

*Ernest Lynton Faculty Award for Professional Service and Academic Outreach*  
*The Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU) is partnering with the*  
*New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) to host the Lynton*  
*Faculty Award program at the CUMU annual conference. This article presents the*  
*achievements of the 2006 recipients.*

# **Building our Futures, Sustaining Communities: Civic Partnerships, Participatory Democracy, and Academic Practice: A Conversation\* with the Recipients of the 2006 Ernest Lynton Faculty Award for Professional Service and Academic Outreach**

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## **Abstract**

*John Saltmarsh, Director of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE), interviewed the three 2006 recipients of NERCHE's Ernest A. Lynton Award for the Scholarship of Engagement about their lives as engaged scholars and the implications of their work for the civic and global contexts for education, and for institutional change. \*The format of constructing an interview 'conversation' was arrived at by the staff of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education as a way of weaving together the three separate papers written by the recipients into a rich narrative on the purposes and processes of scholarly engagement.*

The Ernest A. Lynton Award for Faculty Professional Service and Academic Outreach recognizes faculty members who connect their expertise and scholarship to community outreach in sustained and innovative ways. The recipients and honorable mentions are part of a group of nominees from across the country representing all types of

institutions, ranging from community colleges to research universities; and disciplines spanning arts and humanities, sciences, business, health, and education. Unlike many faculty whose work is invisible to their institutions, Lynton nominees are nominated by chairs, deans, provosts and presidents, along with directors of centers and service-learning programs, and students. The power of their professional service and that of the other nominees is truly inspiring and has a profound effect on our institutions and communities. In 2006, the Award went to three recipients: Glynda Hull, University of California, Berkeley; Julia Reinhard Lupton, University of California, Irvine; and Katherine O'Donnell, Hartwick College, Oneonta, NY.

**[Saltmarsh] The sociologist C. Wright Mills once wrote that “scholarship is a choice of how to live as well as a choice of a career.” This seems an appropriate way to view your scholarship and the choices that you have made to live lives of engagement as academics. How does your engagement connect to your disciplinary grounding, your faculty role, and to teaching and learning in your courses?**

[O'Donnell] My pedagogy emerges from activist, feminist, Freire-inspired popular education models. My work in Chiapas, Mexico, with the Mayan women's weaving cooperative, Jolom Mayaetik, and its center for leadership training illuminates my commitment. My choice of Chiapas as a site grew out of ten years of activist and ethnographic work with rural, poor, dairy farm worker families in the upstate region of New York State and decades of feminist organizing for reproductive freedom. On an intellectual level, Chiapas offered me the chance to analyze the gender, class, and ethnic dimensions of structural inequality and social movement responses to those injustices, but the deeper impetus for my work was political and activist. Over time, courses based on this work shifted from largely academic with a service dimension to a focus on economic solidarity, as my understanding and commitment deepened and as my relationship with my colleagues in Chiapas matured in mutual trust.

When students are in Chiapas for the college's January intensive term, they meet with representatives of the cooperative and civil society organizers. They also work with the cooperative and other sister organizations on actual projects as determined by the organizations in Chiapas. Students learn from civil society activists about community organizing and working collectively and attempt to replicate this work in their home communities via community-based work on fair trade, economic justice, human rights, health, and sustainability. Their preparation involves Spanish and a semester Sociology course, either Women and Social Change or Children's Lives, both of which entail working in community action teams (CATS) on local projects and explicitly tackling the intersection of race, class, gender, and culture.

These courses also attempt to address the challenge of including students in ways that respect their skills, insights, and autonomy while recognizing their levels of maturity, class privilege, lack of community and intercultural experience, and, in many cases, unfamiliarity with collaborative work. I developed a community-based service-learning course that provides academic, work, civic, and group training geared toward

developing the skills needed to work together. These skills include learning to make co-operative decisions, communicating effectively, and respecting diversity in world views from biographical experience to class and cultural contexts.

As an engaged scholar, creating an economic solidarity relationship with my colleagues in Chiapas, Mexico since 1998 has pushed me to a new level of commitment. In this case, work-based educational delegations to Chiapas and the marketing of Fair Trade textiles made by Jolom Mayaetik, bring us into contact with tens of thousands of people and scores of churches, community centers, elementary and secondary schools, organizations, universities, and markets across the United States, Mexico, Europe, and Canada. Negotiating this intercultural work for U.S. citizens and for my companeras in the weaving cooperative has become one of my jobs and is central to teaching and popular education. Research was not my original impetus for going to Chiapas but joint grant writing and eight years of shared experiences as well as requests for me to frame the cooperative's work led me to field notes, academic papers, and a book about our transnational solidarity story.

The work with Chiapas organizations links directly to my work within Sociology, Women's Studies, and the Latin American Studies Program and to a sixty-year college commitment to the cultivation of intercultural programs. My teaching, my research, and my work in the community are inextricably linked. I have become a bridge person across multiple borders of generation, class, culture, and global north and south.

[Hull] I like the way that Kate has framed the connections between the teaching, research, and service of the faculty role. Our university-community partnership, "Digital Underground Storytelling for Youth," (DUSTY), which I co-founded with Michael James, Director of the Oakland Technology and Education Center, brings University of California undergraduate and graduate students together with African American, Chicano/Latino, and Cambodian youth from Oakland communities. At our community technology center, at a range of after-schools sites, at the University, and at local churches, they work, play, and create, using digital multi-modal, multi-media literacies to cross geographic, cultural, socio-economic, and semiotic divides.

With DUSTY we are fundamentally interested in improving teaching and learning, but we are also interested in broadening the impact of the work we do, working out of a comprehensive understanding of and responsibility for education. We try to accomplish this through a collaborative learning model that brings together university students with youth and adults from the local community and is aimed at transcending boundaries. One of the things that I believe is critical to this model is that decisions about the project are made jointly by the individuals from the university and community who are involved in the program. I can see this in the global dimensions of Kate's work as well.

We have another motive, too, in making it possible for youth to create movies and music and to celebrate popular culture, and that is to reconnect them to school and things academic and to foster college-going identities. What keeps me up at night, and

what fills my days with an abundance of meaning as an engaged scholar, is trying to understand as well as to foster the multiplex mix of resources, opportunities, and social relationships that are required if DUSTY youth are to become successful border crossers and global communicators. How is it, I wonder, that young people, especially those who have largely been unsuccessful in school, can re-orient their images of self to include “successful student” and “college-going” and “powerful writer and thinker” in their repertoire?

The primary theoretical underpinning of DUSTY has centered on identity formation and especially the role of language and other semiotic systems in this process. Our abilities to work our will in the world certainly are tempered by the constraints of specific social, cultural and historical contexts, and this is especially true for children and adults who are members of oppressed or disadvantaged groups, for whom these constraints can seem, and can be, overpowering. Children and adults can develop “agentive” selves, using the unique repertoire of tools, resources, relationships, and cultural artifacts that are available at particular historic moments in particular social and cultural contexts.

Working with youth at DUSTY and graduate and undergraduate students from Berkeley, I developed a theoretical framework that explored what I think is one of the fundamental issues of social theory of our time, and that is the intersection of structure and agency. Traditionally, primacy has been given to narrative in oral and written forms as the semiotic means most central for the creation and enactment of identities. However, other semiotic systems can be primary as well—dance, music, images. At DUSTY, multiple media and modes, in combination with supportive social relationships and opportunities for participation, have proved a powerful means and motivation for forming and representing an agentive self. We have aimed to position participants to tell their important stories about self and community and to use those moments of narrative reconstruction to reflect on past events, present activities, and future goals. Our curriculum encourages participants to construct stories that position themselves as agents and, to paraphrase Freire, as local and global community members able to remake their worlds.

Each year approximately two hundred undergraduates who are enrolled in an education course that I teach at the University of California, Berkeley, serve as weekly tutors and mentors for youth at DUSTY sites. These undergraduates gain much from the process: firsthand experience with teaching and tutoring in a range of subjects, the chance to work with diverse children who usually hail from ethnic, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds different from their own, and the joy of civic engagement and the practice of what Harkavy and Puckett call “neighborliness,” or the quality of caring about and assisting those who live in close physical proximity to us. It is hard to over-estimate the importance of the social relations that can develop through service-learning encounters, or the criticality of the need. Graduate students serve as research assistants, teachers, and site coordinators, working with undergraduate student tutors and mentors.

To help students explore complex social issues in urban education, I draw on my own disciplinary background in English, as well as research perspectives and materials from education, anthropology, sociology, and psychology.

My work with graduate students speaks to another aspect of my faculty role that I see as essential to engaged scholarship—that of advisor and mentor to my doctoral students, many of whom have carried on their own engaged scholarship as faculty members at a number of colleges and universities. Much of my published work on this program has been accomplished in collaboration with graduate students as well as with undergraduate students for whom opportunities for this kind of scholarly work are often scarce in traditional educational models.

[Lupton] My work with Humanities Out There (affectionately called HOT) is very much in line with the way C. Wright Mills thought about how we shape our lives as scholars. I agree with Glynda about the centrality of shaping academic careers for deep engagement—shaping the next generation of faculty in the humanities or the role of engaged scholar. HOT is an educational partnership with the Santa Ana Unified School District, a largely Latino urban district only four miles from Irvine, but worlds away. The program combines educational and civic goals including boosting reading, writing, and critical thinking skills through content-rich materials of historical, artistic, and scholarly significance with building academic, professional, and civic ties among universities and school districts through collaborative teaching and research. It aims to build the linguistic, logical, critical, and expressive skills of K-12 students while fostering the skills to participate in the civic arena. I will talk at greater length about the civic dimensions of this work later on, but for now I'd like to concentrate on its capacity to develop future engaged faculty.

The basic model is simple: a graduate student and a team of undergraduates go into a Santa Ana classroom fifteen times over the course of the year, executing a content-rich sequence of humanities exercises designed in collaboration with host teachers. The graduate student writes the lesson and provides a brief overview. Undergraduates then work with small groups of students to develop the material through active reading, writing, and discussion. Our graduate students stand at the intellectual and social heart of HOT. We currently offer eight graduate student “research-ships” to advanced Ph.D. students in history and literature. We look for graduate students with strong teaching records, a broad vision of the university as a social actor, and the ability to adapt their research interests and training to a very different academic environment. Some graduate students come to HOT looking to expand their professional skills. The program develops leadership, teamwork, and independent thinking, since graduate students assume major responsibilities in relation to undergraduate recruitment and training and in the development of original teaching materials. Other graduate students are seeking a break from the standard TA appointments in their departments. HOT offers a unique mix of classroom teaching, program design, and curricular research. Still others want to understand how the university might contribute more dynamically to other levels of public education in the state. Yet all are motivated by an appreciation of the obligations of higher education to civic society in a context of collaboration and reciprocity.

In addition to their work in Santa Ana classrooms, HOT graduate students attend a graduate seminar, “Humanities and the Public Sphere.” Part staff meeting and part crash course in philosophies of education and social change, the graduate seminar builds a common intellectual framework for the distinct projects in history and literature that each team is pursuing in Santa Ana.<sup>1</sup>

Working with schools on curricula is a natural development for the humanities. It gives us an immediate content base, as well as a career path for many of our undergraduates, which makes the movement between institutions both invigorating and familiar. Undergraduate students, working for academic units, get to put their education into action by delivering hands-on lessons in local settings. They learn to practice teamwork, and they get to see public policy in action. Many go on to be teachers. Some return again and again for the opportunity to practice their teaching skills, explore their career horizons, and make a difference in their community. Over two hundred undergraduates participate in the program each year, making a real impact on the education of our humanities majors. The roundtrip to Santa Ana stretches our horizons outward in order to pull them back in for tighter and more focused study. A program like Humanities Out There strives to acknowledge, reintegrate, and conceptualize the pragmatic and philosophical connections between teaching, research, and service, not in order to downgrade our research activities but rather to dramatize the urgency of the humanities both on campus and off.

My work with public schools has transformed my professional life. I was trained in Renaissance studies and the first phase of my academics career was spent focused on academic research of a theoretical kind. When I began working with public schools, I had to translate the questions that animated my intellectual life into terms and activities that made sense to teachers, students, and community members outside the university. Among the key elements of the program is that the scholarly and pedagogical work is carried out collaboratively by university and community partners co-equally as a way of creating a community of scholar citizens. This approach redefines traditional relationships between higher education and the communities it serves while expanding notions of expertise and the location of scholarly work (Boyte 2004).

It will come as no surprise that I think there should be more of this kind of work, and I am not alone. For example, *Greater Expectations*, the report on undergraduate liberal arts published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, speaks repeatedly about the need for more problem-based learning, fieldwork, and education for the business of life in the twenty-first century. The Carnegie Foundation recently released a statement documenting the increase in service-learning for undergraduates and urging deeper connections between academic content knowledge and its application (more service and more learning). At the graduate level, the Responsive

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<sup>1</sup> Readings include John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (NY: Free Press, 1914; 1944). Virginia A. Hodgkinson and Michael W. Foley, *The Civil Society Reader* (Hanover, MA: Tufts University and the University Press of New England, 2003).

Ph.D. initiative launched by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation calls for “public scholarship that applies academic expertise to social challenges.”

**[Saltmarsh] It is clear that carving out lives of scholarly engagement, while personally and professionally rewarding, is challenging and difficult work. It is also something that each of you has been involved with over many years—you are in it for the long haul. What makes this all worthwhile for you and how do you deal with the institutional challenges of community engagement in a culture of academia that traditionally does not foster scholarly engagement?**

[Lupton] In my own case, this work has without question improved my teaching and enhanced my research. As a long-time contributor to our Humanities Core Course, which enrolls 1,200 students a year, I am a better teacher of freshmen knowing what goes into the creation of college students before they come to us. My research has continued to focus on Shakespeare, but my prose has become clearer and my themes more public. And the changes I have witnessed in my own teaching and research are reflected in the work of many HOT graduate and undergraduate students who leave the Santa Ana classroom with an enlarged sense of the social resources, history, and potential audiences of the humanities.

But you are right; there are many challenges to this work. Breaking through the inertia of our colleagues is one of them. Demonstrating that the work we do off campus clarifies rather than dilutes our research is one key to changing institutional attitudes. That means engaging our smartest, most ambitious, most dexterous students and faculty in this work and rewarding them for it.

[Hull] To be sure, most of the scholarship on service-learning in composition studies has tended to focus on the university end of the collaboration. While this perhaps shouldn't be surprising, the effect has often been to relegate the communities served to the shadows, places where adults and youth are sometimes characterized only as needy and different or as leading marginal lives. Some scholars have described typical inquiry patterns of service-learning as a one-sided academic preoccupation with expertise, pedagogy, and critiques of middle-class ideologies. Thus, the geography of service-learning often becomes one of reconnaissance: forays to scout out a possibly unfriendly territory with the intent of returning to cover. For this reason, I have found especially compelling the service-learning scholarship that is grounded in the community—projects involved in the creation and sustenance of community programs over time—and that explores the tensions and challenges of traversing and re-charting community and university borders. I draw inspiration particularly from Flower and her colleagues who have worked within the settlement house tradition in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to carry out long-term collaborations that blend university intellectual traditions with community interests and resources under the label of “intercultural inquiry” (Flower 2002, 2003; Long, Peck, and Baskins 2002; Peck, Flower, and Higgins 1995). Such inquiry involves challenges to the habits of mind of those in the academy as it simultaneously supports literate action among community members. I would urge a shift in the attention by those academics who are involved in this kind of

work, from a focus primarily or solely on university perspectives and needs, to a joint focus on sustained, long-term participation in local communities. Doing so will involve finding ways to move beyond depictions of local neighborhoods that only romanticize or demonize, toward understandings that build on historical, social, and spatial analyses.

Within the institution, different types of barriers may arise to complicate faculty outreach efforts. One that may be peculiar to my own work is the management of grants that include sub-contracts to community organizations. As a big and lumbering bureaucracy, my university lacks the nimbleness needed to transfer funds quickly to other organizations, which means in my case that community partners sometimes don't receive their portion of grants in a timely manner. A different kind of difficulty, though one perhaps also connected to working in a big institution, is the way in which outreach to the local community is dispersed across various departments and programs. Much outreach, which should have a natural affinity with service-learning courses, is completely disassociated with faculty service-learning projects, making it more difficult than it should be to join forces for the greater good. This is an example of turf issues that often keep faculty and staff seated apart intellectually and unaware of the overlaps and commonality in their interests.

[O'Donnell] I see our central challenge as learning to work together to construct just, collective responses to the structural problems we face. My goal is to identify key challenges which confront those of us wishing to make long-term, sustainable contributions to society. The link to the academy is made possible through interpersonal bridges between folks with strong community ties, creative curricular and department coursework for training and community-based learning, community-based research, and links to college mission and sense of place.

Linking community challenges and educational mission allows us to create relationships based on mutual respect; challenge the race, class, gender, privilege matrix which feeds town-gown conflicts, stereotypes, and insularity; and use our collective wisdom to tackle the key issues of our time. I should add, too, that when I began this work as a junior faculty member, I had departmental support and the tenure committee at Hartwick College had a broad sense of scholarly work. Later, this was institutionalized with the use of the philosophical framework of Boyer (1990) in tenure and promotion criteria.

Being chair of Sociology for fifteen years and director of the Women's Studies program for nine gave me lots of creative, departmental curricular power; this did not often translate into institutional power regarding the construction of a college-community partners program or even a service-learning office until recently.

I believe that civic academic practice is at the nexus of mission and sense of place and informs pedagogy, curriculum, disciplines, and research. Particular challenges include educating students for the long haul and creating enduring social structures that must live beyond a course, a semester, and even an individual's career and lifetime. In all,

the goal is to create an educational experience from which students learn through activism but one that does not privilege their learning at the expense of community members. Programs with community-based service-learning components, especially those that involve activist training and expectations of long-term involvement, involve levels of risk and commitment which go well beyond traditional courses and entail long-term commitments to people and communities, structured reflection on ethical and intellectual issues, and respect for diverse cultures. The programs seek local community input on defining needs and match community-identified needs with student skills. These changes reflect the impact of solidarity ethics on academic practice. Students, faculty, and academic institutions are expected to continue their commitments to economic solidarity across contexts. Realizing the depth and intensity of such commitments, particularly when it involves challenging our own privilege, can be intimidating and inspiring.

Academic institutions are challenged to be inclusive and to move beyond their often “gated” existence. Establishing joint projects is tough work, but both universities and communities have the skills and resources to collaborate. Moving beyond potentially different cultures, calendars, power relationships including turf, and stereotypes is a work-in-progress and takes years. Realizing this mission is complex and its success involves the highest levels of administrative support. This includes creating the academic infrastructure that supports community-based endeavors that may be perceived as riskier than classroom-based ones. Some examples of such college infrastructure would include: centers, support staff for community-based work, tenure committees with an understanding of community-based work and criteria to reflect this, reward structures for faculty and students, training, PR that interprets and showcases the institution’s work, campus-community boards with genuine input and links to academic practice, Board of Trustee buy-in, and strong, sustained community links and co-projects.

Creating an institutional “culture of civic responsibility” cultivates critical thinking, ethical reflection, and active citizenship. It also brings students a greater sense of institutional connection as they learn to play the role of representatives of the College to the outside world. Students come to see where their life at the college fits as an active part of that larger world and to recognize that work on community needs requires them to develop communication, planning, and leadership skills. Emphasis on combined analysis and action helps students to appreciate the complexity and richness of community life and to see education’s purpose as a preparation to contribute to something bigger than themselves.

**[Saltmarsh] Community-based teaching and scholarship is increasingly global in context—community issues are both intensely local and inevitably global. How does this context affect the way you conceive of engagement and how does it change the act of engagement?**

[Hull] Perhaps the quintessential quality of our global age is movement. This movement is experienced in local communities. There is the movement of people

across nations, regions, and states, both literally and vicariously, and a related movement of texts broadly conceived—words, to be sure, but also images, music, sounds, moving pictures, and symbols of all sorts, through the mediation of electronic media. “Mobile texts and migrant audiences” is the helpful phrasing offered by Arjun Appadurai, a social theorist interested in characterizing global culture. Movement, the crossing of multiple social and linguistic as well as geographic borders, the communication that accompanies and affords these crossings, and the new “self imaginings” that are required, transform the progress and goals of engagement.

As we look to the future, however, and a global world in which migrant people and mobile texts will become increasingly the order of the day, we are most interested in connecting our youth to youth across the world. Toward that end we have begun digital exchanges of music and story and video “shout outs,” and we are planning, as well, exchange programs for teachers and children. In a world made ever smaller by digital technologies and the migratory impulse and need, and ever larger by differences in ideology, religion, and the distribution of wealth, surely the most important education is one that helps young people develop an intercultural and transnational sense of self as citizen.

[O’Donnell] In this global context, civic engagement addresses our own needs as global citizens who are experiencing challenges, albeit in a different way, as we search for solutions to global issues concerning world poverty and hunger, conflict resolution, equitable resource allocation, support for families and children, ecologically-informed energy, sustainable and just development policies, and the end of racism. Civic engagement can mean working and learning with members of our community about how to use our collective knowledge and skills to solve the pressing issues of the twenty-first century.

The solidarity network works on generating income as well as awareness about human rights, indigenous women’s leadership and cooperative practice, and our collective role in challenging inequity. Our economic solidarity literally translates into markets for fine textiles and, therefore, into earnings for the cooperative’s members and their families, and squarely locates our lives in the context of the shared impact of global economic apartheid and the security, human rights, and sustainability challenges we all face.

Linking ourselves and our students to organizations pursuing solidarity relationships in the North and South focuses attention on structural inequalities as they manifest themselves in local and global contexts and on the possibility of solidarity networks for change. As activist scholars, we can foster the acquisition and sharing of such skills by participating in skill building workshops on alliances, lobbying, community-based research, and alternative development with community members, students, and colleagues.

[Lupton] In the HOT program, we are working with students whose families have come to the United States from Mexico and other points south. Many still have strong ties to other countries, and are still building their sense of what it means to live in

America. Our undergraduates come from mixed backgrounds: some grew up in neighborhoods similar to Santa Ana, others are Asian-American, several are Muslims who bring experiences and knowledge to the program that directly complement the topics we are discussing. Many of our curricular units emphasize global exchanges, from religion and philosophy to sugar and coffee, so we try to address the global perspective through both the content of the materials we teach and through the life experiences of the different participants.

**[Saltmarsh] John Dewey made the point that there is a framework for education in the United States and that framework is democracy. Each of you has placed your work in an explicit civic context and you have framed your understanding of your academic role—and the role of the future faculty you are preparing—in the way William Sullivan has described as “civic professionalism.” What is the civic promise of the community-based work you are involved in?**

[Lupton] I contend that developing the civic dimensions of the humanities will ultimately strengthen, not weaken, the disciplines. Working with schools need not devolve into mere window-dressing, although the university could use some good PR these days. Done properly, rigorous engagement with schools can fulfill that part of the civic mission that makes great universities good neighbors (Damrosch 1995).

Like any site of public education, the schools we visit have as part of their explicit mandate the civic education of their students. The situation we enter in Santa Ana differs from other environments, however, because many of the students we work with are not citizens themselves, or are the children of non-citizens. As was discussed earlier, the global context is inescapable. Building the linguistic, logical, critical, and expressive skills of these young people while increasing their access to a fund of narratives concerning immigration, nation-building, and social action may help them achieve political and economic naturalization. Moreover, studying in small groups with college students from diverse backgrounds is in and of itself civic, regardless of the content studied. Building intellectual communities is a recurrent theme in our units, whether it's a lesson on medieval monasteries, a sequence on early American church design, or a presentation that uses the mastheads of abolitionist newspapers to introduce students to the power of print. The civic point here is not the cultivation of difference, which is everywhere around us, but rather building commonality, “circles of citizenship” where people really can and do talk and work together on shared projects (Lupton 2004).

In this work, citizenship has emerged as a key concept for understanding both the content of many of our workshops and the structure of engagement that brings our many partners together. Individually and collectively, the participants in Humanities Out There are developing a set of “citizenship papers”—documents for citizenship—in several senses. First, “citizenship papers” implies a canon or list of necessary readings that help shape collective identities and shared goals. In our graduate seminar, we read major statements on the history and theory of education, citizenship and civil society. Standard players include John Locke, John Dewey, Jane Addams, Paulo Freire, and

Howard Gardner. The readings are extremely short—sometimes we’re reading a concept as much as an author—and we approach the assignments for the practical wisdom they might offer about what we are doing each week in Santa Ana.

The phrase “citizenship papers” also implies a set of protocols or procedures. Undergraduate students preparing to teach a lesson on hospitality in the *Odyssey* or Islam in medieval Africa are not just absorbing ideas as they would in an academic course. They are exercising their wits in order to figure out how best to share these materials with their cohort of students in the schools. Graduate students are learning how to translate the deeply specialized language of their disciplines into an idiom and a set of activities that makes sense in a public school setting, without “dumbing down” the content or the forms of critical thinking that we value at the university.

Finally, the phrase “citizenship papers” posits a vision or goal. Citizenship procedures, whether they are the laws of naturalization or the rituals and routines of public education, aim to *produce citizens*, persons who achieve a measure of formal equality within a shared space of mobility, interchange, and collective decision-making. Establishing shared narratives along with ways of reading them, and doing so in contexts that stress deliberation and debate, is one piece in the work of building citizens. In inter-institutional programs like HOT, this citizen-building project is multilateral. Each participant moves among distinct frameworks of knowledge, experiencing diversity of every sort (racial, linguistic, economic, and institutional) at every juncture (in the public schools, but also in the university setting where our undergraduate and graduate participants are more diverse than the population of the university at large)<sup>2</sup>.

We believe these experiences challenge their students to develop both an activist and democratic spirit while also learning to learn from community. At our fall orientation this year, one of our returning grad leaders recounted an exit exercise that his group used on the last day of the year’s programming. Each undergraduate talked with the Santa Ana students about how he or she had gotten to college. The stories were varied, touching, and often heroic. Many of the undergraduate tutors are the first in their families to attend college. Many have entered the University of California through a community college. Others have worked before and during their college years in order to support themselves. The exercise broke some stereotypes for both the Santa Ana students and for the grad leader himself. The UCI kids who contribute to Humanities Out There are not, by and large, recipients of privilege, but are themselves strugglers in the contest for access to education and self-development.

Although we haven’t done a formal study on our undergraduate participants, I think it’s fair to say that most of those who come from privileged backgrounds leave the program with a broader sense of California’s demography, the challenges faced by

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<sup>2</sup> On the challenges of citizenship and a common culture in pluralist democracies, see Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents and Citizens* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

urban public schools, and the need to increase access to higher education through multiple forms of interaction across communities and institutions. A few students, of course, both enter and leave the program with a volunteer ethic of enlightened service to the unenlightened poor. In part in response to this problem, we introduced a Diversity Training Workshop for our undergraduate and graduate teams last year that allows students to confront and discuss issues of social inequity in a safe environment.

[O'Donnell] For me, the civic challenge has been a participatory democracy challenge. Participatory democracy has meant empowering people and linking campus and community via organizing programs, curriculum, and projects locally, nationally, and globally. We are using our experiences, cross-cultural knowledge, and scholarly frameworks and research to inform our work and analysis and to critically reflect on that same work in the hope of forging community and social justice.

Big issues include the students, faculty, and the academy learning to recognize and link to existing social networks, building coalitions, checking ego, and recognizing how power plays out in various settings. For students, challenges include: gaining voice; working collaboratively in groups; collectively organizing and challenging systematically; using research to inform actions; working with the community members and respecting their knowledge and expertise; learning not to expect immediate results; thinking of their work as cumulative; realizing that their academic or personal needs do not always come first; learning to negotiate, compromise, challenge, and lobby.

A program that I founded in 1996, OCAY (Oneonta Community Alliance for Youth), also demonstrates the power of grassroots organizing to foster civic engagement. In OCAY, Hartwick students and I are allied with the community in the struggle to address problems of inequity and lack of respect for area youth. The program focuses on youth rights and safety; youth empowerment; creative and safe after school, weekend, and summer activities for teens; and is explicitly about giving young people voice. The Hartwick students' enthusiasm to work on this over many years comes from their own sense of having been disenfranchised in their home communities. OCAY functions as a form of grassroots mobilization—from fundraising to campaigning for elected officials to writing editorials and lobbying city council and the mayor to organizing youth-directed events such as Battles of the Bands, Rock 'N' Bowl, coffeehouses, and teen rock music festivals. For youth who participate, interactions with college students and staff function as alternative spaces for youth identity work. Fine (2000, 2) describes such places as “construction sites where youth create, invent, reconstruct, critique, and reassemble identities” and where they “seek meaning, recognition, and comfort.” Participation in construction sites is about learning grassroots democratic practice for all involved and mobilizing the will of the people. For everyone involved, we are acquiring the knowledge, skills, and values needed to be able to engage in participatory democracy.

[Hull] The current historic moment—beset as it is by geopolitical conflict; driven by the demands of a “new work order;” shot through with increasing intolerance

regarding ethnicity, race, and religion; and characterized by blendings of cultures and languages—is experienced by many people, including youth, as unsettled and unsettling. What kind of person is it now possible to become? What life pathways are available, desirable? What forms of communication and representation—what literacies—can mediate the construction of answers to these big questions?

Such questions are important for all young people, but we have been especially concerned with youth who face the greatest challenges in constructing positive life pathways. Most of these youth live in neighborhoods described as “low-income,” most are people of color, many are first or second generation immigrants, and for some, English is a second or other language.

We think of literacy in this way: a familiarity with the full range of current communicative tools, modes (oral and written), and media, plus an awareness of and a sensitivity to the power and importance of representation of self and others. This literacy, we argue, can be fostered most easily in spaces that support readers and writers in their critical, aesthetic, loving, and agentic communication. Having developed this personal agency within familiar and meaningful cultural contexts, young people are positioned to engage the world in deeper and more authentic ways which can have significant consequences for their grasp of civic and democratic literacies and for their actions in the world.

DUSTY service-learning courses aim to position university students to serve their local community, as well as reflect on these experiences in the context of an academic course on a college campus. Thus, in the spirit of Dewey, such courses ideally connect the learning that students do in a formal classroom with participation and responsibility in the larger society. Service-learning involves a critical consciousness about what constitutes an ethical relationship between the university and the community. Early on, important concerns were expressed about the very nature of “service,” particularly the unhappy possibility that university students could approach their community work with, as Herzberg, Boyle-Baise, and Himley have discussed, a kind of missionary zeal that reduced community members to objects for salvation (Herzberg 1994; Boyle-Baise 2002; Welch 2002; Himley 2004). DUSTY tackles issues of literacy in using context-based pedagogies and creates environments in which all participants—university students and youth and adults from the community—can learn compelling lessons from each other about different social and cultural backgrounds, experiences, and resources for understanding and acting upon the world around them.

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