

RECOMMENDATIONS

Good civics instruction is necessarily historical in character. It must describe institutions that developed in time for specific reasons. But good civics instruction must also teach civic virtues. We teach civics to make students into competent, confident, and patriotic participants in our nation’s public life. Civics courses and programs should not aim to sow disaffection and foster resentment. Above all, they should not aim to recruit students to political causes, create partisan sentiments, or treat the ideals of any political movements as though they are the civic virtues themselves.

In enunciating these goals, we recognize a high hurdle. Many administrators, faculty members, staff, students, and others have abandoned the principle of impartiality in education. Others no longer even recognize when they abandon impartiality. As a result we have reached a situation in which many people no longer see the value of teaching civics, except as a means of advancing their own political agendas.

The current emphasis on “civic engagement” is an enticing diversion. We call on the public high schools and universities in Colorado, Wyoming, and across the country to reassess this commitment, and for legislators and governors to take a hard, critical look at what really transpires under this seemingly positive rubric. This report is a good place to start. Do we really want to marginalize most of the content of the Old Civics? Is the New Civics a worthwhile replacement? Teaching students to become political activists and community organizers no doubt has its attractions. But teaching them to become activists and organizers who are ignorant of how their governing institutions actually work has no merit.

Colorado and Wyoming, no less than the other states, need a citizenry that understands how their government works. That means understanding elections, juries, grand juries, the courts, the police, legislative bodies, the division of powers, checks and balances, the Constitution, federalism—and the many other components of what used to be recognized as the substance of civic competence. It also means understanding the legitimate avenues of dissent and protest. All of this can and should be taught without favoring any political party or cause, except the cause of fostering the integrity of our free and self-governing republic. Civics education should teach students how and why to love America, with both head and heart.

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Declare Principles

Reform of civics education will go nowhere without first finding clarity of purpose. The post-national, progressive left accomplished that for the New Civics with the publication of *A Crucible Moment*. The enthusiasm among campus activists for New Civics deeply complicates the effort to return to non-partisan ground. Some on the political right would prefer to respond with yet another version of politicized civics instead of championing educational ideals that are above politics. What we need, however, is a powerful summons to those national ideals. The place to begin is for each state to forge a declaration of those principles that can attract support from across the political spectrum and that does not use coded language to smuggle back in the partisanship that has undermined real civics education.

MODEL DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES: CIVICS EDUCATION

Because self-government is based on citizens who know what is best about their country and seek to preserve it, students at all levels need to be educated in civics. Civics education in America should teach the history, the ideals, and the structure of government of the United States. Civics education should, in the first instance, aim to create Americans: American citizens who have affection for their country as well as knowledge of how its public institutions work, including the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government; the divisions of power and responsibility among federal, state, and local authorities; and the rights and responsibilities of individuals.

Because non-citizens also attend American schools and colleges, civics education must also teach those who may become citizens and those who simply seek an American education. These non-citizens benefit from learning about this country's history and ideals. Civics education should be a self-confident presentation of how Americans have sought to realize our country's commitment to liberty and justice.

Americans often vigorously disagree about political goals, but are united in love of their country. Civics education should respect differing interpretations of America's ideals, favoring none, and emphasizing what we hold in common: a free republic under the rule of law, and a political culture in which all sides accept compromise and the realization that their own views, no matter how cherished, will not always prevail.

Civics education does not seek to prepare "citizens of the world," but citizens of the United States. American students should know about other nations' governments, laws, and cultures, and about the roles of international bodies, but these are not the substance of civics education. Civics education should prepare Americans for the tasks of participating effectively in their own government. It is not a curriculum meant to provide the whole of a liberal education.

Civics education should prepare students for a life of civic action, which includes such things as voting, running for public office, serving on juries or grand juries, enlisting in the military or the National Guard, paying taxes, volunteering for public service such as fire departments, and demanding accountability from public officials. Preparing students for a life of civic action, however, should not be confused with forcing them to engage in such action. The habits of volunteering are valuable, but cannot take the place of acquiring the background knowledge and values necessary to participate in our form of self-government. Moreover, programs that marshal students into “voluntary” civic activities fail in the primary goal of civics education, the cultivation of independence of spirit.

America has been blessed with free and independent government—gained at no small cost by generations who sacrificed to preserve the ideals of our republic. Civics education is what we undertake to ensure that generations to come will continue to enjoy freedom and independence.

Restructure and Set Standards for the Civics Curriculum

We recommend that Colorado and Wyoming create as part of their public education a rigorous, civics curriculum designed to meet the needs of students today and in the decades to come. This would be a new curriculum, not a restoration of one from the past, but it would incorporate the best features of Old Civics courses. The new curriculum would coordinate what is taught at the high school and at the college levels. It would emphasize knowledge, not activism. Its premise would be that citizens in a self-governing republic need to be educated to understand the institutions of self-government.

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The foundation of civics instruction should be restored to the middle school curriculum, but high school and college provide the capstones of civics education. This report and our recommendations focus on what should happen at the level of higher education.

College-level civics courses can only be taught properly in coordination with a high-school civics curriculum. The two parts of the coordinated civics curriculum should include a High School Civics Curriculum and a College Civics Curriculum.

HIGH SCHOOL CIVICS CURRICULUM

1. a one-year course on the history and structure of the American government. This course should include and test for knowledge on documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, extracts from the Federalist Papers, and the Emancipation Proclamation.
2. a one-year course on American history from the *Mayflower* to the present. This sequence should include significant material on the Revolutionary War and the Constitutional Founding. Throughout, it should be designed to include significant biographical material on exemplary Americans—civic heroes—and to provide both our constitutional history and its historical context.
3. a culminating state-level examination on civic literacy. This test should require serious study—the current (2016) College Board Advanced Placement examination in United State Government and Politics offers a reasonable model for rigor,⁸⁴² although states should provide their own tests rather than rely on a monopoly provider of educational assessment. This test will provide a means of assessing civics instruction in the high school, and a tool that colleges can use to test whether incoming students possess sufficient civic literacy to take a college-level course.

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COLLEGE CIVICS CURRICULUM

1. a civics literacy test (for which the high school exit examination can substitute) to determine whether incoming students have basic civic literacy. Students who have not passed that test must take a remedial civics literacy course that will cover the material they should have learned in high school. Students who have completed this course must take the civics literacy test again; they will not be allowed to graduate, or progress to more advanced civics instruction, until they pass this test.
2. a college civics curriculum. This will be a sequence of required courses for all students.

⁸⁴² College Board, *AP Government and Politics United States Course Description*, <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-us-government-and-politics-course-description.pdf>.

College Civics Curriculum: Structure and Content

THE BEST SOLUTION: CIVIC LITERACY IN A CORE CURRICULUM

We start with a recommendation that we realize is not now within practical reach for most public universities in the United States. In the short run, institutional commitments to the regime of “distribution requirements” is too strong to permit serious consideration of new required courses. But we sketch an alternative based on new required courses as an ideal that may help to guide curricular changes in the long term.

The larger idea of a core curriculum that teaches all students the core history, ideas, and literature of Western civilization is meant not least to be a civics education. Just as high-school civics is meant to be taught in complement with American history, college-level civics should be taught in complement with a broader core curriculum—a classical liberal education to furnish the mind of a well-educated free citizen. This broader core curriculum ought to include the following courses:

1. **a two-semester history of Europe** (“Western Civilization”), from Periclean Athens to the present, which highlights the historical development of republics and democracies, and the intellectual, social, and cultural developments that have sustained the birth of free government in Europe;
2. **a two-semester history of the United States**, repeating at the college level the history of the United States; and
3. **a two-semester civics sequence**, fostering students’ ability to engage in intelligent discussion and argument about the core political texts of our republic, and to integrate associated historical material as a supplement (but not a replacement) to close reading of these texts’ actual words.

The two courses in the civics sequence should consist of:

1. **The American Founding.** This course should focus on the texts and debates of the period between 1763 and 1796. It should include extracts from philosophical inspirations such as the works of Locke and Montesquieu; revolutionary polemics by figures such as John Adams and Thomas Paine; close discussion of the work of Thomas Jefferson, including the Declaration of Independence and the *Notes on the State of Virginia*; the Constitution; the

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- Federalist*; the Bill of Rights; and George Washington’s *Farewell Address* (1796), which signaled the establishment of stable government in America.
2. **The American Debate.** This course should focus on the political debate among the different heirs to the Founding Fathers, and the debate’s institutionalization in the party system. This course should include significant materials on the Jacksonian challenge to the remnants of social and political deference in America; the crisis of slavery and secession that led to the Civil War and reshaped America’s constitutional order; the Progressive and New Deal remodelings of the American constitution; a survey of contending philosophies of constitutional interpretation; and a parallel survey of notable judicial decisions from *Lochner v. New York* (1905) to *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008).

In both courses, the curriculum should emphasize tensions among ideals within the constitutional system—how different liberties can come into conflict, how some may be irreconcilable, and how some are subject to compromise leaving mutual dissatisfaction among contending parties. The civics curriculum, in other words, should teach students to understand their opponents, to live with their political to-do lists unfulfilled, and, most importantly, to understand that true *civic engagement* includes an appreciation for the constitutional order, whose preservation should be deemed a virtue outweighing any substantive political goal.

THE SECOND-BEST SOLUTION: A CIVIC LITERACY DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT

In the short run, a more practical alternative to establishing new course requirements would be to adapt the distribution requirement system.

While a core curriculum would serve the purposes of civics education best, a civic literacy distribution requirement on the model of the University of Wyoming, where students select from a limited number of courses on history, government, and political theory, is a second-best option. Civics courses should be put into their own distribution requirement rather than in broader requirements such as “Social and Behavioral Sciences,” which encourage students to take courses in Psychology or Sociology rather than courses in specifically civic knowledge. Courses that contribute to civic literacy should also double-count against other distribution requirements, so as to encourage students to take these courses.

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THE CHARACTERISTICS OF COLLEGE-LEVEL CIVICS CLASSES

These classes should focus on educating students exclusively on the content of civics. They should not be exercises in partisanship or ventures in social activism. Students will study historical documents and read serious secondary books and articles in quantities appropriate for college-level courses. They will learn the tools of analysis and critique, and be able to converse and argue about any key idea in both oral and written forms. While these courses will go into depth on the topics of how our government works and why it is organized as it is, they will also help students to acquire some of the civic virtues that higher education is especially suited to provide:

- how to listen respectfully and tolerate differences of opinion;
- how to make truth claims of universal validity for which “opinions differ” is an insufficient answer;
- how to engage in rational argument rather than groundless assertion in support of one’s opinion;
- how to argue both sides of any question as a way of learning to take seriously opposing opinions and as a way to discover the truth; and
- how to engage in the life of the mind joyfully, fearing to say nothing and fearing to hear nothing.

Freeze Funding for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement

To restore civics education in the United States, boards of regents, trustees, other responsible authorities, and representatives of the public will have to take steps to correct the diversion of resources and institutional priorities into what we have called the New Civics. This diversion takes several forms, but is especially prominent in “service-learning” and what are often called “civic engagement” or “global civics” classes and activities.

We have made the case in this report that the New Civics is, in essence, a political movement. Its goals are to recruit students to become progressive activists; to provide free labor for progressive organizations; to crowd out (or discredit) other points of view; and to establish campus norms in which progressive ideals are treated as unquestionable. Generally the New Civics is planted in an attitude that anything un-Progressive is un-American.

Restoring civics education will require going against a campus culture in which the New Civics is already well-established and well-positioned to resist developments that threaten its dominance.

Responsible authorities should require good evidence that service-learning and civic engagement is anything more than a jobs program for progressive ideologues.

The first step towards challenging that dominance is to freeze the funding of the New Civics programs, starting with service-learning. Perhaps some of these service-learning programs have value for students, but that should not be assumed. The tables need to be turned: responsible authorities should require good evidence that service-learning is anything more than a jobs program for progressive ideologues.

Reforms within the system might include:

1. Service-learning ought to have lists of partner community organizations that span the political spectrum, and which make it as easy (for example) for service-learning to include teaching gun safety as an NRA instructor as it is to work in a shelter for illegal immigrants.
2. Civic engagement should be reformed in its ideological presumptions so as to prize work for pro-life organizations as much as work for environmental organizations.
3. Conflict-of-interest rules should be tightened, such that no civics or service-learning grant money disbursed by a university can be awarded to a university staff member.

These reforms will not happen without strong public pressure. The staff administering such programs are so thoroughly progressive that they cannot be relied upon to administer such programs impartially, or to recognize their own conflicts of interest. And we should recollect the power of any administrator, who is, after all, hired to make decisions.⁸⁴³ New Civics bureaucrats will always do what they think is best—radical politics disguised as education—until someone tells them that they can't.

Reformers will also have to anticipate that service-learning and civic engagement administrators will unleash a campaign of students eager to testify to the educational value of such programs. After all, the main skill-set of these administrators consists of organizing students to do their bidding. The students have been primed to demonstrate, exhort, occupy, and issue demands on behalf of the political causes favored by the public employees who run these programs.

Government oversight is impractical: the Education Committee of the Colorado House of Representatives (for example) cannot and should not be in the business of examining the content of every service-learning and civic engagement class in the state. Since the administrators of such programs cannot be relied upon to execute them

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843 Stanton, Giles, and Cruz, *Service Learning*, p. 147.

impartially, and the regulatory bureaucrats of the federal and state education departments also have been captured by the institutions they are supposed to regulate, **all New Civics programs should have their funding frozen immediately**. In due time, these programs need to be de-funded and closed. Presumably attrition will thin the ranks of these supernumerary employees before their positions are finally eliminated. The public will support this effort when it learns that the cost savings will be substantial.

Legislative Initiatives: Containing and Eliminating the New Civics

A comprehensive campaign to halt the New Civics takeover of higher education should include as many as possible of the following legislative initiatives:

1. Legislators should freeze all Federal and state funding for the New Civics (service-learning, civic engagement, global civics, and so on), with no further adjustments for inflation.
2. Legislators should end hiring of new personnel for New Civics program, with the long-term goal of eliminating all New Civics personnel.
3. Legislators should mandate that no institution of higher education that receives public money can *require* students to take any New Civics class.
4. Legislators should mandate that no institution of higher education that receives public money can affiliate with Public Achievement, or any other organization devoted to community organizing.
5. Legislators should mandate that no institution of higher education that receives public money can insert New Civics into student residential life.
6. Legislators should mandate that no institution of higher education that receives public money may fund students or give them academic credit for participating in volunteer activities.

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7. Legislators should mandate that no institution of higher education that receives public money may make faculty participation in the New Civics a contributory factor toward receiving reappointment, tenure, promotion, eligibility for sabbatical leave, or other faculty appurtenances.
8. Legislators should mandate that no government money (grant, fellowship, loan) may be used toward tuition for any New Civics class.
9. Legislators should mandate that no Federal or state administrative regulation may promote the New Civics.
10. Legislators should mandate that no Federal or state administrative regulation may use New Civics activity as a plus-factor or requirement for awarding any public money.
11. Legislators should mandate that no institution of higher education that receives public money may support community organizing or political advocacy.

This containment of the New Civics must be carefully tailored to counter bureaucratic maneuvers such as renaming civic engagement programs and moving them into different sub-units of the university. When the Tennessee legislature voted in 2016 to defund the University of Tennessee, Knoxville’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the Chancellor of the University subverted the legislature’s intent by moving all the subprograms of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion into different administrative units.⁸⁴⁴ When legislatures do move to freeze the New Civics, the New Civics’ defenders presumably will use the same tactics so as to preserve its programs under different names. The campaign to freeze the New Civics must be carefully drafted and administered in good faith by watchdogs who are familiar with the subterfuges often employed in higher education.

Legislators must mandate full and detailed fiscal transparency by all public educational institutions.

To prevent such bureaucratic maneuvering to hide university expenditures on the New Civics, legislators must mandate full and detailed fiscal transparency by all public educational institutions.

It is worth repeating here that *A Crucible Moment* cites “student affairs professionals” among those engaged in “The central work of advancing civic learning and democratic engagement in

844 Jimmy Cheek, “Jimmy Cheek’s letter regarding the defunding of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion,” *University of Tennessee Daily Beacon*, http://www.utdailybeacon.com/jimmy-cheek-s-letter-regarding-the-defunding-of-the-office/article_21259bc6-1ebf-11e6-a596-db553c335025.html.

higher education.”⁸⁴⁵ The containment of the New Civics advocates in academic administration must be sure to include these student affairs professionals.

“Leadership” programs are usually shells for the New Civics.⁸⁴⁶ They also should be frozen, save in ROTC military science courses.

What about Academic Freedom?

By recommending that new required courses be created and that some current programs be eliminated, we raise issues that are sure to be debated in the rhetoric of academic freedom. We take these matters very seriously. Academic freedom is a foundational concept in higher education. In that sense, it is like civics education itself: an indispensable part of liberty and self-government. But also like civics education, the concept of academic freedom is susceptible to misuse by those who seek political advantage rather than truth.

Course requirements as part of college degree programs do not infringe academic freedom. There is no barrier on academic freedom grounds to requiring civics education courses.

Likewise, academic freedom does not wall off existing courses or non-academic programs from external review, de-funding, and possible elimination. Academic freedom arguments on these issues are red herrings, but reformers need to anticipate that they will come up.

A further point should be emphasized: academic freedom is justified on the grounds that university members have specialized training in their subject areas. The public defers to academics’ professional competence, and hence grants them the large autonomy of academic freedom. *But neither academics nor academic bureaucrats have special qualifications to judge the attributes of citizenship.* Citizens are the best judges of one another’s civic virtues. If they are going to delegate civics education, it can only be to their elected representatives, whose qualification is the only relevant one—a democratic mandate, articulated via an election. If universities are to be deputed to engage

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⁸⁴⁵ A *Crucible Moment*, p. 31.

⁸⁴⁶ Stanton, Giles, and Cruz, *Service Learning*, p. 60.

in citizen-training, despite their lack of professional qualifications for the job, their personnel do so as agents of the citizenry and its elected representatives, and not as autonomous professionals. Academic freedom does not apply to civics education. Any publicly funded university should teach precisely the civics education the elected legislature requires. Indeed, if a state university is going to teach civics education at all, the legislature has a special obligation to oversee the content of that education, and *not* to defer to the university. A private university may teach whatever civics curriculum it likes, of course—but students would be advised to avoid colleges where the professors and staff have decided they know best what makes a good citizen.⁸⁴⁷

Fund Small Civic Literacy Classes

Some of the money that would have been used to fund the New Civics should be redirected toward funding the civics classes we have recommended. The cost of these courses will be far less than the current cost of the New Civics. In that sense, these are reforms that will more than pay for themselves.

This redirection of funding should be done both as a sign of the real importance our government assigns to civics, and as a way to make civics classes appealing to students. Public universities now tend to teach civics classes, when they teach them at all, as enormous lectures or as distance-learning classes. These two formats are uninspiring to teachers and students, and ensure that even a properly structured civics class will not have much effect. The civics literacy classes should:

1. **Be capped at 30 students per class.** This will improve the quality of civics education substantially. It will also distinguish these classes from the large lecture classes that constitute the bulk of freshman education at public universities.
2. **Be tuition-free.** Public subsidy of higher education ought to make its first priority be a proper civics education for students. Taking civics classes should cause no fiscal hardship.

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⁸⁴⁷ I am grateful to K. C. Johnson for making this point in private communication—and for some of his eloquent wording, which I have pillaged without using quotation marks.

Provide a Supportive Professional Environment for Civic Literacy

The states should also fund an educational framework that encourages the teaching of civic literacy. Measures should include:

1. **Frame professorial career tracks to encourage the teaching of traditional civics.** Measures may include the creation of separate departments focused upon teaching the civics curriculum; giving due weight to teaching traditional civics in tenure decisions; and establishing a tenure track that relies more on teaching traditional civics than on research.
2. **Funding support for traditional civics.** Such measures may include teaching development funds, salaries for teaching assistants, and salary bonuses for good teachers of traditional civics.
3. **Fund journals and professional associations dedicated to traditional civics.** States should help traditional civics teachers to create and maintain a supportive national professional framework.
4. **Require K-12 history and social studies teachers to take advanced courses on traditional civics.** This will improve civics instruction at the K-12 level, and also give civics professors the incentive of the opportunity to teach advanced courses in their specialties.
5. **Fund graduate students who wish to specialize in traditional civics.** This will ensure a continuing supply of properly trained professors.

Foster a Genuine Culture of Volunteerism

Colleges and universities should foster real volunteerism by removing all subsidies and academic credit from volunteer activities. It should also return administrative support for such activities to the unpaid, volunteer level, so as to model what proper volunteer activity should look like. Schools may provide a minimum of administrative support, but all that volunteer groups really need are a bulletin board, paper, and thumb tacks.

No position dedicated to volunteer activity should receive any salary, whether full-time or part-time.

Colleges and universities should foster real volunteerism by removing all subsidies and academic credit from volunteer activities. All that volunteer groups really need are a bulletin board, paper, and thumb tacks.

Universities should provide non-remunerative awards to honor students who have been noteworthy volunteers. The selection panel for such awards should include members of local volunteer organizations whose partisan commitments are evenly distributed across the political spectrum.

Any worthwhile activity now done via service-learning or civic engagement, such as work for United Way or an animal shelter, should be done instead by volunteers.

Unite Non-Progressive Civics Organizations

The infrastructure of progressive civics education organizations exerts nationwide pressure on civics education in a leftist direction, and provides a professional environment for progressive activists employed in civics education. Non-progressive civics organizations should unite so as to form an equally capacious professional environment for civics education teachers and administrators. A great many people interested in civics education drift into the progressive organizations because there is no alternative to them. Give such people a choice—a nationwide alliance of civics education organizations large enough to rival the progressive network—and many of them will avoid the progressive network. This sort of institution building is a necessary component of the reform of civics education—in Colorado, in Wyoming, and nationwide.

Institutes such as the Jack Miller Center, which works to support traditional civic literacy programs on college campuses nationwide, do wonderful work.⁸⁴⁸ Much more, however, needs to be done—and that work needs to be coordinated. These united organizations should engage in activities that include:

1. **Establish a Traditional Civics Ranking Organization.** Universities love to compete; provide them a certificate that shows they are superior at traditional civics, and they will strive to win it. Frame this ranking so that the highest achievement is reserved for those institutions that have eliminated their New Civics programs root and branch.
2. **Market this Ranking to the Private Sector.** Colleges that give degrees to students who take New Civics courses are marketing uneducated students to employers. If employers begin to use the traditional civics ranking as a way to tell which college graduates have

Colleges that give degrees to students who take New Civics courses are marketing uneducated students to employers. If employers begin to use the traditional civics ranking as a way to tell which college graduates have actually taken real college courses, it will encourage universities to eliminate their New Civics programs.

848 Jack Miller Center, “About Us,” <http://www.jackmillercenter.org/about-us/>.

actually taken real college courses, it will encourage universities to eliminate their New Civics programs.

3. **Lobby states to adopt the Traditional Civics Ranking for their certification requirements.** The best way to ensure that universities teach traditional civics, and to eliminate the New Civics, is to adopt these criteria in state certification requirements.

Conclusion

Not every person involved in the New Civics is engaged exclusively in progressive advocacy. Thia Wolf at California State University, Chico went to some length to make CSU-Chico’s Great Debates (required for all first-year students) bipartisan.⁸⁴⁹ But this is a very rare exception indeed, in a sphere overwhelmingly dominated by forthright progressive advocacy.

Boyle and Scarnati cogently articulate the stakes: “Higher education is an ‘upstream’ institution that shapes the citizenship identities and practices of students throughout their lives. As colleges and universities discuss and practice the civic politics of public work, they will help recreate foundations for civic agency in multiple places.”⁸⁵⁰ These are the words of the advocates of the

New Civics, as they seek to take over civics education—indeed, higher education as a whole—and turn it into a device for progressive advocacy, a device to provide cheap labor for progressive non-profits, and, ultimately, an auxiliary to a progressive party-state. We should take them at their word: the content of civics education is the content of our children’s minds, and a progressive takeover of the colleges will end up as a progressive takeover of the country. We have been warned.

This takeover can and must be stopped—but only by the sustained attention of the American people to prevent it from happening. It will take, indeed, democratic civil engagement, by individuals, the institutions of civil society, and the government at all levels, to prevent the New Civics advocates’ exploitation of our universities. That sort of campaign will indeed be an educative experience, and we will be the better as citizens for having conducted it, and triumphed. We must only be careful to make sure that the elimination of civic engagement, service learning, and the other tools of progressive takeover in our schools does not itself become part of our education within the classroom: *organizing* our children would be to hand the New Civics advocates an ironic triumph.

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849 Thia Wolf, “Everyone’s a Participant: Large-Scale Civic Experiences in the First-Year Curriculum,” in Reich, ed., *Civic Engagement*, p. 65.

850 Boyle and Scarnati, “Transforming Higher Education,” p. 80.

In the meanwhile, a proper education to civic literacy will not only instill the knowledge necessary to act as a citizen, but also provide an alternative to the New Civics' progressive agenda. We must not cede the ideals of democracy and citizenship to misuse by leftist activists, and we must provide our own articulation of those ideals, in theory and in practice. It will be a long, hard campaign to triumph over the advocates of the New Civics—but we have models to imitate for such campaigns, in Washington, the soldiers at Valley Forge, and many other Americans who fought for the freedom of their posterity. As they fought to bequeath us a free republic, so we may fight to bequeath one to our children. We have the better cause; let us be worthy of it.