civ·ic ed·u·ca·tor \'sī-vik\ \'e-jə-ˌkā-tər
1. one who provides a classroom rooted in dialogue, in which student ideas, experiences, aspirations and identities are fore-grounded and connected to the larger civic and global environment. 2. one whose teaching practice is informed by the philosophy that education should function both as a vehicle of social criticism and personal enrichment. 3. one who believes that the arts and humanities should play an indispensable role in the education of democratic personalities. 4. one who integrates into their classroom the Deweyan principle that democracy is more an internal mode of being based on certain values than it is an external set of institutions embodied in the state. 5. one who assumes that civic literacy involves the development of the capacity to "read" power relations critically, wherever they exist, including within the classroom. 6. civic educators do not always assume they know everything.

Introduction: Reflections on War, Peace, and the Formation of American Civic Identity

Kerry Burch
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The war against war is going to be no holiday excursion or camping party.

—William James[1]

The permanent war society is upon us. How long this condition will continue to function as the central organizing principle for American society, of course, remains an open question. And while we could enter into fascinating debates about when exactly, in historical terms, the comprehensive militarization of American society first achieved critical mass, few could deny today that such a critical mass now exists. As a result, the conviction is growing among many Americans that our cultural identity as a democratic people is increasingly jeopardized by the domestic and foreign-policy depredations of the Bush administration, reflected particularly in the unprecedented "preventive" war now being waged against Iraq.[2]

The massive reallocation of national resources from the fields of education and health care to the fields of war and occupation means, eventually, that vital human needs will be unmet as they encounter renewed forms of institutional repression. Just as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., observed during the Vietnam debacle, the domestic consequences of U.S. militarism and foreign occupation soon become utterly tangible as such policies "create" impoverished school systems and equally impoverished national health care systems.[3] In acknowledging the domestic consequences of our imperial policies, I am struck by President Eisenhower's earlier, if largely forgotten, warning about the "unwarranted influence of the military-industrial complex" and about the danger this combination posed to the democratic integrity of the nation.[4] In retrieving these voices from the rhetorical wilderness, I want to suggest that if current trends continue, the "unwarranted influence" of militarism can only further alienate the public schools from their civic mission to educate citizens *to be citizens* through a deliberate learning of the democratic values within the public sphere of the classroom.[5] If the current war is deemed triumphal in the public consciousness, then the democratic values that define the civic mission of public education will likely be severely compromised.

For example, will the public schools, in compliance with the national security imperative of inculcating the "new ethos" of preventive war, dutifully reproduce the kind of imperial, civic selves that the doctrine logically requires? Shall democratic citizens, in other words, learn to accept the legitimacy of preventive war? Some might ask if it is even possible, nowadays, for public pedagogues to transform the passion for war into a passion for peace, into a kind of civic passion that William James famously described as the "moral equivalent of war." John Dewey, for one, thought that such a transformation was indeed possible: He wrote that teachers should see their work as an "instrument in the active and constant suppression of the war spirit."[6] In considering these complex and inter-related issues of war, peace, and civic identity, we must also be alert to the rich tableau of "noble lies" that official authority historically relies upon to legitimate not only their own wars but the institution of war itself.[7] Given the intimate nexus between propaganda and the manufactured legitimacy of war, foremost on our

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pedagogical agenda may well be the task of drawing-out and educating those civic dispositions that would enable students to track and discern such patterns of official, authoritative deception.

This issue of *Thresholds in Education* explores the many predicaments and opportunities that confront civic educators in the disturbed wake of September 11. Following are interviews with two exemplary public intellectuals who explore the ways in which educators might creatively respond to these challenges: former Senator Paul Simon (D-IL) and classicist Martha Nussbaum, Distinguished Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago. Senator Simon is deeply familiar with the American political landscape and offers a perspective on the future of public education that is grounded both in democratic values and in a religiously informed vision of hope and reconciliation. Martha Nussbaum is one of the nation's most prodigious and exciting intellectual figures, and offers a perspective on our educational future that is rooted in classical Greek and Stoic philosophy—views also reflected in two of her widely heralded books *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education* (Harvard University Press, 1997) and, more recently, *For Love of Country?* (Beacon Press, 2002). While the educational problems magnified by September Eleventh are discussed in-depth by both thinkers, their interviews also extend beyond this benchmark moment, as both address the continuing problem of public school inequality introducing alternatives for curricular transformation with commentaries that include reflections on their own personal, educational pasts.

Additional contributors' articles augment and extend the Simon/Nussbaum interviews. As an eye-witness to the attacks on the World Trade Center, Joe Toris uses this traumatic personal experience as a catalyst for exploring the anxiety that he contends is endemic to the formation of American civic identity. Toris navigates this theoretical terrain by interrogating the controversial case of John Walker Lindh, the young American citizen captured fighting for the Taliban forces during the American invasion of Afghanistan in December, 2001. Deploying gender as a tool of critical analysis, Amy Wlodek spies some intriguing parallels between the Vietnam War and the current "war on terrorism." She highlights the frequently undiscussed, but ever-present, reproductive linkages that exist between masculinity and war and suggests ways in which teachers might encourage a greater awareness of gender as a means to critique the psychology and culture of war. Emmanuel Allie, an American citizen born and raised in Sierra Leone, writes about his recent experiences in revisiting his war-torn homeland. In applying Nussbaum's principle of cosmopolitan education to our understanding of West Africa and its relation to the United States, Allie provides an antidote to the perils of American parochialism. Taken together, we hope this collection of articles inspires readers to think through and clarify their own commitments to the task of educating critically reflective, democratic citizens.

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Endnotes

1. William James, "The Moral Equivalent of War." In *William James: The Essential Writings.* Edited by Bruce Wilshire (Albany: SUNY Press, 1984) 249-261. This article, published in 1910, is foundational for the field of civic education since James puts into play, in interesting ways, the concept that desires can be educated toward peaceful as well as toward violent ends. The article is often credited with having provided the intellectual underpinning for some novel New Deal programs (CCC, WPA), and with the very idea of finding renewed meaning—and passion— in domestic service rather than in foreign wars. For this reason, it compliments Nussbaum's theory of cosmopolitan education, inasmuch as both narratives presuppose an "educated" expansion of civic meaning and identity.
2. There has been some confusion about the distinction between "pre-emptive" war and "preventive" war that requires clarification. A pre-emptive war is having determined the imminence of an attack and striking before that imminent foe attacks. On the other hand, in preventive war, you attack a foe whose forces one day could "hypothetically" be used against you. Preventive war

thus "lowers the bar" for launching war; and thus, legitimacy is achieved not on the basis of any empirical threat or danger on the ground in a military sense, but almost exclusively on the basis of representational strategies that are themselves untethered from the burden of evidence. In turn, lowering the bar for launching war necessarily places greater levels of public trust in the intelligence and discernment of our leaders to distinguish, and not to deliberately confuse *real* as opposed to *fictive* dangers. The brewing scandal we see daily in the headlines—some have called it "wargate"—gains political steam in large part from the convoluted misrepresentations that were required to justify a war against an enemy whose level of threat fell considerably below traditional criterion. For more on the distinction between pre-emptive and preventive war, see *The Nation*, "Present at the Dissolution," August 18/25, 2003; 3-5.

[3] For further analysis of MLK's attempt in his later years to conceptually link the American energies and resources devoted to Vietnam with the consequent "subtraction" of those energies and resources from the domestic front, see Michael Eric Dyson, "As I Ponder the Madness of Vietnam: The Outlines of a Militant Pacifism." In *I May Not Get There With You: The True Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: The New Press, 2000) 51-77.

[4] Dwight D. Eisenhower, Farewell Address, January 1961. Regardless of what one might think about Eisenhower's complicity in militarizing American society during the 1950s, this text ought to be mined for its great heuristic value, as it can be used to open a window on vital contradictions reflected in American political culture and on questions about how Americans might negotiate these civic tensions. The relevant passage merits quotation:

> In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper.

See Richard Hofstadter, *Great Issues in American History: From Reconstruction to Present Day, 1864-1981* (New York: Vintage, 1983); 543-45.

[5] One primary text that mandates the public schools to educate youngsters for national citizenship on an equal basis is *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (347 U.S. 1954). Conventional readings of this case, however, generally fail to direct analysis to those passages which could be used to challenge not only the moral and legal legitimacy of racial discrimination in state-administered public education, which has been accomplished, but also discrimination in public education on the basis of wealth, a form of discrimination in which the *citizenship* of the citizen is educated unequally.

> Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments...It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today it is a principle instrument of awakening the child to cultural values...In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms. (493).

[6] John Dewey, "Nationalizing Education (1916)" In *The Essential Dewey. Volume 1, Pragmatism, Education, Democracy*. Edited by Thomas Alexander and Larry Hickman. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 269. Despite these pacifist sentiments, Dewey ended up supporting the U.S. entrance into WWI. The best dialogue in written form between two Dewey scholars regarding his rather tortured attitude toward WWI can be found in Lynda Stone's "Dewey's Contribution to an American Hubris: Philosophy, Education, and War;" (274-281) and in Jim Garrison's response to Stone, "Recovery, Reconstruction, and Self-Renewal."(282-284) See *Philosophy of Education 2002*.

[7] Plato originally formulated the "Noble Lie" to function not as an instrument of war but as an educational strategy to create a civic myth of community (*Republic* 414 b-415d), an "imagined community" that had to be pedagogically constructed. The point is that both forms of noble lying—whether for purposes of war or for peace—ought to receive far more critical attention than has previously been the case as central factors in the formation of civic character. For a positive application of Plato's theory of the noble lie to the contemporary problem of American civic identity, see Barry Strauss, "The Melting Pot, the Mosaic, and the Agora." In *Athenian Political Thought and the Reconstruction of American Democracy*. Eds. J. Peter Euben, John Wallach, Josiah Ober. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 252-64.

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Interview with Senator Paul Simon

Paul Simon has been active in political and public affairs his entire adult life. He was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives in the 1950s, to the State Senate in 1962, while also serving as Lt. Governor from 1966-74. He was elected to the US House of Representatives and served until 1982. In 1982, he was elected to the U.S. Senate and served two terms until 1994. Senator Simon's name is virtually synonymous with the values and principles of liberalism, which, as the interview makes clear, is predicated on the idea that the state has an active and positive role to play in the nation's quest to achieve racial and social justice. Significantly, Simon was the only non-lawyer to be selected to the prestigious Senate Judiciary Committee during a particularly tumultuous period of its history, a "plum" appointment that indicates the deep level of respect he consistently elicited from both sides of the political aisle. Currently, Senator Simon is head of the Public Policy Institute at SIU-Carbondale. The following interview took place via telephone on December 8, 2003. I want to thank Ric Orem and his staff at the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Policy Analysis at NIU's College of Education for their cooperation in transcribing the interview notes.

KB: *First of all, Senator Simon, thank you for your time and attention. It seems as though the trajectory of your career since 1994 suggests that there is life after the U.S Senate!*

PS: Yes, well, thank you. I retired early 1997, and didn't run for reelection in 1996. I don't mean any disrespect to those who go into the lobbying field, but all of the extremely generous offers in that field were just

not my cup of tea. So I came back to my home territory; and I'm teaching at Southern Illinois University and heading the Public Policy Institute, plus I am doing a lot of volunteer work, nationally and internationally.

KB: *What kind of courses do you teach?*

PS: Well, they let me wander around. This next semester I'll be teaching a course on the legislative process, which is kind of a natural for me, and political science, but I also teach a course on nonfiction writing, and I'm a history buff. And so, last Spring I taught a course on the history of the abolition movement.

I think we're the only nation in the world where you can go through grade school and not study another language.

KB: *Could you discuss which particular books or authors have had the greatest influence on your philosophy and politics?*

PS: Yes, I would have to say, when I grew up, my father
was a Lutheran minister and so the Bible was, it sounds kind of "holier than thou" to mention it, but the reality is that the Bible obviously played a big role in my early years. Another book that hit me at just the right time (I must have been 12 or 13) was Richard Wright's *Black Boy*. My parents were active in what we then called "race relations," and reading it deeply moved me. It's not Wright's most famous book, but it really grabbed me; and I would say of any single novel that I have read, that one meant more to me than anything else. That would have been in '41 or '42, somewhere right in there.

KB: *Many have commented on the meaning of 9/11 for U.S foreign policy, for the economy, for our relationship to Islam, for the national identity, but less talk is heard about what 9/11 might mean for civic education. Could you discuss how this defining event might help us clarify the mission of the public schools?*

PS: Certainly, I think we have to recognize that it is not enough to simply fault political leaders. By way of background, under the Marshall Plan, we led the world in responding to the needs of the poor beyond our borders, and now, among the 22 wealthiest nations of the world, based on the percentage of our income that goes to help the poor beyond our borders, we're dead last. It's easy to say, "Oh, that's Congress. That's the current administration." But in a great sense, that reflects our insensitivity, *as a public*, to the rest of the world. Public education has to take part of the responsibility for this attitude, and our insensitivity comes across to other countries as arrogance. I've had a reasonably good education, and I've traveled abroad a great deal; but I remember when our hostages were taken in 1979, all of a sudden I was reading about Shiite Muslims, and Sunni Muslims, and I realized I didn't know anything about the Muslim world. I knew about the various branches of Christianity and Judaism, but that's it. I didn't know about the rest of the world.

KB: *You seem to be pointing to the value of expanding a certain type of multicultural curricular emphasis.*

PS: Yes, in thinking about this curriculum, also consider that we are the only nation in the world where you can go through grade school, high school, college, get a Ph.D., and never have a year of a foreign language. I think we're the only nation in the world where you can go through grade school and not study another language. And it should be much more than simply studying a language, particularly today. When I was in college, in learning another language, we learned how to conjugate verbs, but the people whose language we were learning could have lived on Mars! You know, we didn't learn about their culture. And today it's very different, at least in some places. For example, an interesting experiment took place in the Tel Aviv area in Israel. About 700, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders (some Arab, some Jewish) were involved. The Arab students were taught Hebrew, the Jewish students were taught Arabic. A similar sampling of students were not taught either language. At the end of three years, they were all tested. Not surprisingly, the Arab students who were taught Hebrew were much more open to working with

the Israeli government. The Jewish students who'd been taught Arabic were much more open to working with the Palestinians and Israel's other Arab neighbors than those who had not been taught other languages. The lesson is not simply for the Middle East: The lesson is for us. If we want to relate to the other 96% of the world, we're going to have to become more sensitive to them.

KB: *Many commentators have talked about our geographical isolation as one reason for this cultural deficit.*

PS: Yes, that is correct, but geographical isolation is no longer an excuse. Let me give you another example of what I am trying to get at. A former member of Congress, Steven Solarz (D-NY) persuaded me that I should go to an area in North Africa where there were a host of political problems between people in what once was called Spanish Sahara and Morocco. Steve thought maybe I could play a constructive role in helping to mediate that conflict. But I did other things, too. One time I spent the night in a tent out in the remote Sahara desert. I remember the next day, going to visit a little school. The students didn't have pencils or anything like that, just a primitive blackboard and some chalk. Those students were studying another language. And I thought, here we are, with all our fluorescent lights, and desks, and computers, and all these other things. But those kids are getting something that our kids are not getting. To rationalize our failure in this area by saying it's a matter of resources, that we don't have enough money to do it, is ridiculous. We're the richest nation on the face of the earth, and we're the worst nation in foreign education on the face of the earth.

If we're putting too much stress on computer knowledge or technical knowledge, rather than building a base for civic understanding, we're missing the deeper purposes of education.

KB: *Well, you've brought up several interesting points, Senator. Let me pick up on one strand: Do you see a contradiction or conflict between the kind of education we're talking about here and the imperatives of the standards movement, which seems to treat knowledge as valuable only if it can be measured? For instance, "questioning" and "critical thinking" are important qualities for a civic education to cultivate, but they resist quantification,and are thus treated as less valuable within the curriculum.*

PS: Sometimes we can be so practical that we become impractical. If we're putting too much stress on computer knowledge or technical knowledge, rather than building a base for civic understanding, we're missing the deeper purposes of education. Students need to understand how civilization came about, to understand what Plato had to say, and to also understand a very fundamental lesson--that satisfaction in life comes not from piling up money for yourself, but in reaching out and helping others.

KB: *You mentioned the financial factor in terms of the vast resources the nation has at its disposal, and how little of this money finds its way into the realm of public education. Isn't the federal contribution to public education around 6 to 7%?*

PS: That is correct. Or, let me put it another way. It is about 1.5% of our federal budget. In fiscal year 1949, it was 9% of our federal budget.

KB: *That's a dramatic shift backward, can you explain what's up with that?*

PS: As a percentage, it *has* gone down dramatically. The greatest thrust forward in the 19th century was the Land Grant College Act, signed by Abraham Lincoln, which was controversial at the time and almost defeated. The greatest thrust forward in the 20th century, and which explains the higher 1949 percentage, was the GI bill, which only passed in Congress by one vote. But people were willing to get out and fight for education, for something that was controversial, in order to make a better world; and we have to be willing to do the same.

KB: *So, would it be fair to say that you believe the federal contribution to public education should be increased substantially?*

PS: Yeah, absolutely.

KB: *Do you have any numbers?*

PS: I don't have any numbers. However, I did notice the National Education Association uses the figure that it ought to be derived from one-third federal, one-third state, and one-third local. I'm not wedded to any particular formula. But we ought to make sure that quality education is available to all young people in our country at the grade school and high school levels. We ought to be doing infinitely more in pre-school education. At the college level, what is happening is the costs are rising much more rapidly then aid is rising. Thus, we are starting to re-segregate higher education in the nation more and more on the basis of economics. Now that has always been the case to some extent, but it is now being aggravated.

KB: *Today education is considered a legal right at the state level within all 50 state constitutions, and I'm wondering if you think that an equal quality public education should be a specifically enumerated legal right at the* federal *level?*

PS: I do. I strongly favor that. I think you may, even under the present U.S. Constitution, get such a ruling eventually from the courts. The "equal protection clause" of the 14th Amendment should definitely apply to education.

KB: *Alright then, do you think that the property tax mechanism used for funding public education today should be ruled unconstitutional?*

PS: Well, I would not rule it totally unconstitutional, but I would say that there should be some balancing factor from the state. Now the states generally have something of a balancing factor, but it is still true that we spend three or four or seven times as much per pupil in some districts as we do in others; and ironically some of the districts that we spend the most in are the wealthiest districts where the students need help the least (where they get stimulation at home). A related area concerns adult literacy which is a hidden problem in our country. When I look at the test scores in the southern part of Illinois, they rank in the lower one-fifth of our state. As I analyze that, it is in part a problem grounded in spending per pupil. But, a much greater factor is the poverty level, and the poverty level reflects the education level of the parents. So that where you have a district in which there is a high level of adult illiteracy, you are going to "pass that disease" along on to your children because you don't have a home where there are books, where there are magazines, where parents can help the kids with their school work. This is one of the things that we really ought to be tackling, and we're not doing it—although we have a nominal program. I was pleased to be the chief sponsor of the Adult Literacy Act some years ago, but we ought to be doing much more. I made my first trip to Cuba about two years ago, and spent over 5 hours talking with Fidel Castro—I've never met with the county clerk for that long! They claim they have reduced illiteracy there from 83% to 3%. Now there's no way of gauging the accuracy of that claim. But even if it's 10% or 15%, what they did was they clearly made it a national priority, and we ought to be doing the same.

KB: *What you say about Cuba reminds me that the United Nations has published some praiseworthy things about their education and health systems. It also reminds me that Jonathan Kozol has written about Cuban civic education in his* Children of the Revolution.

We ought to make sure that quality education is available to all young people in our country at the grade school and high school levels.

PS: I'm a great Jonathan Kozol fan.

KB: *Good, let's talk about Kozol's* Savage Inequalities. *He has a chapter entitled "Other People's Children," the gist of which is that most of*

us find it easy to love our own children, but the real problem is loving, or learning to care about and desiring the good for other peoples' children. Can you expand on this pedagogical problem? How to teach compassion, how to learn empathy for "abstract others"?

PS: I don't think you can have a course assignment and get three hours of credit for studying a course in compassion. Somehow it has to be integrated into everything. It has to be integrated into the attitude of a school, whether it's a university, or a college, or a grade school, or a high school. Somehow we ought to be, at teachers' retreats and elsewhere, reminded that humanity ultimately is not divisible, and we must be concerned about others. In one of Jonathan's books, *Ordinary Resurrections*, I think, he talks about an Episcopal church in New York City, where they were reaching out, really doing some things for kids. But you know, we're kind of comfortably aloof.

KB: *Would you say the continuation of this aloofness is somehow linked to our increasingly militarized national priorities?*

PS: Absolutely. For example, the bill President Bush signed the other day on the military. I'm all for an adequate military. I served overseas in the army, and I want a strong defense. But the bill that he signed means that we're spending more than the next 26 nations combined spend on their militaries! If the president is correct in saying the fight today is for the hearts and the minds of people around the world, and I think he is correct in that, then I think we have to recognize we must do something other than building more submarines, or more bombers, to capture the hearts and minds of people.

Let me give you another illustration. I've done a lot of work in the field of water, which is going to be a huge problem in the years ahead. According to the United Nations, each and every day, 9,500 children die because of poor quality water. These are easily preventable deaths! That's six hundred and thirty times as many as were killed at Columbine High School. That is three times as many as were killed at the World Trade Center. And yet today, Dec. 9, 2002, that astronomical figure is there and we hardly pay any attention to it. What if the president, instead of saying we're going to have a 1.35 trillion dollar tax cut, said we're going to reduce the figure to 1.33 trillion? What if we were to use that 20 billion, 2 billion a year, to bring safe water to kids around the world? I think we'd have a very different image, and I think we'd have to worry about terrorism a lot less.

KB: *Would you agree that the kind of education you envision is nearly impossible to achieve so long as the nation remains ensconced within a military paradigm of national security?*

According to the United Nations, each and every day, 9,500 children die because of poor quality water.

PS: I'd back off that some and say it a little differently. I would ask, what should our national priorities be? And then if you ask what our national priorities should be, then defense is obviously a part of it. But then you're going to shift what we do to some other things; and I think in the process of that we get in ruts—ruts in education, in the Senate, in national priorities. Journalists get in ruts. Everybody does. And we need to get out of those ruts. All of a sudden, you're not sure what the answer is because we're not emphasizing the things that are really important in the long term for our nation and for our world. Education should teach us how to face problems.

KB: *As you are probably aware, one of John Dewey's central projects was to use education to achieve what he called an "articulate public." But to move in the direction of an articulate public is difficult, for example, when control and ownership of the media is increasingly monopolized, constraining the development of this type of awareness.*

PS: Well, I think that is correct, but, then when you go to the media, you have to also ask, what kind of education do these reporters get? And is it in isolation from the rest of the world? Let me toss out one other

statistic that may interest you. This academic year, there are about 586,000 international students in American colleges and universities, and that's a great asset. But fewer than 1% of our students, at any point, study abroad for a summer or semester; and two-thirds of those who do, study in Western Europe. Ninety-five percent of the population growth in the world is going to be in the developing nations which we're largely ignoring. What if some of those journalism students were to spend a semester in South Africa, or India, or China, or any number of places? I think we would end up with a media much more sensitive to the rest of world. So it comes back to education again—both as the source and solution of most of our problems.

KB: *What you say resonates with me, because I spent a semester at the University of Nairobi in Kenya as a sophomore in college, and it changed everything for me. At least, I thought that it did.*

PS: Good for you. There are, however, some schools that focus a great deal on foreign study. You have Swarthmore College where about 43% study abroad, and St. Olaf in Minnesota also maintains a fairly high percentage. The University of Idaho, as a state university, is well above the average in encouraging foreign study.

KB: *If I may, I'd like to shift our focus to prison education. The Public Policy Institute that you head, among other things, is keenly interested in reforming prisoner education in this country. Can you tell me how many American citizens are incarcerated today?*

PS: It's over two million now. The United States has 4% of the world's population, and we have 25% of the world's prisoners. When I say "prison," there's a few distinctions that have to be made. Prisons are state and federal; jails are local—you know, county jails, city jails, and so forth. When I use the two million figure as two million prisoners, that means jails as well as prisons.

KB: *Can you discuss the states' responsibility to "rehabilitate" the incarcerated through the instrument of education? I am almost afraid to ask what the condition of prison education is today.*

PS: Well, it has not been totally abandoned, but it hardly receives the emphasis that it should. An emphasis, I might add, that would save tax dollars for people. These next statistics that I'm going to cite are about four years old, but I assume they haven't varied appreciably since then. At the federal level, of the prisoners who did *not* get a GED or a high school diploma, either before prison or in prison, 84% turn up in prisons again. Of those who *have* high school diplomas, 51% turn back into prison. Of those who have some college experience, only 18% return. I talked to the head of the Illinois Department of Corrections and, incidentally, it's interesting, in most places they call it a department of corrections. As you know, they don't do much "correcting." At any rate, he said the state figures in Illinois would be very similar. Well, despite those statistics (and I have to confess, I didn't have them when this issue came up on the floor of the Senate), when we adopted an amendment offered by my friend Jesse Helms to knock out any grant or any federal assistance to prisoners to get college courses, we saved a few dollars temporarily—like we save dollars when you don't put a roof on a house. But, you don't save money in the long run. And we clearly ought to be helping these people who are in prison because with the exception of a very small percentage, all are going to be coming out in our streets one of these days. Each year, we release into the general population, from our prisons and jails, the equivalent of

Each year, we release into the general population, from our prisons and jails, the equivalent of the population of Seattle. We ought to be seeing to it that they're prepared to come out and find a useful job.

the population of Seattle. We ought to be seeing to it that they're prepared to come out and find a useful job. One of the interesting things is that when employment goes up, the crime rate goes down. Recently the crime rate has gone up, no doubt owing to a rise in unemployment. You don't need to be an Einstein to figure this out. Obviously, one of the ways you make people employable is to see to it that they have an adequate education.

KB: *As a former member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, do you have any insights or predictions with regard to outcome of the University of Michigan affirmative action case that is currently before the Supreme Court?*

PS: I have no prediction, and I think it's going to be a close vote. I think it is very important that the University of Michigan prevail. The reality is the District Court ruled that there was a compelling state interest in having diversity in a student population. I could not agree more. I think it is really important for these students—and I'm here on a university campus—for White students to get to know African American students, and Hispanic students, and Asian students, and to have this cross-fertilization where we get to know and recognize how much we share in common no matter what our background is. The Appellate Court reversed the lower court, and now the Supreme Court is going to take a look at this; and my guess is it'll be a 5 to 4 decision. I don't know how they're going to rule, but I certainly hope they rule in favor of diversity.

KB: *Senator, it has been a pleasure speaking with you, and I want to thank you again for your time.*

PS: The pleasure has been mine, Kerry, and I wish you well in all of your future endeavors.

Interview with Martha Nussbaum

Martha Nussbaum is one of America's premiere public intellectuals. Since her record of publication is too extensive to cite here, I would like to briefly describe what I find most significant about her work in the context of civic education. As a classicist, Prof. Nussbaum seeks to articulate the ways in which Greek and Stoic philosophies in particular can illuminate and help us work through the most urgent moral and ethical predicaments facing us today. Most recently, for example, her advocacy of "cosmopolitan education" embraces a Stoic vision of liberty, patriotism, and education that transcends the boundaries of the nation-state. Cosmopolitan education reflects the principle that educators ought to play a far more active role than has previously been the case in helping to form civic identities whose primary allegiance is to the worldwide community of human beings.

KB: *To begin, I think the readers of* Thresholds *might be intrigued to hear you briefly discuss some of the intellectual sources that inspired your philosophy of education. Let me put the question this way: If you had to select three "must read" books for the purpose of stimulating aspiring teachers to better grasp the meaning of education and their future role in it, which ones would they be, and why?*

MN: My decision to write about liberal education had three main sources. One was my experience as a Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar, visiting campuses of many different types in the U. S. and teaching classes there. I learned a great deal about the diversity of higher education in America, and I was excited to see so much good teaching addressing the needs of students of many different kinds. Second, during the same period I was serving as a Research Advisor at the World Institute for Development Economics Research in Helsinki, working with people from all over the world on problems of women in developing countries. In this

way I learned the narrowness and incompleteness of my own previous education. Finally, I was asked to review Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind*, and I saw Bloom defending a type of education to which I had a number of objections. It was hierarchical and disdainful of students; it deified books rather than urging people to think for themselves; and it offered nothing to address the needs of intelligent citizenship in a world that is increasingly interconnected, where major human problems have to be solved together.

So you can see that the immediate motivations for writing on education were not books. On the other hand, thinking about how Bloom had misappropriated the views of the ancient Greeks and Romans made me see new importance in their own writings about education. So the main intellectual sources for my book were works that I had been reading and teaching for years, though without focusing on their implications for a theory of education. My "must-read" list would include, first of all, Plato's *Apology* and other "early dialogues" in which Socrates is a leading character, goading complacent people to think for themselves: Euthyphro and Laches, for example. Second, it would include Seneca's *Moral Epistle* 88, the famous "letter on liberal education," together with other related letters, such as Letter 33, on intellectual authority. Finally, I must add Rousseau's *Emile*, which follows Roman Stoic models in many ways, adding some important elements that the Stoics omitted, such as the importance of developing compassion for human suffering.

KB: *You have written quite a lot recently about the need for teachers to understand "9/11" as a moment of profound pedagogical importance, as an opportunity to educate more imaginative and compassionate world citizens. In your* Liberal Education and Global Responsibility, *for example, you argue that the young should receive "an education in common human weakness and vulnerability," because in learning to "de-code" the suffering of others, students would better develop their identification with and care for others, both locally and globally. As you survey the educational landscape today, Professor Nussbaum, almost two years after 9/11 and a few weeks after the "pre-emptive or preventive" war against Iraq, to what extent do you think the pedagogical approaches to civic education that you favor, are being enacted? What are some of the major impediments preventing these approaches and aims from being realized?*

MN: Let me warn you first that I'm going to talk only about college and university education, since I don't know enough about what's going on at the other levels which are, of course, absolutely crucial in this regard. I think that much of what I favor in *Cultivating Humanity* is indeed being enacted in colleges and universities across the country. Increasingly we see programs that address the experiences of minorities within the U. S. and women. We also see in many places at least the rudiments of world history and the study of the major world religions. I believe, however, that this international part is, so far, quite incomplete. Students aren't learning enough about other parts of the world; and, insofar as they are learning, they are sometimes learning simplistic approaches. For example, I would like to junk the whole category "non-Western cultures." That category is a Western artifact, obviously, and it does not tell us anything useful about how people in India, for example, understand their relationship to China, Africa, and Southeast Asia. I believe that Americans still have an appalling level of ignorance about many parts of the world whose future is intertwined with our own. India, in which I do a lot of work, is my pet peeve, but there are many other cases. Students are also not learning enough foreign languages—a part of my proposal to which I attach great importance. It is a national scandal that we have so few people who are fluent in Arabic or that there are only five universities in the country that even teach Bengali.

I would like to junk the whole category "non-Western cultures."

As for the critical-thinking part of my proposal, I am worried about that one, too. As job placement officer for our new Ph.D.s, I see evidence that philosophy programs, which supply essential training of the critical faculties exploring ethical and social issues, are being cut back in favor of disciplines that appear to be

more practical. But nothing is more practical than being able to debate with one's fellow citizens in a way that is careful, accurate, and mutually respectful.

Finally, I am worried about the arts. I insisted that an education in the arts, which develops the powers of the imagination to confront human predicaments, is an essential part of education for citizenship. I think there is a lot of evidence that the arts are being cut in schools (the one case where I do know enough about what is going on in schools to mention it), and that colleges and universities have not sufficiently integrated the arts into their curricular approaches.

KB: *Recently, in "For Love of Country?" and in other articles, you argue that our primary civic devotion should not be anchored in the national so much as the "cosmopolitan." This stance implies a fundamental re-education of erotic investment in which the primary object of affection is no longer the nation-state, but rather certain universal values that transcend purely national allegiances. From an epistemological perspective, could you expand on the theme of gender as it relates to the task of learning to undertake this radical leap of imagination?*

education is to learn to think critically about them. On the other hand, that very process opens up possibilities of transnational understanding. The international women's movement has had tremendous vitality and power for change because when women start talking critically about what they want to change in their society, this dialogue very quickly crosses national boundaries.

Cultural differences are important, but so too are the commonalities that link women all over the world who are struggling for better protection against rape and domestic violence, for better education and opportunities for their daughters, for a solution to the crushing problem of the "double day," i.e., women having to work a full job and also do all the child-care and, increasingly, elder-care. In my Feminist Philosophy class, we read a lot of materials by women in the U. S., but we also read stories by Mahasweta Devi, the great Bengali social activist and author. Students in the course can see that some of the problems the heroines in these stories have are peculiar to a local situation that is different from ours; but they can also see that many aspects of the problem, especially rape and domestic violence, are problems that the U. S. has not confronted well.

We learn to see the world through the lens of a particular society's norms of gender, just as we learn to see it through our society's norms of race and ethnicity.

MN: Each of us begins from a local situation, and we all develop strong attachments to that situation. I urge that we expand our sympathies without dropping our loves of the local—our families, our nation. Our goal should be an attitude that seeks the essentials of a flourishing human life for all human beings, no matter where they are. But we need to build outward from meanings that we understand, or our cosmopolitanism will be weak and watery. One aspect of a local situation is each person's gender. We learn to see the world through the lens of a particular society's norms of gender, just as we learn to see it through our society's norms of race and ethnicity. To some extent, these gender roles can inhibit us, so one big task of

KB: *I would like you to comment on the conceptual tensions that mark the relationship between democracy and cosmopolitanism. For example, if a person actively exemplifies democracy as a mode of being—in the Deweyan sense—could this person at the same time embody cosmopolitanism as a mode of being? Are the two models of civic identity intrinsically different? Or in their most highly developed expressions, do you see them as convergent?*

MN: Democracy, as Pericles defined it, means that people are governed by themselves and in their own interests, rather than being governed by a single class in its own interests. He did not restrict the ideal

of democracy to the nation state since, of course, there were no nation states at that time. The identification of democratic ideals with nation-state patriotism is a very recent phenomenon. I think we can favor democracy as an ideal while having a range of different views about the best role for the nation state to play in a world society that is increasingly interdependent. My own view is that nation states are the largest political unit we so far have that is decently accountable to people; so nation states should continue to play an important role in world society, although they need increasingly to accept the constraints of international human rights agreements, labor agreements, environmental agreements, and so forth. I am not at all in favor of a world state. My cosmopolitanism is articulated in my "capabilities approach": it says that each and every human being is entitled to some very specific opportunities, which I then enumerate. World society should cooperate to bring this about. But that doesn't mean junking the nation state. And indeed, I believe that it means defending the role of the state against the increasing power of multinational corporations.

Certain liberties are so fundamental that they should not be vulnerable to the whims of majoritarian politics.

I want to add that the form of democracy that I favor is not the ancient Greek majoritarian form. It is a form constrained by notions of inalienable human rights. Certain liberties are so fundamental that they should not be vulnerable to the whims of majoritarian politics. Most well-functioning democracies acknowledge this point by placing some fundamental entitlements in their constitutions as fundamental rights that cannot be abridged by majority vote. The sort of cosmopolitanism that I favor is strongly convergent with the progress of constitutional democracy in nations such as South Africa and India.

KB: *Many people in the academy today view Socrates as an anti-democratic, political conservative, a figure whose philosophical message is often assumed to be sharply inimical to both females, as a class of persons, and to the feminine, as a set of psychological qualities. Others however, like yourself, interpret Socrates as a demophile. Could you explain why you regard Socrates as a lover of democracy, and how you respond to those who focus on his alleged bias against females and the feminine?*

MN: I think you are somewhat simplifying my view of Socrates! Like most classical scholars, I think that we have a large problem of interpretation and reconstruction when we seek to reassemble the historical Socrates from the evidence left to us. We have Xenophon's portrait—that of a military man who was not deeply philosophical. We have Aristophanes' profound lampoon. We have Aristotle's scattered remarks; and we have Plato's brilliant portraits which give us not one Socrates but several different ones. We cannot assume that any of these was ever intended to document accurately the teaching of the historical figure. Each writer has his own philosophical and political agenda, and part of getting back to Socrates is to correct for these biases.

When we do this work, to put my conclusions all too briefly, I think that we may very cautiously assert that the Socrates depicted by Plato in dialogues such as *Apology*, *Crito*, *Euthyphro*, *Laches*, *Lysis*, is rather close, at least, to the historical Socrates. (I agree with Gregory Vlastos here, and one should consult his wonderful book for a fuller argument.) This Socrates relies on ordinary critical argument, and hopes to get moral improvement from examining ordinary citizens. He has no interest in transcendent forms, nor does he model reasoning on mathematical deduction. Although critical of the Athenian democracy, he is a friendly critic, the "gadfly on the back of a noble but sluggish horse" who seeks to wake Athens up to get it to do its job better. He refuses to escape from prison because of his loyalty to the laws of Athens, and he appears to believe democracy, with all its flaws, better than any other existing form of government—although he also appears to favor a somewhat greater role for expertise than is present at Athens where all major offices, except that of general, are filled by lot. We should bear in mind that we all accept just such criticisms of old-style democracy, insofar as we have elected politicians, appointed experts in administrative agencies, etc. What

we call "democracy" incorporates these Socratic modifications.

In the *Phaedo, Republic*, and other later dialogues, we find a very different Socrates: one who is deeply hostile to democracy, who believes political knowledge can only be founded on transcendent truths that can't even be approached in a democracy, and who models knowledge on mathematical deduction. All these aspects of the portrait of Socrates in those dialogues are aspects of Plato's intellectual biography, as we know from other sources; and it is a good bet that, by this time, Plato is using Socrates as a mouthpiece for his own convictions. This is no modern conjecture: Aristotle himself distinguishes the character Socrates in these dialogues from the historical Socrates and imputes the views of the former to Plato. Aristotle studied with Plato for twenty-five years, so he might know more than we do.

I. F. Stone and some others who criticize Socrates as an anti-democrat have ignored these issues of scholarship. (Stone runs the *Republic* and the *Apology* together with no distinction.) They also ignore historical evidence. After the restoration of the democracy, Socrates continued to enjoy the friendship of Lysias and other exiled democrat leaders, as he never would have had he backed the oligarchs.

KB: *Now that we are approaching the 50th anniversary of* Brown v. Board of Education *(1954-55), it seems appropriate to reconsider how teachers ought to interpret this decision in light of present circumstances. As you read* Brown *today, for example, do you think it contains any passages that could be used to challenge class-based inequality in public education, or do you think that the inequality it addressed must remain exclusively race-based, thus consigning its meaning to the past, not to the present or future?*

MN: During the 1960s and early 1970s, the Supreme Court did show interest in recognizing constitutional rights to welfare and other basic entitlements for the poor. Justice Brennan, in particular, did suggest that there might be a foundation for constitutionalizing some basic social and economic rights. However, that trend in constitutional interpretation stopped cold during the Reagan era, so I think it very unlikely that the existing Supreme Court would extend *Brown* to issues of class. It should be said, however, that *Brown* has been extended to issues of disability. In two important cases, one in Pennsylvania and one in the District of Columbia, the failure to give children with disabilities access to free and suitable public education was held to constitute an Equal Protection violation similar to that found in *Brown*. The upshot of those decisions was the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, a very fine law about which I'm writing currently. So we are making progress, but I am pessimistic about the further progress you rightly want to see.

I think questions of what the legislature should handle and what the courts should handle are very difficult and shift from time to time and place to place.

KB: *In a recent Illinois Supreme Court decision, Justice Bilandic ruled that the "adequacy" of public education provided to a class of East St Louis school children did not fall below constitutional standards, as the plaintiffs had maintained.* Lewis, et al, v. Spagnolo, Superintendent of Education *(1998-99 docket no. 85[illegible]2). Bilandic summarized his legal reasoning: "In this appeal, the court is asked once again to enter the arena of Illinois public school policy. . . We now affirm our recent holding that questions relating to the quality of public school education are for the legislature, not the courts, to decide." How do you assess Bilandic's invocation of "judicial restraint" in this case?*

MN: I think questions of what the legislature should handle and what the courts should handle are very difficult and shift from time to time and place to place. Nehru thought that there should be no judicial review in the new Indian democracy because he was afraid that the courts would be a conservative force throwing out progressive legislation. (Luckily, he didn't prevail.) That conservative role is a role our own Supreme Court played early in this century, and is

playing again now (with the invalidation of the Violence Against Women Act, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, etc.). On the other hand, once people saw Indira Gandhi throw out all the rights of speech, press, etc., by majority vote, they felt that possibly courts were an indispensable ally of a progressive democracy; and the Supreme Court in India has since played a vital role in extending constitutional protection to the poor. In the U. S. today, we would be well advised not to rely too much on the courts, though there is no reason of principle why they cannot or should not play an active role in protecting the rights of the poor.

KB: *I would like to ask you several questions about the "inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness" clause in the Declaration of Independence, and its relation, or lack of relation, to public education. Do you believe that the existence of systematic inequality in the realm of American public education ought to be seen as constituting a violation of a citizen's "inalienable right" to the pursuit of happiness?*

MN: In thinking about what I'd like to see in a list of constitutional entitlements, I'd like to see education recognized as a basic entitlement all on its own, as a development of the human personality, not as a means to happiness. Learning isn't always pleasant, and it doesn't always lead to happiness. That is not the point. The point is to lead a richly human life and to develop one's humanity. Look at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, followed by constitutions around the world: "Everyone has the right to education. . . . Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. . . ." Education has many instrumental roles: it provides employment opportunities; it gives women a chance to leave an abusive marriage; it gives access to the political process; it contributes to citizenship. But I think we should insist on its intrinsic value as well.

As to how to politicize the issue effectively in the American debate, however, you may be right. That appeal to the Declaration would be useful.

KB: *Horkheimer and Adorno make a fascinating remark in the final pages of their book,* The Authoritarian Personality: *"If fear and destructiveness are the major emotional sources of fascism," they write, "democracy belongs mainly to eros." How do you respond to their attempt to describe eros as a form of love that is crucial to the enactment of democracy? Could you expand on the implications of this linkage for civic educators?*

MN. Well, there are many forms of eros, and some of them are closely linked to fear and destructiveness! So I think it's unwise to begin by a general praise of eros. In *Upheavals of Thought* and, even more, in my forthcoming book *Hiding from Humanity: Disgust, Shame, and the Law*, I argue that what liberal democracy requires is a triumph over narcissism—meaning that people must learn not to demand to be the center of the world and to be in control over all the sources of good. This is a difficult lesson to learn in any part of life, and it means a transcending of a form of eros that all young children at one time have. In personal life, it means living with, and loving, the uncertainty of another loved person's independence and autonomy rather than wanting jealously to control all the other person's actions. In political life, it means learning to live with, and loving, the autonomy and difference of one's fellow citizens rather than wanting to dominate and control. Both that attitude and its opposite are erotic attitudes, so eros alone doesn't tell us much. What we need is a specific development of eros, one that Donald Winnicott called the capacity for "subtle interplay."

People must learn not to demand to be the center of the world and to be in control over all the sources of good.

KB: *In another recent article, "Eros and Ethical Norms: Philosophers Respond to a Cultural Dilemma" (2002), you refer to the conceptual struggle that will accompany any effort to interpret the*

ambivalent qualities of eros. Do you use the term eros to denote only those manifestations of passion and desire deemed positive, or do you prefer to call the base or destructive passions by another name, such as thanatos or epithumia? With this conceptual struggle in mind, could you comment on the status of eros in relation to the expressions of "enthusiasm" and "patriotism" symbolized today by the mass spectacle of flag-bearing citizens in cars?

MN: I argue in *Upheavals* that there are several primary needs in young children, not reducible to a single erotic instinct: the need for nutrition, the need for comfort and safety, and curiosity or the need to understand. I consider all of these equally primary and independent of one another. I don't use the term *eros* for any of them, because I think that something that one might call *eros* probably comes along somewhat later in life, when a child realizes that it doesn't control the movements of the person or people on whom it depends. Earlier we have experiences of being the center of the world and, at other times, of being helpless—that shape the development of eros; but, since at this time the child is not aware of definite objects outside itself, I would not quite call these attitudes eros or love. Anyway, the story I tell is thus very complex, indebted above all to Winnicott, but also to object-relations thinkers such as W. R. D. Fairbairn. When I talk about adults, I use the term "erotic" to signify strong attachments that are traceable back to early childhood attachments, and I do not suggest that all of these are good. Indeed, I think that many are not good, but it all depends on how the development of the individual has gone. It ought to be possible for love to contain delight in the independence of the other, but that is a hard achievement in a life in which our mortality makes us want to control things and people.

KB: *Certainly, Prof. Nussbaum, you've given our readers plenty of ideas to contemplate, and I thank you for your time and effort.*

MN: Thanks so much, Kerry, for these great questions. I've really enjoyed thinking about them, and I look forward to more good conversations.

Broken Mirror: John Walker Lindh and the Anxiety of American Identity

Joe Toris
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Now Who Are You?

The building I work in is near City Hall, four blocks from the World Trade Center. I witnessed first-hand the horror of 9/11: the planes crashing into the buildings, the red and black inferno that raged down from floor to floor, the glass, exploding paper and bodies into space, the panic of thousands fleeing the scene while emergency vehicles wailed and lurched through the mobs. I saw the buildings collapse and hysteria erupt when windows buckled under the concussion, and the world suddenly turned winter-white with a bitter ash. The lobby of my building became a place of refuge for those escaping the toxic air—the dust lay thick everywhere.

Prohibited from leaving the site because of the police blockade of Lower Manhattan and safety concerns, I huddled with my co-workers, shocked and dazed, listening to the *1010 WINS* news reports—our sole connection to the outside world. At one point, with the radio voice streaming forth an endless accounting of what seemed like the apocalypse, I felt a sudden visceral reaction, an epiphany of sorts, to the oft-repeated words "terrorist attack," and I turned to a fellow employee and grimly intoned, from the depths of being: "This isn't a *terrorist attack*...this is an *act of war*." For not only had this guided missile attack shattered the landscape of Lower Manhattan, it had also shattered the look of my own personal and political face as well, turning my leftist proclivity on its head, as it were, as if Hegel had finally avenged Marx. Or had it?

Whatever sincere and forcefully felt "love of country" sentiments had been unleashed inside me that day (and I unashamedly and without apology admit they were), they were nevertheless shaken three months later by the unwashed, unshaven image of a young American citizen captured as a combatant in the vengeful war against al-Qaida and the Taliban in Afghanistan. At twenty-one years of age, John Walker Lindh emerged from the bowels of the wretched Mazar-e Sharif prison and stepped into the American consciousness, catching our disordered and deficient attention in a brief, collective gasp. Blindfolded and strapped to a gurney, he was unceremoniously dumped into our living rooms, an uninvited projectile, resplendent in all the glorious contradictions, protracted hand-wringing angst, and soul-searching flagellation that's so characteristic of America when "one of our own" has given us the finger—big time.

I saw the buildings collapse and hysteria erupt when windows buckled under the concussion, and the world suddenly turned winter-white with a bitter ash.

The most compelling truth-and-consequence of *l'affaire Lindh*, at least for me, has been that this media-driven projection into the American comfort zone of moral clarity and righteousness, my own included, has had the unsettling effect of transmogrifying all those TV screens into full-length mirrors. To be sure, this is not a pretty picture, no matter how it's spliced, yet the saliency here is not the image of Lindh per se, or our perception of it, or even any "attitude" toward it

that might be copped, but rather this: that there is a strong undertow of doubt and anxiety about *the very existence* of an "American Identity" whose strength pulls at us most, *exerts itself most*, when "one of our own" becomes an object we gaze upon in a deeply distressing interplay between recognition and rejection, familiarity and contempt. After all, over thirty years ago, given my hyperventilating distaste for U.S. foreign policy at the time, Lindh could've conceivably been me, or I could've been him.

Combining for review three separate texts that reflect three diverse perspectives (an official state document, a 1950's film, and a scholarly article), I offer a critical analysis of this anxiety over what constitutes American identity, as induced by the Lindh phenomenon. It should be noted that, while each of the texts soliloquize on issues that are relevant and specific to their own particular field of study and interest, when taken together, they more importantly reflect the strain of reaching toward dialogue along the grand vista, the horizon line of national identity and consciousness, a sate of anxiety, provoked by what I shall call the "Lindh/Mirror Effect."

Critical Analysis

When Johnny Comes Marching Home

Any analysis of the Lindh phenomenon that does not include an official government document would be seriously flawed; the State itself provides the very possibility of Lindh's significance. From his capture to his interrogation, from his transfer into custody to the criminal charges against him, to his trial and current incarceration, it is the Federal government that has set the terms of the public debate and marked the ideological boundaries within which we all react.

On January 15, 2002, Attorney General John Ashcroft announced the indictment against Lindh in a Department of Justice press conference: "One, conspiracy to kill nationals of the United States of America overseas; namely, U.S. nationals engaged in the conflict in Afghanistan. Two, providing material support and resources to designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations, including al-Qaida. And three, engaging in prohibited transactions with the Taliban."[1]

Ashcroft serves up some revelatory nuggets about the state's stance toward this anomalous citizen. I have taken the liberty here of distilling Ashcroft's statements into a single, comprehensive passage, adding italics to denote my emphasis.

> We are compelled...by the *inescapable fact* of September the 11th . . . we have *enemies in the world* and that these enemies *seek to destroy us* . . . Walker *knowingly* and *purposely* allied himself with certain terrorist organizations . . . he *chose* to embrace fanatics . . . Walker continued to fight for the Taliban *against American interests* . . . At each crossroad, Walker faced a *choice* . . . John Walker Lindh *chose* terrorists . . . Walker was *blessed* to grow up in a country *that cherishes freedom of speech, religious tolerance,* political democracy . . . yet he *chose to reject those values in favor of their antithesis* . . . *We may never know why he turned his back on his country* . . . *Youth* is not absolution for treachery, and *personal self-discovery* is not an excuse . . . *Misdirected Americans* cannot seek direction in murderous ideologies . . . The United States Department of Justice will defend *the values reflected in our laws* by *prosecuting* John Walker Lindh."[2]

According to the Attorney General's testimony, Lindh is "blessed" to have freedom of choice but cursed when he makes choices—a chilling, paradoxical position.

This transcript illustrates official America's ambivalent and contradictory attitude toward the concept of freedom, especially when it is exercised. According to the Attorney General's testimony, Lindh is "blessed" to have freedom of choice but cursed when he makes choices—a chilling, paradoxical position. And when, in the act of such an exercise, the choices made take Lindh away from what his "values" *really should be*, he becomes both "antithesis" and "enemy" to official America. Of course, he will be condemned and prosecuted for these doubly indemnified transgressions because our "values"

as such are "reflected in our laws," ostensibly the same laws that constitutionally guarantee freedom of choice in the first place!

Even more illuminating is official America's thinly veiled contempt for its own society, a society in which choice is incubated, cultivated and nourished. Youthful, personal self-discovery, after all, leads to "misdirection" and "treachery" and, paradoxically, when Lindh "turns his back on his country," he is rejecting the same society that Ashcroft himself so distrusts. That both men are looking into the same mirror and drawing the same conclusions about the same sets of "values" exposes the experiential disaffection and dissonance that afflicts official America wherein a "value" is either cherished or loathed, its *agent provocateurs* lauded or prosecuted.

Diggs identifies three ideological lessons that are embodied in the Lindh/ Mirror Effect.

Mother, Don't You Recognize Your Son?

You won't find the movie *Our Son John* at Blockbuster Video, but its current obscurity belies just how frighteningly popular it once was. In an article for the electronic journal *www.law.com*, Professor Terry Diggs of the Hastings and Golden Gate University Law Schools has thankfully resurrected this old chestnut and, through the lens of film criticism, explores its thematic connections to the Lindh phenomenon.[3] Produced fifty years ago by Leo McCarey at the paranoid height of the Red Scare, McCarthyism, and the Korean War, Diggs identifies three ideological lessons that are embodied in the Lindh/Mirror Effect-namely, the general lesson of adhering to mainstream ideology, the more specific lesson of liberalism as treason, and a final lesson that regards critical thought as a subversive activity.

She writes that the "principle lesson" of the film "may be that no public inquiry into national loyalty is as much an investigation of conduct as an articulation of mainstream ideology" and how "we turn our tales of deceit into political parables that identify . . . an *inadequate* (my emphasis) love of country . . . Treason stories aren't aimed at traitors; they're intended to affect the attitudes of the rest of us."[4] The role of jingoistic media as it shapes the cultural landscape reaffirms Ashcroft's admonishments concerning "misdirected Americans," the hidden threat of "self discovery" and, in the ultimate, bone-chilling kiss-off, how "*we may never know why he turned* . . . " as a way of casting any would-be dissenter into an epistemological fog of unknowing in which individual existence itself will most likely disappear (as Lindh himself certainly has). Inexorably, "today's Walker commentary focuses on how the American family. . . is unable to recognize the homegrown traitor."[5]

But who are these dissenters and traitors, anyway, and where do they come from? The son John in the film puts it bluntly to his mother, Lucille: "But I warn you, this is liberal thinking." His "disdain for conservative politics" is used "as evidence of a larger disloyalty" that underscores "the deadly threat John poses for his father's world." John's mother is more sympathetic toward her errant son because she is "more generous and forward-looking . . . an American progressive, fighting to justify her support of the widely-disparaged left."[6]

Diggs observes how "McCarey—one of Hollywood's most ardent anti-communists—can't stop himself from transforming an otherwise profound depiction of American political life into *Oedipus Red*," and does so by crushing the 'seduced' mother: her faith becomes shaken, not by John's treachery per se, "but, more importantly, in her own political insight." She "accepts his perfidy as the product of her own liberalism: John's antipathy toward capitalism must be the outgrowth of her own humanism; John's contempt for tradition, the result of her strength of will; his moral relativism, the fruit of her own devotion to inquiry." In other words, "the liberalism that was a precondition to Walker's alleged crimes."[7]

Diggs identifies the true "villain" in the film: "critical thought." Or, as McCarey suggests, "thought is the ultimate foe" as exemplified by "the inexorable suppression of Lucille's intellectual vitality," her "pleasure in exchanging ideas," and a "wish to create change," magnified by John's own posthumous warnings against it. It's not lost on Diggs that many contemporary American commentators on Lindh have "expressed disdain for 'nuance,' loathing for 'deconstruction,' and unmitigated antipathy for the dreaded 'relativism,'" all

by-products of critical theory. The author sees in the film "the hell of a political environment without inquiry," a "horrific microcosm of America" that displayed an "oppression that passed as order, the nationalism that stood in for love of country, and the intellectual blankness that made it all work."[8]

One would think that this valuable study might lead to more insight into the origins of the Lindh/Mirror Effect, but Diggs holds back from making such a leap. Two passages reveal her reluctance to jump off: "That's not to say that crimes emerging from betraying one's country—a laundry list of interchangeable evils . . . aren't genuinely wicked" and, regarding the film, "*John* says that America is unquestionable."[9] I suspect that the author's acceptance of an a priori underlying assumption of an "unquestionable" America, undoubtedly rooted in the concept of the Rule of Law (she is an attorney), has prevented her from rendering nothing more than a serious lament on those ideological fissures that separate us, as opposed to offering up a deeper, more existential critique of what produces them. After all, if an entity is deemed unquestionably valid, it will never be questioned as being invalid—the very challenge of the Lindh/Mirror Effect.

Kerry Burch does a cannonball dive into the deep end of the American psychic pool.

Something Is Happening and You Don't Know What It Is, Do You, Mr. Jones?

Unlike Diggs' hesitation, Kerry Burch does a cannonball dive into the deep end of the American psychic pool and, like Poe's sailor navigating the maelstrom, struggles to navigate the American current in his provocative text, *Mapping the Nation: John Walker as Pedagogical Text.*

> I treat the Walker Lindh case," he writes, "as a pedagogically ripe site of civic conflict, a site in which radically opposed ideological frameworks and models of citizenship can be seen to vie for primacy in the ongoing struggle to shape the meaning of American identity."[10]

In elaborating three core themes—the theory of absence as a vital piece of identity construction, the politics of gender in wartime, and the role of a democratic pedagogy relevant to a post-9/11 American classroom, Burch gives the Lindh/Mirror Effect a full-throated philosophical voice. "Scholars of American identity have long observed that a fundamental *aporia* . . . occupies the very center of our national identity formation;" or, as he refers to it, "the presence of a meaningful absence."[11] Echoing Wallerstein's embrace of Gertrude Stein's observation on the American character (that "there is no there there"), Burch zeroes in on what he calls "the noble lie of our essential unity . . . the imprecise process of imagination is what constitutes American identity"[12] Neither ontologically based nor pre-fixed by racial or linguistic definition, America is a concept, a mythic creation, in which "the Walker Lindh case provides an opportunity for the nation to 'perform itself' once again, to wrestle symbolically with a figure who profoundly disturbs the inscriptions of identity—inside/outside, self/other, domestic/foreign, masculine/feminine."[13]

In the mercurial, shallow vagueness of a 'Be all that you can be' standard of national measurement, Burch shrewdly observes how "it is easy to be vexed, pedagogically, in trying to provoke others to engage and value the tropes of *absence, variation,* and *contradiction* as they relate to the construction of American civic identity." Engulfed in a flux that terrifies it, America invariably reacts to critical challenges by hardening the arteries of its own mythologies. The "American Taliban has been cast . . . as a demonic counter-example to the values of heroic manhood which underwrite the nationalist form of citizenship" and, further, "the emotional ferocity that accompanies reaction to Walker Lindh becomes more intelligible . . . in relation to how his background . . . renders ambiguous the masculinist/nationalist common sense dominant in American culture."[14]

Attempting to square his political and pedagogical pegs into the American hole, Burch poignantly declares: "Walker Lindh's transgressive love of the Taliban is a moment of high pedagogical importance. It throws light on the fundamental tension between the nationalist and cosmopolitan models of citizenship, for Walker Lindh's explicit love of the other—his ability to actualize the principle of variation in cultural life—arguably

represents one of the defining acts of cosmopolitanism as a form of civic identity." And finally, "as a present-day personification of dissent, the Walker Lindh case represents an opportunity to sharpen our questions about what kind of political knowledge is required for educating democratic citizens . . . Simply stated, psychological growth and development is impossible absent the internal tension which comes from the process of wrestling with a well-defined contradiction."[15] Indeed.

Conclusion

Bringing It All Back Home

In the texts that I have examined, there is one unifying thread common to all three; and this is the conflicted role that *liberalism* plays in America's political, cultural and social identity. To the Attorney General of the United States, liberalism is a suspect doctrine corrosive in its effects on American "values," while Diggs expresses concern that attacks on liberalism can set a dangerous precedent and that in the hurly-burly, *quid pro quo* of the American political landscape, please, give liberalism a chance. Burch sees in John Walker Lindh a contemporary reminder that

It is precisely because of its lack of essence that the American identity reaches its greatest expressions, and its worst nightmares.

dissent and rebellion need to be honored within any education that calls itself democratic.

Yet there exists an urge to perform a further phenomenological reduction of the Lindh/Mirror Effect beyond its political and ideological orientation, to explore in more detail the larger philosophical implications of negotiating the American formation of its own identity. This paper has limited its scope to tracking salient demonstrations of the Lindh/Mirror Effect, the disturbing, unsettling *act of seeing* America in Lindh, and Lindh *being seen* in America, as reflected in three specific documents. While there may be tons of media coverage and glib editorial commentary on Lindh, there is little scholarship about the civic meaning of such rebellion and its import for educating democratic citizens.

In the course of evaluating these three texts and ruminating over my own thinking about 9/11, Lindh, and American identity, I have arrived at a tentative conclusion that has quite frankly surprised me: that it is precisely because of its lack of essence that the American identity reaches its greatest expressions, and its worst nightmares. Think of it as slavishly pouring an incredible amount of energy into an immense void with unpredictable consequences. Some remarkable, dynamic, and inventive human capabilities can be liberated in such a gestalt, but some truly horrendous, god-awful and murderous impulses can be unleashed as well. The very thing that can make us proud can also infuriate us, for ours is a mad dash into the possible, at once thrilling and terrifying, even stupefying. Perhaps the most telling aspect of the Lindh/Mirror Effect is that the void *really is there*, and it defines the American experience far more than we may want to recognize.

Endnotes

1 John Ashcroft, *Attorney General Transcript*, DOJ Conference Room, January 15, 2002.
2 Ibid pages 1, 2, 3
3 Terry Diggs, *Our Son John*, see law.com/regionals/ca/opinions/stories/edt0166_digd.shtml
4 Ibid p. 1
5 Ibid p. 2
6 Ibid
7 Ibid
8 Ibid
9 Ibid p.3
10 Kerry Burch, "Mapping the Nation: John Walker Lindh as Pedagogical Text," *Teachers College Record Online*, November 2002 ID Number 1101
11 Ibid p. 1
12 Ibid p. 3
13 Ibid p. 2
14 Ibid p. 5
15 Ibid pp. 7, 8

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War and Gender: Exploring the Construction of American National Identity

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Exploring what exactly constitutes American national identity is a complex yet potentially instructive endeavor. Since the United States now finds itself embroiled in a costly war in Iraq that has been justified largely on the basis of a particular definition of what American identity is, such an endeavor is both timely and necessary. The defining elements of national identity are nowhere as prominent and recognizable as when a nation's people perceive themselves to be uniting in the face of a common enemy. In 2002, the Bush administration convinced many Americans to unite behind the cause of defeating not so much another sovereign nation but "Saddam Hussein," who was depicted as an imminent threat to the security of the United States. While the consequences of the Iraqi war continue to multiply and crystallize, a critical examination of the official and unofficial discourse surrounding the war provides a clear glimpse into the formation of American civic identity. This essay attempts to make sense of this formation in light of gender.[1]

Gender is perhaps one of the more useful theoretical tools available with which to understand how our sense of American-ness is constructed and reproduced.

In her study on gender and the Vietnam War --the very conflict many people are now using as a point of comparison for Iraq—Susan Jeffords observes that "the structural relations between warfare and gender [are] intimately connected, so much so that one does not survive without the other."[2] As a unit of analysis, then, gender is perhaps one of the more useful theoretical tools available with which to understand how our sense of American-ness is constructed and reproduced. The argument here is that American national identity is marked deeply by gender, but in ways that are often veiled or otherwise obscured. The "masculine" basis of our national identity can be seen through an analysis of the discourse surrounding the two major American wars of the past thirty years—Vietnam and Iraq. As this article contends, the primary benefit from utilizing such a feminist perspective lies in its ability to illuminate how a state's recourse to violence against other nations and peoples is rendered possible and acceptable in the first place. By adopting this framework, the parallels between these two conflicts can be seen in terms of how they influence the construction of an American national identity. Specifically, I demonstrate the ways in which dominant images of American national identity reflect a decidedly masculine moral orientation, a learned, gendered orientation which could be learned differently.

Feminist Theory and Gender: Explaining the Roots of Masculine Morality

In her seminal work, *In a Different Voice*, Carol Gilligan argues that men and women display two distinct moral orientations.[3] Gilligan discovered that adult men tended to view the world in terms of a set of rules and rights, projecting the idea of a hierarchical ordering of principles onto their moral universe.[4] For men, upholding the rules becomes the primary and necessary urge of moral action; violating the rules constitutes immoral action. Her study also showed that women placed the cultivation and care of relationships in the center of their moral understanding. The hallmark of the ethic of care is nonviolence: the prerogative of moral action should be the avoidance of hurt or harm.[5] Gilligan asserts that "the morality of rights differs from the morality of responsibility in its emphasis on separation rather than connection, [and] in its consideration of

the individual rather than the relationship as primary."[6] Men thus learn to play by the rules to uphold their prized autonomy and separateness, while women disavow the rules to maintain and cultivate relationships. "For men, the moral imperative appears rather as an injunction to respect the rights of others and thus to protect from interference the rights to life and self-fulfillment."[7] For Gilligan, as well as for other feminist theorists, a clear fault line between masculine and feminine moral orientations exists, but as socialized, not essentialized, components of identity.[8]

Vietnam and Iraq: Masculine Morality and National Identity

The application of Gilligan's observations to the level of the state helps to explain how, beginning with the end of World War II and continuing throughout the Vietnam War, the mindset and moral orientation of the American leadership and much of American society was centered on the "rule" that communism was an evil that had to be stopped, no matter how far removed from our shores. The "domino theory" which informed the minds of the top American policymakers during the Vietnam War represented a theoretical violation of the government's (now globalized) hierarchy of rules; the perceived communist nature of the Vietnamese independence movement represented the tangible violation.

Gilligan asserts that the morality of rights differs from the morality of responsibility in its emphasis on separation rather than connection.

In such circumstances, American policymakers easily convinced themselves of the legitimacy of waging war against a nation and a people that posed no imminent, material threat to United States security and sovereignty.

The American government and many American soldiers, having been instilled with the reflex to assess their actions in terms of rules and not people, conducted themselves as if human lives were nothing more than a footnote to the retribution being dispensed to the offending North Vietnamese government. Peter Davis' 1975 Oscar-winning film about Vietnam, *Hearts and Minds*, illustrates this point with devastating clarity. In a tearful interview, Randy Floyd—the army veteran from Oklahoma –poignantly reveals the disconnectedness that he experienced from the Vietnamese he was responsible for killing. Floyd asserts that from his F-14, "You never could see the people. You never saw any blood. You never could hear any screams. It was very clean. I was a technician."[9] The ghastliness with which Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara defined progress in the war—seen in the body counts he proudly reported to the nation—also reflects this lack of connectedness to millions of Vietnamese people. The more dead, the more the war was progressing. Since the American government conceived of no "relationship" between itself and the people of Vietnam, their cultural destruction did not pose a significant moral dilemma. Here, the transference of a masculine moral orientation from the individual level to the level of the state is clearly in evidence.

The masculine self and its deep need to win was evidenced in America's obsession with unconditional victory in Vietnam. National security officials of the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations continually reassured the American public that victory was inevitable and imminent. In a sense, they had to. Never before had Americans truly "lost" at anything, whether it be a war against a foreign power or a righteous war against itself. This perception has led many of us to the assumption that "God was/is on our side." For this reason, failure in war has been deemed morally unacceptable. Because of the potential threat that defeat in Vietnam posed to this identity, Susan Jeffords argues that official and unofficial dialogue concerning the war became focused on disguising this failure. She believes it is no coincidence that "the first war America lost should be seen in terms of means rather than ends—how we performed rather than that we lost."[10] In effect, representations of Vietnam focus on various aspects of performance: the valor of soldiers, the awe-inspiring might of new technologies, and *not* on the purposes motivating that valor and might.

A comparison of the cultural and symbolic continuities between Vietnam and the Iraqi war illustrates how these masculine elements of American-ness were present from the beginning, and how they persist today.

For one, the sense of disconnectedness with other nations and peoples (a result of basing American moral orientation around an abstract set of rules as opposed to human connections) is no less present today than it was during the Vietnam War. The war in Iraq was presented to the American public as a sanitized, clean set of images, almost entirely devoid of human suffering: the images shown of the human cost of the conflict were largely ones of American soldiers, thus reinforcing the idea that America was waging war against a distant, demonic enemy. Nowhere on American television were images of Iraqi dead and wounded to be seen, in stark contrast to Arab television which showed graphic images of civilians being blown up by American bombs. The human costs of the "collateral damage" across Iraq are still unknown. In the early days of the war, the American audience's lens into the situation in Iraq was usually a silent silhouette of the Baghdad skyline, and there have been no official estimates given of the Iraqi civilian casualty count.

The human costs of the "collateral damage" across Iraq are still unknown.

The staged "docu-drama" surrounding the rescue of Army Private Jessica Lynch from an Iraqi hospital early in the war, and her subsequent elevation to the status of national hero, can also be interpreted as an outgrowth of this masculine identity. In effect, Lynch's heroism stems not from any valor she reflected in battle but because she unwittingly provided the outlet for the fulfillment of one of the requisites of the masculine code of conduct—that of protecting and/or saving a woman in trouble. Similar to the Vietnam War in which "wives and girlfriends [were] justifications for fighting," a female soldier has become an emblem for having been "fought for" in Iraq.[4] While Lynch has achieved iconic status as a result of her rescue, the six male soldiers of her company rescued along with her have been discreetly ignored. Though she recalls nothing of her ordeal, Lynch was able to sell the rights to her story for $1 million; meanwhile, the stories of the six male soldiers elicit not the scantest attention. The masculine identity cannot so easily reconcile the capture of male American soldiers. Given the prior assumption of inevitable American victory, such an incident would be shameful and embarrassing. In contrast, "Saving (the female) Private Lynch" was eagerly presented as a heroic fable for a country still receptive to masculinized images of meaning.

The obsession with winning, an omnipresent element of the national identity, has been revived and perhaps intensified as a result of the Iraqi war. The clips in *Hearts and Minds* of presidents and military officials resolutely stating the inevitability of American victory in Vietnam could easily be switched with images of Bush administration officials proclaiming the certainty of American victory in Iraq (substitute Bush for Johnson, and Rumsfeld for McNamara, for example).[5] America's actions in the Middle East were presented with the gloss of sanctity derived from the assumption of unquestioned victory. Because America would, of course, prevail, American actions in Iraq were correct and desirable. Perhaps we tend to accept without question the morality of such operations if only they lead to victory! In her review of *Hearts and Minds*, and her analysis of the effect the conflict had on American identity, Penelope Gilliot asserted that "for a growing mass of the population, the notion that any military power can be God-given has crumbled . . . With it has gone a crucial tenet in the established dogma of American-ness, which had come to include an almost religious notion that there was rectitude in winning."[6] But almost 30 years later, the war in Iraq suggests that, for many, the "religion of winning" still retains its cultural potency. In this regard, Randy Floyd's lament at the conclusion of the film has proven to be prophetic. When asked if Americans had learned anything at all from Vietnam, he responds: "I think we're trying not to."[7] Apparently, many Americans still believe that military victory is synonymous with moral superiority.

The negotiation of national identity today has not shifted perceptively from that which preceded the Vietnam War—even if it should have. Application of feminist theory indicates the ways in which our civic identity still privileges the masculine by centering its moral orientation around a framework of rules and by taking to task anyone who violates these rules. Similar to Vietnam, the moral legitimacy of the war in Iraq can be explained in large measure as a consequence of these gendered values. On September 11, 2001, the "hierarchy of rules" was resolutely and catastrophi-

cally shattered when nineteen Arab men killed around 3000 Americans. In light of my analysis, the conquest of Iraq can be viewed as the "justified" retribution for defiance of those rules despite the fact that no evidence of Iraqi participation in 9/11 has been established. Nonetheless, the invasion was launched, in effect, to reinstate the rules. The Bush administration was only too glad to make Saddam Hussein pay for the humiliation endured when the rules were broken. For the administration, America's victory was divinely prescribed: failure was inconceivable. If the American occupation of Iraq continues to degenerate, it should not be surprising when the focus of official rhetoric shifts from emphasizing the ends (remaking Iraq over in America's image) to emphasizing the means (valiant soldiers, capture or destruction of enemies)—just as it did with Vietnam

Implications for Civic Education

Understanding the gendered character of American national identity holds important implications for civic educators. Indeed, one of the purposes of this article is to suggest how the gendered dimensions of civic identity are reflected in how we conceive of our wars and explain them to ourselves. If my analysis is correct, further entrenchment of the masculine orientation of America's self-conception is a recipe for more "preventive wars," more justified retributions, and more calls for American global supremacy. Such entrenchment will inevitably give rise to a permanent war environment. The militarization of our cultural identity is rooted in a sense that America is not in a "relationship" with the wider world, that there is no need to establish deeper connections with, and understandings of, peoples who are not deemed strategically important.

In order to forge deeper connections between Americans and other peoples, the educational formation of civic identity needs to be evaluated in the context of gender. The dominant strands of this (unfinished) identity clearly stand in opposition to Martha Nussbaum's theory of cosmopolitanism which calls for reconstructing our moral allegiance around the equal humanity, dignity, and worth of all peoples. This pedagogical project requires that "we should recognize, at whatever personal and social cost, that each human being is human and counts as the moral equal of every other."[8] For many, this will be difficult, in light of the narrowness of vision that accompanies the masculine-oriented national identity. In order for America to renegotiate its own self-conception, its gendered, psychological sources need to be critically understood.

The basis of the masculine code of conduct lies in the process of socializing children to the adult world wherein boys learn to construct and play by an abstract set of rules while girls learn to maintain and foster relationships and human connections. This suggests, at a minimum, that those most responsible for children's socialization must reevaluate the sex-stereotyped messages that they send to young children through various curricular activities. More specifically, educators must recognize that not only do students "learn" gender from teachers and schools but especially so when they study America's wars.[9] This essay suggests that the development of a "gender literacy" can be productively educated when the meaning of America's wars are interpreted through the lens of gender.

Another step in the direction of gender literacy would be for teachers and curricula to incorporate a more sustained focus upon the achievements of women in various fields throughout history. In this way, students can see tangible successes of the "feminine." A concentrated effort to educate students about the psychological costs of rigidly "playing by the rules" can also be utilized to denaturalize this learned component of behavior and identity. This could be done in conjunction with emphasizing the benefits of cultivating relationships with peers, parents, neighbors, and other members of the community. By becoming more conversant with gender as a set of psychological values and qualities, and by creatively integrating these values and qualities into the curriculum, teachers can help transform the gendered negotiation of national identity.

Understanding the gendered character of American national identity holds important implications for civic educators.

Endnotes

[1] As a unit of analysis, gender allows for the most penetrating analysis of official and public attitudes, discourse, and action as it necessitates consideration of both masculine and feminine values.

[2] Susan Jeffords, *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War.* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), xv. Jeffords observes that "War is a crucible for the distillation of social and cultural relations, so that within its frame modes of discourse become more prominent, to the point of appearing almost simplistic." (182)

[3] Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development.* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1993).

[4] This "ethic of justice" esteems the formal procedures of decision-making and of upholding abstract notions of equality and justice, and values autonomy and separateness.

[5] In contrast to men, women internalize an "ethic of care" which revolves around the interdependence of self and other, and women therefore tend to value connection and empathy with others above individual rights and prerogatives.

[6] Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 19.

[7] Ibid., 100.

[8] An excellent study of how the masculine moral orientation lends itself to emotional disconnection and violence can be found in Rebecca Y. Mai and Judith Alpert's article "Separation and Socialization: A Feminist Analysis of the School Shootings at Columbine" in *JCPS: Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society*, Volume 5, Number 2, Fall 2000; 264-275. Combining observations derived from the sex-role socialization literature with principles of feminist psychodynamic literature, Mai and Alpert construct a compelling theory as to why, on April 20, 1999, Columbine High students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold gunned down students and teachers at the school in what became the most tragic school shooting in U.S. history. Drawing upon Gilligan's observations about the gendered nature of moral judgment, Mai and Alpert assert that since the boys would have had internalized the masculine notion of a framework of rules and rights as primary to their identity, they viewed the teasing and taunting they suffered by their peers as a breach of those rules, as it relegated them to the position of weak victims. The boys' use of violence was their way of reassuming power over their "enemies", and constituted "an effort to win in the competitive social atmosphere of the school" (268).

[9] *Hearts and Minds.* Directed by Peter Davis. 1975.

[10] Jeffords, *The Remasculinization of America,* 5.

[11] Ibid., xi.

[12] A clip in the film shows Lyndon B. Johnson saying: "Make no mistake about it...I don't want a man in here thinking otherwise...we are going to win." Compare this to President George W. Bush's State of the Union address of January 30, 2003, before hostilities began in Iraq: "And if war is forced upon us, we will fight with the full force and might of the United States military—and we will prevail." Months later, in response to the growing insurgency in Iraq, he would declare, "Bring 'em on." A "macho", gendered response if there ever was one.

[13] Penelope Gilliot, "A Filmmaker's Meditation on America". *The New Yorker*, April 28, 1975. 122.

[14] Tellingly, Floyd follows up this remark with a shameful acknowledgement of his tearful breakdown during his interview: "I can't even cry easily—my manhood image."

[15] Martha C. Nussbaum, "Reply." In *For Love of Country?* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002). 133.

[16] See Mai and Alpert, "Separation and Socialization." for a specific analysis of how a school environment can emit strongly gendered signals, reinforcing the traditional notions of "masculine" and "feminine."

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How Then Shall We Live?

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The African Child

I grew up in the West African nation of Sierra Leone. This was a time when coming of age brought brutal revelations about the increasing social and political disintegration of my country. Every Sierra Leonean knew that, somehow, the world-class diamonds that were mined in the east of the country had much to do with our troubles, tensions, and violence. The ruling class flaunted their fortunes with sparkling mansions and luxury foreign cars. Of course, we sensed there were dangerous challenges that were ahead for anyone who tried too hard to make any sense of their existence. There is no question that Paulo Freire's "ontological vocation" of liberation simmered within many people. To contemplate the world beyond was to set our sight on the path to freedom, and education became the lone, yet uncertain avenue of escape. After ten, savage years of civil violence, torture, and unparalleled inhumanity (1990-2000), President Ahmed Tejan Kabba correctly summed up the conflict:

> "Ours was not a civil war. It was not a war based on ideology, religion or ethnicity, nor was it a 'class war' . . . It was a war of proxy aimed at permanent rebel control of our rich diamond fields for the benefit of outsiders."[1]

The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) visited upon the people of Sierra Leone the slaughter of entire villages and the mutilation of various body parts—the likes of which have not been known in recent times. From a comfortable distance, one cannot begin to imagine the psychic trauma of having to face ruthless thugs who charge into your town with the sole intent of executing plans such as "Operation No Living Thing" (one of the campaigns of intimidation launched by the RUF). While the liberation of the country would eventually come as a result of Nigeria's intervention in 2000, the people of Sierra Leone were left for slaughter in all but a few of these years. Most Americans are blissfully unaware of such harsh African realities.

Events such as these and many others in Africa, such as the "ignored" genocide in Rwanda in 1994, can only intensify the debate that Martha Nussbaum instigated through her recent advocacy of "cosmopolitan education." In his preface to Nussbaum's *For Love of Country?*, Joshua Cohen describes the aim of cosmopolitan education:

> According to this cosmopolitan outlook, our highest allegiance must be to the community of humankind, and the first principle of our practical thought must respect the equal worth of all members of that community."[2]

One cannot begin to imagine the psychic trauma of having to face ruthless thugs who charge into your town with the sole intent of executing plans such as "Operation No Living Thing."

What responsibility do human beings have to others anywhere and everywhere? Should we promote our identity as citizens of the world? Or, should we limit the scope of our identity to the nation-state? Is it a human obligation to see through and tear down the state-imposed boundaries, to reach out to touch and feel others? Questions like these were lingering in my mind as I went back to visit my motherland after more than a decade of residing in America.

No Longer at Ease

Almost eleven years had passed since I last set eyes on my beloved country of Sierra Leone in 1993. I hesitate to make such a confession of civic love. I am engulfed with shame and guilt and the feeling of having forsaken the place that gave me life. I am consoled, nonetheless, that the gods know that when my country cried, I wept. When it was restless, I, too, was sleep deprived. Those few images that managed to appear on the BBC constantly put me in an awful state as I could only wonder helplessly at the fate of my native land. Although I have stayed in touch with family and friends, nothing could prepare me for going home and having to face the realities that had befallen my fellow compatriots. Preparing to go home after so many years, especially for the African, is tremendously challenging—psychologically and emotionally. I spent countless nights and days agonizing over the tasks that I knew lay ahead.

Over the years, a rift had slowly been creeping in the narrow space that once existed between my people, my land, and me.

Over the years, a rift had slowly been creeping in the narrow space that once existed between my people, my land, and me. I sensed from afar that an unpleasant metamorphosis had taken place in Sierra Leone; the land once dubbed God's paradise has gradually been lost to pillaging and unspeakable atrocities. The hour of truth was coming upon me, and my emotions changed with every passing day. There were days when I could not wait to hear the voice of the pilot on the flight to Freetown, informing his passengers of our final descent into Lungi Airport in Freetown. I imagined how I would throw my hands up to the heavens, thank the gods for my safe return, kiss the soil, and pour libation to the great and merciful ancestors who have gone before. Yet there were those days when I *forced* myself not to think of my upcoming adventure. I dreaded the torture of the unknown: the social and emotional shock that I fully expected to overwhelm me. Based in part on my military training with the U.S. Army, I tried to detach myself psychologically from the emotional conflicts that I expected. My sense of ease had long since left me, for I knew that no amount of mental imagination could prepare me for the turbulence that I was going to encounter.

My wife and I, along with our two-year-old daughter, finally arrived at Lungi Airport. We had transited in London, and it was a relatively calm and uneventful flight once we became airborne. I began to sense a burning question taking shape within me that begged for an urgent answer: How could the world have allowed Sierra Leone to know such inhumanity? While our world today is more connected than ever (at least technologically), morally speaking, we lag far behind in terms of our human connectedness. Our world today is more connected than ever. At the stroke of the keyboard, we can be plugged into a chat room in Bangladesh, and yet not care for others distant from us.

We arrived in Freetown at night, tired and sleep deprived. The morning following our arrival revealed a shocking and complicated sense of reality. While I found myself in a tremendous state of disbelief, it was business as usual for everyone else. I caught a ride into the city with my younger brother and began to survey the conspicuous remnants of war. I was in awe as I tried to place buildings and structures in places where I knew they once existed. I quietly and reverently walked through street after street, tearfully gazing into the piles of rubbish and debris that were once government buildings and handsome neighborhoods.

Witnessing these two war-zones, Bosnia and Sierra Leone, somehow affected me in ways that exceed the power of language to describe.

I began to replay past images of my military experience in Bosnia. When I served there in 1998 with the U.S. armed forces, we frequently went on dismounted patrols. I recalled talking to the Bosnian interpreter who went with us (whose name was Nick). I often sought to satisfy my curiosity by asking Nick about what he knew of the people whose destroyed homes we constantly passed. Nick would tell me of

the babies, women, old men, boys and girls who perished on some given summer evening. In Bosnia, I saw gravesites with multiple head stones often consisting of entire families of five or even more. Witnessing these two war-zones, Bosnia and Sierra Leone, somehow affected me in ways that exceed the power of language to describe.

The Remains of War

The heavy rains had come to Sierra Leone. The piles of ashes, the compressed remains of clothing and household effects lay staled and wasted. As I mourned in silence over the many lives that perished, I tried to make sense of the many stories I had heard. I imagined what it must have been like to be begging for one's life with an AK 47 pointed at your temple, only to be discharged seconds later. What could it have been like to face such a death knowing you did not have to die? One Sunday I went to church, and my sister Betty introduced me to some of her friends. It was a somber day for them. I could see the strength of their faith, but who could overcome the weight of their experience? Two years earlier, when the rebels finally entered Freetown and embarked on "Operation No Living Thing," a family I know was trying to escape from their home to safety when they were overrun by some of the rebels who had occupied the city. There were eight of them in the family—the parents (25 to 27 years old) and six children. On that day, their six children were forced to face a concrete wall by the road while hundreds of bullets were emptied into the fragile bodies of all six children. None of the children survived, but the parents were allowed to walk.

My sister narrated her personal stories to me as well. During the rebel occupation, fifteen others had come to seek refuge at my sister's home; and when the rebels burst-in, they endured a psychological torture that, strangely, stripped every ounce of fear from them. There were those in the neighborhood who were selected for death just to amuse the rebels. Others were gunned down just because they smiled or spoke too loud. My sister and others were made to shop and cook for them. They were assembled at night, asked to keep an all-night vigil, and told to sing and hail the rebel chief, Foday Sankoh.

The Victims

There were kids as young as eight who made up the core of the rebel forces. My sister, while peering into eyes of these rebels, recognized in horror the utter absence of their humanity. What remained of these creatures, she told me, was flesh and blood walking around devoid of all human connection. These killers killed because they could, and that made it even more tragic. Most of them had been mobilized from the provinces. Their initial contact with the rebel leaders placed them in a situation where they were often asked to gun down their own family members, and their refusal would lead to their own death. Once a child or young adult had killed his or her own father or mother, they were told the only family that would ever accept them would be their rebel family. They were then taken to the mountains where they began their new lives as killers and butchers. They could not come back to face their families for they had killed their own mothers and raped their own sisters. In general, Americans are sheltered from such acts of brutality.

Final Reflections

The city, they said, was healing. Most of the people I complained to would nod their head and say they understood my state of despair, but they were quick to mention how much life had improved. People were grateful that things had gotten so much better. I searched fervently for evidence of this improvement: the city was unbearably overcrowded, and there were countless numbers of beggars and amputees on the streets of the city—evidence of widespread hunger. I woke up each morning to the voice of old friends, family friends, and many people I did not even know. They had come to visit very early in the morning. They had no job and hadn't the slightest clue how they might feed their family on any given day. By visiting me, an old acquaintance that had returned from America, they might be able to squeeze five or so bucks from me before they headed home for the day. If I were able to survive the morning barrage and head out to town on errands, I would then return home to a multitude of people sitting on my front veranda waiting to share their stories and hoping I would magically assist them.

By the time I returned to the U.S. after three weeks, I had lost ten pounds. I could not bring myself to eat while many hungry people with empty stomachs sat gazing at me. So I made it a habit to share my food with whomever was around. I remained restless and engulfed with anxiety during my entire stay in

Freetown. From the front of my house, I could see the Atlantic Ocean; and gazing silently at me from the back of the house were picturesque hills and mountains. Yet to bring myself to appreciate and enjoy my surroundings proved to be impossible. I could not detach myself from the destitute of the multitude. I began rationalizing the relationship between the few who are rich and the many who are dangerously poor. I needed to make sense of what was going on, or maybe I needed to find a way to cope with this dilemma. Only then, would I be able to feel some sense of ease.

The poor find ways to get back from the rich. While these attempts aren't always successful, they nevertheless try. How could it be that a country so richly blessed with natural resources and fully capable of educating, feeding, and caring for all of its young was, nonetheless, relegated to the status of one of the poorest nations in the world? So, I figured, the few who monopolize power and control the resources have enriched themselves—not by genuine means but by taking what rightfully belongs to the people and swelling their own personal fortunes. In fairness then, when the masses scramble to get back what little they can from those that have, they are merely seeking a minute fraction of what was theirs to start with. While I may not have been responsible for exploiting the people of Sierra Leone and getting myself fabulously wealthy, I nonetheless had come from America, and in America, as every Sierra Leonian knows, "the streets are paved in gold."

From the congested streets of Freetown to the desolate villages of Rwanda, the image of September 11th speaks to all of humanity. The weeping of the orphans of New York City cry tears no different from those of the fatherless children and victims of the war in Sierra Leone. As a child growing up in Africa, I cared about what happened in other parts of the world, especially America. When I went to my village during the summer vacation at the height of the raining season, I sat in little thatched huts as the elders told stories of the great loss that once visited the world with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. In a place far removed from any semblance of "civilization," some people managed to secure a small transistor radio; and in the late hours of the night after returning from a long day's work on their farms, they often clutched their radio as they listened to the translated version of the BBC world news. For most African youth in the cities, whose parents managed to send them to school, the need to connect with the rest of the world and especially America was part of a larger plan of survival. We constantly imagined the lives of others. The average school-age child is not innately cognizant of his basic rights as a human being, but one is guided to the path of such a state of self-realization, in part, by how one imagines the experiences of our fellow human beings thousands of miles away.

As someone who teaches courses in foundations of education, I believe we should encourage students to come to wrestle with Martha Nussbaum's theory of cosmopolitan education. As Nussbaum observes,

> Compassion begins with the local. But if our moral natures and our emotional natures are to live in any sort of harmony, we must find devices through which to extend our strong emotion and our ability to imagine the situation of others to the world of human life as a whole. Since compassion contains thought, it can be educated.[3]

The educated development of an image of the "other" can be achieved through early, civic education. One might argue that mere imagination is not enough. What is needed is a world where people feel, despite the physical distances that separate them, a sense of solidarity and compassion: Only then will people be capable of realizing that the perils that may befall a brethren in a faraway land could likely befall them as well. Americans should realize that symbolic "9/11s" have occurred in many other places in the world. Through a cosmopolitan form of civic education, perhaps we can learn, to paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that human suffering anywhere is a threat to humanity everywhere.

Endnotes

1. 'Kabba on Diamond war,' New Vision (Freetown) 27 September, 2001, Quoted from the President's convocation speech at Southern Connecticut State University after the University conferred an honorary doctorate.
2. Joshua Cohen, Editor's Preface. In Martha Nussbaum, *For Love of Country*. Boston: Beacon Press, xii.
3. Martha Nussbaum, *For Love of Country*, xii.

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