key elements of effective service-learning practice *(National Service-Learning Cooperative, 1999)*, as follows:

1. Clear educational goals.
2. Involve students in cognitively challenging tasks.
3. Assessment used to enhance student learning and evaluate how well students have met content and skill standards.
4. Engage students in service tasks with clear goals that meet genuine community needs and have significant consequences.
5. Use of evaluation.
6. Youth voice in selecting, designing, implementing, and evaluating service-learning projects.
7. Valuing diversity.
8. Communication, interaction, partnership, and collaboration with the community.
9. Students being prepared for all aspects of their service work.
10. Use of reflection.
11. Celebration and acknowledgment of service work.

However, empirical studies on the effects of curricular and pedagogical features on student outcomes from service-learning have been scanty *(Moely & Ilustre, 2014)* and thus offer limited support for those recommended practices. Furthermore, most of the studies were conducted in the United States and focus on a few selected course characteristics, often based on experience from a single program or course. The generalizability of these findings to courses or projects in distinctly different disciplines or cultures is therefore yet to be established. In addition, few studies compare the relative contribution of the factors influencing students' learning from service-learning. There is therefore a need not only to identify the key course and pedagogical elements that affect students' ser-

vice-learning outcomes, but also assess if some of the elements are more important than others in affecting the different desired outcomes of service-learning *(Celio et al., 2011)*. Indeed, there is a strong consensus among service-learning scholars that more research is needed to understand how specific curricular or pedagogical elements will affect students' learning experience and outcomes of service-learning *(Hecht, 2003; Lambright & Lu, 2009; Novak et al., 2007)*.

This study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, it attempts to identify and compare the relative impacts of a wide range of program and pedagogical elements on students' attainment of three different service-learning outcomes. Second, it targets students in a non–United States setting, which have been largely ignored in the literature to date. Third, it attempts to generalize across student backgrounds, disciplines, and nature of service projects through studying a large sample of students from a large diversity of university-level service-learning courses in different discipline areas, with different service natures, working with different targeted beneficiaries, and at different locations.

How Service-Learning Impacts Student Learning Outcomes

Decades of research has demonstrated that students' engagement in service-learning can benefit their intellectual, social, civic, and personal development *(Jacoby, 2015)*. Intellectually, service-learning has been shown to have a positive effect by deepening students' understanding of the academic content; increasing their ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-life service settings; enhancing problem-solving, critical, and other higher order thinking skills; improving academic achievements; and fostering persistence and retention at college *(Lemons, Carberry, Swan, & Jarvin, 2011; Lockeman & Pelco, 2013; Novak et al., 2007; Prentice & Robinson, 2010; Yeh, 2010)*. Socially, studies have also found that service-learning contributes significantly to students' communication, interpersonal, and leadership skills *(Celio et al., 2011; Fullerton, Reitenauer, & Kerrigan, 2015; Simons & Cleary, 2006; Wurr & Hamilton, 2012)*, among others. Civic learning outcomes associated with service-learning include increases in students' sense of civic responsibility and engagement, awareness and understanding of social issues, empathy for others, political participation, and willingness to volunteer in the future *(Greenwood, 2015; Jorge, 2011; Weber & Weber, 2010; Winston, 2015)*. With respect to personal development, there is also evidence that students' participation in service-learning enhances their self-understanding, self-efficacy,

self-esteem, personal growth, and attitude toward learning *(Beatty, Meadows, SwamiNathan, & Mulvihill, 2016; Celio et al., 2011; Weiler et al., 2013; Yorio & Ye, 2012).*

However, relatively few studies have looked into the factors influencing students' achievement of the service-learning outcomes. At the high school level, Moore and Sandholtz *(1999)* found that students developed more positive attitudinal outcomes when they participated in service-learning projects that had an emphasis on service with learning as a necessary by-product, provided services in the community rather than in their own schools, worked for a longer duration, and had more direct contact with the service beneficiaries. Billig, Root, and Jesse *(2005)* examined the contribution of the service-learning elements and other perceived quality indicators to high school participants' civic and academic development, and found that cognitive challenge, meeting genuine needs, valuing diversity, and student preparation were associated with specific increases in academic and civic outcomes.

At the tertiary level, Mabry *(1998)* demonstrated that service-learning is more effective when students have at least 15–20 hours of service, frequent contact with the beneficiaries of their service, weekly in-class reflection, ongoing and summative written reflection, and discussions of their service experiences with both instructors and site supervisors. Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, and Yee *(2000)* found that the single most important factor associated with a positive service-learning experience is students' degree of interest in the subject matter, followed by class discussion, connecting the service experience to the course subject matter, and amount of training that the students received prior to service. Raman and Pashupati *(2002)* examined the relative effects of selected program characteristics and student motivation on different service-learning outcomes and revealed that motivation and program characteristics work jointly in affecting outcomes, but the individual effects differ across variables. Using a qualitative approach, Largent *(2009)* showed that students' learning from service-learning and intention for future participation in voluntary service is affected by their ability to connect course material and the service experience, the extent to which they believe the service had an impact on the community, and the training and orientation they receive at the community agency. Based on data collected from seven master's-level courses, Lambright and Lu *(2009)* identified three key factors that affect the effectiveness of a service-learning project in achieving its learning objectives: the extent of the project's integration with class materials, whether or not students work in groups, and whether

or not the participating students are studying full time. In a meta-analysis of 62 studies on the impact of service-learning on students, Celio et al. *(2011)* found four key practices that mediated the impact: linking to curriculum, youth voice, community involvement, and reflection. In a more recent study, Moely and Ilustre *(2014)* found that the two outcomes that are most closely related to service-learning—learning about the community and academic learning—were strongly predicted by students' perceived value of the service, the opportunities for reflection, and the social change orientation of the students. However, they reported that focus on service was associated mainly with students' problem-solving and decision-making skills, but not with outcomes related to academic learning or learning about the community.

Given the small number of studies, the results are far from conclusive. Furthermore, most of the studies focused on a few selected course or pedagogical elements and did not compare their respective relative contribution to different student learning outcomes from service-learning. It is still unclear which of the course and pedagogical elements has a stronger impact on which student outcome.

This study aims to identify and compare the relative impact of the key factors that influence university students' intellectual, social, and civic learning outcomes from service-learning. We examined two specific research questions:

1. What are the key course and pedagogical elements that affect students' intellectual, social, civic, and personal learning outcomes from service-learning?

2. Do the identified elements have uniform impacts across different types of service-learning outcomes? Which of the elements has a relatively higher impact, and which of them has a relatively lower impact on each of the outcomes?

Methods

Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in a large public comprehensive university in Hong Kong. It was funded by the university as part of an institutional research project to study students' learning outcomes from service-learning. The proposal for the study was reviewed and approved by the university's ethics committee (which oversees all research involving human or animal subjects), and the investigators were given permission and access to the target participants, who

were 2,880 students enrolled in 55 credit-bearing service-learning courses completed in the 2014–15 academic year.

The 55 courses cover a diversity of class sizes, discipline topics, and types of projects. Each course carries 3 credits. For reference, each student normally takes 15 credits in a semester, with 2 semesters in an academic year.

Since the students hail from all departments, and the service-learning courses are offered by different academic departments across the university, the data exhibits a large diversity in many aspects:

- The discipline areas of the service-learning subjects include engineering, languages, fashion design, tourism, social work, public health, and others.
- The service projects vary widely in nature:
  - instruction-based projects that organize workshops or activities for children and adults;
  - service-based projects that build assistive devices, codesign clothes, perform consultancy services for social enterprises, or identify good farming practices; and
  - advocacy-based projects such as indirect service projects that investigate social topics such as urban planning or accessibility.
- The service beneficiaries include children, people recovering from mental illnesses, residents of slum housing, rural village dwellers, and organizations such as social enterprises.
- The majors of the students range from the humanities (language and history), to engineering and construction, to business (accounting and management), to the hard sciences (physics and mathematics), to hospitality and design.
- The ethnicities of the students are predominantly Chinese, though from various subcultures and dialect groups.

A total of 2,214 valid returns were received, making up a response rate of 76.9%. A detailed analysis of the demographic information of the respondents reveals that only 1,158 (52.3%) of them had had some service-related experience before enrolling in the course. In addition, 565 (25.5%) of the respondents indicated that they had taken part in voluntary services at secondary schools, 551 (24.9%) in community service at university, 64 (2.9%) in credit-

bearing service-learning courses at this or other universities, and 278 (12.6%) in other forms of community service.

The service locations were equally diverse. Although 1,650 (74.5%) of the respondents were engaged in service projects in Hong Kong, the home environment for most of the students, 533 (24.1%) performed service in the Chinese Mainland, in which the culture is similar but the environment and dialect unfamiliar, and 138 (6.2%) participated in international service projects, with an unfamiliar culture, environment, and language. In terms of time, 935 (42.2%) of the respondents indicated having spent 36–45 hours in direct service or contact with clients, which is the level of service engagement expected of all service-learning courses at the university. Four hundred nineteen (18.9%) of the respondents reported having engaged in direct service for more than 45 hours, whereas 766 (34.6%) indicated that they spent less than 36 hours on direct service with clients.

Instruments

The Student Post-Experience Questionnaire was developed by the research team, with reference to the literature reviewed and the specific contexts in which the service-learning subjects and projects were implemented at the university. The questionnaire included, among other things, the following three sets of questions:

- questions asking students to rate, on a seven-point scale (1 = very little; 4 = a fair amount; 7 = very much), their attainment of the intended learning outcomes relating to their intellectual (four items), social (two items), and civic (five items) development as a result of attending the service-learning course;
- questions inviting students to indicate their experience, on a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 4 = neutral; 7 = strongly agree), regarding 17 course and pedagogical elements of the service-learning course; and
- questions aiming to collect demographic information about the respondents, including their previous service-related experience, location of the service-learning project, and the total number of hours of direct service or interaction with clients.

Content and face validity of the instrument was established by a review of a three-member panel of experienced service-learning teachers and researchers. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to examine the construct validity of the

multiple-item scales. Results show that the instrument is reasonably valid, with all of the fit indices meeting the criteria for goodness of fit (CFI = 0.973, TLI = 0.9564, NFI = 0.971, RMSEA = 0.073).

Administration

The questionnaire was administered in class by the course instructor or staff from the Office of Service-Learning after the completion of the service-learning project. The purpose of the survey was explained to the students, with the assurance that their response would not affect their assessment grades. Students were given 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire and asked to return it immediately afterward. Absentees were followed up at least twice by e-mail invitations and urged to complete and return the questionnaire via e-mail.

Data Analysis Method

Data were analyzed using SPSS Version 24 software. Descriptive statistics of all variables included in the study were first calculated. Pearson's product-moment correlations were then computed to examine the relationships among the pedagogical elements and students' attainment of intellectual, social, civic, and personal learning outcomes from service-learning. To determine the relative contribution of the individual pedagogical elements to different student learning outcomes, a series of multiple linear regressions was performed with each of the student learning outcomes as the dependent variable and students' ratings on the 17 course and pedagogical elements of the service-learning course as the independent variables, using the forward selection method. The standardized regression coefficients (beta) were then computed and compared.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

As shown in Table 1, the intellectual (INTELL), social (SOCIAL), and civic (CIVIC) learning outcomes scales were found to be highly reliable, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging between .855 and .901. Furthermore, respondents as a whole reported substantial learning gains as a result of studying the service-learning courses. Among the three outcomes, SOCIAL has the highest mean (5.63 on a 7-point scale), whereas INTELL has the lowest (5.40), which is still significantly higher than the midpoint of 4 (a fair

amount). The standard deviations of the scores ranged from 0.90 to 0.96.

Students' ratings on the course and pedagogical elements were also quite positive, with the mean scores of the items ranging from 4.85 to 5.71. Students rated the following four features of the courses highest: "student effort in service" (EFFORT), "motivated and supportive teammates" (TEAM), "good personal relationship with teammates" (PEER_REL), and "regular reflection" (REG_REFLECT), with respective means of 5.71, 5.69, 5.68, and 5.68. On the other hand, the items on "interest in service-learning subject/project" (INTEREST) and "service related to major" (MAJOR) received relatively lower ratings, with a mean of 4.90 and 4.85 respectively. When compared with the ratings on outcomes, a slightly larger spread was observed in students' ratings on the course and pedagogical elements, with standard deviations ranging from 0.96 to 1.52.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variables Included in the Study	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha
Learning Outcomes							
Intellectual (INTELL)	2197	1.0	7.0	5.40	0.90	4	.895
Social (SOCIAL)	2207	1.0	7.0	5.63	0.96	2	.855
Civic (CIVIC)	2206	1.0	7.0	5.46	0.90	5	.901
Pedagogical Features of Service-Learning Course							
Interest in service-learning subject/project (INTEREST)	2209	1.0	7.0	4.90	1.21	1	--
Service related to major (MAJOR)	2210	1.0	7.0	4.85	1.52	1	--
Perceived benefits to people served (BENEFIT)	2207	1.0	7.0	5.53	1.02	1	--
Service appreciated by community (COM_APPREC)	2207	1.0	7.0	5.55	0.98	1	--
Instructor enthusiasm and passion (INS_PASSION)	2210	1.0	7.0	5.58	1.12	1	--

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (continued)

Variables Included in the Study	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha
Preparing students for service (PREPARE)	2209	1.0	7.0	5.45	1.14	1	--
Interaction with teachers, tutors, and teammates (INTERACT)	2210	1.0	7.0	5.49	1.04	1	--
Help and support available when needed (SUPPORT)	2210	1.0	7.0	5.55	1.05	1	--
Motivated and supportive teammates (TEAM)	2208	1.0	7.0	5.69	1.10	1	--
Good personal relationship with teammates (PEER_REL)	2210	1.0	7.0	5.68	1.06	1	--
Interaction with service recipients (INT_CLIENTS)	2210	1.0	7.0	5.55	1.06	1	--
Student autonomy in service tasks (AUTONOMY)	2207	1.0	7.0	5.44	1.06	1	--
Challenging and meaningful tasks (MEANINGFUL_TASK)	2209	1.0	7.0	5.57	1.02	1	--
Challenge students to try new things (CHALLENGE)	2210	1.0	7.0	5.61	1.09	1	--
Student effort in service (EFFORT)	2208	1.0	7.0	5.71	0.98	1	--
Regular reflection (REG_REFLECT)	2209	1.0	7.0	5.68	0.96	1	--
Structured reflection with clear instructions (STRUCTURED_REFLECT)	2206	1.0	7.0	5.40	1.05	1	--

Correlations between course and pedagogical elements and service-learning outcomes. As expected, all of the course and pedagogical elements were found to have a statistically significant positive correlation with all three learning outcomes, albeit to different degrees (Table 2).

The highest correlates of intellectual learning outcomes (INTELL) were

- "challenging and meaningful tasks" (MEANINGFUL_TASK),
- "interaction with teachers, tutors, and teammates" (INTERACT),
- "preparing students for service" (PREPARE),
- "instructor enthusiasm and passion" (INS_PASSION), and
- "perceived benefits to people served" (BENEFIT).

Social learning outcomes (SOCIAL), on the other hand, were more strongly associated with

- "good personal relationship with teammates" (PEER_REL),
- "motivated and supportive teammates" (TEAM),
- "service appreciated by community" (COM_APPREC),
- "challenging and meaningful tasks" (MEANINGFUL_TASK), and
- "perceived benefits to people served" (BENEFIT).

Civic learning outcomes (CIVIC) had the strongest correlations with

- "challenging and meaningful tasks" (MEANINGFUL_TASK),
- "perceived benefits to people served" (BENEFIT),
- "service appreciated by community" (COM_APPREC),
- "interaction with teachers, tutors, and teammates" (INTERACT), and
- "instructor enthusiasm and passion" (INS_PASSION).

Table 2. Correlations Between Course and Pedagogical Elements and Service-Learning Outcomes

Course and Pedagogical Elements	Service-Learning Outcomes		
	INTELL	SOCIAL	CIVIC
Interest in service-learning subject/ project (INTEREST)	.512**	.427**	.534**
Service related to Mmajor (MAJOR)	.310**	.228**	.301**
Perceived benefits to people served (BENEFIT)	**.574****	**.558****	**.591****
Service appreciated by community (COM_APPREC)	.570**	**.571****	**.582****
Instructor enthusiasm and passion (INS_PASSION)	**.582****	.553**	**.570****
Preparing students for service (PREPARE)	**.586****	.532**	.556**
Interaction with teachers, tutors, and teammates (INTERACT)	**.589****	.539**	**.581****
Help and support available when needed (SUPPORT)	.562**	.523**	.540**
Motivated and supportive teammates (TEAM)	.517**	**.606****	.517**
Good personal relationship with teammates (PEER_REL)	.506**	**.626****	.524**
Interaction with service recipients (INT_CLIENTS)	.520**	.530**	.513**
Student autonomy in service tasks (AUTONOMY)	.458**	.444**	.433**
Challenging and meaningful tasks (MEANINGFUL_TASK)	**.615****	**.559****	**.613****
Challenge students to try new things (CHALLENGE)	.545**	.508**	.535**
Student effort in service (EFFORT)	.557**	.555**	.565**
Regular reflection (REG_REFLECT)	.509**	.500**	.514**
Structured reflection with clear instructions (STRUCTURED_REFLECT)	.548**	.497**	.534**

Note. ****** $p < .001$. The top five correlation coefficients for each outcome were put in bold print and underlined.

Relative impact of course and pedagogical elements on service-learning outcomes. The correlations reported above, although useful in revealing the direction and strength of association between pairs of variables, did not control for their possible

covariations with other variables included in the study. To determine the relative contribution of the multiple pedagogical features to different student learning outcomes, a series of multiple linear regressions was performed. Results are shown in Tables 3–5 below.

   Intellectual learning. As revealed in Table 3, 11 of the 17 pedagogical features were found to be statistically significant predictors of students' intellectual learning outcomes (INTELL), with beta values ranging from 0.159 to 0.050. The combined effects of the 11 predictors explained 55.1% of the variations in INTELL ($F = 243.531$, $p < .001$). The five strongest predictors were

- "preparing student for service" (PREPARE),
- "challenging and meaningful tasks" (MEANINGFUL_TASK),
- "interest in service-learning subject/project" (INTEREST),
- "service appreciated by community" (COM_APPREC), and
- "structured reflection with clear instructions" (STRUCTURED_REFLECT).

The tolerance statistics were all above 0.2, suggesting that there was no evidence of multicollinearity problems among the predictor variables *(Belsley, Kuh, & Welsch, 1980)*.

Table 3. Multiple Regression of Students' Intellectual Learning Outcome on Course and Pedagogical Elements of Service-Learning Course

Independent Variables	Stand. Regr. Coefficient (Beta)	Sig.	Tolerance
Preparing students for service (PREPARE)	.159	$p < .001$	.500
Challenging and meaningful tasks (MEANINGFUL_TASK)	.154	$p < .001$	.407
Interest in service-learning subject/ project (INTEREST)	.149	$p < .001$	.658
Service appreciated by community (COM_APPREC)	.092	$p < .001$	.442
Structured reflection with clear instructions (STRUCTURED_REFLECT)	.081	$p < .001$	.520
Challenge students to try new things (CHALLENGE)	.078	$p < .001$	.510
Student effort in service (EFFORT)	.072	$p = .001$	.447
Perceived benefits to people served (BENEFIT)	.066	$p = .002$	.456
Interaction with service recipients (INT_CLIENTS)	.059	$p = .003$	.530
Service related to major (MAJOR)	.056	$p < .001$	.847
Student autonomy in service tasks (AUTONOMY)	.050	$p = .006$	.621

Note. Dependent variable = Intellectual Learning Outcome (INTELL), Method = Forward, Adjusted R^2 = .551; F = 243.531, $p < .001$

Social learning. Ten of the 17 pedagogical features were found to be significant predictors of students' social learning outcome (SOCIAL) from service-learning (Table 4). The beta values ranged from 0.230 to 0.054. Their combined effect accounted for 54% of the variations in the dependent variables ($F = 255.049$, $p < .001$). The five elements that had the strongest impact on this outcome were

- "good personal relationship with teammates" (PEER_REL),
- "motivated and supportive teammates" (TEAM),
- "preparing students for service" (PREPARE),
- "interest in service-learning subject/project" (INTEREST), and
- "interaction with service recipients" (INT_CLIENTS).

Table 4. Multiple Regression of Students' Social Learning Outcome on Course and Pedagogical Elements of Service-Learning Course

Independent Variables	Stand. Regr. Coefficient (Beta)	Sig.	Tolerance
Good personal relationship with teammates (PEER_REL)	.230	$p < .001$	.426
Motivated and supportive teammates (TEAM)	.162	$p < .001$	.446
Preparing students for service (PREPARE)	.084	$p < .001$	.479
Interest in service-learning subject/ project (INTEREST)	.079	$p < .001$	.672
Interaction with service recipients (INT_CLIENTS)	.075	$p < .001$	.519
Student effort in service (EFFORT)	.074	$p = .001$	.454
Service appreciated by community (COM_APPREC)	.071	$p = .001$	.431
Perceived benefits to people served (BENEFIT)	.069	$p = .001$	.448
Challenging and meaningful tasks (MEANINGFUL_TASK)	.056	$p = .013$	.422
Structured reflection with clear instructions (STRUCTURED_REFLECT)	.054	$p = .006$	.537

Note. Dependent variable = Social Learning Outcome (SOCIAL), Method = Forward, Adjusted R^2 = .540; F = 255.049, $p < .001$

Civic learning. Table 5 reveals that 11 of the 17 pedagogical features were statistically significant in predicting students' civic learning outcome (CIVIC) from service-learning, with beta values ranging between 0.184 and 0.039. Together, they explained 55.3% of the variations in CIVIC (F = 226.561, $p < .001$). The following five elements have been found to have the strongest predictive value on students' civic learning outcome:

- "interest in service-learning subject/project" (INTEREST),
- "challenging and meaningful tasks" (MEANINGFUL_TASK),
- "service appreciated by community" (COM_APPREC),
- "perceived benefits to people served" (BENEFIT), and
- "preparing students for service" (PREPARE).

Table 5. Multiple Regression of Students' Civic Learning Outcome on Course and Pedagogical Elements of Service-Learning Course

Independent Variables	Stand. Regr. Coefficient (Beta)	Sig.	Tolerance
Interest in service-learning subject/project (INTEREST)	.184	$p < .001$	.655
Challenging and meaningful tasks (MEANINGFUL_TASK)	.148	$p < .001$	.399
Service appreciated by community (COM_APPREC)	.115	$p < .001$	.428
Perceived benefits to people served (BENEFIT)	.109	$p < .001$	.453
Preparing students for service (PREPARE)	.083	$p < .001$	.476
Student effort in service (EFFORT)	.082	$p < .001$	.440
Good personal relationship with teammates (PEER_REL)	.060	$p = .003$	.490
Structured reflection with clear instructions (STRUCTURED_REFLECT)	.056	$p = .006$	.502
Challenge students to try new things (CHALLENGE)	.048	$p = .019$	.483
Interaction with service recipients (INT_CLIENTS)	.040	$p = .042$	.526
Service related to major (MAJOR)	.039	$p = .014$	.826

Note. Dependent variable = Civic Learning Outcome (CIVIC), Method = Forward, Adjusted $R^2 = .553$; $F = 226.561$, $p < .001$

Discussion and Conclusions

Table 6 summarizes the relative impact of the key course and pedagogical elements that influence students' intellectual, social, and civic learning outcomes from service-learning. Taken as a whole, the results show that (a) students' learning outcomes from service-learning are influenced simultaneously by a multitude of course and pedagogical elements, with some having more impact than others; and (b) the relative impacts of the different elements are not uniform across different service-learning outcomes. In other words, a certain element may have a strong relative impact on one outcome but low or no impact on another.

Table 6. Summary of Relative Impact of Course and Pedagogical Elements on Service-Learning Outcomes

Course and Pedagogical Elements	Service-Learning Outcomes		
	INTELL	SOCIAL	CIVIC
Interest in service-learning subject/project (INTEREST)	• •	•	• •
Service related to major (MAJOR)	•	ns	•
Perceived benefits to people served (BENEFIT)	•	•	• •
Service appreciated by community (COM_APPREC)	•	•	• •
Instructor enthusiasm and passion (INS_PASSION)	ns	ns	ns
Preparing students for service (PREPARE)	• •	•	•
Interaction with teachers, tutors, and teammates (INTERACT)	ns	ns	ns
Help and support available when needed (SUPPORT)	ns	ns	ns
Motivated and supportive teammates (TEAM)	ns	• •	ns
Good personal relationship with teammates (PEER_REL)	ns	• • •	•
Interaction with service recipients (INT_CLIENTS)	•	•	•
Student autonomy in service tasks (AUTONOMY)	•	ns	ns
Challenging and meaningful tasks (MEANINGFUL_TASK)	• •	•	• •
Challenge students to try new things (CHALLENGE)	•	ns	•
Student effort in service (EFFORT)	•	•	•
Regular reflection (REG_REFLECT)	ns	ns	ns
Structured reflection with clear instructions (STRUCTURED_REFLECT)	•	•	•

Note. • Beta < .10; • • .10 < Beta < .20; • • • Beta > .20; ns: not statistically significant

A closer examination of the results reveals 13 course and pedagogical elements that are significantly associated with at least one of the three service-learning outcomes included in the study. Eight elements have a significant predictive value on all three student learning outcomes:

- "challenging and meaningful tasks" (MEANINGFUL_TASK),
- "interest in service-learning subject/project" (INTEREST),

- "perceived benefits to people served" (BENEFIT),
- "service appreciated by community" (COM_APPREC),
- "preparing students for service" (PREPARE),
- "student effort in service" (EFFORT),
- "interaction with service recipients" (INT_CLIENTS), and
- "structured reflection with clear instructions" (STRUCTURED_REFLECT).

Three of the features have significant impact on two of the three outcomes:

- "challenge students to try new things" (CHALLENGE) was found to associate significantly with students' intellectual and civic learning outcomes;
- "good personal relationship with teammates" (PEER_REL) had a particularly strong impact on students' social development but a much lower impact on their civic development; and
- "service related to major" (MAJOR), on the other hand, was found to associate with both intellectual and civic development of the students.

One feature, "motivated and supportive teammates" (TEAM), had a significant impact only on students' social outcome.

These results are broadly consistent with previous research (e.g., *Astin et al., 2000; Billig et al., 2005; Celio et al., 2011; Largent, 2009; Mabry, 1998; Moely and Ilustre, 2014*). Findings reflecting the most impactful practices in achieving each of the intended service-learning outcomes include the following:

- Students' intellectual outcomes were most strongly influenced by "preparing students for service" (PREPARE), "challenging and meaningful tasks" (MEANINGFUL_TASK), and "interest in service-learning subject/project" (INTEREST).
- Students' social outcomes, on the other hand, were most strongly associated with "good personal relationship with teammates" (PEER_REL) and "motivated and supportive teammates" (TEAM).
- Students' civic outcomes were found to relate most strongly to "interest in service-learning subject/project" (INTEREST), "challenging and meaningful tasks" (MEANINGFUL_TASK), "service appreciated by community" (COM_APPREC), and "perceived benefits to people served" (BENEFIT).

It should be noted that even though four of the pedagogical features included in the study—"instructor enthusiasm and passion" (INS_PASSION), "interaction with teachers, tutors, and teammates" (INTERACT), "help and support available when needed" (SUPPORT), and "regular reflection" (REG_REFLECT)—have no statistically significant independent effect on any of the service-learning outcomes, this does not imply that they are unimportant to learning. It may only mean that their impact has been manifested in or subsumed under other factors and thus for statistical purposes diminished after controlling for the effects of the other elements included in the study. For example, enthusiastic and passionate instructors are more likely to design a challenging and meaningful project that would result in tangible benefits to the community and thus receive appreciation from the people served; preparing students for service would clearly involve providing students with help and support when needed, which would involve interaction with teachers, tutors, and other teammates; and structured reflection with clear instructions would obviously imply regular reflection.

Interestingly, some of the elements that are conventionally regarded as critical for successful service-learning do not show up as statistically significant in our study. For example, "student autonomy in service tasks" (AUTONOMY), which is linked to "youth voice in selecting, designing, implementing, and evaluating service-learning projects" does not show up as a statistically significant independent factor in service-learning, nor is it one of the top five correlates for any of the service-learning outcomes. "Service related to major" (MAJOR) also does not seem to be an impactful factor—in fact, it is no more highly correlated than "challenge students to try new things" (CHALLENGE), which in many cases involves scenarios that bring students outside contexts and topics that they are familiar with (i.e., their major discipline).

There is also a match between our findings and previous work on character development. In contrast to conventional academic courses that mainly aim to develop students' cognitive skills, service-learning is often considered to be relevant to the development of the students' character. We find that our results significantly resemble recent research on the nature of "grit" from Duckworth *(2017)*. Although grit is strongly associated with outstanding achievement, grit itself is associated with four assets: interest (intrinsically enjoying what one does), capacity to practice (persevering in trying to do things better), purpose (conviction that one's work matters to other people), and hope (rising to the occasion type of perseverance). It is interesting and encouraging to note that

the six elements that we found to have a significant predictive value on all four student learning outcomes are highly correlated with three of the four assets identified by Duckworth.

- "Interest" in our study is obviously related to Duckworth's interest.
- "Challenging and meaningful tasks," "interaction with service clients," and, most of all, "perceived benefits to people served" are related to purpose.
- "Preparing students" and "student effort" are somewhat related to capacity to practice.

The apparent match is indicative that service-learning, as studied in this project, is consistent with the development of character conducive to the achievement of success.

Although we should not overgeneralize from one single case, results of the present study do provide some empirical support for the following practices in designing and implementing a service-learning program to maximize student learning across different service-learning outcomes:

- *Involve students in challenging tasks.* It is not sufficient just to send students out to do some voluntary service or charity work, however needed or meaningful. It is important to involve them in *challenging* tasks that require them to apply the knowledge and skills they acquire in the classroom to deal with *complex* problems in the service setting. Moreover, if the emphasis is on students' intellectual and civic development (the latter arguably *the* key objective of service-learning), we should also challenge students to move outside their comfort zone and try things that they have never tried before, including things that have little to do with their academic major.

- *Design meaningful services that meet genuine community needs.* The service to be performed must be readily perceived by students as something meaningful that will bring about real benefits to the community or the people they serve. Students will work harder and learn better if they believe that they are making a real difference to others through their service and can readily feel that their service is valued and appreciated by the community.

- *Prepare students well for the service.* Students need to understand the community and clients they serve, including their needs and the challenges they are facing. They also need to be equipped with the necessary knowledge and

skills for designing and implementing the service to meet the identified needs of the community and learn from the experience.

- *Engage students, as far as possible, in direct interaction with the service recipients, particularly for indirect services.* It is very difficult to develop empathy "at arms' length." Direct interaction with the service recipients helps to reinforce students' understanding of social issues and problems, develop their empathy for people in need, and provide direct feedback on the value and effectiveness of the service they provide.

- *Motivate students to invest time and effort in planning and conducting the service in a serious manner.* Research has shown that students need to have a sufficiently long service duration and deep enough experience for the learning to endure *(Billig et al., 2005)*. Students who do not have the heart for service and put in only minimal effort, or are allowed to get away with minimal effort, will not gain much from their experience.

- *Provide a wide range of service-learning subjects and projects* to suit different student interests and meet different community needs, and allow students choices, as far as possible, to select the ones that match their interests and aspirations.

- *Help students engage in critical deep reflections* on their service-learning experience through structured reflection tasks with clear instructions.

Service-learning teachers should also note that different course and pedagogical elements may have differential effects on different service-learning outcomes. For example, students' civic outcomes are most influenced by their perception of the benefits of the service, their feeling that their service was appreciated by the community, their engagement in challenging and meaningful tasks, and their interest in the service-learning subject or project. Their social outcomes, however, are more strongly associated with their developing a good personal relationship with teammates and having a motivated and supportive team. Teachers should take note of the most influential elements and design their programs accordingly with reference to the particular intended learning outcomes.

It should be stressed that the study has a number of limitations. First, the use of a home-grown instrument and the single-item approach adopted to measure the curriculum and pedagogical

factors may raise some doubts about the reliability and validity of the results, though the study sample is large. Second, all the measures used in the study were based on students' self-reported data. Future studies should include or triangulate the results with more authentic or direct measures of the process and student outcomes from service-learning. Third, the study was basically correlational research. It must be remembered that correlation is not causation; findings from this study alone are not conclusive proof of cause and effect. Fourth, all the participants came from a single university in Hong Kong, thus the generalizability of the findings to other contexts should be treated with caution. Finally, the large number of independent variables made it impracticable to examine the interactive effects of the factors influencing different service-learning outcomes. Future studies might look more deeply into how those factors might interact with each other in affecting students' learning.

Acknowledgments

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Comparing Graduate Student Civic Engagement Outcomes in Chile Among Private For-Profit and Public Universities

Lisa R. Brown

Abstract

This mixed-methods research examined civic engagement in Chilean public and private for-profit universities and its representation among study volunteers. Focus groups of graduate students along with in-person interviews with university administrators were conducted. The study also used an online survey, which was completed by 202 participants who had at minimum completed their *título* (first university degree). The mean age of participants was 32.5 with a standard deviation of 7.1 years. The theoretical framework in this study, spiral dynamic theory (SDT), helped guide the research as data was organized by worldview categories. Findings were that civic engagement, broadly conceptualized, was not well integrated into the Chilean higher education mission. Additionally, the key civic engagement study variables were statistically lower among the participants within the for-profit university environments. Participants also evidenced more higher order thinking and individualism at the for-profit universities based on the SDT memetic indicator classifications.

Keywords: Adult education, civic engagement, Chile, international for-profit graduate education, memetics, spiral dynamic theory

Introduction

What long-term implications and purposes undergird the pursuit of 21st-century civic engagement learning in for-profit higher education? Can any international metrics *(NCES, 2012)* that capture such learning be applied in the United States? Are there means to predict possible civic engagement outcomes resulting from entrepreneurial for-profit graduate education? The purpose of this research was to answer those questions and more, taking into account formal university approaches to student civic engagement learning as foundational core curriculum. This research focused on individuals who had been primarily educated in Chile and had completed their *título*, or first university degree. In Chile, holders of a university degree are called *post-graduado* or, in English, *postgraduates*, and that term is used

for these individuals throughout this article. Examples of the civic engagement activities examined in this research included participation in political demonstrations or protests, voting in student elections, engagement in community volunteering, and discussing politics with family members.

Historical Background of For-Profit Higher Education in Chile

Universities in Chile are looking to the United States as a model in their plans to integrate civic engagement and service-learning more formally into their higher education curricula *(Appe, Rubaii, Líppez-De Castro, & Capobianco, 2017; Fitzgerald, Bruns, Sonka, Furco, & Swanson, 2016; Saltmarsh, 1996; Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011)*. However, given Chile's over-40-year history in the implementation and operation of for-profit universities—via the national privatization of its education systems as constitutional law under Dictator Augusto Pinochet—the proliferation of private for-profit higher education in the United States gives ample room for benefits from assessment of benchmarks within the Chilean system. More specifically, research on graduate student civic engagement within the context of for-profit higher education in Chile is crucial to the identification of probable civic consciousness development among the U.S. matriculates enrolled in public and private for-profit university study. Therefore, in this research, Chile served as a prototype case of a nation negotiating the challenges and complexities of market-based universities and was well positioned to offer insights into the long-term civic engagement outcomes of graduate students who had attended for-profit institutions of higher education.

In March of 1990, the Pinochet dictatorship introduced the Constitutional Organic Law on Education (LOCE), which opened the door to free-market education policies more generally, but especially to the emergence of private for-profit universities *(Bernasconi, 2005; Pérez, 2012; Valverde, 2004)*. In Chile, it is illegal for universities that obtain direct public funding from the state to operate as profiteering educational institutions *(UNESCO, 2014)*. Nevertheless, there was mounting concern among Chilean citizenry—especially university students—that privatized universities in Chile had in fact engaged in profiteering *(Gibney, 2012)*, and such practices served as the catalyst for the emergence of the anti-for-profit-education student protest movement dubbed in 2011 the *Chilean Winter (Villalobos-Ruminott, 2012)*.

Due to the rising cost of university study, the majority of Chile's middle- to low-income students finance their higher education through private loans *(André, 2012; Gambi & González, 2013)*. More than 85% of the total higher education cost is borne by Chilean families *(André, 2012)*. Government-subsidized loans and private bank loans introduce resources for financing university study, which the private for-profit educational institutions find attractive. Educational loans cover 75% of the monthly tuition payments, and families are left to make up the difference, which many find burdensome. Moreover, some 40% of Chileans fail to complete their degrees, and those who do graduate struggle to repay loans whose interest rates at private banks can exceed 8% *(André, 2012)*.

The conceptual model (Figure 1) developed for this research displays the financing structure and the role the Chilean government plays (alongside private banks) as a student educational loan provider. It also offers a visual depiction of the proposition that government funding mediates factors of student protests and that being either a public or private for-profit university influences civic engagement outcomes. The conceptual model also indicates that specific spiral dynamic theory (SDT) worldviews served to influence the graduate students' thinking and that such worldviews were being culturally transferred as memes (i.e., human imitations; *Brown, 2016*). All of these variables combine to produce the civic engagement outcomes of graduate students in the Chilean entrepreneurial higher education context.
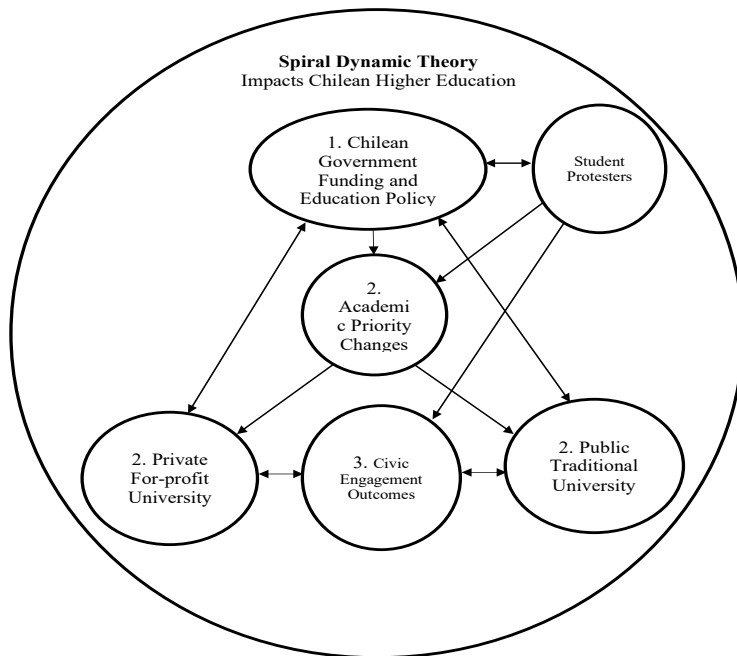
Figure 1. **A graphic depiction of the conceptual model used for the study and how spiral dynamic theory offers a metaframework for the research.**

Spiral Dynamic Theory

As analyzed by Clare Graves *(2005)*, whose research undergirds the spiral dynamic theory (SDT) framework used in this study, adult development occurs within a biopsychosocial system model *(Beck & Cowan, 2006; Brown, 2016; Purdy, 2013)* that incorporates factors of human biology, psychology (thoughts, emotions, and behaviors), and sociology in integral ways, contributing to healthy human function. More specifically, the tripartite health model holds that human well-being is best understood in terms of interconnected relationships, and in this study, memetics helps to further explain those connections.

Memes and Human Imitation

This research introduced the use of memetic science (as a component of SDT) to the study of adult developmental thinking within the context of higher education in order to explicate the phenomenon of civic engagement among postgraduates in Chile. The SDT framework enters the domain of the field of biology by associating processes of *genes* (the natural sciences' genetic inheritance construct) to that of the social science construct termed *memes*—behavioral units of culture that are transferred nongenetically through human imitation *(Beck & Cowan, 2006; Blackmore, 1996, 1998; Dawkins, 1976)*. This research held that civic engagement outcomes within the context of higher education occurred memetically through human beings imitating each other. In the context of this imitation, the meme is subject to the procreative evolutionary processes of replication, variation, and natural selection in order to remain relevant within a social context.

Memes operate and transfer through non-genetic human imitation. Examples of memes include internet images, beliefs, songs, policies, and so on. It is also important to emphasize that memes differ from symbols due specifically to their procreative evolutionary change properties *(Brown, personal communication, March 14, 2018)*. A symbol can become a meme, but a meme is not a simple symbol. Memes are best described metaphorically as the drivers of the mental software represented in each of the 10 unique mnemonically color-coded worldviews represented as part of the two-tiered SDT theoretical framework (Figure 2).

Open-ended System of Value Memes (ᵛMEMEs)
The Spiral Dynamic Theory (SDT) Organizing Principles/Worldviews ©

Tier 2
Being Levels

Integral Wisdom &
Human Insight
The next projected
conceptual level
TEAL (J/W)

The Through Era
Bioengineering and
Futurist Ideas
CORAL (I/V)

Holistic Global
Accepting dichotomies
General life is most
important not individual
TURQUOISE (H/U)

Navigating Complex
Systems
Restoring viability
1st being level
Postmodernism
YELLOW (G/T)

Collectivism
ᵛMEMEs
We/Us/Our
Sacrifice
Self
Themata

Humanistic
Living with
ecosystems
Neo-Moderrnism
GREEN (F/S)

Strategic Materialistic
Conquering the physical
world using manipulation
Positivism
ORANGE (E/R)

Individualism
ᵛMEMEs
I/Me/Mine
Express
Self
Themata

Tier 1
Subsistence
Levels

Purposeful Saintly
Absolutism and
dogmatic order
BLUE(D/Q)

Power Impulsive
Domination & force;
Living with self-
awareness
RED (C/P)

Magical Mystical
World
Safety tribalism and
traditionalism
PURPLE (B/O)

Basic Instinctive
Physiological
imperatives;
Precultural existence
BEIGE (A/N)

Figure 2. **In the SDT dynamic oscillating framework, the lowest order thinking begins at the color beige (A/N) and moves in an upward, zigzag pattern through the open-ended spiral to teal (J/W). Tier 1 represents those ᵛMEME system levels focused on survival through innate sensory abilities and instinct. Tier 2 contains the SDT systems that represent self-awareness, which is reflexive. On Tier 2, one acquires the capacity to imagine multiple future(s) as one begins to cognitively understand and negotiate complex interconnected realities. Copyright 2015 by Brown. Reproduced with permission.**

Deep Value Systems

SDT holds that each person has a tripartite system of surface, hidden, and deep values *(Cowan & Todorovic, 2000)* that operate in conjunction with our unique ways of interpreting, problem-solving, and negotiating our lives based on a unique and dynamic world-view. Each memetic worldview is composed of its own unique set of axiology, epistemology, ontology, and neurological capacities *(Brown, 2016)*. As adults mature, their way of thinking about the world that surrounds them evolves, moving from simplistic to more complex. At the emergence of a new higher level SDT worldview, thinking becomes progressive and evolutionary as one is drawn toward higher order cognition. These 10 evolving SDT worldviews—called ᵛMEMEs where the superscript v denotes the word and concept of values—are the memetic units that represent a unique meta-ontology and deep value system *(Brown, 2016)*. Notably, these worldview constructs can be realized on the individual, organizational, and societal levels.

However, Graves *(2005, 2009)* held that change was not inevitable and that thinking can become static or remain entrenched within a particular worldview. Additionally, in some instances, adult thinking can become regressive, with an individual resorting to a more simplistic prior SDT system of thinking in an effort to resolve an emergent existential problem or conflict. In such cases, the zigzag movement along the hierarchical SDT framework can at times be either forward moving or backward retrenching based on one's readiness to problem-solve.

SDT Worldview Metaconstruct

There are five individualistic *me*-oriented ᵛMEME themata located on the right side of the SDT framework, represented by the colors beige, red, orange, yellow, and coral. On the left side, there are the more self-sacrificial ᵛMEMEs described as the collectivist *we*-oriented themata, represented by the colors purple, blue, green, turquoise, and teal *(Cowan & Todorovic, 2000; Graves, 2005)*. The SDT theoretical framework provided a means to categorize and interpret the diverse and emergent thinking of study participants, which influenced the dependent civic engagement variables in the research. Table 1 offers detailed descriptions of the mnemonically color-coded worldview systems of the SDT framework. Only six of the worldview systems (due to the highly educated nature of the sample) were used for this study.

Table 1. SDT Framework Mnemonically Color-Coded Constructs

PURPLE (B/O) System Tier 1	B/O is the belief in obeying the desires of magical-mystical spirit beings holding to a worldview marked by tribalism and traditionalism. There exists a prevailing imperative to find safety in a dangerous and unpredictable world. Allegiance is shown to group elders, customs, and clans. Sacred objects and spaces, as well as rituals, are held in high status. The locus of control is external and collectivist in nature.
RED (C/P) System Tier 1	C/P is the egocentric memetic worldview often marked by perceptions that *Life is a jungle* where there exist those who are the *haves and the have-nots*. One looks to avoid shame and to defend one's reputation and respect even if it requires deadly force to do so. It is impulsive and often remorseless, as consequences for one's action may or may not come to fruition. The locus of control is internal and individualistic.
BLUE (D/Q) System Tier 1	/Q is the purposeful memetic worldview marked by sacrifice: a need to bring order and stability to a disorderly situation. One relates to notions of guilt and the enforcement of divine principles, holding that people are assigned to their specific place in life. It holds to a belief in a divine truth or moral absolute. More extreme aspects of this meme would require dogmatic obedience while employing paternalistic attempts to bring order to chaos. Rules are to be followed and are nonnegotiable. The locus of control is external and collectivist in nature.
ORANGE (E/R) System Tier 1	E/R is the strategic memetic worldview marked by autonomy and independence in order to seek material gain. This worldview construct searches for the "best solutions," which are often located through science and technological applications. Competition is a prevailing meme aspect within this construct, as is winning. This memetic worldview is cautious not to arouse the suspicions and disfavor of other authorities, holding logic and reasonable certainty for success above a power impulse. The locus of control is internal and individualistic in nature.
GREEN (F/S) System Tier 1	F/S is the relativistic memetic worldview marked by the exploration of the personal inner self in conjunction with the inner self of others. There is a prioritizing of community, unity, and harmony, as a promotion of shared societal resources for the benefit of all is valued. Notions of greed and dogmatic authoritarianism are rejected, as decision-making based upon consensus is promoted. Togetherness, harmony, and acceptance serve to replace the previous stage's scientific logic. Interpretive reality makes space for the metaphysical and one's feelings as analysis tools. The locus of control is external and collectivist in nature.

YELLOW (G/T) System Tier 2	G/T is the systemic memetic worldview marked by functionality, competence, flexibility, and spontaneity that allows for creative thought. There is an imperative to restore order to the chaotic. This worldview produces a more tempered individualism, and better results will always default to the better plan without allegiances to a likely temporal leadership. This meme is described as the Flex-Flow perspective and recognizes the layered dynamics of both the nature of human beings and societies. It is most likely to recognize things as possessing a "both/and" nature and not be bound to a simplistic "either/or" perspective. The locus of control is internal and individualistic in nature.
TURQUOISE (H/U) System Tier 2	H/U is the globalism memetic worldview marked by its ability to easily negotiate complexity and recognize patterns more quickly than those operating under Tier 1 ^vMEME systems. The world is seen as a single dynamic organism with its own mind. Dichotomies are more easily accepted, and this particular worldview uses physics and metaphysics together to explore the problems of life and being *(Dawlabani & Beck, 2013)*. It is a holistic and intuitive way of thinking that is open to notions of spirituality, yet at the same time holding that general life is more important than individual personal life. The locus of control is external and collectivist in nature.

Note. Adapted of Beck & Cowan *(2006)*. Copyright reproduction permission granted by Brown *(2016)*.

Each of the color-coded worldviews on the SDT framework has an associated letter code. Psychologist Clare Graves *(1974)* describes the first letter code of the pair as, "the neurological system in the brain [worldview] upon which the psychological system is based" *(p. 73)*. The second letter represents the set of existential problems that the neurological system is able to cope with. Thus, in the state of the RED C/P worldview system, a person would use a C-type of neurological system in order to solve a P-type of problem. In Table 1 the letter pair symbols are separated by a forward slash. Inherent conflicts exist between types of problem and one's capacity to solve said problem, which makes the SDT framework dynamic and serves to facilitate forward movement along the spiral (or regression when applicable).

It is important to reemphasize that cognitive change along the SDT framework is not inevitable *(Graves, 2005)* and that the SDT framework is an open-ended model of adult development. Figure 2 shows the currently identified color-coded SDT worldviews, but the figure is not suggesting any type of end-stage adult development. There is no peaking of adult maturity and development in SDT. Finally, it is possible for an individual to live out the entirety of their life holding to an outdated and simplistic way of knowing and being in the world *(Graves, 1970, 2005)*. Thus, "if an individual holds simplistic beliefs in the certainty of knowledge, then they will

also hold simplistic beliefs in the simplicity of knowledge" *(Knight & Mattick, 2006, p. 1086)* and as a consequence, the desire for change can remain arrested.

The SDT framework offered this research a unique lens through which to examine the phenomenon of civic engagement in higher education among postgraduate students in conjunction with the complexity of thinking that occurs among maturing adults. Each of the distinct SDT memetic worldview levels—only six of which (red, blue, orange, green, yellow, and turquoise) were used in this research study—is representative of a particular way in which an individual might interpret and respond to his/her own reality and cultural context. Since one research criterion was completion of a university degree, the lower order beige and purple SDT worldview constructs were omitted from this study. The researcher interpreted and classified the dominant SDT [v]MEME expressions that were in operation within the case universities and among the study volunteers in Chile.

Theoretical Advantages

The SDT theoretical framework offered an advantage over other types of adult development frameworks for the study of civic engagement in higher education due to its attention to evolutionary memetic cultural diversity and its open-ended scaffolding of subsuming worldview levels of thinking that become increasingly more complex. When a change occurs along the SDT framework, movement toward the newer worldview becomes more dominant as prior systems begin to become less pronounced.

As movement occurs along the SDT framework, previous [v]MEME systems are retained, integrated, and, in instances of regressive movement, drawn upon when an individual is faced with a new existential problem and the necessary neurology to problem solve has not yet been consolidated. Once enlightenment points are reached and barriers to change are neutralized or removed, then forward movement along the framework toward higher order thinking occurs *(Brown, 2016; Graves, 2005)*. Upward hierarchical movement through the SDT framework happens in a zigzag pattern that oscillates between themata of collectivism and individualism in neighboring worldview systems (Figure 2). Individualistic worldviews (on the right side of the framework) were hypothesized in this study to be more associated with lower civic engagement outcomes than more collectivist worldviews.

Using the SDT framework offers an advantage over traditional adult learning methodologies that compartmentalize or limit adult development by focusing on transformation centered around emotional and spiritual learning *(Mezirow, 1994; Tisdell, 2003)* or from those models based on psychoanalytic theories of personality *(Tummala-Narra, 2015)*. SDT privileges multicultural realities that go beyond traditional Eurocentric models of adult development—where contextual issues are grounded within a normative cultural monolith and timeframe.

Although academe is rich with theories that examine the developmental processes of children and adolescents *(Piaget, 1954)* offering end-stages models of maturity and development *(Erikson, 1959; Maslow, 1948; Vygotsky, 1978)*, there is a paucity of literature on the dynamic thinking of adult graduate students (on topics of civic engagement) and how it changes over time. Moreover, virtually no studies have explored how an evolving social context and expanding worldview impacts the way postgraduates negotiate the phenomenon of civic engagement in higher education. Unlike the adult development theory of critical consciousness offered by Freire *(1985, 1995)* or Erikson's *(1959)* stage theory of role delineation—which focused primarily on adolescents who are moving toward adulthood as they navigate the individualistic (self) identity—SDT introduces memetically emergent open-ended evolving levels of being *(Brown, 2017)* not used in civic engagement higher education research to date.

Interestingly, Kegan *(1982)* offered a concomitant model of adult development to SDT that oscillates between external and internal loci of control and held that self-definition occurs in connection to the surrounding cultural context. The Kegan model also has leveled pathways of cognitive evolution as one advances toward adulthood. However, by contrast, the Kegan *(1982)* stages are grounded in his theory of a subject–object relationship that is negotiated by the adult as she moves within a framework of hierarchical cognitive realities. The Kegan *(1982)* model proved suboptimal for this study of civic engagement in higher education in that it holds to an idealized end-stage of peak adulthood where one achieves a higher form of maturity than others as the person becomes self-authoring. In contrast, SDT holds that the self-authoring stages among adults are multiple, influenced by culture, and reflect an open-ended capacity for continuous lifelong learning and development where there exists no end-stage developmental peaking toward adulthood. Hence, the SDT framework gave an advantage

to this research by offering a never-ending gradient spiral of self-discovery *(Graves, 2005)*.

Methodology

This mixed-methods study investigated civic engagement activities and outcomes among postgraduates in Chilean traditional public and private for-profit universities, interpreting that engagement through spiral dynamic theory (SDT). The research involved an ethnographic cultural immersion experience and used the qualitative research method of content analysis for the transcribed in-person interviews. An online self-administered survey instrument was also used as the quantitative research method for purposes of statistical analysis using SPSS v.21 computer software. The methodology had two phases, and to guide the study the following research questions were posed:

1. In what ways are Chilean public and private for-profit institutions committed to civic engagement education and practices?

2. What are the prevailing SDT [v]MEMEs of Chilean graduate students in public and private for-profit higher education institutions?

3. To what extent is there a relationship between graduate students' personal characteristics and civic engagement outcomes?

4. Is there a relationship between institutional type and graduate students' civic engagement outcomes?

In Phase 1, focus groups were conducted with Chilean graduate students (and working professionals with master's degrees) at one traditional public university (TPU) and one private for-profit university (PFPU). Patton *(2015)* highlights the strength of focus groups as a means to identify major themes. In-person interviews were also conducted with a high-level administrator at each of these institutions. The administrator at the PFPU held a Ph.D., and the one at the TPU was in doctoral candidacy. Table 2 is provided below in order to facilitate understanding of abbreviations used throughout this article.

Table 2. Summary of Acronyms and Abbreviations Used in this Article

Term	Description
CE	Civic Engagement
CRUCH	The Council of Rectors of Chilean Universities (Consejo de Rectores de las Universidades Chilenas)
PFPU	Private For-Profit Chilean University
TPU	Traditional Chilean Public University
SDT	Spiral Dynamic Theory
Mixed	Private not-for-profit Chilean University
ᵛMEME	Value Memes (superscripted v) are the unique identifiers used to describe each of the color-coded worldview constructs represented on the SDT framework.

Study participants were observed over several months through repeated contacts with these individuals and field notes maintained through webpage blogging. Microanalysis of the transcribed text helped to enhance the identification of institutional civic engagement themes, and the audio- and video-recorded focus group discussions served to facilitate the identification of the SDT worldview thinking among the study participants. Phase 2 of this mixed-methods research was quantitative and involved the administration of an online psychometric survey instrument designed to capture the civic engagement and SDT variables.

Because this dissertation study was conducted under the authority of the University of Georgia Adult Education program, participation was restricted to adults 25 years or older who were not undergraduates. The study thus initially targeted graduate students. Those who participated in the focus group discussions of Phase 1 were over the age of 25 and had obtained a master's degree or were enrolled in a graduate degree program. In Phase 2, however, the initial response rate for graduate students taking the survey was unsatisfactory. Criteria for inclusion in the survey therefore were expanded to include Chilean university students who had completed their first degree (*título*). Survey respondents thus included adults who were graduate students and those who were simply working adults holding a *título*. Those without a degree were excluded from the survey via a qualifying question at the beginning of the self-administered online instrument.

Research Protocols and Data Collection

Development of the interview question protocols occurred in two stages. Questions were developed in consultation with a faculty

expert in qualitative research in order to obtain deep and descriptive feedback from study volunteers. Next, the interview protocols in both English and Spanish were registered and approved by the campus Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Survey development. The quantitative survey instrument was also developed in English and Spanish for implementation in a test pilot with Chilean focus group members. The psychometric researcher-developed online survey instrument was initially created and tested in the United States with *(Brown, 2016)* Spanish-speaking graduate students and other adult working professionals who all held college degrees. In fall semester 2013, the test pilot of both the English and Spanish versions of the survey was conducted in Chile. Subsequently, some of the survey items were modified, and the instrument was resubmitted for IRB modification approval, which was granted on April 24, 2014. The finalized Spanish version of the survey was then fully implemented in Chile during Phase 2 of the research design.

Sampling and Demographics

Graduate student volunteers for the focus groups were recruited through referral sampling by classroom professors, academic deans, and flyers that were distributed on campus. The focus groups included two females, ages 28 and 65, and six males, ages 35 to 44. Four focus group members had already obtained their master's degrees, and two others were graduate students in the first year of their academic programs. The discussion sessions were conducted on campus at each of the two separate university sites selected through convenience sampling. Purposeful sampling was used to select the two high-level university administrators who provided in-person interviews with the researcher. The university administrators in the study were male, and their age information was not collected.

Phase 1: University site selection. Selection of the two university sites in the qualitative Phase 1 portion of the study was accomplished using convenience sampling *(Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016)*. The sites were identified based on researcher conversations with key local informants. The two institutions that met the study criteria of being either a TPU or PFPU were both located in the same city in south-central Chile, which reduced travel time needed to conduct interviews. Cold calls that led to scheduled meetings with university staff allowed the researcher to gain access to the study's focus group volunteers and in-person interviewees.

Initially, a PFPU in Santiago agreed to be in the study but later withdrew after its parent company in the United States objected to the institution's involvement in the research. The TPU selected in Phase 1 of the study was a member of Consejo de Rectores de las Universidades Chilenas (CRUCH), the country's oldest organization of national public universities, which was established in 1954. It is important to mention that CRUCH membership was not available to any PFPUs in the country due to their entrepreneurial status. Exclusion from membership in CRUCH served as the condition for identifying and separating private for-profit university groupings in this study.

Concurrent mixed-methods qualitative data collection. Graduate students and administrators were asked to respond to semistructured civic engagement question protocols in Phase 1 of the research. The graduate students also completed prediscussion focus group demographic profile forms where they self-assessed their own civic engagement levels using a Likert-type scale. The graduate students provided information such as annual family income, enrollment status, and political affiliation. Focus group members were given the study's civic engagement definition on their profile form document. At the close of the focus group sessions, all members were again asked to self-evaluate their civic engagement activities as having increased or decreased since they had begun their graduate studies. At the close of discussions, each focus group member self-selected an attribute that was coded either I for increased civic engagement or D for decreased civic engagement. Civic engagement attributes were recorded for each focus group member.

Phase 2: Selected survey sites. Analysis of survey data revealed a third type of university, a hybrid (mixed) private not-for-profit. The hybrid university in this study held membership in CRUCH. Therefore, that particular institution was labeled as a mixed not-for-profit university type in Phase 2 of the research. The country of Chile is divided into 15 metropolitan regions. Twenty-one out of the 25 traditional public universities (TPU) in these regions offer graduate degree programs and were members of CRUCH. The researcher attempted to recruit all 21 of the TPUs for participation in the survey by placing cold calls and sending out e-mail requests to university administrators, data coordinators, and faculty members. Out of the 21 TPUs who met the study criteria of being not-for-profit, 13 agreed to participate in the survey.

A modified simple random sample *(Flynn, Tremblay, Rehm, & Wells, 2013)* process was used to recruit survey participants. The

sampling approach was challenging, since there was no national umbrella member organization for PFPUs in Chile. Therefore, the exact number of PFPUs available for the study was unknown. Nevertheless, the researcher located an online listing of PFPUs in Chile and proceeded with making cold calls and e-mail contacts in order to recruit participants from among the PFPU populations that advertised graduate degree program offerings. Additionally, review of the PFPU websites (not all were publicly accessible) revealed that many universities of this type were under the authority of private investors and not the national minister of education. It is important to reiterate that the PFPUs in Chile were not eligible to receive *direct university funding* from the Chilean government due to their entrepreneurial status.

Out of the 61 PFPUs identified from the website and recruited for participation in this study, a total of 14 institutions agreed to take part in the survey. Snowball sampling *(Emerson, 2015)* was also used in the recruitment of survey volunteers as participants were asked to share the survey hyperlink with qualifying classmates, friends, and associates. In total, the online survey instrument was sent out by the researcher to over 3,236 potential volunteers at 61 different private for-profit universities (PFPUs), 21 traditional public universities (TPUs), and one mixed private not-for-profit university. Among those university officials who offered the researcher electronic mailing lists, some of the e-mail addresses were invalid, thus invitations were returned electronically as undeliverable. An accurate response rate was difficult to calculate because undeliverable surveys were not separately tracked in relation to the successful deliveries.

Completed surveys were received from 104 respondents at the traditional public universities (TPU), 60 from the private for-profit universities (PFPU), and 38 from the mixed not-for-profit university for a total of 202 completed online surveys. There were no missing data on the survey, as it was structured to advance only after a response was recorded. The researcher met the study goal of collecting 202 completed surveys in accordance with Pearson's power chart sampling criteria standard of $\beta = .80$ power for studies with two to eight groups *(Feldt & Mahmoud, 1958; Keppel & Wickens, 2004)*.

Attention was given to the recruitment of comparable numbers by gender because it served to promote diversity of perspective among self-identified male and female survey respondents. Age homogeneity was also an important demographic factor, as it enabled the researcher to collect a sample from a domain of mature

adults with a mean sample age of 32.5 and standard deviation of 7.1 among the postgraduates.

Data Analysis

Focus group and in-person interviews were professionally transcribed and then interpretively coded by the researcher, who organized the clusters of SDT worldview thinking based on participant responses to the question protocols. Data mined from the interview transcripts using a discourse analysis approach *(Wodak & Meyer, 2009; Ziegler, Paulus, & Woodside, 2014)* were placed in thematic categories based on the mnemonically color-coded SDT ᵛMEME. Categorized responses were organized by patterns and given an attribution code *(Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014)* that represented the specific SDT ᵛMEME worldview thinking (see Figure 2).

In consideration of data security and participant anonymity, the researcher adopted pseudonyms for the participants named in Phase 1 of the study. The names were derived from the television program The Simpsons due to the discovery that it was one of the most popular TV programs in Chile and most of Latin America.

Qualitative Data Display Matrices

Display matrices are a recommended technique for setting qualitative data in defined columns and rows in order to enhance observational value *(Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014)*. The researcher was attentive to the flow and consistency of expressed thinking (i.e., worldviews) in Phase 1 semistructured interviews. The matrix creation technique helped facilitate the thematic coding and analysis for the development of Table 3. The more dominant representations and clustering of specific SDT color-coded worldview expressions were labeled using all capital letters; the less dominant SDT color-coded worldview expressions received lowercase lettering.

Table 3. Attribution and Magnitude SDT Coding of Graduate Student Focus Group Data

Could we please begin by your sharing with me your own definition or understanding of what civic engagement entails?	SDT Worldview Expression	Profile CE Scale*
"It's commitment to the country and all the elements and surrounding country. Your nationality, your identity, and also the way that you involve within the society, as part of the society."—Marge (Public University)	BLUE/orange	5
"I think that everything is related to politics. I think that civic engagement is related to how we are going to ask for our rights as citizens in our country or also how we fight against injustice in our parts of the world."—Bart (Private For-Profit University)	GREEN/yellow	3

The SDT color-coded worldviews were attributed through researcher interpretations based upon the discourse analysis of transcribed focus group statement patterns for each of the graduate students. Capitalization reflects the more dominant SDT thinking pattern in the respondent(s). *Each of the focus group members self-assessed their own civic engagement (CE) magnitude using a Likert-type scale of 0 = None through 5 = Very High.

The classification system used for the analysis helped the researcher to better locate dynamic shifts or transitions in the memetic worldview and thinking patterns of focus group members and in-person interview volunteers. Marge's response pattern clusters showed an attention to authority and obligations to country and national pride. Such thinking was consistent with the more dominant SDT D/Q BLUE worldview construct description (Table 1). However, she also talked about the need to obtain better material well-being and economic opportunity afforded to a more privileged class of wealthy Chilean graduate students who attended the private for-profit university. The latter response was interpreted to represent (although less dominantly) the SDT E/R orange memetic worldview.

In Bart's response to the civic engagement question protocols, he consistently gave attention to complex themes as he analyzed the state of national politics and recognized the role of complex systems. Bart explained how civic engagement and outreach activities had been a significant part of his secondary educational experience, and he also spoke about the need to incorporate themes of civic awareness in his teaching and that it serves to improve global awareness for his students. However, Bart also described how the demands of family life and his graduate studies had led to his being

less civically engaged as a graduate student. The SDT worldview responses from Bart were the most complex among the PFPU focus group members.

Bart's thinking cluster was coded to be more dominant of the SDT GREEN memetic thinking classification, expressing an attention and concern for the need to recycle, visit the elderly, and read the newspaper in order to stay informed about the world around him. Bart expressed an individualistic form of thinking that was more complex in understanding the role of power, educational systems in Chile, and government authority. Therefore, some of his thinking was interpreted to reflect the SDT yellow worldview that was located on Tier 2 of the SDT framework and was classified as more integrative as it pertained to both the collectivist and individualist themata.

Trustworthiness. The researcher gave attention to the requirements of trustworthiness by the use of in-the-moment member-checking procedures. Focus groups were videotaped and in-person interviews were audio recorded.

Throughout the tapings, the researcher would periodically solicit feedback from the participants in order to verify and deepen the understanding of responses in an effort to enhance data quality *(Patton, 2015)*. Using a professional interview transcriber to process the recordings and generate visual text helped to preserve the quality of the data. The transcription of the interviews helped to increase the interpretive trustworthiness of the collected data, as session discussions could be revisited for accuracy, categorizing, and coding.

Being able to review the nuances of voice tone and body language in the interviews assisted in the establishment of consistently high-quality data and interpretive integrity *(Roulston, deMarrais, & Lewis, 2003)*. Finally, interpretive validity was enhanced through researcher training: In summer 2013 I obtained professional training and certification in the use and application of Spiral Dynamics Levels I and II assessments in Santa Barbara, California, directly from Clare Graves's protégé Christopher Cowan.

Phase 2: Quantitative Analysis

The correlation matrix (Table 4) was created using the SPSS v.21 computer software, and ANOVA tests of the three types of universities were conducted. Multiple regression analyses were also performed with the key civic engagement study variables. Statistical testing showed that four out of the 10 dependent key

CE variables were statistically significant by university type in the sample: (1) *voting in a student election* (CE_13), (2) *hours per week of volunteering* (CE_17), (3) *participating in protests or demonstrations* (CE_33), and (4) *discussion of politics with family* (CE_83). The analysis proceeded with those four items serving as dependent variables.

Table 4. Correlations Matrix of Key Study Variable and Descriptive Statistics

Measures	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	M	SD
Credential (1)	1.00							1.75	1.33
Enrollment (2)	.53**	1.00						2.00	0.62
Salary (3)	.13	.10	1.00					2.40	1.66
CE_13 (4)	-.13	.02	-.03	1.00				1.98	0.73
CE_17 (5)	-.02	-.01	-.11	-.13	1.00			1.32	1.36
CE_33 (6)	.05	.01	.15*	.37**	-.19**	1.00		2.09	0.68
CE_83 (7)	-.10	-.04	-.11	.19**	-.01	.17*	1.00	1.56	0.62
DQ_Blue (8)	.11	.04	.04	-.13	.04	-.32**	-.12	2.53	0.55
ER_Orange (9)	.05	-.02	-.10	-.05	.13	-.27**	-.15*	2.63	0.51
GT_Yellow (10)	.09	.02	-.10	-.13	-.05	.04	-.05	1.87	0.35
Individual (11)	.10	.00	-.11	-.08	.06	-.18*	-.15	2.39	0.36
Public (12)	.15*	.17*	.08	-.16*	-.11	-.03	-.16*	0.51	0.50
Mixed (13)	-.18*	-.34**	-.20**	-.02	.19**	-.16*	.22**	0.19	0.39
For-profit (14)	-.01	.11	.08	.20**	-.04	.17*	-.01	0.30	0.46

CE_13 Voting in a student election = (4); CE_17 Hours per week of volunteering = (5); CE_33 Participating in protests or demonstrations = (6); and CE_83 Discussion of politics with family members = (7). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Table continued on next page.

Table 4. Correlations Matrix of Key Study Variable and Descriptive Statistics (continued)

Measures	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	M	SD
Credential (1)								1.75	1.33
Enrollment (2)								2.00	0.62
Salary (3)								2.40	1.66
CE_13 (4)								1.98	0.73
CE_17 (5)								1.32	1.36
CE_33 (6)								2.09	0.68
CE_83 (7)								1.56	0.62
DQ_Blue (8)	1.00							2.53	0.55
ER_Orange (9)	.48**	1.00						2.63	0.51
GT_Yellow (10)	.25**	.29**	1.00					1.87	0.35
Individual (11)	.49**	.89**	.58**	1.00				2.39	0.36
Public (12)	.03	.08	.15*	.11	1.00			0.51	0.50
Mixed (13)	.19**	.14*	-.01	.10	-.50**	1.00		0.19	0.39
For-profit (14)	-.19**	-.21**	-.15*	-.20**	-.67**	-.31**	1.00	0.30	0.46

CE_13 Voting in a student election = (4); CE_17 Hours per week of volunteering = (5); CE_33 Participating in protests or demonstrations = (6); and CE_83 Discussion of politics with family members = (7). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Two types of item-scoring convention were used for the dependent civic engagement variables. For example, a continuous scale was used to measure voting in student elections, participating in protests and demonstrations, and discussing politics with family members (Table 5). Survey respondents were asked to select their levels of civic engagement, choosing 1 = frequently, 2 = occasionally, or 3 = not at all. The number of volunteer hours worked used

a categorical scale ranging from 1 = less than 1 hour per week to 8 = over 20 hours per week.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Key Civic Engagement (CE) Study Variables

| | | | | | 95% CI | |
| | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
CE Variable	University Type	N	Mean	SD		
Voting in Student Elections	Public	104	1.87	.70	1.73	2.00
	Mixed	38	1.95	.73	1.71	2.19
	For-Profit	60	2.20	.73	2.01	2.39
	Total	202	1.98	.73	1.88	2.08
Community Volunteer Hours	Public	104	1.17	1.15	.95	1.40
	Mixed	38	1.87	1.85	1.26	2.48
	For-Profit	60	1.23	1.28	.90	1.56
	Total	202	1.32	1.36	1.13	1.51
Protests & Demonstration Participation	Public	104	2.08	.73	1.93	2.22
	Mixed	38	1.87	.58	1.68	2.06
	For-Profit	60	2.27	.61	2.11	2.42
	Total	202	2.09	.68	2.00	2.19
Discussing Politics with Family Members	Public	104	1.46	.57	1.35	1.57
	Mixed	38	1.84	.59	1.65	2.04
	For-Profit	60	1.55	.67	1.38	1.72
	Total	202	1.56	.62	1.47	1.65

The survey items were also structured to capture the memetic SDT worldview thinking of respondents, using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly agree to 4 = strongly disagree for each color-coded vMEME construct. A total of 90 survey items were used to capture the six SDT ᵛMEME worldview constructs. Each of the six color-coded worldviews (red, blue, orange, green, yellow, and turquoise) used in this study had 15 associated survey items. Interrater reliability tests in SPSS yielded coefficient alphas ranging from .70 to .87 for the color-coded worldview constructs that led to the creation of six aggregated vMEME variables for use in the statistical analysis. The aggregated SDT color-coded worldview constructs were used for ANOVA testing of the three types of universities (i.e., public, for-profit, and mixed). This item is an example

of one single Likert-type survey item used to specifically identify the SDT memetic GT_Yellow worldview thinking:

> 23. Too many rules and regulations stifle creativity and innovation.

	1	2	3	4	
Strongly Agree					Strongly Disagree

Findings

Research Question 1 asked in what ways Chilean universities are committed to civic engagement education and practice. The administrator from the public university seemed to interpret civic engagement as volunteerism. However, the for-profit university administrator appeared to describe his view of civic engagement as a type of non-research-based service-learning *(Jacoby, 2017)* intended to enhance students' professional marketability and skills development. The researcher found that neither the public nor private for-profit universities in Phase 1 of the study had operationalized any formal civic engagement curriculum as part of their university mission.

Question 2 sought to identify the prevailing SDT worldviews of the graduate students by university type. In Phase 1 the graduate student focus groups at the for-profit university showed a greater depth of categorical clustering of higher order thinking (e.g., F/S Green and G/T Yellow ᵛMEMEs). The public university focus group members displayed clustering around the lower order D/Q Blue and E/R Orange vMEME SDT worldview thinking (see Table 3).

Quantitative findings from the survey sample in Phase 2 showed that statistically the subjects at the traditional public universities rejected the D/Q Blue ᵛMEME aggregate thinking and showed more acceptance of the E/R Orange ᵛMEME aggregated worldviews, reflecting an attention to materialistic and manipulative competition (see Figure 2 and Table 3). Survey respondents from the TPUs were unsatisfied with the obedience-oriented and rules-following expectations of the D/Q Blue worldview thinking system and were drawn toward the E/R Orange thinking that supported nonconforming protest and demonstration behaviors. These findings indicated the presence of a dynamic-level change among TPU respondents that appeared as an upward movement (with this sample) on the spiral.

The survey respondents who represented for-profit universities continued to show statistically greater orientation toward the higher order GT_Yellow worldview thinking ($p \leq$ .05, M=1.79) than the subjects at the public (TPU) and mixed not-for-profit universities. Statistically, the respondents in this sample who were from the for-profit universities were more individualistic (p= .01, M=2.28) than those respondents at the public (p= .03, M= 2.43) and mixed not-for-profit (p=.04, M= 2.46) universities. This finding suggests the existence of an environmental influence and mixed-methods complementarity *(Greene, 2008)* obtained from the analysis and interpretation of Phases 1 and 2 data.

Research Question 3 asked about the relationship between the personal characteristics of graduate students and their civic engagement outcomes. The multiple regression analysis (Table 6) showed that the SDT worldview thinking associated with DQ_Blue, ER_Orange, GT_Yellow, and the independent variable of Salary (defined as annual family income) were the most influential predictors of civic engagement *protest and demonstration behaviors*. The mean annual family incomes were highest among the respondents at the PFPUs (M = 2.60) and lowest among those at the mixed university (M = 1.71). The subjects at the mixed university also showed the highest mean average weekly volunteer hours (M = 1.87, β=0.19, p< .01). Multiple regression analysis found that as family incomes increased, the civic engagement protest and demonstration behaviors decreased.

Table 6. Multiple Regression Analysis of CE_33 Protesting and Demonstrations

	Model 1 *B* Unstd.	Model 1 *B* Std.	95% CI	Model 4 *B* Unstd.	Model 4 *B* Std.	95% CI
Constant	3.088**		[2.67, 3.51]	2.760**		[2.14, 3.38]
DQ_Blue	-0.394**	-.32**	[-0.56, -0.23]	-0.362**	0.294**	[-0.55, -0.18]
Salary				0.067*	0.162*	[0.13, 0.12]
GT_Yellow				0.351**	0.182**	[0.09, 0.61]
ER_Orange				-0.215*	-0.161*	[-0.42, -0.01]
R^2	.10			0.17		
F	22.71**			9.99**		

*Note. *p < .05; **p < .01.*

Research Question 4 was answered using the key civic engagement dependent variables of *voting in student elections* (CE_13), *hours of volunteering per week* (CE_17), and *discussing politics*

with family members (CE_83). The ANOVA test, along with the construction of a two-way categorical table, helped to highlight the relationship between institutional type and these three civic engagement variables. Voting in student elections (CE_13) had a negative regression slope and was most influenced by public university attendance (*M*=1.87). Performing volunteer hours was highest at the mixed university (*M*=1.87), and discussing politics with family was lowest among those in the sample from the mixed university (*M*=1.84). Based on the stepwise multiple regression analysis, the voting frequency was predicted by the volunteers in the survey sample who were from the traditional public universities (*β*= -.163, *p*<.01). In summary, findings showed that the not-for-profit universities were the most influential predictors of the civic engagement outcomes when compared with the private for-profit universities.

Discussion

Examining the evolution of civic engagement of graduate students in Chile, particularly in the context of for-profit higher education, is an insightful approach toward the identification of commonly accepted frameworks and epistemology historically used to define the phenomenon more broadly. Results from this study serve to assist researchers that seek to compare how the civic engagement origins of higher education embedded in the American university experience *(Hartley, 2011; Hartman, 2008)* might be realized on an international scale. There exists no universally accepted definition or model of civic engagement in higher education. In this research, civic engagement was defined as *maintaining interest and action in one's world as evidenced by active participation in both civic and political matters within one's community, ranging from the local to international domains (Brown, 2016)*. The research found that there were no formal or operationalized institutional civic engagement plans *(Sandmann, Thornton, & Jaeger, 2009)* at either the for-profit or public universities in Chile. Although several of the graduate students in the focus groups described themselves as being personally civically engaged—as a function of their graduate studies and careers—the university administrators in this research identified no explicit documents of civic engagement mission or curriculum in place at their institutions.

The nation of Chile has been identified as a very collectivist culture *(Heine & Raineri, 2009; Hofstede, 1983)*, yet in this survey sample, the prevailing SDT vMEME thinking among the research volunteers was a combination of both collectivist and individualist

worldview orientations (e.g., DQ_Blue, ER_Orange, FS_Green, and GT_Yellow) whose presence differed based on university type. The culture of the private for-profit university (PFPU) environment yielded greater outcomes of higher order individualistic thinking themata (per the SDT framework) as represented by the dominance of the GT_Yellow ᵛMEME worldviews in the study sample. The researcher further concludes that the correlation of higher order thinking to higher annual family income—as reflected among the PFPU volunteers—was an important research finding connecting the two variables. The income data led the researcher to surmise that increased socioeconomic investments allowed for greater cultural opportunities and experiential learning, which the literature shows contributes to higher order cognitive capacities development *(Conger, Conger, & Martin, 2010)*.

Limitations

The researcher considered the small size of the focus group samples a limitation in this study. An optimal standard would be participation of at least five members in focus group sessions *(Patton, 2015)*. As a result, establishment of comparative differences in the graduate student civic engagement outcomes at the PFPU and TPU in Phase 1 is tenuous. Although microanalysis of subtle differences is, in fact, a limitation often cited in connection with the use of focus groups *(Patton, 2015)*, the prolonged 2-year observation and ethnographic immersion of the researcher within the Chilean context served to mitigate that particular limitation.

Implications of the Study

This research offers a new theoretical framework for the assessment of civic engagement in connection to adult developmental cognition, worldview thinking, and the problem-solving capacity *(Merriam & Bierema, 2014; Taylor, 2006)* that influences postgraduates in higher education. This study suggests that an explicit integration of civic engagement learning into the teaching and research mission of higher education could serve to enhance university community-engaged scholarship *(Holland, 2009)*. By dissecting the complex behaviors and cultural worldviews of student activists and our institutions of higher education, university leaders can establish the motivational benchmarks needed in the production of democratically engaged graduates *(Fretz, Cutforth, Nicotera, & Thompson, 2009)*. Use of the SDT framework as a guide also has the potential to improve teacher training and student leadership development *(Lott,*

2013; Whitley & Yoder, 2015) through the identification of culturally adaptive learning themes based on how adults view and negotiate a complex world. In such instances, the SDT framework would serve as an evaluation or assessment tool for designing outreach that privileges the spirit of reciprocity in the production of engaged scholarship.

Contribution to the Literature

Furco *(2010)* discussed how the civic purpose of higher education was implicit in the mission statement of universities in the United States. This research expands his analysis by offering a broader international context from which to evaluate civic engagement in higher education. Moreover, it allows us to consider the emergent role of private for-profit universities and the long-term impacts these environments might have on the civic engagement outcomes of their graduate student populations.

This study found that there is currently no such implicit attention to civic engagement among private for-profit universities in this sample. Although the Chilean university administrators expressed their own value for a civic engagement curriculum as a form of student development, such an approach at the private for-profit universities would be subordinate to their goals of workforce preparation and professional competitiveness for their graduate students *(Morey, 2004)*. The traditional public university administrator viewed civic engagement learning as a valuable approach to student development as well but indicated that it would need to be a voluntary academic undertaking made in coordination between a student and faculty member. The TPU university administrator did not support a *compulsory* requirement for civic engagement curriculum, holding that the *social mobility* of its students and graduates was tantamount to the institutional mission. Nevertheless, both administrators were interested in learning more about the American university models for operationalizing civic engagement in higher education.

Conclusion

Civic engagement concepts in Chilean higher education were not viewed by administrators in this study as being under the auspices of a community engagement umbrella *(Fitzgerald et al., 2016)* as seen in the United States. The civic engagement definition in this research was informed by the traditions of Ernest Boyer *(1996/2016)*, who viewed civic engagement in higher education as

explicitly intentional and expressed through service and moral-values-based learning *(Pike, Bringle, & Hatcher, 2014)* made integral to university study. This research viewed modern student political activism as an outcome of civic engagement among postgraduates. It connected variables of civic engagement to the personal characteristics of postgraduates and their SDT memetic worldviews. More comparative research is needed in order to determine if the model of entrepreneurial higher education stands in opposition to the implicit expectation that learning in public higher education should lead a nation in the production of globally conscious and democratically engaged citizens among its graduates *(Fitzgerald et al., 2016)*.

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PROJECTS WITH PROMISE

Engaging Students: Conducting Community-Based Research in the Senior Capstone Course

Dennis J. Downey

Abstract

Engaging undergraduate students in community-based research (CBR) offers rich benefits to both students and communities *(Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoeker, & Donahue, 2006)*. Finding ways to expand its application promises to multiply those benefits. Senior capstone courses represent a promising vehicle for that expansion, as they are also generally research based and extremely common in contemporary higher education *(Hauhart & Grahe, 2015)*. However, CBR and capstones each have multiple goals and present significant challenges, raising questions about the feasibility of merging practices. This research presents a case study of a capstone sociology course organized around group-based CBR projects. The case demonstrates that CBR-focused capstones, if intentionally designed, are feasible. Assessments by students and community partners provide evidence that the course also achieved the goals of capstones and of CBR. Discussion addresses steps taken since the initial case study to sustain and institutionalize the practice, including measures to assist instructors.

Keywords: Community-based research, capstone, service-learning, high-impact practices.

Introduction

*E*ngaging undergraduate students in community-based research (CBR) is a valuable experience for students and can provide important services to the community *(Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoeker, & Donahue, 2006)*. Finding ways to expand its application promises to multiply those beneficial outcomes. The senior capstone course offers a promising vehicle for doing so, because it is so common in contemporary higher education and shares the focus on supervised research *(Hauhart & Grahe 2015)*. CBR and capstones, however, are each intensive and challenging propositions individually—including the logistics of working with and meeting the needs of community partners while trying to help students to apply all of the skills associated with empirical research. Is it feasible to apply practices concurrently? Each also has its own distinct set of goals: presenting a culminating experience that ties the major together (capstone) and performing research that provides practical benefits to community partners (CBR). Can they be

conducted together in a way that fulfills both sets of goals? Those questions understandably discourage attempts to integrate CBR into the capstone course.

This research presents a case study of a single-semester sociology capstone course in which students completed CBR projects from initial research design to delivery of a final report to community partners. It demonstrates the feasibility of conducting CBR within the capstone, and it presents a range of useful course design elements toward that end (such as project selection, research design and methods, and time management). Assessment based on a survey of participating students and community partners indicated that the course was also effective in fulfilling the goals of the capstone (i.e., providing a culminating research experience and linking the major together) and the goals of CBR (i.e., promoting commitment to community engagement and providing valuable service to the community).

Literature Review: CBR and the Capstone

CBR is defined as "a partnership of students, faculty, and community members who collaboratively engage in research with the purpose of solving a pressing community problem or effecting social change" *(Strand et al., 2003 p. 3)*. CBR projects generally focus on the specific and applied needs of a community partner (e.g., evaluating aspects of their service delivery or environment) and can render an invaluable service to community-based organizations that have neither resources nor expertise to systematically investigate issues that can be crucial to their ability to serve the community. CBR represents a hybrid of two recognized high-impact practices (HIPs): service-learning and undergraduate research *(Kuh, 2008)*. Service-learning can be defined simply as "any program that attempts to link academic study with service" *(Eyler & Giles, 1999, p. 5; see also Jacoby & Associates, 1996, pp. 5–10)*. When conducted with students, CBR is simply a type of service-learning in which the primary service is the research conducted. As such, it is also an example of undergraduate research.

Advocates of CBR have documented the pedagogical benefits (e.g., *Strand, 2000*) and how it offers a productive model for engaging undergraduates in research *(Cooke & Thorme, 2011)*. As a form of experiential learning, it allows students to understand the real-world implications of methods that too often seem abstract and technical *(Collier & Morgan, 2002; Ferrari & Jason, 1996; Potter, Caffrey, & Plante, 2003)*. In addition, working with partners generates addi-

tional motivation for students *(Chesbrough, 2011; Darby, Longmire-Avital, Chenault, & Haglund, 2013; Duffy & Raque-Bogdan, 2010)*. CBR also entails the kind of applied projects that students who do not continue on to graduate school are most likely to engage in beyond college, providing valuable professional development.

As a community-based practice, CBR also presents substantial challenges, which advocates have identified along with a variety of ways to address and manage them (e.g., *Stocking & Cutforth, 2006; Strand et al., 2003)*. Specifically, the service-learning character of CBR layers additional expectations and goals beyond those found in other types of undergraduate research. With service-learning, expectations exist not only for the students, but for community partners as well. Although cumulative research has demonstrated contributions to learning outcomes, it has also demonstrated that learning cannot be taken for granted as an outcome of service participation *(Eyler & Giles, 1999; Manley, Buffa, Dube, & Reed, 2006)*. Nor can the value of service be taken for granted; community partners may receive relatively little in return for the resources invested in training and monitoring students *(Beckman, Penney, & Cockburn, 2011; Blouin & Perry, 2009; Cruz & Giles, 2000; Sandy, 2007; Sandy & Holland, 2006)*. Additional challenges accrue from expectations that service-learning courses will promote future student engagement—conceptualized in terms of civic responsibility *(Myers-Lipton, 1998)*, civic participation *(Clark, Croddy, Hayes, & Philips, 1997)*, civic education *(Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998)*, democratic and civic values *(Hunter & Brisbin, 2000)*, democratic citizenship *(Battistoni, 1997)*, political socialization *(Owen, 2000)*, and efficacy for social change *(Mobley, 2007)*. Research has also identified a range of additional challenges associated with CBR specifically *(Polanyi & Cockburn, 2003; Weinberg, 2003)*.

Capstone courses are defined as "a culminating experience in which students are expected to integrate, extend, critique, and apply the knowledge gained in the major" *(Wagenaar, 1993, p. 209)*. Most often, the centerpiece of the capstone is the completion of some piece of original and independent research, generally conducted in a single term. Hauhart and Grahe *(2015)* specify that the "typical capstone course requires a major project or paper associated with substantive course content that is integrative of the major, requires a minimum page length, relies on peer-reviewed sources, and is submitted in an approved format and style" *(p. 39)*. Capstone courses have become increasingly common throughout higher education in recent decades, representing one example of the broader growth of undergraduate research opportunities and

expectations that emerged as a response to critiques of disengagement in higher education *(Katkin, 2003; Kinkead, 2003; Troyer, 1993)*. The central goal of the capstone is highlighted in the definitional element of a "culminating experience": To provide students the opportunity to review and apply the central skills and content of their major.

Like CBR, the capstone presents multiple benefits and challenges to practitioners. Benefits include its effects on student identity and persistence *(Collier, 2000)*, its integrative effects in promoting liberal education *(Durel, 1993)*, and its role in preparing students both for graduate work and for lives as active citizens *(Davis, 1993)*. As with other HIPs, it also contributes to rates of student retention and graduation *(Kuh, 2008)*. Most significant among the challenges confronting capstone instructors, according to Hauhart and Grahe's *(2010, 2012, 2015)* systematic national research, are those presented by limitations associated with lack of student preparation and restricted time frames. Capstones ask a lot of students, who often need significant supervision and direction, and have to move through the project very quickly to complete it on the necessary schedule. That can be a daunting proposal. Although the one-semester course is not ideal, as it compresses the time necessary for a research project, it remains the most common structure for the capstone *(Hauhart & Grahe, 2015)*.

There is little research on CBR in the context of the capstone. An exception is Collier's *(2000)* research, which found that it can be a transformative experience. It is clear that both practices require substantial investment. Guiding students through the research process—from design to delivery—within a single semester is an extremely tight timeline for any research project. The additional complications of working with and responding to the needs of a community partner exacerbate that. The next section describes elements of course design and implementation that make CBR feasible within the context of the capstone, and the subsequent section provides evidence that it can meet the goals of both practices.

Executing CBR in the Capstone

Ensuring Feasibility: Design Choices for CBR in the Capstone

Identify appropriate projects. Although CBR advocates often promote long-term ongoing projects that can accommodate a richer university–community relationship (for good reason), a short-term

project is essential for a single-semester capstone course. Projects must be selected on the basis of scale and complexity. Generally, that selection must be performed by the instructor—both because she or he will be most competent at identifying what is feasible and because projects must be identified prior to the semester to facilitate timelines.

Another issue that must be considered for appropriateness concerns IRB review. Given that the goal is a semipublic report and public presentations of data, IRB review will be required in most instances. Consequently, it is best to select projects that minimize potentially thorny issues that might delay approval. Working with sensitive topics or vulnerable populations or minors should be considered closely (although some projects associated with later versions of the current case study include research on undocumented students and homeless clients of a social service agency, and there was no problem with IRB).

Focus on applied questions. Relative to the traditional academic research model, CBR projects tend to be more applied. (*Strand et al., 2003, p. 9*, offer a useful contrast between traditional academic research and community-based research.) That difference has important implications for the way that the research is contextualized within the literature and discipline. Generally, having a more applied focus means that there is less emphasis on review of previous literature and relatively little theory brought to the projects, as community partners tend to be interested specific empirical answers to their immediate research questions rather than in generalizable patterns and theory development. That is not to say that previous research cannot be integrated, only that it is less essential—and, given time constraints, is one area that might be sacrificed in order to make CBR capstones feasible.

Limit methodological options. One of the most crucial ways to make CBR projects feasible is to limit the possible methods that can be used. One of the most time-consuming processes is guiding methods; the more varied the methods, the fewer "economies of scale" an instructor is able to achieve in that area. In this case study, projects were limited mostly to self-report methods: surveys and structured interviews. The type of projects generally requested by Community Based Organizations are well-matched to self-report methods conducted with stakeholders such as clients (e.g., food pantry clients, farmers market patrons) or volunteers. Offering a quantitative option (surveys) and a qualitative option (interviews) allows students to productively compare and contrast their applicability to the specific research questions based on conversations

with the partner. Specific methodological options will also vary by discipline. For example, a capstone in history might focus on oral histories; one in anthropology might use ethnography. The point is that limiting methodological options is an important design element for feasibility.

Create manageable workgroups. There is a limit to the number of projects that can be effectively supervised in a semester. In any event, the amount of work necessary is generally too large to be effectively completed by individual students. Those constraints together point to the need to make the projects group-based. There are advantages and disadvantages to team-based versus individually based capstone projects (e.g., *Wallace, 1988*), but well-specified projects can provide a rich experience. Groups ranging from three to four students seem most appropriate; groups of more than four often seem to confront logistical constraints, whereas groups of less than three often face workload constraints.

Project supervision and timeline management. Successful implementation of CBR projects within the capstone demands attention to strict management of timelines throughout the semester. The list below includes the major sequence of tasks that must be accomplished.

Match students with projects. At the first class meeting, presentations are made by the instructor (or partners) about the available partners and the projects— including such details as the mission of the partner, the goals of the project, potential research questions, and any additional relevant information (potential challenges, etc.). Students are asked to contact the instructor by the next day with a ranking of their top three choices. By the second class meeting, student groups are assigned to projects.

Develop a research plan. Initial contacts on the part of the instructor with community partners produce a general research concept. The first task of student groups is to arrange a meeting with the partner to discuss the project and to gather information that will allow them to make specific decisions about research questions and methods. Following that meeting, each group is required to write up a memo for the partner (and instructor) that elaborates on the project design—including background, questions, methods, timelines, and so on. Among other topics, the project design document should address why surveys or qualitative interviews have been selected for the research—and how the method is suited to the specific questions. That document serves as a template for the first sections of the final report.

Design a research instrument. The next crucial task is to develop a research instrument—in this case, either a questionnaire or interview guide. That requires multiple drafts and revisions for appropriate coverage and clarity, screened by the supervising professor and the community partner.

Clear IRB. Given the goal of delivering a research report to an external partner, human subjects review will be required in most cases. Clearing IRB will also allow students to disseminate the research in other venues as well (professional conferences, nonacademic publications, etc.). Since data collection cannot begin until IRB review is complete, that presents another temporal obstacle. It is essential to build relationships with the IRB prior to the semester to facilitate rapid review, and the instructor has to play an active role throughout—ensuring that submissions are clear and thorough, and that any requested revisions are addressed immediately. During the review, groups should more fully develop components of their project design (e.g., the methods and background sections, as well as conducting any literature review—which then can serve as drafts for subsequent chapters).

Collect data. In the case study, surveys were conducted through paper copies or online. Interviews were conducted in person (in some cases, in both English and Spanish). It is important to establish realistic data collection targets. In survey research, the marginal costs of additional subjects are negligible, so the question of number of respondents tends to focus on a floor rather than a ceiling. For interviews, it is essential to have a more defined target (or floor and ceiling). Interview projects for this case study had a target of 20 respondents. It is important to note that the data collection stage has to be tightly circumscribed, given the remaining tasks beyond that point. In this case, data collection was scheduled to be completed by the end of the 9th week in a 16-week semester (although there was some variation).

Enter and analyze data. For surveys, data were entered into SPSS, and analyses focused on the graphical presentation of data. Students were encouraged to focus first on the distributions of variables and then move to focal bivariate correlations. Interviews required time-consuming transcription, followed by thematic analysis. Students were encouraged to complete selective transcription, providing verbatim transcription where respondents address specific issues. Subsequently, students used a general matrix-structured analysis that displayed all responses to specific questions along the same row, with respondents presented in columns, to facilitate

analysis. (This procedure, which can be performed in Excel or a Word table, is a quick and efficient way to analyze qualitative data.)

Write up the report. Clear and concise presentation is essential for reports to be useful for partners, and achieving that standard requires multiple iterations, with substantial feedback on each draft. (Writing centers or other campus resources can provide invaluable assistance as well.) Students are also provided a template of sorts through access to previous reports, including a basic structure with each of the following: title page; table of contents; executive summary; background; methods; a series of findings chapters; and a concluding recommendations chapter. That template is invaluable for keeping the write-up on target (and on time).

Deliver report and disseminate findings. At the end of the semester, students deliver reports at meetings arranged with each of the community partners (in addition to an oral presentation at our annual departmental capstone symposium). Meetings are generally small and informal, including students and one or two contacts with whom students worked most closely—although presentations are sometimes made in a more formal setting (e.g., in a board of directors meeting or a commission meeting).

Overview of Case Study

The capstone course in sociology at California State University, Channel Islands (CSUCI) is designated as a service-learning course. Students fulfill a service requirement and write their capstone report on a topic related to that service experience. In the past, they have tended to draw minimally on any course-specific skill sets, and service activities varied from tutoring to farm work to participating in homeless counts. Prior to the case study reported here, typical capstone reports took the form of reflective essays integrating sociological concepts with a review of relevant literature, or analyses based on rudimentary data collected in conjunction with service. Formal end-of-semester presentations offered a valuable professional experience, but projects seldom resulted in genuinely useful findings for partners, which seemed to be a missed opportunity for both students and partners.

In spring 2011, I redesigned and reorganized the capstone course (with an enrollment of 21 students) around CBR projects. Rather than drawing on service to develop research, the capstone would feature research as service. The redesign had several components. Project selection and design were driven primarily by partners' needs rather than students' interests. Rather than con-

ceptualizing service and research requirements separately, the research itself would be the service provided, with the primary goal of delivering high-quality, professional-grade research reports to community partners to serve an identified need. The reports were to be clearly written for a general educated audience, based on data collected and analyzed to meet social scientific standards. The basic parameters of the course drew on lessons from a previous class-based CBR project that, in retrospect, served as a sort of pilot project.

The "Pilot"

In spring 2009, I led a CBR project with students enrolled in an Introduction to Research Methods course, along with a capstone student who served as a project leader. The class partnered with Camarillo Hospice, as sponsor of our local certified farmers market, which they use to support their services. The project required designing and conducting a survey of patrons to gauge relative satisfaction across a range of services and related issues. Students reported that they developed an appreciation for survey research that they never would have developed otherwise, exemplifying the benefits of experiential learning. Students could see how research design played out and validated methodological decisions that would otherwise have seemed technical and abstract (multiple edits of survey questions, attention to sampling procedures, etc.). Additionally, in informal conversations, students reported that the connection established with our partner, and their understanding of the importance of the project to the organization, made them appreciate the value of the research. That led to increased buy-in on their part, motivating increased commitment and effort.

For the capstone student, the project clearly represented a culminating educational experience: "Working alongside a professor and assisting others in learning the process of survey design, data collection, and data entry allowed me the ability to put into practice all of the facets of my education into one finalized project." She also reported that the project enhanced her subsequent community engagement, leading to "volunteer leadership opportunities in multiple venues." In addition to student learning, the community service outcomes were solid. Our partners were pleased with the final report, finding it useful in direct and immediate ways: "As a result of the survey, which we would never have had the resources to purchase, we identified certain shortcomings of the market . . . which we were able to act on easily and at minimum expense." This initial success seemed to indicate that a properly designed

CBR project could be feasible within the capstone and could fulfill the central goals and tap the central benefits of both practices. Application of the model thus took place through implementation of similar projects in a full capstone course in spring 2011.

Partners and Projects

Prior to the semester, the instructor contacted multiple community partners to gauge interest in partnering on capstone research. Students were informed about all partners and tentative projects and asked to rank them in terms of preference. (All students were assigned to their first choice, except for one who was assigned to her second choice.) Below are the six partners with a general description of each project.

Camarillo Hospice. Camarillo Hospice is a volunteer hospice providing a range of services, free of charge, to community members and their families facing end-of-life issues. The organization relies heavily on volunteers who provide those services to clients. Because the volunteers undertake extensive training and perform emotionally intense work, leaders must understand their needs and find ways to address them. That would be most feasible through a survey, to be delivered online.

Casa Pacifica. Casa Pacifica provides comprehensive services throughout the region to foster youth and families, and abused and neglected children and adolescents. Given the crucial role played by mentors for foster youth, the Chief Advancement Officer was most interested in finding ways to increase interest in serving as mentors. It was determined that a series of interviews with volunteers working with foster youth (some of whom were mentors and some of whom were not, to allow systematic comparisons) about their motivations and experiences would best serve that need.

CSUCI Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). OLLI is a program run through Extended Education at CSUCI that provides classes on a variety of topics for seniors in the community. OLLI directors wanted to gather information from members regarding their satisfaction with services, desired course topics, and interest in additional programs. That would be best accomplished through a standard survey of current members (delivered in classes) and a more limited survey of ex-members for comparison (delivered via mail).

Join the Farm. Join the Farm is a local nonprofit organic farm linking sustainable agriculture to programs promoting nutritional equity in the county. Its central source of earned income is a com-

munity-supported agriculture (CSA) program in which members purchase "shares" of fresh, organic vegetables delivered weekly. Our partner requested a systematic survey of members to measure levels of satisfaction—along with other issues, including motivations for joining, openness toward transitional organic produce, and so on.

Project Understanding. Project Understanding is a faith-based organization providing a variety of services to economically insecure individuals and families in the county, focusing on the homeless population. The executive director was concerned about the potential for services to cultivate dependency among clients and requested research focusing on food pantry clients to identify patterns of usage and any potential issues of dependency. That could be best accomplished through a series of qualitative interviews with clients.

Ventura County Commission for Women (VCCW). The VCCW is a county commission that had previously approached the Sociology Program requesting assistance in conducting a general assessment of the status of women and girls in the county. They were interested in a systematic compilation and presentation of data using publicly available sources, such as the U.S. Census. The commission has no funding, so the capstone course offered a way to achieve their goal without cost. (That project was based on an analysis of publicly available secondary data.)

Meeting Goals: Assessment of Outcomes

Assessment is based on responses to questions addressing issues central to both capstone goals and CBR goals sent to students and partners nearly one year after the conclusion of the course. Questions for students most pertinent to capstone goals focused on the value of designing, conducting, and presenting original research; the value of producing the research report; and how well it served as a culminating experience. Questions most pertinent to the goals of CBR focused on student motivations and satisfactions related to service and potential impacts on interest in community engagement. Questions for partners focused mostly on the value of the final report. The survey instrument presented questions designed to give respondents the opportunity to bring up a wide range of issues and topics. (The list of questions is available from the author.)

Respondents were contacted via e-mail and asked to participate. (The research was reviewed and approved by our campus

Institutional Research Board.) Responses were received by partners from all seven projects and from 12 of 21 students (57%). Although that response rate might be impressive for a large-scale survey, one would generally expect higher for this type of research. The response rate was depressed by the lack of current contact information beyond students' university e-mail address (which students can retain, but many do not access after graduation). Responses were convergent across the sample for overall themes. It is important to note the potential for biased responses given that it was not anonymous—rather, the survey provided feedback to someone who might be reasonably understood to have an interest in positive feedback. Again, the consistency of specific points indicates that the themes that emerged in the responses are robust.

In spite of methodological limitations, this promising practice case study offers ample results to encourage (and guide) similar efforts and assessments. The presentation of findings below focuses on response narratives. Response distributions are also reported to contextualize narratives. (It should be underscored that the questions allowed respondents ample room for responding in distinct ways, so counts can be misleading. For example, to suggest that 50% identified a specific point does not in any way imply that the other 50% disagree with that point.)

Findings: Learning, Service, and Engagement

Student Perspectives on Learning

Culminating educational experience. When asked about the value of the CBR/capstone experience, seven of the 12 students noted that it represented a culminating experience. In some responses, that took the form of a general peak educational experience. For example, as one student responded: "When I think back on my undergraduate experience, my sociology capstone was by far the most beneficial and influential of any of my experiences." Other students focused more specifically on how the project forced them to draw on and integrate multiple skills from their coursework: "It helped put together everything we learned, from research based courses [to] the theory based." Another student called it "an extremely valuable experience" and explained: "Reflecting back on the process of putting our capstone project together, from beginning to end, I feel like it put everything that we had learned from Soc 101 to Research Methods into perspective."

Responses also underscored the methodological orientation of the projects; nine of the 12 students noted independently the course's value in learning research skills. Students noted that the application of those skills deepened their understanding. One student explained that the project helped him to "acquire qualitative methods that one only reads in texts," adding that "to actually go out there in the field and use them is a whole other ball game." Students also pointed to specific skills that they integrated throughout the project; for example, "we really had to dissect the interviews and go back to the transcriptions whenever we disagreed on some of the patterns we were describing." Another offered the following list of lessons: "learning how to properly organize research, delegating research amongst peers, as well as learning to be very thorough and precise with the secondary data." As many of those quotes suggest, much of the value of the projects accrues from students' involvement in the full arc of the research project, because it forced them to apply the range of research skills and to understand how each articulates with the others.

Focusing on more specific skills, all students (12 of 12) noted positively the experience of writing up the research report (although it is important to note that this was specifically elicited, unlike the more general topics above). This is particularly remarkable because of the intensity of the writing experience. Comments from the following pair of students exemplify students' sense of accomplishment, both in terms of what they invested and what they got out of it.

> It was a very intense and hard process that required a lot of time and attention. Being able to write a 30-something [page] report is definitely one of my greatest accomplishments in college. It taught me that a well delivered project requires A LOT of time, which I think we should ALL know before we go into grad school and/or the work force.

> The capstone report is the most professional piece of work I have, and I definitely see it as an asset on my resume. I am currently applying to graduate school for a Masters in Social Work, so this project shows that I am capable of conducting an intensive project.

Students also frequently mentioned a strong sense of pride in the final report—and the link between that pride and the enormous amount of work that went into the final report. The following response exemplifies that connection: "Though it was comprised out of very much hard work, much frustration and many, many, many hours, I believe that it reflects the heart and truth of our findings and is something that we will always be proud of." It is worth further noting that within the responses about the value of writing the report, seven students noted an educational advantage, and eight students noted some type of professional advantage.

One final response is worth noting because it points to a deficit in students' ability to effectively document their experience in writing the report. The problem is that such reports do not generally result in formal publications that are citable on a resume:

> I know that having the experience of researching and being able to write the report definitely has provided me with advantages in my educational goals. . . . However, I do not know how much advantage the report will have on my career goals . . . because I do not know how to incorporate it into my resume. I do not know what language to use to describe the work that I did.

Educational and professional advantages. Students also responded positively about the contribution of the projects to subsequent academic endeavors (four students), especially those currently in graduate programs. One student noted that the project provided "the opportunity to explore my sociological area of interest—gender—through the connections I was able to form with the VCCW." Two current graduate students recognized an advantage over fellow students in that they had completed a substantial piece of research. One added that in upcoming interviews for placements "it is certainly going to be mentioned that I worked with a community partner to provide them with program evaluation."

Students who are currently employed also described drawing on skills from the capstone projects (four students). The several responses below make those links specific:

> The part [of the project] that I found to be the most valuable was the actual interaction with the clients [at the food pantry]; the reason for this is because it helped assist me in my employment I acquired after graduation. I now run a food pantry for the Salvation Army, so

my capstone project was a great preparation for the job and for the clients I would potentially be working with.

The survey development part of the class was very valuable for [me] because I have to develop a client satisfaction survey and treatment team survey where I work at now and I do that on a monthly basis, as part of my duties. I also developed an Excel Program for input and graphs so that anyone on my treatment team can input data and make a bar graph for our team meetings.

Having participated in research, I was [subsequently] able to conduct my own qualitative analysis with a national initiative. . . . I was able to utilize learned skills and lessons learned from our capstone project to be part of that effort.

Another student responded more broadly regarding professional advantages: "Even if my goals do not deal directly with social research, the skills that were put into practice are likely the types that are sought by many employers."

Motivations and satisfactions. Students generally suggested that the amount of time and energy that they invested in the project was far beyond that involved in other courses with equal credits. Yet all of them felt in retrospect that the investment was worthwhile. Students clearly exhibited a sense of ownership over their projects, exemplifying the shift from externally driven to self-driven *(Hakim, 1998)*. Why were students so willing to buy into the project and invest so much time and energy? Much of the answer comes from the motivation provided by students' commitments to the community partners and the confidence that the project would be of real value to them.

All 12 students noted that helping their community partner was a source of motivation for them, often contrasting it with the lesser motivations characteristic of other courses. As one student succinctly described: "The expectation of this project was not just to turn [in] a document that would satisfy a professor, but one that would benefit the community partner." Another student echoed that point: "I knew it was not just for a grade but also for change in the community." The following student links that service motivation specifically to her increased commitment:

It was not simply another assignment that would be read only by the professor for a grade. It was an opportunity to shed light into a question or concern the community partner wanted addressed. Their dependence on our research only heightened our commitment to the report.

The following responses develop the motivational point more fully:

Knowing that the information collected and the data analysis was work that would make a difference for an organization to create a more effective use of their resources was more motivating to me than any letter grade that could have been given to the report. This motivated me to make sure that we had developed not only useful sociological questions but also useful questions for the community partner to analyze their customer base and the level of satisfaction their customers were receiving.

From the moment we found out which community partner we were going to be working with, we were so eager to get right down to work and put all of our efforts together to ensure that we could present Project Understanding with findings that truly and accurately represented their food pantry clients. . . . We became more and more invested and motivated to get as deep as we could.

Perhaps the most telling sign of student motivation and commitment came from students who continued to work on the project beyond the end of the semester. The most notable example is a group that continued to develop and rewrite the final report through the summer (often meeting in the evenings after work) to ensure the high quality of the final report—even though grades were already submitted and they had all graduated. The situation was somewhat unique in that two members of the group were working with that partner and had a long-term connection to it. Still, it clearly indicated that students saw the projects as something more than a simple class obligation. Students also reported that participation in the project motivated them to become more engaged with the community in the future. (In the interest of space, the findings are not reported here, but they are available from the author.)

Student satisfaction can be elusive because it depends not only on delivering a quality report, but on the partner's implementation of findings, as well as students' knowledge of that implementation. The complications in that linkage are evident in the following student who exhibited a mix of optimism and skepticism about the impacts of the research: "I do not know if they actually used the data, but I really hope they did." As she added, however: "The fact that we tried helping them already makes me feel good though." Another student made the same point with more elaborate and specific referents:

> In our report we found that some of the homeless clients had been using the non-profit for far longer than 1–2 years, whereas low-income clients who were housed were primarily 1–2 year clients. Now the non-profit has begun offering more intensive services for homeless clients, which may or may not have been influenced by our report. But I'd like to think that our project played a role.

Overall, it was clear that although there was substantial satisfaction associated with the projects, satisfaction is diminished to some extent when students doubt that their work will be used. As one student stated clearly: "I think I would have a better sense of satisfaction if I knew more about how the report was used or has made changes for the organization." Students also understood the challenges that their partner confronted in implementing changes based on their research. That recognition mitigated the erosion of satisfaction, as the following quote attests:

> I believe our project will be extremely helpful, but I worry about the implementation of the results. . . . My sense of satisfaction is that we were able to come back and give them information that could be useful.

A final issue related to satisfaction was the challenge created by severe time constraints. As one student wrote: "I think given an additional semester to propose and design student research would add value to the possibility of encouraging undergraduate level student research." Even with scaled-down CBR projects, the challenges of integrating the full arc of research into a single-term course is substantial, and expanding it beyond a single term is worth consideration.

Community Partner Perspectives on Service

Value of the final report. All community partners (seven of seven) noted that the final report was valuable to their organization and that they would have been unable to complete the research on their own. Value was most often linked to organizational planning and decision making. As noted above, findings from the initial project allowed Camarillo Hospice to make subtle changes in the way that they operate the farmers market. The food pantry director also reported that findings led to more effective operation:

> I was able to look at the stats and use the info to help better our policies and intake process to assist us in attaining the info we need to more efficiently serve our clients. I was surprised at some of the stats, and that was also good because I was able to get a better idea of what our client case consisted of and implement programs to better serve that community.

Two partners noted that they were not surprised by findings, but they were quick to point out it did not make them less valuable. As one partner reported: "Although we did not learn anything new, outside validation of what we perceive to be true is always valuable." Another responded similarly: "The final report . . . confirmed our 'hunches' which is no small thing, in regard to who our customers are and what they like and don't like." That partner continued by noting that the findings provided crucial information to guide subsequent transitions:

> It contributed to the confidence we had to move in a new direction as our organization is transitioning. Specifically, because of their report, we knew our customers would support receiving food sourced from other local farms and food grown sustainably even if not certified organic.

In two projects, the findings generated significant positive attention beyond the organization itself, as in the case of the OLLI report:

> [The] main results were communicated to OLLI members and to the parent organization, the Osher Foundation. In both instances, the audiences were enlightened about what we have accomplished in the Institute, and what remained to be done. The survey and

analysis came up with several concrete ideas for imple-
mentation, several of which have guided our activities.
Highlighted needs related to the sorts of courses our
students wanted to add (some surprises here), what stu-
dents were willing to do to help the Institute, and the
attractions of the Institute in addition to courses. It was
also gratifying to know that [OLLI] students applauded
the quality of their experiences.

In the case of the VCCW project, the report represented an
important milestone: "[The report] was the first comprehensive
analysis of data about women and girls in Ventura County; it was a
great beginning reference piece." Equally important, the report was
leveraged by the commission to get funding to extend the research:

The study . . . was a valuable asset in helping the VCCW
to obtain the $20,000 grant because it gave credibility
to the capability of students and commissioners in
bringing this project's first phase to fruition and sup-
ported the belief of the funders in our capability and
dedication to complete the full study. One of the stu-
dents presented the study at our presentation before a
group of funders, which was very important.

Several partners noted that they have not yet been able
to act on the findings, so the report's "value" has not matched its
"quality." As one partner explained:

I feel that the final report has been somewhat helpful.
We have posted it on our website as a resource but have
not taken the time internally to utilize the results in an
effective way. . . . Using the findings to enhance our pro-
gram has been the difficulty internally; nothing to do
with the data, process, or final product. Simply a lack of
time and bandwidth.

A longer perspective offers additional insight on this particular
report. Two years later, the organization was able to hire a postdoc-
toral psychologist who was able to focus on the issue of mentorship.
The report that the students produced was a central resource used
to learn about the issue and to begin to design new initiatives.

Overall, partner responses emphasized that findings informed organizational planning and decision making in useful ways and ultimately increased their effectiveness in serving the community.

Interest in future partnerships. Perhaps the surest measure of the value of partnerships is the level of interest in future projects. All partners (seven of seven) confirmed ongoing interest. One underscored the benefits accruing from partnerships that would be impossible to achieve otherwise:

> I am very interested in continuing to participate in these partnerships. It is a great way to access information in raw form and from an outside source with fresh perspectives. It gives our facility a good sense of what is needed [and] we can pull direct facts for annual reporting and grant requests. Given that we are a nonprofit, our staffing and funding is limited. It helps us in that we receive quality work for free and also engages the youth in what we are doing.

Two individuals working for community partner organizations have changed organizations but expressed ongoing interest in partnerships. One reported that she has already sought out partnerships in her new organization:

> Yes, this made me want to participate in the future. Even though I'm not directing [the organization] anymore, I had such a good experience with capstone that I'm setting up my new work . . . as a CSUCI service learning site.

Discussion

This case study documents the feasibility of organizing a capstone course around CBR projects and presents an assessment that documents effectiveness at achieving the goals (and harnessing the benefits) of CBR and the capstone. The experiential benefits of participation in actual research, combined with the motivational benefits of working with a community partner, make for a capstone that is particularly effective as a culminating experience. Likewise, the capstone represents an ideal context for students to conduct CBR and reap its benefits—given that these are students at the end of their major in a class where expectations of rigorous research

are established. Assessment also suggests that the goal of meeting community needs can be fulfilled in this context.

Although participant responses underscore the projects' successes, there were concerns among capstone colleagues about the CBR focus of the course. First, there was a concern among colleagues that service hour requirements were being dropped (even if the service hours represented in producing the research were ultimately much greater). A second concern was the group basis of projects, which meant that students were not required to complete substantial *individual* written work. A third concern was that the applied emphasis of the reports did not demand integration of disciplinary literature or concepts, which is frequently a central goal of the capstone. Notwithstanding initial concerns, the outcomes—that is, the extent to which the goals of the capstone and CBR were fulfilled—largely allayed these concerns. Since the initial case study, capstone projects in our program have shifted toward CBR-oriented projects, expanding the application of CBR at our university. A wide variety of CBR projects have been conducted annually since the initial case study. Nevertheless, some persistent challenges remain that threaten the sustainability of the CBR-focused capstone.

Efforts to Sustain and Institutionalize

The single biggest threat to sustainability is the amount of instructor time and energy required for direct supervision of multiple CBR projects within a single course (although much of that is attributable to the capstone generally rather than the CBR application). The most important efforts toward sustainability, then, have focused on moderating the workload for instructors, as well as finding ways to increase professional recognition for the community service work.

The first effort on the part of our program to promote sustainability has been to reduce course capacity in the capstone from 25 students down to 15. That has been done on the basis of an attempt to generate "workload neutrality" in our courses such that those courses with the highest workload per student will have the lowest enrollments. The reduced capacity has made an immediate impact on instructor workload, as well as the quality of student experiences.

A more general effort to promote sustainability is a long-term curriculum redesign focused on better preparing students for the capstone. The redesign follows a range of best practices in our dis-

cipline (and throughout higher education) focused on creating a developmental and sequential curriculum to scaffold student skills. Our work was guided by the "liberal learning" documents produced by the American Sociological Association to report on best practices in curriculum design within the major *(McKinney et al., 2004; Pike et al., 2017)*. The intent is to address what is arguably the greatest challenge associated with capstone courses: the lack of student preparation, which effectively multiplies instructor workload *(Hauhart & Grahe, 2015)*. Program members are confident that when all components of the redesign are implemented, it will have a positive and significant effect on student preparation for the capstone. Ultimately, that also promises to lower workload, as better prepared students will on average require less time in supervision.

A third effort to promote sustainability (currently under discussion and expected to move forward soon) is to redesign the capstone toward a two-semester model. That would not only provide relief to capstone instructors, but decompress projects in ways that would address concerns of students and partners. This again follows recommendations presented by Hauhart and Grahe *(2015)* in their research. Although this research has indicated that a one-semester CBR capstone is feasible, concerns about its sustainability have moved us to rework the model.

The most exciting and innovative effort to promote sustainability takes a different approach from workload. Research has provided ample evidence of the substantial benefits to students and to partners of conducting CBR; the instructor, however, enjoys negligible benefits (aside from a general sense of satisfaction). A central problem is that although these projects result in very useful applied reports, they do not yield credit that adheres to traditional professional metrics (most notably, publications). This incongruity reflects the dearth of venues for disseminating the findings of CBR projects—largely because applied organizational research findings are not generalizable, which is most often a requirement for publication. Even though these reports may receive substantial public response, they are ultimately lost in the "gray literature." In this capstone course, the most notable example of the gap between public dissemination and formal documentation was the OLLI report, which was posted on the research page of the OLLI National Resource Center, along with an article explaining the partnership process for the purpose of promoting similar partnerships for other OLLI programs. A New York Public Library publication cited this report as a model, but the page where it appeared was taken down,

and no subsequent opportunity for dissemination has been found. That represents a loss on several levels.

The lack of publication venues for such results, and the corresponding lack of professional credit, remains a strong disincentive toward practicing CBR. This lack of opportunities for publications that would document or formalize their accomplishment for professional credit represents a particular concern for junior faculty. CBR advocates have made efforts to address the lack of publication venues (e.g., CES4Health in the field of community health), but opportunities are still extremely limited for such reports.

To provide support for this aspect of CBR, colleagues on our campus have worked together to create an annual online volume of peer-reviewed community-based research. The concept draws from efforts to promote community engagement through the creation of a repository for documenting and disseminating such activities *(Miller & Billings, 2012)*. In this case, the result is a venue that identifies and highlights the best examples of CBR conducted on campus. Peer review guarantees the baseline quality of the reports (including the appropriateness of methods, community benefit, clear presentation, etc.). The process also integrates community partners as reviewers, which will also help to sustain and expand CBR. The inaugural volume is set to be released in spring 2019 (and there is already interest in broader regional implementation). It is also important to note that in addition to making the practice sustainable for faculty, it will allow students to document their work in ways that will provide important benefits professionally.

Conclusion

This case study has been presented as a promising practice to increase community-engaged scholarship with students by integrating CBR into the capstone course. The case study illustrates that conducting CBR within the senior capstone not only is feasible but can achieve the goals of both CBR and the capstone. To the extent that the practice of conducting CBR within the capstone can be made sustainable, that represents a promising practice for expanding community-engaged scholarship with students in higher education. The project also suggests that more attention to the concurrent application of high-impact practices (HIPs) is warranted, focusing on how that might multiple (or erode) the impacts of each individually. Data from the California State University system *(O'Donnell, 2013)* suggest that participation in multiple HIPs during the course of a college career increases graduation rates sub-

stantially with each exposure; those effects are most substantial for Latino students (and, presumably, other student groups who are more likely to be first-generation college students, come from lower income families, or have recent immigrant backgrounds). However, we have little research on the outcomes of concurrent implementation, as in this case.

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BraveHeart Center for Place and Purpose: A New Community-in-Community Inclusion Model for Young Adults With Disabilities

Danilea Werner and Angie Colvin Burque

Abstract

BraveHeart Center for Place and Purpose (BraveHeart CPP) is a comprehensive post-high school, inclusion-focused partnership of university, faith, and local communities. This new initiative aims to address unmet needs of the vulnerable and underserved population of young adults with disabilities through a community-in-community inclusion (CICI) model. The CICI model was specifically designed to support opportunities for individuals with disabilities, especially those with moderate to severe challenges, to empower and increase their presence and level of participation in the community. This strengths-based model operates with a high level of respect and sensitivity for diversity and supports and enhances social skills, cognitive skills, self-esteem, creativity, and work skills for young adults with developmental disabilities. This article explains the CICI model and reviews the goals, activities, and outcomes of BraveHeart CPP's first year of operation.

Keywords: Community Inclusion, Individuals with Disabilities, Post High School

Introduction

*G*raduating high school is a celebrated milestone for most families. However, this landmark presents additional challenges for individuals with disabilities. The transition from high school into typical adulthood opportunities is limited for individuals with disabilities, especially those who have moderate to severe challenges. It is important to understand and implement opportunities for all young adults to successfully transition into adulthood and become valued members of the greater community.

Over the last 50 years services for adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities have changed significantly. Changes have been influenced by policy, spearheaded by the 1971 passage of the ICF/MR law, the 1973 passage of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the 1975 Education of All Handicapped Children Act (now IDEA). These policies have paved the way for better integrated practice and community involvement *(Marini, 2012)* and mirror the argument in the seminal 1972 text *Normalization*, in

which Wolf Wolfensberger posits that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities should have access to lives similar to those of other adults, including living arrangements, work arrangements, social activities, and recreational activities.

Current models of developmental disability services work to emulate Wolfensberger's sentiment by integrating studying, working, living, and recreational activities *(Neely-Barnes, Marcenko, & Weber, 2008)*. Individuals with developmental disabilities are now included in middle and high school classrooms and on college campuses *(Brown, Fay-Vershuur, Logan, & Rossiter, 2007)*. Yet, in many instances, individuals with disabilities, especially those with moderate to severe challenges, are still experiencing limited access to integrated and inclusive services, particularly as they transition out of high school. We were interested in exploring local integrated services for individuals with disabilities post high school, which subsequently led to the creation and implementation of a comprehensive community inclusion program that supports and enhances social skills, cognitive skills, self-esteem, creativity, and work skills for young adults with developmental disabilities. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to describe the development and implementation of BraveHeart Center for Place and Purpose (BCPP) and the emerging community-in-community inclusion model.

Background Needs Assessment

When 21-year-olds who have moderate to severe disabilities graduate from high school, graduation day begins a path to small, segmented opportunities to experience a sense of purpose and belonging. This descent into social isolation results because the resources for this population lack the consistency, daily routine, positive social interactions, and connection found in high school, as well as access to health and wellness activities. In fall 2015 we conducted a small ($n = 22$ families) exploratory study to investigate the needs of young adults with disabilities who had aged out of traditional school settings. This preliminary, localized needs assessment revealed a lack of organized, consistent, and meaningful programming opportunities for young adults with moderate to severe disabilities post high school. Specifically, the time charts revealed that over 70% of the young adult's time was spent at home with another family member. Their primary activities were community based but time limited. Only 14% ($n = 3$) had 6 or more hours of coordinated weekly activities. These activities were primarily events such as Special Olympics sports (seasonal) or were parent organized. The families reported that prior to graduation most

of the weekly hours were spent in school, interacting with social peers, and working on educational and vocational goals.

The needs assessment revealed a gap in local programming for post–high school young adults with disabilities, especially those with moderate to severe challenges. As a consequence of this gap, many young adults with disabilities live quiet and mostly solitary lives during the week and become mostly invisible to the larger community. This assessment provided evidence that a population who was once included in the larger community in a thoughtful, structured way (school) was suddenly forced into a pattern of social isolation and declining health status. As described in the Grand Challenges of Social Work (an initiative of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare) *(Uehara et al., 2013)* and throughout the literature *(Berkman, Kawachi, & Glymour, 2014)*, there is a link between social networks and health. Therefore, the authors created a model program (BraveHeart Center for Place and Purpose) to create a direct positive impact on social isolation, enhance community awareness and inclusion of people with disabilities, and simultaneously serve as a training ground for future social workers and other helping professionals.

Program Description

The faculty drafted a proposal for BraveHeart Center for Place and Purpose (BraveHeart CPP), a comprehensive post–high school community inclusion program that supports and enhances social skills, cognitive skills, self-esteem, creativity, and work skills for young adults with developmental disabilities. After an initial design was developed, university and community stakeholders, including parents of young adults with moderate to severe disabilities, provided feedback and development assistance with the structure of the program (i.e., space, supplies, and university student interns). Community stakeholders as well as parents stressed the importance of safety for the young adults, a desire for peer-to-peer social activity, a need for increased academic opportunities, a desire for health and wellness activities, improved opportunities for defining individual purpose, and an increased sense of community inclusion. These components are also discussed in the literature on social isolation. Martin and Cobigo *(2011)* identified six concepts that individuals with disabilities have identified as key to inclusion: being accepted as a person, not just a person with a disability; having significant reciprocal relationships; involvement in activities; being employed; having appropriate living accommodations; and being formally and informally supported. Stakeholder feed-

back and study of the literature influenced the program design to become more reflective of community inclusion methods and strengths-based practices. Therefore, BraveHeart CPP was designed to be a health and wellness–based program for young adults with moderate to severe disabilities who have aged out of traditional school programs and are in need of a daily structured routine that cultivates mind, body, and spirit through an inclusion-focused partnership of university, faith, and general communities. The mission of BraveHeart CPP is to provide a place where individuals with disabilities are offered inclusive, integrated opportunities for continued growth in the areas of health and fitness, academic and life skills, job skills and community volunteering, and creative art exploration.

Program Logistics and Schedule

BraveHeart CPP began operations in September 2016. It is based in a local faith community in close proximity to the university campus, downtown area, and small neighborhoods. The program meets Tuesday–Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. and follows the university's academic calendar with a fall (August–December) and spring (January–May) semester, each 15 weeks in duration. BraveHeart CPP membership is limited to 10–12 young adults with developmental disabilities. The program has five basic programmatic content areas: (1) movement and exercise, (2) learning (academic, life skills, etc.), (3) working (task assignments, etc.), (4) creating (art, music, etc.), and (5) community integration (community volunteer opportunities, etc.). A typical daily schedule is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Tentative Daily Schedule

8:00	Arrival
8:15	Yoga
8:45	Walk
10:00	Snack
10:30	Science-math-life skills
11:00	Exercise
11:30	Lunch
12:30	Computer fun
1:00	Music/singing
1:30	Walk
3:00	Work tasks, physical activity/exercise and games
4:00	Peer social time
5:00	Dismissal

Community-in-Community Inclusion (CICI) Theoretical Model

As a new initiative, BraveHeart CPP aims to address unmet needs of the vulnerable and underserved population of young adults with disabilities through a Community-in-Community Inclusion (CICI) model. The CICI model, created by the researchers, is a strengths-based model designed to provide opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to empower and increase their presence and level of participation in the university community, faith community, and larger community. Therefore, BraveHeart CPP addresses social isolation by providing a place for young adults to find their purpose through community inclusion, intellectual growth and development, and social belonging.

The CICI model is based on five core principles founded in social work values and ethics *(NASW, 2017)* and based on the ecological model *(Payne, 2016)*. The model assumes that communities are mutually beneficial to those who are included and integrated into shared community practice.

1. Communities are built on the assumption that everyone has a need to belong and have purpose.
2. Communities are a collection of varied and dynamic individuals, groups, and organizations. These entities form holistic subsets that are interrelated, yet function independently to meet their needs and pursue goals.

3. Community is cultivated by developing relationships that are personable, genuine, and strengths based.

4. Community is built on connection and shared lived experiences. Connection grows from consistent person-to-person compassionate and empathetic communication. Individuals benefit from ongoing relationships with reciprocal, compassionate, and empathetic communication.

5. Community cannot happen without presence. Presence provides an opportunity for individuals to be seen, heard, understood, and known. Being present takes time, patience, practice, and support.

The CICI model principles are rooted in the strengths-based perspective *(Saleebey, 1996)* and operate with a high level of respect and sensitivity for diversity and unique individual circumstances. To fully integrate the CICI model and guiding principles into BraveHeart CPP, daily programing is implemented via four strategies:

1. Integrate health and wellness activities throughout the daily program, with attention to supporting and empowering the individual with disabilities to monitor and track their efforts and outcomes.

2. Foster the university and faith partnership to create multiple experiences each week of inclusion, integration, and participation in and across communities.

3. Provide comprehensive and ongoing training and support to enhance effectiveness and retention of quality staff and volunteers skilled in assisting program members with self-determination and capacity-building activities.

4. Integrate community inclusion and outreach activities into daily activities to create shared experience, provide purpose, and promote reciprocal, empathetic communication.

The principles and strategies were purposefully developed to provide a supportive environment for BraveHeart CPP participants to build social capital through community inclusion. Chenoweth and Stehlik *(2012)* found that individuals with disabilities and their families experienced numerous barriers to building social capital, including having few resources to invest in building social capital, experiencing social isolation, and the reality of rejection. They posit that community inclusion is larger than participating in fun

activities: It is a valuable commodity important to individual and group success. Therefore, within the CICI model, the program participants are supported and trained to take on many roles that allow for self-expression, communication, connection, and overlapping participation in the center community, faith community, university community, and larger community on a daily and weekly basis. BraveHeart CPP members serve in a number of roles:

1. **Inclusion ambassador.** All program participants serve as active community liaisons. They interact with college-age peers, community residents, local business owners and patrons, and faith community members. Simplican, Leader, Kosciulek, and Leahy *(2015)* define social inclusion as the interaction between interpersonal relationships and community participation. Individuals in the role of inclusion ambassador are living this definition, as BraveHeart CPP was created to provide a safe place for the students to develop interpersonal relationships and participate in the community.

2. **Fit Me and Wellness Tracker.** All program participants are a part of the Fit Me Team, through participation in daily neighborhood walks, yoga, and physical education activities. Individual health and wellness profiles, including goals for the year, are completed with discussion from parents as well as participants. Each participant documents their daily exercise and physical activities, as well as weekly totals, on individual charts. This is a shared experience and an opportunity to support peers in their fitness goals.

3. **Academic and life skills learner.** BraveHeart CPP participants receive support to complete reading, science, math, and life skills lessons toward greater self-empowerment and enhanced cognitive functioning.

4. **Celebrate and support team member.** All BraveHeart CPP students contribute to the Art Helps and Heals Program—a signature BCPP program that identifies persons who are sick or elderly and would benefit from communication and social support to receive personalized communication from BraveHeart CPP students.

5. **Movie theater host.** BraveHeart CPP hosts a movie day at least once a month. The movie theater staff is involved in all areas of programming in order to prepare and execute the event. Preparation includes selecting the movies; cre-

ating advertising flyers; and distributing flyers to church staff, BraveHeart CPP volunteers, and family members. Participants design and create tickets, collect tickets, arrange the area to create a "movie theater" atmosphere, welcome moviegoers, start and stop the movie, thank visitors for attending and announce the next movie, place popcorn in containers and provide to customers, provide water bottles as requested, and perform cleanup after the movie.

Program Goals and Outcomes

The core principles and strategies of the CICI Model were created to increase community inclusion, reduce social isolation, and empower individuals with disabilities to increase their presence and level of participation in the university community, faith community, and larger community, thereby resulting in a community that is more diverse, empathetic, and connected. The following goals and activities were created to successfully implement the CICI model and BraveHeart CPP. Following each activity is a description of outcomes realized in the first year of operation.

Goal 1

BraveHeart CPP will provide an operationalization of the community-in-community inclusion model. In practice, this means designing and supporting opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to increase their presence and level of participation in the university community, faith community, and larger community.

Activity 1a. BraveHeart CPP students will participate in consistent activities that create an experience of greater belonging in the larger community.

Outcomes 1a. Two activities, the Art Helps and Heals Program and BCPP movie theater, helped BCPP participants make repeated connections with community members and facilitated feelings of belonging.

Art Helps and Heals Program. BraveHeart CPP implemented the Art Helps and Heals Program. This program was designed to create a connection to individuals in the community who are sick, elderly, and/or lonely. The Social Work student intern collaborated with local stakeholders to identify and contact potential "adoptees." By May 2016 the BraveHeart CPP participants had adopted

six individuals and delivered multiple pieces of artwork, handmade cards, and personalized notes.

BCPP movie theater. BraveHeart CPP held six movie theater days between January and April 2017. The student hosts performed various movie theater jobs that provided life skills training. An average of 11 BraveHeart CPP students participated in each movie day. An average of 25 guests from the community attended the movie day events, including 11 high school students receiving special education services at a local school.

Activity 1b. Interested members of the faith community will be engaged and supported in specific roles that enhance community inclusion of people with disabilities.

Outcomes 1b. From the beginning of BraveHeart CPP, two faith community members volunteered their time and talent. In October 2016 the person responsible for the faith community's Dance Ministry began volunteering each week to teach dance and movement. By May 2017, over 40 faith community members had volunteered time at BraveHeart CPP.

Activity 1c. BraveHeart CPP participants will be actively engaged in the university community.

Outcomes 1c. Integrating into the university is a core activity of BraveHeart CPP. The goal is for young adults with disabilities to interact and participate in campus activities alongside other college-age students. This interaction can promote deeper inclusion and possibly create opportunities for reciprocal communication. During the first year, the inclusion ambassadors participated in "Hey Day" activities, as well as other informal campus concourse activities during walks. They attended a university baseball game, toured the university theater, visited a petting zoo held on campus, and participated in a guided tour of the Athletics Complex. In addition, the ambassadors created art and photography that they showcased to university faculty, staff, and students in April 2017. The photography and art focused, in part, on their participation in the university, faith, and local communities.

Activity1d. BraveHeart CPP collaborates with university schools, colleges, and programs such as Rehabilitation and Disability Studies and Social Work to train and educate future helping professionals with a strengths-based and inclusion-oriented approach to working with persons with disabilities.

Outcomes 1d. One of the primary goals of BraveHeart CPP is to engage university students from a variety of majors in a satisfying growth opportunity to expand their learning beyond the

classroom. BraveHeart CPP aims to increase student exposure to people with disabilities, specifically those with moderate to severe challenges. University student volunteers and interns are exposed to this diverse population, one traditionally defined as disadvantaged and vulnerable, while receiving a supervised educational opportunity to increase professional skills and experience. In fall 2016, BraveHeart CPP served as an internship site for three Rehabilitation and Disability Studies senior interns. In spring 2017, BraveHeart CPP successfully trained and supervised six Rehabilitation and Disability Studies interns and one Social Work intern. In addition to the interns, BraveHeart CPP served as a practicum site for six students during the first year of operation. Practicums are short-term volunteer hours served in conjunction with a major course. Practicum students were from Rehabilitation and Disability Studies, Social Work, Special Education, and Kinesiology.

BraveHeart CPP collaborated with multiple university departments and programs as well as clubs and community groups that offered additional programming and/or served as community inclusion sponsors. Community inclusion sponsors dedicated a minimum of 2 hours each week to BraveHeart CPP for 1 month. BraveHeart CPP collaborated with a music education professor to provide on-site training of eight Music Education students. Programming for BCPP students included access to a new instrument and a lesson in music creating mood. Professors in Kinesiology collaborated with BraveHeart CPP to integrate coordinated physical activity into the weekly schedule.

Activity 1e. BraveHeart CPP will participate in community inclusion and outreach activities to create shared experience, provide purpose, and promote reciprocal, empathetic communication.

Outcomes 1e. BraveHeart CPP participated in a number of community outreach and engagement activities during the first year of operation. The staff views all daily programming as an opportunity for inclusion and outreach; however, through the following specific activities, BraveHeart CPP participants helped the community, thereby increasing social inclusion. These events encourage a society that Milner and Kelly *(2009)* advocate—one in which all members are seen as equally important to the community.

BraveHeart CPP Trick or Treat for Cans. Trick or Treat for Cans was held on Friday, October 28, 2016 in partnership with the university bookstore. A total of 1,411 pounds was collected. Six departments and offices in addition to the university bookstore participated.

BraveHeart CPP Holiday Toy Drive. The Holiday Toy Drive was held on November 30 and December 1, 2016. A total of 110 toys were donated to the local fire department's Holiday Toys for Tots Program. In addition, 18 small blankets were donated to the local foster care program.

BraveHeart CPP Warm Blankets Drive. This activity was designed to benefit community members who are sick or elderly and have severe income challenges. BraveHeart CPP collected 100 blankets through partnership with local schools, businesses, and university departments.

Goal 2

BraveHeart CPP aims to benefit the overall health and well-being of individuals with disabilities through the provision of physical, social, and academic activities.

Activity 2a. BraveHeart CPP will positively impact the overall health and well-being of student participants through the provision of physical activities.

Outcomes 2a. All program participants contribute to the Fit Me Team through participation in daily physical activity. To encourage health and wellness, community integration, and social belonging, inclusion ambassadors participate in daily walks. The average distance walked in morning walks was 2–3 miles. Afternoon daily walks averaged 1–2 miles. All BraveHeart CPP students participate in morning yoga daily (4 days a week). In spring 2017 BraveHeart CPP interns provided baseball and track and field skills training for students participating in Miracle League Baseball and Special Olympics Track and Field competitions.

Activity 2b. BraveHeart CPP will positively impact the overall health and well-being of student participants through the provision of social activities.

Outcomes 2b. An important part of BraveHeart CPP is the inclusion of the ambassadors in social activities, including tasks that can be equated to job tasks and daily life skills. BraveHeart CPP students participated in daily setup, cleanup, and room arrangement in the center site, as well as assisted in setup and decorating for Thursday night fellowship dinners. The students also received job skills training on a visit to the University Donut Company, a local business where they were allowed to serve and operate the register for fellow students and walk-in customers. The daily walks in the community and on campus have served to increase student

recognition and social interaction with college students and university faculty and staff.

Activity 2c. BraveHeart CPP will positively impact the overall health and well-being of student participants through the provision of academic activities.

Outcomes 2c. One of the most important goals for the parents of BraveHeart CPP students was the integration of academic activities in daily programming. Therefore the program coordinator models the implementation of academic activities for university interns, who then are tasked with developing and delivering two academic lessons per week. Each lesson is observed and evaluated by student peers and the program coordinator. Lessons include writing tasks, science experiments, language usage, basic math, and more.

Discussion—Community Engagement

BraveHeart CPP supports young adults with disabilities who have aged out of traditional school settings by providing them with consistent experiences akin to those lived by peers without disabilities. Young adults without disabilities wake up each weekday and engage in a routine of behaviors, tasks, and experiences that root them in a specific place and give them a purpose for their days. By providing a structured routine that mirrors what a majority of young adults experience daily, BraveHeart CPP extends this "typical" experience to individuals with moderate to severe disabilities, providing opportunities to live, learn, work, and play in inclusive communities.

BraveHeart CPP builds social capital by allowing participants to be active, integrated, and engaged members of their immediate community as well as the larger community. Carnaby *(2016)* discusses the importance of fostering relationship building between individuals with and without disabilities, stating that it is highly important that the relationships be reciprocal. Through fostering reciprocal relationships, everyone is able to better support one another to build an interdependent community. Therefore, BraveHeart CPP serves as an active internship site for university students and volunteers. In addition, participants receive a variety of physical, social, and academic learning opportunities that support a higher level of self-determination and independence. Hall *(2009)* analyzed a variety of social inclusion studies and identified six vital components of inclusion: being accepted as an individual, meaningful relationships, involvement in activities, appropriate

living arrangements, autonomy in employment, and formal and informal supports. BraveHeart CPP integrates these components by providing a safe, active, planned daily schedule of purposeful activities to enhance quality of life with a focus on physical, academic, and social health and skill development. In addition, through utilization of the CICI model, young adults with disabilities are provided daily opportunities to engage in reciprocal communication as part of an inclusive community.

BraveHeart CPP lays a foundation for system change by creating a day-to-day, ongoing presence of young adults with disabilities in the typical structures, routines, and experiences of the university, faith, and larger communities. As demonstrated by its goals, activities, and outcomes, this program contributes to filling a gap in the community and enriches the community through enhanced interaction of young adults with disabilities. In the CICI model, there is focused attention and effort to develop inclusive communities that value the strengths of each unique person. Milner and Kelly *(2009)* identified five key factors for successful community belonging: self-determination, social identity, reciprocity and valued contribution, expectations for participation that were not limiting, and psychological safety. The CICI model was designed with these components in mind. BraveHeart CPP demonstrates the capacity of communities to support individual needs of persons with disabilities. It also demonstrates how planning and systematic exposure and interaction can serve as a foundation for grassroots advocacy for increased involvement in all levels of community life.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Dolgon, C., Mitchell, T. D., & Eatman, T. K. (Eds.). (2017). *The Cambridge handbook of service learning and community engagement*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. 572 pp.

Review by Kelly Ward

Editor's Note: JHEOE is honored to publish this book review contributed by Kelly Ward who passed away suddenly July 8, 2018. We pay tribute to Dr. Ward's many contributions to the community engagement field as a scholar and campus leader, and publish this final piece with deep gratitude and in her memory.

My first job after my doctoral program was as the Service-Learning Facilitator (a.k.a. faculty developer) for Montana Campus Compact. The goal of the position was to create infrastructures to support faculty and students to using service-learning and for campuses to further their community engagement. I felt so strongly about service-learning's ability to truly change the world one student, one class, and one community partner at a time. I was also dedicated to research related to community engagement and part of my work was supporting faculty and creating structures to recognize faculty work in the community and to build community and campus partnerships. Much of my work was guided by Keith Morton's *(1995)* article, "The Irony of Service: Charity, Project, and Social Change in Service-Learning," which was published in the *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. In the article, Morton identifies a continuum of service that ranges from charity to social change. I resonated strongly with Morton's message and used it to frame and guide my research and practice. At times community and campus collaborations that are based in charity can have their place (think of fundraisers), and what Morton identifies as projects can also have their place (think of stocking food pantry shelves). But it was Morton's conceptualization of social change that really propelled me in my work. Social change perspectives are geared toward empowerment and transformation in ways that look at underlying causes and concerns. Social change perspectives fuel and power community engagement to foster true and lasting change.

The Cambridge Handbook of Service-Learning and Community Engagement, edited by Corey Dolgon, Tania D. Mitchell, and Timothy K. Eatman, deserves a place on the bookshelf of every office of community engagement, service-learning, volunteerism,

and related corollaries. The *Handbook* is a true resource that is in and of itself an interesting beginning-to-end read, or it can be used as a reference guide when looking to answer a particular question (e.g., What's the history of service-learning?), address an issue, or find a way to improve practice. The book is also sure to be of interest and use to researchers who explore different aspects of community engagement, engaged scholarship, service-learning, and related topics. Community partners working with higher education institutions will also find the compendium of topics interesting and useful. The *Handbook* contains a combination of personal essays, biographical pieces, institutional perspectives, historical reviews, and review essays that, in combination, make for an enjoyable and informative read. The *Handbook* can also serve as a desktop reference and be used when exploring a particular aspect of service-learning or community engagement. The *Handbook* is truly a resource, albeit an expensive one, that covers the gamut when it comes to service-learning and community engagement.

The *Handbook* is divided into five parts. Part 1, Histories of Education and Engagement, consists of nine chapters that cover the gamut from an overview of civic engagement in higher education to chapters dedicated to the origins and foundations that have shaped engagement and service-learning as practiced in contemporary higher education settings. I particularly appreciated the chapters about Jane Addams and labor education for how they uniquely frame foundations that are often forgotten. The focus on agricultural and extension programs is important for the historical reasons, and also for the vital, but sometimes overlooked, role extension plays in carrying out community engagement. I also appreciate the perspectives that draw from Historically Black Colleges and Universities, given their strong traditions related to community engagement and the democratic project in higher education. There was a bit of a missed opportunity in not including Tribal Colleges and Universities, given their equally compelling and unique histories when it comes to ties, reciprocity, and engagement with tribal communities and related entities. Special-focus colleges have unique histories that are embedded in community engagement and collaboration. Overall, Part 1 of the *Handbook* is engaging, interesting, and pulls together some of the key foundational and historical ground related to service-learning and community engagement. Although not officially part of Part 1, the introduction to the entire volume by pioneers, Stanton and Giles, is an excellent overview of the founders, framers, and future related to community engagement in higher education. The intro-

duction covers a lot of ground and provides an excellent base for the *Handbook*.

Part 2, *Best Practices and Pedagogies*, delivers as intended in terms of providing readers with specific examples of information related to topics like learning outcomes and how to make them more relevant to multiple audiences and assessment of how to demonstrate the student learning in service-learning. The authors of each chapter in this part of the book provide background information and then particular institutional and community examples. The collection of chapters also offers new ideas about community partnerships and looks specifically at topics often overlooked (e.g., adult learners and service-learning).

In Part 3 of the book, *Engaged Teaching and Scholarship Across Disciplines*, readers are exposed to some of the nuances that are associated with particular disciplinary foundations and how they shape community engagement and service-learning. This collection of chapters that look at particular disciplines (i.e., humanities, women's studies, social sciences, art, ethnic studies, environmental studies, and preprofessional programs) would be of use to faculty and administrators working in these areas. The specific examples are sure to be useful in helping faculty "see" discipline-specific examples of community engagement. Although I know that not every book can cover every topic, there was definitely a missed opportunity in this part of the *Handbook* in not including STEM fields or the health professions—especially given their critical importance in the contemporary landscape of higher education and society.

Part 4, *Research Teaching, Professions, and Policy*, builds on organizational, foundational, and historical constructs that shape service-learning and community engagement. This part of the book addresses the "interdependence among research, teaching, professions and policy" *(p. 340)* that is needed to guide the field. I really appreciate the practical topics incorporated in this section (e.g., faculty development), the often overlooked (e.g., professional staff), and the larger networks associated with the advancement of service-learning and community engagement (e.g., Campus Compact), and advancing research that exemplifies engaged scholarship and scholarship about engagement (e.g., *Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning*). Chapters 34 and 35 in this part of the *Handbook* exemplify how public scholarship plays out in particular spaces.

In Part 5, *Critical Voices*, chapter authors push readers to move beyond "feel good" and "apple pie" narratives of service-learning to perspectives that are critical, transformative, and that support democratic perspectives. Using a combination of personal narratives, examples from particular projects, and theoretical review, this compendium of chapters provides synthesis and ties community engagement and service-learning to the enactment of socially just, democratic, and political engagement ideals that are foundational to higher education (past, present, and future). The *Handbook* concludes by providing readers with a path forward and a set of theories, practices, and principles that can guide theory, research, and practice related to service-learning and community engagement.

Collectively, the *Handbook* is a narrative of hope, transformation, and critical practice. The editors have amassed a unique collection of authors and topics that chart the history and foundation of community engagement, examples of how it has been and can be enacted, and ideas to chart a path forward. In the preface of the *Handbook*, the editors espouse their perspective by stating, "in contrast to most work on service-learning and community engagement, this *Handbook* embraces community-engaged practice as political education" *(p. xix)*. The *Handbook* lives up to its promise to engage readers in new, different, and transformative ways to think about service-learning and community engagement. In addition, the *Handbook* aims to tie the practice of service-learning and community engagement to larger political practice. Much of the writing and research related to service-learning and community engagement is descriptive or prescriptive. The *Handbook* is refreshing in that it goes beyond "how to" and offers novel and critical perspectives that are so often missing in discourse and practice related to community engagement.

The editors of the book use historical and philosophical perspectives to tie current social issues with community engagement. Service-learning is so much more than assessing community impact or counting hours. Instead, community engagement activities are opportunities for people from community organizations and colleges and universities to connect and make change for a more equitable world. The editors encourage practitioners (and to that I would add all readers) to take on the "big questions of democracy and political engagement," researchers to "measure the serious impacts necessary to make significant social change," and students, faculty, administrators, and community partners to "transcend weak notions of reciprocity and pursue principled collaborations to work against oppression in all of its manifesta-

tions *(pp. xix-xx)*. As the editors indicate, these are "tall orders," but the *Handbook* delivers in terms of providing readers with the resources, examples, and ideas necessary to propel action.

My reading of *The Cambridge Handbook of Service-Learning and Community Engagement* reinvigorated the importance of perspectives related to community engagement and service-learning that engender change and transformation—what I think of as a "critical" perspective of community engagement that recognizes power, privilege, and difference. At the core, the *Handbook* is about providing readers with the foundations, experiences, and tools necessary to foster campus and community partners in ways that change campus and community organizations and the issues they seek to address.

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About the Reviewer

Kelly Ward was vice provost for faculty development and recognition and professor of higher education at Washington State University. Her research interests focused on issues of the professoriate, including: the integration of teaching, research, and service; scholarly roles in outreach and engagement; work-life balance; career development; and faculty diversity in the science, technology, engineering, and math fields. Among her many publications, Dr. Ward was coauthor of *Academic Motherhood: How Faculty Manage Work and Family (2012)* and author of *Faculty Service Roles and the Scholarship of Engagement (2003)*. She received her Ph.D. from Pennsylvania State University.

Stoecker, R. (2016). *Liberating service learning and the rest of higher education civic engagement.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press. 219 pp.

Review essay by Gabrielle Hickmon, Patti H. Clayton, and Sarah E. Stanlick

From the Associate Editor...

In his book *Liberating Service Learning and the Rest of Higher Education Civic Engagement (2016)*, Randy Stoecker offers a broad critique of the current practice of service-learning as context for advocating what he describes as a liberating vision for civic engagement education. In a sense, the book is a provocation by a respected critical scholar and practitioner of service learning to others in the field. While reviewers Gabrielle Hickmon, Patti H. Clayton, and Sarah E. Stanlick share some philosophical ground with Stoecker, they take exception to several aspects of the central arguments of his book.

Their review is not typical of those published in the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*. First, it is a review essay. This form of writing calls on reviewers to offer broader reactions to books under review and fuller contextualization of them within the literature. In order to accommodate such thoroughly constructed commentary, review essays are longer than traditional reviews. In this case, five times longer than most *JHEOE* reviews. Secondly, this review is the product of a small team of authors, rather than a single reviewer. Hickmon, Clayton, and Stanlick refer to the experience of reviewing the book together within their review. By example, they make the case for group reading and discussion more generally. Most reviewers read and write alone, and even when partnered with a second reviewer (often a graduate student), offer no commentary on having had a shared experience reviewing a book. I appreciated that element; often scholarship – particularly community-engaged scholarship – is strengthened by being a community endeavor. Finally, this is a fairly critical review. Given the brevity of most reviews and the positive dispositions of people in this field, *JHEOE* reviewers are typically loath to focus on critique, sometimes needing to be urged to offer even constructive criticism in the service of authors and our readers. That was not the case here. Like Stoecker, Hickmon, Clayton, and Stanlick have a point of view. In sharing their divergent views both author and reviewers contribute to the intellectual quality of discourse in this field. Collectively, we are all well-served by their efforts.

As associate editor for book reviews, I would welcome manuscripts of well-written review essays, particularly of books of wide interest to the field like the one at hand. Please know that there is a place for this kind of writing in the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*.

Burton Bargerstock
Associate Editor

Voice, Liberation, and the Future of Service-Learning

"*I*f you are like me, you will alternately feel defensive, amused, and consternated" *(p. xvi)*. Author Randy Stoecker successfully predicts some of what will go on in readers' hearts and minds—at least, some of what did in ours. We were also intrigued, impatient, and irritated. Stoecker thinks and writes with passion, and he evokes the same in his readers—in part, we suspect, by intent. Whether you have heard him literally speak or not, you cannot help but hear his emphatic voice as you read, and it is also in part because of that dynamic that a rich emotional and intellectual response to the book is likely. *Liberating Service Learning and the Rest of Higher Education Civic Engagement* (hereafter referred to as *Liberating Service Learning*) is Stoecker talking, with conviction and passion, in his own no-holds-barred voice. In our experience, service-learning and community/civic engagement (SLCE: the abbreviation we use throughout this essay, use of which, to clarify, is our practice, not Stoecker's) people tend to be attuned to voice—to its use and abuse, what cultivates and silences it, what it reveals and obscures. To who speaks and who does not, who speaks over others, who tries to speak on behalf of others. Voice matters to us, and we engage with it. If we were less inclined to do so, we probably would not respond to it strongly, either affectively or cognitively. We probably would not try to stay open to it when it troubles us. We probably would not read—or review—books with an eye—an ear?—focused on it.

This review essay has a lot to do with voice . . . and not only Stoecker's, although certainly that is part of it. It is also about our own voices: Gabrielle's, Sarah's, and Patti's. It is an expression of our voices, individually and collectively, and part of our ongoing development of them. Gabrielle brings to this review experience with and study of international educational development as well as the personal and professional identity and lived experience of an

emerging young scholar of color. Sarah brings years of experience in work related to global citizenship and human rights as well as current immersion in the leadership of an SLCE center focused on ethical, partnership-centric engagement. Patti writes as a veteran SLCE practitioner-scholar whose work has focused primarily on community-engaged learning and on cocreation among all partners in SLCE.

It is our intention to exercise our voices in this space, in part, to honor ideas and practices we fear are not acknowledged in this book. Stoecker frequently lumps most current SLCE into a homogeneous set he describes as "focus[ed] on being the least intellectual practice in higher education" and "offer[ing] the least we can rather than the most" *(p. 4)*. This is unfair to and disrespectful of decades of hard work and serious thought by deeply committed individuals and programs who share his concerns about insufficient community impact. We are concerned that such characterizations are at odds with our own and others' sustained efforts to nurture an ever more inclusive and self-critical community of SLCE practitioner-scholars that continues to better understand and improve the quality of its processes, inquiry, and impacts across the full range of arenas, including communities at large. We attempt to offer what we believe is a more fair consideration of the author's ideas than he extends to most members of the SLCE community, and we invite readers to try to look beyond the pervasive dismissive tone to engage with significant questions the book raises.

Unheard Voices

We readily acknowledge that the voices of individuals who are not based at least partly in higher education are not directly expressed in this review. At the same time, we believe that we write not only as academics but also as community members and citizens who are part of community organizations, participate in civic processes, and interact with a range of individuals who are both more and less affected by various injustices than we are. As with our colleagues and neighbors around the United States, we have of late been especially entrenched in thinking about race, dialogue, and the power of narratives. We have thus been taking a hard look in the mirror, grappling with questions of voice, meaningful representation of self and others, and what liberation looks like in our country and world in the 21st century.

This review essay is, in some ways ironically, about "unheard voices," including those of community members to whom

Stoecker and his colleagues called the SLCE movement's attention almost a decade ago. The book *The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning (Stoecker, Tryon, & Hilgendorf, 2009)*, perhaps the most well-known of Stoecker's previous work, challenges student-centric SLCE to ask whether communities benefit from and become empowered through partnerships and projects that proponents so often label with the—we completely agree—overused adjective "transformative." Students in a seminar on qualitative research interviewed staff of community organizations who partner in SLCE and wrote up their analyses of what they heard as a way of opening space for otherwise "unheard voices" to be shared. Almost all chapters in that book include quotes from community partners, and Chapter 8 is authored by Amy Mondloch, then director of a nonprofit organization. Her chapter is, to us, the highlight of that book, as through it we are all able to hear an SLCE community partner giving voice directly to the commitment to everyone being a learner, a teacher, and a leader. That the voices of community members are, with the exception of that chapter, heard only through the representation of them by Stoecker and his students is both a lost opportunity and an indicator of Stoecker's long-standing tendency—continued in *Liberating Service Learning*—to position members of the academy primarily, and in rather sharp contrast with members of broader communities, as knowledge workers.

A Vision for SLCE

That earlier book closes with an epilogue that lays the foundation for Stoecker's ongoing development of an approach to SLCE that engages with the voices of community members. It posits two potential futures, one in which the nature and practice of SLCE continue down the "current" path, "with not enough attention to community outcomes," and the other in which "community outcomes are the first priority, not the last, and service learning is structured to maximize community impact" *(p. 187)*. *Liberating Service Learning* exists because of Stoecker's disappointment, frustration, and anger that the movement in the United States—his acknowledged focus—has not, as he sees it, chosen the second possible future. He now uses the term "institutionalized service learning" for SLCE that stayed on the student-centric path, which means for almost all instances of it. "Liberating service learning" is the unrealized alternative future. The term explicitly speaks both to the need to liberate all participants in SLCE from a practice that makes us "complicit in maintaining exclusion, exploitation, and

oppression" *(p. 6)* and to the need to liberate SLCE itself from the "historical baggage" *(p. 7)* that has become deeply rooted in the neoliberal higher education landscape and maintains systems of power and privilege underlying class, race, gender, and so on. A "liberating" SLCE would, instead, be "part of real social change—[helping] to end conditions of oppression, exploitation, and exclusion in society" *(p. 4)*. It would not be theorized and implemented primarily as pedagogy, out of assumptions that it is fundamentally "about affecting students, not communities" *(p. 7)*, but rather as a social change strategy. We consider below how the contrasts Stoecker draws between these two possibilities may enshrine conceptual and practical hierarchies that, as we see it, are at the heart of the world—and worldview—that SLCE at its best seeks to uncover, inquire into, understand, and change.

What Stoecker wants to liberate SLCE from and what his proposed liberating vision consists of in theory and practice are clearly laid out. Before we summarize the book and explore a few of our own responses and questions, we offer the following excerpt from the poem that closes it. We would have found it easier to engage with his perspective had the poem opened the book, as it reveals concretely his take on the appropriate role of members of the academy in social change initiatives. We invite readers to pause over it and acknowledge the assumptions you bring to the book and to SLCE itself, as we believe this is a necessary prerequisite to engaging Stoecker's ideas with an open mind.

> *. . . all through the land*
> *The master had silenced each woman, person, and man. . . .*
> *The poor were most hungry and the sick sicker yet . . .*
> *Oppression was normal, accepted, and unseen,*
> *And the windows to truth were all fogged and uncleaned. . . .*
> *. . .*
> *. . . together they talked about ways to make change,*
> *. . .*
> *. . . they all could agree that the system was slop,*
> *And the oppression of people was the first thing to stop.*
> *. . .*
> *"We need to know more," they said, "before we get lost,"*
> *. . .*
> *So they sought out the teachers and asked for the books,*
> *But their efforts resulted in stares and blank looks.*
> *. . .*

[One] teacher said, "Sorry, I know not what to do,"
"Though I know how to learn--about that I've a clue."
And the people said, "Yes, we don't want you to tell us."
"We want to learn learning; perhaps you can help us?"
So the teacher and people, who were now both together,
They started to study, teaching each other.
And the knowledge they built grew faster and faster,
And the people grew ready to throw off their master.
Out into the streets the people went with their clout,
And confronted the master and said, "You are out!"
"No more will we swallow your lies and deceit,"
"We've learned how to learn and you now face defeat!"
And the people and teacher, who now were as one,
Started a new world. . . . (pp. 183–185)

With the orientation to the vision of "liberating" SLCE this poem provides, we turn to a critical overview of the structure and content of the book and examine a few aspects of Stoecker's argument that stand out to us. We encourage you to read the book and bring your own work into conversation with it—in a way that poses critical questions to both and thereby contributes to our collective efforts to better understand and continuously enhance the processes and impacts of SLCE.

Part of the Solution or Part of the Problem?

Liberating Service Learning opens with a personal prelude in which Stoecker shares his concerns about his own SLCE practice, noting that 30 years of it have increasingly led him to "see the contradictions, the unrealized potential, the unrecognized urgency of the causes" *(p. xi)*. The prelude lays out his standard for his own work:

> If I can't make a difference—not-a-maybe-someday-in-the-future-because-some-student-I-taught-maybe-influenced-someone-who-maybe-indirectly-influenced-some-change difference but an immediate and visible difference in the ability of a collective of oppressed, exploited, and excluded people to gain and practice power—then I have failed. I have also failed if I can't help turn out students who can also do this. *(p. xiii)*

Stoecker is deeply disappointed by "what we have not accomplished" as a movement generally, given that "things are really bad out there"; as one example, "those who have endured the legacy of slavery, genocide, and colonization continue to find not just liberty and the pursuit of happiness but life itself to be elusive dreams" *(p. xiii)*. He thus writes most fundamentally "to figure out whether there are practical ways to do . . . this work better. Not a little better. A lot better" *(p. xiii)*.

We share that goal in our work and are pleased to see Stoecker's intent to "learn from and amplify the critiques of those who directly experience" the issues he is most concerned with SLCE addressing—oppression, exploitation, and exclusion—although we find his related claim that he is "not pursuing [his] own critique" to be a bit disingenuous (pp. x–xi). On the one hand, we, and we expect many readers, share uncertainty about whether the work we do makes a meaningful difference. On the other hand, Stoecker's characterization of the type of difference he implies academics often settle for and the type he considers successful seems to us oversimplified and perhaps even inappropriately manipulative of his readers. Are we being shamed into judging our own work a failure unless we frame it in these terms? We ourselves often speak of "*nudging* the world, any part of the world, toward a shared, desired vision of the possible" and have summarized the set of visions we and many of our colleagues (those based primarily in communities and those on campuses) hold as "a world that is increasingly peaceful, compassionate, just, inclusive, and verdant" *(Clayton et al., 2014, p. 6)*. We are concerned that Stoecker's standard for not-failing—at least insofar as his rhetorical strategy seeks to place it on others—is not only rarely obtainable but an inappropriately grandiose and narrowly constrained take on the community-oriented goals many of us may bring to SLCE.

Stoecker writes this book, he concludes in the prelude, to be "part of the solution rather than part of the problem" *(p. xiii)*. One of the questions we kept coming back to throughout the book concerns whether his understanding of academics, but not community members more generally, as "knowledge workers" perpetuates "the problem" through enshrining the dualisms that are arguably at the heart of the changes democratically engaged SLCE seeks to bring about. The prelude left us with the primary question each of us had upon first picking up the book largely unresolved: Given what he is trying to do here, why is this not a coauthored book or one that at least substantively and directly incorporates voices other than Stoecker's own? The range of "unheard voices" in this book needs

justifying, and the lack of both those voices and such an explanation raised serious qualms for us that only deepened as we read further.

Stoecker's Worries

After the prelude, the book is divided into three parts. Part 1 lays out Stoecker's concerns about SLCE as he sees it currently conceived and practiced. Chapter 1 ("Why I Worry") goes right to the heart of his concerns about "institutionalized" SLCE with a story of student civil disobedience on behalf of worker unionization on campus and the resultant disciplinary hearing. The students "had done their homework" and were "supporting a community effort getting at one of the root causes of poverty" *(p. 4)*. This not being considered legitimate SLCE—whereas students putting in a small number of hours serving at a community organization as part of a formalized course is—serves as a microcosm of Stoecker's concerns about how we define and undertake SLCE. Stoecker's own experience teaching a course that included working with a neighborhood group to turn a vacant building into a community center serves as a second example:

> My students and I helped the group learn city zoning code, housing code, . . . accessibility law . . . [and] what other community centers did. We helped them gather information from their own community so they could say what they wanted to happen in such a center. But we (and I should really say "I") didn't do nearly as well helping the residents learn lobbying, organizing, and change making, so while they actually got the city to purchase the building, its transformation into a community center was tied up for more than two years in all kinds of bureaucratic red tape and residents did not have the organizing capacity to move things along. *(p. 7)*

Institutionalized SLCE is tame, apolitical, and nonthreatening to existing power structures. It is focused on student learning, reduces to forced volunteerism, neglects serious consideration of whether and how community outcomes result, and serves to keep everyone adjusted to—rather than mobilized to dismantle—the status quo. A "liberating" conception and practice of SLCE would be driven by a very different understanding of "our role in contributing to theory that people can use to make more sense of their world and act in

more collectively liberating ways within it by understanding how to transform it" *(p. 7)*.

Chapter 2 ("A Brief Counter-Intuitive History of Service Learning") and Chapter 3 ("Theories [Conscious and Unconscious] of Institutionalized Service Learning") are designed to "help us see not just the need for change but the possibilities for it" *(p. 10)* and thereby complete the stage-setting for the in-depth examination of the sources of and differences between "institutionalized" and "liberating" SLCE that comprise most of the book. Stoecker challenges the tendency to claim Dewey's theorizing about experiential learning as the primary source of SLCE and instead takes us back to the very earliest experiments with "university settlements" in London in the 1880s and traces a line of development from there through the Highlander Folk School, civil rights and antiwar movements, and associated campus activism. He suggests that "the best higher education service learning done in the history of the United States was done under the label 'student activism'" and that "it is completely missing from the official histories of institutionalized service learning" *(p. 15)*.

We want to note the extent to which examples of Stoecker's earlier practice seem to be light years beyond the volunteer placement approach to "SLCE" that we and many others share his concerns about. At the same time, however, the reification of his two categories of SLCE (institutionalized and liberating) highlights for us a troubling reductionism that imposes mutual exclusivity on a set of complex and varied practices, denies the multiplicity of forces that influence the work of SLCE, and makes nuanced critique and associated improvement all but impossible.

SLCE as Firefighting

Between Part 1 and Part 2 is a two-page interlude that concretizes Stoecker's take on institutionalized SLCE by applying it to the imagined operations of fire departments. If they were organized along the same lines as most current SLCE, he claims, fire departments would fight fires "only at certain times of the year" and for a limited number of hours and firefighters would "get to choose" whose fires they wanted to fight *(p. 27)*. People whose homes were on fire would have a hard time getting in touch with firefighters who could help and would have to supply the needed water. Not only would there not be advance training in firefighting but the very purpose of fighting fires would be to provide it. The analogy is

humorous, and we expect some readers will—likely as intended—wince when it hits a bit too close to home for comfort.

The analogy also, however, embodies in microcosm what we see as a problematic aspect of Stoecker's thinking that pervades the book; readers who agree with us will likely be annoyed if not angered. In short, the analogy conveys his tendency to hold up current understanding of and practice of SLCE in a way that comes across as a strawperson. It takes much of what the movement knows to be poor practice—which we quite agree is happening—and overgeneralizes it to represent current practice as a whole. Stoecker largely ignores the reality that better practice is also happening and dismisses the effort that, in our experience, many SLCE practitioner-scholars located primarily in communities and those on campuses make to do this work in ways that engage with its complexities. Equating students, faculty, and staff with modern-day firefighters, whose job it is to come in and save us when we need them, suggests that SLCE positions people from the academy as the primary if not the only ones responding to community issues—as the well-resourced experts who can and should fix problems in communities. Does some current practice assume that? Certainly. However, a growing number of practitioner-scholars are calling upon us and our colleagues to move beyond such technocratic orientations. We do not have to read deeply into the literature or look at many community–campus partnerships to find evidence that SLCE at its best does not take such a stance. We would find the book much more useful if it engaged with SLCE in its full complexity rather than reducing it to what often comes across as a cartoon version of itself.

An analogy with firefighting could carry that weight were it treated differently, perhaps set outside the contemporary urban Western context and framed as a task that everyone takes on and used to concretize the difficulties of collaborating on change *(K. Edwards, August 13, 2017 personal communication)*. Firefighting thus construed might, for example, involve everyone coming together in the moment with water and shovels and also working to reduce incidents of fire through innovative safety measures, trash removal processes, and housing regulations. If we start with the assumption that we all see ourselves as members of broader communities and are all doing our best to contribute responsibly, then we can come together in a nuanced exploration of the shortcomings—indeed, the dangers—of some current practices and the possibilities for alternatives that are increasingly empowering and impactful. But if we start with the conviction that most if not all of us are care-

less at best or intentionally exploitative at worst, then we are not very likely to cocreate ever better ways of being and doing together. The Interlude serves the author's purpose of illustrating the nature and consequences of the version of SLCE he has written this book to challenge, but in doing so it reveals what we see as an unfair, uncritical, and ultimately unhelpful set of assumptions.

Contrasting Liberating With Institutionalized SLCE

Part 2 includes four chapters focused on the "theories of" learning (Chapter 4), service (Chapter 5), community (Chapter 6), and change (Chapter 7) that Stoecker argues undergird institutionalized SLCE. Parallel chapters unfold in the reverse order—change (Chapter 8), community (Chapter 9), service (Chapter 10), and learning (Chapter 11)—in Part 3 to structurally embody liberating SLCE's explicit reversal of these priorities. "A different ordering," Stoecker explains, "provides a foundation for a different practice" *(p. 26)*. Table 1 provides a few of the key elements of one of these four underlying bodies of theory—learning—as Stoecker sees it emerging in "institutionalized" and "liberating" SLCE. We offer this glimpse into these chapters as an aid to readers in understanding Stoecker's two frameworks.

Table 1. Learning: Institutionalized and Liberating SLCE

Institutionalized SLCE	Liberating SLCE
SLCE is a pedagogy (a way to teach) and is designed to achieve preestablished (by the instructor) learning objectives.	Teaching college students is a "secondary consideration" to "building the knowledge power of grassroots constituency members, and then their allies, to support local action toward social change" *(p. 147)*.
The focus of SLCE is on the learning of college students.	
	The model is a participatory process of popular education, in which people set their own change agendas and learning is in the service of pursuing them.
Learning is experiential and comes from reflection.	
Academic credit is given for learning, not for service.	Academics bring to the table "the ability to find things out—to do research—so [we] can facilitate the group to figure out, first, what they need to know and, second, how to know it" *(p. 157)*.
SLCE includes civic education goals.	
Draws on: Dewey, Kolb, Lewin, Piaget, Boyer	Draws on: Gramsci, Freire, Horton, Knowles, science shop model, community organizing

These sections of the book raise several concerns for us, particularly around fairness, representation, and voice. Stoecker indicates that Part 2 "will consider how institutionalized service learning thinks about" each of these four core concepts *(p. 26)*, which led us to expect a summary of each on its own terms that fairly represents—before critiquing—the voices that have contributed to the development of these central concepts. But that is not how these chapters proceed, which does serious disservice to these voices. Each chapter opens with an epigraph that highlights not the central tenet of the concept in question as understood from the perspective of institutionalized SLCE but rather an aspect of Stoecker's critique of that take on the concept. Chapter 4 ("What is Institutionalized Service Learning's Theory of Learning?"), for example, opens with a quote from Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that speaks to a criterion for "truly liberating" pedagogy *(p. 31)*, and Chapter 5 ("What is Institutionalized Service Learning's Theory of Service?") opens with a quote from the book *Toxic Charity* that posits lack of real concern for "the benefits received by the served" *(p. 47)*. Each of the chapters in Part 2—the section that purports to document the theoretical underpinnings of what the author refers to as "institutionalized" SLCE—is thus framed in terms of Stoecker's critique.

We are concerned that this discourages readers from engaging with the theories he shares and distracts them from developing their own interpretations of the influence of the theories on SLCE.

Indeed, we found it next to impossible to replicate the type of summary in Table 1 for the other three core concepts—service, community, and change—as he explores them in Parts 2 and 3 because the corresponding chapters in Part 2 got progressively worse in terms of fair representation of the conceptualizations held by SLCE practitioner-scholars and progressively more like soapboxes for the author's criticisms. Explained by Stoecker as conceptual confusion and undertheorizing within institutionalized SLCE, this lack of actual review of the held meanings of the concepts comes across to us as unscholarly and self-serving. This apparent unwillingness to represent ideas he does not agree with fairly (i.e., as those who hold them would represent them) is one of the ways Stoecker undermines himself in this book—reducing readers' confidence in his critical thinking and his commitment to truly understanding those whose perspectives differ from his.

The chapters in Part 2 would be stronger had Stoecker more fairly presented a representative range of underlying conceptual frameworks in each. As illustrated in Table 1, in each of the chapters in Part 2 and Part 3 Stoecker draws on several bodies of thought related to the concept in question (i.e., learning, service, community, change), but we are concerned that in Part 2 they are cherry-picked to support the story he wants to tell as a foil for his proposals in Part 3. Using Chapter 5 as an example, service is presented as obedience to authority and as charity, but not also as healing, despite the critical engagement with service in these terms in Remen's *(1999)* widely used essay "Helping, Fixing, or Serving." There is little acknowledgment of work such as Davis's *(2006)* essay, "What We Don't Talk About When We Don't Talk About Service," that problematizes simplistic, hierarchical, self-serving notions of service.

Further, the selected works are sometimes misrepresented, as for example, again in Chapter 5, with his description of the servant leader as "someone with enough power to command others engag[ing] voluntarily in the act of serving and developing others" *(p. 47)* rather than, as its founder Greenleaf *(1977)* conceptualizes it: as one who listens first, empathizes, fully accepts others, and sustains others. The "mark of a servant leader," in Greenleaf's writings and in the substantial body of work that builds on them, is commitment to asking, "Do those served grow as persons? Do they . . . become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more

likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?" *(p. 6)*. One of the founders of the SLCE movement in higher education, Robert Sigmon *(1979)*, drew on this conception of service as he established foundational principles of SLCE, insisting upon identities and relationships among community members and their academic partners similar to those that *Liberating Service Learning* advocates, so it is particularly puzzling to us that Stoecker fails to represent this body of work accurately.

Puzzled is, in fact, an accurate label for the feeling we had throughout our reading of Parts 2 and 3. Why does Stoecker almost completely ignore the framing and work of many of the pioneers of SLCE, who decades ago gave voice to the justice-oriented, systems-change goals that gave rise to the practice in the first place (e.g., see *Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999*)? Why does he suggest in Part 2 that "service" is intended merely to modify "learning," quite to the contrary of some of the early work in the field that clearly established that "service, combined with learning, adds value to each and transforms both" *(Honnett & Poulson, 1989, p. 1)*? Why does he essentially claim a complete lack of concern within SLCE for learning beyond that of students when thought leaders in SLCE have from the beginning insisted that all teach and all learn and have increasingly explored what it means to position all partners as coeducators, colearners, and cogenerators of knowledge and practice? And perhaps most inexplicable of all, given his emphasis on community voice, why does Stoecker seem to diminish instances of community members' taking on the role of educating young people? He interprets such actions as mere exploitation of community members' time to benefit students that does not return equal value and expresses concern that "they don't resent it" *(p. 56)* despite documentation going back over 15 years of community partners indicating the importance to them of helping to educate the next generation of citizens whose choices will shape the future of the community issues their organizations exist to address *(see Leiderman, Furco, Zapf, & Goss, 2002; Sandy & Holland, 2006)*. Although we appreciate Stoecker's critical look at some of the philosophical underpinnings and contemporary practices of SLCE in Parts 2 and 3 of the book, we question whether all that he claims for liberating SLCE is as new and revolutionary as he seems to believe.

Two issues in particular concerned us as we read Part 3. First, we are troubled by Stoecker's prioritization of "big A" activism—the protest and imprisonment model that became a hallmark of the 1960s—including in terms of how it cannot be lived in the same

way for students of color. Stoecker frequently calls our attention to examples of students who have risked their standing at their university and their permanent record to protest, sit in, and participate in what he considers radical action. As we see it, although there are times when this type of activism is appropriate and effective, educators must be extremely conscious of the risks of these activities as they decide whether to support and hold them up as exemplars of student engagement. There is a vast difference between being arrested for civil disobedience if you are a White student from Wisconsin (where Stoecker lives) and if you are a Black student from Baltimore. That difference could be not only life-changing but life-ending.

Second, we are troubled by Stoecker's representation of global citizenship. His assertion that "simple volunteerism" *(p. 135)* is a central tenet of global citizenship education is for us yet another example of his reliance on strawperson caricatures. Global citizenship is often framed in this book (and more generally) as being about shedding labels of self or nationality in order to ascend to a pannational ethos or identity. It is unrealistic to think that one can shed national identity, even if one wanted to, especially as one travels or interacts across borders with people from cultures that have been impacted by Western influence or colonization. But more to the point, highly nuanced recommendations for global citizenship education exist, although Stoecker does not acknowledge them. Global citizenship can serve as a critical lens, a transformative experience, and a framework that makes possible world-changing social, political, and economic shifts. SLCE curricula developed by UNESCO *(2014)* and Oxfam *(2006)* describe a global citizen as one who commits to social justice, nurtures peace, exercises civic agency, adopts sustainability, and embraces diversity. *Critical* global citizenship education is focused on dismantling the oppressive systems that nation-states, dictators, and institutions have fostered while also developing the self *(de Andreotti, 2014)*. At its best, global citizenship education should shift one's worldview and engender a sense of interconnectedness while also prompting civic agency to call out and remedy injustice.

The Future of SLCE

In the concluding Chapter 12 ("Toward a Liberated World?") Stoecker seems to speak with a voice of resignation when he shares that he has "difficulty imagining that any higher education institution would actually support the alternative [of liberating service learning]" *(p. 163)*; he is "not even sure [he'd] want them to" *(p.*

163), as that would put at risk the "insurgent" nature of the practice he envisions *(p. 166)*. Walking readers point by point through his "professional civic engagement mission statement" and the associated practice steps he seeks to follow, he provides a concrete distillation of individual-level implications of liberating SLCE (e.g., questioning the role of allyship, taking risks against administrators, experiencing tension around who is doing the "teaching"). Although he thinks they are unrealistic, Stoecker posits several institution-level implications (e.g., professional development in the dynamics of community organizing, less rigid curricular frameworks, and civic education that takes many forms besides SLCE) that strike us as well worth exploring, although not new, as we regularly hear and give voice ourselves to versions of them. There is also a nod in this chapter to an institution from which "we can take a lesson" (De Anza College); we would have appreciated much more depth in this and the handful of other acknowledgments scattered throughout the book that "examples of such practices do exist" *(p. 178)*.

The tone of Chapter 12, that things aren't likely to get better in SLCE, leaves us with the sense that we must highlight examples of where conscious, critical, and counternormative work is happening. One such place, where the three of us are active, is the SLCE Future Directions Project (SLCE-FDP), an international learning community that has been a generative space for multiple stakeholders to discuss their ideas about the future of the movement *(http://www.slce-fdp.org/)*. Many of the thought pieces published in the last round invited reimagining of how we organize SLCE: "crossing presumed boundaries between campus and community if not dismantling them, positioning all partners as co-creators in inquiry and action, becoming part of processes already underway within communities, and developing relationships in the context of particular places" *(Stanlick, Kniffin, Clayton, Zlotkowski, & Howard, 2017)*. Looking at the arena of global citizenship, one example of undoing the type of dysfunctional global citizenship education Stoecker describes can be found in Fine's *(2016)* thought piece; it outlines a nuanced and complex version of global citizenship that "teaches the partnership," modeling cocreation of knowledge and leveraging critical university studies to critique dominant narratives of SLCE. Several pieces emphasize the multidirectional flow of knowledge in SLCE practice and scholarship, honoring community experts, and centering SLCE on community voice. A thought piece by Stanlick and Sell *(2016)* on empowerment as a key factor in a community–campus partnership that focuses on refugee resettle-

ment is coauthored by a community partner and faculty member, the curriculum discussed in it is codesigned by both, and the students work as colleagues within a learning community in which refugee support and community thriving are paramount concerns. Augustine, Lopez, McNaron, Starke, and Van Gundy *(2017)* call on us to locate SLCE within social justice collectives led by people from marginalized groups to address systems of oppression. And Hussain and Wattles *(2017)* offer examples of and recommendations for critical dialogues among all partners about social class– and race-based inequality that lead to SLCE projects that are codesigned, sustainable, and focused on local issues. SLCE-FDP has from the beginning intended to be critical, cocreative, and appreciative. We also know that the ideal we seek is aspirational, and it is the commitment of the contributors to stay engaged, humble, and curious that allows the space to continually improve and to offer an example of how this work can be done ever more democratically and impactfully.

Our Worries

Overall, we share Stoecker's readiness to consider whether SLCE can do more harm than good but not his characterization of essentially all current practice as subject to that charge. We disagree that our colleagues "won't be able to wrap their heads around" *(p. 166)* his proposed reprioritizing of change, community, service, and learning and instead suggest that the way forward ought to involve a more integrative orientation to these four important domains of commitment and work. Echoing the title of Chapter 1, what *we* worry about is that repolarizing what one sees as a hierarchy isn't all that radical or even to the point; indeed, it remains within, rather than dismantles, a problematic hierarchical worldview. That insisting on "knowledge worker" as the distinct identity, role, and function of "academics" does not help us position ourselves appropriately in work in partnership to advance justice, but further enshrines us and only us as "in the knowledge business" *(p. 168)*. That, consequently, Stoecker not only fails to challenge but indeed reinforces the dualisms that ignore, deny, or diminish the everyday knowledge work of all who seek to understand and change the world around us.

We worry that characterizing SLCE practitioner-scholars as "oblivious to" challenges related to such issues as "women's control over their own bodies" *(p. 179)* disrespects and simplifies voices representing a wide range of perspectives that are actively engaged with one another in trying to understand and act in the face of

associated trade-offs and complexities. We worry that Stoecker inappropriately generalizes—if not insincerely lauds—his own acknowledged "unreflective individualism" *(p. 180)*, claiming it as a feature of basically all SLCE practitioner-scholars and thereby perpetuating the uncritical tendency of the dominant culture he challenges to stand in the center and define others' experience in light of one's own. We do not consider ourselves or our colleagues "comfortably ensconced inside of higher education institutions" *(p. 179)* as democracy crumbles around us, and we worry that leveling such a charge against colleagues—many of whom work creatively and self-critically to advance democracy and justice within and through our questions, our practices, and our partnerships—serves more to distance than to engage potential allies in the quest for liberation.

Fundamentally, we worry that "we" (i.e., academics) are positioned in liberating SLCE—not so differently than in institutionalized SLCE—as privileged outsiders (i.e., allies) who can and should help "them" (i.e., the oppressed, excluded, exploited). We wonder if, instead, it is more the case that we are all interdependently caught up in, shapers of and shaped by, relationships, systems, and paradigms that often do violence but also hold the seeds of liberation for all.

Liberation to What End, for Whom, and How?

"But what does it mean for my liberation to be bound up with another's, and especially what does it mean to work together?" asks Stoecker after interrogating the well-known quote from an Australian Aboriginal activist group: "If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together" *(pp. 128–129)*. For Stoecker, this quote begins to flip service on its head, creating space for its liberation within his proposal for liberating SLCE. One of the primary vehicles of the liberation he calls for is allyship, which he defines as a practice that acknowledges difference between those who have a "common social structural experience and those who lack the experience" *(p. 129)*. His definition of allyship hinges on various principles, one of the most important being that "the people with a common experience determine the other principles of allyship" *(p. 129)*. He expands his definition by emphasizing the following: listening is more important than speaking among allies, allyship is a practice requiring engagement in one's daily life, and allies do not speak for the community with which they are allied—they only speak their own views as

aligned with the community. His use of this quote is curious. The language, examples, and scholarship used throughout the book are not always congruent with the values and practices emphasized by allyship. There are many instances (see Chapter 10, for example) in which the focus on the oppressed, exploited, and excluded comes dangerously close to an othering that blames the community for its position and puts the onus of "its" liberation squarely on "their" shoulders. This feels like the opposite of the Aboriginal collective's perspective, inserting a "them" versus "us" dynamic when there should be "we." Though we agree with Stoecker that liberation is and should be a collective effort, we take issue with three aspects of his argument: (a) his colonizing use of the work of scholars of color, (b) his positioning of marginalized people, and (c) his attempt to regulate the anger of marginalized groups.

White scholars have long used the work of scholars of color as their own—moving words around or rephrasing sentences in ways that lend themselves more to exploitation than building and growing knowledge by deconstructing or further interrogating ideas *(Vázquez, 1992)*. We fear Stoecker does this in his references to social justice service-learning, critical service-learning, and other approaches that in his judgment only marginally do the work of "developing a theoretical understanding of the underlying social/political/economic issues exhibited by that placement" *(p. 11)*. Social justice SLCE and critical SLCE are not "liberating," he claims, because "much of the intellectual and research focus is still on the students and higher education institution"; as a result, "the effects of service learning on the community [are] reduced to an afterthought and community members [are] labeled as 'recipients' even when they are to become 'empowered' as a consequence" *(p. 23)*. This portrayal of social justice and critical SLCE seems to us to lack respect for the complexity of how scholars such as Tania Mitchell *(2008)*, who is cited by Stoecker and who has generated robust scholarship around critical SLCE, define and understand both the term and the process of engagement. Mitchell argues that "critical service-learning programs encourage students to see themselves as agents of social change and use the experience of service to address and respond to injustice in communities" *(p. 51)*. It requires educators to focus on social responsibility and critical community—for Stoecker, "constituency"—issues. Framed within such critical or social justice terms, problem-solving grounded in SLCE is a means of social and political reform.

Such reform-oriented SLCE does not seem that different from "liberating SLCE." Stoecker calls for work rooted in community

or constituency, social change, and allyship. He challenges educators and students to prioritize the needs of a constituency as communicated to them and to work collectively toward remedying or eliminating social ills, all of which fall under the purview of critical or social justice SLCE (although sometimes without the deficit-based focus on "needs"). Why, then, does Stoecker dismiss them when they seem to be voicing similar concerns about and future directions for SLCE? Our concern is that Stoecker, like other White scholars before him, uses the work of scholars of color to prop up his own arguments and ideologies. If the liberation of liberating SLCE were tied up in a collective struggle, Stoecker would not only be able to positively acknowledge work such as Mitchell's but also to recognize the ways in which the ideas he offers throughout the book align with those of critical and social justice SLCE advocates. He would be able to build on such work in a manner that does not merely prop up his own argument. With such a stance he might, for example, have invited coauthorship, included one or more chapters of critical reflection by such scholars on some or all of the book, or used any of a number of approaches to anthologizing similar ideas, integrating his own ideas, and further nuancing the conversation in a noncolonizing way.

With this critique about voice in mind, it is important to note that Stoecker recognizes and emphasizes the danger of narratives being written by researchers and others who hold academic power. He opens his book with the notion that SLCE might have it wrong in terms of how we engage with marginalized people. He hits the nail on the head when he states that SLCE can reinforce stereotypes, yet he does not seem to consider that throughout *Liberating Service Learning* he in some ways engages in problematic practices himself—reinforcing stereotypes (e.g., assumptions about collegiate demographics, *p. 145*), policing behavior (e.g., anger and Blackness, *p. 96*), and lacking nuance in how he addresses issues marginalized populations face as well as how SLCE might serve as remedy (e.g., asset-based language and SLCE, *p. 73*). Based on his larger call for liberating SLCE, these approaches seem to be in tension with the transformative values he claims for his work and with his expectations for a more radically situated, social-justice-oriented SLCE.

Second, Stoecker vacillates throughout the book between two positions with regard to marginalized populations, particularly people of color (POC). POCs and other marginalized populations either do not show up at all or exist to serve his narrative. In Chapter 4, while discussing experiential learning, Stoecker

writes, "The student does not directly experience poverty—they only experience what it is like to be a volunteer doing things for someone experiencing poverty" *(p. 35)*. This analysis of experiential learning in some ways strikes us as a useful corrective to imprecise conceptualizations of this type of pedagogy, although it ignores the ways in which meaning can be made of experiences by examining them critically for what they do not, as well as what they do, offer direct engagement with. More to the point, however, this criticism of framing SLCE as experiential learning ignores the experiences of students who may indeed come from or currently live in poverty even though they have gained access to higher education and SLCE. Stoecker does not account for the ways in which the various and varied subject positions of students interact with their SLCE activities in, for, and with communities. In this instance, the marginalized do not show up for Stoecker.

The focus on poverty to make his point about whether SLCE is indeed a type of experiential learning seems to be another strawperson, as we know of no SLCE practitioner-scholars who intend for their students to actually experience poverty as part of learning about course content, disciplinary perspectives, themselves, others, community issues, or social change. Students are to become aware of and reflect critically on their and others' assumptions and beliefs about the issues, questions, people, organizations, and places they interact with . . . on the similarities and differences between theorized and lived experience in these contexts . . . on the sources and significance of underlying explanatory and justificatory systems that serve some at the expense of others. To suggest that SLCE functions as experiential learning only when students directly experience oppression, exclusion, and exploitation seems to us equivalent to accusing it of resting uncritically upon the appropriation of experiences that may or may not be one's own while also reducing the appropriate bandwidth of SLCE to stereotypically "othered" concerns. This disrespects both the practice and those thereby "othered."

Referring to the tendency of "institutionalized service learning [to] . . . attract those who are white and privileged . . . and . . . to alienate students who do not come from privilege," he indicates that "we know little of why" and posits that "perhaps these notions of 'charity' and 'giving back' don't square very well with many students of color and working class students . . . the people, in many cases, who have suffered from the elites who have taken from them or from their forebears" *(p. 47)*. This notion that the movement lacks an understanding of why SLCE is predominantly White and privileged

is both offensive to every marginalized person who ever engaged in SLCE and completely unfounded. Here the oppressed show up but are positioned as unable to be understood. In reality, the reasons for their disengagement (e.g., deficit-based language, experiences of double consciousness, not identifying with the privilege often seen in SLCE spaces) are obvious to many in the field and have also been documented both within and beyond formal academic spaces (see, e.g., *Gilbride-Brown, 2008; Hickmon, 2015*).

Third, Stoecker later transitions from ignoring or lacking nuance in his engagement with oppressed groups to arguing for the use of their anger to catalyze social change. He begins his argument for the power and use of such anger with the claim that "the most important community asset is its people's anger" *(p. 91)*. Chapter 8 opens with a quote from Ella Baker in which she defines radicalism as "getting down to and understanding the root cause. . . . facing a system that does not lend itself to your needs and devising means by which you change that system" *(p. 95)*. Stoecker argues that constituencies, through the example of Black people, need to exercise "cold anger" as they process and respond to injustices: anger that is "rational" and "constructive" (*pp. 97, 98)*. He argues for Black restraint in the face of continued police brutality and in the process demonstrates that he only approves of the "anger" of Black people, the poor, the LGBTQ community, or other marginalized groups when it is packaged in a way he can use and understand—in a way that does not endanger him or force him to examine the role he plays in both benefiting from and upholding White privilege. By doing so, Stoecker asks the oppressed to quell their reactions to wrongs committed against them and channel their now "cold anger" toward working with him or those like him in liberating SLCE to create "radical" social change.

In addition to believing that Baker would resist a politics that encourages such restraint, we do not believe Stoecker demonstrates the allyship he calls for. Here again, we are concerned with his penchant for taking the work of Black activists and using it to support his either unfounded or devoid-of-nuance arguments. Stoecker compares the 2014 Ferguson protests of the police-involved fatal shooting of Michael Brown to the uprisings of the 1960s and the 1992 Rodney King protests; instead of doing the work of trying to understand the very real anger of Black people regarding the Ferguson shooting, he praises protesters for their restraint, arguing that it is what lends itself to the possibility of real social change. We were shocked upon reading such policing of behavior and emotions that the author cannot possibly understand and were troubled

by his presumption in dictating the conditions under which social change can most legitimately happen. The protests of the 1960s yielded the Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act, and countless other pieces of legislation and policy that changed American society in positive ways. The 1992 King protests had complicated results. The riots that took place during that time led to the problematic passage of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, which allocated billions of dollars in federal funding to hire more police, create mandatory sentencing minimums, and expand the prison system; in conjunction with uneven adherence to the law, this all directly led to an increase in incarceration of Black Americans. At the same time, the protests also shed light on injustices faced by Black people subjected to police brutality—something "cold anger" would not have achieved.

Much of our concern about Stoecker's arguments lies not in the fact that he is making them but in how he grounds, conveys, and explores his ideas. The conviction that liberation is collective and should be practiced through a politics of allyship as outlined in Chapter 10 ought to include the recognition that it is never appropriate to tell others (i.e., "the oppressed, excluded, and exploited") how they should experience, process, or respond to oppression. No one, particularly those with acknowledged positions of power and privilege, has the right to insist upon a particular way to begin conversations about what social change that gets to the root of oppression and works to ameliorate it looks like. Stoecker calls for allyship but then colonizes the work of scholars of color, positions the marginalized in ways that do not allow for the full expression of their humanness or that deny them humanness entirely through erasure, and tells people how they should channel their sentiments toward their oppression and oppressors. We worry that the liberation of SLCE and broader society as portrayed throughout *Liberating Service Learning* is not a collective, empathetic, or nuanced endeavor.

Beyond Single Voices and Single Stories

For us, a primary strength of *Liberating Service Learning* lies in the complex tensions we surfaced throughout our reading and discussion. Our read gave us pause, invited ongoing conversation, and kept us struggling with our own questions. Stoecker's book is certainly provocative, in ways that he both may and may not have intended, with examples and assertions that invite scrutiny and discussion. Ultimately, we found reviewing the book, critically dialoguing with the ideas as well as debating and reconsidering

our own assumptions, a worthwhile exercise. *Liberating Service Learning* is important and challenging in its stimulus to critical reflection among both emerging and veteran SLCE practitioner-scholars. Its value can be derived from what is said as well as what is missing. The book should prove a useful text for inviting the next generation of SLCE practitioner-scholars into conversation regarding the intent and impact of our work, the systems we operate in, and the society we shape and are shaped by.

That being said, we circle back to consciousness of the voices not heard here in their own authentic and primary way. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie *(2009)* issues a warning that we find relevant. She reminds us that in the absence of other voices to help complete the picture or at least provide multilayered information, our fallible human selves create stories and stereotypes to fill the void: "The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story." Ultimately, our response to *Liberating Service Learning* lies in our understanding of the danger of a single story. Though Stoecker talks an inclusive talk, the examples, tone, and theories used to illustrate his points demonstrate less "walking a walk that is backed up by talk" than simply . . . talking. Stoecker uses very broad strokes to characterize SLCE practice and thereby creates a single story of the movement, complete with uncritical stereotypes and incomplete narratives.

Stoecker's points are not completely unfounded. It is important for SLCE practitioner-scholars to focus on the challenges of communities as communicated by individuals living most closely with them. It is crucial for allies to listen before speaking. Students should learn about communities and prepare well for engagement with them, and social change is indeed an important, if not the ultimate, aim of SLCE. Where we disagree or offer critique is not on the intent to call the movement toward difficult, self-critical questioning or on the goals of fundamental change in our world but rather on approach, nuance, and voice. We believe that achieving the liberation Stoecker calls for is, always has been, and will truly need to be a collective endeavor. This makes all of our stories and voices not only valuable but critical to the work going forward: "Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to empower, and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also repair that broken dignity" *(Adichie, 2009)*. Stoecker's intent is to envision and empower the SLCE movement toward a world in which all are valued, yet the examples, frameworks, and anecdotes found in

this book tend to reinforce a singular narrative that might have unintended impacts.

To Stoecker and the SLCE movement at large, we offer a final thought from Adichie (2014):

> If you don't understand, ask questions. If you're uncomfortable about asking questions, say you are uncomfortable about asking questions and then ask anyway. It's easy to tell when a question is coming from a good place. Then listen some more. Sometimes people just want to feel heard. Here's to possibilities of friendship and connection and understanding. *(p. 406)*

Friendship, connection, and understanding. Ultimately perhaps these are what SLCE and even our liberation are all about and tied up in. It is with this in mind that we look forward to the next book Stoecker writes, the one that is cocreated with those whose voices he only nods to in this book.

Acknowledgments

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