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EDUCATING CITIZENS IN A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY

WE BEGIN WITH the story of Virginia Foster Durr, who was a friend of the two senior authors of this book. Mrs. Durr, who died in 1999 at the age of ninety-six, was a remarkable woman not only in her contributions to racial justice and civil liberties but in the surprising direction her life took, given the culture in which she grew up. Virginia Durr was a white woman from a genteel (and racist) Alabama family, yet she became a major figure in the black civil rights movement. She helped integrate Washington, D.C., and Birmingham, Alabama, and fought for years to end the poll tax, which was used to prevent blacks, women, and poor people from voting in the South until 1964, when the Voting Rights Act was passed. We begin with this story not because Virginia was dramatically transformed in college but because experiences she had in college played a pivotal role in a longer process that began before her college years and continued much beyond them. Four things stand out in Virginia's account of her undergraduate years at Wellesley College in the early 1920s. They reflect the importance of the courses and faculty; the college's mission, cultural climate, and rules; and the connections students can make through clubs and interest groups.

First, as she studied history, political theory, and economics, Virginia became aware of dimensions of life that she had not known existed, developing an intellectual framework that persisted beyond her college years and affected the way she interpreted her later experiences. Some of her teachers deliberately connected their course material with social issues of the day and with the lives and concerns of their students. As she later recalled:

We had some excellent teachers at Wellesley. I had a marvelous teacher in economics, Professor Muzzy. . . . There were all kinds of tables and statistics that I had difficulty following. But I did get the impression that the great majority of people in the world had a pretty hard time. Once Muzzy gave me a paper to write. He knew that I came from Birmingham, so he said, "Mrs. Smith is the wife of a steelworker and her husband makes three dollars a day. Now tell me how Mrs. Smith with three children is going to arrange her budget so that they can live." Well, I tried to do it. I had to look up the price of food and rent and doctors. It was an active lesson in economics. I soon realized that Mrs. Smith couldn't possibly live on that amount of money. She just couldn't do it. When I handed in my paper, I had written at the end, "I've come to the conclusion that Mrs. Smith's husband doesn't get enough money, because they can't possibly live on what he is paid as a steelworker in Birmingham, Alabama." . . . These incidents at Wellesley had a delayed effect, but the main thing I learned was to use my mind and to get pleasure out of it. So my Wellesley education was quite liberating [Durr & Barnard, 1985, pp. 62–63].

When Virginia returned to Alabama and began the kind of charity work that was expected of young married women, the intellectual framework she had developed through this and other college courses led her to see the plight of the poor as a reflection of deep injustices in the U.S. economic and political systems rather than as a character defect of the poor themselves. This perspective later propelled her interest in the development of unions and her work in forging connections between the campaigns for civil rights and for workers' rights.

Second, a dramatic incident early in Virginia's sophomore year reveals the impact colleges can have when they set clear moral expectations for their students and rigorously enforce those expectations. One evening Virginia went down to the dining room for dinner and was shocked to see a black girl seated at the table to which she had been assigned. She immediately told the head of the house that she "could not possibly eat at the table with a Negro girl" (Colby & Damon, 1992, p. 99). The head of the house calmly explained that the rules of the college required her to eat at that table for a month, and if she did not comply she would have to withdraw from college. When Virginia explained that her father would "have a fit" if she ate at that table, the head of the house responded, "He's not our problem. He's your problem. You either abide by the rules or you go home" (Durr & Barnard, 1985, p. 57). Mrs. Durr later reflected that that was the first time her values regarding race had ever been challenged, and

it made a big impression on her. As she said: "The incident may not have been crucial at the time, but it was the origin of a doubt. It hurt my faith, my solid conviction of what I had been raised to believe" (p. 59). This experience did not immediately lead to a new perspective on race relations and civil rights, but it did move Virginia a perceptible step in that direction. The college had forced her to interact with an educated, middle-class black girl for the first time, and she realized that the girl was intelligent and cultured. She became aware that her views on segregation were not shared by the community she had joined, a community she prized very highly. Although she remained racist until many years later, the incident lodged in Virginia's memory, creating a fracture in her convictions about race that contributed to their later destruction.

Virginia's mind was more thoroughly opened to issues of gender equality during college—the third important experience college offered her. Through a combination of coursework, admiration for strong women faculty, and the ethos and mission of Wellesley, she came to see gender roles in an entirely new way, questioning the norms and assumptions that so severely constrained women in the early twentieth century, especially in the Deep South. She learned to care passionately about women's rights, including their rights as citizens: "I realized for the first time that women could be something. This was the real liberation that I got at Wellesley" (Durr & Barnard, 1985, p. 59).

After Virginia returned to Alabama, she eagerly went to the polls and was shocked to learn that she had to pay a tax in order to vote. Virginia was outraged by the tax and the way the entrenched political establishment used the tax to maintain its control. When she moved to Washington, D.C., with her husband a few years later, she joined the Women's Division of the Democratic National Committee in a bitter, extended, and ultimately successful campaign to abolish the poll tax. She initially joined that struggle solely for the sake of women's rights; her action was a direct result of her college experiences. Although she much admired Eleanor Roosevelt and the other women on the committee, she was still a self-described racist and initially disagreed with them about race. Because of the coalitions that formed around the voting rights issues, however, Virginia soon found herself working closely with black organizations and distinguished black women such as Mary McLeod Bethune and Mary Church Terrell. Over time these working relationships led her to change dramatically her perspective on race and to look back on her earlier views with a sense of shame.

A fourth critical college influence resulted from Virginia's participation in an extracurricular activity, the Southern Club, through which she formed relationships with other southern students who had come north

to college. This might have insulated her from the benefits of encountering a new culture, but almost by chance, it led to further growth. In the Southern Club, Virginia came to know and admire a Harvard student, Clark Foreman, who later became an activist for racial equality, after having studied abroad and then having witnessed a lynching upon his return to the United States. He and Virginia renewed their friendship some years later while they were both living in Washington, D.C. Just at the time that Virginia began her work with the Democratic National Committee, Foreman also confronted and seriously challenged her segregationist views on race, opening her mind still further and helping to draw her into the struggle for racial justice.

Some of the important developmental experiences Virginia had while a student at Wellesley no doubt resulted from intentional efforts faculty, residence hall staff, and others at the college made to awaken intellectual excitement, challenge assumptions, and foster new ways of understanding the world, both by structuring academic study and by establishing a climate and conveying a set of expectations. Other influences, particularly those connected with the Southern Club, seem to have been fortuitous. Had Clark Foreman not made a personal transformation of his own in the years following college, he could not have played a catalytic role in Virginia Durr's awakening.

This book takes up the question of what kinds of influence undergraduate education can have on students' development as ethical, committed, and engaged human beings and citizens. The undergraduate years are just one part of a lifelong developmental process, but especially if efforts are intentionally designed with these developmental outcomes in mind, colleges can establish some groundwork that students can later build on, shape the intellectual frameworks and habits of mind they bring to their adult experiences, change the way they understand the responsibilities that are central to their sense of self, and teach them to offer and demand evidence and justification for their moral and political positions and to develop wiser judgment in approaching situations and questions that represent potential turning points in their lives.

In a loose sense, undergraduate education at its best can resemble the preparations explorers make when preparing for expeditions into uncharted territories. Meriwether Lewis, for example, prior to his exploration of the North American continent with William Clark, collected a wide array of tools and learned how to use many that were new to him (chronometers, sextants, and other scientific instruments; medical equipment; and so on). With the help of some extraordinary teachers and mentors, including Thomas Jefferson, Albert Gallatin, Benjamin Rush, and others,

he mastered knowledge that he would need (in geography, botany, natural history, astronomy, commerce, and American Indian culture) and learned scientific techniques that would allow him to use his explorations to expand the boundaries of that knowledge. Before assembling a team, he thought hard about what kind of men he needed and how he could maintain a cohesive corps. Lewis also collected the best existing maps, however incomplete they were, and out of his experience with those maps and integration of the disparate bodies of knowledge he had studied, his plans took shape (Ambrose, 1996). These preparations shifted somewhat the course of Lewis's journey and the route adjustments he would make in response to unexpected barriers and events. When he finished the preparations and set out, his direction was perhaps only slightly different than it would have been with less groundwork, but over many months of travel the slight initial shift in trajectory and the continuing, responsive alterations no doubt led to a route distinctly different from the one he would have taken without such extensive preparations. Moreover, the viability and scientific productivity of the expedition was critically dependent on what he had learned during the preparation phase.

Similarly, students may leave college with the trajectories of their lives shifted only slightly but with ways of approaching and responding to their subsequent experiences that magnify the shift over time, until much later it becomes clear that the gap between where they are and where they would have been without those influences is dramatic. The undergraduate experience has the potential to be this kind of *preexpedition* for millions of Americans, and we believe colleges will be most effective in this preparation if their efforts are self-conscious and intentional, not simply dependent on the fortuitous impact of the kind that Clark Foreman had on Virginia Durr.

College is the last stage of formal education for most Americans and the last formal education outside their field of specialization for those who pursue further study. Although informal education can continue throughout life—at work and through engagement with the media, the arts, and books—to a great extent experiences in college determine how inclined individuals will be to pursue this kind of ongoing learning and what intellectual and personal capacities they will bring to those engagements.

The Need for Undergraduate Moral and Civic Education

Although acknowledging the exceptional vitality of U.S. higher education, Ernest Boyer's report (1987) on the college experience also points to a number of things that diminish the quality of undergraduate education,

preventing colleges from serving their students as well as they might. One issue that stands out in Boyer's investigation is the question of what the goals and purposes of higher education should be. Boyer's calls for greater attention to the moral and civic purposes of college have been widely quoted in the intervening fifteen years. In a chapter titled "From Competence to Commitment," he said:

Throughout our study we were impressed that what today's college is teaching most successfully is competence—competence in meeting schedules, in gathering information, in responding well on tests, in mastering the details of a special field. . . . But technical skill, of whatever kind, leaves open essential questions: Education for what purpose? Competence to what end? At a time in life when values should be shaped and personal priorities sharply probed, what a tragedy it would be if the most deeply felt issues, the most haunting questions, the most creative moments were pushed to the fringes of our institutional life. What a monumental mistake it would be if students, during the undergraduate years, remained trapped within the organizational grooves and narrow routines to which the academic world sometimes seems excessively devoted [p. 283].

Through large-scale surveys of faculty and students and extended site visits at twenty-nine colleges and universities, Boyer and his colleagues concluded that by and large undergraduate education is not meeting the challenge of going beyond competence to commitment. The research team encountered a picture that seems quite at odds with our opening portrait of Virginia Durr's experience at a small, liberal arts college for women in the 1920s. The report points to conflicting priorities and competing interests, confusion about mission and goals, disciplinary fragmentation, a narrow vocationalism, a great separation between academic and social life on campus, and a disturbing gap between the college and the larger world. These trends and several others impede the efforts of faculty and administrative leaders who see the importance of higher education's civic mission and want to make the undergraduate years a pivotal time for moral and civic development.

It is a good time to revisit this question of the public purposes of higher education. The need is perhaps even greater now than it was at the time of the Boyer report a decade and a half ago. Global interdependence is ever more striking and insistent. Old social problems persist, and new ones are emerging. The country's increasing racial and ethnic diversity has brought tensions and raised dilemmas as well as enriched its already kaleidoscopic culture. And the complexity of the contemporary social, economic, and

political worlds is accelerating at an alarming pace. If today's college graduates are to be positive forces in this world, they need not only to possess knowledge and intellectual capacities but also to see themselves as members of a community, as individuals with a responsibility to contribute to their communities. They must be willing to act for the common good and capable of doing so effectively. If a college education is to support the kind of learning graduates need to be involved and responsible citizens, its goals must go beyond the development of intellectual and technical skills and beginning mastery of a scholarly domain. They should include the competence to act in the world and the judgment to do so wisely. A full account of competence, including occupational competence, must include the abilities to exercise considered judgment, appreciate ends as well as means, and understand the broad implications and consequences of one's actions and choices. Education is not complete until students not only have acquired knowledge but can act on that knowledge in the world.

There is evidence that this kind of civic commitment has waned in recent decades. A number of social commentators have documented the excessive individualism of contemporary U.S. culture and its negative implications for this society (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1991; Putnam, 1995). The consequences of this cultural climate include a growing sense that Americans are not responsible for or accountable to each other; a decline in civility, mutual respect, and tolerance; and the preeminence of self-interest and individual preference over concern for the common good. Goals of personal advancement and gratification too often take precedence over social, moral, or spiritual meaning. Although this emphasis on individual success has some social benefits, it can also entail high social costs by promoting a worldview in which there is no basis for enduring commitment beyond the self. Currently, the most visible alternative to this focus on self-interest is a kind of orthodox and intolerant moralism. Ironically, each of these opposing perspectives contributes to the same result: a polarized and fragmented society, whose members have little sense of being united by participation in a common enterprise.

Many commentators have also chronicled a widespread lack of trust in and respect for U.S. democratic processes and an overall decline in civic and political participation (Putnam, 2000). Demographic data indicate that political disaffection is especially pronounced among youths and young adults, including college students. Americans growing up in recent decades vote less often than their elders and show lower levels of social trust and knowledge of politics (Bennett & Rademacher, 1997; Putnam, 1995). In fact, voting among young people in the 2000 presidential election was at a record low even though overall turnout was up slightly from

1996. This mounting political apathy bodes ill for the future of U.S. democracy unless these generations of young people come to see both the value of and necessity for civic engagement and political participation.

Tempering somewhat this pronounced decline in young people's political engagement is their high level of participation in community service and other volunteer work. A study by the Panetta Institute (2000), for example, indicates that nearly three-quarters of college students (73 percent) have done volunteer work in the past two years, and most (62 percent) more than once. These students understand that their communities face real needs that they can help meet. But although undergraduates are increasingly involved in direct service activities, this involvement does not seem to foster broader or deeper forms of civic or political engagement among them (Gray et al., 1999; Mason & Nelson, 2000; Sax, Astin, Korn, & Mahoney, 1999). Too often students fail to understand that if they want not only to help a community kitchen feed people but also to help eliminate the need for that kitchen, they must work to change public policy and that strong engagement in one's community and in politics in one form or another is the means for affecting public policy.

Higher education has the potential to be a powerful influence in reinvigorating the democratic spirit in America. Virtually all civic, political, and professional leaders are graduates of higher education institutions, and the general public is attending college in ever higher numbers. Over fifteen million students are now enrolled in higher education. About 40 percent are in community colleges, and unlike students in earlier eras, most are commuting students, many with jobs and families. This extensive reach places colleges and universities in a strong position to help reshape broader culture. Although higher education reflects the values of the larger society in many ways, colleges and universities are not simply extensions of society, nor are they helpless in the face of social constraints. Rather they have the potential to act intentionally in fostering the moral and civic learning of their students, as we have frequently observed during the course of our work on this book.

Explorations in Undergraduate Moral and Civic Education Today

Although we see many of the same problems in colleges and universities today that Boyer reported in his study conducted more than fifteen years ago, we also see something that Boyer did not report: a number of institutions that have made their students' moral and civic development a high

priority and have created a wealth of curricular and extracurricular programs to stimulate and support that development. This is a good time to revisit the issue of higher education's role in educating citizens not only because the problems in the world are great but also because educators and policymakers can now learn some important lessons from a close look at the efforts of those committed institutions.

In conducting the research for this book, we reviewed the practices of moral and civic education at many colleges and universities around the country and made in-depth visits to twelve: Alverno College; the College of St. Catherine; California State University, Monterey Bay; Duke University; Kapi'olani Community College; Messiah College; Portland State University; Spelman College; Turtle Mountain Community College; Tusculum College; the United States Air Force Academy; and the University of Notre Dame. These explorations have shown us that an extraordinarily diverse range of colleges and universities take the moral and civic education of their students very seriously. These schools include every category of higher education institution—community colleges, four-year colleges, comprehensive universities, and universities with graduate and professional programs. Some are residential, others are nonresidential; some are public, others are private; some are large, others are small; some are religiously affiliated; some are military academies; some are single sex; and some are primarily for members of a minority group. These and others are represented among the institutions that treat their students' moral and civic development as central to their mission, although each one understands its specific goals somewhat differently and concerns itself with different aspects of this broad domain.

For a few U.S. colleges and universities, this commitment manifests itself as an intentional and holistic approach to moral and civic as well as academic education, an approach that shapes many or most aspects of students' college experience. In calling this approach intentional, we mean that these institutions are explicit about their goals and actively plan strategies to achieve them. By holistic, we mean that the approach addresses many different aspects of students' moral and civic development, and it does so through many different sites in the academic and nonacademic life of the campus, with significant efforts to connect those sites. These holistic, intentional efforts are of special interest because they illustrate the power of a serious institutional commitment to moral and civic education. A close look at these committed campuses shows that if an institution and its leadership adopt a comprehensive approach to moral and civic learning and seek to implement it with a high degree of intentionality, the results can be

transformative for students and for the institution. We highlight institutions that take these intentional and holistic approaches not because this is the only or most prevalent option for campuses interested in these issues but because we believe that supporting students' moral and civic development is best achieved through the cumulative, interactive effects of numerous curricular and extracurricular programs in an environment of sustained institutional commitment to a set of overarching goals. The insights and approaches of these institutions are portfolios of good practices from which other campuses can draw, even if they begin by adopting just one or two courses or programs.

In the following chapters we describe the twelve schools we visited in greater detail than the many others whose work we reviewed in less depth. We spent several days at each of these twelve *case study* schools, interviewing administrators, faculty, and students; conducting focus groups; sitting in on classes; and observing a wide range of programs. Following the visits, we prepared a detailed case write-up on each institution, which was reviewed for accuracy by individuals at that campus. Campus representatives later reviewed descriptions of their programs in a manuscript draft of this book, suggesting corrections where needed. (Of course programs do change over time, so these reviews cannot guarantee that our accounts are completely up to date at the present time.) These twelve institutions are not flawless, and we will point out not only their successes but also some of the areas in which they are still struggling to find the right approach. They are also not necessarily the best exemplars of moral and civic education in the country. We did not conduct an exhaustive review of all possible candidates. Certainly they are not the only institutions doing notable work in this area. We chose these particular institutions in part because of the valuable work they are doing and also because we wanted a group that was diverse in mission and type, covering a broad geographical range.

In addition to institutions that implement moral and civic education holistically, there are many others with a few courses or specific programs that address students' moral and civic development. These colleges and universities focus their efforts on programs or activities that are powerful experiences for some students but do not reach all undergraduates. These targeted programs may take such forms as academic centers and institutes, freshman seminars, and senior capstone courses. Throughout this book our emphasis is on good practices in both the comprehensive and the targeted approaches to moral and civic learning in higher education and the challenges that must be overcome to succeed in those practices.

Ideals and Goals of Moral and Civic Education

Before going further we need to address the question: What do we mean by moral and civic education? What is it that we are calling for? Our answer takes us immediately into the perennially thorny issue of whether colleges ought to stand for particular moral values or ideals or call only for clarity and consistency of moral beliefs. We have taken the former position, that colleges and universities ought to educate for substantive values, ideals, and standards, at least in broad terms, and should not be content with what is sometimes referred to as *values clarification*. We are convinced that it is not possible to create a value-neutral environment, so it is preferable for colleges and universities to examine the values they stand for and make conscious and deliberate choices about what they convey to students. More important, we believe that there are some basic moral principles, ideals, and virtues that can form a common ground to guide institutions of higher education in their work, including the work of educating citizens in a democracy.

On the first point, educational institutions have never been and cannot be value neutral. For decades educators have recognized the power of the “hidden curriculum” in schools and the moral messages it carries. The hidden curriculum consists of the (largely unexamined) practices with which the school and its teachers operate, assigning grades and other rewards and managing their relationships with their students and the students’ relationships with each other (Fenstermacher, 1990; Jackson, 1968; Kohlberg, 1971). Although much of the research on the hidden curriculum has examined elementary and secondary education, the concept applies equally to higher education. If college students see faculty rewarded for pursuing their own professional prestige rather than for caring for others or the institution, if they are subjected to competitive, zero-sum climates in which one student’s success contributes to another’s failure, if they are confronted with institutional hypocrisy, those practices convey moral messages that can contribute to students’ cynicism and self-interestedness. Conversely, students can learn positive moral lessons when they see faculty who approach their scholarship with integrity and who are scrupulously honest and fair, caring with students and respectful of colleagues, and committed to the institution or the larger community.

Academic disciplines also embody values that shape students’ perspectives and frames of reference, even though these assumptions are often unexamined and thus invisible. The preponderance of recent research in economics and in political science, for example, builds on a model of *rational choice*, which is seldom subjected to critical analysis in the teaching of

these disciplines. This model of human behavior assumes that individuals will always seek to maximize their perceived interests and that social phenomena represent the aggregate of individuals employing this self-interested strategy. A similar perspective is fostered by research and theory in other fields, such as sociobiology and some approaches in psychology, which also assume a self-interested or mechanistic view of human nature. An unquestioning reliance on these models of human behavior can result in the *normalization of self-interestedness*, contributing to a belief that individuals are always fundamentally motivated by self-interest, that altruism and genuine concern for others' welfare are illusory, and that failing to act strategically to achieve one's own self-interested goals would be foolish.

In addition to values expressed through teaching, student-faculty relationships, and institutional norms and practices, values from the outside world permeate college campuses. Messages of instrumental individualism and materialism are becoming more and more prevalent in the broader institutional and peer cultures on many campuses. The commercialization of higher education, including corporate sponsorship of faculty and student research, corporate underwriting of programs, advertising on Web sites, and exclusive "pouring rights" given to soda companies at sports and other events, can provide important financial benefits but also reinforces themes of materialism pervasive in the general culture. By default, some powerful values are thrust on young people by outside sources, particularly advertising. Few would deny the influence of commercial interests represented by television, film, music, and other media on the peer culture and informal learning contexts of the campus. To the extent that higher education is influenced by broader cultural trends, it is influenced by those values as well.

In these and many other ways, educational institutions convey values and moral messages to their students. This is unavoidable. Given this reality, we believe it is preferable for colleges and universities to stand for values that are fundamental to their highest sense of purpose, rather than taking "a default position of instrumental individualism in which expertise and skill appear as simply neutral tools to be appropriated by successful competitors in the service of their particular ends," as William Sullivan (1999, p. 11) has described the prevailing ethos in higher education.

The Issue of Determining Goals and Means

How can we identify common values that constitute a foundation for moral and civic learning in U.S. institutions of higher education while still recognizing that those shared values often come into conflict with each other and that different individuals and subcultures may create different hier-

archies among these values? Few would dispute that colleges' educational and scholarly missions entail a core set of values, such as intellectual integrity, concern for truth, and academic freedom. By colleges' very nature it is also important for them to foster values such as mutual respect, open-mindedness, the willingness to listen to and take seriously the ideas of others, procedural fairness, and public discussion of contested issues. The academic enterprise would be seriously compromised if these values ceased to guide scholarship, teaching, and learning, however imperfect that guidance may be in practice.

Principles and ideals that have a place in a common core of values can also be derived from educational institutions' obligation to educate students for responsible democratic citizenship. Most mission statements of both public and private colleges and universities explicitly refer to an institution's responsibility to educate for leadership and contributions to society. We show in the next chapter that this conception of higher education dates back to the founding of this country. Even institutions that do not make this part of their mission a central priority acknowledge some responsibility for it. Recognition of the obligation to prepare citizens for participation in a democratic system implies that certain values, both moral and civic, ought to be represented in these institutions' educational goals and practices. Some of these values are the same as those entailed in the academic enterprise itself; some go beyond that sphere. These values include mutual respect and tolerance, concern for both the rights and the welfare of individuals and the community, recognition that each individual is part of the larger social fabric, critical self-reflectiveness, and a commitment to civil and rational discourse and procedural impartiality (Galston, 1991; Gutmann, 1987; Macedo, 2000).

Educational philosopher Eamonn Callan (1997) argues that a liberal democracy based on free and equal citizenship requires not only certain social rules and political institutions, such as legal protections for free speech, but also moral and civic education grounded in democratic ideals. These ideals include "a lively interest in the question of what life is truly and not just seemingly good, as well as a willingness both to share one's answer with others and to heed the many opposing answers they might give; an active commitment to the good of the polity, as well as . . . competence in judgment regarding how that good should be advanced; a respect for fellow citizens and a sense of common fate with them that goes beyond the tribalisms of ethnicity and religion yet is alive to the significance these will have in many people's lives" (p. 3).

Beyond this generic set of core values that derive from the intellectual and civic purposes of higher education, some private colleges and even a

few public ones stand for more specific moral, cultural, or religious values. Such institutions' particular missions—and the implications of these missions for the educational programs—should be made clear to prospective students and faculty. The most obvious examples of these highly specific values are found in religiously affiliated schools that offer faith-based education. Among public institutions, military academies are mandated to educate military officers, so their values are defined with reference to this goal. Other public colleges established to serve particular populations, such as American Indian colleges, also often explicitly acknowledge special values, such as traditional tribal values, in their curricula and programs.

When the values on which there is broad consensus within an institution are taken seriously, they constitute strong guiding principles for programs of moral and civic development in higher education. Even so, they leave open to debate the principles that should be given priority when values conflict as well as the ways in which individuals might apply the principles to particular situations. Especially in institutions that stand for a commitment to rational public discourse, as higher education must, the most difficult questions of conflicting values can and should be left to public debate and individual discernment. Moral and civic education provides the tools for these discussions and judgments. This means that institutions do not need to begin with agreement on the most difficult and controversial cases of conflict between values. And this openness is what makes it possible to reach a consensus on an initial set of core values. Because a willingness to engage in reasoned discourse and commitments to honesty, fairness, and respect for persons are among the ideals all colleges and universities should uphold, these values should help guide the community toward resolution of the more difficult questions. Colleges and universities should encourage and facilitate the development of students' capacities to examine complex situations in which competing values are at stake, to employ both substantive knowledge and moral reasoning to evaluate the problems and values involved, to develop their own judgments about these issues in respectful dialogue with others, and then to act on their judgments.

We recognize the difficulties and potential pitfalls educators face when discussing moral and civic values in a society as strongly pluralist as this one, in which tolerance and respect for differences are themselves held as fundamental values. Within any given cultural tradition and certainly across traditions, there are deep disagreements about many moral, civic, political, and religious issues. But even as educators appreciate the depths of these differences, it is important that they distinguish between *moral pluralism* and *moral relativism*. A pluralistic view of morality assumes

there are two or more incommensurable moral frameworks that are justifiable. This does not mean that *any* possible moral framework is justifiable, however, only that there are multiple valid moral frameworks that cannot be reduced to a single system. In contrast, moral relativism holds that there is no basis for distinguishing among moral positions at all, that no position can be considered any more or less valid than another.

Even in anthropological research that documents striking cultural differences in moral values, there are boundaries around the range of what is seen to count as an ultimate moral good, and even very different moral perspectives include (though they do not stress) each other's values (Shweder, 1996). Differences in moral frames of reference are best understood as variations in the ways widely shared base values, such as freedom and loyalty, are ordered when they conflict and variations in the salience of values in practice. Even anthropologists who believe there is fundamental moral heterogeneity across cultures generally do not believe in extreme and unqualified cultural relativism. Very different and even fundamentally incommensurate moral perspectives still build on a base set of moral goods or virtues that human beings have in common. Presumably these commonalities will be stronger within a single country, even a culturally heterogeneous and pluralistic country such as the United States.

Educational institutions can respect diversity of opinion on particular ethical questions and avoid both illegitimate indoctrination and moral relativism if they are explicit about their commitment to the moral and civic values that are fundamental to a democracy, at the same time being careful not to foreclose open-minded consideration of multiple solutions to moral dilemmas in which fundamental values conflict.

The Salience of the Moral: Integrity and Engagement

Throughout this discussion we have referred to both *moral* and *civic* values, development, and education. We do so to underscore the point that the moral and the civic are inseparable. Because we understand the term *morality* to describe prescriptive judgments about how one ought to act in relation to other people, it follows that many core democratic principles, including tolerance and respect, impartiality, and concern for both the rights of the individual and the welfare of the group, are grounded in moral principles. Just political systems require citizens with "the capacity for moral reciprocity—the predisposition to create and abide by fair rules of cooperation" (Callan, 1997, p. 21). The problems that confront civically engaged citizens always include strong moral themes. These include fair access to resources such as housing, the obligation to consider future

generations in making environmental policy, and the need to take into account the conflicting claims of multiple stakeholders in community decision making. No issue involving these themes can be adequately resolved without a consideration of moral questions and values. A person can become civically and politically active without good judgment and a strong moral compass, but it is hardly wise to promote that kind of involvement. Because civic responsibility is inescapably threaded with moral values, we believe that higher education should aspire to foster both moral and civic maturity and should confront educationally the many links between them.

If civic responsibility implies and includes moral responsibility, as we believe, then why not make our language in this book simpler by dropping the term *moral* because it is in some sense redundant? We were urged to do this by a distinguished philosopher of education and seriously considered it. In the end, though, we decided to retain the dual term *moral and civic*, along with whatever redundancy it may carry, in order to emphasize throughout this book the necessary connection between the moral and the civic. This is also our response to some quite visible civic educators who attempt to segregate civic from moral education, hoping to avoid controversy by doing so.

One key to legitimacy for moral and civic education is that it not indoctrinate. It must not “restrict rational deliberation of competing conceptions of the good life and the good society” (Gutmann, 1987, p. 44). We believe that colleges can foster core academic and democratic values and at the same time avoid indoctrination. But some skeptics have expressed the concern that however laudable its goals, moral and civic education is bound to indoctrinate in practice and therefore cannot be justified.

Although the institutions we studied take very different approaches to moral and civic learning, every one shares a central concern for developing student inclinations and capacities related to open inquiry and genuine debate. These include openness to reason, effective communication, tolerance of perspectives different from one’s own, clarity of thought, critical thinking, and the capacity to conduct moral discourse across points of view. In these institutions the central pedagogies and other programs intended to foster moral and civic responsibility are consciously noncoercive (with the exception of honor codes, which require adherence to standards of honesty). In part because students are encouraged to think independently, those we observed did not appear reluctant to resist if they thought a faculty member or another student was trying to impose his or her views. In our visits to even the most specialized institutions, we were surprised by the consistency with which faculty took care to ensure that multiple points of view were heard, and encouraged students to question

and think through the assumptions in the dominant institutional culture. Of course there may be abuses of these principles of noncoercion and open discussion by individual faculty or institutions, but this kind of abuse can occur whether or not the development of students' moral and civic responsibility is an explicit institutional goal. Urging institutions of higher education to be explicit and reflective in these efforts, to open their educational practices to public view, and to join national conversations about these practices with a diverse range of other institutions is more likely to minimize the abuses of power critics fear than is attempting to run a "value-free" institution. If pursued thoughtfully, an approach that brings civic and moral issues into public debate and discussion should make it possible to use words such as *morality*, *character*, *patriotism*, and *social justice* in ways that are not hidden codes for any particular agenda or ideology. This should open up communication about what these words mean and what their implications are for difficult contemporary social issues.

The irony in the well-intentioned fear that moral and civic education might impose arbitrary values on students is that achieving the values-based goals of liberal education is students' best *protection* against indoctrination, and it can continue to protect them throughout their lives. Helping students develop the capacity for critical thinking and the habit of using it, teaching them to be open-minded and interested in pursuing ideas, requiring them to back up their claims and to expect others to do the same, and encouraging them to be knowledgeable and accustomed to thinking about moral, civic, and political issues will put them in a strong posture to think independently about their positions and commitments. The more they have thought about these issues and learned to argue them through, the less susceptible they will be to indoctrination.

Goals for Student Learning

If moral and civic education is based in the kinds of fundamental values we have discussed here, what does that imply about its goals for students? In general terms, we believe that a morally and civically responsible individual recognizes himself or herself as a member of a larger social fabric and therefore considers social problems to be at least partly his or her own; such an individual is willing to see the moral and civic dimensions of issues, to make and justify informed moral and civic judgments, and to take action when appropriate. A fully developed individual must have the ability to think clearly and in an appropriately complex and sophisticated way about moral and civic issues; he or she must possess the moral commitment and sense of personal responsibility to act, which may include

having moral emotions such as empathy and concern for others; moral and civic values, interests, and habits; and knowledge and experience in the relevant domains of life. We are concerned with the development of the whole person, as an accountable individual and engaged participant in society—local, state, national, and global. Responsibility includes viewing oneself as a member of a shared social structure and as a fair target of evaluative attitudes, such as praise and blame. Virtues such as honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and respect are essential to personal integrity, fostering fair dealing and concern for the ways one's actions affect others. Social conscience, compassion and commitment to the welfare of those outside one's immediate sphere, is an important component of moral and civic development that goes beyond the level of personal integrity. Partially overlapping these two dimensions of personal integrity and social conscience is a specifically civic component: coming to understand how a community operates, the problems it faces, and the richness of its diversity and also developing a willingness to commit time and energy to enhance community life and work collectively to resolve community concerns. Finally, constructive political engagement, defined in terms of democratic processes, is a particular subset of civic responsibility that has been the focus of substantial concern in recent years. Although there is overlap, we believe it is important to distinguish the political domain from the non-political civic domain, because they can be independent of one another in terms of both motivation for and modes of involvement.

Political engagement cannot always be sharply distinguished from other forms of civic participation because it exists on a continuum with apolitical forms of civic engagement. But making this distinction is important for understanding what it means to educate citizens. It is also important for identifying some of the strengths and weaknesses in moral and civic engagement in U.S. undergraduate education. We do not want to define political engagement as simply voting in national elections or joining political parties, because that excludes forms of participation that may have appeal for today's college students, particularly activities related to direct participation rather than electoral politics. In an effort to find a middle ground between an overly narrow and an overly inclusive conception, we define *political engagement* as including activities intended to influence social and political institutions, beliefs, and practices and to affect processes and policies relating to community welfare, whether that community is local, state, national, or international. Political engagement may include working informally with others to solve a community problem; serving in neighborhood organizations, political interest groups, or political organizations; participating in public forums on social issues, dis-

cussing political issues with family and friends, and trying to influence others' political opinions; working on a campaign for a candidate or issue; writing letters, signing petitions, and participating in other forms of policy advocacy and lobbying; raising public awareness about social issues and mobilizing others to get involved or take action; attending rallies and protests and participating in boycotts; and of course voting in local or national elections.

Even in this relatively broad definition of political engagement, not all forms of civic involvement count as political. Political involvement does not include some kinds of direct service volunteer work, such as tutoring in after-school programs, and it does not include social activities such as bowling leagues or book clubs, personal commitments such as recycling, and other endeavors not connected to concerns for policy questions (regarding animal treatment or environmental health, for example) or root causes of social problems (such as educational inequity) and not intended to result in broad social or institutional change.

Encouraging political engagement directly related to public policy is particularly important, because some of the most acute concerns for U.S. democracy relate to distrust of government and lack of interest in governmental affairs, especially among young people. To reconnect college students with political affairs and traditional forms of political involvement, faculty and program advisers need to help students see the links between their direct service activities, personal commitments, and lifestyle choices on the one hand and related institutional and policy questions on the other. In doing so, it is important that they build bridges to students' own conceptions of appropriate political analysis and action, which for many students are focused on grassroots activities and related activities rather than mainstream electoral politics, about which they remain skeptical. Although some institutions of higher education are seeking ways to stimulate political engagement as well as other kinds of civic participation and leadership, we have found that this aspect of civic responsibility is least attended to in higher education, even among schools with strong commitments to moral and civic learning.

The kind of moral and civic maturity we have outlined here entails a wide array of capacities. We have found it useful to group these capacities into three broad categories. The first is moral and civic understanding, which includes dimensions such as interpretation, judgment, and knowledge. The second category is moral and civic motivation and includes values, interests, emotions such as empathy and hope, sense of efficacy, and moral and civic identity. Finally, some core skills are essential for carrying out moral and civic responsibility by applying core knowledge and virtues

and transforming informed judgments into action. Given these necessary capacities, moral and civic maturity requires competence in a wide range of practical areas, including moral and political discourse and other forms of communication, interpersonal relationships, and civic and political engagement. Among the skills needed for the latter, for example, are the ability to lead, to build a consensus, and to move a group forward under conditions of mutual respect. Through a diversity of strategies, undergraduate moral and civic education can support the development of capacities and skills in all the essential areas.

The Integration of Moral and Civic Learning with Academic Learning

We are convinced that taking moral and civic outcomes seriously has the potential to simultaneously strengthen and enrich nearly all other educational goals. In fact, there is considerable evidence that both moral and civic learning and academic learning more generally are at their most powerful when creatively combined. The civic education pedagogy that has been most subjected to empirical research is service learning (which links disciplinary study and community service with structured reflection), and the results of that research make it clear that service learning does enhance academic performance. In an evaluation of a large number of service learning programs, Alexander Astin and his colleagues found significant positive effects on grade point average, writing skills, and critical thinking skills, as well as on commitment to community service, self-efficacy, and leadership ability (Astin, Sax, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000). There is also a body of research indicating that students' academic performance and their self-assessment of their own learning and motivation are increased through participation in high-quality service-learning programs, especially those that involve challenging service work that is well-integrated with the course material and is accompanied by opportunities for structured reflection on their service experience (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Another part of the value of broadening the goals of higher education is that linking academic material to students' lives and personal concerns and passions will lead to deeper understanding and more memorable learning. Both cognitive scientists (Bransford & Stein, 1993) and scholars in the experiential learning tradition, going all the way back to Dewey (1916) and Whitehead (1929), have pointed out that much of the knowledge acquired through decontextualized classroom instruction may be useless because students are likely to be unable to transfer the knowledge and principles to new problems. Most contemporary educational theorists

agree that the “active construction of knowledge” is essential in order to achieve the kind of deep understanding that is required for application and transfer of knowledge (Shulman, 1997). In order to address this challenge directly, many curricular programs designed to foster moral and civic responsibility incorporate problem-based learning, service learning, and other *pedagogies of engagement* in their efforts to involve students more deeply and fully with the issues and support more lasting student learning. In doing so, they enhance academic learning as well as moral and civic responsibility.

Translating the Vision into Action

We have laid out in this chapter our ideals for the responsible and engaged citizen and will go on in later chapters to show how undergraduate education at some colleges and universities aspires toward these ideals. We know that despite the best efforts of these institutions and their committed administrators, faculty, and staff most students will not emerge transformed and complete. But this is not really the goal of moral and civic learning in college. Rather, the goal is to start students on, or move them further along on, a route that provides them with the understanding, motivation, and skills they will need to meet the challenges of engaged citizenship. We have seen that it is possible for an undergraduate education to act as a powerful preexpedition, equipping students with critical tools and skills, clearing away some of their central confusions, shifting them toward more constructive habits of heart and mind, providing them with new lenses for refracting the many problems and dilemmas they will confront, raising questions about their unexamined assumptions, and connecting them with others who can inspire them and become indelible images of the kind of person they want to become. The full outcome may not be evident until many years later, but their college years may shift these students’ direction just enough to make a dramatic difference over the course of their lives as experiences accumulate and the individual approaches each one just a little bit differently than he or she would have otherwise. This is what happened for Virginia Durr. The potential is there for a similar impact on both those who are older, part-time, working students—now about half of all undergraduates—and those who enter college directly after high school.

To translate this vision for moral and civic learning into effective educational programs, educators must attend to many questions. What are the essential elements of moral and civic character for Americans in the twenty-first century? What specific dimensions of understanding, motivation, and skills contribute to those elements (recognizing that there may be

a range of ways to be a good citizen)? What contribution can higher education make toward developing these qualities in sustained and effective ways? What are the problems confronting colleges and universities that make moral and civic education a priority, and what are the best strategies to help overcome these problems? These are the questions we have wrestled with in writing this book. They are issues at the heart of democracy's future in America, and we encourage others to join this conversation.