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Chapter 25

Idiocy, Puberty, and Citizenship: The Road Ahead

In chapter 1, I designated *social studies* as this book's "keyword"—an important, dynamic, and contested idea. Its meanings and purposes, like those of "math" and "science," are subject to argument because curriculum space is limited, stakeholders don't necessarily share the same values or interests, and at the local level schooling is one of the few institutions open to public debate. The social studies curriculum is debated with special vigor because it occupies curricular space where identities are deliberately shaped. Schools, as we saw, *make people up*, and just about every one who argues over the curriculum knows this. That is why they are arguing. In social studies especially, the curriculum wars zero in on existential questions—questions about our founding myths, our master narratives, who "we the people" is and ought to be. Should students be fashioned into nationalists, globalists, workers, entrepreneurs, enlightened and engaged citizens, or what?

In this final chapter, I want to flesh out an idea introduced in chapter 1, that of aiming the social studies curriculum toward *enlightened political engagement*.¹ We can describe it simply as reflective citizenship as opposed to engagement without knowledge (the uninformed activist) or knowledge without engagement (the alienated expert). Aiming toward democratically enlightened political engagement, schools would fashion citizens who are thoughtfully patriotic as opposed to blindly nationalistic or thoughtlessly compliant with authorities. The working premise here is that the several social science disciplines are indispensably rich resources toward this end but not ends in themselves. They are means; enlightened political engagement is the end. To develop the idea further, it will be useful to revive the ancient meanings of three terms: *idiocy*, *puberty*, and *citizenship*.

Idiocy is the bane of our time and place, but it was a problem for the ancient Greeks, too, who coined the term. *Idiocy* in its origin is not what it means to us today—stupid or mentally deficient. The recent meaning is deservedly and entirely out of usage by educators, but the original meaning needs to be resuscitated as a conceptual tool for clarifying a pivotal social problem and for understanding the central goal of social studies education. Idiocy shares with idiom and idiosyncratic the root *idios*, which means private, separate, self-centered—selfish. "Idiotic" was in the Greek context a term of reproach. When a person's behavior became idiotic—concerned myopically with private things and unmindful of common things—then that person was believed to be like a rudderless ship, without consequence except for the danger it posed to others. This meaning achieves its force when contrasted with *politēs* (citizen). Here we have a powerful opposition: the private individual and the public citizen.

Schools in societies that are trying in various ways to be democracies, such as Mexico, South Africa, Japan, Singapore, Canada, and the United States, to name only a few, are obliged to develop citizens. Citizens hold the highest office in a democracy; they are both its governors and its laborers. In this chapter I show that schools are well-

positioned to develop citizens, and I suggest how they can improve their efforts and achieve greater success.²

Dodging Puberty

An idiot is one whose self-centeredness undermines his or her citizen identity, causing it to wither or never to take root in the first place. Private gain is the goal, and the community had better not get in the way. An idiot is suicidal in a certain way, certainly self-defeating, for the idiot does not know that privacy and individual autonomy are entirely dependent on the community. As Aristotle wrote, “individuals are so many parts all equally depending on the whole which alone can bring self-sufficiency.”³ Idiots do not take part in public life—they do not *have* a public life. In this sense, idiots are immature in the most fundamental way. Their lives are out of balance, disoriented, untethered, and unrealized. Tragically, idiots have not met the challenge of *puberty*, which is the transition to public life and taking one’s place on the public stage.

The former mayor of Missoula, Montana wrote of the idiocy/citizenship opposition, though using a different term:

People who customarily refer to themselves as *taxpayers* are not even remotely related to democratic citizens. Yet this is precisely the word that now regularly holds the place which in a true democracy would be occupied by “citizens.” Taxpayers bear a dual relationship to government, neither half of which has anything at all to do with democracy. Taxpayers pay tribute to the government, and they receive services from it. So does every subject of a totalitarian regime. What taxpayers do not do, and what people who call themselves taxpayers have long since stopped even imagining themselves doing, is *governing*. In a democracy, by the very meaning of the word, the people govern....⁴

The French sociologist Alexis de Tocqueville, writing 150 years earlier on the occasion of his famous visit to the United States, also described idiocy. All democratic peoples face a “dangerous passage” in their history, he wrote, when they “are carried away and lose all self-restraint at the sight of the new possessions they are about to obtain.”⁵ Tocqueville’s principal concern was that getting “carried away” causes citizens to lose the very freedom they want so much to enjoy. “These people think they are following the principle of self-interest,” he continues, “but the idea they entertain of that principle is a very crude one; and the more they look after what they call their own business, they neglect their chief business, which is to remain their own masters.” Just how do people remain their own masters? By maintaining the kind of community that secures their liberty. Tocqueville’s singular contribution to our understanding of idiocy and citizenship is the notion that idiots are idiotic precisely because they are indifferent to the conditions and contexts of their own freedom. They fail to grasp the interdependence of liberty and community, privacy and puberty.

Similarly, Jane Addams argued in 1913 that if a woman was planning to “keep on with her old business of caring for her house and rearing her children,” then it was necessary that she expand her consciousness to include “public affairs lying quite outside her immediate household.” The individualistic consciousness was “no longer effective”:

Women who live in the country sweep their own dooryards and may either feed the refuse of the table to a flock of chickens or allow it innocently to decay in

the open air and sunshine. In a crowded city quarter, however, if the street is not cleaned by the city authorities, no amount of private sweeping will keep the tenement free from grime; if the garbage is not properly collected and destroyed a tenement house mother may see her children sicken and die of diseases from which she alone is powerless to shield them, although her tenderness and devotion are unbounded.⁶

Addams concluded that for women to tend only their “own” households was idiotic, for to do only that would prevent women, ironically, from doing that. One cannot maintain the familial nest without maintaining the public, shared space in which the familial nest is itself nested. “(A)s society grows more complicated,” she continued, “it is necessary that woman shall extend her sense of responsibility to many things outside of her own home if she would continue to preserve the home in its entirety.”

Leaving aside individuals, families can be idiotic, too. The paradigm case is the mafia—a family that looks inward intensely and solely. A thick moral code glues the insiders together, but in dealings with outsiders who are beyond the galaxy of one’s obligations and duties, anything goes. There is no organized cooperation across families to tackle shared problems (health, education, welfare), no shared games, not even communication save the occasional “treaty.” There are no bridging associations. Edward Banfield called this *amoral familism* and gave its ethos as “maximize the material, short-run advantage of the nuclear family; assume that all others will do likewise.”⁷

Amoral familism is certainly not restricted to the mafia. Social scientists who examine popular culture find no shortage of amoral familism today. A notorious contemporary example is (was?) the sports utility vehicle (SUV) craze. Here, the family provides for its own safety and self-esteem at others’ expense. Accomplishing mobile tasks such as commuting, ferrying children about, and running household errands, the SUV moms and dads put other drivers and passengers at risk, widen the ozone hole, and waste nonrenewable resources. SUV drivers often justify their behavior by speaking of their “rights” or the pleasure of “sitting up higher than others,” but especially “family safety.”⁸ It is my right to do what I please, goes the argument, with the added, supposedly selfless rationalization of securing “my” family from dangers real and imagined. To draw the line of obligation so close to the nuclear family is idiotic because it undermines, as Addams and Tocqueville argued, that family’s *own* safety along with everyone else’s.

We could continue this survey of idiocy from its individual and familial forms to its nationalistic variety wherein a nation secures its own needs and wants in such a way that the world environment—the ultimate nest—is fouled. I want instead to conclude this section with a puzzle: How did idiocy grow from an exception in the Greek polis to a commonplace in contemporary, developed societies? Others have asked just this question. Marx saw idiocy (“alienation,” he called it) as the inevitable by-product of capitalism wherein accumulating profit becomes an end in itself and everything else—from labor to love—is commodified toward that end. Robert Bellah and colleagues trace idiocy to the culture of rugged individualism. John Kenneth Galbraith focused on the problems created by the widespread affluence of contemporary North American society where, for example, beef cattle are consumed at such a rate as to flood the environment with their waste while farmland is wasted on their feed.⁹

Schools and Idiocy

Capitalism, individualism, and affluence are a powerful brew. But let's turn to schooling. Do schools marshal their human and material resources to make up idiots or citizens? Does the school, through its explicit, implicit, and null curricula, cultivate private vices or public virtues? Can schools tame the rugged individualism and amoral familism that undermine puberty and foul the common nest? Actually, schools already educate for citizenship to an extent, and there lies our hope. By identifying how schools accomplish at least some of this work now, educators can direct and fine-tune the effort. The wheel doesn't need to be reinvented; it is at hand, rolling already, and needs to be rolled more intentionally and explicitly toward citizenship. There are three assumptions that propel this work, three assets, and three keys to its success.

Assumptions

The first assumption is that democracy (rule by the people) is superior to the alternatives (e.g., rule by one person [autocracy], by clerics [theocracy], by the wealthy [plutocracy]) because it aspires to and, to varying degrees, is held accountable for securing civil liberties, equality before the law, limited government, competitive elections, and solidarity around a common project (a civic *unum*) that exists alongside individual and cultural manyness (*pluribus*).

That democracies fall short of these aspirations is terribly obvious and the chief motive behind social movements that seek to close the gap between the actual and the ideal. The purpose of the Women's Suffrage Movement and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States was not to alter the American Dream but to realize it. When a democracy excludes its own members for whatever reason (patriarchy, Jim Crow, religious intolerance, homophobia, etc.), it is "actively and purposefully false to its own vaunted principles," wrote Judith Shklar.¹⁰ Here is democracy's built-in progressive impulse: to live up to itself.

The second assumption is that there can be no democracy without democrats. Democratic ways of living together, with the people's differences intact and recognized, are not given by nature; they are created, and much of the creative work is undertaken by engaged citizens who share some understanding of what it is they are trying to build together. Often, it is the unjustly treated members of a community who are democracy's vanguard, pushing it toward its principles. The Framers of the U. S. Constitution may have been the birth parents of democracy, American style, but those who were excluded, then and now, became the adoptive, nurturing parents.¹¹

Third, democratic citizens do not materialize out of thin air. They are not given by nature already grasping knotty principles such as toleration, impartial justice, the separation of church and state, the need for limits on majority power, or the difference between liberty and license. They are not born already capable of deliberating public policy issues with other citizens whose beliefs and cultures they may abhor. These things are not, as the historical record makes all too clear, born into our genes. Rather, they are social, moral, and intellectual achievements.

On the three assumptions taken together, educators are justified in shaping curriculum and instruction toward the formation of democratic citizens. In poll after poll, the American public makes clear its expectation that schools do precisely this.¹²

Assets

As it turns out, schools are ideal sites for democratic citizenship education. The main reason is that a school is not a private place, like our homes, but a public, civic place with a jumble of diverse students. Some schools are more diverse than others, of course, but all of them are to some meaningful extent. Former kindergarten teacher Vivian Paley put it plainly: “The children I teach are just emerging from life’s deep wells of private perspective: babyhood and family. Then, along comes school. It is the first real exposure to the public arena.”¹³ Boys and girls are both there. Jews, Protestants, Catholics, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and atheists are there together. There are African Americans, European Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans and more. Immigrants from the world over are there.

This buzzing variety does not exist at home, or at church, temple, or mosque either, but in public places where diverse people are thrown together, places where people who come from numerous private worlds and social positions congregate on common ground. These are places where multiple social perspectives and personal values are brought into face-to-face contact around matters that “are relevant to the problems of living together,” as Dewey put it.¹⁴ These are mutual, collective concerns, not mine or yours but *ours*. These arise in public places—places such as schools.

Compared to home life, schools are like village squares, cities, crossroads, community centers, marketplaces. When aimed at democratic ends and supported by the proper democratic conditions, this interaction in schools can help children enter the social consciousness of puberty and develop the habits of thinking and caring necessary for public life—the tolerance, respect, sense of justice, and the knack for forging public policy with others whether one likes them or not.

This, then, is the great democratic potential of the public places called schools. As Dewey observed, “The notion that the essentials of elementary education are the three R’s mechanically treated, is based upon ignorance of the essentials needed for realization of democratic ideals.”¹⁵ Mobilized, schools can nurture these “essentials”—the qualities needed for the hard work of living together freely but cooperatively and with justice, equality, and dignity. Schools can do this because of the collective problems and the diversity contained within them. Problems, diversity, and a curriculum that orchestrates these along with learning from the disciplines—these are the essential assets found in schools for cultivating democratic citizens.

Keys

But how actually to accomplish this? Three actions are key. First, increase the variety and frequency of interaction among students who are culturally, linguistically, and racially different from one another. Classrooms sometimes do this naturally. But if the school itself is homogenous, or if the school is diverse but curriculum tracks are keeping groups of students apart, then this first key is more difficult to turn. It is not helping that resegregation has intensified in recent years despite an increasingly diverse society. White students today are the most segregated from all other races in their schools, and on this criterion, they may be at the greatest risk of idiocy.¹⁶ Still, race is certainly not the only source of diversity among students. What school leaders must do is capitalize on whatever diversity is present—race, religion, language, gender, social class, ideology, national origin—and increase the variety and frequency of interaction opportunities.

Second, orchestrate these contacts so that competent public talk—especially deliberation about common problems—is fostered. In schools, this is talk about two kinds of problems: social and academic. Social problems arise inevitably from the friction of interaction (Dewey’s “problems of living together”), and academic problems are at the core of the social studies curriculum.

Third, clarify the attributes of deliberation and the distinction between open/inclusive and closed/exclusive deliberation. In other words, expect, teach, and model competent, inclusive deliberation. Deliberation is discussion aimed at making a decision across these differences about a problem that the participants face in common.¹⁷ The main action during a deliberation is weighing—weighing alternatives with others with the goal of deciding on the best course of action. In schools, deliberation is not only an instructional method (teaching *with* deliberation) but a curriculum goal (teaching *for* deliberation),¹⁸ because it generates and animates a particular kind of social good: a democratic community—a public space.

Teachers and administrators can expand deliberative opportunities by increasing student participation in different kinds of mixed student groups. What the participants have in common in these settings is not culture, race, or opinion but the problems they are facing and must work through together in ways that strike everyone as fair.¹⁹

The Social Curriculum

One of the best-known primary-school examples of children deliberating their shared social problems comes from the kindergarten classroom of Vivian Paley. Paley captured in a number of books the look and feel of actual classroom-based deliberation, and she shows how entirely possible it is to do such work in everyday classroom settings, even with the youngest children. In *You Can’t Say You Can’t Play*, she tells the story of her facilitation of a lengthy deliberation about whether to establish the classroom rule of the book’s title. She engages the kindergartners in an ongoing discussion about the desirability and practicability of having such a rule. She tells them, “I just can’t get the question out of my mind. Is it fair for children *in school* to keep another child out of play? After all, this classroom belongs to all of us. It is not a private place, like our homes.”²⁰ This is a compelling question to her students, and they have lots to say. She brings them to the circle again and again to weigh the alternatives. “Will the rule work? Is it fair?”, she asks. Memories and opinions flow. “If you cry people should let you in,” Ben says. “But then what’s the whole point of playing?”, Lisa complains.

Paley sometimes interviews older children to collect their views and brings them back to her kindergartners. Trading classes with a second-grade teacher, Paley tells those children: “I’ve come to ask your opinions about a new rule we’re considering in the kindergarten. . . . We call it, ‘You can’t say you can’t play.’” These older children know full well the issue. Vivid accounts of rejection are shared. Some children believe it is a fair rule, but that it won’t work: “It would be impossible to have any fun,” offers one boy. In a fourth-grade class, students conclude that it is “too late” to give them such a rule. “If you want a rule like that to work, start at a very early age,” declares one nine-year-old.²¹ Paley takes these views back to the discussion circle in her own classroom. Her children are enthralled as she retells the older children’s views. The deliberation is enlarged, the alternatives more complex.

High school deliberative projects exist, too. Perhaps the most widely documented are the Just Community schools.²² In them, democratic governance becomes

a way of life at school. These projects aim to transform the school culture—especially its implicit curriculum—and in this way they aim to cultivate democratic citizenship. Students in Just Community schools participate in the basic governance of the school. They deliberate everything from attendance policy, dress codes, and the consequences for stealing and cheating to whether cafeteria seating should be assigned randomly as a move against resegregation. If in the explicit academic curriculum the values of justice, liberty, and equality are taught and vaunted, students are quick to see whether the school itself runs on a different set of values. They will learn which are the actual rules of the game.

The Social Studies Curriculum

Just as research and practice are interdependent (an argument made this book's Preface), citizens need to be both enlightened and engaged. The suggestion to engage students in dialogues on the shared problems of school life is most definitely not an argument against disciplinary learning. The two together is the prize. Action without understanding is no cause for celebration (recall, the Klan acted; Nazis were engaged). Consequently, a rigorous social studies curriculum of powerful ideas, issues, and values is essential alongside deliberations of controversial school-governance questions.

Furthermore, if deliberation is left to the school's social curriculum only, to the non-academic curriculum of student relations and school governance, then students are likely to develop the misconception that the academic disciplines are settled and devoid of controversy. Nothing could be further from the truth. The disciplines are loaded with arguments, and expertise in a discipline is measured by one's involvement in them. In a good school, social studies teachers are engaging students in the core problems of the disciplines.

Argumentation is authentic disciplinary activity. Social scientists argue about everything they study—about why Rome fell, what globalization is doing, why slavery lasted longer in the U.S. than in England, why poverty persists, how the nation-state system developed initially, and why it is maintained today. What they do, as we learned earlier in this book, is develop theses or claims (warranted assertions, evidence-based accounts) about such matters. Accordingly, engaging students in deliberations of academic controversies may be the most rigorous approach to disciplinary education available.²³ Its advantage over cover-and-control curricula is that it involves students in both the substantive (ideas and issues) and syntactical (methods of inquiry) dimensions of the disciplines.²⁴ At the same time, it prepares them for the argumentation that both democracy and science require.

A number of now-popular instructional methods in social studies feature deliberation. The inquiry method has students weigh rival hypotheses, the seminar method has students weigh alternative interpretations of a powerful text, and Structured Academic Controversy is useful to a wide variety of deliberations.²⁵ Moreover, there are some good curriculum materials readily available that help teachers and curriculum leaders lay out several alternatives for students to deliberate. Two of the most widely vetted for the high school social studies classroom, especially history and government courses, are published by the *National Issues Forums* and *Choices for the 21st Century*.²⁶ Each produces a series of materials containing background information on a pressing problem (contemporary or historical) and three to four policy alternatives. Both engage students in the kind of deliberation that develops their understanding of one another, the

array of alternatives, the problem itself, and its historical context.²⁷ The provision of alternatives by the authors scaffolds the task, modeling for students what an array of alternatives looks like and allowing them to labor at interpreting these and at listening to one another. After this, students are ready to have the scaffold removed and to investigate an issue of their own choosing, creating their own briefing materials.²⁸

Conclusion

Social studies educators are in a particularly good place to work against idiocy; well-positioned, that is, to cultivate enlightened political engagement. They have at hand in schools three key resources for this work:

- a) a more-or-less diverse student population assembled in a public place for a public purpose,
- b) plenty of problems (both social, drawn from school involvement; and academic, drawn from society and the social science disciplines),
- c) a curriculum that can be mobilized to bring students, problems, and the social science disciplines into a productive relationship for learning and development.

Underlying these three assets are two more, each so basic as to be easily overlooked. Both are problems, but they are assets because they focus attention where it is needed for educational purposes. One is the content-selection problem. Social studies educators are never allowed to take their eye off it. The currency of educators is curriculum decision making—deciding which (and whose) knowledge most deserves inclusion in the curriculum. Consequently, they are forever forced to weigh one subject matter candidate, whether a topic (life in the Amazon region), a problem (deforestation in the Amazon region), or a whole course of study (South American history and geography), against an ocean of alternatives. The asset I am pointing to here is that curriculum decisions are based, by definition, on a consideration of the *educational significance* of any proposed addition to or other change in the curriculum. This is always the case given the curricular economy of unlimited content and scarce instructional time and materials. This decision making involves a calculus of disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and social knowledge, not to mention a sage's knack for forecasting.²⁹ Meanwhile, single-subject disciplinary scholars, such as historians, geographers, and political scientists, are not bound by any such problem. Thornton and Barton elaborate:

Historians want to study *all* content—or at least they assume the freedom to study any content that individual members of the profession consider worthwhile. When historians begin to study new questions, they face little opposition from others (apart from curmudgeonly grumbling), for new approaches do not necessarily crowd out old ones. No historian is prevented from doing research on Robert E. Lee just because someone else has chosen to investigate Gypsy Rose Lee. The field is wide enough, and publishing opportunities numerous enough, to accommodate such pluralism, and as a result the output of historical scholarship covers an incredible diversity of topics, time periods, geographic regions, and methodological approaches. But because the time available to teach history in school is finite, the curriculum cannot incorporate all possible content, and so choices must be made about which topics are important enough to include. In schools, unlike in the

profession of history, each new topic *must* crowd out an old one. How, then, do we decide which knowledge is of most worth...? The discipline of history is silent on this issue.³⁰

Social studies educators have a second underlying asset in addition to the content-selection problem. Social studies educators are required to pay attention to the transmission-transformation question: Should the curriculum encourage students to thrive in the current social system or to build a new one? To ignore this question would amount to naïvety about the public role of schools.

In Chapters 1 and 2, three basic responses to the transmission-transformation question were outlined—from the political left, right, and center. I believe the approach to combating idiocy and cultivating *politēs* detailed in the present chapter lands in the center. It features rigorous deliberation of social problems that arise inevitably at school, including school governance issues, along with what Dewey called “intelligent study of historical and existing forces and conditions.”³¹ Combined, these are a “method of intelligence,” as Stanley called it in Part I (“Purpose Matters”) of this book. This is not a neutral approach because particular values are upheld: both democratic (e.g., cooperative decision making) and scientific (e.g., basing claims on evidence). But this does not mean that it aims to indoctrinate students into a particular vision of social welfare (e.g., capitalism or socialism). Rather, the method is progressive and open-ended. Having been made more intelligent by their education, students will themselves, quoting Dewey, “take part in the great work of construction and organization that will have to be done....”³²

It is to be expected that a diverse student body will engage and interpret this work differently. As indicated in the second section of this book, *Perspective Matters*, culture and identity matter strongly in teaching and learning. Educators dare not ignore these resources if they want to manage instruction intelligently and teach all students. But this is not to say that subject matter doesn’t matter. As we saw in the “Subject Matters” section (Part III), it does matter and in wonderfully complicated ways—from the earliest primary grades through the final years of high school, as well as at home, temple, church, and mosque. That fact that a topic such as the Holocaust or the Vietnam War is taught—that it is included in the explicit curriculum in the form of lessons, units of study, and curriculum materials—doesn’t mean that it is taught in the same way from school to school or classroom to classroom, nor that it is learned in the same way, if at all, from student to student. In fact, a topic’s presence in the explicit curriculum, while an important achievement, says nothing about how it is taught or interpreted by students or teachers. Furthermore, the *interaction effects* of the three curricula—explicit, implicit, and null—can be explosive: The exclusion of gay and lesbian people from the explicit curriculum (that is, their banishment to the null curriculum), plus the heteronormativity present in the explicit curriculum, combines dangerously (and too often tragically) with the homophobia found in the school’s implicit curriculum.

Global Matters (Part IV) are affecting the three curricula today in both old and new ways, and the effect is not necessarily good. There are exceptions, as we saw in the

fourth section of the book, namely new approaches to teaching world history, civics, and literature alongside innovative programs to put students around the world into contact with one another. But the rule seems to be encouraging education *for* rather than against idiocy. I am referring to the new flurry of activity in schools today under the banners of “international” and “global” education. Too many of these are motivated not by global purposes but by intensely national ones, chief among which is maintaining (or, if already lost, regaining) the nation’s competitive economic edge in the new so-called “flat” world of the 21st century. Economic anxieties are driving the United States and other nations to do with their schools what they have generally done with them: deploy them for narrowly nationalistic purposes even when using terms such as “international” and “global.” Those who believe the current surge of activity means that parents, educators, and citizens are genuinely interested in transforming schools to create “global citizens” are in for a sobering awakening. As one legislator stated in 2008, arguing for transmission rather than transformation and voting against funding for a global education initiative, “I would like to have American citizens who know how to function in a global economy, not global citizens.”³³

As for *Puzzles*, it remains to be seen whether schools will move forward or backward in the quest to educate an enlightened and engaged public. To a large extent, this depends on whether they are encouraged to do so, for schools are not independent agencies where massive social forces can be stopped with a lesson plan. Schools are thoroughly nested in society; schools are products of their societies, not the reverse. Nevertheless, the school is not an insignificant source of social change. What it does and doesn’t teach, both explicitly and implicitly, matters. At some level, everyone seems to believe this, which is why curriculum debates are among the most impassioned anywhere in the public sphere. My view is that the “three Rs”—mechanically treated and tested with Puritanical fervor—are not the essentials needed for the realization of democratic ideals. A proper curriculum for democracy requires the study and practice of democracy, one approach to which I have outlined here.

Notes

¹ I am adapting the term “enlightened political engagement” from Norman H., Nie, Jane Junn, and Kenneth Stehlik-Barry in *Education and democratic citizenship in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

² This chapter draws from two sources: my article “Teaching against idiocy,” *Phi Delta Kappan*, 86, no. 5 (2005): 344-351; and my book *Teaching democracy: Unity and diversity in public life* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2003).

³ Aristotle, *The politics of Aristotle*, trans. Ernest Barker (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958): 6. Also, Alasdair MacIntyre, *After virtue* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 1981): 263.

⁴ Daniel Kemmis, *The good city and the good life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995): 9.

⁵ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. J. P. Mayer, trans. Lawrence, George, *Democracy in America* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1969): 540.

⁶ Jane Addams, “Why women should vote,” in *Woman suffrage: History, arguments, and results*, ed. Frances Maule (New York: National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1913): 1.

⁷ Edward C. Banfield, *The moral basis of a backward society* (New York: The Free Press, 1958). Also Robert D. Putnam, *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

⁸ Sarah Jain, “Urban errands: The means of mobility,” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 2, no. 3 (2002): 419-438. Keith Bradsher, *High and mighty: SUVs* (New York: Public Affairs, 2002).

⁹ Karl Marx, *Capital*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Classics, 1867/1990). Robert N. Bellah et al., *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). John Kenneth Galbraith, *The affluent society* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958).

¹⁰ Judith N. Shklar, *American citizenship: The quest for inclusion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991): 12.

¹¹ See Gary Y. Okihiro, *Margins and mainstream: Asians in American history and culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994).

¹² Jennifer L. Hochschild and Nathan Scovronick, "Democratic education and the American Dream: One, some, and all," in *Education for democracy: Contexts, curricula, and assessments*, ed. Walter C. Parker (Greenwich, CT: Information Age, 2002): 3-26.

¹³ Vivian G. Paley, *You can't say you can't play* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992): 21.

¹⁴ John Dewey, *Democracy and education*, ed. Jo Ann Boydston, vol. 9, *The middle works of John Dewey, 1899-1924* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1916/1985): 200.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ Gary Orfield, *Schools more separate: Consequences of a decade of resegregation* (The Civil Rights Project, 2001, available at www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/deseg/separate_schools01.php).

¹⁷ The OED's definition: The action of deliberating, or weighing a thing in the mind; careful consideration with a view to decision.

¹⁸ On the with/for distinction, see Walter C. Parker and Diana Hess, "Teaching with and for discussion," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 17, no. 3 (2001): 273-289; and Bruce E. Larson, "Classroom discussion: A method of instruction and a curriculum outcome," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 16, no. 5 (2000): 661-77.

¹⁹ See Thomas F. Pettigrew, "Intergroup contact: Theory, research, and new perspectives," in *Handbook of research on multicultural education*, ed. James A. Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004): 770-781.

²⁰ Vivian G. Paley, *You can't say you can't play* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992): 16.

²¹ *Ibid.*: 63

²² F. Clark Power, Ann Higgins, and Lawrence Kohlberg, *Lawrence Kohlberg's approach to moral education* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989). Ralph Mosher, Robert A. Kenny, Jr., and Andrew Garrod, *Preparing for citizenship:*

Teaching youth to live democratically (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994).

²³ The classics include Donald W. Oliver and James P. Shaver's *Teaching public issues in the high school* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1966/1974); Maurice P. Hunt and Lawrence E. Metcalf's *Teaching high school social studies: Problems in reflective thinking and social understanding*, 2nd ed. (New York: HarperCollins, 1968); and Edwin Fenton's *The new social studies* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967).

²⁴ Joseph J. Schwab, "Structure of the disciplines: Meanings and significances," in *The structure of knowledge and the curriculum*, ed. G. W. Ford and Lawrence Pugno (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964): 6-30.

²⁵ Walter C. Parker, "Public discourses in schools: purposes, problems, possibilities," *Educational Researcher* 35, no. 8 (2006):11-18; and *Teaching Democracy*, chapter 7.

²⁶ *National Issues Forums* materials are produced by the Kettering Foundation and available at www.nifi.org. *Choices* materials are produced by the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University and are available at www.choices.edu.

²⁷ John Doble, *The story of NIF: The effects of deliberation* (Dayton: Kettering Foundation, 1996).

²⁸ See penetrating studies of these materials by Diana Hess, Jeremy Stoddard, & Shannon Murto, "Examining the treatment of 9/11 and terrorism in high school textbooks," in *Educating democratic citizens in troubled times: qualitative studies of current efforts*, ed. Janet S. Bixby & Judith L. Pace (Albany: State University of New York Press): 192-226; and Steven P. Camicia, "Deliberating immigration policy: Locating instructional materials within global and multicultural perspectives," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 31, no. 1 (2007): 96-111.

²⁹ See the classics: Donald W. Oliver, "The selection of content in the social sciences." *Harvard Educational Review* 27 (1957): 271-300; Harold Benjamin, *The saber tooth curriculum* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939); and Michael Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004).

³⁰ Stephen J. Thornton and Keith C. Barton, “Can history stand alone? Drawbacks and blind spots of a ‘disciplinary’ curriculum,” *Teachers College Record* 112, no. 9 (2010): 2471-2495.

³¹ John Dewey, “The crucial role of intelligence,” *The Social Frontier* 1, no. 5 (1935): 9.

³² John Dewey, “Education and Social Change,” *The Social Frontier* 3, no. 26 (1937): 236. (Both this quote and the one above are from Stanley’s chapter in this volume.)

³³ Quoted in Walter C. Parker, “‘International Education’ — What’s in a name?” *Phi Delta Kappan* 90, no. 2 (2008): 202.