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Civic Renewal in America

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Our formal political system is coarse, unproductive, and short-sighted. Outside of formal politics, however, a robust movement is beginning to renew civic engagement in America. In this article, I define what I mean by "civic" work. I then describe some important current examples and contend that the whole field is growing stronger and more unified. (This independent analysis supports the results of a new book by Carmen Sirianni and Lewis A. Friedland entitled *The Civic Renewal Movement.*) Finally, I argue that civic renewal should matter to academic philosophers—and vice-versa.

Open-ended Politics

Good citizens care about issues and debates, often passionately. They want to save unborn children or to defend women's reproductive freedom, to rescue the environment or to promote growth, to achieve world peace or to punish America's enemies. These are matters of life and death, so naturally we want our positions to win, and we are entitled to fight for public support.

But a civic attitude begins when we notice that a great democracy is *always* engaged in such debates. It matters not only which side wins each round, but also

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what happens to the nation's public life over the long term. Are most people inclined to participate in discussions and decisions (at least within their neighborhoods and schools), or are many citizens completely alienated or excluded? Do young people grow up with the necessary skills and knowledge to allow them to participate, if they so choose? Do we seriously consider a broad range of positions? Do good arguments and reasons count, or has politics become just a clash of money and power? Can we achieve progress on the

goals that we happen to share, or have our disagreements become so sharp and personal that we cannot ever cooperate?

One may serve civic ends while also fighting hard for a political position, so long as one takes care to avoid collateral damage to the civic culture. Indeed, much of the energy in politics and civil society comes from people who want to promote particular policies and interests. That energy is welcome. Nevertheless, it is important for some people, some of the time, to be mainly concerned about the quality of public institutions and debates. While most citizens engage politically as Democrats, Republicans, or members of another party, we also need at least a few citizens to fill nonpartisan roles, ensuring that elections are fair and government is transparent and ethical. While it is useful for editorial writers and bloggers to promote their own ideological views, we also need reporters who provide facts regardless of the political implications. While it is appropriate for people to form and support organizations that promote their own economic and legal interests, we also need some organizations to worry about the overall political process and culture.

In short, we need political work that is *open-ended*. Instead of defining problems and solutions in advance, such work creates open forums, networks, and institutions in which diverse groups of citizens can make their own decisions and act effectively.

"Open-ended" seems a better term than "neutral," because neutrality is something of a chimera. Most political interventions have more or less predictable consequences for left and right. For example, someone might register young voters simply in order to increase the level of participation in our democracy. However, if one registers students on my campus, experience suggests that 70 percent will vote Democratic—a partisan consequence. Most journalism benefits one side of the political debate more than another. Before there can be an open public meeting in a community, someone must write an invitation and agenda that may somehow favor one group or perspective. These examples show that political neutrality can be ellusive.

Nevertheless, there is surely a difference between trying to inspire, persuade, or manipulate people to adopt a view, versus helping them to form and promote decisions of their own. The latter goal is appealing for several reasons: it reflects the best spirit of liberal education, it builds citizens' capacities for self-government, and it creates the hope that we may together develop *new* policy options and ideologies, for none of the existing ones seem impressive.

If one endorses a full-blown political ideology (complete with appropriate policies, arguments, institutions, constituencies, and tactics), then it may seem morally compelling to further that view rather than to promote open-ended civic processes. However, I doubt that any of the available ideologies, from libertarianism to socialism, is in good enough intellectual condition today to merit anything more than lukewarm support. In that situation, pragmatic, open-ended, participatory civic work is especially important.

It would be unwise to adopt an open-ended approach to politics if public opinion generally reflected deep inequality of knowledge, status, power,

> *Talk—no matter how civil and informed—is not enough.*

and other resources. We would have to reform the economic structure of society *before* we could trust public deliberations to reach just or wise conclusions.

Indeed, there is such a thing as "false consciousness"—a set of views contrary to people's own interests that they adopt because they are manipulated by cultural norms, status differentials, advertising, state propaganda, schools, religious bodies, and other large forces. However, we are not respectful of our fellow citizens when we diagnose them as having been so manipulated. It requires a remarkable belief in the superiority of one's own views to attribute false consciousness to others. Again, given the weak intellectual condition of all major ideologies today, such arrogance seems misplaced. Besides, it is generally more effective to begin with a sincere attitude of respect and, having genuinely listened, then to express one's own dissenting views.

Much has been written about the ethics of public deliberation. For instance, to the greatest extent possible, discussions should be about policies, not about people. Although competition and disagreement are inevitable, arguments should not be unnecessarily harsh, because studies show that Americans tend to shun political discord.

However, I want to emphasize that talk—no matter how civil and informed—is not enough. Most citizens are frustrated by discussions unless they lead to action. In the best civic renewal work, people not only deliberate; they also vote and otherwise influence the state, manage common resources, and build non-state associations and institutions. Deliberation without work is empty, but work without deliberation is blind.

A Human Scale

We might conceive of politics as occuring on two levels. One involves major policy issues, the kind of questions that are ultimately decided by legislative votes, court decisions, and referenda. In considering these issues (e.g., taxation, welfare, war, or the right to abortion), people fall into ideological groups that are represented by major organizations and parties. Voting is a citizen's main source of power. Debating, organizing, petitioning, and raising consciousness are important, but they count only insofar as they change votes. Free and fair elections are what make this level of politics democratic.

Politics at the macro-level can sometimes be "win-win" and creative. Wise legislation and competent public administration can make everyone better off. Nevertheless, much macro-level politics is zero-sum, because (for example) a victory for abortion rights is a loss for abortion opponents—and vice-versa. Indeed, this level of politics *should be* competitive, because tough competition between parties and ideologies gives citizens choices and keeps incumbents honest. Besides, when parties are forced to compete, they mobilize ordinary people to engage as voters and activists; thus competition encourages participation. Perhaps the worst flaw in today's macro-politics is a lack of vigorous competition caused by gerrymandered electoral districts, incumbents' advantages in campaign finance, and various impediments to insurgent campaigns and movements.

A second level of politics—most common at the local level and within institutions—involves direct participation. At this level, many of the people who will be affected by a decision should personally participate in deliberations about it. For example, before a religious congregation makes a major financial decision, often the whole group discusses it. Furthermore, there is no need to isolate discussion from action at the micro-level of politics. The same people who meet and talk about an issue can also implement their own decisions. A student government can decide to implement a mentoring program and then actually serve as the mentors. A neighborhood group can decide to protest a crackhouse and then actually picket it. An academic department can choose a new curriculum and then actually teach it.

The micro-level of politics—characterized by direct participation, deliberation, and what political theorist

Harry Boyte calls "public work"—is not necessarily more pleasant or less divisive than macro-politics. On the contrary, when issues arise in our everyday lives, involve our identities as workers or neighbors or parents, and cause disagreements with people we know well, politics can become intensely emotional and painful. That's why "office politics" and "academic politics" are phrases with very negative associations. Diana Mutz, professor of political science and communications at the University of Pennsylvania, shows that people tend to avoid controversy within families and social networks. The avoidance of controversy is understandable: persistent disagreement can tear a group apart; and even when most people agree, minorities may feel excluded and mistreated. However, it is possible for micro-politics to be consensual and "win-win" rather than competitive. Indeed, if the main problem with macro-politics is a shortage of competition, then the main flaw in micro-politics is a weak set of institutions, habits, and practices that allow Americans to collaborate on common problems.

We need the micro-level as well as the macro-level of politics.

I contend that there are two main reasons that we need the micro-level as well as the macro-level of politics. First, a whole range of issues is better addressed in a participatory, deliberative way than through state action. Governments can do some things well, but they cannot change hearts, care for individuals holistically, or tailor solutions to local circumstances. Second, participation in micro-level politics may be the most powerful form of civic *education*, giving people confidence and a deep knowledge of issues that will enable them to participate in macro-politics effectively and wisely.

Examples of Civic Renewal Work

At the heart of today's civic renewal movement are concrete, practical experiments, including the following.

Practical deliberative democracy. For some thirty years, nonprofits have been organizing groups of citizens at a human scale (say, five to 500 people) to discuss public issues, typically providing background materials and offering some kind of moderation or facilitation. Major organizations in this field include the National Issues Forums (mainly self-selected adults deliberating face-to-face, with published guides), Study Circles (a similar process, but usually more embedded in community organizing), Deliberative Polls (randomly selected citizens who meet for several days), and online forums such as E-The People. Work on deliberation shades into conflict-mediation efforts and inter-group dialogues (which usually involve discussions of identities and relationships rather than issues).

On occasion, public deliberations have significant effects on official policies. One recent example was Listening to the City, a process organized by AmericaSPEAKS in Lower Manhattan. Participants caused the first round of plans for rebuilding the World Trade Center to be scrapped. A few government agencies are using deliberative techniques instead of public hearings and notice-and-comment procedures to "consult" the public.

Community economic development. Deliberation also occurs within non-profit corporations that aim to create jobs and income, and that are formally tied to neighborhoods or to specific rural areas. These corporations include co-ops, land trusts, and community development corporations (CDCs), among others.

One of the biggest weaknesses of democracy today is the mobility of capital. As Gar Alperovitz, University of Maryland professor of political economy, argued recently in *Philosophy & Public Policy Quarterly*, a corporation can influence political decisions in many ways, including the "implicit or explicit threat of withdrawing its plants, equipment, and jobs from specific locations." What is more, "in the absence of an alternative, the economy as a whole depends on the viability and success of its most important economic actor—a reality that commonly forces citizen and politician alike to respond to corporate demands."

Even people who favor low taxation and light regulation may believe that democratic communities should be free to make their own policy choices without undue influence from capital. Unfortunately, in the absence of alternatives to the standard corporation, democracies must do whatever firms want. Trying to restrict capital flows simply violates the laws of the market and imposes steep costs. On the other hand, the success of CDCs, land trusts, and similar innovations proves that viable alternative to the standard corporation indeed exist. It is possible to increase the wealth of people in poor communities by creating economically efficient organizations that are tied to places.

Democratic community-organizing work. The Industrial Areas Foundation (which has created and worked with many CDCs and other neighborhood corporations) represents a form of community organizing that builds the political capacity as well as the wealth of poor people. Instead of defining a community's problems and advocating solutions, IAF organizers encourage relatively open-ended discussions that lead to concrete actions (such as the construction of 2,900 townhouses in Brooklyn, NY), thereby generating civic power. Though IAF is a major force in this

field, it is not the only one. Asset-Based Community Development emphasizes the importance of cataloguing and publicizing the assets of communities as a prelude to development. The goal is to shift from thinking of poor communities as baskets of problems to recognizing their intrinsic capacities. The Pew Partnership for Civic Change is also a hub for this kind of work.

Work to defend and expand the commons. The "tragedy of the commons"—that tendency of any resource not privately owned to be degraded as people over-use or fail to invest in it—is real. Consider the collapse of global fish stocks due to over-exploitation. However, many unowned resources actually flourish for generations or even centuries because they are nurtured by strong communities with appropriate habits and values. New examples of commons include land-trusts and co-ops as well as cyberspace, understood as a whole structure, not as a series of privately owned components. Scholars such as political theorist Elinor Ostrom, who works closely with communities, have begun to understand the principles and practices that underlie effective commons—whether they happen to involve grasslands, computer networks, or bodies of scientific knowledge.

Practical work to protect and enhance commons is underway within the American Libraries Association, because librarians see themselves as defenders of public artifacts (the books, maps, databases, and web pages in their collections), public facilities (library buildings, meeting spaces, grounds), and public ideas (including all human knowledge that is not patented or copyrighted, plus copyrighted books that people can borrow and read). Librarians believe that these public goods face numerous threats, ranging from patrons' abuse of library books and budget cuts to corporations' efforts to over-extend copyright law. However, the ALA fights back in the courts and legislatures.

Meanwhile, librarians encourage constructive public participation in local libraries to enhance the value of these commons. An example is the September Project, an impressive series of discussions, art exhibitions, readings, and performances that now take place in thousands of public libraries every September 11th, as a democratic response to the terror attacks.

Collaborative efforts to restore and protect natural commons (ecosystems) are often undertaken under the name of "civic environmentalism." Since the keys to robust, sustainable commons include public deliberation and the wide dispersal of civic skills and attitudes, commons work must be viewed as closely related to civic renewal.

Work on a new generation of public media. When we hear the phrase "public media," we may first think of publicly-subsidized organizations that produce and broadcast shows to mass audiences. Indeed, within the

constellation of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), NewsHour Productions, and Public Broadcasting Service, one finds interesting work that could support civic renewal. However, "public media" is much broader than CPB; it should include any communications medium that promotes the creation and sharing of ideas and cultural products relevant to public issues. So defined, the most compelling public media today originate from thousands of grassroots groups that create websites, email-based discussions, and audio and video segments.

J-Lab, the Center for Interactive Journalism at the University of Maryland, for instance, makes grants to grassroots groups to conduct "micro-news" projects. All across the country, people are producing community blogs (websites on which citizens post short news items and comments), elaborate "content management

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systems" that allow citizens to contribute news to local websites, and "podcasting" projects (short audio clips of news or music that can be downloaded and heard on cell phones and other portable devices). While most of the material created for these new technologies has nothing to do with politics or social issues, there is a substantial amount of real community news and deliberation.

Newspapers are also venues for relevant work. In the 1990s, many professional journalists were interested in writing the news in ways that would better support public deliberation. (See my article on public journalism in the winter 1994 *Report from the Institute for Philosophy & Public Policy*.) That movement is no longer a political force, but it has left an important imprint in newsrooms. Furthermore, because of the Internet, newspapers are keen to become more "interactive." Although interactivity can be a mere gimmick or a way to enhance an individual's experience on a website, some journalists now experiment with interactive features like blogs for democratic purposes.

Public media production and work to defend the commons come together in the field of positive hip-hop. Youth of all races now produce music and poetry that confronts serious social problems and depict themselves as three-dimensional human beings, not as thugs. Hip-hop culture usually involves borrowing, quoting, and parodying snippets from mass media. Since this is a powerful democratic activity, there should exist a commons composed of cultural products available for such "fair use." Unfortunately, over-

restrictive copyright laws threaten the growth of this commons. Young people in the hip-hop world are increasingly aware that they have a stake in dry issues like copyright.

Development of social software. I mentioned blogs in the last section. They are one example of a new behavior enabled by software. Many developers are working on other software to enhance discussion and collaboration. Examples include "wikis," documents posted on web sites that can be added to and edited by anyone who visits the site. The *Wikipedia* is a whole encyclopedia created this way. *Wikipedi*a is strikingly accurate and well written for an enormous website edited only by its own readers, and it exemplifies a certain kind of deliberation. A good example in a geographical community is the Bakersfield, CA, *Northwest Voice,* which consists entirely of material submitted by

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citizens. People submit news items that are automatically sorted by location and topic. The result is a website that looks exactly like a professional online newspaper, even though it is created by volunteers. Copies are printed with advertising supplements and distributed to every household.

While some of this frenzied innovation is driven by purely technical interests and goals (and by the prospect of making money), many in the subculture of "hackers" are committed to the commons and to norms of voluntary collaboration.

The engaged university. Colleges and universities have great civic potential as producers of knowledge, sites of deliberation, and powerful nonprofit economic institutions, rooted in communities. However, William Sullivan, a senior scholar at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, argues that post-War universities were mostly committed to the idea that experts "'solved problems' by bringing the latest technical knowledge to bear on matters which, it [was] widely presumed, the public as a whole was too limited to understand, much less address." This attitude could lead to the overvaluation of certain forms of technical knowledge and the denigration of public deliberation. It also sharpened distinctions among research (defined as sophisticated scholarship assessed by academic peers), teaching (the transmission of expert knowledge to students), and service (the appli-

cation of expertise to community problems). In competitive universities, teaching and service were generally valued less than scholarship. All three enterprises suffered from the understanding of research as strictly technical.

Today, however, one finds many counter-trends, including various impressive scholarly research programs that require close and mutually respectful interactions among scholars, students, and geographical communities, social movements, or professional groups outside the academy. For example, the Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania provides opportunities for distinguished scholars to advance their own disciplines by conducting research that benefits (and takes direction from) residents of West Philadelphia, where the University is situated. Penn has also used its economic leverage in constructive ways, collaborating with community partners.

The Center for Community Partnerships exemplifies several civic trends in higher education: a move from "service" to collaboration; a rediscovery of geographical communities; a reflection on colleges' power as employers, builders, and consumers; and a turn to sophisticated research that *requires* learning with and from non-academics. Ostrom's work on commons is another good example: it is theoretically original, yet it depends on her learning from lay partners. Campus Compact and the Democracy Collaborative are centers for research and experimentation on the engaged university.

Civic education. From the 1960s through the 1990s, most scholars argued that explicit civic education had no lasting effects. In the same period (although not only because of the scholarly nay-sayers), schools tended to abandon civic courses and curricula. Major educational reforms, culminating in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, have made civic education a low priority.

Nevertheless, some nonprofit organizations have continued to provide textbooks, programs, and seminars for teachers. These groups include the Center for Civic Education, the Constitutional Rights Foundation, Streetlaw, Public Achievement, Choices (founded at Brown University), and the Bill of Rights Institute, among others. Their programs usually combine a focus on perennial democratic principles with investigations of immediate issues relevant to students. They also tend to combine experiential learning (e.g., debate, community-service, advocacy) with reading and writing.

Since 1999, these nonprofits, traditionally fractious, have come together to create the National Alliance for Civic Education (NACE) and then the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools. The Campaign is an effective advocacy organization that brings together all the leading organizations that specialize in formal

civic education, plus major nonprofits that have pledged to support their agenda, including the American Bar Association, both national teachers' unions, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and thirty-five additional other organizations. They are working to ensure that the next generation of educational reform will not again ignore civics.

Service-learning. A particular strand of civic education involves combinations of community service with academic study of the same topic. Service-learning is popular not only in K-12 schools (about a third of which now offer it), but also in colleges. Much service-learning is non-political; it involves acts of charity and service, such as cleaning up a park or visiting elders. Often the underlying theory derives from experiential education (whose proponents believe that students learn best from doing); this need not have anything to do with civic or political values. However, within the large field of service-learning, one finds avid discussion of how to engage young people in solving social problems—as a pedagogy. Careful, independent evaluations of some excellent service-learning programs have found that participants develop civic identities that last well into adulthood. The National Service Learning Clearinghouse and the National Service Learning Partnership are hubs for this network.

Community youth development. Much of the best civic education takes place not in schools but in youth groups that are concerned primarily with healthy adolescent development. Increasingly, adults in 4-H, the Scouts, and urban youth centers believe that engaging teenagers in studying and addressing local social problems are vital ways to develop their intellects, characters, and to keep them safe. Much like proponents of asset-based community development, these people want to treat their subjects (in this case, kids) as partners and assets, not as bundles of problems. They also emphasize local geographical communities as excellent subjects for youth to study and as venues for youth work. The Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development and the Forum for Youth Investment are important hubs in this movement. The Coalition for Community Schools brings a similar set of values to its work with K-12 schools.

In Hampton, Virginia (and to a lesser extent in other communities), youth have been integrated into the city's governance. Youth are recruited into school and neighborhood boards, where they make significant contributions to their communities. Leaders emerge and are tapped for the citywide police and school advisory boards, which have major influence.

The Strength and Growth of the Movement

I am convinced that the civic renewal movement whose main elements I have mentioned so far forms a reasonably tight and robust network. My basis for that claim is the set of social ties that I observe as part of my official work, which involves numerous meetings and conferences in many parts of the United States (probably more than 75 per year). I am constantly struck by the appearance of the same people, or of people who know others in the broader network.

This is a mere impression. It could be tested with rigorous network analysis, which I believe would be quite useful. In brief, researchers would begin with several key organizations (such as the ones listed above) and ask decision-makers to list the other groups with which they collaborate. Researchers would then move to those groups and ask, in turn,

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about their collaborations. Software can automatically generate network maps based on such data. I would hypothesize that a network map of civic renewal would show many links binding the whole field.

Lacking the resources actually to conduct such a study, I have used a very imperfect substitute. Instead of asking people to list their partners, I have examined electronic links among organizations' websites. A web link provides imperfect evidence of actual collaboration, but it does reveal a conscious decision to connect two organizations.

I used software called IssueCrawler to generate the diagram shown below. I began with four nodes that I chose because of my sense that they represent important consolidations of civic work since the 1990s: the Civic Practices Network, the Deliberative Democracy Consortium, CIRCLE (The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement), and the Pew Partnership for Civic Change. IssueCrawler detected all the sites to which these four linked, and then all the sites that were linked to those, and so on, until it had built a large database of networked websites. It then placed the sites on a two-dimensional plane based simply on the degree to which sites linked to one another. (The software has no information about the nature of any organization or the content of any website.) The resulting map shows the websites at the core of this network. They turn out to involve adult public deliberation, civic education, service-learning, higher education reform, and political reform. If the map were allowed to display more nodes, it would become too large and complex to present as a single image; however, a complete map would reveal further links to the fields of community organizing, urban planning, conflict resolution, and social software.

It is important to note that while the civic renewal movement may be robust and coherent, it suffers from *insufficient diversity*. Most of the organizations listed above are predominantly, sometimes exclusively, white. Minorities are best represented in the work that involves community economic development; they are not well represented in civic education or in much of the deliberation field.

Those working in social movements tend to make two historical assertions without hard evidence. They assert that the problem that concerns them (whatever it may be) is getting worse, and that they belong to a newly formed movement that is beginning to reverse the decline. Since these two claims are convenient clichés, one might doubt my assertions that America's *civic* condition has declined and that a new civic renewal movement has recently formed. Certainly, lamentations of civic decline are as old as Plato. In 1790, the French philosopher Marquis de Condorcet

observed that *every* generation accuses itself of being less-civic minded that its predecessors.

However, some aspects of civic life certainly have declined, and some new strategies and organizations certainly have formed to renew civil society. When the National Commission on Civic Renewal created an Index of National Civic Health (INCH) in 1999, its index was comprised of twenty-two indicators of civic health, shown in the trend line below. I believe that the steep decline in *almost all* of those indicators of civic health captured by INCH between 1984 and 1991 promoted genuine alarm and caused people to work on civic renewal by the mid-1990s. For various reasons, including civic-renewal work, the situation had begun to improve by 2000. This is not to say that INCH includes all relevant indicators, or even that everyone agrees with the proposition that "civic health" had declined. But there was pretty widespread agreement, rooted in people's daily experience, that we had a

problem. (No comparable data exist after the year 2000, so one cannot continue this trend line after Sept. 11, 2001.)

The decline of the INCH variables impelled activists to form a robust Civic Renewal Movement in the 1990s. I also propose a *generational* reason for this development. During the War on Poverty, launched in 1964 by the Johnson Administration as part of the Great Society initiative, the Federal Government paid the salaries of thousands of mostly young people who worked at the
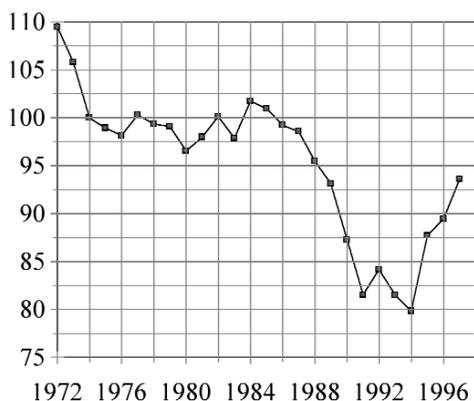
The year 1974 is a baseline, set at 100.

Index of National Civic Health, including measures of trust, associational membership, and participation in civil society.

grassroots level, organizing communities and running programs. Overall, the Great Society included elements of bureaucracy and centralization, but it also required the "Maximum Feasible Participation" of citizens. While the War on Poverty did not end in victory, it generated a lot of civic experimentation.

Some people who were heavily involved in those experiments later switched over to electoral politics. Some burned out or lost the opportunity to serve when their budgets were cut. But a considerable number continued to experiment and learn, often moving from federal programs to nonprofit organizations. When they lost their government grants, nonprofits developed local financial sources. When individuals and nonprofits got tired of fighting city hall, they developed collaborative relationships with local governments. By the 1990s, those who were still political activists had mostly become very pragmatic and were ready to do effective civic-renewal work. Their trajectory is a major theme in Sirianni and Friedland's *Civic Innovation in America*. Sirianni and Friedland argue that the Civic Renewal Movement marks the full mat-

uration of the Baby Boom and the arrival of younger people whom the Boomers mentored.

Another impetus was the defeat of the Soviet Union at the hands of civil society. Well before 1989, most leftists in the West had become thoroughly disenchanted with the Leninist regimes of the Warsaw Pact. Nevertheless, the fall of the Soviet Union—and the triumph of such dissidents and reformers as Czechoslovakia's Vaclav Havel, Poland's Lech Walensa and Adam Michnik, and Russia's Andrei Sakharov—was an important moment for the Western left. It clearly displayed the moral superiority of civic work over Marxist state-centered politics. And it revealed that civic culture was an important historical force, not merely a phenomenon of the underlying economic system. Because dissidents built healthy civic spaces in Poland, the former Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, those countries could overthrow communism and build democracy. In countries that lacked such a civic culture, the same overthrow led to civil war.

Meanwhile, as authors like James C. Scott and Michael Edwards have argued, economic development is usually disastrous when it relies on social engineering and top-down mandates. Even when governments are reasonably well-meaning, as in Tanzania or India, state efforts to promote growth and equity usually backfire. Again, what seems to matter most are democratic institutions and political culture. As Edwards argues, "It's the polity, stupid." Edwards had a stint at

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the World Bank at a time when many of the lending institutions were beginning to recognize the importance of civil society.

The Role of Philosophy and Philosophers

This effort to map one current reform movement has implications for how philosophers ought to work. For the most part, contemporary philosophers and normative theorists address the largest or smallest scale. That is, they either consider the overall structure of a society and the definition and distribution of fundamental rights and essential goods; or they consider decisions and dilemmas faced by individuals. I contend that philosophers ought to address the middle range, exemplified by actual social movements. Analysis at that scale requires significantly different methods from those that are typical in the discipline today.

It is often noted that a narrow focus on the moral behavior of individuals is inadequate because decisions about such important matters as abortion, euthanasia, divorce, and discrimination are constrained and framed by large social institutions. An equally serious mistake is to concentrate exclusively on what the late Harvard philosopher John Rawls called the "basic structure of society." After all, the only mechanisms we have for distributing wealth and protecting rights are the actual institutions that exist today. And the only means we have for changing our institutions are social movements, political parties, and organizations.

I can argue, as part of a theory of justice, that everyone has a right to affordable health care. However, I cannot defend the proposition that our actual government spends our money very effectively, transparently, accountably, or equitably. Nor can I name a social movement capable of achieving excellent, universal health care in our present circumstances. Thus a debate about basic entitlements and rights is fundamentally sterile. It is politically irrelevant because it does not confront the main argument against government, which is not libertarian but pragmatic (i.e., government does not work very well). The debate is also normatively weak because it assumes that we can have better institutions and movements than we do. As in the old joke about the economist on the desert island who "assumes a can-opener," philosophers who promote egalitarian (or libertarian) societies without discussing how to reform actual institutions and build movements are just avoiding the hard issues. They also overlook the most normatively interesting and unexplored questions, which involve political strategies under imperfect conditions. Finally, by focusing on the

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distribution of rights in a hypothetical just society, they overlook the creative and fulfilling aspects of political engagement in our real world.

I believe philosophers ought to give much more attention to the middle range between individuals and the basic structure of society. Philosophers should focus on the strategic and ethical choices faced by concrete institutions, networks, and social movements at the present historical moment. That is why I study the civic renewal movement, but it is equally useful for philosophers to write about and interact with other current movements, from environmentalism to Christian conservatism.

Another reason to work at the middle range is to increase one's impact. To be sure, moral and political

philosophy can be valuable without being practical or politically consequential. However, I believe that many mainstream political theorists want to influence the world. Their method is to address the sovereign: the power that can shape the overall structure of their society. Historically, the sovereign was the monarch, so philosophers from Plato to Bacon tried to get the prince's ear. Today, the sovereign is supposed to be "the people," so engaged political theorists attempt to influence public opinion. They do so by translating their ideas into relatively readable, public arguments.

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expressed. Besides, even if people are persuaded by an argument, they also need skills, confidence, and institutions through which to act. Thus it is much more consequential to find organizations and social movements that have broad constituencies, because one then can become involved in their discussions about goals and strategies. If philosophers are willing to adopt an open-ended approach to politics, not only will they form and express their own views in these discussions, but they can also learn from other participants. Philosophers can offer deep reflection about normative matters; in return, they can obtain invaluable information and insights from practitioners.

The model presumed by many political theorists is:

(a) develop and refine views about how society should be organized;
(b) promote those views in public fora; and
(c) hope that legislation is passed to implement the vision.

As an alternative, I recommend that philosophers:

(a) find organizations that seem to be enhancing the quality and quantity of public engagement;
(b) help address the ethical and strategic questions those organizations face; and
(c) learn from the ideas that citizens develop.

Focus on concrete reform efforts influences one's methodology as a philosopher. Moral philosophy always has some empirical basis; it depends on contingent facts about people and institutions. If philosophers are concerned about the distribution of goods and rights in a whole society, then they must know the facts about wealth, poverty, justice, and injustice in a nation or across the globe. They should also master arguments in political, moral, and legal theory. For

The Deliberative Democracy Handbook
### Strategies for Effective Civic Engagement in the 21st Century

Edited by John Gastil and Peter Levine

"The Deliberative Democracy Handbook is a terrific resource for democratic practitioners and theorists alike. It combines rich case material from many cities and types of institutional settings with careful reflection on core principles. It generates hope for a renewed democracy, tempered with critical scholarship and political realism. Most important, this handbook opens a spacious window on the innovativeness of citizens in the US (and around the world) and shows how the varied practices of deliberative democracy are part of a larger civic renewal movement"

—Carmen Sirianni, professor of sociology and public policy, Brandeis University, and coauthor, *Civic Innovation in America*

"The Deliberative Democracy Handbook, edited by John Gastil and Peter Levine, is an important collection of readings for anyone interested in the role of citizen participation in the public policy process. It provides concrete examples of successful efforts to expand public input in decision-making at the local, state, and national levels. The book also grapples with emerging challenges to the continued development of these efforts in the future."

—Robert Mark Silverman, associate professor, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University at Buffalo, the State University of New York
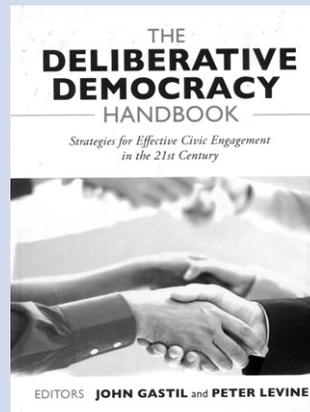
The Editors

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both purposes, the most important information and ideas are available in libraries and in discussions among academics. Direct engagement with the world outside academia is unnecessary.

However, books are inadequate if one hopes to address the moral and strategic choices confronting people in a social movement at the present time. For instance, in 2006, many people in the field of youth civic education are wrestling with the potential advantages of a shift to much *smaller* high schools. Several major cities, prompted by the Gates Foundation and other donors, are actually building small high schools that each have a different academic "theme," such as the arts or public service. These schools provide more choices to students and families but less diversity within each building; tighter communities but less individuation of curriculum. Philosophers of civic and

moral education who rely predominantly on books would be unaware of this reform, which is just developing (and may die before it reaches large enough scale). I know about it because I attend meetings, interact with foundations, and help to lobby policymakers. Since groups will not invite me to their meetings unless I come as a participant, my usual stance is one of participant-observer.

Civic Models: More Hamptons

Earlier, I mentioned Hampton, Virginia as a particularly civic community. Hampton is an old, blue-color city, not in any way privileged. Yet the city has reinvented its government and civic culture so that thousands of people are directly involved in city planning, educational policy, police work, and economic devel-
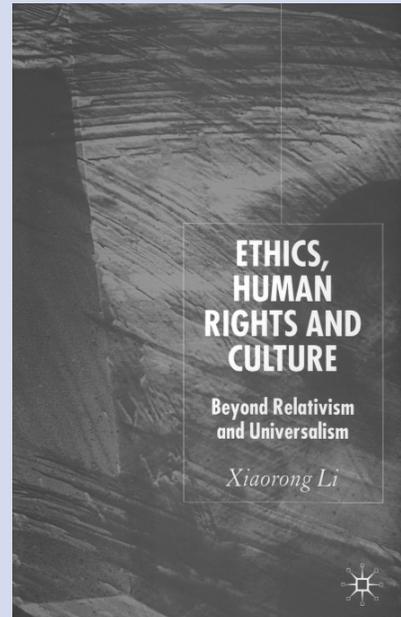
opment. The prevailing culture is relatively deliberative; people listen, share ideas, and develop consensus, despite differences of interest and ideology. Young people hold positions of responsibility and leadership. Youth have made believers out of initially suspicious police officers and school administrators.

Imagine that the whole country were more like Hampton. Then we could have a really interesting debate about distribution and other classic philosophical issues. Those who promote a more activist stance for the government would be able to cite examples of good municipal regimes that are truly accountable to their citizens. Those who are skeptical about the public sector would be able to find flaws in the Hampton model. Such a discussion, far from sterile, would generate rich insights and practical ideas.

So how can intellectuals help to make America more like Hampton? First of all, they should be aware of the civic innovation that is going on today. Hampton has been the subject of at least two scholarly studies. The authors used their own networks of practitioners to identify Hampton as a site of civic innovation. We need plenty more of that kind of writing.

Second, we must grapple with the subtle and difficult issues that all such cases raise. How did Hampton get where it is today? Are its achievements sustainable? Are they replicable? Is the city's deliberation truly inclusive? Does all that participation generate good economic and social outcomes? Is democracy worth the time people have to spend in meetings? To me, these are the crucial questions, much more likely to yield insight and impact than any novel argument in favor of a theory of justice.

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Sources: Carmen Sirianni and Lewis A. Friedland, *The Civic Renewal Movement: Community Building and Democracy in the United States* (Kettering Foundation Press, 2005); William M. Sullivan, "The Public Intellectual as Transgressor," *Higher Education Exchange* (1996), p. 20; Michael Edwards, *Future Positive: International Co-operation in the 21st Century* (Earthscan, 1999), chapter 3.

Feynman's Unanswered Question

Herman E. Daly

Introduction

In a series of lectures given in 1963, and only recently published, physicist Richard P. Feynman raised what he called a central question to which he said he did not have the answer. Thirty years later that same question arose in a conference on science and religion, and once again remained unanswered. Probably the question has been raised by others on other occasions as well, and perhaps even answered. If so the answer has not yet reached me, and so I raise the question again.

In beginning his discussion of science and religion Feynman noted that:

> . . . .even the greatest forces and abilities don't seem to carry with them any clear instructions on how to use them. As an example, the great accumulation of understanding as to how the physical world behaves only convinces one that this behavior has a kind of meaninglessness about it. The sciences do not directly teach good and bad.

Most people seek enlightenment on good and bad from religion in the broad sense. Feynman distinguishes three aspects of religion—the metaphysical, the ethical, and the inspirational. By the last he means a ground for conviction that one's actions are not meaningless—"if you are working for God and obeying God's will, you are in some way connected to the universe, your actions have meaning in the greater world, and that is an inspiring aspect."

However, Feynman continues a few pages later:

> That brings me to a central question that I would like to ask you all, because I have no idea of the answer. The source of inspiration today, the source of strength and comfort in any religion, is closely knit with the metaphysical aspects. That is, the inspiration comes from working for God, from obeying His will, and so on. Now an emotional tie expressed in this manner, the strong feeling that you are doing right, is weakened when the slightest amount of doubt is expressed as to the existence of God. So when a belief in God is uncertain, this particular method of obtaining inspiration fails. I don't know the answer to the problem, the problem of maintaining the real value of religion as a source of strength and courage to most men while at the same time not requiring an absolute faith in the metaphysical system.

Feynman said this in 1963. Today the question is sharper and more obvious—how to maintain inspiration to provide the strength to do good in the face, not of a slight doubt as to the existence of God, but in the face of aggressive assertions by the high intelligentsia that the very idea of God is an infantile superstition.

Of course many today claim that ethics does not require a theistic or even a religious basis—it can, they say, be explained scientifically. But Feynman rejected this, noting that scientific understanding of nature's behavior simply increases one's sense of meaninglessness. Furthermore, he argues that ethics by itself, merely knowing good and bad, from wherever this knowledge is derived, is powerless to produce action without inspiration, the third element of religion. We are then back to the dilemma that the more we understand the behavior of nature, the more meaningless it seems, and consequently the harder it is to find inspiration to serve any goal at all.

A Moral Compass in an Inert World?

The logic of Feynman's question was played out in a meeting on science and religion some thirty years later. Some prominent scientists, turned part-time prophets calling for environmental repentance, asked themselves this same question. They noted that science has the techniques, but is unable to ignite sufficient inspiration or moral fervor to induce the public to accept and finance policies that apply these techniques to even so basic a goal as conserving the capacity of the

> *Today the question is . . . how to maintain inspiration to provide the strength to do good in the face . . . of aggressive assertions . . . that the very idea of God is an infantile superstition.*

earth to support life. They thought that it would be worth a try to appeal to religion to supply the missing inspiration as a basis for policy. This resulted, in May of 1992, in the "Joint Appeal by Science and Religion on the Environment," led by the eminent scientists Edward O. Wilson, the late Stephen Jay Gould, and the

late Carl Sagan, along with a few religious leaders, and hosted by then Senator Al Gore. The three scientists are quite well known for their affirmations of scientific materialism and consequent renunciations of any religious interpretation of the cosmos, as well as for their highly-informed and genuine concern about the environment. Their rationale for courting the religious community was that while science had the understanding on which to act, it lacked the moral fire to inspire action by others (and perhaps itself). In a frequently-used metaphor, religion was asked to supply the moral compass, to show the direction, and science would supply the vehicle to get there.

I was a participant in the conference, and was vaguely troubled at the time by what seemed to me a somewhat less than honest appeal by the scientists to a somewhat puzzled group of religious leaders. A year or so later I read a book by theologian John F. Haught, who had also been present, and discovered that he had precisely articulated my uneasiness.

Haught wondered aloud:

> . . . whether it is completely honest for them [the scientists] to drink in this case so lustily from the stream of moral fervor that flows from what they have consistently taken to be the inappropriate and even false consciousness of religious believers . . . the well-intended effort by the skeptics to co-opt the moral enthusiasm of the religious for the sake of ecology is especially puzzling, in view of the fact that it is only because believers take their religious symbols and ideas to be disclosive of the truth of reality that they are aroused to moral passion in the first place. If devotees thought that their religions were not representative of the way things really are, then the religions would be ethically impotent.

He further wondered:

> It is hard to imagine how any thorough transformation of the habits of humans will occur without a corporate human confidence in the ultimate worthwhileness of our moral endeavors. And without a deep trust in reality itself, ecological morality will, I am afraid, ultimately languish and die. Such trust . . . must be grounded in a conviction that the universe carries a meaning, or that it is the unfolding of a "promise." A commonly held sense that the cosmos is a significant process, that it unfolds something analogous to what we humans call "purpose," is, I think, an essential prerequisite of sustained global and intergenerational commitment to the earth's well-being.

Haught's point, of course, is that Sagan, Wilson, and Gould proclaim the cosmology of scientific materialism, which considers the cosmos an absurd accident, and life within it to be no more than another accident ultimately reducible to matter in motion. In their view there is no such thing as value in any objective sense, or purpose, beyond short-term survival and reproduction which are purely instinctual, and thus ultimately mechanical. Calling for a moral compass in such a world is as absurd as calling for a magnetic compass in a world in which you proclaim that there is no such thing as magnetic north. A sensitive compass needle is worthless if there is no external lure toward which it is

pulled. A morally sensitive person in a world in which there is no lure of objective value to pull and persuade this sensitized person toward itself, is equally worthless.

In Feynman's earlier formulation religion loses its power to inspire when the truth of its metaphysics is denied, or even doubted. If science tells us nothing about good and evil, and if it pictures the universe as

> *Calling for a moral compass in . . . a world [existing via random, unintentional causes] is as absurd as calling for a magnetic compass in a world in which you proclaim that there is no such thing as magnetic north.*

basically meaningless, and denies the existence of God, then what is the ground for inspiration to do anything, to serve any purpose (which could only be an illusion anyway)? In the conference this void of purpose was papered over by sentimental references to "our children," and to "other species." But if we are purposeless accidents then so are they, and the dilemma is not solved by pushing it one generation forward, or one species to the side. The meaninglessness refers to all of Creation, a term which, from these scientists' perspective, should be replaced by "Accidentdom" or "Randomdom."

Feynman's question, sharpened by Haught, is still awaiting an answer. At least it deserves to be taken seriously, even if we can't answer it—especially if we can't answer it!

Metaphysical Impatience

It is worth considering Feynman's question anew because it underlies the culture war over the issue of intelligent design versus neodarwinism. Much of this debate is simply noise and knee-jerk reaction from both sides. Let us try to cut away some irrelevancies. First, there are the biblical literalists who do a disservice to both science and the bible. Let's forget them. Beyond that we must ask just what is meant by "evolution" in each case. Some deny the considerable evidence for microevolution (natural selection for differing characteristics within a species, including such things as development of resistance to antibiotics in bacterial populations). This has been confirmed by repeated observation, and those who deny microevolution can also be ignored. Macroevolution is an extrapolation of the same mechanism observed in microevolution (random mutation and natural selection) to explain the development of all species from a presumed single ancestor over a very long period of time. This cannot be directly observed nor repeated in a laboratory and is an

extrapolation, a conjecture. Is it a reasonable conjecture? Certainly. Is there evidence for it? Yes. Are there gaps in the evidence and logical glitches in the theory? Yes. Scientists themselves debate these when they think creationists are not listening.

The intelligent design folks, however, have been listening attentively, and while they may not have understood everything they heard, they have understood enough to raise some questions within the framework of science. The main question, at the level of macroevolution, is the one that Darwin himself proposed as the key to refuting his theory, namely: "If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down." The critics claim that this is indeed the case not only for much-discussed complex organs such as the eye—they consider existing Darwinian explanations unconvincing—but also for many molecular machines at the sub-cellular level. These recently-discovered micro machines at the most basic level of life exhibit, they say, "irreducible complexity," i.e., every part must be present before the machine can perform its function. Within microbiology, they claim, even attempts to explain the origin of such irreducible complexity by Darwinian "numerous, successive, and slight" modifications are largely absent from the literature. The logical glitch is that natural selection selects by how well a system functions (to perform a task that increases reproductive success). If the system cannot function at all until it has been completed by the numerous, successive, slight modifications, then how could natural selection preserve successive random modifications that by themselves confer no advantage, until the system is completed? The modifications would have to be more simultaneous than successive, large rather than slight, or few rather than numerous. The gap in the evidence that critics point to is mainly the relative absence in the fossil record of gradual change, and the presence of the Cambrian explosion in number of species. These are questions that, except for the microbiology dimension, have been around for a long time. All the more reason to expect that by now, say the critics, we would have better answers to them.

Instead of forthrightly answering such questions of micro- and macroevolution, as best they can, many neodarwinists have reacted defensively and insecurely by attacking the motives of their critics, and even claiming that consideration of their questions in the curriculum would undermine science itself, and even weaken US scientific preeminence and competitive advantage in the global economy! It is probably true that the motivation of many in the intelligent design camp is ultimately to reopen a metaphysical space for God in modern intellectual discourse. But it is an elementary rule of logic that the correctness of an argument, or relevance of a question, does not depend on the motivations of the persons raising it. Science generally abhors *ad hominem* refutations, and should not make an exception in this case. Both sides seem to suffer from a certain metaphysical impatience in the face of uncertainty and mystery.

Sometimes "evolution" is stretched beyond the descent of all species from a common ancestor to the origin of that first living ancestor from what is invariably called the "primal soup." Many scientists, including Sir Francis Crick, think that there simply has not been enough time since the earth's beginning for any random physical process to create life from inanimate matter, let alone differentiate it into so many forms. Crick prefers the hypothesis of "panspermia"—that the primordial ancestor arrived on earth from space in some unexplained cosmic ejaculation. Some scientists dislike this apparent retreat from randomness and postulate that although the random origin of life in our single world is infinitely improbable, it so happens that our world is just one of infinitely many other (unobservable) worlds, and is obviously the one in which the improbable event actually happened. Surely the people who want evolution to be referred to as a "fact, not a theory" in the textbooks should at least exclude this whimsy from their meaning of "evolution."

The "infinitely many worlds" hypothesis shows the extreme a priori devotion of some scientists and philosophers to randomness as universal cause. It is also employed against the "anthropic principle," which holds that the extremely balanced fine-tuning of many physical constants necessary for life to exist is infinitely improbable in an accidental universe. Some conclude that our single universe is therefore not accidental; others that there "must" be infinitely many accidental universes! Interestingly, physicists seem willing to discuss and debate the anthropic principle in a relatively civil manner, in spite of its creationist implications.

Survival Value?

In addition to the distinctions between micro- and macroevolution, and the cosmic evolution of the living from the nonliving, there is another set of ambiguities inherent in the way we use the word "evolution." Specifically, what range of human experience is thought to be explained by random mutation and natural selection? The stories of the giraffe's long neck, and of our opposable thumb, etc., are generalized by some to an explanation of everything, including morality, religion, reason, and self-awareness. If reason itself is merely the product of randomness (no matter over how long a time period), then why should we trust it? Remember, mutations are considered random, as are changes in the environment to which natural selection

adapts. If morality is likewise reducible to the random, then why obey it? Good and evil are reduced to survival value, and even survival is just something that happens or doesn't, not a purpose or a good thing.

To reply that we trust reason and obey morality because evolution has programmed us that way as evidenced by our survival so far, fails in several respects. First, it is inherently circular or tautological—if irrationality had resulted in survival then presumably we would follow it, and logic and mathematics would be incoherent if they existed at all. If mathematics has survival value, it is probably because it is independently true. Its truth is not likely a function of its presumed survival value. Further, once we understand evolution we are in a position to control it, to decide at least to some extent what genetic combinations henceforth will be eligible to play in the (rigged) survival lottery. In order to decide the direction in which to influence evolution, we need an external criterion for goodness (one other than survival). Otherwise evolution is still controlling us through a happy illusion. Finally, in a world that is the product only of random events, survival (or extinction) of our species is just another random event. Is it not self-contradictory to have policies in favor of one "random" event (survival) over another (extinction)?

It has been said before that a theory that explains everything ends up explaining nothing. Pushed to its logical limit randomness explains away explanation itself. Scientists have shown a remarkable incapacity for recognizing the nihilistic implications of their materialism when it is extrapolated from a working hypothesis to a metaphysical world view. Feynman, and no

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It may seem contradictory to complain of science's excessive reliance on randomness and at the same time of its determinism. The point is that in neither case is there room for purpose as an independent cause in the real world.

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doubt many others, are exceptions. But the public mainly hears the evangelical atheism of Sagan, Gould, and Wilson, aided by Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, and others. The public, whether vaguely or clearly, senses the nihilistic consequences of these ideas and sensibly reacts against them. Unfortunately, the public often shoots at the wrong target, denying that microevolution is a fact, or that macroevolution is a fruitful working hypothesis. Feynman's question helps us to identify the right target—namely the apotheosis of a good working hypothesis about the origin of species from a presumed common ancestor, to a complete materialist world view having no room for the most important parts of human experience, namely

freedom, purpose, good and evil. Unfortunately, the more successful the working hypothesis in its limited domain, the greater its imperialist ambitions.

American writer, philosopher, and farmer Wendell Berry clarifies this overreach in the following comment on biologist Edward O. Wilson's book, *Consilience:*

> A theoretical materialism as strictly principled as Mr. Wilson's is inescapably deterministic. We and our works and acts, he holds, are determined by our genes, which are determined by the laws of biology, which are determined ultimately by the laws of physics. He sees that this directly contradicts the idea of free will, which even as a scientist he seems unwilling to give up, and which as a conservationist he cannot afford to give up. He deals with this dilemma oddly and inconsistently.
>
> First, he says that we have, and need, "the illusion of free will," which, he says further, is "biologically adaptive." I have read his sentences several times, hoping to find that I have misunderstood them, but I am afraid that I understand them. He is saying that there is an evolutionary advantage in illusion. The proposition that our ancestors survived because they were foolish enough to believe an illusion is certainly optimistic, but it does not seem very probable. And what are we to think of a materialism that can be used to validate an illusion? Mr. Wilson nevertheless insists upon his point; in another place he speaks of "self-deception" as granting to our species the "adaptive edge."
>
> Later, in discussing the need for conservation, Mr. Wilson affirms the Enlightenment belief that we can "choose wisely." How a wise choice can be made on the basis of an illusory freedom of the will is impossible to conceive, and Mr. Wilson wisely chooses not to try to conceive it.

Also, if a particular illusion has survival value, then would not recognizing and seeing through the illusion diminish our odds of surviving? Can an illusion be effective once exposed? Contrary to Wilson, might it turn out that the survival value of the neodarwinist world view is negative for the species that really believes it?

It may seem contradictory to complain of science's excessive reliance on randomness, and at the same time of its determinism. The point is that in neither case is there room for purpose as an independent cause in the real world. Neither deterministic nor stochastic models of the world allow purpose to exert any independent influence on events—in that sense it is all determinism, whether law-like or random.

Misplaced Concreteness

The British logician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead identified an error characteristic of modern thought that he called the "fallacy of misplaced concreteness." This fallacy consists in taking our abstractions as more real than the concrete experiences that our abstractions seek to explain. We all have the experience of purpose and freedom. This experience is well known and direct, unmediated by the sometimes deceptive senses, and apparently uni-

versal. Whitehead's radical empiricism says we should take that experience itself as the more well-known thing in terms of which we try to explain less well-known things. If I, the part of the universe I know best, experience freedom and purpose, then freedom and purpose are at least not absent from the part of the universe consisting of me. Instead we seem to start with less well known things—abstractions like random mutation and natural selection—and use them to explain away our direct experience of freedom, purpose, good and evil, as illusory. This is anti-empirical. Abstraction is powerful, and we cannot think without it. All the more reason, says Whitehead, to be conscious of its limits. And the more reason yet to be conscious of the danger of moral and intellectual decay inherent in preaching a misplaced metaphysic of purposelessness that aborts the very possibility of policy.

We cannot all be as brilliant as Richard Feynman or as clear-headed as Wendell Berry, but if both sides in the evolution culture war would reflect deeply on the questions these thinkers have raised, maybe a bit of their honesty, humility, and metaphysical patience will rub off on us, opening the way to both reconciliation and coherent policy. And if it turns out that the conflict is too deep to be reconciled, then at least we will have a better understanding of what we are fighting about.

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Sources: Richard P. Feynman, *The Meaning of It All: Thoughts of a Citizen-Scientist* (Helix Books, 2005); Feynman's question was also implicit in the famous closing statement of Stephen Weinberg's 1977 book, *The First Three Minutes:* "The more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it also seems pointless." (New York: Basic Books, 1977); John F. Haught, *The Promise of Nature: Ecology and Cosmic Purpose,* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1993); Charles Darwin, *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection,* (NY: NY Univ. Press, 1988) 6th edition. Charles Darwin expresses his own "horrid doubt" at the recognition of the circularity of the argument that we trust reason and obey morality because evolution programmed us that way. To a correspondent he writes: "Nevertheless you have expressed my inward conviction, though far more vividly and clearly than I could have done, that the Universe is not the result of chance. But then with me the horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of man's mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are of any value or at all trustworthy. Would any one trust in the convictions of a monkey's mind, if there are any convictions in such a mind?" (*Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, vol. 1, ch. VIII, Religion, pp. 274-286 (NY: D. Appleton & Co., 1896, edited by Francis Darwin). This is a curious statement. Darwin asserts an inward conviction that the Universe is not the result of chance. But he then disparages his own troublesome conviction as untrustworthy, having developed from a "monkey's mind." Yet he seems not to discount his own theory for that reason, although it must have the same mental ancestry as his other convictions. Wendell Berry, *Life is a Miracle: An Essay Against Modern Superstition* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 2000); Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (NY: The Free Press, 1967; first publication 1925).

Research as a Profession

Robert Wachbroit

There is good reason why most medical research is conducted by practicing physicians: their experience and judgment are often valuable assets in the design and execution of a research protocol. But physician-researchers are caught in a conflict of interest. This conflict is due to basic differences in the goals and practices of medicine and research. The physician's goal is to care for the patient, to promote and maintain his or her health, whereas the researcher's goal is to produce "generalizable knowledge." These distinct goals lead to practices and methods that are not only different, but also sometimes contrary: researchers regularly employ the techniques of double-blinding or randomization, while a physician who dispenses treatment in a double-blind manner would rightly be seen as irresponsible. Such common observations have led many scholars to wonder: How can one be a responsible physician *and* a responsible researcher?

The Unsteadiness of 'Equipoise'

The frequent if not standard response to this problem is to invoke the concept of equipoise. If the physician-researcher is *equally* uncertain about all the arms of a study—the different treatment conditions to which subjects are assigned—then he is in equipoise, and he can assign a research subject to any arm without believing that he is shortchanging the subject in terms of medical care. The physician-researcher can thus seek generalizable knowledge without undermining his duty to provide the best known care.

Despite its popularity, this response is unsatisfactory for a variety of reasons. As several commentators have remarked, achieving or maintaining a state of equipoise is both unrealistic and unstable. It is difficult to believe that the researcher, conducting a clinical trial, is equally uncertain between the experimental treatment and the control because by the time the study has reached this stage of investigation, the researcher has already performed or is familiar with various preliminary studies that presumably justify the considerable time, effort, and expense needed to continue the research. This does not suggest the mind of someone who believes that it is a toss up, a flip of the coin, whether the experimental treatment or the control is better.

Furthermore, even if the researcher began the study in a state of equipoise, it would almost always be undermined as the study progressed: if the data suggested even a slight trend favoring one arm of the study, equipoise would be destroyed and, according to the common view, the physician-researcher could no longer ethically continue the experiment.

There have been several responses to these concerns, including shifting the focus of equipoise from the researcher to the research subject or from the individual researcher to the research community. But none of these proposals address the most important objection to appealing to equipoise. They concern only one type of research activity: research in which the subject might benefit medically from participating in the research, the most common example of which is the randomized clinical trial (RCT). But medical research consists of more than RCTs. A good deal of research is exploratory, offering little or no likelihood of therapeutic benefit. Consider, for example, a study of some cancer treatment in which subjects in an advanced stage of the disease are given different doses of the treatment in order to determine the appropriate dose for further studies. The researchers, the research subjects, and the professional community know that most people will not derive any therapeutic benefit from participating in this research. Some might benefit therapeutically from participating, but most will not; either because the dosage will be too low and thus ineffective or else too high and possibly harmful. The concept of equipoise has no purchase in such settings. But without appeal to equipoise, how can the *physician*-researcher pursue such dosage determination studies—or research on healthy volunteers—without conflict with the physician's goal of caring for and promoting the health of the patient?

A Profession in its Own Right

There are three responses to the problem of different goals. (1) We could try to identify those cases where the two goals overlap and restrict research to those sit-

uations. This is the strategy of appealing to equipoise. The difficulty, as we have noted, is that this overlap is not sufficiently large and stable to sustain medical research. (2) We could try to revise the goals so as to avoid a conflict. For example, we might consider the physician's goal to be the maintenance and promotion of health, without any mention of promoting what is in the patient's best medical interests. The difficulty here of course is that it radically alters if not undermines the physician-patient relationship. How can the patient trust or follow his physician's recommendations if he does not believe that his best medical interests are being promoted? (3) We could acknowledge that medical care and medical research differ in goals, methods, and, consequently, ethical requirements. But what does such an acknowledgement consist in? Just arguing that a clear understanding of the difference between research and medicine care renders the concept of equipoise unnecessary (as medical ethicists F.G. Miller and H. Brody argue) is not enough. We need to move from regarding research on human subjects as an activity that some physicians perform to regarding such research as a profession in its own right, distinct from the profession of medicine. Thus, the tension between being a physician and being a researcher is not a tension within a profession but a tension between two different professions.

Tensions or conflicts between professions are not uncommon, nor are they unexpected in light of their different missions. The lawyer's duty to advocate for his client's rights does not always mesh with the physician's duty to provide medical care to his patient or with the journalist's duty to inform the public. This remains true even if the same person belongs to more than one profession. So, for example, choosing the same person as one's doctor and lawyer would likely create a serious problem—any conflict between professions would automatically become a conflict of interest for the individual professional. As they say, you should wear only one hat at a time.

If biomedical, human subject research is a profession, then the people conducting the research are wearing the hat of the (professional) researcher, regardless of what other professions they might also belong to, including the medical profession. This of course does not mean that the researchers should be indifferent to the health conditions or needs of research subjects, but their concerns and duties are not those of a physician. They have a duty to ensure that research subjects are not exposed to unreasonable risks and to ensure (not necessarily administer) appropriate medical care for conditions that are a consequence of the research. While I am not proposing here a specific code of conduct or professional ethics for researchers, distinct from the code governing physicians, constructing one would not be difficult. It is at least implicit in the

increasingly elaborate requirements and guidelines for conducting human subject research. Applying the discussion of professional ethics—sometimes called "role morality"—to research as a profession can offer insights into the obligations, responsibilities, and special social role of medical researchers. More work needs to be done in this area.

Treating human subject research as a profession in its own right not only eliminates the need to employ the concept of equipoise, it also addresses certain confusions research subjects might have that go under the name of "the therapeutic misconception." The misconception occurs when research subjects believe that the study in which they are participating is therapy and that their relationship towards the investigator is that of patient to physician. Although investigators and their consent forms make an effort to disabuse research subjects of this misunderstanding, it persists. If it were clear to everyone that research was a different profession from medicine, it seems less likely that research subjects would regard a study as treatment, the investigator as a physician, and the subject as a patient. Even if your lawyer happens to belong to the medical profession, you don't confuse his legal advice with medical advice.

What would it mean to treat biomedical research on human subjects as a profession? Although there are no universally recognized criteria that distinguish a profession from other skilled vocations or activities, many professions are associated with three institution-related features: (1) specialized education and training, (2) licensing or certification, and (3) some sort of oversight

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over members through professional standards. When we consider research as a profession, the applicability of (1) is straightforward and uncontroversial. Everyone acknowledges that biomedical research requires training that is distinct from the training required for medicine, even if overlapping. Although the other two features are less well-recognized, recent developments seem to point in their direction.

For some years the National Institutes of Health, one of the most important sources of funding for biomedical research in the US, have required researchers to provide in effect certification that they can conduct responsible research. While this is not as demanding as the licensing requirements in medicine or law, it does suggest a recognition that there are professional stan-

dards to which practitioners must certify their competence and compliance. Furthermore, any research that hopes to be supported by the federal government or accepted by the FDA must be approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). While not the same as State Licensing Boards, IRBs, whose membership will include researchers, do have the power to bar individuals from acting as biomedical researchers in their institution. In some respects, therefore, research is beginning to be treated, at least implicitly, as if it were a profession. Treating it explicitly as a profession may not be so radical a step.

Research as a Profession: A Problem and a Compromise

Nevertheless, let me acknowledge an important problem with research as a profession—or, in fact, with any approach that maintains a sharp distinction between medical care and medical research: If biomedical research as a profession distinct from medicine, it becomes questionable whether physicians should refer or recommend patients to research studies. It would seem inappropriate—an abuse of the patient's trust—for a physician, acting in his professional capacity, to refer a patient to his banker, lawyer, or realtor; if the physician were compensated for these referrals, it would certainly have the appearance of a conflict of interest. Accordingly, one might hold that, if biomedical research were a distinct profession, physician referrals of their patients to researchers would be similarly inappropriate. This conclusion, however, would place a significant burden on the recruitment of subjects for important studies.

It is worth exploring whether this problem can be solved with a compromise—perhaps we should replace physician referrals with information displays in hospitals and in the physician's office? Treating biomedical research as a profession, distinct from medicine, does not mean ignoring their interdependencies.

While distinct from the other health professions, biomedical research still needs to be coordinated with these professions. And yet, treating it as a distinct profession can help us better understand what is being asked of us when we perform or participate in research.

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Ethics of Global Development: Agency, Capability, and Deliberative Democracy— An Introduction

David A. Crocker

Poverty, degrading inequality, violence, and tyranny continue to afflict the world. In spite of humankind's efforts, these four interrelated scourges are in many places more rather than less pronounced than they were a decade ago. Even in rich countries, poverty and inequality have increased. Efforts to understand and reduce these scourges have taken many forms. Moral reflection on the ends and means of "development," where "development" most generically means beneficial societal change, is one important effort. Such moral reflection, which includes the assessment of the present and the envisioning of better futures, increasingly is called "international development ethics" or the "ethics of global development."

My forthcoming book, *Ethics of Global Development: Agency, Capability, and Deliberative Democracy,* is a work in global development ethics. It explains, justifies,

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applies, and extends ethical reflection on development goals, policies, projects, and institutions from the local to the global level. The volume is a new statement of my views on development ethics, the ethical foundations and applications of the capability approach, and deliberative democracy.

Central to the volume is my sympathetic and, at times, critical engagement with economist and philosopher Amartya Sen's "capability" approach to development. Since my first encounter with Sen's thought in the mid-seventies, I have increasingly come to recognize, as philosopher Hilary Putnam puts it, "the importance of what he [Sen] calls the 'capabilities'

approach to welfare economics to perhaps the greatest problem facing humanity in our time, the problem of the immense disparities between richer and poorer parts of the globe."

To introduce my forthcoming volume as a whole, I weave together my own intellectual journey, what I understand to be the evolving stages of development ethics, and the rationale for the volume's additional chapters. Other development ethicists, such as Denis Goulet, Nigel Dower, Des Gasper, Martha Nussbaum, and Sabina Alkire would tell different personal stories and provide somewhat different accounts of the evolution of development ethics. My personal trajectory is only one of the ways development ethics has evolved. For example, some development ethicists have not engaged Sen's capability approach or have done so in ways that differ from my own.

Toward Development Ethics

In spring of 1978, two Colorado State University colleagues, an economist and an historian, paid me an office visit that was to redirect my professional life. I had been teaching for 12 years in the Department of Philosophy at Colorado State University, my first position out of graduate school. The two colleagues came with good news and bad news.

The good news was that they had just received a two-year grant from the US Department of Education to establish a M.A. program in Comparative Rural Development, and that program was to include a graduate seminar in "Ethics and Rural Development." The course was to treat the moral and value issues that emerge in Colorado's impoverished rural and mountain towns as well as in CSU's overseas projects in international rural development.

The bad news was that these colleagues wanted me to teach the course. Although flattered by the offer and attracted by the promise of a stipend, I responded incredulously. "You've got the wrong guy." My intel-

lectual interests focused on the theories of justice of John Rawls and Robert Nozick, the social theory of the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, and the Yugoslav Praxis Group's vision of democratic and market socialism. What did such philosophical views have to do with rural development—whatever that was—at home or abroad or with "Third World" and North/South issues?

My two colleagues, however, persisted. Not only would I team-teach the course with two other CSU professors—an expert on India, who lived several years in India and Iran, and a professor of animal science, who had AID-funded projects throughout the developing world, but they also stressed the need for such a course to address questions of value and ethics. With misgivings, I accepted. But when we three co-teachers met to plan the new course, chaos ensued.

What . . . was "development" anyway?

The professor of animal science didn't know what ethics had to do with (rural) development and improvement of cattle strains in Bulgaria. The scholar of Indian and Persian culture was worried about Northern and Western ethnocentrism. I couldn't figure out what Rawls' argument from the abstract and hypothetical standpoint of the "original position" had to do with practical ethics or with "development." And what, I asked myself, was "development" any-way? Writings in development economics or development policy scarcely mentioned ethics. The philosophers I admired never talked about development. Given the abstract, otherworldly way in which even applied ethics and sociopolitical philosophy was done in those days, this state of affairs was probably a good thing.

Only when the three of us discovered the work of development scholar and activist Denis Goulet and of sociologist Peter Berger did we begin to get some help on how we might proceed in our course. In different ways, both Goulet and Berger argued that ethics should be put on the development agenda—both for the sake of better development and for the sake of ethics.

Since the early 1960's, Goulet—influenced by French economist Louis-Joseph Lebret and development economists such as Benjamin Higgins, Albert Hirschman, and Gunnar Myrdal—had argued that "development needs to be redefined, demystified, and thrust into the arena of moral debate." Goulet, in such studies as *The Cruel Choice: A New Concept in the Theory of Development* (1971), made the important point that

so-called "development," because of its costs in human suffering and loss of meaning, can amount to "anti-development." Similarly in the book *Pyramids of Sacrifice* (1974), Peter Berger argued that so-called "development" often sacrificed rather than benefited poor people and what was urgently needed was a marriage of political ethics and social change in the "Third World."

We now had valuable resources for getting ethics onto the agenda of development practitioners and policy analysts. But did philosophical ethics and sociopolitical philosophy have anything to contribute to "ethics and rural development" or—as we soon called it—"ethics and international development"?

In the 1970s three currents of Anglo-American philosophy appeared promising for our work: John Rawls' theory of justice; Peter Singer's challenging argument that the affluent had a duty to aid famine victims, and the life-boat ethics debate begun by Garrett Hardin.

The moral problem of world hunger and the ethics of famine relief were among the first practical issues that philosophers tackled after John Rawls's pivotal 1971 study, *A Theory of Justice,* convinced them that reflection

Did philosophical ethics and sociopolitical philosophy have anything to contribute to . . . "ethics and international development"?

on normative issues should be part of the philosopher's task. In the same year that Rawls's volume appeared, Peter Singer first wrote about famine in East Bengal (now Bangladesh) and, more generally, about "the obligations of the affluent to those in danger of starvation." In a 1974 article in *Psychology Today Magazine,* Garrett Hardin argued against charitable aid. While Singer argued that moral duty, rather than charity, should be the basis for aid, Hardin argued that rich nations and individuals (living in lifeboats) have a duty *not* to help the needy (swimming in the sea). Aid would only worsen the problems of hunger, because it would result in more mouths to feed, and would cause other countries to become dependent on handouts rather than solving their own food and population problems.

Throughout the seventies (and on into the eighties), often in response to Singer, on the one hand, and Hardin, on the other, many philosophers investigated whether there exists a positive moral obligation to aid distant and hungry people and, if so, what is its nature, justification, and limits.

My teaching colleagues and I took full advantage of the Hardin-Singer debate and the philosophical dis-

cussion it had provoked. Something, however, was missing in this literature. Preoccupied as they were with the task of justifying aid to distant people, philosophers paid scant attention to institutional and practical issues. In particular they almost totally ignored what happened to food aid or famine relief once it arrived in a stricken country. Did it go to the rich instead of its intended starving recipients? Did food aid glut the national and local markets with the result that food prices fell and local farmers suffered? Was food aid a cause of anti-development in rural areas, perhaps blinding donors to structural injustice that caused the famine in the first place? What role might the right kind of food aid have in national efforts to reduce chronic deprivation and wrenching inequality?

Singer was right that what was needed—and what philosophers could contribute to—was an ethics of food aid. But we quickly came to see such an ethic would be only one part of an ethics of and for national and local development. There would be (and still is) much work to do before development would be part of the philosophical agenda the way that environment and animal welfare were beginning to be.

Still harboring doubts that we could bring development and (philosophical) ethics into fruitful interaction, we launched our new graduate course in the fall of 1978 and placed ethics explicitly on the agenda of development policy and practice.

Deepening and Broadening Development Ethics: Costa Rica and the International Development Ethics Association

Despite the CSU course's success during its initial years, it became increasingly clear that something was missing from the class and my work in this field. To make a contribution to what we began to call "development ethics," I needed to live and work in a "developing country." I would have to become less an "outsider" to what was increasingly called "the South," given the pejorative connotations of "Third World."

Attending a 1984 conference in Costa Rica, I discovered at the University of Costa Rica an exciting group of philosophers interested in applied philosophy and development. Notably, E. Roy Ramírez stressed the importance of forging a new concept of development "in order not to confuse it with modernization" and "because it is preferable to decide things for ourselves than to have others decide them for us." And Luis Camacho contributed to an ethics of science and technology (especially) in developing countries, evaluating different notions of crisis and development, and proposing relations between advanced countries and Third World countries, including the treatment of the problem of individual development within socio-economic development.

Supported by a Fulbright Research Award to study "Ethical Issues in Costa Rican Development," I returned to Costa Rica for 12 months in 1986-87. These colleagues and I transformed the "Development Ethics Working Group," formed after the 1984 conference, into the International Development Ethics Association (IDEA). Although the acronym represents the English word order, we always pronounced "IDEA," which has the same meaning in English and Spanish, as a word in Spanish (ee-day-uh). At our First International Conference on Ethics and Development, held in June 1987, I discussed strengths but also weaknesses in traditional Costa Rican social democracy, the already ascendant free-market liberalism, and attempts to renovate social democracy. I argued for a fourth model that I called "just, participatory, eco-development." This explicitly normative vision was a pluralism that asserted the moral importance of basic human needs, democratic self-determination and participation, respect for the natural world, and equal opportunity for self-development.

Unlike many of their fellow Central Americans in the late 1980s, most Costa Ricans were by and large friendly to US visitors. Yet I repeatedly was asked (and asked myself): What business does someone—especially with a name similar to a frontiersman who died at the Alamo—from the United States—especially with its unsavory history of intervening in Latin American affairs—have in evaluating and proposing alternatives to Costa Rica's development model? This challenging question led me to distinguish between cultural insiders and outsiders and to argue that a certain outsider-insider hybrid clarifies a society's options, reflecting

What business does someone . . . from the United States . . . have in evaluating and proposing alternatives to Costa Rica's development model?

the culture back to itself, synthesizing disparate ideas or interjecting novel ones, and saying what should be said but which insiders cannot say. A global ethic can be fashioned by insider-outsider hybrids from a variety of groups.

Such questions and answers are the same ones that exercised many of us in the 1980's and became central to IDEA-sponsored events. But there are new dimensions as well; one of them is the importance for development ethics of Amartya Sen and the capability approach.

Engaging the Capability Approach

In order to enhance one's resources to confront development's quandaries, one must first weigh the strengths and weaknesses of various development approaches or "theory-practices." A crucial part of that evaluative exercise is what development ethicist Des Gasper calls the second stage of development ethics. For Gasper, the first stage is what I have called "putting ethics on the development agenda" and he calls presenting "ethical concerns about development experiences and actions." Gasper's second stage is the examination "of major valuative concepts and theories used to guide, interpret or critique those experiences and actions."

In the next five years or so following my return from Costa Rica, I gradually came to see the importance of Amartya Sen's and Martha Nussbaum's ethically-based perspectives—both joint and separate—on international development.

Amartya Sen, since the 1970s, and Martha Nussbaum, since the mid-1980s, have been fashioning a new and important normative approach (Sen) or ethic (Nussbaum) for international development. Global hunger and other severe deprivations, they argue, indicate conceptual and ethical failures as well as scientific, technical, and political ones. Sen, the Indian-born economist, social choice theorist, and philosopher had evolved an original normative outlook, articulated in 1999 for the general public in *Development as Freedom,* for the improvement of the theory and practice of international development. Sen's normative perspective owes much not only to Adam Smith and his concept of human freedom but also to the Aristotelian/Marxist tradition and its concept of human existence and well-being.

Nussbaum, a leading scholar of Greek thought and especially Aristotelian ethics, coauthored with Sen an important paper, "Internal Criticsm and Indian Rationalist Traditions," which concerned national and global development ethics, and with Sen Nussbaum edited and introduced a seminal anthology in development ethics, *Quality of Life.* Moreover, in a series of articles and in several books, Nussbaum compared Sen's ideas with those of Aristotle, advocated what she called "Aristotelian moral inquiry" and "Aristotelian social democracy" as relevant for international development, and set forth her own robust versions of the capability approach.

In the early nineties I stressed what the two had in common and interpreted Sen as implicitly proposing something close to Nussbaum's explicit pluralistic conception of the good or flourishing human life. I now argue that, in spite of ongoing shared commitments and concepts, Sen and Nussbaum have increasingly different normative outlooks. Sen's rejection of a prescriptive list of valuable capabilities and functionings is part of his participatory and democratic turn. Nussbaum's retention of a list, albeit in a somewhat more flexible form, is part of her view that philosophers (and constitutions) have important prescriptive roles to play. Furthermore, although both have learned from Aristotle, Sen emphasizes Aristotle's critique of material goods as nothing more than a means to good living while Nussbaum emphasizes Aristotle's ideal of fully human flourishing. Although both continue to admire the work of John Rawls, in their recent writing they find stimulation in different aspects of Rawls's perspective.

I also changed my comparative assessments of Sen's and Nussbaum's versions of the capability orientation. Whereas earlier I was attracted to Nussbaum's ideal of the good or flourishing human life and her list of its components, now I argue that this approach has limitations. Previously I thought Nussbaum's notion of

> *Development ethics, . . . should assess norms, policies, and institutions at all levels—local, societal, national, and global.*

capabilities as personal powers was unfortunately missing in Sen. Now I argue that his notion of capability as opportunity or freedom does justice to personal traits as well as to environmental constraints and future possibilities.

A portion of my book, then, crystallizes more than fifteen years of my understanding, probing, evaluating, and trying to strengthen the normative dimensions of the capability orientation. It became clear to me and to others, however, that it was not enough to clarify, appraise, and strengthen this development ethic. To provide the critical confrontation that the perspective deserved, one should also apply and extend the approach and then evaluate the results. And, more generally, development ethics, whether working within a capability theory-practice or not, should assess norms, policies, and institutions at all levels—local, societal, national, and global.

Applying and Strengthening the Capability Approach

In my present position as Senior Research Scholar at the University of Maryland's Institute for Philosophy & Public Policy and School of Public Policy, my work increasingly focused on applying development ethics and especially capability norms to various public problems and policies.

In one part of the volume I apply development ethics and the capability approach to the urgent issues of, on the one hand, hunger and under-consumption,

and on the other hand, over-consumption in both the North and the South. If the problem in the North (and parts of the South) is often that people consume too much or the wrong things, the problem in the South (and parts of the North) is that the majority of people often lack access to those commodities needed for well-being.

Applying the capability approach and strengthening it with an explicit attention to the ideal of agency, I argue that relative emphasis should be shifted (1) from moral foundations to interpretative and strategic concepts, (2) from famine to persistent malnutrition, (3) from remedy to prevention, (4) from food availability to food entitlements, (5) from food and entitlements to capability and agency, (6) from capability and agency to development as freedom. This last progression, I argue, goes beyond even the best recent work on world hunger and development aid. Overall, the progression I favor conceives an ethics of food aid as a part of a more basic and inclusive ethics for development.

I also turn my attention from under-consumption to over-consumption, showing that a suitably strengthened version of the capability approach can generate a valuable criticism of consumerism and over-consumption. What I have come to call the "prudential version of the capability approach" uses Sen's notion of well-being and a Nussbaum-type list of features of human well-being to assess the impact of US consumption choices on the well-being of US consumers. Although I still believe the prudential account has some merit in appealing to the enlightened self-interest of American and other affluent consumers, I believe this prudential version of the capability approach to be seriously flawed as an *ethic* of consumption. It is especially weak in addressing the consumption choices of consumer-citizens and governments in the light of the effects of these choices not only on one's own well-being but also on the environment, institutions, and especially the capabilities and agency of others.

New Directions: Deliberative Democracy, Participation, and Globalization

It is important that development ethicists in general and those working within the capability orientation in particular pursue new directions. Not only has the world changed in important ways since the origination of development ethics, but the field, in general, and the capability orientation, in particular, confronts certain new dangers. Among these are dogmatism, usurpation by mainstream institutions, and a recent fadishness concerning both development ethics and the capability approach.

I chart new directions to apply and strengthen the capability approach. What emerges—especially in dia-

logue with the Spanish philosophers Adela Cortina and Jesús Conill—is a agency and capability-oriented view of autonomous, just, co-responsible, and happiness-generating consumption. I also explicitly explore new directions in development and capability ethics, contending that democracy as public discussion is an important recent emphasis in Sen's work and holds great promise for development theory, institutions, and practices. I argue for the importance of Sen's recent stress on citizen voice and public discussion, the ways in which the theory and practice of deliberative democracy might strengthen Sen's democratic turn, and the ways in which the theories of and experiments in deliberative democracy theories and practices further extend and strengthen the capability orientation.

Especially important in my own work is what I hope will be the fruitful interaction between the capability approach and the theory and practice of what political theorists Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright call "Empowered Participatory Governance" (EPG). This latter approach to robust democracy emphasizes deliberation in all democratic bodies, the vertical integration of local and higher level bodies, and the integration of, on the one hand, personal/collective agency and, on the other hand, institutional design. EPG and other experiments in local democracy become one basis for responding to criticisms that Sen's democratic turn and deliberative democracy are underspecified, disrespectful of autonomy, and impractical.

I also argue that development ethics should take up, as Joseph Stiglitz and others have done, the new issue of globalization. Development ethicists should ethically assess the various faces of globalization. I argue for both the democratization of globalization and the globalizing of democracy. The former would include identifying morally acceptable and effective ways to democratize current global forces and institutions as well as morally acceptable (and unacceptable) ways to promote and deepen democracy on every level. I offer a concept of inclusive, wide-ranging, and deliberative democracy as both a fundamental end and means of local, national, and global development.

The volume as a whole emphasizes the ideal and practice of democracy, a thread that runs through my career as a teacher and scholar. From Reinhold Niebuhr, I learned (as an undergraduate in the late 1950s at De Pauw University) that because people are good, democracy is possible; but because they are evil, democracy is necessary. From William Lee Miller at Yale Divinity School, I grasped the importance of public argument for a democratic polity. In working with Cleveland's inner city youth in 1961-62, I applied the new ideas of citizen participation that would soon flower in the New Left. From Richard J. Bernstein, then of Yale's Department of Philosophy, and his hero

John Dewey, I grasped that philosophers should deal with human problems and that democracy was a way of life in which people deliberate together to solve common problems. My work with Habermas in the mid-1970s nurtured my commitments to the public sphere and the ideal of dialogue in which the only force was that of the better argument. The Yugoslav vision of democratic socialism led to my belief in the importance of a multi-leveled democratic self-management. This volume culminates with a conception of deliberative democracy that I hope will play an important role in the further evolution of both development ethics and the capability orientation.

Ethics of Global Development: Agency, Capability, and Deliberative Democracy conveys the book's main themes. The four parts of the work represent the stages of development ethics, my professional trajectory in this field, and the organization of the volume's chapters. First, it was and remains important to get ethics on the development agenda, address development as a philosophical topic, and gain cross-cultural perspectives. Second, development ethics benefits from the clarification, strengthening, application, and evaluation of the capability orientation, especially Sen's and Nussbaum's versions. Finally, the changing world situation offers development ethics and the capability orientation new challenges, among which is that of showing that development on all levels must be democratic as well as poverty-reducing and that democracy should be deliberative as well as electoral.

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Sources: Des Gasper offers a helpful working definition of "development ethics": "Development ethics looks at meanings given to societal 'development' in the broad sense of progress or desirable change, at the types, distribution and significance of the costs and gains from major socio-economic change, and at value conscious ways of thinking about and choosing between alternative paths and destinations. It aims to help in identifying, considering, and making ethical choices about societal 'development', and in identifying and assessing the explicit and implicit ethical theories" (*The Ethics of Development: From Economism to Human Development* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2004). The two Colorado State University colleagues to whom I refer are David Rogers, then Assistant Professor of Economics; and

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