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ABSTRACT

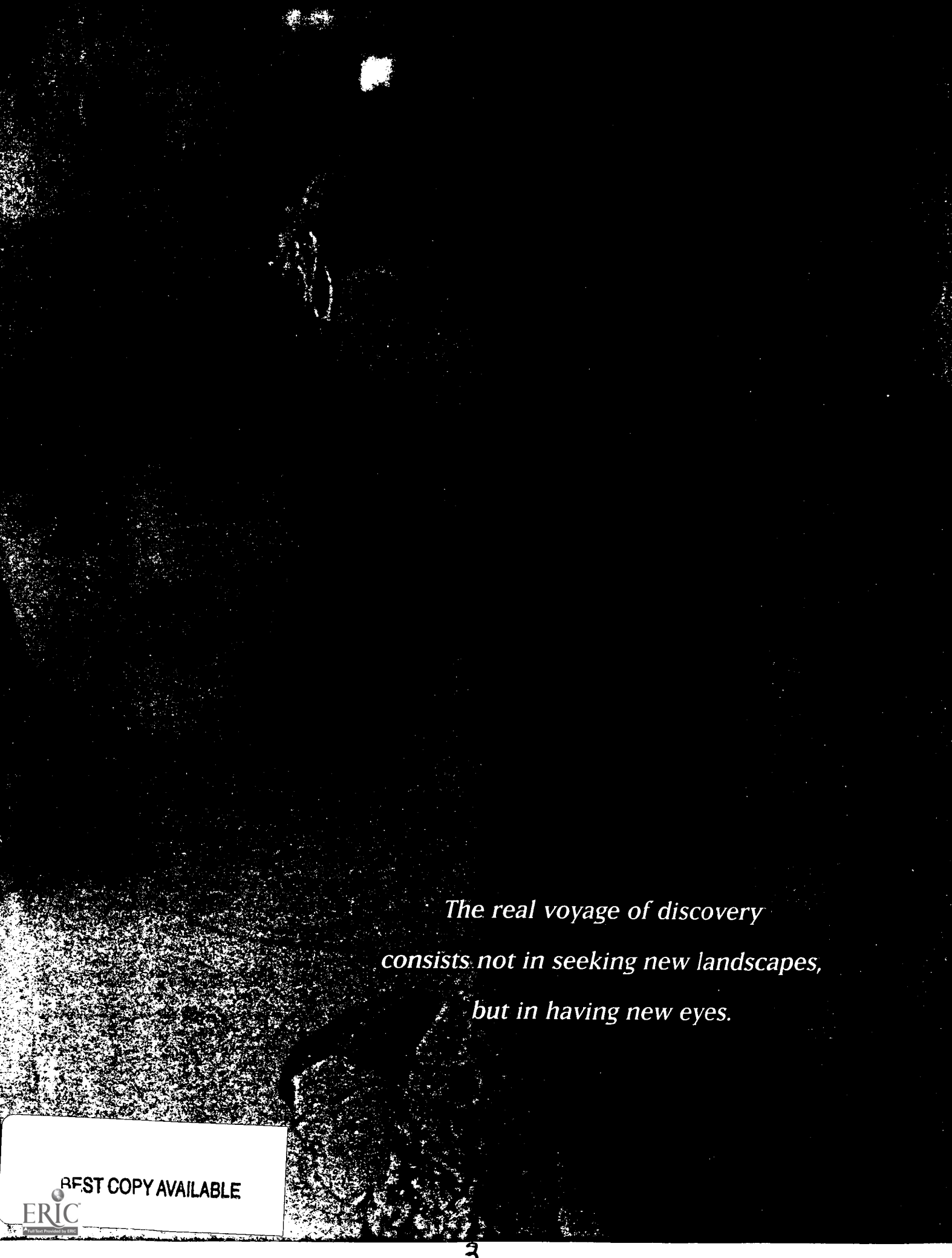
This issue of "Civic Partners" is a call to action on behalf of American's cities. The issue opens with John W. Gardner's discussion of the "responsibles" whose vision and energy sustain communities. He stresses that all of us are "responsibles." Among the many tasks that face those responsible for urban improvement is the teaching of conflict resolution skills and collaborative problem- solving. Such teaching, in school and out-of-school settings, is possible because of the development of systematic teachable techniques for conflict resolution. Retta Kelley interviews nine citizens who work in the service of their communities. Several of the people profiled participate in mentoring programs in U.S. cities, and one is the mentored half of a partnership. Another participated in a tutorial program of great value in the community. One of the profiled leaders is principal of a middle school that participates in the "Lighted Schools" initiative of the McClennan County schools (Texas). The after-school program of this initiative provides enrichment and safe and structured activities for students. Another profiled volunteer has benefited from parent education herself, and is now beginning to help other parents in a school program designed to increase parent participation. Still another volunteer works in an anti-violence campaign directed at school and out-of-school activities. Karen Pittman explores the crucial role young people play in all communities, and describes the guide to community action that has been designed for the middle school student to complement a guide for adults. The Pew Partnership identifies 10 U.S. cities chosen to participate in the Pew Civic Entrepreneur Initiative, which has been established to recruit a diverse array of people to civic involvement and decision making. Specific aspects of community building are examined by Michael Loftin, who discusses an approach to affordable housing in Santa Fe (New Mexico), and Kathryn E. Merchant, who explores the investments of foundations in civic leadership development. The collection closes with the remarks of Samuel D. Proctor about opportunities for civic service. (SLD)

Civic Partners

1997

A Report from the

PEW PARTNERSHIP FOR CIVIC CHANGE



The real voyage of discovery
consists not in seeking new landscapes,
but in having new eyes.

A Call to Action

A CELEBRATION OF CIVIC LEADERSHIP, THIS ISSUE OF *CIVIC PARTNERS* IS A CALL TO ACTION. This call is anchored in the challenges issued by two of the nation's most eloquent prophets of the promise of community—John W. Gardner and the late Samuel D. Proctor. Mr. Gardner lauds those "Responsibles" whose vision and energy sustain community and concludes that he is still "addicted to hope." I imagine that Dr. Proctor would also have admitted to this addiction. He wrote that as a child growing up in the segregated South, he learned "a way of seeing the stars, rather than the canopy of darkness."[1]

Retta Kelley and Karen Pittman encourage us to broaden our notion of these "Responsibles" as citizen leaders. Ms. Kelley, principal of RBK Communications, talks with nine so-called "ordinary" citizens who use their imaginations and exert their energies in the service of their communities. Ms. Pittman, senior vice president of the International Youth Foundation, urges us to embrace the crucial role young people have to play in the future of all communities, as we marshal leadership for the new century.

Table of Contents

The Pew Partnership is pleased to recognize the ten cities chosen to participate in the Pew Civic Entrepreneur Initiative (PCEI). PCEI is a new program established to recruit a diverse array of individuals to civic involvement and decision making. Reflecting on the road ahead for these civic entrepreneurs and their communities, Suzanne W. Morse, executive director of the Pew Partnership, articulates a new vision for community by drawing on the model of the plaza—an open, inclusive, and welcoming public space.

Michael Loftin and Kathryn E. Merchant examine specific aspects of community building. Mr. Loftin, executive director of Neighborhood Housing Services of Santa Fe, discusses how "bricks and mortar" investments in affordable housing help create the kind of environment where citizen engagement can flourish. Kathryn E. Merchant, president and CEO of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, explores the investments of foundations in civic leadership development.

This *Civic Partners* closes with the words of The Reverend Samuel D. Proctor, who was pastor emeritus of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, professor emeritus at Rutgers University, and Pew Civic Entrepreneur Initiative national advisory board member. In an excerpt from *The Substance of Things Hoped For: A Memoir of African-American Faith,* Dr. Proctor articulated our responsibilities in "this rare moment of change" in which we live. The Pew Partnership speaks for many when we say that Dr. Proctor's wit and wisdom helped steady our course at a critical time, and that his life of learning and service endures as an inspiration to us of what an individual working for change can accomplish.

Carole J. Hamner
Editor

[1] Samuel DeWitt Proctor. *The Substance of Things Hoped For.* New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995, p. 10.

You Are the Responsibles

by John W. Gardner

I WANT TO LOOK AT OUR CITIES generally—and the problems ahead. It seems as though in matters relating to the cities, everything is in transition; the challenges become more numerous, difficult, and frustrating by the day. We cannot be discouraged by this. Let's think of ourselves as hardy pioneers, blazing new trails, clad in buckskin. I'm not really joking. History never looks like history when you're living through it. It's too messy. The historians do a lot of tidying up.

When I was chairman of the National Urban Coalition in the 1960s, the cities were near the top of everyone's list of domestic problems. The riots were in full swing, cities were burning, and everyone was deeply worried. Universities were eager to start departments of urban affairs, publishers were seeking books on urban problems, foundations were making big grants, etc. Then the riots ended, the notoriously short attention span of the American people (and the media) reasserted itself, and the cities disappeared from the radar screen. Disappeared. It was a very disheartening experience.

> We all have a thousand insights on the problems, and we have to pass them on to others.

But a few years ago exciting evidences of change began to appear, and in my judgment the long-awaited renewal is now on its way.

We all have a thousand insights on the problems, and we have to pass them on to others. We all have to be missionaries in this great effort. I want to distill out of those thousands of insights just a few that we might pass on to others with some confidence.

First, for at least two decades now the federal government has been ruthless in pushing the states and cities to the wall financially. And the states and the cities have been all too passive in accepting it. Sooner or later the states and the cities are going to have to fight back. It's not a matter of the states and cities becoming more dependent on the federal government. The money came from the states and cities originally.

Second, there must be an end to the reflexive government-bashing indulged by liberals and conservatives alike. We must greatly strengthen local government for its new responsibilities. Contemptuous treatment of our government officials won't accomplish that. We must have campaign finance reform and accountability to the citizen, and we must involve all stakeholders fairly and honestly in the new governance partnerships, creating a wholeness that incorporates diversity. Too many of my friends who are interested in building community take little interest in how local government works, yet it presides over structures and processes that can make all the difference.

Third, all of our large-scale organized systems—corporate, governmental, military, educational—whatever—tend to centralize and must instead consciously disperse initiative and responsibility downward and outward through the system. This is essential to vitality at the periphery of the system. It is not an ideological or political issue. It is how large-scale systems work.

Fourth, as you so well know, our system simply will not evolve as it should evolve without substantially greater citizen engagement. Voting

isn't enough. Participation requires that citizens deliberate, perform community service, monitor government, and engage in civic action. They must put their backs into problems such as the schools and crime and the environment and balancing the budget.

The healthy effect of engagement on the morale of the citizens is now well recognized. I began my professional life as a psychologist, and I endorse the maxim of well-known psychiatrist Irving Yalom: "Engagement is the main therapeutic path." He was speaking of psychological problems, but it's just as true of political alienation. Engagement is a way out of isolation—it repairs the disconnect between citizens and their leaders, and it restores the individual's sense of ownership of his or her governmental institutions.

All citizens should have the opportunity to be active, but all will not respond. Those who do respond carry the burden of our free society. I call them the Responsibles.

All citizens should have the opportunity to be active, but all will not respond. Those who do respond carry the burden of our free society. I call them the Responsibles. They exist in every segment of the community—ethnic groups, labor unions, neighborhood associations, businesses—but they rarely form an effective network of responsibility because they don't know one another across segments. They must find each other, learn to communicate, and find common ground. Then they can function as the keepers of the long-term agenda.

But in order to do so they must learn to further their purposes in the public arena with tough-minded skill and effectiveness. They must remember the *Peanuts* cartoon of Charlie Brown standing on the pitching mound saying, "How can we lose when we're so sincere?" Citizens are going to have to organize powerfully, bring the best talent to bear, and stay the course.

Fifth, we must cope with the loss of a sense of community. We have witnessed the collapse of communities of obligation and commitment, and we have seen the consequences.

For most of human history, people have accepted "community" as a given. They were like a people who could live generation after generation in the houses their ancestors built. Today we are like people in a land of continuous tornadoes, where constant rebuilding is essential. This entails a new level of individual responsibility to the group—equaled in the past only in times of great catastrophe. The forces loose in the world that undermine coherence have never been more powerful.

But we can rebuild. Ernest Renan, the great nineteenth-century French writer, feared the total decay of traditional beliefs. He said, "We are living on the fragrance of an empty perfume jar." Only a great writer could have come up with a metaphor so beautifully bleak and desolate. But it gives no hint of our extraordinary regenerative capacity. The capacity of humans to regenerate their culture runs through the history books. We just have to bring that regenerative capacity to bear, beginning with the family, where the root of community—responsibility for "the other"—first emerges.

The currently popular phrases "social capital" and "civic society" refer (with some variations in usage) to the web of mutual obligations and trust, and the shared values and goals that characterize the older word "community." But a community must have two additional attributes—commitment to the largest values of the culture (e.g., the values embedded in the Constitution) and constructive links beyond its own boundaries. (Without those attributes, a terrorist cult could be counted as ranking high in social capital!)

We must create the stable institutional frameworks in which community can flourish, including the economic underpinnings that make survival possible. I don't mention the economic underpinnings lightly. No public discussion of city or neighborhood is carried to completion without mention of jobs. For years economic development and social betterment were pursued as though they were two wholly separate goals. No longer.

If we're not willing to think about economic growth and productivity, about deficit control, about de-industrialization, and about global competition, we will never gain command of the social problems of the inner city. Improved education, school-to-job transition programs, training in entrepreneurial skills, affordable housing, restored business areas, and much more will be needed. As you know, admirable efforts along all of these lines are being carried forward—but not on a national scale.

We must institutionalize community. A momentary upwelling of a sense of community won't do it. Values don't just float out there in space (except in political campaigns). They are woven into the web of mutual obligations that characterize family and community. The culture instilled by loving care-providers in infancy and by the community later is our nurse and civilizer. And it doesn't happen overnight. A community is the child of time.

Historically, this country has had more faith in human possibilities than most others.

I agree with William Drayton who says that "the conscious development of human institutions is the major evolutionary task."

Sixth, as all of you know, we are going to have to teach the difficult skills of conflict resolution and collaborative problem solving. Collaboration and conflict resolution have become great buzzwords, but their popularity will vanish like the morning fog unless we teach people that behind the buzzwords is a discipline—hard to learn, hard to carry through.

And we should put major resources into further development of the discipline. With all due respect to the ancient arts of law and diplomacy, the recent development of systematic, teachable techniques for getting at the roots of conflict and engaging multiple, often hostile, parties in disciplined collaborative problem solving represents something new in the 5,000 years of recorded history. It could be a Copernican turn in human affairs. If it were an invention involving a silicon chip, the excitement would be hard to contain. We'd all be buying stock in it. As it is, the new development is merely tolerated as part of the contemporary social fumbling.

Seventh, we must never forget that in seeking social renewal our greatest assets are the talent and energy of human beings. Most societies in history have done a very good job of smothering talent and energy. Even in our own society, we smother a great deal—or fail to develop it.

The problem is not just the obvious obstacles such as poverty, illness, and political oppression. Even those who have had every advantage unconsciously put a ceiling on their own growth, underestimate their potentialities, or hide from the risk that growth involves. I think it's quite possible that most of us in our lifetimes will have fulfilled not much more than 50 percent of our possibilities. We have potential we don't even know about.

Historically, this country has had more faith in human possibilities than most others. The rather simple idea of getting people off other people's backs—the old great idea of America—the idea we've never fully achieved and must never stop working on—may ultimately prove to be our greatest releaser of talent and energy.

We know the obstacles to the release of human talent and energy, and we know how to remove most of them. It's primarily a question of what resources we want to put into the effort.

Eighth, anyone with the capacity to face reality recognizes that people who move their societies ahead are highly motivated. Great things are accomplished by people who believe that great things are possible. It is not a striking attribute of the American people today, but the possibility is there. Beneath the passivity and self-indulgence and cynicism is a people waiting to be awakened, wanting to be awakened. Never forget it. Yes, even in that politically catatonic 50 percent who did not perform the elementary civic duty of voting in the last election. Teach them that freedom and duty are inseparable.

The kind of high motivation that shrugs off failures and moves ahead undaunted is almost exclusively seen in men and women who have made commitments beyond the self. Commitments beyond the self confer meaning upon one's efforts—and the ingredient of meaning greatly heightens motivation.

Freedom and obligation, liberty and duty. That's the deal. Your commitments may be different from mine, but it is not in the grand design that we can have freedom without obligation. Not for long.

Ninth, no doubt our cities are launched on a course of renewal, but we have chronically underestimated the capacity of long-scale systems to resist change. We must design our efforts for the long haul. Short-term programs won't do it.

I do believe that this is a hopeful moment for the cities. But I had better confess that I am addicted to hope. I cannot shake the addiction. Not many people know the ailments of the cities better than I do. But I look at the wave of innovation today—innovation in practically every field of social problem solving. I look at the resurgence of interest in community, the success of the new methods of collaborative problem solving, the willingness to face the problems of city and metropolitan regions, and I return to my addiction. I do believe that this is a hopeful moment in our civic life.

John W. Gardner is a senior statesman and professor emeritus at Stanford University.

Civic Leadership for the New Century

by Retta B. Kelley

"All citizens should have the opportunity to be active, but all will not respond. Those who do respond carry the burden of our free society. I call them the Responsibles. They exist in every segment of the community—ethnic groups, labor unions, neighborhood associations, businesses ... They must find each other, learn to communicate, and find common ground. Then they can function as the keepers of the long-term agenda."

—*John W. Gardner*

TO HEAR THE VOICES OF THESE NINE "Responsibles" (as John Gardner would undoubtedly call them) is to hear the hymns of hope. All of these people have given of themselves for their communities. All say they have gained more than they've given, experiencing growth in new personal directions. They share common traits: highly motivated, positive thinking, deeply committed. They now share in the conviction that through collaboration with others like themselves, crucial systemic change is possible.

Stoney Lamar, Western North Carolina

"What the HandMade in America opportunity has offered me ... has been the ability to affect a larger and more varied segment of Western North Carolina from a broader perspective. Now I think of myself as a citizen artist."

– Stoney Lamar, wood sculptor, Saluda, North Carolina

Stoney Lamar, wood sculptor, family man, and frequent volunteer leader in the craft circles, now has a new way to describe himself: citizen artist. He ascribes this new view of himself to his work with HandMade in America, which he says has offered him a broader perspective of the region of Western North Carolina in which he lives.

HandMade in America is a regional initiative in which craftspeople, community leaders, educators and business people work together to promote and develop the handcraft industry of the Western North Carolina mountains. For three years, Lamar has played an important part in bringing together business people and craftspersons, otherwise known as "the suits and the sandals." He says that the craft and the business communities have found they can work together for their mutual benefit and to strengthen the regional economy.

Lamar explains that by taking the new role as "citizen artist," he acknowledges his concern for how this era and time will be remembered—"what the anthropologists dig up." HandMade in America, he feels, has shown that there is power in objects and in the hands that create them. To this end, Lamar has worked with others to create the Center for Craft, Creativity and Design, formed in conjunction with three major North Carolina universities. This center will serve as a chronicler and an archive of the living dynamics of craft today in Western North Carolina and will steer K–12 curriculum development in the historical and artistic significance of locally created crafts.

For himself, Lamar is convinced he must keep one foot in the "'60s with its idealistic goals and beliefs, along with the other foot moving forward in the '90s."

Phyllis Wagoner, Eugene, Oregon

"My husband and I wanted our children to see complaining about a situation isn't enough—to show you have to work for solutions."

– Phyllis Wagoner, mentor, Eugene, Oregon

Phyllis Wagoner had serious qualms about raising her hand to be a mentor with Networking for Youth, based in Eugene, Oregon. After all, what could she and a "tattooed and pierced" teen mom possibly have to talk about? But she was sold on the importance of connecting with today's youth.

"I went into it with blind faith," Wagoner said. "Now, three years later, that blind faith has paid enormous dividends for me and my family. I consider Alyson Powell, my mentee, to be one of the most amazing people I have ever known. She's extremely bright, extremely motivated."

Wagoner was also looking for an antidote for some of the attitudes she encounters in her work as director of constituent services in Senator Peter De Fazio's office in Eugene. She laments that working in politics can give one the feeling that "people don't care about anyone but themselves." It has been uplifting for her to be involved with Networking for Youth, "to be in a room full of people who believe they can change things and make things work."

She sees the enthusiasm and commitment spreading. Networking for Youth has involved hundreds of citizens from every walk of life. "And more and more, you hear about people identifying themselves as mentors. I hear people talking about their experiences just about everywhere I go," she said. "Typically, they have a gleam in their eye, their chests puff out. They are proud to be mentors."

Alyson Powell, Eugene, Oregon

"In my case, I had no one to look up to, no one for a role model. A lot of things were going on in my family, and my mentor, Phyllis Wagoner, let me know she would be there to talk even late into the night."

– Alyson Powell, computer software worker and student, Eugene, Oregon

Alyson Powell is convinced every young person could benefit from having a healthy adult to look up to, a non-family member to talk with and share hopes, dreams, and frustrations. Teens, she said, typically won't listen to parents or grandparents.

Powell said it was not that "Phyllis was sitting around patting me on the back. She was showing me what to do, the steps I had to take to get where I wanted to go, to do what I wanted to accomplish."

Wagoner guided Powell through an unpaid internship at her office, where Powell learned how to use the computer, take phone calls, and respond to constituents. According to Powell, this experience helped build her self-esteem and her résumé. Equipped with letters of recommendation from others in the office, she was able to qualify for a job with a future.

"Now I'm a customer representative at Symantec, a computer software firm. I configure networks and help customers install software. I've got a salaried job with fabulous benefits, and the company is giving me financial assistance so I can attend college. I owe all of this to Phyllis Wagoner."

She and Wagoner also do fun things, like taking their children to the park and spending casual time together.

Prompted by her own positive experience, Powell envisions mentoring programs that could work in many offices and high schools.

Dr. Sharon Shields, Waco, Texas

"It's fantastic. I don't see any barriers any more. All the agencies are ready to collaborate to be able to remove all turf battles, and to work together to improve our Waco community."

– Dr. Sharon Shields, middle school principal, Waco, Texas

Word came from the Waco Independent School District level: the G.L. Wiley Middle School where Dr. Sharon Shields was principal would participate in "Lighted Schools," an initiative of the McClennan County Youth Collaboration offering at-risk youngsters a wide range of recreational and arts enrichment programs.

"My greatest struggle was to envision how this cultural expansion and creative activity program aimed at building self-esteem—with no school stuff in it—was going to help my students," said Dr. Shields. "Now that my understanding has expanded, I would not be without it."

She credits the after-school program with providing a safe, nurturing, structured environment in which "the children benefit tremendously and the parents benefit, knowing their children are safe."

The welfare of her students stays at the forefront of Shields' mind and actions. In fact, she makes her claim boldly: she is "on a mission" and is moving rapidly forward to transform her school into a resource center for her students and their families as well as for the community surrounding her campus.

Her energy and determination stem from the need she sees around her. Wiley Middle School is identified as a Title I campus, which means eighty to ninety percent of the students receive a free or reduced lunch, come from households with a limited income, and live with parents who are likely

to be under-employed or unemployed.

Dr. Shields knew that the "employability" of the parents of her students was a question that had to be addressed. "At a brainstorming meeting the Pew Partnership for Civic Change invited me and some Waco leaders to in Arizona last fall, we came up with a job-training component," Shields said. When the mayor asked what could be done "at the city level to help student success," Shields answered immediately: the parents and other community persons need another chance, another opportunity for higher earning power.

"When we look at school performance and poverty, the economic level of that household drives so much of that success," Dr. Shields said. "We have got to work together to address those basic skills on how to get a job, how to keep a job, and to teach new skills."

David Pecos, Santa Fe, New Mexico

"Without Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS), our family would never have been able to afford a home in Santa Fe. Now our daughters will grow up in their own home and will learn what it means to be responsible for the growth and development of a neighborhood. Now we are part of making the American Dream come true. For me, as an NHS board member, I felt like it was good to give back."

– David Pecos, landscaper and nonprofit board member

The odds were long, but David Pecos and his wife Maria rushed down to sign up for the Santa Fe Affordable Housing lottery, getting their names in the hat just thirty minutes before the drawing. That made them one of the 276 families applying for loan qualification for ten homes, five with four bedrooms, five with three bedrooms.

The homes had not been built but were slated to sell at $20,000 below construction price: a $108,750 home for $88,750, subsidized by a grant from the New Mexico State Housing Authority through Santa Fe's Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS).

Debbie Jaramillo, the mayor of Santa Fe, drew the first twenty names in a public ceremony, celebrating the initial offering of affordable housing by NHS. The Pecos family was not among the names drawn. Mr. and Mrs. Pecos and their three young daughters: Suzanne, Latasha, and Dana, settled back into their small twenty-year-old mobile home, believing it would be for the duration.

"Our middle daughter, Latasha, started praying, 'Please help us get a new house,' Pecos said. "And at dinner, she would slip it into the blessing from time to time. She was about five then, and off and on she would say that prayer."

But some of the first families whose names were drawn in the affordable housing lottery failed to qualify for the loan program, making way for new drawings. And one day, the call came. The Pecos family was next in line, if they could qualify for financing. Mr. and Mrs. Pecos remember plowing through mountains of loan and grant paperwork. With the help and encouragement of family, friends, and the NHS staff, they were able to come up with a down payment, improve their debt ratio, and become homeowners.

Shortly after moving into their four-bedroom home in the Las Acequias development, Pecos was invited to serve on the board of directors of the Neighborhood Housing Services of Santa Fe. In his past two years of service on the board, one of Pecos' primary duties has been to talk to potential home buyers like himself. Pecos has proven extremely effective in helping his fellow Santa Feans understand, through sharing his personal experiences, how they, too, can qualify for home ownership.

Pecos feels good that he is helping others find a way to stay in the neighborhoods they grew up in. He particularly enjoys the interaction with older Santa Feans struggling to keep up with the repairs and rising property taxes on homes that often have been in their families for decades. He explains that a large portion of the loan funds are granted to existing homeowners. He also takes pleasure in investigating new loan products that might be included in the suite of those available through NHS. After two years, Pecos even found time to run for a school board spot that opened up in his new neighborhood.

"For me, its been good to feel that now I can give back," David said. "It was hard for my family to qualify. Now I can help others realize their dream of home ownership."

(For more about affordable housing in Santa Fe, see Bricks and Mortar Build Civic Infrastructure on page 25.)

Melissa Mathews, Albany, Georgia

"Now my dreams of someday being a teacher are coming true. My life was going awful, but now I'm going to be a parent worker, to be in the school. I'll be able to help make that school better."

– Melissa Mathews, mother, parent worker, Albany, Georgia

Melissa Mathews only dared dream she would ever be a part of a team working with parents, youngsters, and teachers to make the schooling experience better for all.

Mathews recently completed eighty hours of the Albany Dougherty 2000 Parent Track courses. Now she's scheduled to join the HIPPY (Home Instruction Parenting for Parents of Pre-School Youngsters) group that works right in the schools, helping bridge the gaps in performance for some children from disadvantaged backgrounds. She will serve as a role model and a friendly listener for other parents. Mathews says that as a single parent with two pre-school children, she has faced many of the same problems of these parents—hurdles like interruption of utility services, limited budgets, nonexistent or too-costly day care. And she feels she can be a key part of the team both to identify and deal with these difficulties.

"I know from personal experience there are children in our schools with serious problems at home," Mathews said. "I want to help take away the burdens keeping kids from learning."

Mathews commented that parents often see school as just a place to leave their children to get them out of their hair. She wants to help turn that attitude around and help parents understand the crucial role they play. "As a parent myself, I want to be involved in my children's education and teach other parents about this," Mathews said.

As a parent worker, she will help school officials designate and design positive programs to attract the parents to school who might not have come otherwise.

"I've learned there are so many alternatives to spanking for discipline. Parent Track has made me a better parent. I'm eager to pass that on to others."

John Boles, Charleston, West Virginia

"This mentor program has provided that stabilizing force in our community and has provided a framework that shows someone cares. As mentors, we can give help on the social front, which allows teachers to get back to concentrating on the educational side."

—John Boles, mentor, Charleston, West Virginia

Connections. That's what John Boles has concentrated on with his active second-grade charge. Connections between sports and learning. Connections between personal interests and reading. And Boles has forged a close connection with the student's teacher to build self-esteem in a youngster who was losing interest.

Boles is completing his third year as a mentor, one of hundreds of volunteers mobilized in Charleston, West Virginia, through the Family Resource Centers. Family Resource Centers coordinate a wide range of services to strengthen and support families. The Centers are located in accessible and welcoming locations such as elementary schools and community centers.

Boles' first stop was with his mentee's teacher. The teacher described a young student with low self-esteem and with a lackluster attitude toward his schooling, particularly his reading. She told Boles the boy's passion was sports.

Boles knew he had to connect the youngster's interest in sports with real life and education. He selected books about sports figures that his student began to read, and he talked to the boy about how his own sports ability had led to a college scholarship.

"I stressed in every way I knew that you get out of sports what you put into it—that he could get a college degree out of his sports ability that would help him in all walks of life," Boles said. Soon, the student began to ask him questions about how hard college is, what it's like.

Boles stays extremely clear about what his role is: he leads by example, by showing genuine interest, and by love. When asked how he feels about the commitment of time and effort, Boles gives a resounding, "It's worth it."

Patti Herlihy, Rapid City, South Dakota

"If you look at the big picture, it's overwhelming. But if everyone just does one thing, just helps one person, that's what is important. That makes a difference."

—Patti Herlihy, community activist, Rapid City, South Dakota

Patti Herlihy, a community activist and volunteer, is extremely hopeful about her work with Stand Against a Violent Environment, S.A.V.E., in Rapid City, South Dakota. This time her volunteer efforts are not about asking for money. They are about putting a face on all forms of violence from its earliest stages—disrespectful behavior such as rolled eyes and name calling—and attracting as many people and organizations to the table as possible.

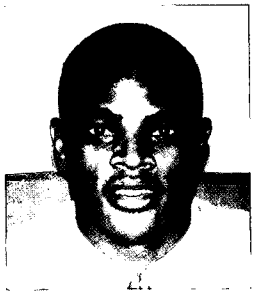
She raised her hand over two years ago to take a lead role in Rapid City's S.A.V.E. program. She was then heavily involved with a similar national program sponsored by the American Medical Alliance, SAVE, an acronym for Stop American Violence Everywhere. Herlihy was delighted to hear of the local effort and sought to link the two initiatives.

Herlihy serves on the S.A.V.E. steering committee, which includes representatives from such varied organizations as the Rapid City Public Schools, Ellsworth Air Force Base, city and county substance abuse groups, Rural American Initiatives, Girls Inc., and representatives from

two local businesses. In addition, there are over seventy supporting organizations that take an active role.

"S.A.V.E. is totally a community grassroots effort. We stress it is not the police. Our monthly meetings, held at a local church, are open, and we work on getting as many people and groups involved as possible," Herlihy said. "We have found so much strength from focusing our efforts and pooling our resources."

During their earliest meetings, they discovered almost every entity sponsored some sort of program working with youth, striving to combat problems such as violence and drug and alcohol abuse. "We were all just doing our own thing," she said. Together these groups are taking on the whole community, to bring awareness first of what violence is, how it starts, and how each citizen has a role in stopping it.



Keith McGhee, Pine Bluff, Arkansas

"You see, certain people had made the way for us. We wanted the students to know we cared, so we told them: 'We don't care if you're daydreaming, you're sleepy, or whatever. We want you to know we will be here every Thursday, and we are going to keep coming to impress on you the importance of getting an education.'"

– Keith McGhee, volunteer tutor, Pine Bluff, Arkansas

Never mind what Keith McGhee does second with his life, first he wants to teach public school. His three-year tutoring stint for the Partners for a Better Pine Bluff has convinced him that "working with kids" is where he belongs.

"At college, my first dream had been to go on to law school and be a lawyer," McGhee said. "But after being involved with an elementary and junior high tutorial program, I know I want to teach first."

As a volunteer tutor, he was first assigned to a site in a neighborhood considered to be unsafe. McGhee said there were a lot of young people contributing to that negative atmosphere. "But after we started showing up to tutor every day, things started getting better," McGhee said.

McGhee remembers one elementary school child who came in very quietly with his second-semester report card. He told McGhee, "I showed my mother my grades, and she didn't care." McGhee did a little research and found out that his mother was on crack and unable to be responsive to her son. "I never gave up on him, and he kept coming back. He was very intelligent and can go anywhere. He just did not have the support or anyone who cared," McGhee said.

This is not McGhee's first experience working with young people. During college as a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., he and a group of his fraternity brothers began a high school visitation program to urge students to consider college seriously.

McGhee currently is working with the prosecutor's office in Pine Bluff in the victim-witness protection program of the juvenile crime division. He serves as the support person for the victim, "to walk them through the process step by step and to make them feel as comfortable as possible." He stays with the process up to and through the restitution phase.

He is working currently on his teacher certification, which he'll finish this year and hopes to "find a school district that will hire me." His second dream, to be a lawyer, is going to wait.

Retta B. Kelley is principal of RBK Communications. She brings extensive journalistic experience to her work and has served as publisher, editor, business manager, and reporter at newspapers across the country. She was vice president of Prodigy, Inc.

New Metaphors for Leadership

by Suzanne W. Morse

WHEN TOURISTS TO ONE CARIBBEAN country enter the airport customs area, two large signs greet them: Belongers and Visitors. The dichotomy is startling. While any newcomer fully expects to be a visitor, the idea of a "belonger" is intriguing. The volumes written today about leadership fail to recognize the motivation and the necessity of the phenomenon of "belonging" to leadership preparation and selection.

Too often managing the tension between leadership technique and leadership possibility becomes the focal point of discussion. The heart of leadership (belonging to a community and its common interests) is lost. No longer are technique and position enough; rather it is this broader reach for leadership—possibility and belonging—that will win the day. Part of the challenge is simply recruitment—getting more capable people into places where they can exercise leadership. The more difficult job is to reach out to everybody and call forth the leadership possibilities that exist in people from all circumstances and experiences, reminding them, and ourselves, that we all are belongers.

Leadership cannot and should not be one-dimensional or singularly focused.

Conventional wisdom identifies two categories of leaders: those with a natural gift to organize, motivate, and inspire through word and deed; and those who learn, and desire to learn, those skills of leadership that make the traits of leadership possible. From my experience, communities and organizations need both types. The first reaction to the "needs both" declarative is to rejoin with, "There can be only one person at the top." While that may be true in somebody's organizational chart, it is not true in reality. Organizations and communities need many more than one leader. The challenge before us as a nation and as individuals is to recognize and promote the idea that leadership is multidimensional in both application and participation. No longer is it desirable or even practical to build leadership pyramids—those closed, hierarchical structures of traditional organizational charts. Rather, the task facing organizations and communities is to build leadership plazas—open and inviting places that draw together a diverse citizenry.

Architectural metaphors notwithstanding, leadership in its truest form is about collaborating, connecting, and ultimately catalyzing actions focused on common interests. The pyramid model works off the assumption that leaders are few and followers are many. While there are certain times when decisions must be made by a few rather than a committee, the plaza model of leadership demonstrates that the *process* of decision making is a crucial determinant of the ultimate wisdom of the decision. This recognition that process affects outcomes allows the plaza model to emerge—multiple levels, shared responsibility, common spaces, diverse connections—necessary elements for strong leadership. Time and time again the most successful organizations have proven the effectiveness of the plaza model that is inclusive, draws on community talents, and supports larger actions in the community.

Leadership cannot and should not be one-dimensional or singularly focused. The issues facing the nation—community by community or

organization by organization—are such that one person or even one group is ill-equipped to meet the challenges. The complexity and interrelationship of issues require that citizens at every level have a stake in their solution.

The question before us as a nation is: How do we build leadership plazas rather than leadership pyramids? We will make the first step when we make a place and space for more people to be involved in the decisions facing us all. We must look in board rooms and backyards for leadership "bench strength." In a democracy, common action requires common deliberation.

Secondly, we must develop and build skills for inclusive leadership like consensus building, collaboration, deliberation, and strategy. Leaders must know how to talk together, work together, and act together. They must feel as if they and their fellow citizens are belongers.

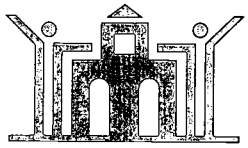
Finally, this new model of a leadership plaza gives a visual image that communities and organizations must create working principles of process and action that not only allow but encourage opportunities for new leaders to participate in building and executing common priorities and common agendas.

Our work with the Pew Civic Entrepreneur Initiative takes as its premise that the plaza model of leadership is not only right but essential. Consequently, the initiative proposes to restructure how communities envision and recruit civic leaders. The ten communities participating in this initiative are embracing the challenge of tapping the tremendous resources of citizens' combined knowledge, experience, and insights on behalf of their communities.

The litmus test for leadership will come when citizens, employees, and elected officials think of themselves and others as stakeholders for the larger good. They will ask "What will we do?" rather than, "What will they do for us?" In the Masai culture, a common greeting is "Eserian nakera"—"How are the children?" The common answer is "All are well." The plaza leadership model is about thinking how "all" in our shared existence can be well.

Suzanne W. Morse is executive director of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change and the Pew Civic Entrepreneur Initiative.

Ten Civic Entrepreneur Cities Chosen



THE PEW PARTNERSHIP for Civic Change has selected ten cities to participate in the $3.68 million Pew Civic Entrepreneur Initiative (PCEI) to equip a diverse group of citizens, or "civic entrepreneurs," to play a greater role in decision making in their communities. Intended to broaden and strengthen existing community leadership efforts, PCEI will work with communities to identify and support citizen leaders.

"This country's greatest challenge is to renew its spirit of civic responsibility and to develop more fully its public stewardship," says Rebecca W. Rimel, president and CEO of The Pew Charitable Trusts. "Our democracy requires the full range of citizen perspectives to further our community change and renewal. The Pew Civic Entrepreneur Initiative is a remarkable effort to reinvigorate and expand leadership in and for our communities."

This country's greatest challenge is to renew its spirit of civic responsibility and to develop more fully its public stewardship.

Each of the ten participating cities will work to strengthen community-based leadership by developing "civic entrepreneurs"—citizens who invest their expertise and experience in solving urgent community problems.

Those selected as civic entrepreneurs will represent a broad range of ages and backgrounds. What they will all share is a commitment to work collaboratively to improve their communities. Civic entrepreneurs will have demonstrated this commitment through their involvement in neighborhood, civic, and religious organizations and through their work in government, business, or the nonprofit sectors.

"Churches, beauty parlors, offices, senior centers—these are the places where people meet, mingle, and go about the business of making their communities the places they want them to be," explains Jim Gibson, director of the DC Agenda Project and PCEI national advisory board member. "We must meet people where they are and appreciate the different strengths they bring to the table as citizens and as leaders."

In September 1997, each of the ten PCEI communities selected their first group of twenty civic entrepreneurs to participate in national and local training. Each team will develop skills to address a critical issue in its community. In the second year of the program, these original civic entrepreneurs will serve as mentors to new teams of twenty civic entrepreneurs in each community. While the Trusts have committed to funding the program for two years, communities were selected in part based on their ability to sustain the program in its third year and beyond.

Through participation in a national PCEI network, civic entrepreneurs from across the nation will have the opportunity to share strategies for building stronger communities. Twice each year, the initiative will convene the civic entrepreneurs from all ten cities at national training institutes to examine the theory and practice of collaborative leadership.

Through a curriculum combining presentations by seasoned community leaders, strategic planning sessions for each city, individual skill assessment and development, and experiential learning, these institutes will challenge and equip civic entrepreneurs to tackle the tough problems at home.

Cities Selected to Participate in PCEI

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Anchorage, Alaska

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Greensboro, North Carolina

Honolulu, Hawaii

Jersey City, New Jersey

Lexington, Kentucky

Providence, Rhode Island

Santa Ana, California

Shreveport, Louisiana

Each of the ten cities is structuring its local training program to suit the unique needs and opportunities of the community. Civic entrepreneurs met in each of the participating cities in September to begin identifying the concrete issue they will work collaboratively to address in the coming year. Training at both the national and local institutes will focus on practical strategies to solve urgent and interrelated community problems.

"For too long the few have made decisions for the many," asserts John Parr, former president of the National Civic League and chair of the PCEI board. "These ten cities participating in the Pew Civic Entrepreneur Initiative will demonstrate how a broader and more collaborative model of leadership renews our public life by mobilizing citizens to confront issues—from economic development to youth opportunities—with innovation and boldness."

Cities identified a range of issues crucial to their long-term health. For example, Santa Ana, California, and Jersey City, New Jersey, are working to engage increasingly diverse populations in civic decision making. Providence, Rhode Island, and Honolulu, Hawaii, are grappling with the challenge of neighborhood economic development in a global economy. And cities from Greensboro, North Carolina, to Albuquerque, New Mexico, are mobilizing to build relationships that cut across traditional barriers of race, class, and culture.

The ten winning PCEI cities were chosen from an eligible pool of seventy-five cities. (Eligible cities were those with central city populations between 150,000 and 400,000 according to the 1990 U.S. Census.)

The Pew Civic Entrepreneur Initiative is a special project of The Pew Charitable Trusts, a national and international philanthropy based in Philadelphia. The project office is located in Charlottesville, Virginia. Dr. Suzanne Morse is the executive director.

Civic entrepreneurs in Shreveport, Louisiana, one of ten cities selected to participate in PCEI.

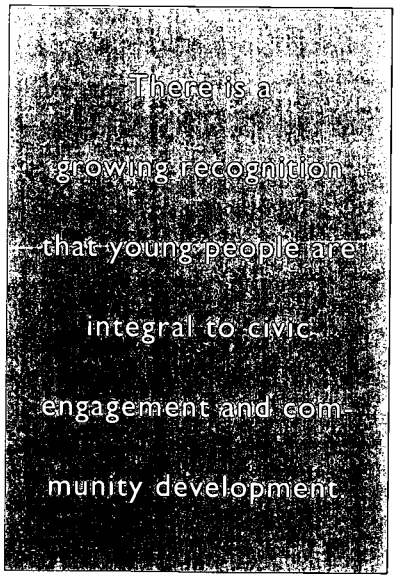
Young People in A.C.T.I.O.N.

by Karen Pittman

Articulating, Critiquing, Teaching, Implementing, Organizing, Negotiating

Young people as civic leaders. It is curious that this concept in the United States warrants extended discussion and special attention. Our history shows that young people have played critical roles in shaping and reshaping public opinion, public policy, and public response. We need only watch PBS documentaries on the civil rights movement or on the protest movement against the Vietnam war to see the youth of the leadership.

So why the discussion? And why now? There are several possible explanations. General concern about the disintegration of civic life in America is evidenced by all-time lows in voter turnout and captured in essays such as Robert Putnam's "Bowling Alone".[1] More focused concern that not only civic education, but community service, civic engagement, and public problem solving are lessons that can no longer be gleaned from daily life, but must be scripted, orchestrated, and logged. Nagging concern that young people in this country are shifting from apathy to anger, disgusted with the job adults have been doing in everything from environmental protection to welfare to foreign aid. Occasional concern that the failure of adults, even well-meaning adults, to reach out to young people as they pursue civic solutions to community problems is not just unfortunate, but counterproductive. Casual observation suggests that about half of the community issues raised by civic groups concern young people (as beneficiaries of services or perpetrators of problems). But only a fraction of the civic planning groups involve them.



There is a growing recognition that young people are integral to civic engagement and community development. Further, there is a deeper understanding that engaging young people in civic life and community problem solving is a key ingredient of youth development. People from a variety of vantage points are ready to act. What will it take?

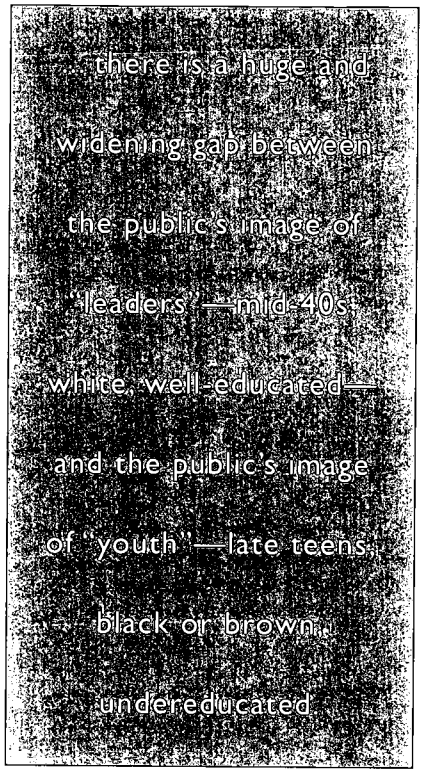
First, a clear definition of our goal. The following language may need further refinement but does reflect the spirit of several foundation-sponsored discussions on the issue:

To create expectations, supports, and opportunities for youth and adults to engage in important, public work, work that contributes to the individual well-being of youth and adults and/or to the economic, social, and physical health of the communities in which they live.

This definition embodies several important themes: (1) young people and adults should work together toward common solutions; (2) the work needs to address real problems; (3) the benefits can accrue both to the community and to individuals. Once stated, these seem obvious. But each point speaks to a documented tendency to narrow the goal—to assume or insist that young people must be not full partners but the sole owners of ideas and efforts; to allow the work to

[1] "Bowling Alone," *Journal of Democracy*, January 1995.

be of marginal importance to the community because young people are doing it "for the experience;" or, conversely, to allow the work to be of marginal benefit to young people because they are doing it "for the public good."



Second, an acknowledgment of the challenge. Part of the reason we are now discussing how to increase the civic participation of young people (rather than documenting its plentiful and varied forms) is that there is a huge and widening gap between the public's image of "leaders"—mid-40s, white, well-educated—and the public's image of "youth"—late teens, black or brown, undereducated. There is ambivalence, at best, about whether and how youth should be drawn into the center of civic discourse.

Third, well-orchestrated documentation of examples of what it takes to "create the expectations, supports, and opportunities ..." and what these opportunities, once used, yield for young people, adults, and the community. There are literally hundreds of examples. What we need are common listening aids, labeling tools, and linking and leveraging mechanisms. We need trained teams of "documenters"—people who will unearth, package, and publicize what is already going on around the country (putting on labels and pulling out learnings, taking care not to distort the content). And we need networks of users—people who will put or push the learning into practice.

Fourth, a willingness to create space for young people. Not "spaces"—which implies designated slots in particular events and structures. Space—room in our basic images of how things should be—the kind of space that would never let you consider purchasing a two-seater as the family car. This concept of space was explained to me by a group of young leaders from Ecuador. After challenging their English—I thought they meant "places"—I came to understand and appreciate the deeper meaning.

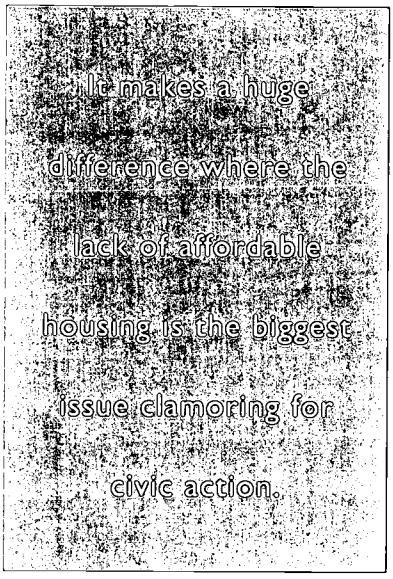
The importance of "space" was brought home to me vividly a few weeks ago. I was working with a very talented team of consultants on designing a "Youth 2000"-type planning document for communities. I was concerned with the "corporate" look and read of the document and argued that a community planning guide should be accessible to all members of the community. "We strengthened the section on broadening the table," reported one of the consultants. Yes, I replied, but the design left the option to broaden the table in the hands of traditional community leaders. What would happen if you wrote the planning guide for middle school students and encouraged them to broaden the table? The pause suggested that we have a way to go in creating space. The response suggested we could get there. The middle grade guide is now on the drawing board, to be done with young people.

Karen Pittman is senior vice president of the International Youth Foundation in Baltimore, Md.

Bricks and Mortar Build Civic Infrastructure

by Michael Loftin

APPROPRIATELY, A LOT OF ATTENTION recently has been paid to the importance of civic leadership in making our towns and neighborhoods better places to live. The involvement of citizens in public life is essential, the argument goes, to improving community life. If you pursue this line of thought, you may conclude (and some have) that many community revitalization efforts have ignored the importance of "civic infrastructure" by focusing too exclusively on simply improving the physical and economic infrastructure of communities—new or rehabilitated housing, new and better jobs, improved educational facilities, street improvement, parks, etc.



Such reasoning creates a false dichotomy between the importance of civic life and the need for economic and community development and, in fact, begs an important question. If healthy civic leadership is important to improving communities and providing economic opportunity, how are improved communities and economic opportunity important to the development of civic life?

To put the question more directly, why should the Pew Partnership for Civic Change have invested in a program whose main goal is to improve housing opportunities for a relatively small proportion of the residents of Santa Fe? What difference do 436 new modest-income homeowners make to the civic life of a town of 60,000?

It makes a huge difference where the lack of affordable housing is the biggest issue clamoring for civic action. In a town where more homes sell for over $400,000 than under $100,000 and where over 80 percent of its residents cannot afford a home priced at the median, the failure to address the crisis of affordable housing can contribute to civic strife. Much of the ethnic and class tension in Santa Fe has resulted from the inability of native Santa Feans to own a home in their hometown. Increasing home ownership opportunities reduces the tension between rich and poor, native and newcomer. Offering home repair assistance allows modest-income homeowners to keep the home they own, helping to maintain the economic and ethnic integration of Santa Fe's older neighborhoods.

The second difference Santa Fe's housing initiative has made is that the community has actually developed new civic leadership in the process of creating affordable housing. Not a few city and county officials have been elected because of their commitment to affordable housing. Nonprofit housing organizations are now key players in debates concerning future growth, zoning, and other planning issues.

Third, because more low-income families have been able to purchase a home, they have acquired the means most Americans utilize to accumulate some wealth. This ability to build assets is a crucial difference that separates the economically secure from the poor. It also increases the number of residents with an economic stake in Santa Fe's future.

Fourth, the stability that comes with decent housing contributes to stronger communities. Stable housing means people move less often and children change schools less often so neighbors have the chance to get to know one another

better. In Santa Fe, availability of decent, affordable housing means people can find a home nearer their job and can get to work despite bad weather. Less time commuting means more time spent with the family and children or with the neighbors or as a volunteer at school.

Last, stable housing can help people feel special. The concept of home has a special place in America's identity. It is part of the American Dream, it is our safe haven, and it is thought of as "where the heart is." Having this place of safety and security makes it easier to take risks in public life. Perhaps this sentiment is best captured in the saying, "When you walk into your own home, you're standing on your own two feet."

Forthcoming in 1998 from the Pew Partnership

The Civic and Economic Impact of Home Ownership,
prepared by Michael Schubert,
Community Development Strategies.

Michael Loftin is executive director of Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) of Santa Fe. NHS is a not-for-profit partnership dedicated to providing affordable housing to modest-income families. It channels both private and public money into low-interest loans to help families buy new homes or repair existing ones. Since 1992, every dollar it has loaned has leveraged more than $28 in private investment.

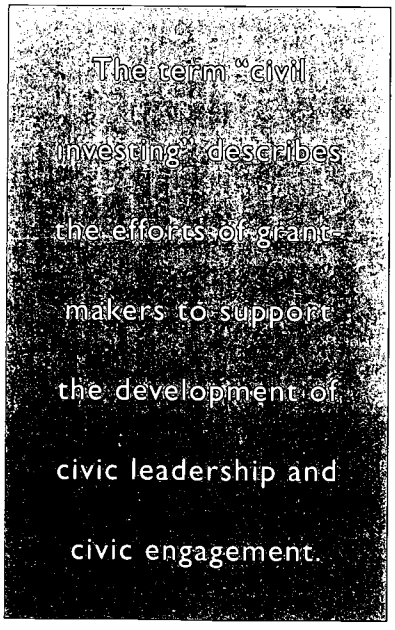
Foundations Develop Social Capital

by Kathryn E. Merchant

WHAT IS "CIVIL INVESTING"? Is it a new activity or simply a new term? What is the responsibility of foundations to invest in civic renewal? These questions have inspired much recent debate in the field of philanthropy.

The term "civil investing" describes the efforts of grantmakers to support the development of civic leadership and civic engagement. During the last twenty-five years, there has been an explosion in the number of nonprofit organizations dedicated to increasing the opportunities for citizen participation in civic life. Many received start-up grants from foundations.

Foundations have traditionally supported the major educational, cultural, health, and human service institutions that make up civil society. However, they are beginning to experiment with new approaches to civic renewal by funding ad hoc or informal groups that fall outside of formal legislative processes and programs. In this emerging community-building paradigm, people are viewed as assets rather than problems, and results are measured by increases in capacity for collective action rather than program outcomes.



In simplest terms, the main goals of civil investing are to strengthen social capital and/or to promote deliberative democratic participation. The phrase "social capital" is used increasingly to describe the networks, norms, and trusting relationships necessary to facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. (For example, a mature community development corporation hires a neighborhood organizer to reestablish its civic relationships with neighborhood residents and to help resident groups work collectively to improve community safety.) The term "deliberative democratic participation" describes a process of redefining and restructuring the participation of individual citizens, civic organizations, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and local governments in decision-making processes. Institutions reinvent themselves to foster collaborative approaches to problem solving. (For example, a partnership is formed among community groups, educational institutions, businesses, and local government agencies to devise a comprehensive economic development plan for a specific neighborhood, including a strategy to change the way institutions assist welfare recipients to make the transition to full-time employment.)

The complexity and urgency of today's economic, social, and political realities will continue to inspire civic innovation. In the foreseeable future, we can all expect to be challenged by fewer public-sector dollars available to deal with critical societal issues and continued devolution of local responsibility for solving problems. Civic-minded foundations can help translate the hope for civic innovation into civic action by developing new grantmaking and leadership tools and strategies designed to bring people and institutions together across sector lines.

Considered in this light, is "civil investing" a new activity or a new term? There appears to be substantial agreement within the field that, at this point in time, few foundations practice civil

investing. For most foundations, civil investing is (or could be) a new activity.

Five Strategies to Develop Social Capital

As stewards of public trust, our country's foundations have a special responsibility to cultivate civic leadership. There are five major strategies philanthropies can and do employ to develop social capital and promote deliberative democratic participation:

1. *Grantmaking.* Many foundations typically dedicate most of their unrestricted and field-of-interest funds to "responsive grantmaking." This is an open and flexible process intended to invite and encourage civic innovation. Foundations can enhance the quality of their civil investing by underscoring the importance of civic participation in grant guidelines and by giving priority to projects that promote civic leadership.

2. *Community foundations and the promotion of philanthropy.* Community foundations have a unique role to play in the promotion of philanthropy and civil investing. The core mission of a community foundation is to build a permanent endowment that will generate income to address a community's current and future needs. The endowment is a collection of funds established by individuals who exemplify the spirit of civil investing. Anyone can be a philanthropist—not just a wealthy person—and community foundations are getting better at creatively encouraging broad-based civil investing.

3. *Strategic initiatives.* A relatively new trend among primarily larger foundations is multiyear initiatives targeted to a particular issue, place, or special-needs group. Typically, a foundation designs a grantmaking strategy based on a thorough analysis of community needs and

opportunities and then issues a request for proposals or recruits participants based on specific criteria. Most strategic initiatives also include "technical assistance" to introduce grantees to new ideas and skills.

Their standing makes foundations ideal candidates to convene diverse groups of people and organizations.

4. *Convening.* Foundations are often perceived to be "neutral" institutions in that they are neither politically derived nor motivated; it is central to their missions to be fair and equitable in their consideration and treatment of a broad range of issues. Their standing makes foundations ideal candidates to convene diverse groups of people and organizations from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors and to lead them through a collaborative process to develop creative solutions to complex problems.

5. *Public policy.* Foundations often work to address the public policy aspects of critical issues that affect the well-being of communities. Often, leadership in the public arena flows from and relates to a foundation's strategic initiatives and convening roles.

Kathryn E. Merchant is president and CEO of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

Civil investing is a new way for funders to look at society, or more specifically communities, which helps them to see things they would not with other approaches:

They notice connective structure, such as ad hoc or informal groups below the official realm;

They are aware of processes other than legislative or programmatic;

They see people as citizens solving problems rather than clients, a general audience, or interest groups; and

Instead of looking for immediate outcomes, they look at the capacity of a community to act together.

David Mathews
President and CEO, Kettering Foundation

An Excerpt: The Substance of Things Hoped For: A Memoir of African-American Faith

by Samuel DeWitt Proctor

AMERICA HAS NO STATE RELIGION, no single political party, no royal family, and no single ethnic root. That puts us in an excellent position, at just two hundred years old, to create a new model of community. As citizens of the United States, we carry her passport and her Social Security card, but such contracts do not create a meaningful, viable relationship among ourselves. However, if we recognize and celebrate the majestic principles on which this nation was founded, and in doing so discover our unity in nurturing the ideals of democracy, we can set an example for the world. Other nations bond around their culture, religion, or royal family, but we are bonded by ideals of equality and justice, which are the zenith of human aspiration.

We can capture this rare moment of change through strong leadership from churches and synagogues, from universities, and voluntary associations, and from the inspired vision of our intellectual and spiritual leaders.

We could all simply wait to see how we make out, swallowed up by those who match greed against need. We can wait to see where a culture that pivots on hedonism, prurient entertainment, and brutal industries leads us. We can hold on and continue to indulge in politics that are polarized by Darwinian ethics versus human compassion and fairness. But we can do much better by deliberately embracing the new human paradigm.

For the first time in this century we are free to revise our national agenda without worrying about a contending military superpower. We can capture this rare moment of change through strong leadership from churches and synagogues, from universities, and voluntary associations, and from the inspired vision of our intellectual and spiritual leaders. They can point the way toward true fulfillment, the completion of the sublime intentions of the founders of this noble experiment. We needn't wait for some wild development to lead us there. By our own intentionality we can be bold in its pursuit, as when Alexander brought Occident and Orient fact to face, and the thirteen colonies said "no" to George III.

The important thing is that we hold on to this rock of faith. By faith we know we can accomplish our goals with integrity. We will help America to redefine herself. This nation began with the ignominious dispossession and near obliteration of Native Americans. It compounded its shame with the disgrace of slavery. Yet this same nation is the world's last and best hope of a free and democratic society.

Where we are today demands that we make choices that are worth living and dying for, choices deserving of our best efforts, those that have the best chance of steering us toward the optimum human condition, a genuine community.

The mission of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change is to build stronger communities. We work with local and national partners to

- *design and implement new solutions to tough problems;*
- *catalyze local civic leadership for action; and*
- *research and disseminate cutting-edge urban strategies.*

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