

COMMON WORK

Education and Democracy

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Common Work

- A parable about Jane Addams
- Democracy as a social ethic and the role of education in preparing our students for our democracy
- A new vision of the inextricable link between liberal arts and citizenship

What is a vocation?

- Helping our students (and our institutions) discern their vocations
- A call – are you listening carefully?
- “The circles of responsibility” – Bonhoeffer’s concentric ripples
- “The link between the world’s deepest need and your deepest gladness” – Buechner’s poetic description of a calling

What is citizenship?

- A reflective perspective – informed, education, in dialogue with ideas
- A set of skills – to engage, organize, serve, reflect...
- A way of seeing the world – as civic friend (Aristotle)
- A way of life – navigating the “intersection of conspiracies” (John Courtney Murray)

The vocation of citizenship

- The call to live in public, mutual interests and concerns
- The call to pursue the good in common
- The call to engage the body politic
- The call to believe in commonwealth
- The call to be a fellow traveler on a “mixed and thronged road”

Jane Addams and Her Call

- Who was this woman?
- Born 1860, in Cedarville, Illinois
- Died 1935, in Chicago, Illinois
- During her 75 years, she changed the world:
 - Hull-House, part of settlement house movement
 - Nobel Peace Prize in 1931

Biography of a Citizen: The Vocation of Jane

- Why is this important?
- It is not about nostalgia, remaking some long-lost time
- It is about the formation of a person to be a citizen, principles that abide
- It is about you and your students, your autobiographies – why you are here!

Growing up

- Formation starts with childhood
- This is how the “eyes of a child” are linked with your heart, maybe your gut, even your soul
- Jane Addams was raised by a good father and stepmother, formed to “see” injustice in the world, to care, and to do something

Heroes and heroines

- Who do you aspire to be and be like?
- Seems to be a difficult question these days – college students have a hard time naming their heroes/heroines...
- Jane Addams had a hero – Abraham Lincoln

Being educated

- Formed to be reflective and thoughtful
- Adlai Stevenson put it well – “we’re not in the majority”
- Jane Addams took education very seriously – saw it as an opportunity to be expansive, to learn to imagine
- Education at the heart of democracy

Exploring the world

- The world is ours to explore
- More relevant than ever – think about our experience after 9-11 – how much do you know about Islam, about the Middle East, about the politics and culture of our fellow citizens of the world?
- Jane Addams and Toynbee Hall

Making a life

- You can create your own list of the ways you are formed
- My point is that if citizenship is a calling, then the sorts of people we are (as individuals and as a society) is directly linked to the well being of our democracy
- Jane Addams made a life and she made a difference

Democracy as a road we travel together

- Together on the “mixed and thronged road”, Addams believed we carved out our democracy together, understanding each other’s burdens
- It is not a neutral position – it is a social ethic, a way of living as a citizen

Democracy as mutual interests and concerns

- Addams had a remarkable regard for the interests and concerns we share as citizens of a democracy
- She believed in and lived out a lifelong commitment to helping others understand mutual interests and concerns – and thus the call to citizenship
- Democracy as common work!

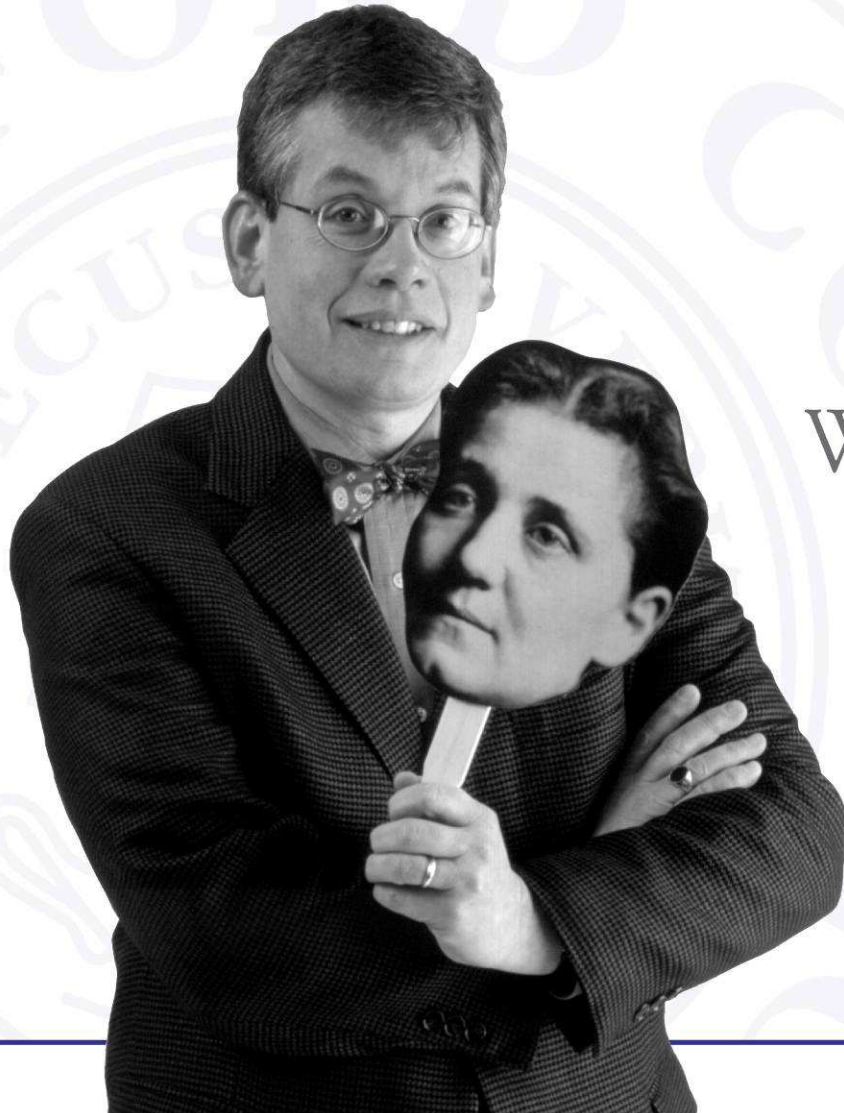
The liberal arts and the call to citizenship

- Love and learn as amateurs – open to what we might receive from others
- Love and learn as strangers – recognizing that our companions will not always be friends in our contemporary (and limited) sense
- Love and learn as chastened patriots – love your country, but know that a critical eye will make it better

My issue

- I valued the opportunity to consider my own vocation related to the mission and saga of Rockford College...
- I also focused my attention on ways a non-sectarian institution could help make connections between the vocation of members of the college community and the college's unfolding narrative

Some people think we're crazy.



No wonder.
We think we *can*
change the world.

You don't have to look like Jane to act like Jane...



- Overcome the stereotypes of Jane Addams
- Build a diverse and passionate community of activists
- Integrate Addams' message and legacy into athletics, arts, co-curricular and curricular programs

Think. Act. Give a damn.

- The essence of a 21st century liberal arts education
- Thinking and acting always go together - and they forge passion
- See it in the practical education focus, in service learning programs, in efforts to build a more engaged community



The world isn't fair. We're trying to change that.



- Our abiding work - not ideological, but a shared commitment to a better, more just, more humane world
- Community partnerships locally, but also a growing commitment to global engagement (Toynbee Hall, Kobe College)
- The Kobe-Regents Center for Global Education

Think dangerously!



- FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover once called Jane Addams “the most dangerous woman in America” because of her ideas
- Where the liberal arts meet real life - in the professions, in citizenship - there is a spark of danger
- Education and ideas are dangerous!

Educating citizens

- Civic literacy
- Civic engagement
- Civic prosperity

Civic literacy

- Source texts – political and cultural documents that define who we are
- A common (though not always comfortable) history – it cannot be unlived, but need not be lived again (Angelou)

Civic engagement

- The skills and arts of democracy – engaging each other in our common work
- It is about trust, integrity, and accountability – making value-based decisions and taking responsibility for both what goes well and what does not

Civic prosperity

- The authentic and mature work of citizenship
- The work of abundance and collaboration and partnership – banding together to do something more than we could do alone

A case study in civic learning

- An asset mapping approach to linking education and democracy – college and community
- Seeking organic reasons for why we create partnerships and connections
- Civic literacy, engagement, prosperity...

What is the Asset Based Community Mapping Project?

- An eight month project seeking to identify and engage the assets at Rockford College in building a more dynamic campus community and linking the campus to the wider community in meaningful ways.

Community Problem Solving Models

- Needs Based Model:

- Deals with:

- Problems
 - Pathologies
 - Needs

- Community Asset Based Model:

- Makes Use of:

- Skills
 - Talents
 - Resources

The Rockford College Mapping Project is a Community Assets Based Model

- Focus on the whole community;
- Seeks to identify opportunities for community growth and investment;
- Most of the resources we need are available at Rockford College.

Community Assets:

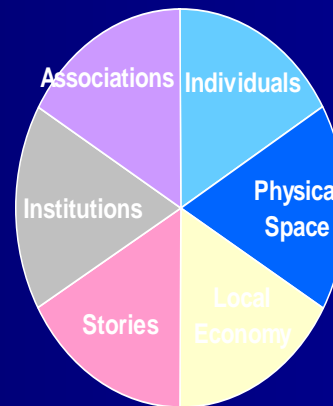
Associations

- Animal Care Groups
- Anti Crime Groups
- Block Clubs
- Business Organizations
- Charitable Groups
- Civic Events Groups
- Cultural Groups
- Disability/Special Needs Groups
- Education Groups
- Elderly Groups
- Environmental Groups
- Family Support Groups
- Health Advocacy and Fitness Groups
- Heritage Groups
- Hobby and Collectors Groups
- Men's and/or Women's Groups
- Mentoring Groups
- Mutual Support Groups
- Neighborhood Improvement Groups
- Political Organizations
- Recreation Groups
- Religious Groups
- Service Clubs
- Social Groups
- Union Groups
- Veteran's Groups
- Youth Groups

Individuals

- Gifts, Skills, Capacities, Knowledge and Traits of:
- Youth
- Older Adults
- Artists
- Welfare Recipients
- People with Disabilities
- Students
- Parents
- Entrepreneurs
- Activists
- Veterans
- Ex-offenders

My Community



Institutions

- Schools
- Universities
- Community Colleges
- Police Departments
- Hospitals
- Libraries
- Social Service Agencies
- Non profits
- Museums
- Fire Departments
- Media
- Foundations

Stories

- Of background & personal history
- Of what you like to do and contribute
- Of realizing and engaging skills and capacities
- Of successful community development
- Of economic growth
- Of addressing racism
- Of including those who are marginalized
- Of recognizing the value of everyone
- Of a time when you or your group felt appreciated and valued
- Of a time when the community was at its best

Physical Space

- Gardens
- Parks
- Playgrounds
- Parking lots
- Bike Paths
- Walking Paths
- Forest / Forest Preserves
- Picnic areas
- Campsites
- Fishing spots
- Duck ponds
- Zoos
- Wildlife center
- Natural Habitats - coastal, marine, amphibian
- Bird Watching Sites
- Star Gazing Sites
- Housing
- Vacant Land & Buildings
- Transit stops and facilities
- Streets

Local Economy

- For-Profit
- Businesses
- Consumer Expenditures
- Merchants
- Chamber of Commerce
- Business Associations
- Banks
- Credit Unions
- Foundations
- Institutional - purchasing power and personnel
- Barter and Exchange
- CDCs
- Corporations & branches

Community Connections:

Much of the work identifying community connections will begin during the community connections portion of this project.

There are four steps to identifying community :

- Briefing;
- Identifying community connections and resources;
- Building partnerships;
- Creating a master community connections list.

YOU ARE A
COMMUNITY
CONNECTOR



What is a Community Connector?

- ✓ A Community Connector is part of the glue that holds a community together.
- ✓ A Community Connector helps move a community forward.
- ✓ A Community Connector reaches out to everyone in the community to build a better place to live, study and work.

What are the Community Connectors' Tasks?

- Create connections by approaching and introducing yourself to a fellow student/faculty/staff member based on your assigned group
- Interview roughly 8 to 10 Rockford College students/faculty/staff members

Community Connectors, cont'd.

- Meet an interviewee outside one of the campus buildings, walk and interview together
- Be sure to draw the walking route you take with your



Objectives of the mapping project

- To map assets and commitments that are both personal and common
- To follow those assets and commitments into the wider community, creating connections that enhance our common work
- To build abiding relationships grounded in common purpose
- To link personal vocations and institutional mission/saga

Implications for our work

- Enrollment management – gathering a student body with gifts that are well-used
- Community-building – Rockford College as an employer of choice
- Alumni affairs and philanthropy – recognizing life-long commitments and service
- Educating students – modeling a perspective of abundance in the nexus of learning and engagement

Implications for town/gown relations

- Our work is common and shared – not two separate spheres of activity
- The boundaries of our campus are more and more fluid
- Community assets create abundance
- Students are prepared (while in school) for lives in cities and neighborhoods

Citizenship as vocation

- Leave you with two simple thoughts:
- Citizenship as vocation is aspirational – must be full of hope (despite the evidence)
- Citizenship as vocation is inspirational – like Jane Addams, you and your institution can change the world!

Common work

- Democracy as social ethic
- Higher education as normative – teaching values
- Linking education and democracy!

Please join me in conversation

- *Notes for the Reflective Practitioner*, musings, references, ideas, practices
- An e-mail newsletter published every two months
- Helping to form a community of reflective practitioners
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