THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

TEACHING AMERICA:
THE CASE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

Washington, D.C.
Monday, January 9, 2012

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Opening Remarks:

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Keynote:

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Discussants:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. GALSTON: (in progress) which brings together some of the national leaders in the area of civic education, which happens to be a great and continuing passion of mine as well. So, it's with personal pleasure as well as professional pride that I'm happy that Brookings is able to host this session.

Let me tell you a little something about the governing ideas, series, before I turn to the matter at hand. Washington is awash in politics, and every once in a while we actually have a serious policy conversation. But it occurred to us in governance studies some years ago that the political conversations and policy debates always occur within a much broader framework, a framework of institutions, of political history, of constitutional history, and of course of culture and values and religion. So, from time to time on an irregular basis each year for some years now we've convened sessions like this that attempt to get a little bit beneath the surface of the daily debate and to probe the broader issues that do exercise a subterranean influence on the political debate whether we realize it or not. And the topic of civic education fits squarely into that tradition.

George Bernard Shaw once said something to the effect that democracy is the only form of government that ensures that we shall be governed no better than we deserve. And he left open the possibility that in a democracy we could be governed even worse than we deserve, which is what many Americans think about our current situation.

But in a democracy, if you want to see where the problem lies, usually the right place to begin is by looking in the mirror, because the government that we get is an imperfect but nonetheless very real reflection of the citizenry as a whole, not only what it wants and what it believes but also what it knows. And there is a strand of argument that goes back to well before the beginning of the American republic to the effect that the ultimate guarantor of constitutional democracy, of individual rights, and the decent,

sustainable society is in not just the hearts of the citizens but also the minds of the citizens, what we know about our country and its governing institutions. That of course is where civic education comes in.

There are three different dimensions of civic education that strike me as being particularly timely. The first is the dimension of knowledge. This is the classic dimension of civic education. And I note, with interest, listening to stump speeches in New Hampshire over the weekend, that, for example, Congress Ron Paul goes around the state and the country and the world, if somebody would pay his ticket, you know, saying that if it's not in Article I, Section 8, then there's a pretty good reason why Congress shouldn't do it. Well, that sort of challenges all of us, doesn't it? What is in Article I, Section 8 anyway? And even, you know, just as much to the point, what is the tradition of interpretation of Article I, Section 8, and such that there is a path -- if there is a path -- from what the founders had in mind and the words that they wrote down to the current practices of the U.S. Government and its scope and activities?

A second important dimension of course is participation. And there is a long, long tradition of scholarly inquiry that probes the relationship between civic education on the one hand and the quantity and quality of political participation on the other.

As you know, the rate of participation in the United States is substantially below that of many other constitutional democracies around the world, so much so that I made myself a little bit notorious a few weeks ago by publishing an article advocating that the United States imitate Australia and about 30 other member nations of the OECD and institute some form of mandatory voting. I was denounced as un-American, you know? And to some extent, I guess that's a fair charge, but, you know, I would argue that America might be more deeply American if every citizen except ones with very good

excuses had some participatory skin in the game.

The third dimension that's worthy of note, it seems to me, particularly in our current circumstance, is the tone and temper of our civic life. I don't need to tell any of you that partisan polarization is at the highest level it has been in more than a century, and that is one important reason why trust and confidence in the American government on the part of the citizens is at its lowest point ever mentioned. There is a relationship between those two things.

Can civic education contribute to an improvement in the tone and temper of our civic life? That is a question. It is not an assertion. But it's a very timely question in current circumstances.

Now, I'm really pleased that to illuminate all of these questions and many others besides, we have an all-star cast. I am going to introduce the editor of this splendid volume, *Teaching America: The Case for Civic Education*, David Feith, in just a minute. And following his framing remarks, we will then yield the podium to John Bridgeland, who will deliver what we're grandly calling a keynote address, after which you will hear remarks from three other contributors to the volume. I will moderate some crosstalk, and then we will turn the proceedings over to you and we'll have a frank and free exchange of views on all manner of items related to civic education.

But, in conclusion, let me do my duty now, and introduce both David and John. David Feith, to my immediate right, the editor of *Teaching America*, is an assistant editorial features editor at the *Wall Street Journal* and also chairman of the Civic Education Initiative, which he founded while a student at Columbia University. And I can attest to that, because I began getting e-mails from young Mr. Feith I think the day after the organization was founded, or pretty nearly, and so this event represents the culmination, you know of a long e-mail friendship, to say nothing of other relationships.

After David frames our conversation, John Bridgeland will then take the podium, and John I think is very well known to most if not all of you in the civic business. He's the president and CEO of Civic Enterprises, a public policies center with a wide variety of civically oriented activities. He has a very long civic biography and a long record of bipartisan activity. It doesn't surprise me at all that he was recently appointed by President Obama to the White House Council for Community Solutions. I'll give him a promo. He's the author of a recently released book, *Heart of the Nation: 9/11 in America's Civic Spirit.* And many of you first met John Bridgeland when he served as director of the White House Domestic Policy Council and then as assistant to the President of the U.S. and the first director of USA Freedom Corps.

So, without further ado, David, John, and then the panel. (Applause)

MR. FEITH: Thank you very much. Thanks for coming out, everyone, and thanks to Brookings, especially to Bill Galston and to Corinne Davis, for hosting us this morning.

The panelists this morning represent various backgrounds from the academy to the military to the government, the classroom, and elsewhere. They also represent several different generations, and I'd like to begin with a thought about my generation and its relationship to our subjects this morning of education and healthy citizenship.

In the 1960s, if you wanted to spot young American idealists, you might have looked to a Peace Corps mission in Ghana or a voter registration drive in Mississippi. To find that idealist today, in my generation you'd be well advised to check out a classroom in Harlem or New Orleans. From college campuses overflowing with Teach for America applications and applicants and recruiters to Facebook icon Mark Zuckerberg's hundred million dollar gift to New Jersey public schools, education reform

seems to be the leading social cause of my generation. But for all of the justified excitement over this, including some major achievements in some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country, the education reform movement suffers from at least one major failing, and that's that it largely ignores the need to prepare young Americans for informed citizenship.

The U.S. today, as Dr. Galston began explaining, has a civic literacy deficit that represents a slow boil threat to our democracy, and yet we've dedicated too little creativity, manpower, scholarship, and policy expertise to remedying it.

My interest in the subject, in civic health, derives from family history. My paternal grandfather, born Jewish in Poland in 1914, lost his parents, aunts, uncles, and seven siblings in the Holocaust, only surviving by escaping to Britain and working as a coal stoker and eventually as an engineer in the British and then American Merchant Marine fleets. My mother, born in Khrushchev's Soviet Union and given a name that masked her Jewish heritage, was, by good fortune, allowed to emigrate in 1977 at the same time that thousands of other Soviet Jews were refused the right. This background helped me appreciate that American citizenship, which came to me as a birthright, is an unusual blessing that is rooted in certain political and social institutions that require understanding, perfecting, and protecting.

Yet, far more American teenagers today know the Three Stooges than the three branches of government. A quarter of teenagers can't identify Adolph Hitler.

According to the Department of Education, 75 percent of high school seniors are not proficient in civics; 90 percent aren't proficient in U.S. history; 6 in 10 of those high school seniors can't place the Civil War in its correct half century or identify basic symbols of the Civil Rights Movement. And the achievement gap separating the poor students from the rest is larger in civic education than in any other area, larger than

in math, larger than in English.

That kind of civic ignorance, that degree of civic ignorance is disenfranchising. It prevents citizens from understanding, let alone influencing, the political debates of our time. It also weakens our common culture and makes it easier -- again, as Dr. Galston eluded to -- it makes it easier for our political discourse to become uncivil, uninformed by the kind of historical perspective that should prevent Americans from routinely accusing their political opponents of being Nazis and Stalinists.

Hence, this book, *Teaching America*, sounds an alarm about civic literacy, about our civic literacy problem, and provides reform ideas for educators, policymakers, parents, philanthropists, and others nationwide. The book includes essays by our panelists and about 20 other leading thinkers from across the political spectrum: government officials like Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Senator Jon Kyl, former Senator Bob Graham, former Education Secretary Rod Paige, and former National Endowment for the Humanities chair, Bruce Cole, who I see is here with us today; also public intellectuals like Alan Dershowitz, Juan Williams, and Michael Kazin; educators like Mike Feinberg of the Kipp Schools; and policy experts like Andrew Rotherham and Frederick Hass.

The book also launched an organization, the Civic Education Initiative, which is housed at Democracy Prep Public Schools, the network run by our panelist, Seth Andrew. The initiative will establish several programs to improve civic education in schools and to build a national network of school leaders focused on cultivating informed citizenship. Our Only In America program, for example, will send into schools young speakers whose personal stories of immigration or entrepreneurial success or military achievement embody the kind of sentiments needed in a healthy society, sentiments of enfranchisement, empowerment, opportunity.

The initiative is also setting out Challenge 2026, a national challenge that by 2026 all high school graduates be able to pass the U.S. citizenship exam. That year is the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and it's one generation of children away.

Earning civic education its rightful place in the education reform movement and cultivating the kind of civic knowledge and civic feeling that we need will require a generational effort. It can be done, though. It's been done in the past repeatedly for over 200 years, and it can be done today. There are certainly new challenges today. Not only are the data grim, but it seems that we have to rely more than ever on schools, colleges, and universities since other institutions like labor unions or religious organizations, civic institutions have less cultural influence today than they might have in the past. But this is a challenge very much worth taking up in the fact that we must.

What we want to do today with the panelists is to drill deeply into the subject and into several of the solutions and reform efforts laid out by our very expert panelists in Teaching America. So, to start that off I'm happy to turn the mic over to John Bridgeland, especially so since I noticed on the calendar this morning that it was exactly three years ago today, when I was on winter break in my senior year of college, that Bridge became the first author to commit to writing an essay in my book. So, for his willingness to lead the pack, I'm particularly grateful. And thanks again to you all. (Applause)

MR. GALSTON: Well, before John Bridgeland, known to one and all as Bridge, proceeds to the podium, just a minute of reflection on David Feith.

I recently had the experience of signing up for Medicare, which is a real right of passage in a not-young man's life, and as I heard David talk I was reminded of

one of the famous lines in John F. Kennedy's inaugural address, "It torches from past to a new generation of Americans." And I must say that it does close to bring a tear to my eye that there is hope for our civic future coming from young men and women across the country who are willing to step forward with new ideas and fresh energy to move forward a mission that those of us who've grown old in its service have not succeeded in fulfilling.

And so congratulations on putting this volume together, on spearheading this event, and in committing a substantial portion of your life to an enterprise that never grows irrelevant, and never will as long as we're a democracy.

And with that, John Bridgeland. (Applause)

MR. BRIDGELAND: Good morning, Bill. Don't feel bad. I just got my AARP card in the mail, so I --

MR. GALSTON: The worst to come.

MR. BRIDGELAND: Yes, that's right.

Good morning. This feels more like a civic family reunion of sorts, and it's a wonderful to start a Monday morning, not only with these extraordinary panelists. When I had this terrifying experience of becoming director of domestic policy -- and you go into these jobs and no one actually teaches you anywhere how to actually do that job -- Bill Galston was the first person I called, because he had held it in the Clinton administration. But it's thrilling to see people with whom I worked in the administration, like Bruce Cole at National Endowment for Humanities and Les Frances, who now -- who was in the Carter administration leading this effort called the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools. And I see that my friend, David Smith from the National Conference on Citizenship, has even grown a beard for the occasion, trying to imitate Ulysses S. Grant.

I do want to give special thanks to David Feith. He called me three years

ago and said he had this wonderful idea to conceive, develop, and then help edit a wonderful book called *Teaching America: The Case for Civic Education*, and I really do hope it ends up in every schoolhouse and statehouse in America. It deserves to. It's a wonderful book. I've read every word. I enjoyed the other chapters far more than my own, and just -- particularly Peter Levine's letter to President Obama has all these concrete ideas. And I just have to tell you that if at the end of this day we don't come out of here with new fresh energy from a new generation, as Bill said, to concrete ideas of how we can move these ideas and the agenda forward, I think we'll all be disappointed.

I want to highlight two civic guiding lights. You know, Bill and Peter led the National Commission on Civic Renewal more than a decade ago, wrote that groundbreaking report with Cindy Gibson called "The Civic Mission of Schools" with the Carnegie Corporation in New York, and also founded this wonderful organization called CIRCLE that does so much to educate all of us on how we're doing in terms of our civic stocks.

I also want to note that it's been a pleasure to work with Admiral Mike Ratliff. It's always a privilege to work with admirals, and Seth Andrew -- his Democracy Prep Public Schools -- who has such a good branding with his hat.

I've been asked to do three things this morning -- first, to share my own thoughts and what's at stake to make civic learning more of a national priority; second, there were counts of my experiences in trying to create a stronger civic nation from my perch at the White House after 9/11; and to offer concrete ideas for the way forward.

But I wanted to begin -- as a junior in high school I had this charismatic American history teacher, John Nellis, and he asked me to be the lawyer for Dred Scott in the famous *Scott v. Sanford* case, 1857. As I researched the history, my heart instantly dropped. Here was a man who lost a case, apparently didn't even have standing to bring

the case before the Supreme Court, although I did learn a fancy term, *obiter dictum*, and I used to use it, my friends, oh, aside from off the record, not really part of jurisprudential history. But as I took my civic responsibility seriously and realized I had a man's freedom in my hands, I rose to the occasion, won the case, and remember just about everything about it. In the process I learned about the Constitution and the Declaration and what they mean to human beings, the interplay between Congress, the courts, and the Executive; the political bargain of the Missouri Compromise; the life and trials of Dred Scott moving between a life of slavery; marriage at a time when slaves weren't legally permitted to be married, if you can imagine that; and freedom across many states and the dangers of inept leaders. But more than anything, I had played a personal role. I had experienced it and saw how my role as a citizen and a lawyer, at least in my fantasy world, could use an extraordinary system to protect rights and help people. Chief Justice Taney and the Court got it wrong. I was able to make it right.

A year later, my government teacher, Jim Powers, asked us to take the first 10 Amendments of the Constitution and then find newspaper and magazine articles that breathe life into those 10 Amendments. We used those modern-day examples to debate the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution, and it taught me extraordinary things about how these wonderful documents were playing out today and the role that I could play in helping to advance public -- understanding the public service. They felt like problems in democracy courses rather than just history and government classes.

Thirty years later I had this experience. I walked into the John Glenn Institute for Public Service in Columbus Ohio. Anybody been there? This gentleman. Susan.

The first thing you see as you look through a little magnifying glass is John Glenn's civics teacher in high school. And he goes on to talk about how that

inspired his career in public service. I smiled.

I start with these stories, because I think one question for us is to figure out how do we make civic education personal or, what David Feith talks about so compellingly, to resist our temptation to just mandate from above and instead explore what the fancy entrepreneurs call demand creation -- create experiences in schools and communities that will inspire and awaken authentic interest in our history, core values, and ideas -- ingenious system -- and the individual's role in it.

I was taken, actually -- and David mentioned family history -- by a wonderful idea proposed by Lynne Cheney at our White House seminar on American History civics and summit where she said we should link the study of family history and genealogy to an understanding of our own history and civics education to literally see how civic life flows through our veins. So, I love this idea of thinking from the ground up.

David asked me to touch briefly on my view of what's at stake and one small attempt to make the case for what's at stake. Les Francis, Mike McCurry, Mike Gerson, and I reached across four different administrations to create a modern-day pamphlet in the spirit of radical Tom Payne called "Civic Common Sense," which is part of a larger report called "Guardian for Democracy," spearheaded by the Civic Mission of Schools, CIRCLE, and the National Conference on Citizenship.

We tried to create the basis for a revolution to embrace an idea, and I confess I don't see an Occupy movement around to get, but we're trying. The pamphlet begins, "It is the current crisis of America. The great civic exertions are required of a divided people. Our bonds are strained, our civility has worn thin, and our sense of common purpose is weakened just as the need for cooperation on large challenges grows great.

"We get on our high horses a bit and fight what's at stake, the challenges

of an historic, economic transformation from an industrial to a technological global economy. Declining social mobility at the levels below our European counterparts and the lack of access for millions to the American dream; an education system that for the first time in our history is lagging, not gaining an educational attainment; risking that this generation will not exceed the educational levels of their parents; and a crippling debt crisis, showing the promise of a sort of leadership by the Simpson-Bowles Commission; and a dramatic failure of a less than super committee to confront our moment of truth in how civic knowledge and skills are fundamental to addressing all of these challenges."

We go on to talk about the centrality of an educated citizenry to American democracy, highlighting the dangers of the inability of a public to check government power. We highlight how a lack of civic education results in undereducated citizens demanding nothing more than controversy and celebrity from the media in superficial dialogue from politicians. We showcase how a lack of civic knowledge leads to civic inequality, how citizens with lower incomes speak with a whisper that is lost on the ears of inattentive government officials while the advantaged war with a clarity and consistency with politicians readily here and routinely follow.

We talk about a wonderful nation of immigrants in search of liberty and a new life, and as Americans united not by a motherland, royal family, national religion or race but by fidelity to a nation that protects individual liberty, promotes a quality of opportunity, and permits the human spirit to flourish in building a more perfect union.

We end with the benefits of restoring the civic mission of our schools and country, noting that the founders were concerned that in building a country based on rights founded in a time in the struggles of the revolution that future generations would need to be constantly reminded of their duties. We try to make the case for what's at stake, and our ambition, as Les will tell you, for civic common sense was to have it

become widely read in schools, libraries, online, in Starbuck's coffee houses. I was in Starbuck's yesterday, and I can report that's not being widely read, so we're not quite there yet.

So, on a beautiful September day in 2001 I went from a comfortable West Wing office coordinating domestic policy on education faith-based initiatives and other issues to a bunker below the White House in an urgent visit to the Federal Emergency Management Agency to check on our coordinated domestic disaster response in three cities. The tragedy changed the national mood, and a patina of civility covered Washington. You can believe it. I Remember President Bush and Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle actually embracing on the House floor on national television. Those times seem distant.

The President summoned the nation in his 2002 State of the Union Address and in 42 subsequent presidential events to build on the gathering momentum of millions of acts of kindness and decency and asked every American to commit to serve at least two years over their lives in service to the country.

We ramped up AmeriCorps by 50 percent; created a new Citizen Corps and Medical Reserve Corps to mobilize trained professionals and volunteers in emergency response, which is today the largest volunteer service program supported by government in the country; grew Peace Corps to its highest levels in three decades and sent more volunteers to predominantly Muslim countries; created a new Volunteers for Prosperity to send skilled volunteers to work under an international problem, such as HIV AIDS in malarian Africa, and put in place, building on Bill Galston's inch from the National Commission on Civic Renewal in the Index of Civic Health, a volunteering survey that enables us to chart our progress over time.

It was in the face of a 30-year decline in civic participation in the United

States, and I will note -- notice how former aids like me always love to recite some of the successes of our efforts and defend the record -- there were failures, too, and plenty of them. But it was the record of the American people as volunteering not only soared after 9/11 but actually soared through the end of 2005. And then a divisive war and a lack of call to service at all levels eventually ended in reversals.

But, interestingly, at Ground Zero an author wrote, "A reversal soon occurred by which people began moving toward the disaster at the World Trade Center rather than away from it. The reaction was spontaneous and cut across the city's class lines as New Yorkers of all backgrounds tried to respond. Eventually there were so many donations so soon that the clutter became a problem, hindering the rescue effort, and a trucking operation was set up just to haul the excess away." So American isn't it? An excess of American compassion.

But we also learned from people like Bruce Cole and others the state of civic literacy was alarmingly low as we were trying to help more Americans see how their own stories in service were part of a larger American story.

President Obama would eloquently state the proposition later, "Through service I found a community that embraced me, citizenship that was meaningful. I discovered how my own improbable story fit into the larger story of America." That was how I felt and I'm sure many Americans might have felt after September 11th. But that convergence could hardly happen if people didn't even understand the basics of the American story, of American history.

So, we went to work to figure out what the White House and the federal government, given both the strengths and the limits, could best do to improve civic education and link civic learning to the longstanding tradition of community and national service that we were growing.

I first reached out and deliberated with key thinkers and advisors, such as David McCullough, whose books on American history were breaking through to citizens, populating airports, schools, and better seller lists; and Jim Billington, the Librarian of Congress who had just digitized 8 million original records from the Library of Congress and made them available through the initiative American Memory, just as Anthony Kennedy, who was so alarmed by the tenor of the dialogue in high school and college campuses, had started a program called Dialogue on Freedom with the American Bar Association to educate young Americans on core American principles and ideas through this Socratic method; Bill Galston and Peter Levine, who had just written this wonderful report, "The Civic Mission of Schools," which is really a playbook for what we could do in America in our nation's schools to ramp up civic learning; Senators Robert Byrd and Lamar Alexander, who wanted to work together to move legislation in the Congress; and Amy Cass, a University of Chicago professor, who would later write with her husband, Leon, a wonderful book called *What So Proudly We Hail*, and we hired her to run the American History and Civics Initiative.

But in the process, I met wonderful people who ran programs across the country that just gave you such hope, people like Chuck Quigley in his Center for Civic Education, which at the time was receiving significant funding support from the federal government; Vickie Hughes and her Bill of Rights Institute; Cathy Gorn on National History Day; Lee Hamilton in the Center on Congress; and Jim Basker at the Gilder Lehrman Institute on American History.

With Bruce Cole and a group of these thinkers and advisors and people of goodwill around the country, we concluded that the federal government had three comparative advantages regarding the promotion of civic literacy. First, it could collect national data in publicized reports on civic knowledge but drew revealing comparisons

across states, regions, and demographic groups. We could chart our progress over time.

Second, the government houses, through the Library of Congress, the National Archives, Smithsonian, National Park System, and elsewhere the original record of American History and wonderful resources that could be tapped for extraordinary educational use in the Internet age.

And, third, it had a bully pulpit, legislative reach, and significant funding to jump start and scale efforts that could in turn invigorate civic learning at the state and local levels.

So, on Constitution Day in September 2002, shortly after the first-year anniversary of 9/11, the President announced in the Rose Garden a series of new efforts to improve education in American history and civics and to link civic learning to service.

Thanks to Bruce Cole and the wonderful people at the National Endowment for the Humanities, “We the People” was announced to encourage the development of curriculum by funding scholars, teachers, filmmakers, librarians, curators, and others to conceive of creative means to explore American history and culture.

When we had asked David McCullough what would be the one thing that you would do -- he was the first person I called after 9/11 to ask him about this issue -- and he said I would establish summer seminars in institutes in places like Braintree, Massachusetts, and connect young teachers with the original places in the original record and inspire a love of history that they can in turn convey to their students using that original record. So, as part of Landmarks of American History, Bruce Cole created an effort to connect with seminars in institutes and seminars in presidential homes and libraries and museums, places where teachers and others could be educated in the original record breathing life into David McCullough’s idea.

The Education Department supported the Teaching American grant

program, which, God love him, Senator Robert Byrd forced into the No Child Left Behind legislation, and he mandated that every school in the country on Constitution Day read the Constitution, read the Declaration, and in his 92nd year comes into the National Conference on Citizenship, can barely walk, and stands up and talks so movingly for 45 minutes about the Constitution, which he carries in his pocket, that the entire place gave him a 20-minute standing ovation. God, we miss him.

Robert Byrd -- that program provides about a hundred million dollars a year in grants, and important connections were made between schools and the Smithsonian, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and the National Park Service and presidential libraries and museums.

Building on the work of Dr. Billington at the Library of Congress, the White House partnered with the National Archives to create this wonderful program called Our Documents. It's now become a best-selling book, the best selling book in Archives history. What it does is it provides teachers and students with copies of a hundred milestone documents from their archive, from the Lee Resolution to the Voting Rights Act, offering facsimile and online copies of the original documents, lesson plans for schools, workshops to train teachers on how to integrate these documents into their current lessons, and a competition that's actually popular, right? I mean, it's exciting. It's popular. Students all across the country compete to identify a hundred documents that have been most important and then describe why and have discussions in their classrooms about their relevance to today.

As Dr. Billington told me, students should not read the standard copy of the Declaration of Independence but the original with all of the notes of what got struck and what got inserted in so students can learn and discuss the original debate. Interesting that the Library just recently discovered that Jefferson inserted the word

"citizens" over the Old World "subjects."

We work with the Department of Education to make the National Assessment of Education Progress, which had previously reported on American history and civics every eight years -- can you believe that? -- every eight years we're going to know how we're doing as a country -- and shortened it down to four so we could take a civic checkup for students in 4th, 8th, and 12th grades.

No Child Left Behind turned out to be a blessing and curse for civic education. It required every state to provide students with a highly qualified teacher of core academic subjects, including civics, but in turn, because it was a narrow testing regime, crowded out civics from the curriculum. So in that way it was a disaster.

Overall, we gave civic education high priority after 9/11 and tried to be creative in using the comparative advantages of government in strengthening civic education and the civic mission of schools.

One of my favorite moments was actually to accept from Bill and Peter and Cindy Gibson and Vartan Gregorian the Civic Mission of Schools Report on behalf of the White House and then to make that a topic of our senior staff discussions. And Connie Rice was the most excited about it, and, interestingly to date, and though she was National Security Advisor, is spending most of her time on education in urban areas.

Notwithstanding these efforts, we wanted to see progress in civic education at a much faster pace. There was certainly no revolution.

So, finally, some thoughts on pass forward. My best example, something called Service Nation that Susan and many others in the room worked on together. Many of us were frustrated across many administrations that notwithstanding the fact that Washington -- Presidents, literally, since Washington have tried to awaken the national consciousness and get us to serve.

When we laid down the soldier, you know, we became citizens. Adam said our duty to serve our country ends but with our lives. Teddy Roosevelt and others -- Franklin Roosevelt -- used the park system and public lands to create Civilian Conversation Corps. But as Harris Wafford loves to say, as a country we've never taken the quantum leap in national community service. And so this effort was created called Service Nation. More than 200 organizations in the United States, including the AARP, which had kind of -- older Americans had been left out of the debate on service, and with this strong, active civic will and power got the two presidential candidates to agree to endorse the Serve America Act in what eventually became the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which represented the quantum leap in national community service in America. And believe me; even though that's our playbook, we're still working very hard to fulfill its promise.

So, I wonder what a civic nation quantum leap might look like. And here are eight things, very quickly, I would want. First, nearly every state constitution makes civic education a central priority. I would arm governors with the most compelling case for reviving civic education, including the economic case. Students who receive both traditional and interactive civic score highest on assessments and demonstrate high levels of 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, news comparisons, and work ethic.

High school dropouts, who cost the nation literally billions of dollars every year -- when we interviewed them, you know what they told us? It wasn't that they couldn't make it in school. It wasn't that they were academically, you know, unable to do it. They didn't see the relationship between what they wanted to be and what they were learning in school. And again and again and again, what they cited was experiential learning, and most of the time they were examples that had a strong connection to civic education. So, I think civic education plays a central role in stemming the dropout tide.

Second, I love the idea of demand creation, whether it's Justice O'Connor's *I Civics* or David Feith's *Band of Brothers*, a project with students deploying in civilian service when units of the armed services deploy. What a creative idea.

Third, building on David McCullough's idea, the notion of adjunct instructors to bolster instruction in civics and American history, including making online instruction in lectures from our finest scholars more widely available to students in high schools and colleges. When I recently went to Gettysburg, I had downloaded Dave McCullough's lecture on Little Roundtop, and so I'm sitting there listening to David McCullough talk about Joshua Chamberlain's textbook maneuver that saves the Union army and, arguably, the Union itself. And I put it in my kids' ears as well, and it was an uplifting transformative experience, and I think in the Internet age more of that could happen.

Fourth, I think we need to resurrect the problems of democracy course, which Peter tells me are largely gone except in places like Hawaii, and bring these courses into the modern age and use them as engaging classes to debate relevant public issues, enlist students to help solve public problems. Wonderful examples existed in Seth's organization or the Cesar Chavez Public Charter School for Public Policies.

Fifth, with the heavier-handed stuff, I think we need state assessments in civics and to smartly embed civics in the common core state standards, including state standard assessments in profession development friendly to the Problems of Democracy course.

I'm going to end with this, because I've been long. Sixth -- and this is my favorite thought -- to have the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia sponsor an annual constitutional convention for which students from low-income high schools all across the country could compete every year, to come together over the summer for a

two-week program that exposes them to engage in classes with the nation's top teachers and policymakers from both sides of the aisle; to engage them in debates around current events and then like the Rodel Fellows Program at the Aspen Institute does, brings people of different parties and political affiliations together, mentored by the James Bakers and George Mitchells of a prior generation, and to take on tough problems and then make their solutions part of the current record that gets sent to the Congress and the state houses in terms of solving those problems.

C-SPAN and other media should commit to broadcast the convention in schools across America. It might model their own conventions on this national invention.

Finally, I hope that we could have an annual action foreseen summit maybe perhaps here at the Brookings Institution with key partners like the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, CIRCLE, National Conference on Citizenship but also the National Governor's Association and the White House and policymakers and educators that would provide a platform for major announcements, national prizes, a report to the nation on the progress and challenge that remains in fulfilling the promise of becoming a civic nation. Let's join the community of quantum leapers.

So, I love to close with a favorite quote that Washington and Adams shared from Addison's *Cato*, "We cannot insure [*sic*] success," but with wonderful people like you who have such creative ideas and a bipartisan group of Americans working together in the template that Les put together in the campaign for the civic mission of schools called Guardians of Democracy, "we can't insure success, but we can deserve it."

Thank you. (Applause)

MR. GALSTON: Well, thank you very much, John Bridgeland, for that superb keynote address. And I cannot restrain myself from uttering a word or two about

John.

This is a pretty cynical city, you know, filled with people who have gone through the revolving door and have come out the other side to cash in, and John had a terrific record in the Bush '43 administration. But when he got out, he didn't hesitate, right? He created an organization, spread his arms wide, and became a big tent for a range of civic activities that are going to have enduring value, and he -- as he did in the administration -- he did it in a spirit of good cheer, constant bipartisanship, reaching out to the best that the country had to offer, regardless of party, regardless of ideology. And with a few more like John, we'd be having a different kind of conversation here in Washington. May your tribe increase.

And now, on to the panel. And David in his introductory remarks referred to the multigenerational aspect of this project, which is on full display in this panel, I'm happy to say. Let me just introduce them briefly in the order in which they will speak. To my immediate right, the man with the highly visible hat, Seth Andrew, who serves as superintendent of Democracy Prep Public Schools, which he founded in 2005, which is described as a network of no excuses schools in Harlem educating students in grades K-12 to become responsible citizen scholars prepared for success in the college of their choice and a life of active citizenship. And congratulations on founding this wonderful network.

To his right is Rear Admiral Michael Ratliff, who is president of the Jack Miller Center, which if I read correctly is very much focused on the next stage of education. That is, higher education and the civic mission of higher education. And before he went into the higher education biz, he served a distinguished 30-year naval career, retiring as director of naval intelligence, and those of you who know about such things will know what an important, indeed, irreplaceable organization naval intelligence

is. Indeed, he was the Navy's top intelligence officer and, for Mike Ratliff, military intelligence was not an oxymoron.

And finally, my friend and comrade in arms, Peter Levine, director of CIRCLE, which is an acronym for the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. It started at the University of Maryland, it's now located at Tufts University in the Jonathan Tisch College of Citizenship. Peter has been a one-man civic army for a very long time, and I will take the risk of correcting just one thing that John said in his speech. I wish I could take even a bit of credit for authoring the report, *The Civic Mission of Schools,* but all I did was say yes when Peter came to me and said, you know, this is something that's important, and I was happy to preside benignly as he and a wonderful team put it together and have taken it to the next stage in states and schools around the country.

So, without further ado, Seth, Admiral Ratliff, Peter Levine, and then it's on to you and your questions.

Seth?

MR. ANDREW: Well, thank you, John. Really remarkable, exciting to be inspired, even though the work that I do is inspiring every day with our kids it is exciting to come and think deep thoughts with a great group like this.

I think the last time I was in this room was actually about a decade ago with my now-wife. We were Truman scholars and we were talking about Social Security at the time and other interesting things, and I was trying to understand what Brookings was and they said it had the benefits of a university without the problem of students. (Laughter) And I have somehow chosen a career with the problems of students without the benefits of a university. (Laughter) And I don't know why I did that on some days, but on some days I wake up --

SPEAKER: It was the hat.

MR. ANDREW: It may have been. I can tell you more about the hat at some other time, but it has an origin in students, for sure.

The thing that strikes me both in that journey as I'm sitting here with this amazing panel is that as David said, the civil rights issue of our generation is really fixing our public schools, and radically so, because they are fundamentally, profoundly, disturbingly, dangerously broken. And especially in our urban communities, with our low-income students of color. It is a crisis with proportions that we cannot even begin to think about until you walk into some of these classrooms.

And so, one of the things that I'm reminded when I come in to great settings like this is that nothing matters, right? So, *The Civic Mission of Schools*, which is an amazing report, profound and deep, does not matter, does not do anything for a child in Harlem unless a teacher in a classroom decides to take it up and make it something real for that child to inspire them to a life of active citizenship.

And until we have that kind of traction, that kind of real power in classrooms the conversation is not going to have the impact we want on our students, on our communities, and eventually on our nation and our nation's future. And so, we have a long way to go.

We have major challenges, and part of what I hope -- just to sort of push folks on today -- is to think about how massive these challenges are, because we are just starting to figure out some of the solutions to these problems at the ground level with real kids and real classrooms. Just starting now, and the scary thing is how big the problem is.

So, Democracy Prep is a network of public charter schools. Right now we operate five schools in Harlem; we'll be opening two more next year. Next year we'll serve about

2,000 students. We're not going to be even 1 percent of New York City public schools if we double every year for the next 5 years.

And we are a fantastic group of schools for students. Our schools were ranked Number 1 last year in the city of New York. We have great results academically in English and math and all of the sort of No Child Left Behind metrics. The real question, though, is that what are we doing to prepare them long-term for success in college and citizenship? We don't quite know that we're on that -- we don't know the results yet because we're still new, but we know we're on the right path.

The scary part is how few kids are being impacted by programs like ours, and how many millions of Americans are not getting the kind of educational quality, let alone civic educational quality, and that students deserve and that our public schools should be providing, and fundamentally are not. And so, we have a long way to go and we have to make sure that we take the theory and move it into practice in a much faster basis. The cycle between idea and practice and the return on investment between the great ideas and the actual impact on kids has to be faster. We have to close that cycle and make it happen much more quickly, because another generation of kids can't go by or our democracy will not be the democracy that we grew up in, that we know it as at any of our generations. And that is what scares me and makes me do the work that I do every day, is that I see great hope in certain schools.

So, the public charter school sector -- just as a quick interlude -- the public charter schools are public schools. We're open by natural lottery enrollment. Last year, Democracy Prep had about 5,000 kids for 200 available spots, and then it's chosen randomly. And those students come to our school dramatically behind grade level, 90 percent behind grade level, and it's our first job to figure out how to teach them to read.

And so one of the things we learned early on, even though they're

starting in sixth grade with our middle schools is that, we can't start with civics. Even though that's my passion, it's what I believe in, it's why I do this work, we can't start with civics because our students can't read and we are just so miserably failing in the basics of education that to get to the higher order thinking, the critical thinking skills, the more challenging things, we have to figure out a totally different paradigm for how we're going to build our public schools.

And so one of the thing we did, and it's in the chapter in the book -- which I hope you'll all buy on the way out -- talks about this thing that Bridge talks about, which is demand creation. And we have, in civic education, often thought about civic ed as first you develop the knowledge, right? How does government work, what are the three branches, et cetera? Then you develop the skills. All right, so how would you change, you know, stuff if you wanted to change it? And then, the dispositions. The dispositions are sort of what all of us have by showing up here on a Monday morning, right? We had the disposition to give up two hours of our life to come and hear about and think about deep thoughts and actually get engaged and push on civic education.

And what is the problem in our schools very often is that we try to teach it only in that sequential order, and by doing that we actually fail our kids dramatically because they don't' have the demand to actually want more skills or more knowledge. And so what we've done at Democracy Prep is we've tried to flip that. We've said the first thing we have to do is demand creation. The first thing we have to do is focus on dispositions, not skills or knowledge.

And I had this terrible moment when I brought some of my scholars to visit Supreme Court Justice Kennedy in one of our first years, and it was one of the epiphanies for me. We went in and we had been doing this civic education curriculum, We the People, all year and I was excited, and we got to meet Justice Kennedy, and how

profound this was for me. The kids didn't particularly care, but it was really exciting for me. And you know, the second question the kid stands up and says, Congressman Kennedy, I want to know about how -- and I like sunk into my chair, just wanted to cry, and realized that like, he didn't care. He was a sixth grader who was asking an interesting question, but just didn't have the knowledge yet to really put it all together.

But what we had started to stoke was a disposition in our children and in our students to try to make them want to be able to change the world. To want to improve the community around them, to want to give back, to want to serve our nation in various ways. And that that disposition, if we actually successfully stoke that first, then skills and knowledge become a whole lot easier because it becomes intrinsic instead of extrinsic. Because it becomes our students who want the knowledge and want the skills instead of our teachers who are telling them you have to have these, right? These are important, and never quite make the connection about why, but they tell them they're important.

And what we need to make is students who want that civic knowledge and civic life ahead of them because they find it fulfilling and enriching and exciting and meaningful. And so, we do things like a get out the vote campaign every year. It's a non-partisan campaign on election today where our students are out on the streets of Harlem and they're handing out flyers in these bright yellow hats and shirts that say, "I Can't Vote," right? And on the back it says, "But You Can." And they handout flyers that say, today is election day, you must go to the polls, I can't do it today but I need you to go. And then it starts these great, very authentic conversations about what's going on in their community and how it's affecting them and what's going on in housing and asthma and other issues, and it starts to build in our kids a sense of the importance of the work that they can do, even as kids, and also how exciting it will be when they actually can do it themselves.

When they can actually vote and have the impact that they want to have down the road.

And so, what I'm hoping that we'll be able to do and see over the next few years is an expansion of some of the best practices learned in the public charter school movement. We are really the cutting edge. The charter sector was built as really laboratories for innovation, and the -- right now there's, I think, 7,000 public charter schools across the country serving about 2 million kids. So, it's a small part of the country as a whole but it's where a tremendous percentage of -- you know, I would probably say -- this is a made up number, but 90 percent of the innovation is happening in public charter schools, even though they're only 2 percent to 4 percent of the American population in terms of students. And the innovations that we're starting to see at Democracy Prep and other high-performing schools are getting results. And the question then is, how do we take that to the next level to leverage those innovations and those things that we've learned in individual schools like mine and individual classrooms like ours to impact millions more students so that they can, in fact, be the next generation of citizens who are changing the world around us and really impacting the next generation?

The last two things I'll say. The first is that one of the challenges we have right now is that we're in a vicious cycle. We are in a cycle where low-income families -- especially families of color -- aren't connected with our civic institutions, aren't connected with our democracy. Don't feel the power of what democracy could mean because it hasn't led to great benefits for them and for their families. And they haven't seen those benefits in a very tangible way, especially in an economic crisis, right? You don't see the benefits of being involved in democracy in America if on your day-to-day life is just this painful and as much of a struggle as it is for many of our students and families. And so, we have to make sure that we are changing that vicious cycle where they become more and more disengaged and more and more disconnected and actually

making it a virtuous cycle. Where because they're starting to see impacts by their engagement, by their civic connection, that they actually are seeing tangible small, incremental changes in their community and their lives, that that makes them want to actually become more and more involved and say, wow, we accomplished this. What if we tried this? Oh, that would be amazing. What if we tried this? And I think we're starting to see that with our scholars in Harlem now, but we still have a long way to go.

The last thought. I just was watching CNN this morning on my way over here, and there's a debate now between Rick Santorum and President Obama about whether college should be for all kids. And it's a silly debate on some level. Rick Santorum sort of said, like, no, we shouldn't make college for all kids, that's crazy, the hubris of this President to say all kids should have college. And of course, this is a college-educated man whose kids mostly went to college, who he wants, you know, that for himself but doesn't want it for most low-income kids of color.

And the crazy part, to me, the part that is so frustrating is that in our society we have come to expect and be comfortable with this idea that college isn't for all people. And one of the things that Democracy Prep tries to do is say that college is for every single child who walks in our door, every single child. Because that is the foundation that they need academically and intellectually that right now our public schools are not giving our kids. That we can actually have much more intellectual rigor, much more challenge in college that I would be willing to be almost all of us in this room received. But that we're saying to kids across the river in Anacostia, it's okay if you have college graduation rates of 9 percent, that that's okay, and that we're not taking up arms to say that this is absolutely unacceptable. We must change this; we must fight back really hard against these low expectations.

And so, the part of the charter sector that I work in is called No Excuses.

And because we basically say, there are no excuses. All of the challenges we know, all of the challenges we face, our kids will go to college and will be successful if we give them the tools that they need to be there, and that's what schools like Democracy Prep and others are doing.

The final word I'll say is that if you are interested in what this looks like on the ground, right, and not just at the Brookings Institution or in theory or on paper? Come visit a school like mine. And so if you're in Harlem, come visit in Harlem. If you're in D.C., go to Achievement Prep, go to some of these amazing public charter schools that are doing this work day-to-day with these kids to see what it looks like on the ground to start to educate citizens and to really teach America in profound ways. You'll see it can be done. The question is how do we just leverage it and replicate it so that more and more students can have these kinds of opportunities that right now are being denied the opportunity to go to college and have a life of active citizenship. And that is saying that I believe every American deserves that right and that opportunity to have, and I hope that you'll join us all in trying to push for it over the next generation.

Thank you. (Applause)

MR. GALSTON: Just a brief anecdote. You know, when I was in college I studied the classics. It was a long time ago, but there was a story from the classical Greek period. There was a great tradition of Greek oratory, of course, and there was a story to the effect that when many famous Greek orators spoke the citizens who listened said, how well they spoke. But when Demosthenes spoke, they said, let us march. And Seth, I think that you were in the spirit of democracy and of Demosthenes.

Admiral Ratliff.

ADMIRAL RATLIFF: Well, I would second that. It is -- we are past time for diagnosing the problem. I know everyone on this panel has already long-since

reached the conclusion that action is necessary. And what distinguishes this group, I think -- and I suspect most of the people in this room -- is that they're doers. Certainly, we still need to build the case; certainly we still need to articulate why it's so important. Sound the alarm, as David has put it. But we are at the point now where there are so many things that can be done, and I think it's in spiriting to learn more about them, what Bridge put in place while he was in the White House and what he's done since then, what Will has done and what Peter continues at Tufts University, and certainly what Seth is doing, and now what David has launched.

There are a lot of exciting things going forward, and at the Miller Center we are just delighted to be able to be a part of that on the college and university campuses, because we believe that's where a great deal of the work needs to be done. Not because we don't understand that it is the problems in democracy course in middle school or high school and the American history course in high school that should reach all of our students. Certainly, that's true. But if we're going to change that in a fundamental way long-term, honestly we need to be working on those people who are now on our college campuses, who are going to be the teachers in the next generation. We want to be offering those teachers who are out in the classrooms today opportunities for summer programs or continuing education taught by some of the most exciting, dynamic, and committed university faculty to help them do a better job today in their classrooms and shape that future cadre of teachers in American history and civics education classes across the country.

At the Miller Center, we decided that's the right approach. Why? Because there are a couple thousand colleges and universities, and frankly if you focus your resources on a relatively small number of them you can have outsized impact. You know, god knows we need to plant the seeds and we need to encourage the kinds of

things Seth is doing. My daughter and I owe Bridge, and have thanked him before, for what he did while he was in the White House. My daughter benefited immensely from the opportunities at AmeriCorps when she went to university here in D.C., and many of her friends have gone on from there to lives that clearly engage that commitment and are going to continue it forward. We need that.

But the way we're going to -- we believe, with our resources, the way we're going to be likely to have a greater impact is to help those college and university faculty who are passionate about this do a better job on their campuses on preparing, again, that next generation of citizens, that next generation of leaders, that next generation of people who are going to be teaching these courses.

Every day I find something new that gives me hope that there's so many good things happening on college and university campuses that this is starting to move forward and take root. Certainly what Senator Byrd started has moved forward and has had great impact.

Just yesterday, I had a chance to have lunch with a professor at Oklahoma University, where former Senator David Boren is now president and has done a lot of good things there over the last couple of years. He established an Institute for the American Constitutional Heritage, building on the kind of idea that Senator Byrd had, if you will. And being a man of the '60s, I guess to some degree he had a great idea. On February 27, they're going to shut the campus down and have a teach-in on the American constitutional heritage. They're bringing in Peter Onuf, Professor Wood from Brown University, people like David McCullough, and they're going to focus the students on the importance of this education and they're going to give them opportunities to learn. At the same time, he hopes that that will excite a lot of them to sign up for the kinds of new courses that are being taught by this institute, which he's established there in

Northern Oklahoma.

We work with faculty on about 179 campuses now, and on about 44 of them they've established programs not unlike what Peter is doing at Tufts University and it's exciting to see what they're doing. But it may be more exciting to see just how passionate they are about them.

I'm delighted when a faculty member comes to me and he says you know what keeps me up at night? I worry that somebody is graduating from my university without having a profound experience with Alexander Hamilton and Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln. And he's right. If a student has that kind of experience, if they're studying under a faculty member who is passionate about giving them that kind of opportunity, it will create the disposition, I believe, that will carry on in the lives of those students so that they'll understand how fundamentally important it is for them to learn more and to understand their duties of citizenship, and to be active, engaged, and thoughtful citizens.

Abraham Lincoln, you know, said famously that we all are not born of the blood of the people who came to the new world and established this country. We all are not able to trace our lineage back. Most of us are a little bit like the Feith family, we came from very, very different roots. And yet it is when they read the Declaration of Independence that all of those who have emigrated here to this country feel that they are of the very blood of the blood and the flesh of the flesh of those old men who had those ideas and who established this system. We need professors across the country who are committed to pursuing that and giving students that experience so that they know, they understand who we are as a people at that most fundamental level. We need that taught in the elementary schools, we need it taught at the middle schools, and at the high schools. But at its most profound level, it's going to be taught at the colleges and

universities. That's where the students ought to be able to dig in most deeply in the kinds of courses that we've been able to support.

Through our postdoctoral fellowship program -- this year on 26 campuses -- the kinds of courses that are being developed at the University of Virginia, the University of Texas, the Jefferson Center there, what Michael Zuckert is doing at Notre Dame University to establish a new school, he hopes, ultimately, a new school there for the study in teaching of the American constitutional tradition. We believe, over time we'll have outsized impact.

We're delighted to be able to work with these people, and we're excited every year that we keep finding more of them. When we started, we were advised that we might do this 1 year because you might find 25 university and college professors who felt this was central and important, and to which they would commit themselves. Now, 5 years later, we started a $50 million program. We'll be completing that project this year, and we have hundreds of faculty on a waiting list to come to our summer institutes. And god knows, I wish we had multiples of the resources that we have available to help the college professors who are out there right now wanting to move this forward so that they could do a better job.

It's very exciting to see, again, that we've moved so decisively from the point where we've got to build the case exclusively and diagnose the problem to where we really are at the time now where a great deal can be done, and we need to be doers. (Applause)

MR. GALSTON: Thank you, Admiral Ratliff. And never has the phrase "Thank you for your service" been more appropriate.

And finally, Peter Levine, who in a quiet way has become one of the real national leaders and someone who is insistently focused on what needs to be done here

and now.

Peter?

MR. LEVINE: Thanks, Bill. It's great to be here with old friends and new. I have to confess to you that I'm playing hooky a little bit because I'm supposed to be with a small group working on the NAEP, the National Assessment of Education Progress, and civics this morning.

I brought the document we're working on, and I was going to sort of wave it around but it says -- I just realized as it I'm sitting here. It says, "secure testing material," and apparently it's a felony for me to show it to you. (Laughter) So, we're all -- I don't know if it's a felony for you to see it, but I'm in big trouble.

But seriously I do come a little bit out of that perspective, at least at the moment, in that I've been working with the NAEP and last week on some projects related to the state standards. So, I'm sort of in the weeds on this kind of material, but I think it might be a useful perspective.

I guess the dominant kind of rhetoric or discourse around civic education, especially if you talk to people who don't know much about it but who are interested enough to want to have a discussion about it, is the following kind of argument. Kids don't know about American government, Constitution, basic principles of the American system. Therefore, we must not be teaching it or testing it in some rigorous way. And so, what it means to strengthen civics is to start teaching and requiring the teaching of and the testing of knowledge of American government. I don't wholly disagree with that, but I would like to challenge it a bit and render it a bit problematic.

First of all, as someone who has been deeply in the weeds on the NAEP, my view is that young Americans -- at least those who make it through to the last year of high school -- do know quite a bit and quite a bit more than the public thinks they know about

American government, civics, and the Constitution. I know that's a controversial claim. I don't want to take time to defend it because I'm not sure if anyone's interested.

I would note it's a little at odds with what my good friend David Feith said at the beginning, and that's because there's two sides to the debate. It's a genuine debate, but I think it's a helpful orienting one, because how you read the data about what young people know will drive your feelings about what should be done. And further, for what it's worth my read is that they actually know a fair amount.

In any case, they are studying it more than 90 percent -- I think it's 93 percent of high school seniors report at least a full semester of American government. American government is also in middle school, and it's also in the history curriculum, which is almost always required. Many of them are taking high-stakes tests precisely on questions about the American Constitution, system of government. Whether their scores are high enough is another question, but I will say this. We were able to -- thanks to a data set collected at a $1 million expense by the Knight foundation, we were able to look at whether testing and course requirements at the state level affected what kids know about very kind of core conventional questions, knowledge questions. We found absolutely no effect.

So this is another reason why even if you read the data a little bit differently than me, basically the glass is half full. And even if you think it's half empty, why I would suggest that the emphasis on requiring everyone to take tests and then -- to take courses and then take tests is barking up the wrong tree. I'm sure that was a terribly mixed metaphor. (Laughter) But the -- I can't even remember the beginning of the sentence to know whether I mixed the metaphor along the way. (Laughter) But the point is, most of them are, in fact, under those requirements. But whether they are or not doesn't seem to matter to whether they know the answer to these questions.

So, let me try a different starting place. I think -- and several people, David among others, said We the People -- we, American adults -- aren't doing something else, which is we aren't deliberating with people who are different from ourselves, with people who disagree with us, about common concerns and common issues and taking responsible, effective, informed, constructive, voluntary civic action. Deliberation and work -- deliberation and collaboration have seriously eroded over 30 years.

We used to actually -- so the need to teach that in public schools is greater because it's not actually being done in communities as much. And yet, the trend in public schools, unfortunately, is the reverse. Bridge mentioned the problems of democracy course. That was received by as many as 40-some percent of Americans in the mid-20th century, but it's virtually gone. I don't think it's -- I could be wrong, I could definitely be wrong. I don't think it's a state requirement anywhere except in Hawaii, where it was just re-institutionalized. It disappeared; here I get a little polemical, a little controversial. I think it disappeared in part because it didn't serve the function of getting people necessarily to know the answers to lots of political science questions. And in fact, we've driven the curriculum more towards copying college classes on political science, which are mainly about the structure and functions of government. And at various levels, that's actually become more and more robust, so that, for example, American Government AP has become quite a popular course.

So, what we need is actually the course that we cut because it wasn't serving the functions that people are most worried about. So, we need the problems -- and here, I end but I also end with endorsing and expanding a little on Bridge's final -- I think it was your penultimate suggestion. We need the problems course or something like it, and there are different flavors. That would require changing state course

requirements because it's not required and other things are.

We would also need to rethink standards because they are all about more and more elaborate factual information about the structure of government, and we would need standards that were in part about deliberation and about civic action. Then, we would need different assessments because we should be rigorously assessing this kind of skill, knowledge, and disposition, and it shouldn't make a difference whether you succeed and pass and there should be consequences, but you can't do it with a conventional standardized test for a whole bunch of reasons, which I can elaborate on if you want me to.

And finally, we would need to help teachers to learn to teach this kind of material. No disrespect to them, but they are growing up in a society in which other adults are not doing these things. They're not deliberating and they're not taking constructive, voluntary civic action. So, how could they possibly know how to teach it? So, we would have to take particular attention to teaching those skills to teachers, both before they go into the classroom and once they're there.

And so, this is both a modest sort of suggestion -- of course, problems of democracy -- and a very radical proposal requiring quite profound rethinking of testing standards, accountability, and professional development. So, that's what I would propose.

MR. GALSTON: Thank you. (Applause)

Thank you. Thank you, one and all. The theory of this morning was that there would be now a 20-minute moderated conversation among the panelists. The practice of this morning, you know, given the flow of events and the wonderful things that everybody has had to say, will be somewhat different.

I am going to confine myself to one question to the panel, and each

panelist will have, at most, one minute to answer this question. And then, we will have a half an hour, the half an hour that we planned originally, available for questions, comments, conversation involving everybody in the room. I want to preserve that.

So, my one and only question to the panel takes its point of departure where Peter left off. If you look at the civic problem that is dominant in the minds of Americans today, it is not first and foremost about civic knowledge. It is not first and foremost about civic skills and participation. It is about the capacity of leaders and citizens to deliberate, collaborate, and act across the lines that divide us as, you know, organized political parties and as citizens.

We have lost the habit, the disposition, and the ability to engage in that kind of civic discourse, and that first and foremost is why so many citizens have lost trust and confidence in their government. They look at what's happening, how their elected officials are behaving, and they see no hope for a common future emerging from this sort of divided and intentionally divisive discourse.

So, here's my question. One minute per panelist. What, if anything, can civic education as you understand it do to promote discourse? Not that ignores our differences, but enables us to discuss, to deliberate, to agree, and to act despite those differences?

David, I'm going to begin with you.

MR. FEITH: Well, it's -- the novice on the panel. I think it's an extremely interesting and tough question. I'll happily limit the answer to a minute.

I think that the first thing that I'm going to say is that there is a certain kind of challenge, I think, in discussing this subject. Which is, the inclination to point to it as -- either as the root of all problems or as the potential solution to all problems. And I think that as the book has come out and as I've been discussing the subject with various,

you know, people and audiences, questions will very frequently come up about, you know, what about Occupy Wall Street and civic education? Or the Tea Party? Those connections are very rich and important, and I think very much worth exploring. But I wonder whether there's a certain kind of importance to -- in a sense, to look to fundamentals that kind of transcend the immediate, you know, political interest of today or, you know, on the news.

And so, I think that doing what I know several of us spoke about, which is cultivating this -- you can call it kind of the demand side, or cultivating certain sentiments in young Americans, I think has the ability to help them look beyond or weather, or even change the kind of nasty environment we see in Washington and beyond today. I think that there is certainly a risk that if everyone on TV is engaged in certain political fights and saying, you know, this is the worst it's ever been, this is a rotten system, it's all these things, a lot of that discussion takes place among people who do have a certain base civic education and civic appreciation. And what they're saying is more of a gesture toward, you know, a political history that's known to them.

What's important, I think, is conveying to young Americans who maybe haven't yet gotten the point that while they see commentators and politicians describing the situation this way and it might have historical contrasts, it might be worse than it's been in the past or worse than it's been in certain eras it is, though, built on a foundation of a political system that is valuable, worth protecting, unique in the world with a unique history. And I think laying that foundation is an extremely important buffer to set because one does imagine it can be very disillusioning on young Americans in particular to see not only the scene that we see in politics today, but to see the commentary about that scene that says, boy, isn't it rotten, difficult, and we can't see the light at the end of the tunnel?

MR. BRIDGELAND: As Bill always does, I think he focuses like a laser

on our most fundamental civic crisis, which is the inability of our civic leaders -- and I don't mean just the politicians -- to take enormously complex problems and actually work across aisles and divides and ideologies and cultures and religions and races to get important things done for the country. So, I think the media culture is just fueling and educating the next generation that that's the case.

So, I think lifting up and embedding an education in our dispositions but also in teaching one another to listen to different sides, to listen to people with different ideologies and views, and creating common spaces in order to do that. And then also, holding up the great moments in history. You know, one of the reasons I love *Profiles in Courage* was because it -- these were people who stood up in extraordinary times and did things that sort of bucked their party or bucked the trend or bucked the ideology to do something that they felt was fundamentally right for the country. So, I think holding up those examples from history that show that we can overcome.

The two modern examples I see are when you really get behind the scenes, talk to somebody like Bruce Reed who was the executive director of the Simpson-Bowles Commission. And you saw what Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles did to tackle our debt crisis, and the arrows from all sides that they took. Extraordinary act of civic leadership.

And then you know, my friend Rob Portman is on the supercommittee. I had hope that the supercommittee would actually come together across the lines and do something, and that failure was so dramatic that I think we need to work so hard.

The best example I see today is the Rodel Fellows Program that Walter Isaacson and Mickey Edwards lead where they bring people of different parties together who don't agree on issues and they tackle Social Security, and then they go to hotspots around the world like China, the Middle East, and elsewhere and they get educated together on what

these common problems are and then they come up with a common plan of action to solve it.

MR. ANDREW: I'd say that if we think back to what made us interested in this question of civics and citizenship, it probably came back to a teacher. It probably didn't come back to a book, it probably didn't come back to a lecture, it probably didn't come back to a curricula, it certainly didn't come back to a test. It came back to a teacher.

And so as we think about what we need to do to fix this problem, it is to have more of these masterful teachers in our profession and in our schools, and we are at a tremendous deficit of great teachers right now. And those great teachers are the ones that through incredible skill and who are just able to stoke a dialogue and a conversation in a classroom -- be it a college classroom or a kindergarten classroom -- between students talking about their ideas and where they disagree and how they disagree and their own personal experiences and backgrounds. That is a masterful teacher who is able to create that dialogue, and we're missing masterful teachers in this country right now and we need far more masterful teachers to come into the profession.

There's a lot of things that need to go in to make that possible, but that to me is the way that we're going to get further along in the dialogue, is that if people start to demand masterful teaching instead of just sort of diatribes and prognostication, but actually to create real dialogue it's going to start in classrooms.

ADMIRAL RATLIFF: I second that. There's a kind of secret agenda for our program at the Miller Project, and that is we've brought now 500 university and college professors through our 2-week summer institutes. They come in for two weeks, they eat together, they don't really sleep together, but they don't get to go home at night. (Laughter) And they spend all day talking and engaging about the kinds of ideas that

excited them when they decided they wanted to be a professor.

And yet, by the time they've completed seven, eight, nine years of very narrow and increasingly narrowing doctoral work, they've forgotten all of those things and they instead just want to teach upper-level seminars in their particular little niche. And yet, it is the Shoudens who are going to encounter Madison and Tocqueville for the first time in their classroom in that freshman or sophomore survey course that needs them to be excited to get about those things.

The kind of little dirty secret about our project is, we really want to encourage classroom education as a primary focus for higher education, and that is often not always the thing that people are most excited about.

I was on a campus just last week where, to my horror, I discovered that the university facing the economic problems they're facing today has decided they can get by on year-to-year contracts for the people teaching American political thought and American history, especially at those survey levels. No use to waste a tenure track position on those things. Instead, let's just do it on year-to-year contracts and let people who are going to get those tenure track things do really important research and teaching at the upper levels. Classroom education needs to be respected, and we hope to get people excited about that.

And then, I just mention one thing. One of the things that just astonished me is how the experience of debating through the middle schools and high schools and colleges has atrophied. I think many of us probably learned much of what we needed to know about how you reach decisions and how you argue things out, discuss them, through debating. And sometimes, you had to argue the other point of view than the one that you actually believed in. That could be a very valuable lesson, I think, for a lot of the people in the country today, and it's a shame that we're not giving students the chance to

debate as we once did.

MR. LEVINE: As the geekiest person on a fairly geeky panel, I will just offer a research finding. Which is that we're part of a research team, in this case led by a colleague called Diana Hess. She's got a study of deliberation and discussion in classrooms. The thing that jumps out at me is there's always ideological diversity in all of her classrooms.

So, one example -- and it's only one example -- is that evangelical Christian private school in a suburb in an overwhelmingly white, middle-class suburb in the Midwest where all the kids have to say that Jesus Christ is their personal savior in order to be admitted to the school. And yet, when you look at their answers to a whole bunch of policy questions they're very different.

So, Diana's recommendation -- and the research supports it -- is you have to learn how to activate the disagreement that's in the classroom, even as our schools have become more segregated in many ways, ideologically as well as racially. You have to learn how to activate the disagreement and then resolve it in ways that are constructive.

MR. GALSTON: Okay, folks, your turn. There's a roving microphone. As you're recognized, if you would state your name and institutional affiliation if you have one or wish to mention it, and either a brief question or brief comment, because there are lots of people.

Let us start with the woman in this row right here.

SPEAKER: I'm Helen (inaudible). I've just retired from the State University of New York in Albany last week. I want to commend you for an extraordinary, galvanizing, exciting program. But there's one component missing today, and that is the voice of the women and people of color.

SPEAKER: Absolutely. (Applause)

SPEAKER: I wonder if you could spend a few minutes talking about the involvement of women and people of color in the entire effort, in your writings, and in your conversation. Because I'm sure it's there, but we didn't have a chance to explore that.

MR. FEITH: Sure. It's something we were actually all -- we were discussing it in the -- when we were seated together just a few minutes before walking out on the panel.

As for the very sort of particular, even parochial, matter of the book, it's funny to do -- I mean, I didn't exactly think of it in these terms, but we were -- I mean, it was great to have on the project Justice O'Connor and several others who bring all kinds of diversity. I think the fact is, there is, though -- I mean, diversity brought to the book by people, you know, in a kind of way reflected as we've discussed, from different fields of life who focus on different areas of the education world, but also people of different ethnic and other backgrounds. And I think that the -- I mean, going forward.

Again, I mean, the opportunity to collaborate and to work with people and groups of all sorts are immense. I mean, Seth perhaps can speak to it. The organization that the book launched, which is housed at Seth's school, networked in Central Harlem. Seth can, you know, bring the specific demographics. My understanding, I think almost all the students are students of color, black and Hispanic, perhaps exclusively.

And I think if we want to kind of step back, I mean the previous question spoke a bit about diversity, ideological and otherwise, and how to kind of facilitate it. I think there's no question that it's kind of fundamental to our system and to cultivating knowledge of the system, appreciation of the system, in the next generation. And this matter, though, is something that in a way that both mirrors other aspects of education, but actually as I mentioned, looks even worse. The civic achievement gap between poor students and, you know, better-off students socioeconomically and also students of color

and not is larger, and if you look at metrics of civic literacy, then of any other.

And given the other sort of challenges that those communities face, I think it makes it all the more important, and I know is something that Seth and I have talked about a lot.

MR. ANDREW: So, I'm a white guy working in Harlem with a student body that's 100 percent black and Latino. And what that means is that we think about this question and approach it and really tackle it head-on all the time because it's something that you cannot put aside. It is absolutely essential to the work we do to make sure that our kids have both role models and exposure and experience to an incredibly diverse set of opinions and experiences, and it is a problem as Peter says that we've had this incredible segregation and re-segregation of our schools across America based on geography and income and race in really troubling and profound ways.

And so, one of the things we've had to do as a school community is really work and go above and beyond to make sure that our faculty is as diverse as possible -- and we're about 50 percent folks of color on our faculty -- so that our kids get a wide range of experiences and approaches.

We also have to work on changing the teaching profession. The teaching profession as a whole has been primarily female in the classroom but primarily male in administration areas and in policy areas. And so, this panel certainly represents that trend which is generations in the making, has been part of the problem we've had in our public schools, and we need to try and change that.

So, I see our work at Democracy Prep very much as part of breaking that cycle of civic disengagement that I talked about by making sure that our kids and our graduates and our alumni and our teachers are actually starting to change that pattern which is very, very clear not just on this panel but across the work, across D.C., across elected

office. Any way that you look at it, we've got a major problem. We have to hit it head-on.

MR. GALSTON: Thank you. Next question, please. Right on the end of the row. Yes, you.

MS. WEN: Thank you. My name is Jeanie Wen (phonetic) and I'm with Voice of Vietnamese Americans. I thank all the panelists, excellent presentations.

I'd like to come back to Dr. Galston's questions and echo Dr. Levine's point that have you thought of somehow resolving this capacity of our decision makers -- and the most important decision makers now affecting educations at the state level of governance? And the decision-making people most important, at the federal level, our Congress. So, have you talked to them? And did you ever give them the test?

And a special question to John Bridgeland. You graduated from UVA and you have led the summit between the National Governors' Association, Bill Gates' Millennium organizations, and also *Time* magazine MVP and all that TV. So, have you brought this to them?

You know that just recently a few months ago in Virginia before the 2011 elections at the state level, there is a flyer coming from the Republicans that showed the pictures of our African-American President being shot in the head. You know that? So, let's come to the core values. Are we talking about race? Are we talking about differences in religions? Because that's where we are now.

Never before -- our Founding Fathers did not face the problems with race. Our Founding Fathers did not face the problems with difference in religions, Christianity and Muslim. So, would you please address that? Thank you.

MR. BRIDGELAND: First of all, this panel should have had more diversity, and let's just get that on the record, particularly with the changing demographics in the country.

So, I think this is a problematic in two ways. One, we don't do enough listening. I had a transformational experience where I was working with the Gates Foundation. They said, do you think there's anything we can do to break through on the dropout issue? And I said, I don't know, let me -- so we went back and we discovered there had been research dating back to 1870 on the high school dropout issue but nobody knew in America what the actual graduation rates were and nobody had ever talked to the dropouts.

So, we went around the country in 25 cities and we sat behind glass screens initially and then interacted with them. Extraordinary stories of young people, most of whom could have made it. Because we just lifted up the voice of young people who could make it and it was a very diverse group, the cover of *Time* magazine, the Oprah Winfrey show. All of a sudden, there's a national movement.

So, what gives me hope is we do a lot more listening across ideologies, lines, races, religions. I think we'll do better as a country. But I think Peter and Seth and Mike and everyone on this panel is right that we need to embed mechanisms within schools and community institutions. And a lot of these Presidential institutes and others are actually working to try to figure out, you know, can we get policymakers to come together for book club and know one another's names and get to know each other in an environment that isn't political? And then, it's tough when you know somebody not to talk to them and kind of -- you know, Newt likes to say I'm not going to compromise but I'll collaborate. You know, what does collaboration mean? And I think that's really important.

One last experience. So, I'm up on the Hill and we wanted to get something done, and Henry Waxman was the chairman of our committee. I said to Rob, we got to talk to Henry Waxman. Rob said, well, he's investigating Republicans. We

went over as Republicans to meet with Henry Waxman and his jaw fell open. But you know what? We ended up collaborating on the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, and we got it done within a year because of that willingness to put our stereotypes aside, even the fact that they were investigating Republicans.

And you used a horrific example of what Republicans; apparently, you said are doing vis-à-vis our President. How do we break down those walls and barriers? It's remarkable to me that we don't see more of it in Congress, and I think we have to create more mechanisms to foster people to know one another.

MR. GALSTON: Thank you. I'm going to take one more question from this side and then I'm going to shift to the other side and then I'll come back to this side.

MS. NOONAN: Good morning. I'm Megan Noonan from the Medill News Service. First of all, thank you all for coming today.

When I leave here I'm going to go back to my newsroom and try to write an article for 20-year-olds about why they should care about civics. If maybe several of you could just say in a line or two what can't a 20-year-old do if they don't know their civics?

MR. GALSTON: This is an opportunity to get your message out, gentlemen. Seize it. (Laughter)

MR. LEVINE: I only get 20 words? Thank you for covering this. Medill is a student-run news agency, which is an excellent venue.

So you know, one thing would be to read and discuss -- I'm trying to really fit in 20 words -- read and discuss quality news about current events, starting with reading the Medill News Service. But you also said why, and I -- to boil that down I would say there are advantages to them and advantages to society. You know, the advantages to society come from supporting democracy and having it be more robust and egalitarian,

too, in having their voices count.

The advantages to them are that there are all kinds of ways in which you actually benefit as a learner and as a participant in society from being civically engaged. And the evidence that people are better off if they're civically engaged is very powerful.

MR. RATLIFF: If you're 20 years old and you're in school somewhere, I would say think for a minute about who you want to be and not just your first job, and talk with people about who is teaching on your campus that really will give them an exciting introduction to the American experience.

MR. ANDREW: I'd have -- the first thing is that it's going to be harder to get a job because, you know, at Democracy Prep we are always discussing, you know, issues of current events with our kids and with our staff and in the faculty room and in every other place. But that's true of pretty much every workplace, and not just ours. And that it's something that leads to promotion and other things that are a very tangible, practical thing.

And then the much more highfalutin goal is that I don't think you can change the world unless you have a real concept of civic knowledge, dispositions, and skills and are excited to use them. And I think most people in some way would like to see the world changed in some way that they want to change it, and you can't do that without those skills, dispositions, and knowledge.

MR. BRIDGELAND: I would add that the Founders were brilliant when they talked about the pursuit of happiness. It wasn't just an individual pursuit of self-interest. Even Adam Smith, who wrote *Wealth of Nations* also wrote *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, which talked about you cannot benefit yourself and be a good person without a sense of your impact on others.

Just remind them that the Founders were talking about the public

happiness, and that it was something that we would help others achieve. And if they want to make an impact on the world and connect their own individual story to the larger American story in a way where they -- you know, my sister who is a nurse tells me that when she works with the dying that they think about three things upon their death. One is family and loved ones, and the second is the impact they left on the world. And without civic skills and knowledge and dispositions, you're not going to be able to have an impact on the world.

MR. FEITH: The basic point about ability to change the world, whether that's in a very local way or a broader way or a national way or a global way is, I think, is exactly the right one. And I think with 20-year-olds, or the people in the famous 18 to 29 or 18 to 34 demographic, there's an enormous gap between the frustration that is often heard from the demographic -- and for very good reasons, in many cases -- and the voter turnout numbers in that demographic. So, it's, I think, something that obviously everyone is able to do.

And the fact that there's all this concern and interest, and yet a failure to do this most basic act of civic participation is a sign of the challenge for policymakers and others, and of the -- to the degree it is, the onus being on that citizen of concern for him or herself.

MR. GALSTON: If I might just add a word -- and the UVA graduate confirmed what I dimly remembered -- that when Thomas Jefferson was framing his legacy for his tombstone, which is a pretty -- you know, talk about Twitter is a restrictive medium. (Laughter) You know, he chose not to cite his eight years as President of the United States and in its place he inserted his role as the founder of the University of Virginia. That tells you most of what you need to know about the legacy that you leave behind.

Okay, in the name of geographical equity I, as promised, move to this part of the room. The young man with his finger raised, and then we'll move forward one row to the woman with her arm raised.

MR. BASKUM: Hi, my name is Chad Baskum (phonetic) and I'd like to first thank Mr. Feith for putting together a great book, which I've enjoyed thus far.

My question is something of a follow-on from what Mr. Bridgeland was talking about earlier, but is more directed towards Mr. Andrews. Are there ways that you track on an individual basis not just the civic knowledge but the civic disposition and the development of things like active citizenship skills not only while your students are your students, but after they leave? Well, I guess, is there a way to do that is what I'm asking.

MR. ANDREWS: It is a huge policy paradox and we're actually working on it right now with a group of researchers from RAND, which is to start a longitudinal study of our alumni as they go out into the world. And I think there are ways to measure this, actually. I think there are quantitative answers to this question. They're hard and they're expensive to really track over a long period of time, but I think they're possible.

So, we start in school. We measure things like the percentage of our kids that have testified at a public body. And actually, we're at about 70 percent of our high school kids now have testified in a public body of some form, either their community board, the community education council, the city council, the state assembly, the state senate. We measure how many have competed in an intercollegiate debate round of some kind, right? So there are things that you can do as a student and then, long term, you can look at incarceration rates, you can look at civic participation rates, philanthropic giving rates, political contributions which are public records, voting rates. There's lots of ways to measure the sort of outcomes. Those don't really get at the sort of joy of engaging in civics, right? But they are proxies for trying to figure out whether people are,

in fact, engaged and whether what we've done in K-12 has affected them for, as we talk about in our mission, a life of active citizenship, not just those early indicators.

MR. BRIDGELAND: I just have to add. There's something so interesting. We got tired of waking up every day and hearing on NPR just the economic news. So this guy, Robert Putnam and David Smith and a big group of people got together and said what would America's civic health index look like? And so working with the Census, we have information and then they have these state civic health checkups that provide -- you know, it's not at the school level, and I love the longitudinal studies that track students over time. But for the national level, you can compare, you know, Akron to Albuquerque to Anaheim in terms of its civic stock.

And then policymakers like Schwarzenegger discovered that California was really low in volunteering, and he used that to get the state legislature to support his California Corps. So, it has implications for policymakers, too.

MR. LEVINE: Since my essay in the book is about donors, I guess I'll have to make one point about this. It's absolutely essential if, like our organization and like many of the innovations are going to be, I think, maybe our best ideas, you're going to depend upon private funding, as Bruce Cole, who is on our board knows, we have to look very carefully at the outcomes, track really what's happening as a result of these courses and these programs so that you know over a long period of time what the results are, or else you're not going to get the private support that's going to be necessary to advance a lot of this because donors are just getting a lot smarter.

MR. GALSTON: Okay, I'm going to move forward a row and then I'm going to move back and then I'm going to move forward.

MS. McTIGHE MUSIL: I'm Karen McTighe Musil, the senior vice president at the Association of American Colleges and Universities, and want to say how

exciting it is to be here today with a whole group of people who are working very hard on this issue because tomorrow at the White House, I will be part of a launching of a new report that's called *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future* that's the result of a year-long study. Peter was part of it, 150 people from many, many sectors. And it is actually a national call with very concrete actions saying, essentially what you all are saying. That -- and I believe right now there is the opportunity to really work together, and I'd love to have all of our separate works crisscross, and we tried to do that with a group we brought together.

But that this is a moment where we can build on the work that, Bill, you and others began in higher education. I would argue that some of the best work began with the civil rights movement itself and the way in which that came onto our campuses in scholarship and in action. But ways in which we have laid the foundation for this in college is particularly relevant to you, Admiral Ratliff, because our focus is on college, although the session I'm leading tomorrow is with Ted McConnell with the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools and we talk about the way in which there needs to be a civic continuum.

But I would just say two main things. One, the practices that, David, you and John, you also -- or Bridge, I guess if I could be that familiar, talk about -- and Seth -- talk about, the very practical work of deliberative dialogue, of service, of civic problem-solving, and in higher ed of the engagement in real-world issues where you get out in the community with your knowledge and are interacting are there for us to build upon to go to the next level.

So, I will be sending those of you on the panel some PDFs. They'll be available on the Department of Education, they funded the initial national roundtables. But we hope this will spur a continuing work so we can tip it from being, you know, an

optional outcome in college to do this work to an expected outcome of everyone, and that's where we really have to go in the next generation. So, I love the 2026 for schools that we could do that for college.

MR. GALSTON: Thanks so much. If we could move to the back row and then we'll move forward.

MS. SHRIVER: Thank you. This is Susan Shriver from Common Cause. And I just wanted to mention a piece that really hasn't come up today that is just worth throwing into the mix. And that is, the role that our state legislators play in fostering the kind of work that we want to have done in terms of education reform, and particularly in civics and history. And it is where a heck of a lot of decisions get made that really impact people.

In Maryland this past year, the governor and, unfortunately, the superintendent of schools made the decision to drop the required civics test, which was one of the more highly rated government tests in the country, from the curriculum as a cost-cutting measure. So this really came from the inside.

What we have found is that the state legislators, as we've been talking with them about it this year and working to get that reversed, is that there is enormous support and interest across -- now, Maryland obviously is heavily Democratic. But as Seth pointed out, that doesn't mean that there's not a lot of difference of opinion and diversity in perspectives, and this issue has really brought people together in a very interesting way and started some conversations between people who don't necessarily even talk to one another.

So, you know -- and this is an area where citizens on the ground can get involved and push. So, you know, I would just suggest that that level of advocacy -- even if we may feel ambivalent about the whole issue of high-stake testing and its role in

driving education, we do know that if it isn't tested it isn't taught in so many situations. So, I just want to ask you to keep that in mind as well.

MR. GALSTON: Thank you very much. The last question will come from the front row.

Thanks. I'm Garrett Mitchell and I write *The Mitchell Report.* And I just wanted to say that, you know, at this time of year there are people who are rooting for the Patriots and some are rooting for the Broncos. I root for the Governing Ideas Seminars. I think I haven't missed one, and each time I say it can't possibly get better the next time, and they just keep getting better, and I really am deeply appreciative of the work that all of you are doing and sharing it with us today.

I thought I'd just make an observation because Bill's question was really the question that I wanted to explore, and I think you've done it, which is the notion of the thing that really is corrosive in democracy today is the incapacity of the people who should be able to think together and talk together intelligently and respectfully aren't doing it. A fellow by the name of Bill Bishop has written a book called *The Big Sort* that goes a long way to explain that. But the little tiny book that I'm thinking about today, and that your comments have generated for me, is something that Cass Sunstein wrote not so long ago about what happens when you have people who are of different persuasions in the same room talking about issues. And then when you -- he did this, as you probably know, in Boulder, Colorado, in Colorado Springs, which are two separate universes in one state. And that when you separate them -- so you get the Colorado Springs group, which leans hard right, and you get the Boulder group, which leans hard left; you get different behaviors and they're not the ones we want. The ones we want are when people are together in the room.

And I'm struck by the fact that as I listen to the sort of continuum of the

K-12 work and the work that Admiral Ratliff and his group is doing in higher education, that if there is a way to have there be a continual set of experiences where students of various persuasions, et cetera, are coming together to talk about the problems of democracy or issues in which they disagree, that perhaps we can reinstitute the habit of what some call “civility.” And I’m just struck by how what we’ve heard today gives me great hope, especially when I see people like David and Seth, whose ages I almost remember, are taking a lead on that.

So, I hope that’s not a too-gratuitous way to end this. But I am just deeply appreciative of what you’re doing and wanted to make that observation.

MR. GALSTON: Well, thank you so much. There’s a lot that I want to say, but there is no time to say it. And so, I will content myself with one valedictory remark. Namely, I had high hopes for this panel and the panel has exceeded those hopes. So please join me in thanking the panelists. (Applause)

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