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# THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION IN AMERICA

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**Welcome:**

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Ezra K. Zilkha Chair, Senior Fellow, Governance Studies
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**Presentation:**

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**Response to Presentation:**

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**Panel Discussion:**

WILLIAM GALSTON, Moderator
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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. GALSTON: Well, this is a very ruly crowd, I must say, so I barely need to call you to order. My name is Bill Galston and I'm a senior fellow in the Governance Studies program here at Brookings. And on behalf of all sorts of people and institutions that I'll talk about in just a minute, let me welcome you to Brookings.

This is an event sponsored by the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, which is a very important research center at the University of Virginia, and hosted by the Brown Center on Education Policy, which is here at Brookings. Indeed, is a research center within the Governance Studies program. It is ably directed by Mike Hansen, who's right here.

And so why am I introducing this event? Perhaps because I have a longstanding relationship with both of the institutions, you know, the sponsor and the host.

We are gathered, dearly beloved, to discuss the relationship between democracy and public education. This is a perennial topic, as you know, but it's a topic that's been refreshed by the recent publication of a book entitled "Democracy's Schools," which we will spend the next hour and a half discussing. I will give its author a proper introduction in just a minute. But let me just note very quickly that from the beginning, Americans have invested their hopes in education as a source of economic advancement, but more than that, as the crucible in which would be forged a single united people with a strong adherence to democratic principles.

This raises all sorts of questions. How well have our schools measured up to these hopes? Has their performance varied over time and, if so, how? And perhaps most important of all, have we exaggerated the extent to which schools can perform the momentous tasks that we've assigned to them?

Well, we have all sorts of takes on those questions in the present day. If schools are the source of educated democratic citizens, then something seems to have gone seriously awry in our own time. But we need to escape the tyranny of the present and to do that history helps. Indeed, it's essential.

And Johann Neems new history will help us to do that. I promised Johann an introduction and he will now get one.

He is professor of history at Western Washington University. He received his B.A. from Brown, his Ph.D. in history from the University of Virginia. His first book, "Creating a Nation of Joiners: Democracy and Civil Society in Early National Massachusetts," published by Harvard almost a decade ago, examines at a time when many Americans remain worried about bowling alone, Bob Putnam's famous phrase, how an why Americans learned to come together in the first place.

Johann will speak for about 15 minutes, presenting the basics of his book. After which we will hear about a 10-minute commentary from Julie Reuben, an historian and a professor at Harvard's Graduate School of Education. And she is interested in the intersection between American thought on the one hand and culture and educational institutions and practices on the other. Her best-known book, "The Making of the Modern University," published almost 20 years ago, examines the relationship between changing concepts in knowledge, standards of scholarship, and religion and morality in the American university during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

After the two of them have spoke, there will be a panel discussion and I will introduce the remaining panelists at that time. The panel discussion will go for about a half an hour, which will leave about half an hour for your questions and their answers.

So without further ado, Johann Neem. (Applause)

MR. NEEM: Well, thank you all for coming out this afternoon and I want to thank Bill for the introduction, and the Brown Center and the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture for hosting, and my fellow for being here, as well.

So my new book examines the rise of public schools in the United States between the Revolution and the Civil War. And I wrote this book because I felt that, and this is going back quite a few years, during the Clinton, the Bush, and the Obama years we were

increasingly drifting from the core purposes of public education, at least in our public and national rhetoric. And those worries have not changed since November.

And I would wage that we debate often the secondary questions. We talk about student achievement. We talk about charter schools. We talk about unions. But we've lost sight sometimes of why we have public schools in the first place. Sometimes it seems all we can agree on is that we want students to be college and career ready, but what actual deeper purposes might there be that inspired people to build robust public systems in the first place?

So I wrote this book to try to remind us of some of those higher purposes of democratic education is to provide Americans -- citizens, policymakers, and scholars -- and historical resource to think about the fundamentals. And for me, those fundamentals should guide our public policies.

So today I want to ask two questions. First, why, according to the founding generations of Americans, do we have public schools? And second, how did education go from being a private good to a public good? And I believe both have implications for policy discussions today. I'm an historian, however, so I'm not making specific policy recommendations, but I'm hoping that a deeper historical understanding can enrich the policy conversations we have and help frame them.

So question one, why do we have public schools? To the founders of our public schools there were three goals that were fundamental to them. One was the education of citizens. The second was the development of human beings' capabilities, what was then called self-culture. This was the age of the self-made man. And we often think of self-making in this context as pulling one's self up by one's own bootstraps, but, in fact, their understanding of self-making was really about making a person, making a self. And that required institutions like schools and it involved the moral and intellectual development of people, not just their economic lives. And then the third was helping an increasingly diverse population see themselves as members of the American nation. So let me quickly turn to each of these points.

So citizens, this is the one we're most familiar with. For Americans after the Revolution one of the most pressing concerns was whether the new United States would last. Republics, sometimes we forget, are among the most fragile of political units. Some of the largest empires, the Roman Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the Han Dynasty, and even the British, French, and Spanish empires, not to mention many Native American empires, lasted centuries. But when the founders established the United States as a republic in 1776, they did not have the same precedence. They admired Athens, they admired Rome and other Italian city states, but there were few examples of republics that could withstand the test of time.

"A republic, if you can keep it," those were Benjamin Franklin's supposed words when he emerged from the Constitutional Convention and was asked what kind of government the framers were proposing. A republic, a government of public goods founded on popular sovereignty, but only if the American people would keep it. And for America's founding generations public education was essential to keeping the republic.

Thomas Jefferson famously proclaimed that of all the arguments justifying education, and these are his words, "none is more important, none more legitimate, than that of rendering the people the safe, as they are the ultimate guardians of their own liberty." So citizenship was one of the fundamental reasons for pursuing the expansion of education.

But by the 1830s, another reason had been added, what people at the time called "self-culture," which meant to develop the capabilities of human beings through deep immersion in the arts and sciences. In other words, to provide every American a liberal education. What had once been reserved for the elite should now be made available to all.

No person made this case better than the Reverend William Ellery Channing, who was one of the founders of American Unitarianism and had a huge influence on various American thinkers. And he argued that access to a liberal education, to the arts and sciences, was the obligation of a democratic society that proclaimed equality. To Channing, every child had the image of God within her or him. Every person deserved an education he wrote in 1838,

these are his words, “because he is a man, not because he is to make shoes, nails, or pins.” Today, of course, we would say “a person,” but the point holds.

He argued against those who proclaimed, “A liberal education is needed for men who are to fill high stations, but not for such as are doomed to vulgar labor. Whether rich or poor, whether professional or laborer, each of us,” he wrote, “is a son, a husband, a father, friend, and Christian. Each of us,” and these are his words again, “belongs to a home, a country, a church, a race. Education,” he was determined, “would not prepare some to lead flourishing lives and others to toil. In a democracy, we must all be educated to fulfill our various roles as human beings.”

The third and final purpose was to bring together a diverse nation. “Our public schools are the most democratic institutions that this peculiarly democratic country affords,” proclaimed E. Hodges, who was a superintendent of schools in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. The schools would not only teach people “the rudiments,” as he called them, for citizenship, but in a society divided by religion, ethnicity, party, and wealth, public schools would, in his words, “harmonize the various discordant elements that are found in society,” as students learn to, and, again, his words, “sympathize with and for the other.” In other words, in public schools diverse people would come to think of each other as fellow Americans.

One of the concerns was immigration, but growing economic inequality also concerned the advocates of America’s public schools. John Pierce, the new state of Michigan superintendent of public instruction, celebrated public schools where, “all classes are blended together, the rich mingle with the poor, and are educated in company, and mutual attachments are formed.”

Horace Mann, who was secretary to the Massachusetts Board of Education and the so-called founding father of American public schools, considered bringing the rich and poor together to be one of the most important functions of public education. “If rich parents,” he wrote, “turn away from the common schools and choose to send their kids to the private school

or the academy," which were chartered schools of their era, "the poor," he worried, "would end up with a second class education. To ensure that students and their parents intermingle he wrote, and these are his words, "There should be a free school sufficiently safe and sufficiently good for all the children within its territory." This was a time before economic segregation had reached the kind of -- had become the kind of thing it is today.

In short, in public schools Americans advocated -- the advocates of public schools said that Americans would become effective citizens, develop their capabilities as human beings, and learn to see themselves as members of a common nation. This last piece was particularly important because in the decades of the 1830s, '40s, and '50s, there was increasing amounts of violence. From frontier violence in the West to anti-Catholic violence in urban centers, to race riots, Americans fought in the streets against each other. There was partisan violence, partisan mobs, and members of Congress started arming themselves when they walked into the Capitol. Slavery, of course, depended on daily violence.

But scholars have long argued that democratic societies depend on social trust, on the level of confidence that Americans have in each other and their capacity to see themselves in one another. But as Americans looked around their nation in the 1830s, '40s, and certainly by the 1850s and the decade leading to Civil War, they had good reasons to be concerned and they put their hopes in public schools.

Today at a time of growing diversity, when violence is once again breaking out in our streets, in churches, temples, and mosques, and in our schools, we can ask ourselves again do we see ourselves as fellow Americans? Are we able to find enough common grounds to educate our children in common schools? Do we trust each other enough to do so?

Our democracy needs us to care for each other, but to do so we need common ideals and traditions that bind us together as Americans across class, religious, and ethnic lines. So I think there are some questions that we can ask that are relevant for today.

One, of course, is how do we revive our commitment to preparing effective,

ethical, and capable citizens? A second is how do we best develop Americans intellectual and moral capabilities? And are our current policies encouraging these or discouraging the full development of such faculties as intellect and imagination? And finally, how do we ensure that diverse Americans living in the same neighborhoods or cities come together in common institutions?

Let me now turn to my second question, how did education become a public good? So some background. At the time of the Revolution, education was a family responsibility, not the states'. Many of the founding fathers hoped to change that. Indeed, revolutionary state constitutions included clauses, like Georgia's in 1777, which proclaimed schools shall be erected in each county and supported at the general expense of the state. This was something new.

But at the time, even the earliest common public schools charged tuition to supplement local and state taxes. Often there would be a short free term for all the people in the district and then wealthier parents would pay to keep the teacher on, the schoolmaster, for longer terms, creating unequal access to education. But most Americans believed that families were responsible for choosing how to educate their children, not the community, so that was not initially considered a problem.

But education reformers wanted to change that, but they knew it would not be easy. Many Americans rejected the idea that they were responsible for educating other people's children. One Pennsylvania tax collector recalled in 1859, "Many guns were leveled at me and threats made. At one house I was badly scalded by a woman throwing boiling water over me. At another, a woman struck me on the back of the head with a heavy iron poker. And at another, I was knocked down with a stone and assaulted with pitchforks and clubs." This is the heroic tax collector and he does ultimately get away with some cows from one of these houses that he can then auction off to pay the school tax.

In other words, many parents didn't feel that they were responsible to pay the

state to educate people who were not their own children. Pennsylvania School Superintendent Francis Shunk observed in 1838, and I think he got it right, "It may not be easy to convince a man who has educated his own children in the way his father educated him or who has abundant means to educate them or who has no children to educate that an opposition to the custom of the country and its fixed opinions on that custom, he, this person, has a deep and abiding concern in the education of all the children around him and should cheerfully submit to taxation for the purpose of accomplishing that great object." And clearly many Pennsylvanians, if the prior example is representative, did not necessarily cheerfully submit.

And yet, by the Civil War most Northern states had started to provide free, tax-supported, tuition-free schooling and many Southern states were heading in the same direction for their white citizens. So the question is, why did that happen when it was not considered a public responsibility by so many families? And I argue in my book that the schools themselves as institutions turned a private good into a public good.

Many Americans then, like Americans today, saw education as a way to get their children ahead, a private good for their family. But by coming together in the new schools they learned to invest not just in themselves, but in each other. The public schools in a sense forced parents to share time and taxes with each other, making every family a stakeholder in this public institutions. The schools transformed education from a private good to something that the public felt responsible for. The schools were one of the few places, indeed, where the people came together and thus they also helped cultivate for Americans a sense of themselves as members of a public.

In a country like ours without a strong welfare state tradition these were no small achievements. The public schools remain among the most popular public institutions because so many Americans remain invested in them. And by investing in them, they invest in each other. That commitment, though, has always been tenuous and were it not for the common institutions, I wager, education may still have been a private good.

Balancing the private good of education, the private interest that families bring to the education of their own children, with the public has been an ongoing challenge since the very beginning of American public education. And indeed, all of the visions that reformers had were contested. In my book I describe a tension between a vision of democratic education that reformers wish to pursue and the realities of education in a democracy, where citizens disagree with each other and don't necessarily all want the same thing. This is also a fundamental challenge of democratic education or education in a democracy. But so long as most Americans went to the public schools, they had an incentive to care for them. The public schools could thus transform private ambitions towards the public welfare.

And I think this, too, has significant policy implications for us today. As we debate new models for funding and schooling, we still need to ensure that Americans continue to consider education a public good and that they remain stakeholders in institutions that benefit not just their children, but also other people's children. Thank you. (Applause)

MS. REUBEN: Hello and thank you very much. I'm delighted to be invited to participate in this event and particularly I'd like to thank Johann for writing this wonderful book. But I have to say that I thank him with a little bit of mixed feelings for a couple of reasons.

One is that there is a classic book on the development of common schools that every historian of education, like I, assign in our class. It's called "Pillars of the Republic" by Carl Kaestle. And it's always so easy to know what to assign for that unit and now we're going to have -- I'm going to have to really debate in my mind what to do. I have a conflict here about what I would want to assign.

And it was very brave of Johann to take on this subject because of the dominance of this other book, which is a truly wonderful book, as is this one. But they're very different books.

When I think of Kaestle's book, the past feels very far away in how he presents it. And when I read Johann's book, I am constantly tugged toward the present. And that doesn't

mean that it's not a well done history. It is a well done history. But it highlights certain things that continue to, and maybe even in the contemporary world, seem very, very important at this moment.

The book sort of has two parts. The first part where he's talking about schools for democracy is very inspiring. And then he turns to the part where he talks about schools in democracy, how they actually work and practice, and it gets a little depressing.

The part about schools for democracy, where he lays out this program of the idea of schools as really being the mechanism for a long-lasting republic, but also being this opportunity for self-development, I that part really speaks to anyone who has ever devoted themselves to education. So all of us who spend our lives as educators or spend our lives as policymakers thinking about how to make education better, we do so I think because in some way our education allowed ourselves to make ourselves into people who we felt were richer because of our education. And I think that we always want that out of education. We want education to be a way for people to make themselves and make themselves into deeper, better people.

But we always kind of look at the schools themselves and wonder, hmm, they don't seem to be doing that. And I wonder why that is. Is that a problem of schools? Is it that you can't do that in large groups? Is it a problem of our expectation of what we think that looks like, where we think it should look just like we feel it? And we look at other people and think they're not really developing. So maybe it's a problem of our kind of limitation of our understanding of what self-development looks like.

The second half where he talks about democracy in schools, there are several perennial issues that come up and one is that the schools themselves seem to be all about discipline and order, and not about this sort of self-development. He talks about the educational theories about how a teacher should behave and then the evidence of how teachers actually behave, where then instead of creating a loving, caring community, they're hitting their students

over the knuckles and sometimes lashing them over the back. So there's that conflict, you know. What does it actually look like?

There's also the conflict of the limitations of inclusion. He was just talking to us about how the schools ideally were going to bring people together, very diverse people. But the schools also were very local and the schools that worked well were the ones where there was already a strong community, a strong sense of community, and that community sustained a school. But people who were outside that community were seen as outsiders and they were often, when they were included at all, they were included in somewhat punishing ways, in ways that were often disrespectful and limiting. And so schools for ourselves and schools for others often looked different, and that has been a perennial problem for American education.

Another real concern and long-time concern for education, in addition to this issue about the excluded and the included, is about how we know when schools are really working. So we have very poor evidence about that. And even in the present we have poor evidence, but in the past we have even worst evidence. And so we have the stories of the people being beaten by their teachers, but the people whose lives were enriched by literacy, by the capability of reasoning, they don't often talk about that.

So in one way I wonder if we have a perennial problem of thinking our schools are worse than they actually are, that we focus on some of their limitations and we don't hear the ways in which people are able to make their education into something more meaningful. So the measurements that we know, I'm wondering if they tend to the negative.

The other question that I really have is when we see this as speaking so much to the present, when we read about the first half of the 19th century and we feel like, wow, we're still there working on similar issues, it raises a question for me as whether education for democracy is an unfinished project or whether in certain ways it's an undoable project. And this is a very difficult question. I certainly want it to be an unfinished project, but I wonder whether there are elements of it that are undoable.

And that has a lot to do with this issue about how wide a circle of belonging we can create. And I feel like that question, it was a question for the 19th century and they didn't answer it very well. They created bigger circles than the family, but not nearly as big circles as the full country. And I wonder for that today. Can we break that and create a larger circle? And if we can't, do we need to think about schools having a different aspiration? And I hope that we don't have to, but if we do, I think that we need to think about how different communities can then make the schools meaningful for them, that we don't want to be like the 19th century where a dominant community created different kinds of schools for others and didn't allow them to create their own schools.

I think that we want to strive for inclusive schools, but if we don't believe that we can create it, do we have to have a different kind of school and a school where people create their own communities and have more control over their own schools? Thank you. (Applause)

MR. GALSTON: Okay. Well, you've already gotten to know Johann and Julie a little bit, but before we proceed, let me give Alex Hernandez and Gerard Bradley [sic] less than an introduction than they deserve, but at least enough to get us started.

To introduce Alex Hernandez I'm going to have to, I think, say a word about the organization that he works for, which is called the Charter School Growth Fund, and it is a nonprofit venture capital fund that supports the growth of public charter schools. And Alex joined this organization in July of 2010 as the lead investment partner for the Western United States and Texas. Before that, he was an area superintendent at Aspire Public Schools, which is prominent enough so that even I've heard of it, a leading K-12 charter school network, where he managed schools in the California Central Valley. And he has a long history of educational accomplishments before that.

As for Gerard Robinson, he is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute right down the block, where he works on education policy issues, including choice in public and private schools, regulatory development, and implementation of K-12 laws, the role

of for-profit institutions in education, prison education and reentry, rural education, and the role of community colleges and historically black colleges and universities, HBCUs, in adult advancement. Before joining AEI, Mr. Robinson served as commissioner of education for the state of Florida and secretary of education for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

So the good news on this panel is that we have a couple of people who can help us keep it really real because they've been there and they're doing it. And the cloistered academics on this side will absorb their wisdom.

I have all sorts of questions based on this book and what we heard in summary and in comment, but let me start at the very end, the final question that Julie put on the table. The aspiration of the public common school is that it will bring people together across their differences. And in bringing them together, getting them to know each other, work with each other, respect each other, learn with and from each other, the goal of *E Pluribus Unu*m will be substantially promoted.

Sounds great, but, as Julie also pointed out, our schools are local institutions, in many cases hyper local institutions, with very small catchment areas. We are increasingly living in communities of the like-minded, among people who look like us and think like us. Query: To the extent that this geographical segmentation is an ongoing process in our times, how does the public common school achieve its *E Pluribus Unum* mission? Anybody?

MR. HERNANDEZ: So I attended a very integrated school, high school, and we're kind of a third, a third, a third different demographics. It was the common interest school. And we had 900 freshmen and 450 sophomores. I don't know where folks went. This was before they ranked high schools in California. When they started ranking high schools, my high school was perennially in the bottom 10 percent of schools in the country -- or schools in the state of California, which is the size of a country.

And when I got to college, even though I graduated fifth in my class, I had a friend tell me you know you can't write, right? And so this tension, because I grew up kind of in

the civil rights, Cold War era where I believed in democracy and community, and, at the same time, there was this huge tension between -- I wouldn't today send my 11-year-old twin boys to the high school that I went to even though this is how we defended the common good. So this tension that Johann brings up, which I think is fascinating, between the individual and the collective is real for parents.

I just want to speak briefly about the local thing. There were 130,000 school districts in the 1930s, well beyond what Johann was talking about, a country about a third of the size. We have 14,000 school districts today. So this notion -- well, I know there are some very small school districts, this notion that these are hyper local institutions that are in touch with their communities, I think a little bit misrepresents and certainly wasn't my experience in my kind of 50,000-kid school district that I grew up in.

MR. ROBINSON: I enjoyed the book for two reasons. Number one, I have an undergraduate degree in philosophy and there were a number of philosophical themes in the book, so I felt like I justified my decision. (Laughter) Because you major in philosophy, it's always a lot of laughter as we heard just now.

Number two, it was great to have a conversation about the founding of our nation, moving toward a Civil War, and what took place in the middle. The question of whether we need a democratic education or an education for a democracy is one that actually precedes the founding of the United States. It really goes back to Plato's *Republic*, the concepts of what we think an ideal nation looks like.

I believe the common school concept is important because it gives us a common theme. I think at times we put too much on the public schools to do things that families should be doing. Maybe a civil society should take place. But one of the great takeaways about what public schools can do is to have us really think about what it means to have a public school. Maybe "public" means something different.

So in the book Johann talks about the importance and the rise of academies.

These were nonprofit, private schools or academies funded partially by the state because they were filling a role that was needed in the state. So think about it, private schools funded by the state, part of a larger discussion of the common good. And they weren't public schools, but they were still schools for the public's interest.

So I think his book is helpful in trying to broaden what we mean by "public" because "public" is broader than a building, broader than tax purposes. It has more to do with the idea of 1787, that we found in the Northwest Ordinance: "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." I think if we use that as a grounding pin to help us think about the role of public education and education for the public's good, that will be helpful.

MS. REUBEN: I think that we talk about schools as local, but I don't know that they're as local as we say. There are these districts that have been created over time, sometimes because they made a lot of sense for the communities that lived in them and sometimes through various kinds of political maneuvers.

Some of those districts have a lot of self-determination in them and many of those districts have very little self-determination, and many of the schools within those districts have very little self-determination in current times. So I think that we can over exaggerate how much local control there is and we need to be honest about how has control and what kind of control that they have.

I do think that we are living in a situation with greater and greater geographical segregation of various sorts. And those map onto school districts in ways that don't really serve common good. And so I think that we need to rethink school districts as the unit of governance and think about how to make schools that create different kinds of communities and how to give communities more actual power within their schools. And I think that there might be ways that public policy could encourage schools that cross these current geographical lines if they were freed from the current school district creation.

So in some ways, I think really to get to this idea of schools as being places that mix people and bring people together across boundaries, that we need to do away with the current boundaries and think about how do you empower people to create new schools in joined communities? And how do you create incentives for people to join together in community across difference? And hope that, as Johann was saying, that the school itself creates a greater sense of public.

So I would say that local control is a bit of a myth and it's a myth that currently creates obstacles to bringing people together rather than creating opportunities.

MR. NEEM: I think the point about incentives really matters. You know, when the first public schools were being forged, they were local institutions. And it was the reformers, the Horace Manns of the 1830s and '40s, that sought to provide some kind of central oversight and some sort of expertise to improve their quality. And at the time, no one could have imagined the kind of bureaucratic control that schools would ultimately have. So looking in the 1830s, you have the same tension, but from a place where extracting some of that local control in the interest of quality made some sense. And we're in a different historical moment and so we need to reevaluate how those pieces are balanced.

I think, at the same time, we have to really think about how incentives are created when people are making decisions about their families' schooling. One of the things I tried to point out was that the common schools forced people to work in common institutions in many ways by making them stakeholders in them. It wasn't a kind of coercion that one needs to fear necessarily, which is that through these schools they kind of converted people towards caring about institutions that other people were also engaged in.

That's not the only way to do it. It's just that whatever system we use, we need to maintain that idea that the people are stakeholders and care for those institutions and, in doing so, will care for other people's children.

I think the challenge that the question raises is as education has become more

important to many families, the history of American education suggests that many families will choose to put their interests ahead of other people's children. I mean, whether it had to do with white flight, whether it has to do with economic segregation, and in many ways the residential market served as a proxy market for education. And so we've seen in some ways people exercising a certain kind of economic choices to invest in their children.

But I think even in that context that produced great inequalities through districts that at the time, before residential segregation could be seen as equalizing, with residential segregation or as you suggested unequalizing, because people still were sending their kids to those schools they had an investment in the larger project of public education. And I think however the future organizes schools, that investment is something that we have to ensure is sustained.

MR. GALSTON: Let me ask a very different kind of question. You know, and I'll commit the non-historian sin of aggressive presentism, but with an historical glance backwards.

By my count, for the third time in American history we are engaged in a great national debate or tug of war between populism and elitism. Now, here's the problem. If you look at arguably our greatest Democrat, democratic theorist Thomas Jefferson, he saw schools as sorting mechanisms, the way of moving from a conventional aristocracy based on wealth and birth to a natural aristocracy based on cultivated talent. And Jefferson believed, I think quite plausibly, that although people are morally equal, they're not equal in their natural endowments and developable talents.

And so in our time, education, including public education, has become part of this vast sorting mechanism that creates a class of people who think of themselves as natural aristocrats, not conventional aristocrats, not like these vulgar people with too much money, but nevertheless, a class that as we now discover in our political system is deeply resented by people who have less education and who don't think that superior educational attainment entitles those attainers to the sorts of worldly goods or political power that they

disproportionately enjoy.

So how do we deal with this tension between education as an equalizer and education as a sorter because it does both?

MR. NEEM: Well, I'll start by not committing the historian's sin of presentism and stick with Jefferson for a moment. I think that for Jefferson the ideal was that everybody would have a similar foundation and then there would be those who would be -- as he put it, these are his words, not mine, you know, "rake the rubbish." So he said there would be a handful of people scattered all across the classes who are particularly intellectually capable and they would be supported in pursuing higher levels of education, grammar school and then ultimately William & Mary, and then William & Mary didn't live up to his expectations, the University of Virginia. And so he imagined a pyramid, a tiered system.

I think that's right. I think the other piece, though, he was very insistent on was that those natural aristocrats would have a deep education in the formation of their characters, and so that those people who emerged at the top of the system would see their role as caring for the public good and see their success as tied to their responsibilities as leading citizens. And I think we've lost that in our meritocratic race for prestige and status through education.

So I think while Jefferson would acknowledge that not all people would have the same academic achievements, he was very concerned that those who emerged at the top had the character to care for the welfare of the republic. And we have often treated it as a kind of way of us getting ahead rather than being responsible for each other.

MR. HERNANDEZ: I read an article yesterday by this gentleman, James Davison Hunter, and he asked what institutions have the credible authority to reanimate democracy? And I like to believe it's our schools, but I also, considering this conversation we have, I think we have to think a little bit differently.

And I live in Colorado, and just as I was finishing this article, one of our gubernatorial candidates, Mike Johnston, came out with an idea, hey, let's offer free education

and job training in exchange for meaningful public service. And it was just a different way of thinking about the local support of education that I found kind of provocative. Because I think as much as I struggle and wrestle with the role school districts play today, which we've all kind of expressed, what I thought was so interesting about your book was we really have common schools today because of the personal connection we had. And so can we use things like career and technical education, job training, the connection between higher ed, and tie that to public service in a way that reanimates democracy?

And I think there's a lot of room actually to be creative around this. I've been working in charter schools for the last, I don't know, 20 years, and we really started out very strongly around academics and academic achievement. And I think if you ask me today what do we believe about educating young people, we can't just educate the minds. We also have to educate the hearts. And if we can do that in our school districts, great. But if we need new ideas like tying public service in meaningful ways to education and job training, I think those are things that are really worth exploring.

MS. REUBEN: I think we have to recognize that historically schools have worked to give individuals opportunity for social mobility, but schools have never had the capacity to redistribute wealth and create more equal distributions of wealth. We have had historically periods in time where wealth has been distributed more equally than other periods in time, and that, as far as historians and economists have been able to explain, has much more to do with policies unrelated to education; has much more to do with tax policies, with unionization, with other kinds of public policy that influences the distribution of wealth.

Schools operate to help individuals have opportunity or not have opportunity. I think that one of the things that we have, unfortunately, done is given a kind of myth that schools are really the one thing that makes a difference. In fact, mostly people's ability to get ahead and perform well both in school and out of school has a lot to do with what they get from their families. There's a lot of passing on both educational success and economic security.

What schools can do well is some of these things about preparing people and their character. If we could change people's understanding of what schools do well, I think there might be less frenzy about families picking schools so that their children can get ahead or stay ahead.

We have a situation now where there's a little bit of hoarding of advantage going on. And some of that hoarding is unnecessary and it is related to a myth that school is what determines one's economic success when, in fact, a lot of what determines one's economic success has to do with one's own family. So parents need to be told that actually they don't have to feel as afraid for their children and that they can take some risks in picking schools that will help develop their children's character and help develop their children's moral sensibilities. And parents might actually realize that more diverse schools can do that in ways that more segregated schools cannot.

I happen to live in a very unusual place. I live in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and it's extremely economically diverse. Very unusual. My daughters went to school with children of professors, children of owners of high-tech companies, and children of people living in the projects, children of people who have had multiple generations of poverty, children of immigrants. And actually going to that school didn't -- it resorted some of the people, it gave opportunities to some people, but it really didn't take away the advantages that children have from their parents.

And so I think if we can get away from some of this myth that schools determine economic outcomes, we might be able to break away from the frenzy of sending your children to school with high performers and only high performers. I think that we could maybe convince parents that, you know, if you were relatively well off and relatively well educated, it's likely that your child is going to do well academically and that you can put your child in a more diverse school and they will not lose those advantages.

So I do think that some of the refraining of the connection between education and

economics would be helpful here. Education has less economic power than we've given it. It's really a minority that use education for social mobility. Mostly changes in economics, the distribution of wealth, have to do with other kinds of policies, not schools.

MR. ROBINSON: Jefferson's a great place to have a conversation about or starting point about elitism debate population, in part because you have the whole conversation about sorting and achievement. And he is a good person to start with, but really that tension preceded that Jefferson. He was influenced, like many in the founding generation, by Enlightenment philosophy, also by ancient philosophy.

We just go back to, again, the republic and the idea that some children are born with gold, some children are born with silver, some children are born with copper or iron. Already sorting, some could say biological determinism and what that would mean later for the great chain of being and what that would play out later. But the idea of this tension between elitism and fighting against it is just a major part of the Western tradition about seeking voice in a democratic society. That's part one.

Part two, it's true, there were at least three major populists movement. However, one thing I would have liked to have seen in the book, and again it's a great book, is the role the Great Awakening played in the founding of what we call the common school movement. The 1730s and '40s, a major Protestant movement, changing the ideas that fueled a revolution, thereby allowing states to create education clauses in their constitutions. Before then 5 states had an education clause of the 13. Afterwards, you find many states going by 1867, 20 of the 37 states had an education clause focused on encouragement, that language coming from the Northwest Ordinance.

Second, the idea that we're going to be able to create a democracy without struggle is going to be a challenge. And the term "segregation" I think is ubiquitous. Before you had a Civil War, before the enslaved Africans were freed, and white people went to school with each other, you had segregated schools: Irish, Italian, Protestant, Baptist, Catholic. But it's

only when the black people come up do we then become concerned about the history of segregation.

MR. GALSTON: Well, on that challenging note, which some members of the audience may wish to pick up, we've now shifted to the last half-hour, which is your half-hour. Now, our usual practice, and I hope it's true in this event, is to have at least one roving microphone. So we have at least one roving microphone? Very good.

So I will try to recognize you without prejudice, regardless of whether you're in the front of the room or the back of the room. But when you are recognized, please state your name and institutional affiliation if you want or think it's relevant, and, third, avoid speechifying and please state a question. And if you're directing it to a particular member of the panel, say that, too.

So who's going first? There's a woman right on the aisle there.

SPEAKER: Hello. My name is Aubriana. I am an undergraduate student at the George Washington University. I'm actually enrolled in a class on education policy right now. My professor for that class worked at The Brookings Institution back in the '90s, so we spend a lot of time discussing some of the works that come out of The Brookings Institution.

One of the pieces that we read was Labaree's article form 1997 called "Public Goods, Private Goods: The American Struggle Over Educational Goals." And Labaree in that article came up with three different types of educational goals: democratic equality, which is what you all are discussing today; social efficiency; and social mobility, which is what Ms. Reuben began to discuss.

And so my question is, what are the dangers of approaching a different aspect other than democratic equality from a policymaking standpoint when creating education policy?

MR. ROBINSON: Of the three I would support the social mobility component. I'm a first-generation college student. I live a radically different life than my mother from Louisiana and her grandmother and grandfather or mother and father. I'm married to a law

professor, UVA, so all the UVA people and Jefferson coming in; radically different. I moved from California. I now live in Virginia. And so I have seen the importance of education for social mobility.

The challenge is, and I agree with my colleague, is that education becomes a Holy Grail. Part of the challenge is education is often synonymous with building or school when, in fact, you don't have to go to college to become an educated person. So social mobility, if education is a way to become socially mobile, independent of a degree as well as a degree, I'm fine with it.

MR. GALSTON: Other reactions from the panel?

MR. HERNANDEZ: So my dad's first job was work in the fields and my first job was on Wall Street, and so we saw this huge jump in my generation. And my dad eventually became a high school guidance counselor and I was having a particularly rough day in high school and he goes if you just survive high school, I promise you, you'll be really interested in college, like it'll be awesome. And I was like that feels good, but why can't I be interested in high school? (Laughter)

And so I agree with my friend Gerard about the power of social mobility. We lived it, but what would it look like to commune with the leading thinkers, as Johann said, earlier on in our education in a way that animates democracy for kids? And so I like to believe that there's more that we can do on this front.

I mean, whether we like it or not, the way we commune with our founding fathers right now is through text and for some of us thousand-dollar Broadway tickets. (Laughter) But it's largely through text. And so what would it look like to put these texts at the center of our education in a way that makes us excited about that time and not just hold on for dear life until you get to college because everything will be better?

MR. NEEM: I would just add, you know, Labaree's concern in that essay and his other work is that from the beginning efforts to put democratic equality at the center of education

were quickly trumped by families seeking to credential their children. And credentialism is what comes when there's a vacuum of purpose for public schools.

So I think given that lots of kinds of education can lead to economic success, why not have the kind of education that puts democratic texts at the center? Why not have the kind of education that orients people and commits people to democratic virtues and gives them the kind of education they need? Because it'll be as useful on Wall Street as it is in other places.

But if we don't talk that talk, then credentialism at its very worst fills a vacuum because we're not willing to fill it with something better. And I think that's what's at stake.

MR. GALSTON: Yes, I'm going to recognize the woman next to the woman who just asked a question, and then I'm going to work my way across and backwards.

MS. DELLO: Hi. My name is Barbara Dello. I started school in Catholic school and then I went to a school where we had a moment of silence and then my children when to a school where they were taught secular homogenous values. How do you incorporate -- many feel that the secular values kind of has been one of the factors in the diminishment of religion in our country? Shouldn't public education respect and be supportive of religious, cultural, and individual differences in a free society rather than striving for cultural and religious unity in addition to civic and public unity?

MR. GALSTON: Good question, thank you. Who wants to jump into this raging fire? (Laughter)

MS. REUBEN: So I'd just to say that I think religion is doing very well in our country, and I don't mean that sarcastically. I think that particularly if we compare ourselves to European countries, too many other developed countries, to countries that have tried to incorporate people of different backgrounds, we have very thriving churches and synagogues and mosques. And I think that's a wonderful aspect of our country and I think that we should continue to encourage that.

Now, what should schools' role be in that? We currently have an interpretation of our Constitution that has said that public schools, there has to be a sharp line between public schools and religion. We've had different interpretations of that. We've had periods of time where schools taught a single religious view, that they read the Protestant Bible, and people felt alienated from those schools. We've had periods of time where schools let children break into groups and go study with the Catholic priest and with the rabbi and with the Protestant minister, so that there could be incorporating different points of view.

We currently have religious education through the home and, when families choose it, through going to a church or a mosque or a synagogue that support them in their religious education of their children. That hasn't created a crisis, but I think many people agree that we want some way in which that there is a kind of communication across the home and the school. And sometimes people think that's about teaching about religion, but many people find teaching about religion to be very insufficient because it's sometimes too distant and often sometimes characterizes religion. It doesn't capture the religious feeling and the things that are important about religion.

There have been some people who have been talking about how do you have education about religion that is near, that tries to get into the experience of religion? And I think that's a very promising idea where schools try to help children understand what people get from religion, how people experience religion, and that not be only about a single religious tradition, but that be across religious traditions and allow people to understand that some of what we get form our religion: community, values, a sense of the world that's having something more important than the here and now and the material.

I think that if there was a way to try to reform education about religion so it was near and allowed people to understand that across various religious traditions religion serves those functions, then I think that we could have religious education in the schools that wasn't proselytizing, but also wasn't alienating. And so I see a lot of promise in that new development

in religious -- education about religion to try to make it near to the experience.

MR. GALSTON: Let me offer a personal anecdote. I went to public elementary schools in Connecticut. And I'm going to date myself here. I'm Jewish. The majority of my classmates were Catholic and every morning we began with a recitation of what I now have learned is the Protestant version of the Lord's Prayer. (Laughter) And while I can't say that it did me irreparable damage, I don't think that's a viable model under current circumstances.

In circumstances of religious diversity, which surely characterizes American society, that prayer, if it's supposed to be unified prayer, is always some particular religion's prayer, and we can't go that road anymore. Even if the Supreme Court hadn't made its decisions blocking that road, I think that would no longer be a viable road. So we need to think in a different way about all of this.

Let me recognize some other questions now. Okay, I'm going to switch genders for a minute, if I may. That gentleman in the red shirt.

MR. LENNON: Thanks. My name's Alex Lennon. I work at George Washington, although I'm actually an international security policy guy, not education policy. You may know the high school policy topic this year for policy debate is on education policy in the country. And I sort of moonlight as the policy debate coach at Thomas Jefferson in Virginia.

My question is about STEM and its role in education today and how it works with the purposes of education that you're talking about. As an outsider in education policy it strikes me in sort of three very quick ways.

One is the ability to quantify STEM and compete on international levels for the U.S. system versus others, how that turns education outward rather than inward. Second is the capital costs of STEM equipment and how that may undercut the ability to be more equal across school districts. And third is sort of the content and purpose of STEM education not necessarily -- I won't say at cross-purposes with, but the same as some of the humanities, democracy-building sort of purposes that you're talking about.

How relevant is STEM historically compared to other influences in education? And how does it shape education policy today in ways that it hasn't in the past? It seems very influential. We haven't talked about it at all. Is it different today?

MR. NEEM: So let me sort of frame this as we often I think in policy conversations use education to fight what we see as our greatest threat as a country. So after the Revolution the greatest threat was just this possibility of a republic.

During the Cold War, there was this ideal of shaping democratic minds to fight against Communism, and that led to huge investments in the arts and sciences, including the humanities. With the end of the Cold War, the greatest fear of many policymakers is economic competitiveness. And so we've turned to our schools to fight that big war. So historically, it makes sense that whatever we're fearing most, we're turning to our schools to fix.

That said, I will just make a very quick answer, which is STEM fundamentally reorients historically the role of the sciences in education, where the emergence of the arts and sciences, which we used to use as a term, referred to both the sort of trivial liberal arts, like logic and grammar and rhetoric, so the trivium, but also the sciences, which were the humanities, social sciences, and the biological and physical sciences. So that they were seen as bodies of knowledge that a liberally educated person needed access to for purposes of being effective citizens, for the purposes of their own self-development as intellectuals and scholars.

STEM reorients the sciences to a purely economic kind of vocational model that splits them apart from the humanities and social sciences. And increasingly, we're telling students not that they should be scientifically literate, but rather -- or that they should be scientists in a kind of intellectually curious way, but rather the secret to their success is to major or focus on a small subset of subjects that policymakers now see as the secret to America's future economic success.

So it's changed. STEM is a fundamental change to the nature of where the sciences fit in in the larger curriculum.

MR. ROBINSON: So launching of Sputnik and the response of the National Defense Education Act changed the concept of what we know as STEM. Also, the teaching of foreign language is something we often forget about, that law.

2010, I'm speaking to scientists at one of the NASA locations in Virginia. And someone said for the first time in her career there are more non-Americans working in an area in chemistry than Americans trained in American schools. You talk to business owners who are going overseas to recruit, a lot of them, in fact, are recruiting people, STEM-based subjects that they can't find domestically.

Now, I think there's some hyperbole in that just to fit into ideas of foreign affairs, but STEM is important particularly for young women and the importance of getting them involved. So when you have a group called Black Girls Code, that's not by mistake. But also white girls and Hispanic girls and Asian girls, all girls should code.

So I think it's important, but I would say take a look at the business literature and figure out exactly why they're saying they're having to go over the Atlantic or the Pacific to find someone. There's some truth to that and I think we need to get real about it.

MR. HERNANDEZ: I just want to take a slightly different tack. I agree with all the Sputnik competitive stuff, but we're in a period of unprecedented technological change. And if we take some of these old ideas around the dignity of work and self-realization it's hard to ignore the STEM fields. And there's some amazing programs, like, you know, TechHire that's really looking to put people to work in not $100,000 a year jobs, jobs that sustain incomes, that are accessible to a broad -- hopefully successful to a broad swatch of the population if we prepare them correctly.

And I just don't know how we -- I'm not sure those are mutually exclusive from this exploration of the humanities that we're talking about. If you read about gene editing or any number of topics that I'm sure come up in your speech and debate, the humanities and STEM I think are just getting more and more woven together.

MR. GALSTON: I'd now like to recognize some hands from the back of the room and then move back forward. And I see first a woman in -- or my distance vision is terrible, somebody in an orange -- burnt orange? Okay, right. And then I'll recognize the gentleman in the far back.

MR. VON KLAPPRED: Hi. Yes, I'm Christopher Von Klappred. I'm an undergrad at George Washington. I'm very happy to hear all the GW people here.

Anyway, I actually came from Michigan. And as you can understand, this is a very fascinating talk because the state of education there is really unfortunate. And I know, Mr. Robinson, you touched at the very end about the segregation of blacks there and how sometimes that's put at a high priority when there's segregation all around.

And first a quick anecdote, I came from a school that I think is very representative of this inclusive school. Whites were the minorities, but many other ones in the district were fully black. And the sad reality is my school didn't even have windows in reality.

So I'm trying to understand, on one hand, monetary, because we got no money at my school and clearly we felt neglected for that reason. And so why is it those inclusive schools aren't getting the same representation? And on the flip side, we're also leaving many minorities in the dark in trying to achieve that hope and that self-determination that they want to have.

MS. REUBEN: I think that you're raising a really important issue and that's just the basic support for schools and for lots of other public infrastructure that we need to face. And then, in addition, thinking about beyond the basic support, how do we create incentives for certain things that we're talking about in terms of bringing people together across different economic backgrounds, different religious, different racial, different ethnic, in order to create a more united United States; to create out of that diversity the unity that the founders thought? And I think without a basic level of support there's no discussion to be had. And so I think the discussion assumes that there aren't schools that, unfortunately, do exist today that aren't

getting even the most basic needs met.

MR. GALSTON: The good news is that there has been some serious movement in that direction over the past generation. School funding from one district to the next is a lot less unequal than it was 25 or 30 years ago, in part because there's been a shift in the funding stream from the local community to state provision. And so state grants to local school districts have served as an important equalizer. There's a lot left to go, there's no question about that, but it's not as though we are where we were 25 or 30 years ago with regard to equalizing school funding.

There's a gentleman at the very back.

MR. JENKINS: Hello. My name's Erick Jenkins. I'm a student at East Carolina University here on fellowship for the Fund for American Studies. And I currently intern at Pearson Education.

So my question is based on a statement that Julie made a bit earlier. You talked about how outcomes of school are based on families, the student's family. Actually, I think that's part of the problem, not part of something that's good. So like kids who have bad homes, kids who don't have that guidance in the home, when they go to school, it they're not learning what they need to learn to be a proper citizen, I don't think their outcomes are going to be good.

One thing I have a question for the whole panel is how do you assume we start adding more proper civics education, so students can actually know how to file their taxes when they leave high school, how to actually do things that they need to do as an adult when they leave high school, even vote and things like that? How do you propose we kind of implement that in the local school districts that you all have agreed upon that local systems actually don't have as much power as, say, the state? So how do you propose we kind of do that?

MS. REUBEN: Just as clarification, I don't think it is good that we currently have the economic inequality that we have and that it is passed through generations. I would like to see public policies that reduce that, but education alone is not going to do that. Education can

create individual social mobility, but it's not going to be undo the intergenerational economic disparity. We need other public policies.

I think that if we were more honest about that, then wealthy parents might not need to segregate their children as much. That was the point I was making, that wealthy parents do not have to be afraid that if they support mixed schools their children lose out.

I do think that the points that you're making about how do we bring in this practical civic education, as well as the sort of civic education that Johann talks about in the book that is really focused on this kind of self-development, I think that we're going to have to think about partnerships in order to do that. And some of those might be private-public school partnerships, but some of them might be public-public partnerships.

So libraries are an underused resource in many communities and I think that partnerships with libraries and schools for things like how do you register to vote and those kinds of basic functions I think could be very helpful. But I think that we're going to have to think about a lot of different partnerships. And the question is how to give the people in the school enough time to manage those partnerships and build those partnerships and keep them alive? And I think that is about a lot more resources and radically thinking about what people's jobs are and how do we redefine those jobs.

MR. HERNANDEZ: I share with you -- I differ slightly around the effects of family than my colleague here. Let me share a little bit about my high school which wasn't very good. When your high schools not very good, the effects of family are very, very strong.

There also are schools that make profound shifts in the outcomes of kids and we treat them as statistical aberrations. And part of the big debate in that education is whether they're aberrations or not, or there's opportunity here. And we could argue that for another day.

To answer your question, though, what's the opportunity around introducing more civics and more programming, I used to teach high school. And we had these eight-hour days -- eight-period days and every piece of real estate there's glorious wars fought over whether it's

foreign language or do you double-block math or all these things. I would challenge us, if we really thin that democratic education and character education sits at the center, what if unencumbered 12 hours a week for those types of programs, who would our schools look different? And I actually think there's really nothing preventing us from doing that other than tradition.

In Colorado, where I live, we actually have a very permissive state framework. We don't even know what the laws are, but no one actually ever bothers to test them. And so design a school where we encumber 12 hours, 15 hours, and put democrat education and -- I'm not saying do this with all schools, but do it with a set of schools. I think you're create some really great programs that animate the local families and parents and hopefully have a chance of reanimating the community.

MR. ROBINSON: The first time I met Bill was at a Hoover Institution event looking at the Moynihan Report at 50 and the families. So I would just say great time to have this conversation again about the structure of the family.

Earlier today, I was at the Heritage Foundation at their anti-poverty event. This is a conversation, in fact, Johann brings it up in his book. So it's time to dust off some books and to take a look at family structure.

The civics part, I would tell you from a state level 20 years ago I would have said we should make sure we inculcate it into the curriculum. I wouldn't say that today. I would want outside agencies of what I call civil society, nonprofits to get involved in doing this.

Number one, the teachers will tell you please don't add another course to what I'm teaching. That's number one.

Number two, a Supreme Court justice, or former, Sandra Day O'Connor, in her post-Supreme Court life is working with a tech company to actually teach civics virtually. So I would say take a look at that because the way we have -- if you have a civics class in the environment we have today, it's not a civics class, it's a partisanship class, and that's another

story.

MR. NEEM: You know, just a quick point, which is that civics, like all character traits, are taught through longstanding practices. And so a civics class will not make a citizen. What makes a citizen is if a community, including the school community, at its very deepest level acts and walks like citizenship matters, and if our culture doesn't want that or enable that, no civics class is going to change that any more than a parent telling someone -- yelling at someone not to yell teaches that child not to yell. (Laughter)

MR. GALSTON: Since, alas, we are about out of time, let me just bring this to a close with considerable regret, but I suspect that the people on the panel would be willing to stick around for some questions afterwards unless they have really pressing engagements.

When I was younger I started a research center on the civic and political life of teenagers and young adults. We sponsored an experiment that had remarkable results. We brought a team into the classroom in all the 11th and 12th grades and it was nothing highfalutin'. It was a mock polling booth and kids learned how to cast ballots. And guess what. The kids that had gone through that one 45-minute preparatory exercise were much more likely as young adults to vote.

And what that taught me was that when you're young the only thing you think you can die of is embarrassment. (Laughter) And that young adults are literally ashamed to show up and admit that they don't know how to vote. So if we did that one very simple thing for 45 minutes in every 11th and 12th grade class in the country, we could probably have a magical effect on young adult voting participation. That doesn't solve all of our civic problems, but it's a start.

And let me just conclude by reflecting on Gerard Robinson's final point, that is that in the current political situation civics education is partisanship education. Regrettably, there's a substantial measure of truth to that. And one indication of that is Johann a number of times used phrases like "democratic character" and "democratic virtues." Do we any more

agree on the nature of the democratic virtues in this society? And the research available to me suggests that we do not, that conservatives have one canon of the virtues, including the best virtues to inculcate in their children, and liberals have a different canon of the virtues and there are also different conceptions of what good citizenship is.

And so the path back to a real concentration on civic and character education in this schools is greatly complicated by the hyper polarized circumstances in which we find ourselves. That's just a fact, regrettably.

Well, please join me in thanking this splendid panel. (Applause)

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