

Service, Politics and Identity: On Realizing the Potential of Service Learning

Author: David Harker

Persistent link: <http://hdl.handle.net/2345/bc-ir:104043>

This work is posted on [eScholarship@BC](#),
Boston College University Libraries.

Boston College Electronic Thesis or Dissertation, 2014

Copyright is held by the author. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>).

Boston College

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Department of Sociology

SERVICE, POLITICS AND IDENTITY:
ON REALIZING THE POTENTIAL OF SERVICE LEARNING

a dissertation

by

DAVID HARKER

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctorate of Philosophy

December, 2014

© copyright by DAVID HARKER
2014

Service, Politics and Identity: On Realizing the Potential of Service Learning
by David Harker
Dissertation Advisor: Lisa Dodson

Abstract:

Service learning has emerged as one of the most popular mechanisms to promote and teach students about civic, moral, and political responsibility in American colleges and universities. This dissertation offers a critical exploration of the potential and limitations that engagement in service activities, and service learning in particular, can offer. The research was designed to explore how individual long-term volunteers attach meaning to their service experience, as well as how these meanings are constructed. In other words, what is the process by which students come to make sense of the volunteer work in which they are engaged? Of particular interest are the potential connections between these constructed meanings and a sense of politics or a sense of social change strategies.

To explore the ways in which volunteers attach meaning to their service experience, I conducted participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups with a number of college students currently participating in a structured long-term service learning program; along with staff members of this program and of community partner organizations; and a group of comparison volunteers.

This research provides an overview of the relationships, roles, responsibilities, benefits, challenges, and overall structure and design of a long-term service learning program. Participation in a structured service learning program shapes the ways in which students think about their service as it relates to a sense of politics and social change. However, the connection between service and political engagement is often complicated

by a lack of political opportunities, a perceived lack of civic skills or political knowledge, and views of politics as divisive and ineffective. This dissertation also contributes to a greater understanding of the ways in which collective identity can develop among student service learners, and how this collective identity may impact their work.

Service, Politics, and Identity: On Realizing the Potential of Service Learning

A dissertation by David Harker

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Ch. 1: Introduction.....	1
Ch. 2: The Political Context of Service Learning.....	15
Ch. 3: Research Methods.....	58
Ch. 4: Comparing Engagement: Partnerships, Relationships, and the Meaning of Volunteerism.....	70
Ch. 5: Connecting Service and a Sense of Politics.....	135
Ch. 6: Collective Identity and Service.....	199
Ch. 7: Conclusion.....	232
Appendices	245
References	248

Chapter One:

Introduction

Considerable evidence exists to indicate that in the present-day United States, participation in traditional forms of public engagement among ordinary citizens (such as involvement in community associations) has declined dramatically (Edwards and Foley 1997, Putnam 2001, Skocpol 2004). Explanations for this trend include a growing distrust of the government, a political ideology increasingly focused on personal (rather than collective) responsibility, and a significant disengagement from conventional civic networks (Eliasoph 1998, Skocpol 2004, Stone 2008). Along with this shift in ideology and disengagement, recent decades have seen a clear decline in support for social welfare programs, and a drastic reallocation of responsibility from the public to the private and non-profit sectors (Hacker 2008). These trends seem to present contemporary Americans as isolated, distrustful of public institutions, and singularly self-interested. The ebbing of the public role of everyday citizens can be seen as a profound and undermining absence in a democracy that relies on the active participation of its citizens in order to thrive. However, countervailing these shifts in traditional public engagement, there is an area of social engagement that has greatly expanded and deepened, and currently includes nearly 63 million Americans – particularly students and young adults.

In 2012, the national volunteer rate was 26.5 percent, with 64.5 million volunteers donating approximately 7.9 billion hours of service (Corporation for National & Community Service 2013). College students accounted for 3.1 million of these volunteers in 2010, and the last ten years have seen a service learning “movement”

emerge among institutions of higher education (Saltmarsh and Zlotkowski 2011). Service learning is an experiential education method under which students learn and develop through active participation in organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of communities, is coordinated with a school or institution of higher education and the community, and helps foster civic responsibility (Corporation for National and Community Service 1993). Service learning is based on the pedagogical principle that “learning and development do not necessarily occur as a result of the experience itself but as a result of a reflective component explicitly designed to foster learning and development” (Jacoby 1996, 6).

The growth rate of college student volunteers is more than double the growth rate of all adult volunteers, and in 2005, approximately 30.2 percent of college students volunteered, exceeding the volunteer rate for the general adult population that year of 28.8 percent (Corporation for National and Community Service 2006). According to a 2011 Campus Compact survey of 1,100 college administrations, the number of students who engage in service, service learning, and civic engagement activities has risen steadily in recent years, to a current high of 35 percent of all students represented in the sample. In addition, 93 percent of schools reported offering service learning courses (Campus Compact 2011). Proponents hope that through engagement in the “public work” of service learning, a kind of informed, committed, and participatory citizenship will develop among students (Youniss 2011).

These seemingly divergent trends present what Deborah A. Stone calls the “Samaritan’s Dilemma” (2008) facing American society today. While young people, like many of their older counterparts, have a desire to “help”, they are likely to think about

service and politics as two very distinct activities – one ethical and effective, the other corrupt and fruitless. There has been a surge in volunteerism across the board, with citizens (especially students) engaging in community service programs in record numbers. At the same time, there has been great concern over the demise of civic life, the lack of engagement in associations, and the decline of political participation. How can we be experiencing high levels of voluntary service and at the same time be suffering from a decline of civic and political life? As will be discussed, much of this answer depends on how actors think about their service work, how they define “politics”, and the extent to which they connect the two.

Among the literature on service learning, there is considerable debate about the potential for service learning to contribute to a healthy democracy. There are many forms of service learning, and numerous ways to categorize these service experiences and programs. They do not exist as simple binaries, however broad analytical categories of service can be useful to help make sense of this work. On one hand, critics of voluntary service see such engagement as a moral, rather than a political act (King 2004, Poppendieck 1998, Eliasoph 2011, Wang and Jackson 2005). In this view, service is a good, noble, and principled thing to do, but is often perceived to be apolitical. In other words, much of the service that is conducted is perceived to be an act of charity by the volunteer, intended to achieve a small, but noble outcome that improves the life of individual service recipients, rather than one that can alter the stratification systems that produce inequality. On the other hand, proponents of voluntary engagement in service believe that such involvement can lead to politicization of the individual, and impart a deeper understanding of social issues, as well as instill a sense of social justice and create

the potential for social change (Kahne and Westheimer 1996, Marullo and Edwards 2000a and b, Matthews 2000, Zlotkowski 2007). In this dissertation, the term politicization is used to describe the process of political socialization among those engaged in service. In other words, politicization means both developing a political consciousness and becoming politically engaged. Marullo and Edwards (2000b) believe that service has the potential to transform and politicize individuals to become change activists who attempt to alter the structural or institutional practices that produce inequalities.

The process and underlying influences by which politicization occurs, or fails to occur, through service engagement must be studied in more depth. The research detailed in this dissertation seeks to come to a better understanding of the service experience. It is clear that the design and goals of a service experience, along with the volunteer's own motivations and approach, greatly impact the meaning of service constructed by the volunteer. As such, my specific research question asks how individual volunteers attach meaning to their service experience, and how these meanings are constructed. In other words, what is the process by which these students come to make sense of the volunteer work in which they are engaged? Of particular interest are the potential connections between these constructed meanings and a sense of politics or a sense of social change strategies.

To explore these questions I conducted participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups with a number of college students currently engaged in long-term volunteer service at a variety of community partner sites. These community partners are non-profit organizations located in the geographic area surrounding the

college, that work on a variety issues that have been identified by the service learning program as meeting a social need. To gauge a number of influences on these volunteers and the ways they attach meaning to their service work, two different groups of students involved at the same sites for a comparable amount of time were interviewed. Students in one group are engaged in service as part of a structured program that emphasizes reflection and connection to larger social issues, while students in the comparison group simply volunteer, with no such structured program attached. The staff of the community partners with whom students are engaged were also interviewed (and participated in a focus group) to provide another angle on the way that service engagement is undertaken and understood. This methodological approach offers a complex vantage of the various ways in which service opportunities are designed and experienced.

Overall, this study seeks to offer an in-depth critical analysis of the volunteer experience from the perspective of volunteers in contrasting programs and the community partners with whom they work, including a focus on the ways volunteers attach meaning to their work. A review of relevant literature provides a discussion of the potential benefits and limitations that engagement in service (including service learning in particular) can offer, and includes the role of higher education in a functioning democracy. Such an inquiry must also include recent changes in political thought and policies in the provision of social services that have helped give rise to the need for, and popularity of, volunteering. Chapter Two will explore this literature in further depth, as these themes are important in framing the study. This discussion also highlights the need to further analyze the ways in which the members of society engage with social needs within the broad framework of politics, ideology, and political participation. As volunteer

service is increasingly promoted as the favored form of public engagement work in the United States, a critical examination of this trend is timely and important.

Overview:

This dissertation will explore how individual volunteers attach meaning to their service experience, and how these meanings are constructed. The chapters that follow discuss the process by which these students make sense of the volunteer work in which they are engaged. Chapter Two – *The Political Context of Service Learning* will provide an overview of relevant literature, situating the rise of service learning and campus-based volunteer service within a broader framework of ideology and social policy. This chapter will also provide an overview of the debate on the role that higher education can play as a vehicle for transforming society to make it more just. An important component of envisioning such a transformation is distinguishing between a variety of models of service learning programs which will be explored. Chapter Three – *Research Methods* will explain the research methodology used to gather the data used to answer the research questions. In order to gain a greater understanding of the meanings that volunteers attach to their engagement in service participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups were conducted with current student volunteers participating in long-term, time intensive service experiences. Those who have participated in an organized service-learning model through the “Engaged Scholars” program (referred to as “Scholars” throughout this dissertation – pseudonyms are used throughout to protect the confidentiality of all persons and programs) at a mid-sized public liberal arts college are compared with other volunteers who serve on their own, as individuals, but for a similar

number of hours, with the same community partner organizations (referred to as “Vols”). This comparison allowed me to examine how participation in a structured program influenced the ways in which these volunteers think about their work. Interviews, observation, and focus groups were also conducted with staff members at the community partner organizations, and the Engaged Scholars program in order to better understand the structure, design, and goals of the service projects in which the volunteers are engaged. Using these multiple methods allowed me great depth and insight into the work being done by these volunteers and staff members, along with the ways in which they think about their work.

Chapter Four - *Comparing Engagement: Partnerships, Relationships, and the Meaning of Volunteerism*, will provide an overview of the long-term volunteer service program I studied, along with the relationships between the program staff, volunteers, and community partner organizations. These relationships are worth exploring because they shape a considerable amount of the volunteers’ service experience. This overview will also discuss a number of the benefits of the Scholars program’s design for various participants, as well as some of the successes that the service learning partnerships have achieved in meeting their goals. Among the most important of these goals is for students to draw a connection between their direct service work and the larger structural causes of the issues on which they are working. In other words, the goal is for students to “politicize” their work, and develop a political consciousness, in order to see a connection between their site-based issues, and a broader system of politics. The successes can be used as somewhat of a “roadmap” of what is working for these partnerships and programs, but I will also describe the challenges faced by these students

and staff members, along with some of the tensions in their relationships. Many of these challenges involve difficulty meeting expected roles and responsibilities, and dealing with the logistics of meeting immediate goals and completing rapidly approaching projects and deadlines. The immediacy of these logistical challenges often impact the ways in which many of these actors interpret their work, and serve as a barrier to the politicization of their work.

It is clear that the structure and focus of service-learning programs matter in the ways volunteers think about their engagement. Chapter Four will also be where the majority of the comparison between Engaged Scholars and the volunteers who are not involved in the program will be made (although this will be discussed in the following chapters as well). As a matter of simplicity, volunteers not involved in the Scholars program will be referred to in the remainder of the dissertation as “Vols”. The goals and motivations for the Scholars program and their partnerships will be explored, along with how the results of such programs are interpreted by the volunteers and staff. Because it plays such an important role in the ways in which volunteers experience their service, I will also explore the working relationship between volunteers and staff in this chapter. Communication issues between volunteers and various staff members often complicate these relationships and the work undertaken by these partnerships. This chapter will provide a framework and overview of these programs that will be useful for the next two chapters as well.

Chapter Five – *Connecting Service and a Sense of Politics*, is largely focused on the potential for volunteers to connect their work doing service with a larger sense of political awareness or involvement. The interviews focused quite a bit on the connection

between service and politics; however, they also revealed that the various ways in which students define “politics” is important in understanding these broader constructed meanings. My own working definition of politics for this project borrows from Harry C. Boyte’s work (2003, 2005) calling for a re-imagination of citizenship in the 21st century. I define politics in a broad sense, as the interplay and negotiation among distinctive interests, values, and ways of looking at the world for the sake of accomplishing some public task. Mathews (2000), similarly calls on institutions of higher education to broaden the definition of politics to include the parts of our lives in which we engage with others, around issues of the common good.

The Scholars and Vols I talked to tended to define politics in a much more narrow sense however, such as supporting a specific candidate or advocating for a specific policy position. Drawing on such a conception of politics, they are unlikely to see their volunteer work as “political”. If, on the other hand, Scholars defined politics in the broader terms of engaging with other citizens with diverse interests in order to address public issues, they were much more likely to see their work as “political”. In these cases, they were more likely to see their volunteer work as a step, albeit a small and local one, towards contributing to larger political and social change efforts. It is important to note that these Scholars recognize the need for large-scale structural and political action, far beyond individual efforts like volunteering, as necessary to solve the issues on which they are working. Thus, to them, volunteering is only a small part of a larger social change effort. Regardless of how they defined politics, many Scholars were likely to see a distinction between their service and political engagement. Scholars see politics as divisive or futile, while service was noble and meaningful. Thus, many of these students

see the issues on which they are working (housing, hunger, education, health care/disability rights) as inherently structural, and even political in nature, but at the same time say that they themselves are not, and do not want to be political. I will discuss why this contradiction is problematic, and limits the overall impact of the Scholars program.

In Chapter Five, I also discuss the strength and influence of an ideology of personal responsibility. Many Scholars discuss their issues in structural terms throughout the interview, and admit that volunteering alone will not be enough to solve these issues. They note that “something bigger” needs to happen, yet when asked specifically if they think the government should play a larger role in addressing their issue, these volunteers are often wary of increased government influence. Several even mention that this will only lead to people taking advantage of government programs. The influence of an ideology which insists that hard work and good decisions will be enough for anyone to “make it” is so strong that these volunteers’ regularly contradict themselves within the span of minutes.

However, ideology is not the only factor influencing why these volunteers are wary of government programs to address the issues on which they are working. There is a common recognition among students that they “should” be more political, but there are a number of factors that stand in the way. This idea of “I know it’s political, but...” is one of the most important themes of this chapter. Among the reasons that volunteers fail to make a connection to political work are that they see politics as too divisive, or they do not see politics (at least not in its current state) as a viable solution. These responses are hardly surprising, given the high levels of government distrust in recent years (Pew Research Center 2010a, 2010b, 2013a, 2013b). Volunteers also failed to make a

connection between their service work and political action because they said they do not know how to engage politically. This seems to confirm studies which indicate low levels of civic learning (National Task Force on Civic Learning 2012), but also indicates that these volunteers' definitions of "politics" includes a need for more expert knowledge than they possess – far from the inclusive political participation required of a healthy democracy. A number of volunteers also discuss that while they see their issue as political at its root, they are usually too busy with logistics to explore this connection in any meaningful depth. Each of these views contribute to a conception of engagement stripped of "politics", where volunteers see making a difference as an individual as their best potential for creating change. While many of these themes come across most clearly through the interviews with student volunteers, staff members are similar in many of these respects.

Chapter Six – *Collective Identity and Service* will examine the role of collective identity in the service experience. It may not seem an obvious fit at first to utilize social movement literature to analyze a group which includes a number of individuals who do not identify as political. However, service-learning and civic engagement programs are often referred to as a "movement" in the literature (for example – Marullo 1996; Saltmarsh and Zlotkowski 2011; Stanton, Giles and Cruz 1999), and several volunteers refer to their own work as part of a movement. As the data was analyzed, it became obvious that "being a Scholar" comes with a strong identification as part of the group. There is a clear difference between those volunteers who do their service as a member of an organized group (the Scholars), and those who volunteer as an individual (even though these individuals volunteer with the same organizations, often at the same time, doing the

same work). While the Scholars may not identify themselves as political, they clearly identify themselves as part of a collective, and the Scholar identity carries quite a bit of importance. In the interviews with Engaged Scholars, they regularly comment on what it means to be a Scholar, and how this identity impacts not just the way they go about their service and think about their work, but their lives as a whole, outside of service.

Resource mobilization and political process theories posit a shared and implied political interest among movement members, who recognize political opportunities, and mobilize resources for political purposes. Collective identity theory, however, allows that movements may form around a shared moral, cognitive, or emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution (Poletta and Jasper 2001). Thus, collective identity is particularly useful in this study, as Engaged Scholars fall along a broad spectrum of political beliefs (or political ambivalence), but come together around a shared commitment to “making a difference” in their local community. Once involved in the “movement” of civic engagement, their collective identity forms and grows stronger. In Chapter Six, theories of collective identity are drawn upon to analyze what the Scholar identity means to participants, how this identity is formed, how this identity impacts their work, and how this identity impacts the way they think about the issues on which they work and the meaning they attach to their service. The Scholars collective identity takes on different levels of salience depending on the situation in which volunteers find themselves, and this collective identity can come into conflict with Scholars personal identities.

While many long-term volunteers fail to regularly connect the work they do on a day to day basis to a sense of politics, critics who blame this connection on apathy seem

to miss the point. While volunteers often do not consider themselves “political” (both Scholars and Vols), they are hardly apathetic about the issues on which they are working. There is a real sense of civic and moral responsibility among these volunteers, but the way these issues and their work on them are framed is clearly important.

Collective Identity theory may be a way to make sense of this seeming disconnect between service and political change, and potentially a way to reframe this work in a way that helps meet the promise of service-learning programs. Scholars undoubtedly see themselves as part of a collective effort, and this sense of identity seems to empower them as agents of change. They see that working as part of a collective effort enables them to make a much larger difference in their local community than they would on their own. However, these efforts are often seen as the goal in and of itself to many volunteers. They see the impact of their work as a group in the provision of direct service but they do not often see how they can take the next step to connect this work to larger political or structural change, even though most realize that these steps must be taken to truly address the issues on which they work. Collective identity plays an important role in the ways Scholars interpret their work. Being a Scholar is an important piece of these students’ identities, and it shapes the way they think about their work, and about their own lives.

To those invested in the current state of higher education, it is clear that a renewed scholarship of engagement is needed; one that will make use of higher education’s many resources to promote active citizenship, and to solve some of the most pressing social problems. Many advocates of civic engagement see their work as a renewal of higher education’s pivotal role in catalyzing students’ commitment to a functioning democratic society. This dissertation will explore the ways in which students and staff involved in

one form of civic engagement make meaning of their work. As similar programs are expanded, and engagement in service is promoted at institutions of higher education throughout the United States, it is important to analyze this process. This study will contribute to the understanding of the ways in which student volunteers relate to their communities, to each other, and to the staff of community partners. It will also contribute to the understanding of the ways volunteers and staff relate their work to a broader sense of politics. This dissertation will also analyze the important ways that student volunteers and program staff think about collective identity, collaborative effort, and broader social change.

Chapter Two: ***The Political Context of Service Learning***

The latter part of the twentieth century, and early part of the twenty-first century have seen a radical shift in both political ideology and social policy concerning the role of the U.S. federal government - particularly in the provision of social welfare programs. While there has been an ideological shift towards personal responsibility while limiting government assistance to the poor, economic policies have created rising levels of poverty and inequality. Thus, while policies have created an ever-widening gulf between the rich and the poor, services to assist the most vulnerable have been increasingly reduced, shut off, or privatized. As more people have needed assistance, the government has increasingly shed the role of providing for social welfare, leaving the private and emerging nonprofit sectors to meet social needs. Meanwhile, the world of nonprofit organizations has also undergone a transformation, as increased funding pressures force them to follow a model traditionally more consistent with corporations and for-profit companies. As politics is further removed from the provision of social services, citizens become less trusting of the government and increasingly disengaged from civic life, with one large exception—volunteerism.

While the United States relies more and more on nonprofits to meet social needs, there is a parallel focus on the volunteers who help keep these nonprofits running. Much has been written on the benefits of engagement in service in strengthening our democracy, along with the necessary conditions for creating such beneficial forms of engagement (Flanagan 2004; Marullo and Edwards 2000a and b; Marullo 1999; Rhoads 1997; Youniss and Yates 1997). There has also been a widespread promotion of volunteering as a form of engagement, and a resulting growth in forms of volunteering

such as service learning (Campus Compact 2011; Corporation for National and Community Service 2011). As mentioned in the introduction, service learning is defined as an experiential education method under which students learn and develop through active participation in organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of communities, is coordinated with a school or institution of higher education and the community, and helps foster civic responsibility (Corporation for National and Community Service 1993).

Using existing scholarship, this chapter will explore the potential benefits and limitations that engagement in service activities, and service learning in particular, can offer to students and larger communities. First, however, it is necessary to discuss the recent changes in political ideology and social policy in the provision of social services that address inequalities on which service learning focuses. Edwards and Foley claim that the seeming contradictions between the rise in volunteering and the decline in other forms of civic engagement can be traced in large part to the retraction of social welfare services, a trend over the past quarter century that has profoundly restructured social life (1997b). This discussion highlights the need to analyze the ways in which we engage with social needs within a broader framework of politics, ideology, and political participation.

Changes in Ideology – From Civil Rights to Personal Responsibility:

The conservative argument that a concentrated government poses a threat to personal freedoms and responsibilities is hardly a new one. The key points to this argument are that the most important functions of the federal government are to protect its citizens'

freedoms, to preserve law and order, and to foster a competitive market. Beyond these functions, however, voluntary co-operation and private enterprise, and never regulation, should be relied upon to order society (Friedman 1962). Additionally, this conservative ideology stresses that limited power held by governments should be localized as much as possible because federal governments spend money ineffectually and large federal programs do not work in ending inequality, but rather enable it. This ideology also emphasizes the primacy of the market, a harsh critique of the “welfare state”, and emphasizes personal responsibility and personal freedom (Friedman 1962; Murray 1984, 1997, 2006; Frum 1994, 1996). These ideas have grown increasingly powerful over the last 30 years, and not just among Republicans. As both Republicans and Democrats have moved further towards this ideology of personal responsibility, it greatly affected the provision of social welfare services, and the way many Americans interact with them.

Since the late 1970s, there has been a sharp increase in the influence of this conservative movement, as the political power of the far-right has expanded (Ferguson and Rogers 1986; Smith 2007; Hacker and Pierson 2006; Kuttner 2008). Proponents of this brand of conservative ideology admit that personal responsibility can be “harsh” (Murray 1997), but that the risks associated with personal responsibility teach people self-control and discipline (Frum 1994). On the other hand, according to this ideology, federal welfare programs erode social ethics, such as the middle-class values of hard work and responsibility, and reward destructive behavior in the “underclass” (Mead 1993; Murray 1984, 1997; Frum 1996). To attest that government assistance encourages bad behavior, however, one needs to believe that people do not really need help—that the poor are lazy, have just hit some bad luck, or are just not willing to help themselves

(Hacker 2008). This approach obviously downplays the influence of structural inequalities as a root cause of poverty, instead blaming the poor themselves. The ideology of personal responsibility assumes that we enter the market not only as individual rational actors, but also as equal actors. This assumption ignores any existing inequalities, including those along economic, racial, and gender lines. Thus, in policy debates, there is typically very little discussion of the crucial need for social insurance to protect against the risks of a capitalist society, nor is there recognition that such “risks,” and the gains and losses associated with them, are assigned far from equally.

Even when Republicans lost elections over the last 30 years, or lost in key policy votes, they have still succeeded in reshaping the political landscape, pushing public opinion further to the right, becoming more extreme throughout both Republican and Democratic presidencies (Hacker and Pierson 2006; Stone 2002). Thus, the Republican far right has built itself a formidable political position—a call for personal responsibility that remains a dominant American political fact. Ferguson and Rogers (1986) and Hacker and Pierson (2006) also argue that both Republicans and Democrats became more conservative in the 1980s, abandoning New Deal beliefs that the state should play an active role in regulating business and remedying welfare inequalities.

Policy discussions and analysis have been dominated in recent years by a model of society as a market, with individuals as rational decision-makers seeking to maximize their own self-interest (Stone 2002). These political claims from the right have been passed off as an accepted truth, even though it is evident that they often do not resonate with the American public. On the contrary, community values, and the idea of helping one another are still very important to the American public, as is the desire to “help”

those in need (Stone 2002, 2008). However, the ways in which social policies are framed are clearly important. When a 2010 Pew Research poll asked, “All in all, do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose ... providing more generous government assistance to the poor?” 63 percent of respondents said they strongly favored or favored greater assistance, while only 31 percent opposed or strongly opposed (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life 2010). “When asked about public spending on welfare, 48 percent of Americans said it should be cut. But when asked about spending on programs for poor children, 47 percent say it should be increased, and only 9 percent want cuts” (Stone 2002, 3). Republicans succeeded in controlling the framing of the social policy debate into what Hacker (2008) calls the “Personal Responsibility Crusade,” and successfully framed the idea of government assistance in the form of “welfare” as harmful to individuals and society (Stone 2008).

This shift in ideology has a great deal to do with the shape of our current political discourse. As Stone (2002) states, the essence of policy making in political communities is the struggle over ideas. Thus, ideas are at the center of all political conflict, and the conservative ideology of personal responsibility, deregulation, the “free market,” and individual self-interest now dominate American politics. It is also important to consider that this shift in the role of government has not necessarily come with a corresponding shift in public opinion. Public opinion polls consistently show that Americans support providing more generous assistance to the poor (Hacker and Pierson 2006; Kuttner 2008; Newman and Jacobs 2010; Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life 2010).

This shift was not simply a matter of political philosophy however. There has been a corresponding shift in economic and social policy, and the effects have been very

real for many Americans. Since the 1970s, the political process has been increasingly appropriated by economic elites, and the laws governing capitalism moved consistently toward a legal conception of markets that further narrows concentrations of wealth. “Public goods” have been undervalued and resources have been cut to important public institutions such as schools, public health programs, research, training, and social insurance (Kuttner 2008). The conservative movement has also been successful in dictating tax policy and limiting federal regulation, as well as preventing many major new social policy initiatives (Pierson and Skocpol 2007). Thus, ours is not only an economic structure that creates very few winners and many losers, but one that offers increasingly less insurance, security, and support to those who lose out (Hacker 2008).

Changes in Social Policy – From the New Deal to No Deal:

Key policy changes accompanied the increase in conservative political power and focus on personal responsibility, including (although hardly limited to) a marked transformation in regulatory policies and federal welfare programs. During the mid-twentieth century, social programs and labor regulations developed by the federal government promoted economic security and educational opportunities across broad segments of the population. Since the late 1970s, however, many of these social programs have faced grave challenges. While programs for elderly citizens benefited from policies that generate political involvement, programs for lower-and middle-class nonelderly and nondisabled citizens have been shrinking in value and coverage (Mettler 2007). Many in these groups appear to have withdrawn from political engagement in response, as tax

policies that increasingly favor the affluent only further limit the political voice of lower- and middle-class Americans (Schlozman, Verba and Brady 2012).

The American social welfare system, which has always been a complex hybrid framework of public and private programs, underwent many changes over the last 30 years. Although the United States spends significantly less on social welfare programs than most industrialized nations, what is most distinctive about American social welfare practice is not the level of spending itself, but the sources. The U.S. relies much more heavily on private benefits for protection against the fundamental risks of modern life. Large shares of the duties and responsibilities carried out by governments in other industrialized nations (such as health insurance) are left in the hands of private actors in the U.S., mostly through employers (Hacker 2002). These private expenditures account for more than a third of U.S. social welfare expenditures, compared to less than a tenth on average in other industrialized nations (Hacker 2002, 7). These private programs are supported by a form of government intervention through tax breaks, regulations, and credit subsidies, but the difference between these programs and direct public services are crucial. Public programs are substantially more risk- and income-redistributive than are private social benefits (Hacker 2002). Coverage is typically broader under public programs, and they are more likely to favor vulnerable and low-income groups. Alternately, private benefits are more generous and prevalent among higher-income workers, those who need them the least. Conservatives in government, business interests, insurers, medical providers, and others who are generally opposed to the expansion of public social provision tend to support underwritten private benefits. The benefits to these groups are preserved in this type of social policy framework, modest in its redistributive

effect, dependent on private institutions, and responsive to private concerns (Hacker 2002).

Although social welfare has always been a balancing act between public and private insurance, it once created much greater protection against economic volatility for many Americans. Social welfare legislation has historically been a compromise, and despite nostalgic discussions of the programs of the New Deal or Great Society, has been seen by many as inadequate, and has always left large numbers of people on the outside looking in—uncovered, uninsured, or unprotected (Hacker 2008; Kuttner 2008).

However, it is important to note that at one point, both the public and private sectors embraced the notions of economic security in the form of what Hacker (2008) calls social insurance programs. Such programs were based on the idea that we should treat the inevitable dislocations of capitalist society as a shared responsibility, and risks could be transformed from individual misfortunes into common social problems. Thus, when social welfare programs were originally designed, they were seen as “insurance” rather than “relief” (Hacker 2008, 41-42).

By the 1980s, a range of programs for the poor lost federal funding, particularly in the early years of the Reagan presidency, and again after Republicans took control of Congress in 1994. States allowed Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits to lag sharply behind inflation through the early 1990s, and in 1996, welfare reform (the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act—PRWORA) eliminated AFDC in favor of Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), which essentially turned cash assistance over to the states through federal lump sum grants. Under the current TANF program, federal requirements are much stricter, work is

mandated in exchange for aid, and a strict limited time span of eligibility is imposed. In essence, welfare reform has meant that millions of women's lives are radically more insecure. Mothers are forced into "workfare" jobs or simply cut off from aid to scramble for whatever jobs they can get (Hays 2004). Women are forced to enter a world of low-wage employment that is increasingly competitive, at a time when postindustrial restructuring of the labor market has already displaced many existing workers (Piven and Cloward 1997).

TANF benefit levels are so low that they do not, in any state, raise a family's income above 50 percent of the poverty line. In most states, TANF benefits are worth at least 20 percent less than when TANF was created, after adjusting for inflation (Pavetti 2011). These changes in policy are obviously not driven by any visions of collective good or social insurance; they are driven by a conservative ideology that offers tax cuts for the most wealthy, and reconciles it with a platform of "fiscal prudence" by pushing for cuts in spending for the poor and those least able to defend themselves in our political system. In this way, economic and political interests have "coalesced in the assault on the social compact" by scapegoating the poor as the cause of their own condition (Piven and Cloward 1997, 170-71). This shift in ideology led to the gradual undermining of the role of a centralized federal government, and changed the way Americans think about social responsibilities and risks. Many Americans gave up on the idea of government making a difference in their lives, as the ideology of deregulation and personal responsibility became dominant in both political parties (Kuttner 2008). There has been a gradual, cumulative de-politicization of economic ills, as voters fail to see public policy as a potential solution to social problems.

Along with changes to social welfare programs, the past 35 years saw important changes in the tax code. The U.S. moved from a progressive tax code, one where the wealthy paid a much larger marginal rate on incomes, and ordinary workers' rates were relatively low, to one that is now only very marginally redistributive. In what can be seen as another example of sacrificing the long-term security of many for the short-term gains of the few, the same tax cuts starved the public sector for revenues that could otherwise pay for public programs of economic opportunity and security. As inequality increases, services are increasingly unavailable to the public due to cuts tied to decreased tax income (Kuttner 2008).

These policy changes had a very real impact on society. U.S. Census data reveal a weakened middle class and a significant increase in poverty and hardship for Americans. The real median household income has been stagnant for the last three years, following two consecutive years of annual declines. The median household income in 2013 was 8.0 percent lower in 2013 than in 2007 (DeNavas-Walt and Proctor 2014, 5). In 2013, a total of 45.3 million, or 14.5 percent of Americans lived in poverty (following a steady increase since the mid-1970s). For the third consecutive year, the number of people in poverty at the national level was not statistically different from the previous year's estimate (DeNavas-Walt and Proctor 2014, 12). During the 3-year period from 2009 to 2011, approximately 31.6 percent of the population had at least one spell of poverty lasting 2 or more months (DeNavas-Walt and Proctor 2014, 4). The welfare reforms of the Clinton era, combined with a growing economy, generated an increase in working poverty in which poor individuals typically lived in families with at least one member working (Danziger, Chavez, and Cumberworth 2012). The official poverty rate, however,

leaves out the millions of families who earn just enough to fall above the official poverty line, but do not make nearly enough to be considered economically secure and struggle to make ends meet.

America has always had a contested balance between public and private provision of social welfare services (Hacker 2002). While the institutions and frameworks of public social provision face increased challenges from the right, a second and less visible political struggle is unfolding as well. The private side of America's hybrid system of social benefits has also been eroding as corporations eliminate and restructure benefits to cut costs and encourage self-reliance. For example, health coverage for employees has dropped, benefits have grown more unequal, and recipients face both more restrictions and more of the risks that insurance plans once covered (Hacker 2002). All of this occurs while political leaders increasingly look to the private sector for models and means for transforming established public social programs, but another sector has also seen its responsibility in this area grow in recent years.

Changes in Volunteering – The Corporatization of the Nonprofit Sector:

As the resistance to the government provision of services increased late in the twentieth century, and the private sector began to shed its crucial role in this area, a third sector of social provision has also taken on an increased role. Beginning in the 1960s, nonprofit organizations began to grow rapidly, benefiting from government support to provide an array of services that Americans wanted and needed, but were not provided by the government directly. In 2005, an estimated 12.9 million people were employed in the nonprofit sector, a 16 percent increase since 1998. During this period, nonprofit

employment grew more than three times faster than employment in the rest of the U.S. economy (Wing, Pollak, and Blackwood 2008, 18-20). In 2006, 26.7 percent of the population said they had volunteered at some time during the previous year, which translates into 61.2 million volunteers. In total, about 12.9 billion hours were volunteered in 2006. Assuming a full-time employee works 1,700 hours per year; those volunteer hours were the equivalent of an additional 7.6 million full-time employees. Assuming those employees would have earned the average private hourly wage, they would have earned \$215.6 billion in 2006 (Wing, Pollak, and Blackwood 2008, 69-70). Contributions to nonprofits have also been on a general upward trend since 1965, and more than doubled from 1996 to 2006. Total private giving in 2006 was \$295 billion (Wing, Pollak, and Blackwood 2008, 69).

The shrinking role of the government in providing services directly to citizens in need has played a large role in this rapid growth. Large numbers of nonprofits now deliver services that ordinary Americans depend on. The modern welfare state has not only shifted to the private sector, but also has largely been subcontracted to the nonprofit sector. After welfare reform in 1996, many nonprofits providing service programs saw a financial windfall. As the number of welfare recipients began to fall sharply, and payments directly to individual recipients declined due to stringent work requirements, the federal government was still locked into large block grants to states. This allowed states to use funds to finance nonprofit organizations involved in a variety of work readiness, child care, and human service activities, but not as payments to the poor themselves (Berry and Arons 2003; Salamon 2003). The move to privatization drove a sharp increase in government spending on nonprofits. From 1974 to 1995, federal public

support to nonprofit organizations increased from \$23 billion to \$175 billion (Marwell 2011, 211). As funding decisions have been allocated to the state and municipal levels, these officials have a greatly increased responsibility for deciding how to spend dollars earmarked for services, including the decision of which nonprofits receive government support (Marwell 2011).

Overall, however, the total amount of public money being spent on services to the poor has decreased. This has been part of the overall effort to roll back the “welfare state” in order to replace it with voluntary support from charitable associations (Clemens and Guthrie 2011). At the same time, the wellbeing of our poorest citizens depends increasingly on state and local level decisions about how to allocate public service contracts. This structure has led to increased competition for funding between nonprofits, and has led many organizations to follow a corporate model, focusing more on investments and measurable returns. The autonomy of this sector is thus being challenged, as new pressures and new levels of accountability for organizations make them increasingly subject to market logic and corporate control, even as it continues to be shaped by government programs and policies (Salamon 2003; Clemens and Guthrie 2011). These organizations need to continue to cultivate political sponsorship at the local and state level for funding, so they must accept serious restrictions on their right to lobby and advocate for their clients. In this way, as to not upset their local support, many nonprofits have become depoliticized, as they must always appear as non-partisan as possible (Berry and Arons 2003). These pressures, together, can lead many nonprofit organizations to experience not only increased demands, but identity crises, threats to

their missions, and a loss of public trust (Salamon 2003; Berry and Arons 2003; Clemens and Guthrie 2011).

Reliance on the nonprofit sector reveals two contradictory impulses of the American character: a deep-seated commitment to freedom and individual initiative with an equally fundamental realization that people live in communities and that they consequently have responsibilities that extend beyond themselves (Salamon 2003). This contradiction between the powerful ethos of personal responsibility and the desire to help others in our communities constitutes what Deborah A. Stone calls the “Samaritan’s Dilemma” (2008). The nonprofit sector effectively mobilizes individual action to improve the common good. However, while voluntary groups are highly effective in mobilizing individuals to act, they are far less equipped to affect the structural roots of social problems, which limits the ultimate role they can play in addressing critical public needs.

The appeal of relying on nonprofits to provide social services seems clear. They can serve as a site for volunteers to become engaged, and this engagement has the potential to form a foundation for civil society, serve as a new arena for the generation of social capital, and build trust and relationships that bind societies together (Berry and Arons 2003; Putnam 2001; Skocpol 2004). The nonprofit sector allows individuals and groups to take independent action, spurred by motives ranging from traditional charity to social change. Working or volunteering with nonprofits allows for a means of opportunity for those who have been excluded from political and economic endeavors to engage (Clemens and Guthrie 2011).

However, as nonprofit or volunteer work is increasingly depoliticized, it further entrenches a separation between “helping” and politics. According to Stone (2008), people like to “do good,” but politics are something entirely different from “doing good”; particularly as government mistrust has grown. A 2010 poll from the Pew Research Center found that by almost every conceivable measure, Americans are less positive and more critical of government today than at any other measured point in history. The poll also revealed that with the exception of greater regulation of major financial institutions, there is very little desire for government solutions to the nation’s problems (Pew Research Center 2010a). A 2011 poll indicated that even after a modest improvement, only 22 percent of Americans polled were content with the federal government, while 59 percent were frustrated, and an additional 17 percent were angry (Pew Research Center 2011). An analysis of public trust in the federal government from 1958 to 2010 shows a dramatic downward trend, with the percentage of Americans who say they trust the federal government hitting a historic low of just 17 percent after the financial crisis and bank bailouts of 2008, with only a modest recovery to 22 percent in the early years of the Obama administration (Pew Research Center 2010b).

Change in Engagement – From Civic Participation to Civic Recession:

According to Stone (2008), the idea that “help is harmful” violates our basic moral sense and our everyday experience, but it has become our new public philosophy, our national story. We are told from all directions that volunteering and helping others on an individual level is a good thing, yet the message we receive from politicians is that independence and personal responsibility are the highest virtues. But as Stone (2008)

argues, interdependence is the very essence of communities and of democracy. A democratic society requires its citizens to depend on each other and on public resources like schools, hospitals, universities, infrastructure, and government institutions.

For many, the contradiction between our public and private moralities seems to be too much to bear, and many young people simply drop out of any form of political participation. Compared to other well-established democracies, few Americans vote, few have faith in the government, and many are ignorant about the most basic political issues. As of 2000, students were twice as likely to do volunteer work as they were to vote (Stone 2008, 20-21). The opportunities that exist for high school students to work directly on civic issues through community service, school government, or service clubs are disproportionately available to wealthier students (CIRCLE 2010). Solt (2008) shows that greater economic inequality is tied to greater political inequality, and Uslander and Brown (2005) show that economic inequality leads to greater levels of distrust and decreased civic engagement.

Young people, like many of their older counterparts, are likely to think about service and politics as two distinct activities—one moral and effective, the other corrupt and fruitless. People of all ages desire to be good, caring members of a community, and they want to cultivate a sense of belonging and companionship. They want to care about people, but increasingly, they do not want to care about politics. Eliasoph (1998) found that this dialectic meant that individuals limit their concerns to issues about which they felt they could “realistically” make a difference in people’s lives, and thus defined issues as small-scale, local, and nonpolitical. This model of involvement lends itself perfectly to many forms of volunteering. Mathews (2000) argues that if a sense of political

responsibility is removed from one's sense of moral responsibility, all moral positions risk becoming no more than matters of personal preference, leading to a growing sense that Americans are not responsible for or accountable to each other, with little care for the common good.

Political conversation is a defining feature of a healthy democracy, and the ways we talk about our concerns go a long way towards shaping public policy. A strong democracy requires competent, responsible citizens, and the ability to discuss politics allows citizens to generate power together. (Barber 1984). Yet in current American society, there are far too few contexts in which to openly discuss political discontent (Eliasoph 1998). A vibrant public life, full of political debate, discussion, and disagreement, does not come naturally. It is hard work. The political skills of engagement are not inherent powers, but are habits that must be acquired through our culture and under the influence of the institutions of society (Barber 1984, CIRCLE 2010; Dewey 1927; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Organizations that allow for face-to-face interaction and political engagement are the basic schools for learning democratic principles and social responsibility (Eliasoph 1998). Most indicators of civic health in the U.S. are abysmal. The U.S. ranked 139th out of 172 world democracies in voter participation in 2007 (McCormick Tribune Foundation 2007, 6-7). Only 10 percent of citizens contacted a public official in 2009-2010 (US Census Bureau 2010). Only 24 percent of graduating high school seniors scored at the proficient or advanced level in civics in 2010 (National Center for Education Statistics 2011).

The U.S. is in the midst of what Charles N. Quigley (2011), executive director of the Center for Civic Education, calls a “civic recession”. However, one way in which

Americans do engage in their communities in large numbers is through volunteer service. Thus, a critical evaluation of the potential contributions of service, particularly academic service learning, to a healthy democratic society, could make a significant contribution. Of particular concern in this study is the question of how service learning, and higher education more generally, can contribute to further involvement in politics and public life.

The Role of Higher Education in Facilitating Participatory Democracy:

In light of the stated need for the development and cultivation of civic skills, it is worthwhile to reflect on the role of higher education in a functioning democracy. A decline in civic and political engagement has been a concern for many scholars (Beem 1999; Eliasoph 1998; Putnam 2001). However, if volunteer engagement in communities prepares students well, and impacts their later political participation, then there are several positive indicators. The number of students in the U.S. receiving bachelor's degrees rose steadily over the last 70 years (Julian and Kominsky 2011), and service learning has emerged as one of the most popular mechanisms to promote and teach about civic responsibility in American universities. According to a 2011 Campus Compact survey of 1,100 college administrations, the number of students engaged in service, service learning, and civic engagement activities has risen steadily in recent years, to a current high of 35 percent of all students represented in the sample. In addition, 93 percent of schools reported offering service learning courses (Campus Compact 2011).

The hope behind service learning courses in particular is that students' experiences will be the beginning, or a key part of, their overall trajectory towards a

commitment to civic responsibility and action toward social change (Marullo and Edwards 2000a). There are both empirical and theoretical reasons to believe that current high rates of volunteerism will translate into high levels of political engagement as young people transition into adulthood. Promoting greater participatory democracy involves fostering civic competence, and education is critical to this development. Civic competencies include a civic conscience, a willingness to engage in participatory decision-making, and persistent critical inquiry (Battistoni 1997; Beem 1999; Colby et al 2007). People in a democratic society must learn how to understand the larger world by interacting, working collaboratively, and talking about social issues in groups (Boyte 2005). Even seemingly apolitical sociable gatherings can be fertile ground for political life by offering space for the familiarity and meaning-making that is a necessary precondition for public life (Eliasoph 1998; Gamson 1992a; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995).

Most people are more than capable of engaging in informed and reasoned discussions about political issues – so while they may not be inclined to actively engage in politics, the seeds of political action are present (Gamson 1992a). Political conversations are needed to build civic competencies, but politics can be hidden in almost any topic, and ideas of what counts as “political” can change from one context to the next (Eliasoph 2011). Only this type of plain talk, between citizens, can forge the bonds necessary for a more humane society, and can reveal the often morally objectionable assumptions often hidden by the market and the bureaucracies (Habermas 1985). Participation in the public sphere can become a source of power and political involvement by helping cultivate a sense of community, along with a sense of attachment

to others, so that people care more, and think more, about the wider world. Educators can (and many scholars argue should) impart these skills to students and help empower them to understand the important role they can play within a democracy (Lisman 1998; Colby et al 2007).

The goal of a more civic-minded society dedicated to a common good requires a shared commitment to a set of values, virtues, and civic ideals. In other words, it requires a certain degree of shared identity as a nation, with a restored sense of civic, cultural, and social unity. If it is to operate as advocates intend, civil society must be directed, contained, and sustained by an overarching set of moral principles, which means that such a society requires institutions with universal reach and import (Beem 1999). As will be discussed in further depth in Chapter Six, the emergence of a collective consciousness organized around a common aspect of identity is necessary for a social movement to gain strength. Committing oneself to change is contingent on having a shared vision of what ought to be, and connecting this vision to one's sense of self. This type of "identity politics" can serve a key role in bringing committed groups of students together, but the groups themselves must remain open and flexible spaced capable of building solidarity across cultural lines (Rhoads 2000).

Rhoads (2000) used examples of student activism across the nation to show how diverse students can come together across cultural lines to form a collective consciousness around "issues of democratic struggle" (234). These democratic challenges were grounded in the goal of including diverse voices in a more participatory form of decision making. Rhoads (2000) noticed this renewed commitment to social justice and equality among students during the 1990s, at the same time that conservative

forces won battles to eliminate social welfare programs. He believes that this was no coincidence – and claims it was the force of conservatism in recent decades that created an environment in which progressive-minded students saw little choice but to join together to launch a countermovement (Rhoads 2000). This Multicultural Student Movement built on the Civil Rights movements of the 1960s, focusing on full political participation and cultural inclusiveness. Thus, these students did not fit the stereotype of young people as apathetic and disengaged. He claims that many scholars have failed to recognize the significance of student activism, and calls for a broadening of the ways we think about student movements, which have the potential to challenge the fabric of American social life (Rhoads 2000). To Rhoads, student activist groups form a new, more complex way of organizing.

John Dewey wrote in the 1930s that the growth of knowledge is a social process, and that democracy is ineffectual without the ability to communicate intelligently. Thus, Dewey also argued that society requires institutions that cultivate habits of critical thought. However, in his observation, our institutions of education tend to impart information as “ready-made” and do not promote the necessary skills of inquiry or of testing others’ opinions (Dewey 1994). Instead, he found that most schools were hostile to critical thought and tended to dull curiosity.

Many recent and contemporary critics agree with Dewey, not only that education is a key component of democracy, but also that our educational institutions have failed in this crucial role. While Dewey is seen by many as the forefather of service learning theory and practice (Deans 1999), Paulo Freire (1985) took his ideas in an even more critical direction. Freire was much more attuned to power and diversity of opinion than

Dewey. For Freire, experiential education is liberatory; education is both reflection and action, and should involve interrogating one's role within power structures. Thus, to Freire, education is ideally the transformation of individuals and society. In other words, it is not enough for students to just be in the community, the individual and community must collaborate for transformative change (Deans 1999).

Marullo and Edwards (2000b) provide a vision of how higher education could become a vehicle for transforming society and making it more just. They contrast the current state of higher education with a vision of a transformed academy they find preferable to the status quo. To Marullo and Edwards, an important component of a broader transformational strategy is distinguishing between charity (which typically ends up reproducing the status quo) and social justice (which can facilitate the politicization of students and help them to become active promoters of a more just society). While this distinction between charity and justice is often presented as if there are simple binary yes/no answers portraying black and white, the authors recognize that the reality is that there are many shades of gray in the world of community based education work. The elements of social justice can exist in varying degrees in any type of volunteer work. However, as an analytical tool, the distinction between these two models is summarized in the chart below (adapted from Marullo and Edwards (2007b).

Level	Status Quo/Charity	Transformation/Social Justice
Student	Alienated from self, work, others, place, and generativity. Externally driven learning. Material, career, credential motivations.	Integrated and whole. Self-motivated learning. Enrichment of self and community.
Pedagogy and Learning	Banking model. Disciplinary, canon-centered.	Circle of co-learners. Interdisciplinary, problems-centered. Applied, synthetic,

	Analytical, recitative. Service as extracurricular.	reflective. Service integrated into curriculum.
Faculty	Pure science scholarship. Isolated, atomistic, alienated. Respond to disciplinary frontiers. Work within paradigms.	Scholarship of engagement. Holistic, integrated, complete. Responsive to community needs. Critical Perspective.
Institutional	Professional service as add-on. Autonomous disciplines. Reward system prioritizes the scholarship of discovery.	Integrated professional service. Interdisciplinary and collaborative. Scholarships of pedagogy, application, and integration valued as well.
Community Relationship	Do for. Community as subject. Insulated from community. Hierarchy, elite institution.	Do with. Community as partner. Engaged with community. Egalitarian.

Marullo and Edwards (2000b) argue that acts of community service can lead students to become political in two ways: a) as part of a larger political change strategy or process, in which charitable acts can lead to a redistribution of resources that changes institutions, and b) as a first step in a process of politicization that puts community service volunteers on the path to becoming active agents of social change. Marullo and Edwards (2000b) also argue that at the institutional level, service learning should become the catalyst for larger social change.

The questions that determine where projects fall along the continuum between charity-based and social justice-based service are: Does the community service work undertaken by students empower the recipients? Are students required to examine whether and how their service work helps to address the root causes of the problem? Does the service learning encourage students to see that the shortcomings of individuals in need are not the sole cause of the problems that service learning activities attempt to

address? Are the institutional operations of the university-community partnerships organized in such a way as to support and sustain the collaborative efforts of faculty, students, and community members? Does the university-community collaboration build community, increase social capital, and enhance diversity? Do education institutions operate their community partnership programs in accord with social justice principles? (Marullo and Edwards 2000b).

Measured along these lines, it appears as though modern higher education often fails in its mission to prepare students for active political lives. Universities in the United States long prided themselves on a commitment to civic society through education (Zlotkowski 2007). American colleges and universities were traditionally charged with the responsibility of training students to take their place in a larger civic society, to teach them to be committed members of the community, and to promote positive change (Edwards 2007; Mott 2005). However, institutions of higher education have faced much criticism in recent years for not living up to this responsibility. Among 14,000 college seniors surveyed in 2006 and 2007, the average score on a civic literacy exam was just over 50 percent, an “F” (Intercollegiate Studies Institute 2007). Just over one-third of college faculty surveyed in 2007 strongly agreed that their campus actively promotes awareness of U.S. or global social, political, and economic issues (Dey et al. 2009). Only 35.8 percent of college students surveyed strongly agreed that faculty publicly advocate the need for students to become active and involved citizens, and one-third strongly agreed that their college education resulted in increased civic capacities (Dey et al. 2009).

Rather than serving as a public good that instills students with civic skills, many argue that postsecondary education, in line with trends in broader society, has become an

individualized private good that is focused on career-building and promoting self-interest (Ehrlich 2000; Sullivan 2000; Ostrander 2004). Far from the goals of promoting critical understandings for the common good, and even farther from transforming unequal power structures, higher education has primarily become a means for the pursuit of individual gains for many students. While active citizenship may be the foundation of civil society, there are many forces in higher education urging young people towards complicity, conformity, silence, and inaction (Edwards 2007).

The increasing commoditization of higher education impedes a commitment to civil society among undergraduates. Just like the nonprofit sector, as universities increasingly take on corporate models and practices, they respond more to market demands than to missions of public good. The commoditization of higher education leads to individualism, over-specialization, and competition, which attracts consumers (students) who are looking to maximize their own self-interest (Edwards 2007; Ehrlich 2000). As higher education costs have risen, universities have to increasingly focus on the bottom line, causing them to sacrifice and undercut their core missions. Admissions departments market their schools as products, and aid to students is increasingly based on merit, in order to raise school rankings, but this leaves many poor students without aid (Kuttner 2008). An increasing number of adjunct faculty members are hired to teach courses, which can lead to decreased contact with and commitment towards students (Eyler 2002). Faculty involvement is proven to have a significant impact on students' commitment to civic involvement, so this lack of commitment to fostering relationships between students and faculty further threatens a scholarship of engagement (Astin et al. 2000).

Harkavy and Benson (1998) argue that the quality and sustainability of higher education is imperiled by institutional disengagement from “real-world” concerns. Higher education, according to critics, has become too narrowly focused on a scholarship of discovery at the expense of pedagogy, integration, and application (Boyer 1996). Thus, a renewed scholarship of engagement is needed; one that will make use of higher education’s many resources to promote active citizenship as well as to solve the most pressing social problems. Many advocates of civic engagement see their work as a renewal of higher education’s pivotal role in catalyzing a commitment to the society in which we live. “The new push toward university civic engagement is part of an effort to develop alternatives to measuring the value of a university education by students’ future economic success” (Ostrander 2004, 77). Civic engagement serves as a recent expression of the historic mission of higher education, particularly among liberal arts colleges, of preparing students for public life as civic participants (Latham 2003).

Potential for Service Learning in Contributing to Participatory Democracy:

As a form of civic engagement, service learning initiatives have received tremendous support from educators, policy makers, and legislators at the local, state, and federal levels, from both Republicans and Democrats (Kahne and Westheimer 1996). Service learning is defined as a course-based educational experience in which students participate in organized service that meets community needs and reflect on that service to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility (Hatcher and Bringle 1997). As resources flow to these initiatives, though, it is important to clarify the various ideological, political, and

social goals that can be promoted through service learning and civic engagement activities. The ways in which programs, goals, and relationships with the community are conceptualized largely determines their impact—both for students and communities (Kahne and Westheimer 1996; Mathews 2000).

While these models are often presented as binary either/or models, most service learning tends to fall within the two extremes. Britt (2012) notes that not all service learning projects share the same rationales or goals for student development, or engages students in the same way in communities. Service learning is not a new idea, but rather a pedagogical influence that has appeared through time in many forms. The impulse to use community service as a way to enhance learning has a long and complex history with roots sprouting from many social, institutional, and historical forces. As a result of these forces, differing forms of service-learning represent particular educational, philosophical, and democratic philosophies. Different impulses among service learning practitioners lead to very different ideas of what service learning is or should be. “Service-learning is not a singular pedagogical approach, but rather several rather distinctive approaches that share some commonality but also have very varied assumptions about the role of service, the reasons for linking service and learning, and the goals and desired outcomes for students, communities, and social issues” (Britt 2012, 80).

The literature on service-learning practice suggests that educators engage in service-learning for a variety of reasons. Thus, there is a rich diversity of service learning pedagogy. Identifying the specific approaches to service learning can guard against treating service as a broad panacea for higher education. No service learning course can accomplish all of the many positive changes heralded by its proponents, and the goals of

service learning should be carefully articulated. However, much of the current research in the field of service learning fails to adequately acknowledge, investigate, or reflect that not all service-learning is developed with the same end goals in mind. As several streams of pedagogical and institutional approaches to strengthening connections between universities and communities have converged, differences in the varying approaches to service-learning have become obscured. Teasing out these nuanced differences in varied service learning models reveals underlying foundational influences and assumptions of the role that service can play in the learning experience.

Britt (2012) classified three separate approaches to service-learning pedagogy, each of which positions service differently with regard to its primary emphasis: (a) skill-set practice and reflexivity, (b) civic values and critical citizenship, and (c) social justice activism. Each approach engages students in service as a way to extend the classroom, but the service component in each approach serves different goals. “The three approaches converge on their attention to the development of students’ identities, but they diverge on which particular facet of identity is nurtured and called forth: learner, citizen, or social activist and what type of engagement within the community is needed to develop these student identities” (Britt 2012, 82). The approaches are summarized in the adapted table below.

	Skill-set practice and reflexivity	Civic values and critical citizenship	Social justice activism
Goals/definition	Develop competence and self-efficacy. Emphasizes doing as a way to enhance learning. Reflection about experience aids in critical thinking about subject matter.	Explore what it means to exist in relation to others in community. Used to raise awareness of and critical thinking about social issues and students’ values	Work with others to transform systems of oppression. Used to help students take action to address human needs, often related to societal injustices/power

		and moral choices/responsibilities as societal members.	imbalances. Seeks to develop critical consciousness of the complexity of social issues.
Foundation	Dewey and the progressive education movement,	Democratic tradition of citizenship/civic education.	Social justice initiatives and critical pedagogy.
Focus/Domain	Content/Intellectual domain.	Values/Moral domain.	Systemic change/Political domain.
Outcomes	Active learner with understanding of reflexive relationship between theory, skills, and practices. “Internalize” knowledge by connecting theory and skills.	Personal development as an individual in relation to others in society. Reflection on relationships of self and community.	Social change and continued efforts to right social injustice. Document changes, develop activist orientation.
Role of Service	Space to concretize abstract theories, and encourage critical thinking.	Touchstone for considering and shaping one’s values.	Opportunity to engage in efforts that begin to correct systemic social disparities.
Development of Student	As a Learner, by encouraging individual content competence.	As a Citizen, by providing experience of being an individual in relation to collective community.	As a Change agent, through encouraging critical consciousness of structural inequalities and marginalization.

Mathews (2000) found that if students do not define their own service as grounded in politics, or do not see politics as a viable avenue to address the social issues they encounter, they are unlikely to move beyond the “charity” model of service. While infusing a sense of politics into service activities may seem like a challenge, Eliasoph (1998) argues that all public interactions are political, and political decisions permeate every aspect of human life. In fact, it is political disinterest that is actively cultivated, as

“it can be as difficult to ignore a problem as to try to solve it ... to stop thinking as to think (Eliasoph 1998, 6).

Kahne and Westheimer (1996) also discuss two very different types of service learning programs, with very different sets of goals: charity-based and change-based. The charity approach to service learning has the following attributes: a “giving” sense of morality is emphasized, engagement in the community is seen as a civic duty, and experience is seen as an add-on to the intellectual process. On the other hand, the change approach to service involves a “caring” sense of morality, sees engagement as a potential arena for social reconstruction, and regards experience as an intellectually transformative experience (Kahne and Westheimer 1996). Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2000) similarly differentiate between approaches that see engagement as “doing for” local communities from those that see engagement as “doing with” community partners.

Service learning has emerged as one of the most popular among a variety of program initiatives that attempt to infuse a sense of political responsibility in students by encouraging civic engagement as part of the college experience (Ehrlich 2000). Service learning programs that achieve the most success in infusing a sense of political responsibility tend to provide a way in which students can better understand how experiential and classroom knowledge are linked, as well as better understand the roots of social problems and their role in furthering social justice (Zlotkowski 2007).

Proponents of service learning describe it as a civic engagement “movement” on college campuses, which speaks to its popularity within higher education (Sullivan 2000; Ostrander 2004). There is a growing body of literature assessing the impact of service learning on students’ educational experience and post-college actions. Much of this

research finds that service learning is associated with an increase in students' positive attitudes towards and commitment to civic responsibility (Myers-Lipton 1998; Astin et al. 2000). Experience with voluntarism has also been shown to contribute to political participation to a significant degree (Corporation for National and Community Service 2010; Putnam 2001; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Youniss and Yates 1997). There are several suspected reasons for this connection. First, organizations that host volunteers can operate as sites of recruitment into political activity. Partaking in civic activities like volunteering incorporates people into social networks that may encourage or invite their political activity, or encourage them to develop a particular political stance or act on a political issue (Colby et al. 2007). If students define their collective work as based in issues of democratic politics, these social networks have the potential to form and build activist collective identities (Rhoads 2000). Civic engagement also often exposes participants to political knowledge and stimuli, potentially increasing their interest in and concern about political issues (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). It is important to note however that among students, becoming politically aware does not mean becoming politically progressive (Binder and Wood 2013).

Service learning can provide opportunities for participants to develop civic capacities, such as communication, organizational, or advocacy skills, which serve as resources necessary to participate in political action. This skill-building effectively reduces several of the biggest barriers posed by a lack of political competence (Battistoni 1997; Mann and Patrick 2000). The possession of these types of civic skills is among the most important predictors of political participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). It appears as though simply being engaged in communities influences political

participation, as scholars found that politically active adults are more likely than their inactive peers to have participated in community service, clubs, and other organized forms of engagement in their youth (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Youniss, et al. 1999; Youniss, McLellan, and Yates 1997).

Studies have found that students involved in service learning programs show larger increases in civic responsibility than students with no educational component and students with no involvement in community service of any kind (Myers-Lipton 1998; Astin et al. 2000). Service learning programs in particular often result in a student's deeper understanding of social issues, an increased sense of civic responsibility, an increased commitment to social action, and even produce changes in students' world views (Eyler 1997; Monard-Weissman 2003; Seider 2007; Myers-Lipton 1998). Civic engagement can lead to a transformation of students' perceptions of themselves, and of the community and its residents, but only if students are presented with a pedagogy and curriculum that forces them to critically examine the histories of communities, as well as larger systems of inequality (Wu 2007).

Along with an increased commitment to social justice, service learning is connected with educational benefits to the students themselves, including increased cognitive skill acquisition, improvements in reading skills, and the ability to produce better writing (Eyler and Giles 1999). Service learning participants also show a deepened awareness of inequality, along with the development of several multicultural skills, such as empathy, patience, attachment, reciprocity, trust, and respect, as well as a commitment to continued civic engagement (Einfeld and Collins 2008). Students who participate in service learning show an increased sense of efficacy in creating social change, self-

esteem, confidence in social skills, and the ability to build positive relationships with other students and adults (Conrad and Hedin 1982; Conrad and Hedin 1991; Eyler and Giles 1999; Youniss and Yates 1997; Youniss et al. 1999). Iverson and James (2013) demonstrate that involvement in service learning that is “change-oriented” led to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of citizenship among students, along with a more developed sense of efficacy as citizens, and an increased awareness of self in relation to others and their communities.

In these ways, service learning projects have the potential for the type of engagement experiences that can lead to a change in the framing of social issues from private to public, from a charity-based and apolitical perspective to one that is active and political. The goal of such volunteer service projects is to encourage youth to care about politics and “the big picture.” However, doing so requires a space for political discussions and the possibility of conflict or disagreement, which many organizers consider difficult and depressing (Eliasoph 2011). Rhoads (1997) explained that “critical service learning” is an experience “that brings students into a direct and significant relationship with others, and thus challenges students to consider a variety of significant issues about the self, such as a code to live by” (36). The critical service learning experience challenges students to confront stereotypes and generalization, emphasized collaborative relationships, and seeks to involve all parties equally in the creation of service experiences.

Rosenberger (2000) describes critical service learning as academic service experiences with a social justice orientation. This explicit aim toward social justice challenges traditional perceptions of service “as meeting individual needs but not usually

as political action intended to transform structural inequalities” (Rosenberger 2000, 29). Wang and Rodgers (2006) show that a social justice approach to service learning results in more complex thinking and reasoning skills than traditional service learning courses. A critical service learning approach embraces the political nature of service and seeks social justice over more traditional views of citizenship. Critical service learning programs encourage students to see themselves as agents of social change, and use the experiences of service to address and respond to injustice in communities (Mitchell 2008).

Marullo (1999) considers service learning a revolutionary pedagogy because of its potential for social change. According to Marullo, service-learning should be critical of the status quo and should ultimately challenge unjust structures and oppressive institutional operations.

It is the analytical component of service learning that gives it revolutionary potential, because it is precisely this component that will reveal the systemic, social nature of inequality, injustice, and oppression. Service-learning is also revolutionary to the extent that it creates a partnership for change among community and university actors. Once the sources of social problems are seen to reside in the social and political systems that so lavishly reward the few at the expense of the many, it becomes obvious that such systems require change. It is in the ensuing step, advocating for change and assisting students to acquire the knowledge and skills to become agents of change, that the revolutionary potential becomes real. In this sense, service-learning provides an opportunity for institutionalizing on college campuses activism committed to social justice. (Marullo 1999, 22)

To realize the potential that Marullo (1999) sees, critical service learning must emphasize the skills, knowledge, and experiences required of students to not only participate in communities, but to transform them as engaged and active citizens. Critical service learning should focus on creating true community-university partnerships where

community issues and concerns are as important (in planning, implementation, and evaluation) as student learning and development (Brown, 2001). The work to realize the potential of the critical service learning pedagogy (and avoid paternalism) demands a social change orientation, working to redistribute power, and developing authentic relationships as central to the classroom and community experience (Mitchell 2001).

Service learning programs that do not take a critical approach emphasize the service experience as an opportunity for students to do work that will benefit a service agency and provide the students with an opportunity to reflect upon the work they are doing, and perhaps upon their own assumptions and stereotypes about the individuals with whom they serve. Eby (1998) and Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) caution that these types of service programs, while beneficial for the students in service roles and providing much needed service in communities, do not lead to any transformation in the community and certainly do not tap into the revolutionary potential that Marullo (1999) envisions.

A critical service learning pedagogy asks students to use what they learn in the classroom (readings, discussion, assignments, and other activities) to reflect on their service in the context of larger social issues. “Such a vision is compatible with liberatory forms of pedagogy in which a goal of education is to challenge students to become knowledgeable of the social, political, and economic forces that have shaped their lives and the lives of others” (Rhoads 1998, 41). Critical service learning is political in nature because it questions the connection between power and economics, and how power is distributed (Rhoads 1997). However, if time is not dedicated to reflective discussion, and participants are not asked why problems exist in the first place, any connection between

civic volunteering and political engagement is severed. Worse still, this disconnect can tend to breed a sense of hopelessness among volunteers about finding any solutions beyond meeting immediate needs, and further disengagement from public life (Eliasoph 2011).

Limitations and Challenges of Service Learning Within Higher Education:

For all of the support devoted to service learning, it is also the subject of much criticism. If volunteers become too busy with logistics and measuring volunteer hours, there is no time for reflection or discussion. This style of volunteering can make problems like poverty seem natural, not matters of dispute, let alone human creations that humans can fix. Thus, the service experience and any sense of politics can become completely disconnected (Eliasoph 2011). Many service programs (particularly those based on the academic semester calendar) encounter problems trying to forge instant, and often artificial, intimacy between volunteers and participants. The short-term nature of many service projects often lead to volunteers running off to another project before any serious questioning has begun, and higher education institutions must deal with this challenge. In many projects, volunteering has become flexible, and temporary, and volunteers are supposed to be able to bond quickly and easily, and separate just as easily. Volunteers are expected to be capable of “healing the needy” quickly, and without any need for expertise or further thought about the class inequality, ethnic diversity, literacy levels, or other differences between themselves and the communities in which they are serving (Eliasoph 2011). Bickford and Reynolds (2002) also recognize the limitations of short term community-university partnerships. “Avoiding superficial encounters begins

with the recognition, already in place among service-learning advocates, that one assignment, one semester, is not enough” (p. 234). Authentic service learning relationships depend on a commitment between partners that extends beyond the last day of class. An alternative to such limited relationships is an ongoing and evolving partnership, which will be discussed in further depth in Chapter Four.

Eliasoph (1998) calls short-term temporary volunteering the “thousand points of light” style of service, so named after George H.W. Bush’s call for increased service in local communities during his 1989 inaugural speech. The type of public sphere engagement described in the previous section, which can help citizens create democracy by generating a kind of civic power, is very different from this “thousand points of light” style of service, which is often advocated by politicians who treat voluntary associations as the panacea for all social ills. Such calls to service ask apolitical citizen-volunteers to fill in for underfunded social welfare agencies, saying that such “citizenship” is more necessary now than ever, in times of cutbacks. However, these calls do not ask the citizens to discuss the political decisions and policy changes that led to the cutbacks in the first place. Citizens are asked to “make a difference” without addressing issues that should be considered political at their core (Eliasoph 1998).

Walker (2000) explains that although her service learning students found their experiences personally rewarding, and contributed to their learning, it did not help them to better understand politics. Very few of her students had ever been a part of an organizing effort, and simply had no idea of how the process worked. “These students understood how to serve; they did not know how to affect political change” (Walker 2000, 649).

Eliasoph (1998) also found that volunteers had trouble connecting their service to the larger political forces that produce the problems on which they worked. Volunteers, in other words, need to develop the “sociological imagination” of Mills (1959), allowing them to connect the personal troubles they encounter during service with larger public issues. To Eliasoph (1998), many Americans are disconnected from even the most basic elements of the political process not because they simply do not care, but because they lack this kind of imagination that could help them understand why such facts matter. This kind of sociological imagination comes from talking, reading, and interacting with others in contexts in which people could stretch their minds and expand their sense of selfhood in connection to others. If service is depoliticized though, or space is not purposefully dedicated to this type of discussion, such opportunities are missed. This supports earlier claims of the need for an increased institutional commitment to the use of critical thinking to challenge social institutions.

Longo (2005) recognizes that educational institutions have been linked to the promise of democracy throughout our nation’s history. However, he claims that over the past century, this connection has become too often narrowed to the school as the sole vessel for civic education. This is harmful to both education (by putting too much pressure on a single institution) and democracy (by ignoring the role of the many institutions that educate, along with the connections between these institutions). Longo advocates for a new way of thinking about civic education practices that reaches beyond the schools and widens the conversation on the connections between education, community, and democracy. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, institutions of higher education face criticisms of institutional disengagement (Harkavy and Benson 1998),

increasing commoditization (Edwards 2007; Ehrlich 2000), an overly narrow focus on academic discovery among faculty (Boyer 1996) and self-interest and career-building among students (Ostrander 2004). These factors complicate service learning efforts even more than other forms of volunteer service. These additional institutional barriers can potentially limit the efforts of even those service learning models that attempt to be social change oriented.

The goal of many service learning programs is to engage students in a transformative learning experience that will increase their understanding of the world around them, in the hopes that these experiences will provoke students to ask questions about issues like poverty, global inequality, and environmental hardship and lead them towards a greater commitment to social justice (King 2004). Thus, while students may begin doing service under a “charity” model of community service, it is hoped that they move beyond charity toward a more structural model of social change as projects and connections with communities grow (Wade 2000; Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2000). Critics argue that this frequently does not happen. They suggest that students retain a charitable orientation towards their work (Wang and Jackson 2005), and service learning serves as a form of assistance that reproduces structural inequality and institutionalized power relationships (Marullo and Edwards 2000a; Bickford and Reynolds 2002; King 2004). In volunteer programs such as this, the powerful ideology of personal responsibility is never questioned. Poppendieck (1998) explains that this type of charity-based service has gained high levels of popularity and support in the United States for exactly this reason – because it functions as a “moral safety valve” which allows volunteers to feel like they

are doing something, while not addressing or engaging with the root causes of a social issue; nor challenging the way power and resources are distributed.

Without a curriculum that helps students see the conditions they encounter in communities within a broader context of institutionalized injustice, there is a high risk that service learning experiences can reinforce the embedded biases, assumptions, misinformation, and ignorance that pervade U.S. society (Wu 2007). Eby (1998) notes that even when the student learning goals of service learning projects are reached, the effectiveness of service is often limited, as is as the ability of such service to address community needs at a structural level. The service students do is “often ameliorative and the explanations of social issues gained through service-learning are often individualistic” (Eby 1998, 1). Thus, participation in service learning may lead students to develop oversimplified understandings of the nature of social problems, and of strategies for social change (Eby 1998).

Marullo and Edwards (2000b) indicate that community service, including service learning, is typically not considered to be political or counted as an indicator of democratic participation. One reason is that such acts are not perceived by most service actors themselves to be part of a political change process, nor are they seen by many political activists as having political outcomes or even the potential to do so. However, Marullo and Edwards argue that two outcomes – politicization and institutional transformation – can be achieved by properly socializing service learning students to understand the political nature of the problems they seek to address. University-community collaborative activities must also be designed in such a way as to make them part of larger institutional change efforts. “As a result, it may therefore be the case that by

transforming the perceptions of the actors and engaging them in service strategies that are integrated into a larger institutional change process, then we have the potential of an enormous movement for social justice already in place” (Marullo and Edwards 2000b, 900).

The challenge then, is to better understand the politicization process for students and the various service-as-change strategies so that this potential can be realized. Over the past 20 years, young people say they care less and less about “politics,” while saying they care more about working with other people (Eliasoph 2011). Young people have become less politically active, yet have grown more eager to address problems locally and personally, by volunteering, in a compassionate, one-on-one relationship (Eliasoph 2011; Delli Carpini and Keeter 2001). In order to open up participants’ wider political imaginations, civic engagement projects must show participants the inner workings of the organizations with which they are involved and how they fit into larger-scale political decision-making.

Conclusions:

In theory, and at times in history, sustained engagement in civil society has been a doorway to political power. Unlike isolated one-on-one voluntary experiences, participation in the public sphere can generate political power for common citizens (Arendt 1958). This form of citizenship offers a cultural kind of power, the power to open up public spaces for citizens to question, challenge, and debate. It has the power to transform, to create new meanings and ask new questions, to inspire action (Eliasoph 2011). However, democratic citizenship and participation in voluntary service are no

longer closely linked in the minds of most Americans. In contrast, Skocpol (2004) notes that it is now often claimed that volunteer groups flourish apart from an active national government, disconnected from politics. Many volunteer opportunities simply try to fix predefined social problems, and avoid the possibility for participants to define political issues themselves. The potential power generated by the friction of public debate is absent from this style of volunteer involvement, as political conflict is removed from the experience, and projects are made comfortable and accessible to people who may not be willing to challenge institutions (Eliasoph 2011).

As our national philosophy has transformed into one of personal responsibility, fewer Americans see politics as a means of addressing social issues, particularly issues of poverty and inequality. Instead, these responsibilities increasingly fall to nonprofits and volunteers. This volunteer service, however, is often disconnected from any sense of political citizenship. It has long been argued that institutions of higher education must play a role of utmost importance in the health of a strong democracy, and these institutions are beginning to respond. As criticism of higher education for not fulfilling this role has grown, so have programs that seek to address this perceived shortcoming by introducing students to civic engagement in local communities. As resources increasingly flow towards programs of civic engagement, and to service learning in particular, it is important to examine the relationship between these programs and political participation. The potential for service learning rests on the ability of students to take their experience and build on it, to engage politically, and to question and think critically about institutions and relationships of power. There are many proponents that argue that this is occurring, but many critics say that service learning programs do not meet these goals.

While the impacts of service learning on politics continue to be debated, it is clear that the design and goals of such programs matter a great deal.

Chapter Three:

Research Methods

This inductive, multi-method qualitative study was designed to explore the meanings that long-term volunteers attach to their service, and in particular, if they consider these meanings political. These research methods offered a deep view of students' engagement in the community, and illuminated a number of the factors that inform and help shape the volunteers' perceptions of service. They also offered a deep understanding of the structure, design, and goals of the service projects. The goal of qualitative studies is to reveal hidden aspects of a research question within the life experiences of people (Downton and Wehr 1998). In this study, qualitative methods were used to probe deeply into the lives of students and staff to uncover factors that influence the ways in which these actors attach meaning to their long-term service work.

For the purpose of this research, "long-term" is defined as any volunteer who has worked with the same partner at least once a week, for at least one academic semester – although most volunteers in this study committed much more time than this to their service work, over a longer duration. It is important to be clear that this is not a study designed to measure the impacts of service on the eventual political activity of volunteers (which would be best measured by a longitudinal study with a pre-and post-service test). To explore how volunteers attach meaning to their service engagement, I conducted one-time, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with current student volunteers participating in long-term, time intensive service experiences. I presumed that through their engagement, students would develop perceptions and opinions of their service, as

well as beliefs about the social issues on which they worked. It is these constructed meaning that are at the heart of the analysis that follows in this dissertation.

This study compared volunteers who have participated in an organized service-learning model through the “Engaged Scholars” (pseudonym) program at a mid-sized public liberal arts college, with others who volunteer on their own, but for a similar number of hours, and with the same community partner organization. The interviews were designed to explore the service experience of the subjects, and the meanings the volunteers attach to their service. Interviews were also conducted with staff members of the Engaged Scholarship Center and community partner organizations in order to better understand the structure, design, and goals of the service projects, and to gain an additional vantage on students’ engagement. The primary research question was to explore the meaning that volunteers attach to their work, but this approach also illuminated a number of the factors that inform and help shape the volunteers’ perceptions of service and influence this attached meaning.

In order to witness volunteer service engagement as it occurred, participant observation was also conducted beyond the interviews of volunteers and staff. Participant observation requires the researcher to become directly involved in the work and participate in the daily life of research participants. In this study, that meant working alongside volunteers at their service placements. This method also requires the researcher to reflect on and critically engage with their own participation in the activity under study (Tedlock 2005). Volunteer work is an especially rich activity for studying the ways in which people make meaning of social issues, because this work offers the potential to

bring volunteers into contact with people different from themselves to interact around community issues (Nenga 2010).

Observations are useful in documenting interactions between volunteers and service recipients but in-depth interviews are also necessary to discuss the meaning attached to these interactions (Nenga 2011). As Lofland (1971) notes, these two methods of data collection often go hand in hand, as data from participant observations often informs the interview process. This was true in the course of this research. I conducted observations at each service site before starting the interviews. I took field notes as often as possible and the information gained from the observations was used to further develop and refine the interview questions. This approach reflects studies that rely mainly on interviewing for data collection and often also employ observational methods to pick up on non-verbal cues that lend meaning to the words of the respondents being interviewed (Angrosino 2005). Observational research provides the opportunity to provide a more rounded account of the service experience in a more “natural” setting (Angrosino 2005).

To gain access to these volunteer opportunities, I contacted the leader of each Engaged Scholar site-based team. After coordinating a date and time that the Engaged Scholars would be active at their community partner organization, I met up with the team and joined them in whatever service activity they were doing that day. At different times over the course of the research, this meant assisting elementary school students with their homework in the after-school program with the education team, playing kickball and other recreational activities with the health care team, sorting donations with the housing team, or serving lunch with the hunger team. I tried to be as helpful as possible at all times, without getting in the way of ongoing projects and efforts. I joined the Scholars for

participant observations at each site at least twice, although I visited some sites more often to get a complete picture of the opportunities available to volunteers. In addition to on-site participant observation, I joined the Engaged Scholars and staff twice for their intensive summer orientation and training, which took place over the course of four days before the fall semester began. I also attended a number of weekly meetings where all Scholars came together.

While no specific data was collected during the participant observation stage, this process was very influential in the overall research design. The observations improved my overall understanding of the program, and informed the formation and refining of interview questions. My participation in activities at service sites also aided greatly in forming a sense of rapport with the Engaged Scholars, staff, and other volunteers. In order to gain understanding through interviews, it is important for the researcher to attempt to see the situation from the respondent's viewpoint, and rapport is paramount to this process (Fontana and Frey 2005). This rapport was also extremely helpful in the recruitment of volunteers for interviews, as many participants already knew me when I contacted them for a potential interview, and they were aware of my research. During interviews, students and staff regularly noted that I was already familiar with their work due to the participant observation, which allowed them to go into greater depth with their responses.

Three separate groups were included in the research sample for interviews: student volunteers who were Engaged Scholars at the time and conducting service at four selected service sites/community partners; the "Vols", a comparison group of student volunteers engaged in service at the same selected community partners sites, but not as

part of the Engaged Scholars Program; and staff members from these community partner organizations and from the Engaged Scholars program itself. The diverse makeup of these volunteers, along with the variety of issues and community partners chosen, allowed me to explore each of my research questions. By interviewing volunteers and staff from each of these four sites, I was able to better understand the service experience, as well as the meanings of service constructed by the main actors in the service experience, paying particular attention to the potential connections between service and political meaning or social change strategies. A model of the interview research design is included as Appendix A. Students engaged in long-term service projects were chosen for this sample because it has been shown that regardless of the site, youth volunteers benefit from lengthier volunteer commitments that expose them to the structural causes of social problems (Nenga 2011).

The Engaged Scholars are a diverse group of students at a mid-sized public, liberal arts college in the Northeastern region of the United States (referred to as Northeast College or NC hereafter), who work as part of a team of students, staff, and community members to improve the quality of life in their surrounding area. This Engaged Scholars program is one of nearly 25 similar programs at colleges and universities nationwide that work with an Engaged Scholarship Foundation, supporting 1,500 students to be actively involved in social justice issues. These four-year programs are intended to provide students with opportunities to enhance their own skills while promoting positive change and social justice. In return, Scholars receive an annual scholarship, which can cover either 50 to 100 percent of their tuition bill. In this

particular Scholars program, the amount of scholarship money given to each Scholar is need-based.

Scholars are expected to fulfill the following requirements: attend an intense orientation, training and community planning session prior to service; conduct 300 hours of meaningful service, meetings, or workshops a year (7-10 hours per week); attend weekly meetings and occasional forums or conferences; go on class-based service trips; and remain in good academic standing. This particular Engaged Scholars program was chosen because it has been recognized as a “gold standard” service learning program (by both the larger Engaged Scholarship Foundation and local community partners) and is seen by peers to be at the forefront of this work. At the beginning of their involvement in the program, Scholars choose to join one of 12 issue-based service teams, made up of approximately 5-8 students. The Scholars program is designed to bring together the students’ service and academic experiences in significant ways. As students continue in the program, they are expected to pursue their interests and increase their levels of participation, commitment, and leadership—both at their sites and on campus.

This study also included a comparison group of student volunteers, which allowed me to examine the difference in the service experience between these “Vols”, and of those involved with a formal service-learning program (in this case, the Engaged Scholars program). In order to be eligible for inclusion, the comparison volunteers (Vols) students must have volunteered with the same community partners, for a similar number of hours, and on similar projects as the Engaged Scholars to ensure a fair comparison. The Vols were comprised of students from the same college as well as from surrounding colleges and universities in the area. I conducted a total of 66 interviews with these three

groups. Interviews ranged from just under 30 minutes to almost two hours, although the average interview was roughly an hour. Among student volunteers, interview participants were evenly distributed through each of the four class years (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior). Those identifying as female comprised 37 of the interviewees, with 29 identifying as male. The Engaged Scholars program recruits and chooses an intentionally diverse group of Scholars by race and class, and this diversity is reflected in the sample as well. A table with information on each interviewee's role and placement is included as Appendix B.

There is a wide variety of volunteer activities available to students. This study focused on students who volunteer with one of four community partners, which host four issue-based teams (housing, hunger, education, and health care/developmental disabilities). These organizations included: Homes for All (HFA), which partnered with the housing team; the Mid-Atlantic Soup Kitchen (MASK) - hunger; The Learning Coalition (TLC) - education; and Community House (CH) – health care/developmental disabilities. These host partners were selected due to their deep relationship with the Scholars program, as well as the diversity and high number of volunteers (both Scholars and Vols) at each site. The four different issues on which these organizations work also allows me to analyze the relative importance of the issue itself in the meaning-making process. No research was conducted with the clients or communities served by these programs, only the volunteers and staff.

Purposive sampling was used to achieve a sample that was reflective of the Engaged Scholars program at Northeast College in gender, race, and class year. The intent of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the service experience and the

meaning attached to this experience by the volunteers and the community partners with whom they serve. This sample is not intended to be representative of any other larger populations. After the four site-based teams were identified, staff members of the Engaged Scholars program provided me with the contact information for the Scholars, and attempts were made to contact each team member for an interview. As mentioned previously, many of these Scholars were already familiar with me and my research. A small number of Engaged Scholars took a particular interest in my research, and were key to introducing me to fellow Scholars, while encouraging them to participate in an interview as well. The Engaged Scholar staff also provided me with contact information for community partner organizations, and I was introduced to several community partner staff during Engage Scholar events, and through my participant observation with Scholars. Vols were identified via snowball or chain sampling. After each interview with Scholars or staff members, I asked if the interviewee knew of any other Vols who met sampling criteria, and who might be interested in speaking with me.

This sampling method allowed me to “identif(y) cases of interest from people who know people who know what cases are information rich” (Miles and Huberman 1994, 28). I sent an email to each of these Scholars, staff, and non-Scholar volunteers to ask them to email me back, call, or text message me if they were interested in setting up an interview. I scheduled an interview with each of the potential subjects or participants that expressed interest, at a time that was convenient for them, and in a location that provided adequate privacy. Interviews were conducted within each sampling group until all interested actors were interviewed, or the “saturation point” was reached, when the information gathered from interviews began to be repeated, and no new relevant

information was gained (Glaser and Strauss 1999). This method allowed for a sizable sample from each group, although the most important for the purpose of this research was the Engaged Scholars, so this group was larger than the others (26 Scholars, 20 non-Scholar volunteers, and 20 staff members).

This design allowed me to examine how each of these actors interpret the service experience, and how this interpretation impacts the ways in which social issues are understood, as well as how actors think about potential continued action around these issues. By including community partners in the sample, it also allowed me to explore how staff members of nonprofit organizations feel about their role in the provision of services, and the use of volunteers to meet social needs. The voice of community partners is also particularly important in this study, as volunteers who remain at one organization for a long period of time have a greater chance to absorb the organization's ideology. These ideologies have a profound impact on volunteers' identities and meaning making (Allahyari 2000). For example, youth who volunteered at organizations that explicitly discuss power, privilege, and oppression in order to give their volunteers a framework for understanding their work gained a much greater ability to engage in sustained, cross-class interactions and helped the volunteers learn about the structural causes of inequality (Nenga 2011).

During the data analysis stage, two interpretive focus groups – one with Engaged Scholarship Center staff, and one with a group of Engaged Scholars – were also conducted, in order to ensure accuracy of the emerging themes. Interpretive focus groups are a form of secondary analysis which involves a more participatory method of analysis of the meaning of qualitative data (Dodson 1998). These differ from conventional focus

groups in that participants analyze existing qualitative data to extend the analysis and co-create new primary data (Dodson 1998; Dodson and Schmalzbauer 2005; Redman-MacLaren et al 2014). Conducting focus groups after individual interviews allows the researcher to explore issues in further depth and detail that came up during the analysis of the interviews (Morgan 1997). Focus groups also offer the advantage of observing group interaction on a topic, and can be particularly useful for topics that are typically not thought out in detail in prior (Morgan 1997). The focus groups conducted for this research focused on two topics in particular which will be discussed in further depth below: how they define “politics”, and collective identity among Scholars – both of which can draw particular importance from group interaction. Members of staff, and particularly Scholars, mentioned frequently in interviews that these were concepts about which they were not used to thinking in depth. Focus groups can be particularly useful because the complex dynamics of groups often reveal unarticulated norms or normative assumptions that may not have emerged in individual interviews. Collective testimonies that emerge from focus groups can also foreground political power and group identity (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005). Thus, they are particularly important in determining the meanings attached to service work, particularly in the formation of collective identity.

All 66 interviews, as well as the focus groups, were transcribed by the author as an ongoing process, while additional interviews were conducted. The transcription process allowed me to begin building a deep understanding of the data. During transcription, an evolving list of analytical codes was developed. This process allowed me to identify emerging themes, as well as define new leads and existing gaps in the data. According to grounded theory methods, each new interview, focus group, or field note

can inform earlier data, so codes developed during one interview transcription could provide insight into other data (Charmaz 2005). Data is thus given multiple readings and renderings, to ensure a complete understanding of the Scholar, volunteer, and staff experience in service.

All data was analyzed and coded with the use of the qualitative analysis software HyperResearch to turn raw data into ordered themes. According to Charmaz (2005), “(c)oding is the first step in taking an analytical step toward the data.” The initial codes that were compiled during transcription were active, immediate, and short. After transcription, the initial coding list was refined, narrowed down to relevant themes, and organized by major topics for further analysis. Coding thus allowed me to develop an “analytical scaffolding on which to build” (Charmaz 2005). Interview and focus group data was read line by line and tagged with the appropriate codes. The qualitative analysis software then allowed me to pull up any chunk of text with the selected code during the analysis and writing stages. The major themes which developed from the transcription and coding process were ordered into broader categories, eliminating repetitive or overly narrow groupings. These themes were organized around important concepts, which would become the chapters that follow. All quotes included in this dissertation are direct and word-for-word, with the exception of pseudonyms, which were used for all participants and programs. Any information that could be used to identify the participants or programs has been removed or changed to protect anonymity. Short sections of quotes were also removed and replaced with ellipses for the purposes of readability and brevity. In these cases, the removed words were unrelated to the overall importance of the quote, and their exclusion did not change the meaning.

The methods used in this research allowed me to gain a very full picture of the service experience for volunteers and staff, the meanings that these participants attach to their service, and a number of factors that influence the ways these participants think about the role of their work. Through in-depth participant observation, interviews, and interpretive focus groups, I was able to gather a large amount of quality data from these participants, with whom I had built a strong sense of rapport. The methods used for analysis, particularly transcription and coding, also gave me a very deep understanding of the collected data, enabling me to present a number of important themes in the following chapters.

Chapter Four:
***Comparing Engagement: Partnerships, Relationships, and the Meaning of
Volunteerism***

Our goal with student learning is to kind of come to that place, ... from where you might start as an 18 year old freshman just going out to your site, like we just had freshmen here yesterday for their orientation, and you know, they're maybe not thinking about what's the systemic causes of this, homelessness, or whatever, but along the way of four years, right, with all of that time spent, and they start to take courses, they start to have reflection, they have training, they might get to some of those questions, like 'is what I'm doing actually making a difference? Are we using the best models? You know, what do I want to do after I graduate?' And that's one of the most promising things about the program, is that our alumni are all involved civically. And that they all make choices of what kind of job or career they're going to have that has been influenced by their work with service (Donna – Vice-President, Engaged Scholar Foundation).

The Engaged Scholars Program was at the center of this dissertation research, which aims to explore the meanings long-term volunteers attach to their work. The Engaged Scholars are overseen by the Engaged Scholarship Center at Northeastern College (NC). The Center is active and visible on campus, but most of its work focuses on partnerships in nearby Capital City, a former industrial and manufacturing center with a population of roughly 85,000. Capital City, like many others in the United States, fell on hard times beginning in the 1970s as many jobs left the city, and has faced record levels of crime and poverty in recent years. The Engaged Scholarship Center works to increase awareness of civic opportunities for students, and incorporate these opportunities into the college community, while simultaneously providing volunteers and support to partners in Capital City. The Center also oversees the Engaged Learning Program, a mandatory service experience for all NC students, supported in large part by the Engaged

Scholars. This chapter will begin with an overview of the Engaged Scholars Program, including the program's design and structure. This overview will introduce a number of ideas that will be explored in further depth later in the chapter, including: the benefits and challenges of the program structure, the roles and responsibilities of volunteers and staff, and the relationships involved in their work (between Scholars and staff, as well as Scholars and community partners). This chapter will also discuss the different experiences of the Engaged Scholars as compared to the Vols, who volunteer with the same community partners, for similar amounts of time, but not as part of the Engaged Scholars Program. The comparison between these groups allowed me to explore the differences in the ways these students attached meaning to their work.

Program Design and Structure:

The Engaged Scholars Program – Structure, Roles, Responsibilities

The Engaged Scholars Program is designed as a “four-year student and community development program that provides its participants with opportunities to enhance their own skills while promoting positive change and social justice” (Engaged Scholar website). In return, engaged scholars receive an annual academic scholarship. The Engaged Scholarship Center (ESC) at Northeast College follows a model provided by the Engaged Scholarship Foundation. The Foundation provides best-practices resources to the Center at NC, as well as 22 other Engaged Scholar Programs at colleges and universities across the country. The Foundation also provided an initial endowment to assist in funding the creation of each of these programs. The ESC at NC has a particularly close relationship with the Foundation as well. This relationship is partly

based on close geographic proximity, but also close personal relationships: “I think one thing that is unique with us... is our relationship with the foundation. That’s a huge positive for us. We’re so close to them, that we have an advantage of having the brain-people here all the time. You know, we’re kind of one of the better programs in the country, and I think a small part of that is attributed to them being so close. You know, they say, we want to try this new model for service, and we’re the ones that try it, and we’re awesome, you know” (Jennifer – Education Coordinator at the ESC).

Wade, the Director of the Engaged Scholar Center at NC, explained that while they received an endowment from the Foundation, their program follows a “hybrid” model, with funding coming from the initial endowment, along with funds from the college and a lot of grants. “We were one of the last schools to receive an endowment. So it was a half-million dollars that the college matched, so we’re kind of like a hybrid school... So we have an endowment, but it’s a different type of endowment, and a different set of rules and levels of scrutiny. The other schools are a little bit higher level of scrutiny in terms of looking at the individual scholars or packages of students and things of that nature. So we’re endowed, to a degree.”

Most Scholars are accepted into the program as incoming first-year students through a multi-part application process involving essays and interviews. Some are identified by the admissions office and “flagged”, and asked to apply.

Back in high school, when I graduated I think I had completed more than 1400 hours of service and that’s how I even got, I guess picked out from the NC recruitment pile to even be a Scholar. NC sought me out, I remember it was like February of my senior year of high school, they were like, you have all these hours of community service on your transcript, on your resume or whatever. And they said you know why don’t you apply for this scholarship, the Engaged Scholar Scholarship. And I said ahh no, NC wasn’t really my top choice, I wanted to go to Boston, I wanted to go to Boston University but it’s expensive and my

parents said, scholarship, try it out. So I went for the interview in April and fortunately I got it and it's been life-changing (laughs). So service is something I've always done, always (Sheila – Scholar with MASK).

Others know about the program ahead of time, and apply directly to the program. For

Sydney, the program was a large factor in choosing NC:

Um, well, when I was applying to colleges, the first thing was the service program, it was the first thing that I looked at, because I knew that it would probably be a great place for me to make a lot of connections, make a lot of friends, and I wanted the service program to be very, very good. I wanted to go in and get involved right away, and I wanted it to be set up well... When I found out about the Scholar program here, I applied immediately, and I was really discouraged by the college process, and it was either I would get into Scholars and go here, or I would take a year off and go do service or something for a year. It was very who knows. And then, I got into Scholar. I actually visited the Scholar Center before I applied, and then I got in, and I was ecstatic, and then I came here for that.

In addition, a small number of students join the program each year as “back door” Scholars after showing notable commitment volunteering with one of the community partner sites. “I actually didn’t know about it coming into college and I guess that’s happening a lot more often when people come into the program not as freshman. ...Through a club on campus, I was asked if I wanted to go the Mid-Atlantic Soup Kitchen one day and that became an every week thing. I got to know the Scholars who were on that site team and um, having gone there for a year, and come the next term they asked me if I wanted to join the program and I was really excited to do that so I did.” Some of these “back door” Scholars, like Bill, were impacted enough by their ELP day that they decided to get further involved, and end up applying to be Scholars:

My CEL Day was a fantastic experience and since I had already done a lot of work with Homes For All, and had met the Scholars who were currently on the Homes team I knew there were avenues for me to continue my growing interest at Homes as well as have access to a little bit more volunteering and become more involved in the organization. I did not even know that Scholars was a scholarship

program before reaching out to (ESC Director) Wade. I said, hey I just want to make a connection.

At the beginning of the Engaged Scholar experience, most Scholars choose to join one of several site-based service teams. For some, like Larissa (who has a sister with special learning needs), there is already a personal connection to an issue, so it is an easy decision: “When we went to the interview they gave me a list of the different sites and just kind of asked me which one you think you’d be interested in. And when I saw developmentally disabled I was like, that’s me, that’s my site, I want to be there all the time.” According to Wade, the goal for the ESC is to provide this kind of match between interest and site for each Scholar (or other volunteer, or faculty member): “When you look at those fifteen teams... it’s very deliberate that we’re slowly trying to over time structure this scaffolding, that at any time, a professor or a student can walk in, and find their passion, their issue area within a division, or a site”.

However, some Scholars are assigned (or re-assigned) to teams because they do not have a preference, or to reach the needed number of Scholars at each site:

I started volunteering with MASK my junior year. It was because I was low in hours and it was like oh, I don’t know what to do and I knew there was the Mid-Atlantic Soup Kitchen and one Scholar student she was just like, ‘you know I go to MASK on Mondays and Fridays’ ... and I was like this is perfect. I need to finish up my hours and I need to find somewhere to go in order to finish it up or whatever. So I went there and I really liked the feel. And then last year, last semester I guess they were making changes, like moving people to different sites or whatever and Wade, the director, decided to move me here. I’m not really sure why but you know, I was just moved here but I didn’t mind because I had already volunteered here so I knew what it was like (Anjuli – Scholar with MASK).

Each site-based team of Scholars focuses on an area such as hunger, homelessness/housing, developmental disabilities, the environment, juvenile justice, immigrant services, prisoner education, urban education, and youth development. Each

ESC staff member oversees and coordinates at least three of these teams, and these coordinators report to an Associate Director and Director of the program (these roles have shifted slightly since I finished collecting data). Almost all of these staff members have been with the program since its earliest days at NC, or are graduates of NC that were Scholars as undergraduates. Donna, the vice-president of the Engaged Scholarship Foundation, sees this as one of the program's strengths:

NC is an example of one of the schools in our network that is most savvy at program management, and building a staff team. Wade has done a really good job especially of keeping talented people that come through the program around as staff positions, and growing a team. ... And that makes a big difference, because if you want to grow your program, and also the complexity of what you want to do with the agencies, you have got to have staff who were student leaders, in management positions that understand that, right? ... To do it well, you've got to spend time training, advising, placing, seeing, going out to the sites. There are a lot of functions (Donna – Vice President of the Engaged Scholarship Foundation).

Both staff and Scholars agree that the staff structure of the Center makes a big difference in their work. "I think part of being a Scholar is like we have a whole staff, that all they do is support, not all they do, but part of what they do is support our work. So it gives you a good support base to go out, and it allows you to do a lot more things and allows you to do bigger projects. So, that's one thing that I think makes a big difference" (Focus Group – Scholars). This is clearly an intentional piece of the Center's structure:

We hold the staff accountable; you know we have our own way of scoring our wins and losses, so you're in a structured program where the staff are being held accountable for the Scholars having a meaningful experience. We survey them (the Scholars) at the end of the year; do you feel like you're making a difference? Do you feel like you were supported? Do you feel like you learned something? And so I think that's different than if you are volunteering on your own, there's not necessarily a staff person who is also being held accountable to remove some of the obstacles and invest in the journey, so you have a meaningful one, and that you learn something (Wade, Director of the ESC).

As Scholars continue through the program (typically for all four years), they are given multiple chances to pursue their interests and increase their levels of participation, commitment, and leadership – both at their sites and on campus. Donna describes this as another unique component of the Engaged Scholars:

I think it's really about community impact, and the model is quite different than a lot of programs because of the fact that it is developmental and multi-year. So, you think of typical college programs, you might be involved in a semester, like in a course where you do 20 hours of service or 30 hours, or maybe as a volunteer, trying to squeeze in a couple hours. But, by being able to be a Scholar, where you're doing, it's not the hours that matter it's the fact that you can go back to the same agency every year, you can take on higher levels of responsibility. It means, it really is an intensive opportunity, not only for the students learning, but for the community partners to have their capacity change, to improve their programs, to start new programs, etcetera.

In addition to a minimum of 300 hours of meaningful service per academic year (roughly 10-12 hours per week) while maintaining good academic standing, Scholars are required to attend a five-day orientation, training, and community planning session before the fall semester. Attendance at weekly meetings or trainings, occasional forums or conferences, and class-based service trips (both domestic and international) are also required of each Scholar. Beyond these requirements, Scholars organize critical discussion forums on campus that address local and international issues. The Scholars also play a key role in facilitating service opportunities for other NC students through more than 80 Engaged Learning Program projects each year.

Engaged Scholars and the Engaged Learning Program

The Engaged Scholarship Center works closely with thirteen non-profit community organizations in the Capital City area, referred to by Center staff as “deep

partners” (although this number can vary from year to year based on need, and the relationship between the organization and Center). The Engaged Scholars work most closely with these organizations, but the partners also host a number of other NC volunteers through the Engaged Learning Program (ELP), a designated eight hour service obligation that each NC student must complete as part of their academic requirements. One of the responsibilities of the Engaged Scholars is to organize and lead these ELP days, primarily for first year students completing a day of service. Scholars play a key role staffing these service opportunities as student leaders and liaisons between the college and the community partner. On a typical ELP day, Engaged Scholars are expected to gather first year students to learn about the magnitude of the community issue they will be working on, and hear why the college has a community engaged learning requirement. Students then work on a service project, reflect on what they learned from the experience, and learn about how they can stay involved (if they have an interest in doing so). The ELP program is discussed briefly below, along with some measures of the impact of the program, because (as will be discussed later in the chapter) Engaged Scholars have mixed feelings about their role in these days of service.

Some professors teaching first-year seminar courses (also required of all NC students) integrate ELP days into their classes so they may apply concepts learned in class to the greater community. The findings of an independent study conducted by a faculty member in the Sociology Department at NC, along with six students, revealed positive relationships between the Engaged Scholarship Center, community partners, and faculty whose first-year seminars integrate the ELP requirement. Both the community partners and the faculty who participated in interviews and focus groups (for the

aforementioned NC study) commended the Engaged Scholarship Center, and acknowledged the positive impact it has on the partner organizations and in the classrooms. Good practices that were highlighted included: the Center's extreme accommodation to partners, its structure and consistency, the "mission-driven" students it provides, and the "incomparable energy and enthusiasm" provided by the volunteers. Several of these positive practices were echoed in the research for this dissertation as well.

The mission of the Engaged Learning Program is to provide "sustained involvement with community organizations and social issues" through service learning events which bring students together to "learn, serve, and reflect on an issue together." In order to assess the effectiveness of ELP program goals, the Engaged Scholarship Center administered a survey to all first-year students who completed the mandatory eight hours of service in the 2011-2012 academic year. The survey was designed by the Engaged Scholarship Center to measure student levels of agreement with statements that reflect ELP goals and outcomes, and the Northeastern College Office of Institutional Research compiled the data. The survey was administered to students electronically via the college's student service software. The survey was administered to students prior to participating in their Engaged Learning Program (pre-ELP) and again, after completing their ELP requirement (post-ELP). A section of five identical questions included on the pre-ELP and post-ELP survey instruments were paired so that any changes in student responses from pre-ELP to post-ELP experience could be examined. Agreement levels were expected to increase as a result of students' ELP day experience. Overall, the

results of the survey analysis support the idea that student knowledge, awareness, and attitudes on social issues are impacted by participation in community service.

A total of 1,299 students completed surveys for their ELP days. A greater number of students completed the pre-ELP experience survey than students that completed the post-ELP experience survey; 1,296 pre-ELP completers versus 1,172 post-ELP completers. A total of 1,142 pre and post CEL survey completers were matched for a response rate of 88%. A student's responses to pre and post ELP surveys were linked to one another via a common variable to form a complete pre and post ELP experience database. The survey data analysis for the pre and post surveys included results for matched survey respondents only.

The pre-ELP survey collected demographic information from students including gender, major, and organizational involvement. Of the 1,142 matched survey respondents, 57% were females and 43% were males. The largest number of respondents reported they were enrolled in Biology as their major (7.0%). Other majors with a large number of respondents enrolled included Psychology 5%, Nursing 4%, Elementary Education 5%, Math 4%, and English 4%. Students were also asked about their membership in community organizations (clubs, fraternities, sororities, church, etc.). More respondents selected one (22.3%) or no organization (21.9%) involvement than other categories. Twenty-one percent indicated they belonged to two organizations and 19.5% were members of three organizations. Fifteen percent (15.3%) reported involvement in four or more organizations.

Results of the data analysis of pre- and post-ELP survey paired items indicate that the majority of students selected responses to the paired items that fell within the range of

agree and *strongly agree* ratings for each of the following statements: 1) “Individuals can make a difference and have a positive impact on their community”; 2) “I can make a difference and have a positive impact on my community”; 3) “People have the responsibility to help others”; and 4) “We could solve more problems in our community through more volunteer service”. While students did change their responses on items from pre-ELP to post-ELP surveys, the majority of students still selected a response within the *agree* to *strongly agree* levels for each of these questions. An increase in the percentage of agreement was found for four out of five statements from pre to post assessment. A fifth statement, “Most problems in our community are too severe to be solved by ordinary people” resulted in a mean response in the *disagree* range.

An analysis of the mean difference between the pre and post responses for each paired statements 1 through 5 using a Student’s *t* test yielded statistical significance for statements 1, 2 and 4 (Statement 1: $t = 5.017$, $p = .000$ two-tailed; Statement 2: $t = -1.635$, $p = .102$ two-tailed; Statement 5: $t = -2.899$, $p = .004$ two-tailed). The average amount of difference for individual responses between the pre and post-ELP paired items was less than one, with standard deviations between 1 and 2.4 agreement levels. The results to the mean response difference analysis suggest that there was a change in student responses on the post-ELP survey for Statements 1, 2 and 4 as a result of students’ CEL experience. Although these results are considered statistically significant, there were no controls for student differences or other factors outside of the ELP experience which may have affected student responses. Therefore, the results should be used with caution when making statements applicable to the NC student population. However, it seems clear that

most students who participated in ELP days agree that individual engagement in local communities has the potential for positive impact.

It also appears that students' responses on the post-ELP survey may have been impacted by their experiences with the Engaged Learning Program at NC. For the most part, percentages of agreement increased for the paired items from the pre to post-ELP assessments. A comparison of the mean differences between responses to the pre-ELP and post-ELP paired items yielded statistically significant results. While some students did change their responses from pre to post-ELP survey, the average amount of individual response difference was less than one, indicating that overall the majority of students maintained their pre-survey agreement level. Students that selected a high agreement level on the pre-ELP survey were most likely to select the same level for the post-ELP survey.

After participating in their Engaged Learning Program, 85% of students reported that they gained a new level of understanding for issues facing communities and believed they made a positive contribution to the community. Over 70% reported feeling more aware of the types of responses from non-profit and governmental agencies regarding community issues. Sixty-six percent better understood their role as citizens in a democratic society. Over 60% reported they felt more connected to other NC students and the NC community, and they planned to participate in future community service activities. Sixty-two percent of students participating in community service as part of their ELP course reported that their overall course experience was enhanced by the community service component of the course. Most students reported they were experiencing the issues associated with their ELP event for the first time.

Community-Based Partnerships

A key factor in the success of a service learning project is the quality of the relationship between higher education institutions and community partners (Tryon, Hilgendorf and Scott 2009). Bringle and Hatcher (2002) compare service-learning partnerships between campus and community to romantic interpersonal relationships, which can be helpful in thinking about the interdependence of these partnerships, as well as highlighting the need for mutual understanding, commitment, and communication (as well as the need for ongoing maintenance and some occasional uneasiness). One of the most effective paths to high quality service learning partnerships is to cultivate long-term relationships (Tryon et al 2009). Important characteristics of effective partnerships include developing a mutually beneficial agenda, understanding the capacity and resources of all partners, participating in project planning, attending to the relationship, shared design and control of project directions, and continual assessment of the partnership processes and outcomes (Holland 2005). Other highly valued characteristics of effective partnerships are communication among partners; understanding partner perspectives; personal relationships; co-planning, training, and orientation; and accountability and leadership (Holland and Sandy 2006).

Clayton et al (2010) explain that relationships are a central, defining dimension of community-campus engagement, yet the terms “relationship” and “partnership” are not interchangeable. Relationships refer to the interactions between persons, and partnerships refer to a particular subset of relationships characterized by closeness, equity, and integrity. Relationships can be casual or formal; short-term or long-term; or simple or

complex in nature, and may be characterized by any of a wide range of interactions with differing characteristics, capacities, goals, and outcomes (Clayton et al 2010). Clayton and her colleagues go on to describe three common types of service learning relationships: exploitative, transactional, and transformational. Those that are exploitative do not meet the minimum standard of being mutually beneficial for both campus and community partners. The distinctions between the other two types of relationships are explored in the table below (adapted from Clayton et al 2010).

Transactional	Transformational
Short-term; definite	Long-term; indefinite
Project-based	Issue-based
Limited, planned commitments	Dynamic, open commitments
Work within systems	Create new systems
Maintain separate identities	Create group identity
Accept institutional goals	Critically examines goals
Each partner benefits	Each partner grows

Clayton et al (2010) found that most faculty described relationships with those in community organizations as transactional, with some but not all desiring that they become transformational. They note that because of time constraints and other responsibilities for both parties, a more involved transformational relationship may be neither possible nor desirable. Sometimes, transactional, mutually-beneficial levels of relationship are satisfying and perhaps appropriate. Clayton et al (2010) also note that there are strong institutional norms in the academy that often discourage students (and staff/faculty) from pursuing transformative relationships as a goal. Through these types of relationships, service learning practitioners hope that students will feel compelled to pursue further action on the issues they encounter in the service experience.

With these characteristics in mind, it is worth exploring the nature of the relationships between the Engaged Scholarship Center and the community partners with whom they work. During the Scholar orientation each year, the site-based teams of Scholars meet for a planning session with their community partner. Wade sees this type of planning as an important piece of developing their partnerships:

One of the key differences is when you're volunteering (as compared to the Scholar program), you're jumping into a set of activities that have been defined for you, but you were not involved in those conversations. And so our whole site-planning process in August, the staff does a lot of work over the summer, talking to community partners, it ends up being... a conversation of what the community partners need, what the students say their skills and interests are, then you're making those matches. So they're playing a more deliberate role in the planning, and the shaping, then are allowing (students) to get involved in something that they're particularly interested in learning about, or skill that they want to develop, or something that increases the odds that they're going to have something kind of successful, do something successful.

While reflecting on the differences between her work as a Scholar compared with the service she did as a high school student, Justine (a Junior working with Homes for All) also noted this type of early communication as an important first step to building a successful partnership that meets the community partners' needs:

I do believe that building relationships and going back to the same site and sustained involvement with a non-profit community partner is very important in volunteering. It's not about one day events and it's not all about fund raising. It's about... really sitting down with the community partner and asking them what they need. So in high school I felt like I did a lot of oh, we're going to do this for you and here we're going to donate these goods to you or we're going to...instead of sitting down and actually asking them, what do you need? Do you really need a canned food drive or do you need, like what do you actually need? Working with them...because that's what volunteering is, it's not kind of to make you feel good about yourself, it's to help them and to help others.

These themes of communication, long-term commitment, and meeting real need continue throughout the interviews when discussing successful college-community

relationships. Again, Wade discussed his overall view on deciding on community partners:

When I got here...I re-inherited a set of community partners. And it wasn't a team-based model, so the students were kind of, went a lot of different places. So we had concerns about that, wanted to change that for a couple of different reasons. So what we did initially is we pulled together the students and said, alright, if we're going to form a new partnership with somebody what should the criteria be? ... And you know, at the top of the list was, we should go where we're needed, we should go where the people need us the most. ... So fundamentally we try to go where we're needed. We try to develop partnerships with a broad range of partners, so we're addressing a broad range of community needs, and creating spaces for faculty and students to find their way.

A focus on meeting community needs seems to fit what Bell and Carlson (2009) call the "capacity enhancing motive" for community partners. A prime motivator for organizations to work with service learning students is the services and skills that these volunteers can provide which enhances the overall capability for the organization. In fact, each of the community partners said that their organization would not be able to function if not for volunteers, and particularly the Scholars. "Volunteers are integral to what we do. Our whole structure is around volunteers and volunteerism from the inside out" (Margaret – Volunteer Coordinator, Homes for All). Volunteers fill a number of crucial roles in each of the partner organizations - from interacting directly with clients, performing outreach, or specific projects to meet the organizations' goals.

It doesn't happen without, none of this happens without volunteers. Uh, we have twenty-three full and part-time staff. We have about thirty-five hundred volunteers that come here every year; about fifty or sixty a day. So if we don't have volunteers we don't open our doors. The volunteers are obviously tutors; the adult education program is all volunteer tutors except for the coordinator. The kitchen staff, the cooks and some, dishwashers, some people, but all our food is served by volunteers. Our pantries are operated largely by volunteers and, and so that's the people that come here. There's a huge number of volunteers that do things off-site that don't even come here. People do food drives, they raise money, they do brown-bag lunches so there's a ton of stuff that happens to support MASK (Kevin – Director, Mid-Atlantic Soup Kitchen).

Direct-service providing organizations in particular rely on volunteers to keep the ration of staff-to-clientele lower, and provide more personal attention (Bell and Carlson 2009). Each of the community partner organizations told me that the reliable, consistent presence of the Scholars allows them to operate with a much smaller paid staff than they would be able to otherwise, particularly as they are called to meet increasing needs on shrinking budgets.

After (the grant) money was gone, that also gave us the money for staffing. And when we lost that money (the director) was left to pay for staff out of his own pocket. So he cut back on a lot of stuff, but due to that, the Scholars really picked up. They, they like doubled the size like their volunteer teams they were sending over ... and it was just amazing. I think they went from a team of like six or seven to like seventeen...yeah like on any given day you'll see that there's like more than twelve Scholars. And on good days you're having twenty to twenty-five... So they are a huge, huge part of our staff. I mean this year we had two part-time, one full-time staff and he's full-time and the rest are volunteers. And we kind of, I guess to give the Scholars, I'd say more power within the program, to feel more like a little power within the classroom especially... But they're volunteers still. They're wonderful and they really...they're the ones who made lesson plans, implemented the different programs, they carried out, you know, whatever programs were coming out... Without them I don't know how we would have got through the year, it would have been crazy (Emily – Program Manager, TLC).

Several of the strongest partnerships between the ESC and community organizations are also partnerships that have the deepest histories of working together. This is particularly true of the four community partners included in this study. Both the Mid-Atlantic Soup Kitchen and Homes for All have been service learning partners for over 10 years, long before Wade took over as Director of the ESC, and despite significant staff turnover at each partner site (and two of those he mentioned above as “re-inheriting”). The other two partnerships, The Learning Coalition and Community House, developed out of personal relationships between staff members at ESC and staff members

of the community organizations. While discussing their reliance on volunteers due to severe budget cuts, Damon, the Vice President and co-founder of The Learning Coalition, described the history of their partnership with ESC:

There was such a need. Because at the time... the after-school programs were kind of falling by the wayside due to funding. And there was no outlet for the kids... we got so many kids, we had to figure out a way to one, cut hard costs, as far as paid staff, and you know, get some people to volunteer, where they can get something out of it, and a good friend of ours, whose son was in one of our athletic leagues, Wade, loved what we were doing, and it was a great opportunity. He was doing so many other tracks, with the soup kitchen, and this was just a great opportunity for a lot of the education majors to be involved with some of the inner city kids on an education level, and they're giving back, and they're earning their volunteer hours at the same time. That relationship kind of came together. And you know, Northeast College, you know (the other co-founder) is a NC alumni, so... there was the connection with the school, you know, this is what's going on with the Scholars, this is what they do, this is what we're trying to do, so it was, we did our little test run, just to see how it would work, but the relationship is just great now. A great fit.

Wade admitted that these personal relationships have been a key to building successful partnerships, using the example of the beginning of their work with Community House:

A lot of it is just...built upon pre-existing personal relationships, and knowledge of who has the capacity – capacity also being kind of their values, and their philosophy, and their work styles – to be good partners... I had lived in Capital City, and worked in Capital City... so I had a pretty good idea of which nonprofits were doing what, or had friends who had a good idea of what was doing what. And kind of just happened organically, as we started more and more work, and got more and more involved in different things, we developed relationships with folks...

As is the case with a number of Scholar alumni, Melissa now works directly for a community partner organization at Community House, as Director of Operations. She described another example of a personal relationship leading to the beginning of a successful partnership with the Scholar program from her unique perspective:

So we had a day planned, but it was an outdoor day, and it rained. Poured. And (Wade) goes, what are we going to do? And I said, well, my mom runs these

group homes for people with disabilities, um; do you want to do something with them? And he's like yes, make it happen! And that was the first day... (My mom) came to campus... and then everybody went bowling. And everybody had such a great day, and we were all already a little bit like, ooh, how is this day going to go? ... It's a new partner, with this whole new plan, and Wade knew he had to get good grades (on ELP student evaluations of the day). But it went really well, and everyone was giving A pluses, and saying they had such a great day. So, they decided to expand it to more ELP days. And then um, I think the next year, CH became a real site. And that's when people, like Scholars started coming. Or maybe it was even half-way through that year, because people asked to switch, like they wanted to come here on a regular basis. So that's how the partnership began.

Prior relationships – both institutional and personal – are key to forming these community-university partnerships. Community organizations are chosen based on the needs of both partners, and on the fit between these needs. However, partnerships are not based on a common orientation towards service. Thus, as will be discussed later in this chapter, there can at times be a mismatch between the Scholars and the community partners in terms of their goals and what they hope to accomplish together. While the Scholars programs aims to focus on “social justice/transformation”, community partners are often more focused on a “status quo/charity” model (Marullo and Edwards 2007b). Similarly, as will be further discussed in the next chapter, the Scholars program attempts to take a “civic values and critical citizenship” approach to service partnerships, and at times attempt to move towards a “social justice activism” model (Brill 2012). However, community partners often take more of a “skill-set practice and reflexivity” approach (Brill 2012).

Compatibility is key to successful partnerships. A good fit is mutually beneficial, with a match between the goals of the organization and that of the volunteers. This means that service learning projects cannot be just about the students volunteering. However, students do need to see a benefit to themselves, as well as to the organization. The

organization, the student, and the higher education institution must be clear about expectations and motivations for participating in a service learning project to ensure mutuality of fit (Hidayat, Pratsch and Stoecker 2009). Reciprocity is seen as a key principle of service learning, and differentiates service learning from more paternalistic, one-way approaches to volunteer service (Stanton, Giles Jr., and Cruz 1999). The benefits to students will be discussed further below, but the partner organizations in this study clearly saw this mutual benefit between organization and Scholar. “The volunteers in our program, it kind of helps each other, it works both ways. I think it gives them a hands-on opportunity to see what education is about, if that’s what they choose to do, and if this is maybe something they want to do after they get out of college. I mean, a lot of times, this is a great experience because it’s tough... So it’s a good learning experience for the volunteers too” (Damon – Vice President, The Learning Coalition). The Engaged Scholarship Foundation sees this discussion of mutual benefit as key to the ongoing work of the programs they work with as well:

We never think about student development without thinking about, how does that play into and advance our community partnerships? ... And so, it’s highly integrated that way. Nevertheless, at any one time, you have to sort of, it’s a little bit of a catch-22, you can’t have a high level student development without a high level partnership, and you can’t get that unless you have the students at that level. ... So, in terms of emphasis, I think you could argue that it’s sort of been a fair amount of student development, with the campus infrastructure supporting that, and the community partnerships sort of lacking. But then you work on the community partnerships, and then you have to go back over to the student development stuff and say okay, well we have to have a new set of skills, because we’re talking about high level stuff. We’re grappling with that right now, because we’ve gotten to the point where the schools have very strong models for structuring sustained direct service engagement... I think our sites, our agencies are very pleased, having both understanding the developmental model, their role in it, from the student development standpoint, but also the benefits in terms of, you know, very committed, pretty well trained, pretty experienced students working with them (Ian – President, Engaged Scholarship Foundation).

Commitment may be the most fundamental principle for successful community partnerships. Community organization staffs rely on partners to make a genuine commitment to the organization's work. The expectations for this type of commitment include being genuinely interested, being reliant, having effective communication skills, and feeling a sense of ownership for their work (Hidayat et al, 2009). In fact, the desire to build and sustain relationships with institutions of higher education can be its own motivation for organizations to engage with service learners. Beyond simply accessing volunteers as labor, organizations often anticipate that a sustained relationship with a college or university can lead to a variety of other connections and resources (Bell and Carlson 2009)

Based on the longstanding nature of the partnerships included in this study, it is unsurprising that the Scholar Program sees long-term commitment as one of the key strengths in their collaborations as well.

What is important to us as we structure, is that we deliberately enter into long-term strategic partnerships with specific non-profits. And so, it becomes an ongoing dialogue, there's a real sense of trust that's built up, and meeting with them three times during the year and starting off the year with that site-planning process is kind of institutionalized, where they understand that we're identifying their needs and interests ... and that we're in it for the long haul, and that the combination of the Scholars and the staff, in my opinion, have convinced them that we always deliver. At the end of the year, most of the work is going to be A+ work, because if someone doesn't get it right, you can have the ongoing dialogue with the staff person and with the Scholars, and we'll kind of get it right. And so that just over time has allowed us to get involved in deeper and deeper, and more meaningful work (Wade – Director, ESC).

Maintaining an ongoing relationship can be a challenge for these partnerships though. There is an inherent lack of compatibility between higher education institutions and the community in terms of schedules, deadlines, and priorities (Strand et al, 2003).

We deal with small pieces of a puzzle, so we have a class for a semester, and then they leave, and that class is not taught in the spring. And so it takes a lot of effort to pull together some pieces of the puzzle that are constant, like a steady presence, so you're having an ongoing dialogue with your community partner, and you're able to take the different pieces of that academic puzzle and put it together in a coherent whole, a coherent whole for the community, but also a coherent whole for a student. So the challenge is sustaining involvement, I think. It's not a problem with Scholar involvement, because they're on scholarship for four years. How do you sustain the involvement of the first year students after they have their ELP day in their Spring, or their class-based project in the Fall? And so that's a challenge (Wade – Director, ESC).

While no partnership fits neatly into entirely one category or another, the framework by Clayton et al (2010) mentioned earlier provides a useful framework for analyzing the Scholars' partnerships. The partnerships in this study were long-term/indefinite, issue-based, dynamic/open commitments, and create group identity (which will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Six). Each partner experiences growth, goals are developed collaboratively, and these goals are examined at least once a year. These are all characteristics of a transformational relationship. However, as will also be discussed in further depth in Chapter Five, these partnerships work almost exclusively within systems, and do not work to create new systems, which greatly limits the transformational potential.

Benefits of the Scholars Program Design – Comparing Engaged Scholars and Vols:

The mission, design, and overall structure of the Scholars program has been described at some length above, along with the broad nature of Engaged Scholarship Center's relationships with community partners. This section will detail some of the specific benefits of the Scholar program according to the Scholars themselves, along with staff of the ESC and several community partners. This discussion will also specifically discuss the difference between engaging in service as a Scholar as compared to

volunteering on one's own. Both Scholars and Vols were able to discuss successes and challenges in their work, but when asked specifically about the distinction of working with partners as a Scholar, these conversations unveiled a number of interesting insights. The research design of interviewing both Scholars and Vols was particularly useful in discovering these key differences, and the following discussion is framed in terms of this direct comparison. Scholars in particular were able to talk about how their experience is shaped by the Scholars Program, but since Vols work regularly alongside the Scholars at the same sites, they were also able to articulate key differences in their experience.

Structure, Organization, and Opportunities

There is a clear financial benefit in the form of a scholarship that cannot be ignored as a motivation for the Scholars. However, this does not fully explain why these students become involved and stay involved in their service work. Downton and Wehr (1998) explain that people participate in social movements based on multiple factors, including a mix of collective goods and personal incentives (including material rewards), but this does not explain sustained involvement. A number of commitment sustaining factors can be cultivated by movement organizations to draw new people into commitment and to reinforce their persistence and effectiveness. Important social and personal factors that help to sustain commitment include creating an activist identity; integrating their activist work into daily life; holding beliefs that sustain activism; feeling bonded to a group; cultivating opportunities for action; sharing a common vision with other activists; and managing responsibilities, criticism, and burnout (Downton and Wehr 1998). The Scholars sustain a high level of commitment to their work. The role of

collective identity will be explored in depth in Chapter Six, but the Scholars program creates opportunities for action and has created a shared identity. Scholars feel bonded to one another, and often share a common vision including a set of beliefs that sustain their service work. Scholars also discuss how they integrate their work into everyday life, and work to manage responsibilities, criticism, and burnout.

Engaging in service with an identified group of fellow Scholars was an important component to the Engaged Scholars Program in and of itself. “I wouldn’t be doing this stuff if I wasn’t a Scholar. Well, I would, but not as much, definitely not as much” (Trent – Scholar, The Learning Coalition). The Scholars program provides a structure to the Scholars’ work, which a number of Vols mentioned as something they noticed working alongside the Scholars. “I think it’s a lot easier to go through the Scholars Program because they have everything set up. It’s very organized. You know what you’re going to be doing, when you’re going to be home, it’s very structured. So I think that makes it a lot easier to volunteer rather going on your own and helping out” (Stella – Vol with Homes for All). The organized nature of the program also provides a sense of consistency to the Scholars’ service. “It’s consistency a lot, especially with kids. Scholars also provides that, it provides consistency” (Focus Group with Scholars).

Hector, a Scholar working with Community House, described this structure as a large part of what keeps him going with his service. It keeps him focused, and keeps him engaged:

I think they are very good with emailing us all the time (laughs), all the time, all the time, different things to think about while we’re doing our service, or don’t forget the Scholar meeting, and the meetings are really interesting too, because it’s just a lot of different things that we focus on, and I like the fact that there’s always a theme of the day, and yeah, I feel like ESC is always that little buzz in your ear, telling you, whispering little bits of information to think about while

you're doing your service. Yeah, so they just get you really excited, I guess they're the ones that get you passionate. I don't know, I feel like they're really important in motivating us, yeah.

The Scholar program also provides resources to the Scholars that may not be available otherwise, and assistance with the logistics of service work. Serena, a Vol who works with Homes for All noted, "I think if you have a program you might have more resources, like more people above you that can tell you who to contact or give you ideas on how to get things done or where things need to get done stuff like that. When you're on alone ... a lot of people just don't know a lot of things that would be more helpful, I guess. Like if you had a program." The resources provided by the ESC open up possibilities for both Scholars and Vols:

I think the ESC makes it accommodating, because if I was going on my own, how would I get there, you know, if I was going on my own, how would I even know about this program? I feel like Scholar makes, it's like a center for you to involve yourself... So, it's like, you go there and it, it has all these resources there available, so you can go to different places, and do service wherever you feel like. We tell our freshmen, well if you want to work with ESC, you can come to this team, we'll take you there. You can go to this team, if you don't like it, you just experience different things. I feel like, if the ESC wasn't there, there would be no avenue for that to take place (Rachael – Scholar with TLC).

The structure of the Scholars program allows students to step into a pre-existing and ongoing relationship with a community partner. When looking back at the differences with his previous work as a Vol, "back door" Scholar Bill noted "the access, the access to these opportunities. It's much easier to do this through structure and through organizations rather than on your own. Being on a team, paired with other individuals who are similar and who have similar interests and want to do the exact same thing you do helps tremendously...I think Scholars really structured my service. It allows you to have that impact, to put yourself in place to become impactful in an organization."

The structured nature of the Scholars program also provides a set pathway for students to engage in the community, and eases what could otherwise be a bumpy transition:

It gives it more meaning and more purpose. Scholars has this defined mission in what they're trying to achieve, so you're just not going there and thinking what am I supposed to be doing? I'm at a school where kids have had experiences that I've never had and probably will never have them so what do I do and ESC is very good about immersing people slowly into the culture and giving them an understanding of what goes on. ... So that's something that I think Scholars helps us with a lot. Having so many community partners you have such a holistic understanding of what Capital City is and what the culture is and what the environment is that these people are living in (Gina - Scholar with TLC).

Relationships Among Scholars, Staff, and Community

As noted above, strong relationships between higher education institutions and the community are key to successful service learning partnerships. The ESC is successful in creating and maintaining relationships with community organizations in a number of ways. However, another benefit to the structure of the Engaged Scholars Program is that it creates strong relationships between all parties involved in the program: between the Scholars program and community partners, but also between Scholars and ESC staff, and amongst the Scholars themselves.

Close, nurturing relationships between Scholars and the ESC staff allow students to feel truly supported in their work. "I'm close with the staff. They're so on top of everything, like really dedicated to not only meeting the needs of the community, but the students as well. Because they know that it's important that if we're meeting the needs of the community, we're out there doing our thing, who is going to be making sure that we're ok?" (Hector, Scholar with CH). Another Scholar noted that the support she receives from ESC staff emboldens her to take on more responsibility in her work:

We have this support system of staff that actually allows us to make our own changes and to organize our own teams and initiatives if we want to. It feels like we have a lot more freedom to serve in the way that we feel is necessary....If I have an idea for this crazy lesson plan or this crazy club I want to start in The Learning Coalition with fifth graders and then I can go to Jennifer and say this is what I want to do, this is my plan and have her to back me up and help me with whatever resources I might need (Samantha – Scholar with TLC).

ESC staff members see their relationships with Scholars as an important element in their work as well. Jennifer, the Coordinator for the Education Team at ESC explained, “They get an immediate mentor in one of us. And I think it’s really cool that a lot of us here are young, so it’s not like Wade, who went to college a while ago (laughs). I’m only three years out, and I went to this school too, and I was a Scholar when I was here, so I’m able to literally say, I was in your position three years ago. This is what I found to be really useful. So I think that’s a huge benefit.” Jennifer sees her relationship with the Scholars as part of a broader network of relationships in her work: “One thing that I really utilize, and why I love the position that I’m in, is that I don’t have to do it alone here. I have my teams to help me, the students, and then they have friends, and then we have professors, and we have other staff members that support, and we have community members that support us.”

ESC staff members try to be available to Scholars, and remain supportive of their work, but challenging the Scholars is also part of their mentoring role.

I tell them, when people come to me and complain I’m like – we don’t want you guys to be okay with the status quo. We want you to make a big stink about it, even if it’s with us, ourselves, our staff members and they come here and say like – oh I don’t like the way things are going with this person and this team-. Good, I’m glad, what are you going to do about it? We want you to be able to do that because we want you to challenge yourselves to go more than what it is. We don’t want you to get comfortable with the status quo (Marina – Associate Director, ESC).

With a yearly commitment of 300 hours, plus weekly meetings, trips, and other responsibilities, the Scholars spend quite a lot of time together. It is unsurprising then, that the Scholars develop very close relationships amongst themselves. As Donna, the Vice President of the Engaged Scholarship Foundation points out, this is an intentional piece of the Scholar model as well. “That’s another reason that Scholars is distinctive, because the students kind of travel as a class group through the program. So there is a kind of bond that exists.” In Jennifer’s experience, this bonding resulted in a lot of close friendships with her fellow Scholars:

And then, there are friendships. When we get asked in conferences, and we present to the college all the time, and other people, what is the best thing about the program? My closest friends are Scholars, or Scholar alum, and it’s because you’re meeting people that have a passion for the same thing that you do, and understand why you work like 80 hour weeks, and not get paid anything (laughs). So finding those people, and that’s the only way you can get through this kind of job for a long period of time, is having an awesome staff like we do, that you can vent to, that supports you, that will help you problem solve, that will drop everything and serve at the soup kitchen if we’re short volunteers, you know, meeting those people is really cool.

The relationships go beyond pure friendships though. The Scholar program provides a structured space for these students to come together as a group. “Definitely being part of Scholars, I feel like things are a lot more organized. We get to talk about our experiences that we’ve had, and just being around a bunch of people that are doing the same thing you like to do is also great because everybody has new ideas, new things they would like to try, new organizations they like to go to... being a Scholar is great. I wouldn’t be as influenced to do this stuff if I wasn’t with Scholars” (Trent – Scholar with TLC).

Scholars remarked repeatedly that working with other students who are just as passionate about service as themselves helped keep them motivated.

You know, it's one thing to feel passionate about something and then just work towards it alone but when you're backed by eighty other students, and they might not be working on the same project as you and they're not all on the Homes for All Team but they all do care about their service. So having that and then the staff as well, they all care about the service we're doing, they all care about me... They have an investment in me and what I'm, you know, involved with and working towards. So I think having that, having that foundation of people supporting my efforts, supporting my ideas, supporting my passions really helps when you're going out and actually going... when you're driving to Capital City, into the city to do the work, having that foundation certainly helps (Justine – Scholar, Homes for All).

Working alongside fellow Scholars also offers a sense of support that these students would not receive if they volunteered outside of the program.

I definitely like that there's a whole group of people who are doing the same type of thing that I'm doing. If I was just going to CH on my own I wouldn't have the same support. Last year I had (two other Scholars), they're older and more experienced, they've been there doing that and they had so many new ideas that I just couldn't do by myself. You need a team of people to help you and I really like having that support system and people to bounce ideas off of and go with you. You make awesome memories and it's just great. I love the Scholars (Larissa – Scholar, Community House).

Both Scholars and ESC staff also recognize that a benefit of the Engaged Scholars Program is working alongside other Scholars who are different from them. Marie, another Scholar at Community House, says that she enjoys that other Scholars “come at it from a different angle. Which is kind of good in a way too, you get more than one perspective.”

Josh, a Vol at MASK, has noticed the difference between his experience, and the Scholars with whom he regularly works:

When you're in a group you get a lot of different perspectives and different ideas and like maybe you didn't think about something and it sparks something in you and made you think about it in a different way. Of course somebody has a different background than you, you could come from the middle-class or lower-class and then you're like, oh man I didn't think about it that way but this person has lived it so I can take some cues and advice from them and it may just change your whole way of thinking.

Scholars also see the inter-group relationships among themselves as just one piece of a larger network of relationships with which the programs connects them:

I think the fact that we have such an organized process of having these community partners who work with our staff members, who work with us and having this range of students who can teach you about their experiences is just much better than going out by myself. Because going in as a freshman I had seniors, juniors, sophomores who could tell me, who could prepare me for what I was going into: this might be a cultural shock and this is how the students act and this is how you have to behave to get their respect. If I went in by myself I don't know whether I would have been prepared and I think I might of ended up being discouraged (Samantha – Scholar with TLC).

This network of relationships clearly extends to the community. Every Scholar in the research sample indicated that they feel a close relationship with their community partner organization, and most stated that they feel much closer to the community of Capital City in general, despite the city having a negative reputation among many NC students.

I feel like I'm more connected to the city than anyone else would be on this campus, because of Scholars, because we work directly with these people, and we understand that they're just people... I definitely think it makes me more connected, and it just angers me when people don't see that, and I think Capital City is a really cool place. I think it's like become a lot better than it was in the past, and there are a lot of shops and stuff there that are very original, because it's an urban area, and I think there's a lot of beauty in that (Penelope – Scholar with MASK).

The relationships between Scholars and the community grow deeper over time, as their roles in the organizations change, and the Scholars take on more responsibility.

Jesse was a Vol at TLC before becoming a Scholar in his second year at NC. He has seen a clear difference in his relationship with the children in the program, "I feel like I'm doing more for sure because I'm seeing this class three days a week. I'm an actual teacher. Cause last year I went once a week and they didn't know me that well, now they

run up to me, Mr. Jesse, Mr. Jesse.” Again, according to Jennifer, this is an intentional component of the program’s model, which benefits both Scholars and staff:

The great thing about staying at the same site, or even in my case, in the district, I now know, even just after my four years in school, I knew the superintendent before he changed, and I now know the current superintendent. I know principles, I know teachers, I was just in the high school, and one of the high school volunteers that was there, I saw her from the back, and she was one of the kids that was in my 6th grade project, and now she’s a senior in high school and going to these (events). The relationship that you can build by staying in that same location really opens up your eyes to the bigger problems, and maybe like the hidden problems... There are just things that you really do get to dig deeper into and learn more about, kind of being in the same place, and that now extends to my third year out and working. I get to see those same people, and make those same relationships, to the point where I think I know at least one person in every school in the city, and hundreds of kids.

The community partners notice a difference with the Scholars as well. The strength of these relationships seems to come about in part due to the amount of time the Scholars spend on site. When describing the relationships formed between Scholars and MASK, Ray, the Volunteer Services Manager, said “it’s more of a long-standing one, because we have some that have been here for three years, you know, they start their freshman years and they do the Scholars for all four years, so they have more of a long-standing relationship, and they do a lot of tutoring also. So some of the patrons actually look for them, you know, they’re used to them being here... they get more familiar with them.” However, these relationships do not become so strong simply due to the accumulation of hours. Because many of these relationships have been maintained over a number of years, there is real depth to them:

What I like about the Scholars especially the NC Scholars, I don’t mean to disparage any of the other ones, it’s that they really put a lot into it, the support from the school, um with Wade and everybody. They really, really put a lot into it. There’s a professor, we come and speak to his class every semester. We sit down with him...he comes here and volunteers himself, brings his kids here. So I

mean it's beyond just talking the talk so to speak, they actually walk the walk as they say. They're really, really into it so um...and Scholars don't just do the soup kitchen, they have a whole array of community involvement. So I think it's an example they set, the leadership, in terms of what they put into it and a lot of students stay there and work with the Scholars or do other things afterwards. Yeah, they're great (Kevin – Director, MASK).

A diverse network of relationships is seen as another strength in the Scholars program. The program is known throughout Capital City, and while each Scholar spends the majority of their service time with one primary partner, most also spend some time volunteering, or otherwise interacting, with other partner organizations.

Well, it definitely gets me involved in things that I wouldn't have been otherwise. Especially like, because I don't only do work on my sites, I'm kind of all over the place. Especially with Homes for All, because some days we'll be on a build day, and some days we won't, so we'll have 17 ELP students we need to do something with, so we're across Capital City, meeting some person I've never known before, working on this project, in this church that I didn't even know existed (laughs). So I think it's definitely, Scholars itself, has definitely like exposed me to so many different things. I can't even imagine what my college experience would be without it. Because it's been such a huge part of it, and I would never know, because I've been in it since day 1. Before I even started welcome week, and met my freshmen friends, like my real good group of friends, I had my Scholar friends first (Brian – Scholar with Homes for All).

According to Donna, the Engaged Scholarship Foundation recently conducted a study of Scholar alumni (at all schools with Scholar programs, not just NC). The relationships formed while engaged as a Scholar - with other Scholars, with staff, and with the community - made a big difference with these alumni.

One our key findings in our student impact survey is that the biggest factor, the two biggest factors of the program's effectiveness are: one – dialogue across difference, so the notion that students are having the chance to be engaged in dialogue with people who are different than them, or with ideas that are different from them. That could be their peers, their faculty, their community partners, the people that they serve. That actually makes a difference in how strong the program is. ... So like, if you remove the dialogue across difference, the only other thing that is really, really strong is mentorship. So that could be, again, a lot of Scholar programs have those teams, where there's teams at different levels,

some of them have things called Scholar families, where they intentionally group upper class to freshmen in small groups, and they do reflection together, some of them, they have faculty advisors, they have administrator advisors. About a third of our coordinators are alumni. So, even the person running the program has often been a Scholar, and they relate to them.

This vantage-point from alumni can be particularly useful, because nonprofit organizations often take a long-term perspective in their motivations to participate in service learning partnerships. In the eyes of many nonprofits, the hands-on experience gained by service learners provides graduates with a “community competency”, and deepens their interest in nonprofit work in the future (Bell and Carlson 2009).

Commitment and Consistency

As noted above, a key differentiation between Scholars and other volunteers, in the eyes of their community partners, is the amount of time the Scholars spend working with them. Again though, this is not just a matter of accumulating hours. Community partners see a sense of commitment that seems to be unique to the Scholars. “With the Scholars ...there’s more heart, there’s more passion for it, there’s more commitment, there’s more like ownership too....We also have the Vols, and it’s not the same commitment as the Scholars” (Emily – Program Manager, TLC). Community partners recognize that this sense of commitment most likely grows as part of the structure of the program, and the requirement that the Scholars dedicate so many hours to working at their sites.

I think it’s a cause and correlation like if you’re there like at least twice a week for like both semesters, for a semester or both, for the year then there’s definitely a stronger relationship between the Scholar and the students at the after-school program. Um, I think it just makes sense. They get to know their names, they might even know the whole back story, how many siblings they have, who their Mom is when they come to pick them up. You know, a lot of the volunteers, like the temporary ones, they don’t know who the parents...when the kid’s parents

come in asking for so and so they're like I don't know who that is. When you have a Scholar it's like oh that's so and so's Mom over here. I can have Scholar do simple things like taking attendance or going to scold someone for me or go get something for me, they know, they know the program much more than someone who's only there a couple of times a semester versus someone who's there every week a semester (Emily – Program Manager, TLC).

As Taysha, a manager of an education program at Homes for All notes below, a sense of commitment is not necessarily something inherent to every Scholar. It grows over time with the community partner:

The time commitment really helps the Scholars take ownership. You know they're going to be here day to day, week to week, they're forging relationships with the children, they see the flow of the center, they understand my expectation, so I think that they end up, even if they don't start out that way, over time, they end up being a part of the program, and working towards the common goal of the program, because it's familiar to them, and they are getting the hang of it. Everybody doesn't walk in and are just outgoing, and know how to help, most of them, even the Scholar students, they take a while and they're just kind of observing and don't really know how to help just yet.

Todd is a manager for a new project at Homes for All; however he does not currently work with any Scholars. While other Homes for All projects count on the Scholars to be there throughout the week, he cannot say the same. "Our biggest challenge is finding repeat volunteers who come for extended periods of time. Ultimately, I would like to take a calendar and Monday through Friday and have volunteers pre-scheduled for those days that are people that come every week. For instance, Saturday I had 7 volunteers scheduled. Three showed ... I was basically here by myself, so it's very important." Knowing that they can rely on the Scholars allows community partners to accomplish more of their own work, and further the mission of the organization:

Talking about the difference in volunteers, the Scholars really help me to meet the need, the mission. Like Sydney for instance, she's the site leader, she really takes this seriously. She really takes on ownership, and really works at the site in a position of power. And I really appreciate that, because that allows me to attend to

everything else that I have to attend to, because I know I can depend on her to keep the flow of the day going. I can also depend on them for lesson planning, which is very, very important, especially since I'm also a kindergarten teacher. It helps, with moving the program forward, and ensuring that the children are engaged and doing meaningful activities. I can give them my vision or something that I would like them to do, and they will find and take initiative to find activities and things to address that vision (Taysha – Manager, Homes for All).

Scholars realize that their community partner sites depend on them, and they take this responsibility seriously. They know that if they fail to make it to their site, their partner or program cannot function successfully. However, as Sydney, a Scholar with Homes for All notes, sometimes this means going to her site even when she's not thrilled about the work.

Yeah. I never not show up to (an after-school program at) HFA, because I know that if I didn't show up, no one would be there to greet the kids. No one would be there to separate the older kids and younger kids... With the earlier service stuff, I would kind of just not show up, in high school, I would just, if I was busy, I would just not show up, if I had a lot of homework, I would just not show up, and this, that's just not cutting it, I'm also held accountable for all of my behavior, so that can't really happen. And this is different because I'm not choosing, a lot of times I have to do stuff I don't want to do, just like annoying office work on the weekends, and I'm just like, oh my god, I don't want to do this.

Part of this commitment comes from the realization that Scholars are not simply volunteering. After all, as part of their enrollment in the program, they receive a significant scholarship:

I never worked with this amount of people, this type of huge group that comes together for one site, on a regular basis. So something that I think is really amazing about Scholars is that you get this large group that, like TLC is the largest group, we have like 15 Scholars that come on a regular basis, and there's a very strong commitment, a continued commitment, and what's also very different is that we're all going to Capital City. It's like, we're going to one city, and we're taking it over, and we're trying to help these children ... I think Scholars prides themselves, ourselves, on being very specialized, that we will, we have these different focus points, and we're getting a team, we're giving scholarship money, so that these students will dedicate their entire college career on making a difference in Capital City. I guess that's another huge point, is that we get scholarship money, and one of the things that, a lot of times, people say, is it

really volunteer work? Because you are getting paid. I mean, I'm getting a \$10,000 scholarship... But, I'm dedicating my entire life to this organization, and it's like, I think that's like the biggest misconception about the Scholar program, is like why are you guys getting money for volunteer work? (Jessica – Scholar with TLC).

Beyond completing their hours, and knowing that the partners rely on them, Scholars also feel a deeper sense of commitment to their work because they care deeply about the issues upon which they are working, and feel a strong connection to their work, and to each other:

We're immersed in it. It's not just something we do two or three times a week and that's it. Wade is constantly sending us emails about issues, about issues we should care about. The Scholar meetings are every week, like this year we started talking about gender issues, race issues, class issues...it's become more of a dialogue and I feel like it's really a sense of community too. I think all the Scholars and what we do it's just feels like it's such a good support there too. It's, it's really service, it's not just like going three times a week, that's it and you forget about it. It's always with you (Fiona – Scholar with TLC).

Depth, Responsibility, and Impact

The high level of commitment and sense of ownership over their work with community partners also gives increasing depth to the Scholars' service. This depth often means taking on different roles within their partner organizations, and provides opportunities that would not be available to them outside of the Scholar program.

Antonia, a Scholar with TLC said, "As a volunteer you're just like there; you don't see anything that's behind the scenes, you just kind of show up. So I think being in Scholar, it kind of shapes you to become that person that can manage a whole bunch of different things at once." In fact, the ability to take on increasing responsibility is a major reason that Antonia applied to be a Scholar, after a year of volunteering alongside the Scholars as a Vol. "I realized I was already volunteering two or three times a week so I was kind

of doing what Scholars already did ... but I wanted to be part of the planning because as a volunteer you kind of just get there and do whatever people tell you to ... I wanted to take that extra step and actually plan things and have activities ready for them.” Jessica told me that as a Scholar, she was able to start a new program within TLC:

One benefit is that I would never get this much intellectual freedom. Because we have a strong partnership, and because there is such a big connection, TLC tells us, you Scholars can do whatever they want... I get to do whatever I want there, if I was just a random student off the street wanting to help out, I wouldn’t be able to start an English as a Second Language program, I wouldn’t even have that opportunity to. Plus, I get to do this on a regular basis. So, the Scholar program provides you with this empowerment.

Similar to Jessica, several other Scholars mentioned that a big difference between their earlier service work and their work in the Scholars program is the ability to impact the programs on which they are working. Steve, a Scholar working with Homes for All said that the work with Scholars is “more focused, and ultimately it’s more beneficial to the people, the community members that we help. We’re able to mobilize such large numbers and powerful people. I feel that as much as an impact that you have just going, just showing up to do something... it’s even more rewarding to both parties, the helper, like us and the people that we assist to have such an organized focused group that is so bent on helping people.” Later in the interview, he continued “if you did it just by yourself it wouldn’t be as in-depth or involved because we really get deeply entrenched in the community partner’s lives and the community we serve.”

Prior to becoming a Scholar, Bill also worked with Homes for All through a campus club, and discussed the differences between the two experiences.

It’s different in the sense that when I was there through the club, I was organizing volunteers whereas here I’m able have more of an impact on the site. Before my impact was on campus and now my impact on campus is probably a little less but my impact at HFA is greater. I work more directly with the administration, the

development and volunteer coordinator, construction coordinator, everyone. I work with them and they know me. Scholars is a really good place for someone to realize what their impact can be somewhere. So I can make an impact at Homes for All if I focus, put the time in and really work with the people. It might be a four year process, it might be a two year process and of course the administration changes all the time, you learn the new ropes, things change but you still stay at the human level when you make an impact there and they realize you made an impact there, they know they can trust you to do whatever they need.

This was a common idea among the Scholars, a strong feeling that they can make a bigger impact together as a group, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six. However, for now it is worth pointing out that this was a clear difference between the Scholars and Vols. Many Scholars felt that because they worked with the partners for so many hours, developed such a deep relationship, and took on such significant responsibility in the organization, they could make a more significant impact with their work. This idea is clear to Jennifer, ESC Coordinator for the Education Team as well.

The model of being in the same place, for hopefully four years, you get to move up there. It's not a stagnant, you know, I'm literally serving food on the line in the soup kitchen for every year. It's, I'm starting there, then I'm learning about the pantry, now I'm helping you write a grant. And then I'm in charge of your volunteer coordination. So by the time you're graduating, you've now developed this resume, at a really unique organization, with people who we've developed relationships with too, who trust us and our organization to allow students to move up this rank, so when they're done, they have this resume that says they coordinated volunteers for Homes for All, and who else who is graduating can beat your resume? You can't. And then I think it also kind of helps people, this is that kind of loftier level, find careers that are more rewarding. ... So I think that that is a huge benefit, kind of opening their eyes to something that is a little more rewarding, and not just for them, but for their community.

Experience, Growth, and Other Benefits of Scholars Service

While service learning programs must meet community need, successful partnerships can also provide education for students in the form of communication skills, professional skills, and specialized practice skills as an integral piece of their work. If

students are interested in fitting service learning work into their own professional or personal development however, all parties must be clear about expectations and motivations (Hidayat et al 2009). In addition to each of the previously discussed benefits of engaging in service as part of the Scholars program (rather than volunteering on one's own), Scholars also gain valuable experience, growth, and a number of skills that will be transferable to their goals beyond their time at Northeast College.

Marie, a Scholar with Community House, discussed the interpersonal and leadership skills she has gained, "just working with some of the Scholars, like teaching them stuff, learning stuff from them. ... And, even just in the organization itself, I struggled at first with trying to find how to fit in as a leader, amongst this group of really strong leaders. I've never been in such a group, with such prominent personalities, and people. So, it was, it was really beneficial for me to learn how to fit into there, like where my place is."

In some partnerships where shared goals are an explicit part of the service learning relationship, these skills can developed when students take part in complex activities such as participating in the administrative functions of the community partners organizations (Bell and Carlson 2009). Bill gained so much experience while working as a Scholar with Homes for All that he described his role with the organization as "semi-staff". The Scholars model is based on the idea that as students gain more experience working with organizations, they take on more leadership positions. Thus, students on the education team gain experience working with principals and other administrators. Students interested in criminology gain experience working in prisons, teaching courses to inmates. "If you believe in the experiential model, what Scholars provides is a hell of a

lot of experience, way more than normal. And therefore, we have a much better chance of achieving some of those higher level activities, and therefore understandings” (Ian - President, Engaged Scholarship Foundation).

Some Scholars see a clear connection between their service and their personal, academic, and career goals. Even those with no clear connection between to their academic and professional goals gain valuable experience and skills though.

I think there’s a couple different paths for students to go, when you’re doing your service as a Scholar, to connect it to your career goals, or your academics – so like, I was in education, I was working in education, I was serving in education, and I wanted to work somewhere in education as a career once I got out – so for me it all became this really cohesive learning experience where I was going to class to learn about teaching strategies and adolescent development, I was doing the school’s direct experiential stuff, but then I was also doing my service, which was just one more addition to what I was learning in class, and maybe fighting what I was learning in class a little bit, which really made my whole education a really well-rounded experience. ... Now some people don’t, there’s no major in like soup kitchens (laughs). So, you know, we have some sociology majors who will fit, like that’s their kind of thing there. ... There’s another in between too, which is doing something completely new that you never knew anything about and learning about something brand new... So those people get to have their education in something that they’re really interested in maybe as a career, but now they have a supplement to that, which has nothing to do with it, it just means that they get to know something completely different and completely new, so they get two things. Those people sometimes will change their career path to try to meet the two in the middle (Jennifer – Coordinator, Engaged Scholarship Center).

Jennifer also believes that the experience and skills gained in the Scholars program leave Scholars as attractive candidates for jobs and graduate schools.

There are at least six people who have graduated that are working directly for a community partner that we work with... Scholars is a big help when you look at an application, and you’ve had all these really awesome experiences, to get into law schools, to get into Teach for America, we’ve had, I mean, most of the people that we are working with are working in non-profits, so being able to say, well, I volunteered at this list of non-profits before, and I know how they function, is really great experience.

Challenges, Limitations, and Frustrations with the Scholars Program:

Despite the many benefits of participation in the Scholars program, the strong relationships, and the many positive advantages of doing service as part of this structured model, there are also a number of challenges, limitations, and frustrations associated with the Scholars' work. As noted in the literature review, there is an expanding field of scholarship on the impact of service learning on students. As Mills (2012) notes however, there are not many studies on dissatisfaction among students participating in service learning partnerships, nor is there much work on dissatisfaction among community partners (Stoecker and Tryon 2009). A number of the frustrations and misunderstandings between service learning students and nonprofit agencies involve tensions or conflict in the emphasis and goals placed on the service experience. Students tend to emphasize the completion of hours, while agencies emphasize commitment. Students emphasize learning, while agencies emphasize efficiency. Students emphasize flexibility and idealism, while agencies emphasize dependability and realism (Mills 2012). Additionally, Rosing et al (2010) found that most student dissatisfaction in service learning involves criticism about their community partner, concerns about site choices, or criticisms related to time and scheduling.

Scholars, Vols, and staff of both the Engaged Scholarship Center and community partner sites were able to describe a number of tensions and challenges in their ongoing work together. These challenges include: logistics and organization; difficulties meeting requirements; relationships within the program and with community partners; and frustrations with roles and responsibilities. To Scholars and staff, these challenges can feel like they get in the way of working effectively. "There are some service sites that are

just...very disorganized at times, and I see people at those sites struggle. Because despite you going there with the best intentions and wanting to do stuff, and wanting to change lives, other things will prevent you, like other roadblocks that you won't be able to do that" (Sydney – Scholar with Homes for All).

Logistical and Organizational Challenges

Perhaps unsurprisingly for a program its size, and with as many moving pieces, logistics and organization are ongoing challenges for the Engaged Scholar Center and their partners.

To be honest with you, the Scholar program is extremely unorganized...It has almost shown me how difficult it is to really tackle an issue, because people are all over the place. People don't answer emails, like what if you're really passionate about this, and you're just blowing me off.... So my class, we'll like go out to dinner or whatever, and we always talk, like sometimes we'll be ranting, like yelling, because like "oh my god, we all came in together thinking that we're going to change things", and people just drown in it.... there's communication issues again, administrative stuff, but people that go to TLC, and like, they try to get Charles (the Director) to do something, and he won't listen, and then Wade won't talk to Charles, ... and then meanwhile, Charles doesn't even know half the people who volunteers' names who go there (Brian – Scholar with HFA).

Both Scholars and staff must remain flexible because plans change very frequently.

Issues come up, and schedules change, but when these roadblocks pop up, it can cause confusion. "The challenges I face are orchestrating and getting everybody on the same page, that's the hardest thing to do sometimes. Because now you're delegating to other people and if this person can't make it at this time now you have to change up your game plan. It's logistics; I feel that's the toughest thing for me" (Justin – Scholar with TLC).

There is a lot to keep track of in the Scholars program. With so many Scholars coming and going to various partners not to mention hours to count, there is a lot of paperwork; which can seem tedious to Scholars.

You got to go through a little bit of a process, there's paperwork, meeting this person or that person, and sometimes you just want to go and do your service work and be out. You don't want to sign no papers, you don't want to show that you were there. That's the one thing I often have problems with because I want to just go and do service and not sign a book. I just wanted to be anonymous, I just want to do my service and help. But sometimes you have to go through that process when you're going through organizations like Scholars (Trent – Scholar with TLC).

Transportation to and from the service sites causes its own set of logistical challenges. NC is a residential campus, and most students (particularly first and second year students) do not have access to their own cars. Thus, the Scholars program relies on a set of 12 passenger vans. ESC staff and Scholars regularly express frustration with vans (or the van keys) not being where they should, or the unsatisfactory state of the vans (either messy or in need of repairs). Scholars must take a driving safety course in order to be certified to drive the vans, adding an additional level of logistical hurdles.

“Challenges, well definitely the schedule and driving because a lot of us don't drive, I don't drive and others don't drive so that's definitely an issue” (Brad – Scholar with MASK). Wade (Director, Engaged Scholarship Center) believes that the Center could achieve more if not for this particular issue. “You know, our impact would be on a much higher level; this is going to sound stupid, if we had three buses. Three buses and three drivers.”

Difficulties with Program Requirements

In their study of dissatisfaction among service learning students, Piper, DeYoung, and Lamson (2000) found a disconnect among students and community partners based on concerns with time and over-scheduling. Whitbourne, Collins, and Skulety (2001) similarly found complaints among service learners to include excessive workload (along with a lack of organization and lack of staff availability). Each Scholar knows coming into the program that they are required to commit to 300 hours per academic year, but some have difficulty balancing being a Scholar with their academic work, and other extracurricular activities, including jobs.

I know this is like, such a general answer, but I feel like with everyone's scheduling, and having to, you know, you have to talk to your site manager, and like, you just have to go through so many people, so I guess that's the biggest challenge. I mean, 300 hours is a lot to get done. ... I came to Scholars and was like, 300 hours! Wow, I'm going to be doing a lot of work... And you can't really control your classes... that's probably the only issue, just being able to be consistent. Because, like I said, we're all a team, so it's like if you don't go one day, it's a big issue (Larissa – Scholar with CH).

Many Scholars will work with other community partners in addition to their primary site in order to compile additional service hours. However, due to restrictions attached to certain grants that fund the ESC, Scholars are not always able to count hours with some partners, which also causes discontent.

It's frustrating for me now...I really liked being able to go to Homes for All and being able to do other sites and stuff, but where my funding comes from I can't count those hours for anything except TLC. And as far as my scheduling goes now on campus I can only go to TLC twice a week. I really have to take five classes so it's really hard to do what I'm expected to do and I don't know I just wish there were more hours in the day. ... It's really annoying to me because I did that semester my first year and like now with being more of an upperclassman and having a lot more, a lot more responsibility it's hard (Susan – Scholar with TLC).

With “the 300” looming over them, and some restrictions placed on where these hours will count, a number of Scholars admitted that at times their priorities can shift.

Just because I’m on the Education Team doesn’t mean I don’t have different interests. And that’s the same for every team. ... There are a lot of things I like to do but I can’t be on any other team and have that count towards my three hundred hours... And Scholars is all about not being type-casted into your team but I have to be to get my hours done and it sucks because then it becomes about the hours and not about the service. TLC is Monday through Friday and I can only go certain days in that week, so yeah I’m going to need more hours and I want to have different experiences but because of the grant, you need to think more about getting your three hundred hours there before you can start doing the other things to enhance your overall experience. I do those other projects and I love them but it doesn’t count towards the three hundred (Gina – Scholar with TLC).

Several other Scholars admitted that while they know it shouldn’t be the case, the focus of their work often becomes too much on accumulating hours, particularly when other responsibilities pile up.

Well, three hundred hours are not bad at all, but it’s just that when you’re busy it is. I have an internship, I’m also the president of another student association, I’m a resident advisor, it’s just so much and I have school on top of that. A lot of times I forget that the reason that I’m here is to get a degree and stuff. I’m doing all these other things but it’s just finding the time to really volunteer. Sometimes when you go to volunteer sometimes you’re not putting, you’re just putting in a little bit of effort and sometimes people see that and they’re just like – oh you don’t want to help me today, are you okay? And it’s just like I know I shouldn’t come here with a bad attitude or having two hours of sleep or whatever. But it’s just like sometimes I got to get these three hundred hours done and then it doesn’t become about service anymore, it just becomes about the hours (Anjuli – Scholar with MASK).

As Anjuli notes, community partners also notice it when the Scholars’ focus isn’t on their work at the site.

The Scholars that come are basically, they have to be here, so they look for more downtime sometimes, you know, whereas the volunteers are, I’m coming in at 10:00, and I’m here until 1:00, they look to just, do everything they can do in the time they’re here, whereas the college students, I’m not going to call them lazy, but you know, it’s more repetitive for them, it’s almost like a job instead of like a volunteer thing. It essentially is, because they have to meet their hours through the

Scholars. So, people are more enthusiastic about giving back when they come on their own, as opposed to being forced to come here.

Jessica (a Scholar with TLC) notes that the looming 300 hour requirement, along with feeling the pressure of too many commitments can also lead to some Scholars feeling burned out, or limited in what they can do as college students.

When you're a servant leader you get burned out, very quickly. I guess one of the negatives, I guess it would be that you're doing it while you go to school, and it's really tough. And we have such a high hour requirement, it's 300 hours, so sometimes it's such a huge commitment, it's like you kind of kill yourself, because you don't have enough time for all of this. It's like you're trying to get all your classes done, you're trying to be involved with something else besides Scholars, and trying to have some friends here and there, hopefully, and you don't really have time for a lot of other things.

Another requirement that leads to a lot of frustration among the Scholars is leading the Engaged Learning Program, the mandatory eight hour service days for all first year NC students. In their focus group, the Scholars mentioned that there is very little investment from the ELP students. "They just show up and it's 8 hours. These random kids show up, they don't take ownership of anything, and it's like, this is my project, you know? And with Scholars, it's like, well we're going back there for 15 hours a week, for years, so there's an obvious buy-in there for us." Thus, Scholars see a disconnect between their own work, or their own projects, and having to take time out to lead the ELP days. It can be very difficult to motivate the ELP students, particularly since most of these days of service require waking up and being ready to leave campus at eight in the morning. "It's their day off, they're being forced to volunteer some place they don't want to be in, in the middle of Capital City, and you know it's really not easy" (Matt – Scholar with MASK). Another Scholar in the focus group admitted that this leads to her putting in much less effort. "They're annoying. And it's just stupid, it doesn't help anything, they

don't get any real prep. I do a half-assed job of it, so that's my fault, and it's just like, I wish their professors went with them instead honestly." The Scholars typically take their work very seriously, and can see the ELP days as taking away from the work they value more.

The drawback would be that some of the other responsibilities I have for Scholar sometimes can conflict with what I'm doing at the school, like if I have to deal with the ELP students one day – I know that's terrible to say, because it's important, it's an important program, but I feel like if I have to deal with ELP students some days it takes away from the time that I'm spending with some of the students in Capital City. So I'm like, well, I mean you have to balance the responsibilities, but sometimes I get a little frustrated with having to do that when I'm in charge, or the students are relying on me to be there and help them through a lesson or something like that (Ashley – Scholar with TLC).

Foley (1977) found that in short-term service projects, students often fail to spend enough time working with nonprofit partners to make any real difference in the lives of the community in which they serve. Worse than just failing to make a difference though, a lack of commitment in this type of service can actually do harm to the community. Particularly in service programs that are aimed at addressing issues associated with a "lack of good role models and other inconsistencies" in young peoples' lives, the transient (and often unreliable) nature of short term service only exacerbates these problems (Martin, SeBlonka and Tryon 2009). While the Scholars (particularly those working in the after school programs) tend to form deep relationships with the communities in which they serve, several Scholars recognized that the ELP students make at best a cursory connection to the community during their day of service.

Service learning has often been critiqued for providing student experiences that actually reinforce stereotypes; emphasize a simplistic and individualized understanding of social issues; and reflect a charity model of "doing for" rather than "doing with"

(Boyle-Baise 1998; Brown 2001; Eby 1998; Green 2001; Vaccaro 2009; Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2000). “Plug-in” volunteers can undermine an organization or programs otherwise family-like intimate atmosphere (Eliasoph 2011). Scholars also believe that the short-term nature of the ELP days can do more harm than good for the students themselves as well.

No offense to anyone, but we have these kids that come in for one day, and suddenly they’ve seen the tragedies of Capital City, and they’ll speak about this experience for the rest of their life every time they encounter a Scholar, and the fact of the matter is, they go in for one day, they sit on their cell phone, they write it off on their record, and they brag about it for the next year. And something that I’ll never forget is walking into my school in Capital City ... and having kids come on an ELP day to my elementary school where I teach, and laughing when they saw metal detectors at the front door, which weren’t being used at the time. Just laughing hysterically, saying this school is so ghetto. And it was like, alright, okay, I’m just going to let them go with that one, but I just remember, because there were students who I know, who were in my class, the next few weeks they would say, oh remember that one time we went to TLC and they had metal detectors? And it’s like, people who go for their ELP days, get a passing view of what Capital City is, get a passing view of what our work really is, they observe it in the tiniest, most superficial perspective. And they’ve never had to make relationships with students in Capital City because they were there for probably six and a half or seven hours, and even in the classroom, maybe five hours in total, if they do something in education, and if they go to any issue site. And it’s like, I think it’s just an unappreciation (sic), and a superficial kind of way to do things.

There is also a sense among Scholars that the ELP requirement takes away from what they think the focus of the program should be. Later in the focus group another Scholar said, “most Scholar programs are all student development based, so it’s all about the model of doing direct service and then gradually going to doing policy work, with staff members, and they help you, and that’s all they do. Our program doesn’t do that. Our Scholar program, they do all the ELP stuff, which you can tell how we feel about that, and it’s just not a lot of student development.”

Wade agrees that the focus on ELP days could take away from other things the Engaged Scholarship Program could be doing. “I think we’re in a little bit of a Catch-22, in that if we’re only running the Scholar program and not mobilizing the rest of the campus, I think there would be more time and energy to put more deliberate things in place that focus specifically more on the reflection and their knowledge, and capstone types of experiences.” Thus, while the ELP requirement results in a number of beneficial outcomes described earlier, it is hardly seen as entirely positive among those in the Scholars program.

Relationships within the Scholar Program

While relationships within the Engaged Scholars Program are very strong on the whole, there are some tensions in these relationships that are worth exploring, including: between Scholars and staff, between the Scholars themselves, and between Scholars and Vols. As with other organizational and logistical challenges listed above, Scholars seem to understand that the size of the program, along with the many responsibilities of each staff member, stretches effectiveness. Still, a number of Scholars discussed challenges communicating with ESC staff. In the focus group, one Scholar explained, “also I think the staff has taken on, each staff member has the responsibilities of probably like six employees, all put onto one person, so we try to communicate, and it usually doesn’t work... the staff and the students, as far as the work, aren’t always on the same page.”

Penelope, a senior Scholar with MASK, has seen the program grow over her four years, and discussed how she feels the growth has impacted things. “There are too many people to keep track of, and so many little things for each, even for each team, and I don’t know how, like suddenly there’s like 15 teams, when there used to be 10. Which is a lot

more, and then like, so many people are now site leaders ... they are improving, they're taking our suggestions and improving the program, which is great, but there's still a lot that needs to be done, and it can just be really frustrating." When asked if she thought that it was tough to keep organized with so much going on, Penelope continued,

I think so. And prioritizing. I mean, I'm sure Wade has a ton of meetings and stuff to do every day, but it always seems as though, like I'll email my coordinator, and he'll email me back, but Wade, I'll email him many, many times, and he will never get back to you. And like, why is that necessary? You should keep up with your email, because getting multiple emails is just worse on you, because now you have to delete them, and it's ridiculous, and I feel like a lot of the things that, I was even talking to them, some of the staff members about it, um, and they're in charge of a lot of things, that they can't, they still don't have control over, so like, they're in charge of doing it, but actually making the decisions, they can't do, so that must be really frustrating.

This was a common complaint among Scholars – feeling as though they either did not have a strong enough say in program decisions, or that they were frustrated by not hearing back from staff members in a timely manner.

In Scholars, there is a heavy hand from the staff. In Scholars, it's much bigger (than in previous service experiences), and you're doing things like tutoring inner city kids, helping inmates, but there's a huge hand coming from the staff that is in one way very nice, because hey, you don't have to deal with all the bureaucracy garbage, but then again, it's not as empowering... Then, I'll be upset maybe at a staff member for not emailing me, but then they'll tell me I have to finish this paper work by tomorrow. But I'll be like - you don't even respond to my emails within a week! Why should I give this to you?!

This relationship between Scholars and staff can also be difficult at times for ESC staff themselves as well. Staff members see mentoring as a large part of their role with Scholars, fostering them along a student development model. However, this model presents its own difficulty at times.

One of the biggest challenges is you're working with students who are at different levels, you know, from freshmen to seniors in terms of work ethic, in terms of what they bring to the table. You're always kind of fostering and mentoring. Some people are great from the beginning and other people need more, you know

professional development. So one of the frustrating things is perhaps not delivering the quality that you always want to because you always have to allow students to kind of deliver and learn from the process... If I have three teams I know that I can deliver everything that you're asking me for if I was working on that full time. But I'm not. The idea is that I'm delegating to the team and that they're learning so you still, I still as a staff member will fill in some gaps but I can't fill in all the gaps. So the quality, I think. And then just the quantity of work that's sometimes...there's just only so much that you can do (Marina – Associate Director, ESC).

As discussed above, and will be discussed in much further depth in chapter six, some of the strongest, and most meaningful relationships in these students' service experiences develop between the Scholars themselves. These relationships are not without their own conflicts as well though. "There are just so many great ideas that conflict with each other, so it's like, I feel like that has been my biggest challenge, like maybe proposing an idea to the team, and then like maybe having to make it that everyone can see eye to eye with that project" (Hector – Scholar with Community House). Again, as with tensions between Scholars and staff, communication seems to be at the heart of most conflicts.

Sometimes we don't always see eye to eye. I think we make more of a difference when we are together. If I was there by myself, I wouldn't be able to plan so many projects, or field trips, like we have to do it together. But, sometimes it doesn't always work if we don't have the same ideas, or we're not looking at it the same way. And it's hard, because on my team, on CH, I'm the only education major, I'm the only special education major too, so we don't see eye to eye a lot, because sometimes like maybe I look at it a little too in-depth sometimes because it's all I think about all of the time at school, but so, I have trouble sometimes with that (Marie – Scholar with CH).

There are student site leaders for each issue-based team, and these leaders take on additional responsibilities, including serving as the primary contact between the team and the partner organization, organizing schedules so that each site has coverage, and organizing team meetings. While Scholars overwhelmingly see the team-based model as

a positive, it also creates some challenges. Larissa recently took on the responsibility of site leader for Community House, and was feeling increased pressure.

I think also on the flip side of having a team – last year I sat and listened, I complained to the rest of my team, we all complained about sitting through the meetings that are three hours long and that kind of stuff. And we would complain about our site leader and I don't want to have that happen now that I'm like... I feel like my responsibility has multiplied by ten times this year and I really don't want to mess it up. I don't want to have my team sitting there going oh my gosh, she's so unorganized. She's never here. That was one of the complaints last year that she's never on the site. So I just don't want to turn into that. I'm trying to be really good.

A final set of relationships within the Scholars program that can create tension is between the Scholars and the other NC student volunteers that work with the same community partners. Scholars are clearly seen as leaders at these sites, but responsibilities are not always clearly delineated. "Sometimes I guess when I volunteer at HFA, I see that I kind of have to take a step back and let the Scholars do their role and I just kind of have to facilitate and be on the back burner, as only a Vol. But in their absence I have to step up to the plate and it's a weird transition and especially for the kids that I'm mentoring. They don't really know how to address me" (Victoria – Vol with Homes for All). Similar to Victoria, other Vols talked about not being able to quite figure out what their role should be on site. Dawn, a Vol with TLC felt like this confusion impacted her own relationship with the children. "With the class that I was in last year, since I wasn't a Scholar and the kids knew all the Scholars it was easier for them to connect with them more than me... So I could still help them and everything but I didn't have as much of a connection with the kids at TLC... That was one of the negatives."

Both Scholars and Vols recognize that the mix of volunteers on site leads to a sometimes awkward mix. Naoma, a Vol with TLC, felt as though her contributions were sometimes limited by the structure.

Well one thing, one thing that's different is you're obviously beneath them cause they're running the programs, you're a tier below them of the structure, the way it works, you default to them which normally is fine but I mean I've had a couple of instances where some of the techniques that the Scholars use as they're trying to instruct wasn't working very well. I would have done it differently but I didn't want to say anything because I don't want to step on their toes. So when you mix the Scholars and regular volunteers, you get this sort of hierarchy so it's interesting.

Gina, a Scholar with TLC, also saw a tension between Scholars and Vols, but thinks the relationship is improving.

There is kind of a disconnect between the Scholars and the Vols, but I think that we're getting better incorporating them in. Just because you're a volunteer it doesn't mean you don't have good ideas, it doesn't mean that you have nothing to contribute and it doesn't mean that you were court mandated to be here because you got a citation and things like that. Making it more of an even playing field between everyone and getting rid of the label of oh, you're a Scholar, oh you're a volunteer. When I was a Vol, Ashley was very good about saying if we had any ideas or any lessons that you come across in your classes that you just want to try, go for it. You're just as much a part of this classroom as I am. Like the ELP kids, we couldn't do half the work we do if it wasn't for them. They're just as crucial in this equation as we are. We might be more of the leader of it but they are so close behind.

Relationship with Community Partners

While relationships between the Engaged Scholarship Center and their community partners are also quite strong overall, there are a number of tensions that are well worth exploring. Discussing these tensions provides insight into the challenges of forming and maintaining successful service learning partnerships. A clash in expectations or a mismatch in goals often creates challenges in a service learning partnership. Students expect agency supervisors to act as teachers and mentors, while supervisors expect

students to behave like trained professionals (Bacon 1999, Mills 2012). When there is a mismatch of goals, or a lack of common vision, Scholars can feel conflicted about how to best go about their work. Samantha discussed a conflict during her work as a Scholar with TLC, over how much students should be concentrating on homework, as compared to other projects. “It’s hard to, on the one hand, to be given the freedom to just design your own lessons and create your own goals but also be working underneath someone who has their own objectives and their own goals. So the head of the program has ideas of what this program should be and I have my ideas. Sometimes they don’t match so I have to compromise my goals at times to meet the program’s needs.”

At times, the mismatch in goals and overall outlook can be based on personal differences between Scholars and community partners, but this can still lead to tension. Both Larissa and Marie discussed having difficulty reconciling their own personal beliefs with the strong Catholic mission of Community Home. Larissa said, “They’re a Catholic run organization so they have some beliefs that are more centered on their religion. I’m Catholic too but some of this stuff is a little different than I would think... So that’s something I’m wrestling with.” Marie also explained, “I don’t exactly agree with some of the ways Community House is run. They’re very Catholic based, and I am a Christian, but I’m not as devout to it as they are, and being a special education major, and a big proponent of the disability rights movement, and the independent living movement, I kind of see things a little bit differently. So I don’t exactly agree with all of the things they do there. So I feel a little like, I lose hope sometimes there.” When I asked Marie if this is something she felt like she could talk about with the CH staff, she said, “We don’t really have much of a chance. And like, I’m a little nervous to say anything, I don’t want

to step on any toes, because they really are good people, but like, and it's hard with the Catholic basis, like I said, because a lot of my sort of morals and values don't really coincide with that, which makes it tough."

Service learning partnerships suffer when there is a lack of communication in terms of schedules, deadlines, and priorities (Hidayat et al 2009). Similar to the discussion above about their frustrations communicating with ESC staff, several Scholars mentioned challenges communicating with their community partners as well. Particularly at sites like Homes for All, which require communication between a number of parties to set up a day of service, communication can be "an ordeal". Sydney, a Scholar with HFA described her frustration with one example, when the partners change plans, and instead of communicating directly, talked to Wade, who talked to another partner, who sent them to another project where they ended up short on supplies anyway. Susan described a similar frustrating experience with TLC:

Last year we were trying to get approval to do stuff at the high school it was very hard because we would show up and the gym would be locked. We would show up on a Saturday and it would be like, you told us to come, you said somebody would let us in and we're now sitting outside Capital City High School with a lot of people asking what are you doing here? You don't belong here kind of thing and sneaking in because the sports team had a game. We would store our supplies in a closet and then the closet would be locked. It's all those little things that would be like kicking you when you're trying. But I don't know, we ended up working things out but there would be too many days when we'd show up and we couldn't get in or we'd show up and the closet was locked so we couldn't use it. Just little things, and it would be so tough to reach out to them and get a response.

Other Scholars with TLC described similar communications-related frustrations with missing paperwork or information about students, students being moved from classroom to classroom, confusion over assignments, and miscommunication between teachers and parents that put them in the middle. "It's all very disjointed and you have no

idea what's going on" (Gina). Ashley admitted that she can be "very vocal about things I don't like", although she had stifled herself recently. She also explained that it is very frustrating because, I talk about it, and I feel like that's going to get me in trouble one day... It's a challenge that I can't overcome because of the position I'm in." Part of this frustration comes from being put in a role with a lot of responsibility, but still feeling like staff members with the partner organization weren't listening. "I feel like people get annoyed with me. I don't think people really listen, but they're just like, Ashley is on her soapbox, or, they don't really think, and like the, I talk to some of the teachers and they are like, meh. And I'm like, uggghh! Like, what can you do to change it? It's frustrating." Brian, a Scholar with Homes for All, expressed a similar frustration of not feeling heard, or staff "not really even pretending to care, you know? Sometimes you wonder, here you are paying all of these people, like they're paying us (through scholarships), to be involved in all of these things, and to tackle all of these issues, and then you're not going to listen when they're coming to you and saying, if you want us to tackle this issue, we need to change this? Because it's not convenient for you?"

While Scholars tended to focus on communication issues when reflecting on their frustrations with their relationships with community partners, the partners themselves tended to focus on commitment as their biggest challenge. Community partner staff typically understand the challenges associated with being a college student. However, they still expect to see service learners display a commitment to the organization's work on a consistent basis (Hidayat et al 2009). Emily, as a former Scholar and current staff member at TLC has a unique perspective on issues of commitment and reliability.

If a volunteer says she can't be there, I'm like, come on. She made a commitment and you're thinking like you're beholden to that commitment but realistically

you're not, you're not paying them and consistency becomes a problem... With the Scholars, their attendance becomes a problem if it's in conflict with their schoolwork – I got a paper due or I got a test, exam or blah blah blah – sometimes I would get really frustrated and then I remembered I did the same thing. I was in your shoes two years, like last year. I know that's real. I know that work piles up and exams do exist and you get sick. Sometimes something pops up and you want to go to some event on campus rather go do your volunteer work, I get it. Like you said it's interesting, I'm on the other side now. It's like no excuses, that's BS, what do you mean you have an exam tomorrow, and you want to skip out?...but I remember, I remember how it was, what it was like, I do. I'm still not out of college that long, I still get it.

Other community partner staff members are similarly understanding, but emphasize that they rely on volunteers, so no-shows can be a big setback. Alex, a manager at Homes for All explains that volunteers can't just decide to show up (or not) at the last minute, "the schedules, they need to be enforced, and maybe some people need to be turned away if they're not going to deal with it, because safety is the number one issue, and punctuality. We don't kill you, you're not punching a clock, I understand things happen, but it's important. You partied last night? That's okay, I don't care (laughs), just show up. Are you functional? Good. Just don't waste my time." Staff from Homes for All emphasized the challenges faced if volunteers aren't reliable, especially on days they do construction projects.

What I try to tell people is, look don't take on anything, a project you can't finish. We want you to finish the project, because if you don't finish the project, it really is not useful to us, because we're not going to have Joe coming in and say, oh can you finish this project for us, because they're probably, their learning curve makes that tough. So finish a project, that's what we emphasize with volunteers. Can you come and finish something. Things change in people's lives. Even if you're volunteering just for a day, things happen, and you don't come. And many times, we're going to have 10 volunteers from such and such organization on Saturday, and five showed up. Or, you were going to have 10, and 12 show up. That's, so the problem you have in reverse is, I had work for 10, and now I have five, I have too much work, or I had work for 10, and now I have 12, now I have too little work... The goal is to have a core of volunteers who are going to be regular (Pete – Executive Director of Homes for All).

Melissa, the Director of Operations at Community House is also flexible with volunteers, although she felt that some Scholars have a slight sense of entitlement. “Everyone has things that come up and whatever, we are flexible with that for sure, but it’s like, wait a minute. You’re getting a scholarship; you’re expected to do these hours... I’m just expecting them to manage their time a little bit better. When we’re counting on you for 9 o’clock in the morning and you call at 10:00 the night before saying, oh I have a test, and I have to study. Okay, that just gets a little bit annoying.” However, a sense of commitment is not all about just showing up when you are scheduled. Melissa also explained that she sees a difference of commitment once volunteers are on site as well.

I mean, people are different, so it’s always the different personalities, and different experiences that they come with, one person might walk in, they might have a brother with downs syndrome or autism, and just get it (snaps fingers), and jump right in. And others might, this might be a totally new experience, and they need a little more guidance, and orientation, and also some are just a little more, have a better work ethic. And I mean, I see work ethic and volunteering kind of going hand in hand. Some are just better at figuring out what needs to be done, and doing it. Or finding, asking the right questions and doing it. And others are kind of like, well I’m just going to sit here until someone is going to tell me, here, you do this.

Frustrations with Roles and Responsibilities

The final set of challenges associated with the Scholar program involves Scholars’ frustration with their roles and responsibilities. It would be clearly exploitative for a service learning program to focus solely on the students’ gain and structure opportunities with their satisfaction in mind (Hidayat et al 2009). However, ignoring student dissatisfaction over the role they play while volunteering can also undermine the effectiveness of the service learning experience. Rosing et al (2010) found that common concerns among service learning students in this area include not understanding how their

work is meaningful or important to the agency, criticism of the agency being unprepared for the volunteers' arrival, lacking structured duties to perform, and general dissatisfaction with role they play in the organizations work. Students in the study also voiced concerns about site choices, and raised complaints over the degree of control over their placement.

Scholars share a number of closely related frustrations, many of which are also clearly related to the challenges of communication listed above.

We had a lot of difficulty whether we should be making concrete lesson plans and like who should be responsible for doing that; whether it's the program telling us what they want specifically,...things were just really tough to expect, to have in-depth things planned out, like you really can't be a teacher and be at school at the same time... But that was difficult because we weren't sure what the line was, you know. Expectations as far as what the program needs and wants was something that we definitely are working on defining, I think (Susan – Scholar with TLC).

Other Scholars expressed frustration in the inflexibility in choosing their own sites. In the focus group, this dissatisfaction was clear. "Some programs suck, and they can't find Scholars. They're totally unorganized, they can't find Scholars to stay there, but then we tried to start our own program, to be its own team, and they want us to do these other sites that are awful, and no one wants to do it. I'm not going there, I hate that place. But we have to do it, so it's like, there's a mismatch of ideals, with what we think is worthwhile, and what they think is worthwhile."

Several Scholars who were otherwise happy with their sites overall stated that they had concerns over being placed in situations in which they were uncomfortable, or felt unprepared, particularly at TLC. This seems to support the research of Matthews and Zimmerman (1999) and McEachern (2001), who found a recurring theme of dissatisfaction among service learning participants with the partner agencies' level of

interest in their service, or the capacity to guide their learning experience. Jessica is an education major, but was still taken off guard by the role she was asked to play in the program.

Ok, my challenges at TLC. So, as Wade probably told you, we're the junior staff. So there's not many people above us. There's maybe like one or two go to people, that are on site, which is like the Director, and a few other people. So, there's (sic) not many resources for us. It's very self-motivated, which has given me invaluable experience as a future teacher... But as a new Scholar, I didn't know what I was getting myself into. So, it's like, how are you going to create lesson plans that really motivate these kids? It was really hard to be able to do that. It's really difficult. And classroom management was horrendous. I didn't know what to do sometimes. Like I told you, I cried twice because these kids just tore me apart.

Antonia is also an education major, but recognized that working as a Scholar with TLC puts students in a difficult role.

There are so many challenges. One of the things is that we have very limited resources so it's really hard for us to, even if we do have an idea, to carry it out. We have to do a lot of improvising... I'm an Education Major and I'm a senior so I do have some more experience than a lot of the other people but we're all not Education Majors and even me I'm not a teacher. I don't have years and years of experience and you know I don't have my own class so I think in that sense it's just really hard to apply those kinds of concepts. One of my best friends is an Accounting Major and it's really hard...stuff like that, you don't know what the right approach is...We basically run the whole entire thing. It's like twenty kids and you're in front of them and you have to figure out what you're going to do every single day. So it just becomes really hard and they all have homework and it's trying to help everyone and there's only one person in the classroom and it gets chaotic.

As the TLC program has grown, in part due to additional support from the ESC, this conflict has worsened. For those like Trent, who do not receive any instruction or training on education as part of their major, these concerns are only heightened.

I would have to say the beginning of this year at TLC was very difficult at times just because we actually accepted about sixty more students; we got up to one hundred students. So it was a big jump from last year when we only had forty students. Keep in mind that we're running this program. We're not trained staff or anything, we're college students. I'm a Computer Science major, I'm not an

Education major, so I know nothing about that. But now they put us in such big roles, so much more responsibilities that we have to run the classrooms by ourselves and it's no longer ten students, it's twenty students in a classroom. That was probably one of the biggest challenges that I've had to overcome.

Trent discussed a disconnect between his academic major and his service work as a Scholar. This was a common tension for a number of Scholars, and one that will be explored in further depth in Chapter Six. For those who see a connection between their service and their academic or career goals, service learning experiences can be useful as resume builders and can provide insight into possible career choices. (Hidayat et al 2009). However, a number of Scholars felt like the overall benefits of their work were limited by a lack of connection with their academic development.

If you're an Education major especially an Urban Education major, this is what you want to do and this is what you like, so it's easy to be interested in that, it's easy for you to want to push for a better education system for them. Kids who aren't Education majors at TLC though, you see the difference. They're happy to be there and they're doing what they need to do but you see the...there's just a totally different experience if you're an Education major (Brielle – Scholar with TLC).

This is an issue that ESC staff recognize as well. "I guess a limitation of the program is that we have set issue areas, and set teams, and so if it doesn't fit your personal interests, or what you want to advocate for, or what you personally connect with, then that also makes it a little difficult. So I think that that can also affect somebody. Like, I'm thinking of Justine, she's an excellent Scholar, but she doesn't do anything related to her nursing major, and at this point she's questioning, like what can I do to put on my resume? And that's conflicting (Focus Groups – Staff).

Students can also feel this sense of disconnection between their service work and their own personal goals or motivations when they are unhappy with the tasks they are asked to perform on site. As Bill, a Scholar with HFA explained, "the challenges that you

can face are getting lost, in the sense that you feel like you're doing the same thing over and over again and you feel like that impact has dissolved and you're not making any difference. That can happen really easily, especially if you're doing mundane tasks, like filing or data entry." Many Scholars expressed a deep sense of frustration when confronting the limitations of their service. These students are very committed to their work, and put in tremendous amounts of effort and time. Many of the Scholars say they are motivated by seeing the immediate results of their work: a family receiving a meal, a student raising their grades, a family receiving an affordable home, or a resident of CH developing new skills. Yet, as the Scholars continue at their sites, take on additional responsibilities, and add depth to their understanding of the issue on which they are working, many realize that tangible results on the issues of hunger, education, housing, and care for adults with developmental disabilities are quite limited. This frustration, along with how it impacts the ways Scholars think about these issues and their work, will be explored in much further depth in the following chapter.

Conclusion:

This chapter shows that the Engaged Scholars Program, like most service learning partnerships, is an extremely complicated endeavor, with many moving parts, and many relationships to be managed. The Scholars program has a distinct mission and program model, and is successful in meeting a number of their goals. The Engaged Scholarship Center has several very deep and mutually beneficial partnerships with nonprofits in the Capital City area, and this allows Scholars to step into projects and experiences that might not otherwise be available to them. There are clear benefits to both the Scholars and the community partners in participating in this ongoing relationship, and the partners

admit that their work would be either impossible, or greatly limited without volunteers from Northeast College. However, there are also a number of challenges and frustrations in this engagement.

It is clear that engaging in service through the Scholars program has a large impact on the Scholars' work, and the meaning they attach to their service. Both Scholars and Vols agree that their experiences differ on a number of levels, and that the Scholars program has a large impact on their service work. A number of key components of the Scholars program (that have been discussed throughout this chapter) impact meaning making in important ways, and can contribute to a deeper understanding of the ways in which a structured program can shape the service experience. These key components also help shape the ways in which students think about the connection between their work and a sense of politics, and impact the formation of a collective identity – both of which will be explored in greater depth in the coming chapters. The key components of the Scholars program, listed in the table below, emphasize themes of commitment, accountability, and sustainability.

Key Components of the Scholars Program:

Commitment	Accountability	Sustainability
Institutional commitment from college	Staff held accountable for successful partnerships	Staff members who share a common vision
Staff members who were members of the program as undergraduates	Build agenda with community partners	Strong, deep relationships with community partners
Long-term partnerships	Clear program expectations/requirements for students	Staff members as a resource that know how to get things accomplished
Feeling of making more of a difference as a collective	Scholars held accountable (while Vols are not)	Allows for Scholar input into service experience
	Diverse group of Scholars working together	Support from fellow Scholars
		Learning other skills such as leadership

When these components are achieved, the Scholars program provides a model close to the transformative/social justice model presented by Marullo and Edwards (2007b). Ideally under the Scholars model, the service experience should be applied; interdisciplinary work that is responsive to community needs, and is integrated into the students' lives. The program seeks to create a circle of co-learners among the Scholars, who engage with the community as a partner and reflect on this work from a critical perspective. These are all important components of the social justice model presented by Marullo and Edwards (2007b) as well.

To be clear, some of these components also occur for Vols in their service. For example, several Vols also mentioned developing leadership skills, or developing long-term and strong relationships with community partners. However, the key difference is that Vols are not part of a structured program that ensures these components are provided to them. There are also a number of components that are only available to students who are members of the Scholars program, such as access to staff members; accountability to

the Scholars program and fellow Scholars; the feeling of being part of an organized collective; and the ability to help shape and build their own service agenda.

The next two chapters will build on specific themes that began to emerge in the discussion above. An explicit goal of the Scholars program is to connect students with experiences that will lead them to think more structurally and systematically about the issues in which they are engaged. The developmental model upon which the Scholars program is built is meant to move Scholars from direct service experiences to a deeper level of thinking about the policies and political structures that shape issues like hunger, housing, education, and health care. Chapter Five will explore this relationship between service and politics among the Scholars, and discuss the ways in which the Scholars program affects this relationship. Scholars also see an enormous difference between engaging in communities as part of the Scholars, and volunteering on one's own. During the research process, it became clear that a sense of collective identity exists among the Scholars, and the role of this collective identity will be explored in much further depth in Chapter Six.

Chapter Five:

Connecting Service and a Sense of Politics

I think that one of the biggest issues is the construct we have around the word politics. I think that that's why you have those reactions of not going there, well I don't really want to say this, well I'll be neutral. You have all those reactions whenever someone says the word politics because their entire life, they've been kind of raised to stay away from that word, like they say what should you not bring up? – politics, religion, and sex. So they say never bring those things up, but like, I think we have so much, and there is so much connotation to the word politics, that we don't really think about how encompassing it can really be, and so we're raised all these years saying avoid that, don't talk about that, keep that to yourself, don't, you know, just don't. So when we see someone protesting a pipeline, or we see someone doing something crazy and radical, we say well I would never do that, I'm not going to a protest, they don't need to know my opinion. It's because we have this construct that if you speak out about politics, you can only be speaking out about this one radical idea, and you can't relate it to any other definition or perception of politics (Sydney – Scholar with Homes for All).

Introduction

There has been no shortage of attention paid to the democratic prospects of the current generation of college students. Perhaps most notable, Putnam (2000) suggested that the younger generation knew less about politics, were less interested, and less engaged than previous generations. Macedo et al. (2005) also showed that the younger generation was less likely to care about, know about, and engage in U.S. politics. There are, however, trends that suggest these worries are overstated, and there may be a reversal in participation among young people in recent years. Recent studies indicate that those in the emerging Millennial generation are increasingly engaged politically, and that new forms of democratic participation must be recognized (Bennett 2007; Dalton 2008; Zukin et al. 2006). Depending on where one draws the boundaries on birth points for the generation (as early as 1978 and as late as mid-2000s), anywhere from 80 to 100 million Millennials will be of voting age by the 2016 election (Rankin 2013, 5). Thus, the sheer

volume of this age group (the largest generation in absolute numbers since the Baby Boomers) makes it a significant presence in U.S. politics, and their impact will continue to grow (Rankin 2013).

A concern among scholars over political participation is nothing new, nor is a recognition that free democratic societies will struggle to maintain political attention and activity. As Berger (2011) points out, such influential thinkers on the topic of political participation as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Alexis de Tocqueville, John Dewey, and Hannah Arendt all recognized that an enduring characteristic of democracy is citizens struggling to pay attention and invest energy politically. When democratic citizens are free to spend their time and attention freely, politics seldom fares well. While everyone in American society is impacted by politics at nearly every turn, “having a stake in an outcome does not mean that we attend to it” (Berger 2011, 11). Nonetheless, it is important to understand how young people understand U.S. politics. More knowledgeable and informed citizens are more likely to engage in politics and in their communities (Skocpol and Fiorina 1999; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Yates and Youniss 1998). While our nation’s colleges are enrolling more students, questions remain about how much undergraduates learn about U.S. politics. Colby et al. (2007) call for more explicit attention to be paid to political learning in colleges and universities if society intends to “take full advantage of higher education’s opportunities to prepare thoughtful, skilled, and active citizens” (41).

Students entering college come well accustomed to volunteering. The 2005 HERI U.S. Freshman survey reported the highest percentage ever of incoming students who had volunteered at least occasionally, at 83 percent. The 2006 HERI survey reported an all-

time high of 67.3 percent of students who stated there is a good or some chance they would continue to volunteer in college. However, as discussed in the literature review, there are mixed findings regarding how volunteer service relates to politics. Marullo and Edwards (2007b) distinguish between charity-based models (which reinforce the status quo) and social justice-based models (which can facilitate politicization of students and help them promote a more just society) in service learning. Britt (2012) described three approaches to service learning pedagogy as they relate to politics: skill-set practice (developing personal competence and self-efficacy); civic values and critical citizenship (exploring what it means to exist in relation to others in a community, encouraging critical thinking about social issues and responsibilities); and social justice activism (working with others to transform systems of oppression).

Rankin (2013) sees a clear gap among Millennials between the familiar act of community volunteerism and the much less familiar concept of political engagement. Perhaps because they are so much more familiar with this style of engagement, Millennial-age students tend to view volunteering in their community as more directly relevant and impactful. Nevertheless, it appears that there is reason to suspect that high rates of volunteerism can translate into high levels of political engagement as students move into latter stages in life (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Yates and Youniss 1998). Those who volunteer are also more likely to engage in political activity and feel less alienated from public institutions (Macedo et al 2005). Eliasoph (2013) also shows how volunteering can sometime lead people to pose bigger questions about how our society works. “Volunteers may start out serving meals to the hungry and then go further, to ask why a wealthy society like ours even has hungry people to begin with” (2).

Volunteering, in other words, can lead people to realize that truly helping to address an issue requires not just one-on-one volunteering, but deep political action as well.

Defining Politics:

This chapter explores the connections that student volunteers make between their service and a sense of politics. As noted below, the term “politics” is used in a number of different ways, and defined quite differently by student volunteers and staff members of the ESC and their community partners. The term is used in both broad and narrow meanings, but this ambiguity is an important point in itself. The ways that volunteers and staff use the word politics is informative in thinking about two other key terms in understanding the connection between service and politics: political consciousness and political engagement. As a point of clarification, it is useful to define how these two terms are used in the remainder of this study. Political consciousness refers to a structural understanding of the issues on which student volunteers are working. As such, developing a political consciousness means realizing the important roles that political systems play in issues such as hunger, housing, education, and health care. The term political engagement refers to taking action on a political level around these issues. As such, political engagement requires Scholars and staff to not just think about politics and develop a political consciousness, but to “be political”.

The purpose of this study is not to provide a set definition of terms such as political or civic engagement. In fact, the meaning of these terms is subject to some debate among scholars. Macedo and others (2005) define civic engagement as any activity, individual or collective, devoted to influencing the collective life of the polity. Berger (2011) on the other hand, claims that the term civic engagement has become so

broad and overused as to lose all meaning. Instead, he divides engagement into three categories, differentiating political engagement from social or moral engagement; all of which are necessary for a healthy democracy. According to Berger, while these different engagements can accompany one another, they need not do so, and are in fact distinct. The gap in definitions for the term politics can be just as wide. For example, Boyte's work (2003, 2005) calls for a re-imagination of citizenship in the 21st century to define political engagement as the interplay and negotiation among distinctive interests, values, and ways of looking at the world for the sake of accomplishing some public task. Berger again gives a much more narrow definition of political engagement – “any activity and attention relating to the political process and political institutions of local, regional, or national government. It can include voting, seeking or holding public office, attending town hall meetings, circulating a petition – any engagement whose purpose is to influence state actors and political outcomes” (2011, 5).

In their interviews, volunteers and staff both talked quite a bit about both service and politics, although their definitions of politics also greatly varied. The ways in which students defined “politics” is important in understanding the way they think about political engagement, and how their service relates to politics. This became clearer and clearer as I conducted interviews and began analyzing the data, so the interpretive focus groups with Scholars and ESC staff discussed this notion in further depth.

I think it all depends on how you go about defining politics. Really it's just a matter of perspective. If you put on the perspective of politics is our elected officials, our government, if you have that lens on it, then you see of course our work is very political, because you are working in areas that have been affected by an unequal distribution of power (Focus Group – Scholars).

Many of the students I talked to, both Scholars and Vols, tended to define politics in a very narrow sense, such as supporting a specific candidate or party. When I asked Constantine (a Vol with HFA) if he considered himself a political person, he told me, “No... I never found politics very interesting because I just don’t like politicians very much. I don’t know enough about the system or the issues in general to be able to establish an opinion. I avoid political talks for the same reason I avoid sports talks. I know what I would like to see changed in politics but I haven’t figured out a way to fix that.” Robin, a Vol with TLC, saw politics as aligning with one or the other of the two dominant political parties.

In High School I took AP Gov and we took a quiz to see what we were, and I was like a Republican. So I thought I was that but in a lot of the social issues I one hundred percent don’t agree. So I just go with whatever. I think I lean more towards Republican because my brother is in the Army, so I think that is where it came from, like really big support for war. But there’s (sic) a lot of things I disagree with. So that’s why I just kind of go with the flow and don’t think much about it.

Others narrowly defined politics as advocating for a specific policy position – something in which they also had little desire to participate. “I just don’t like that, the way that the systems work, and the way like, I guess funding for different programs, like I don’t like the way the whole system works. And I know that’s not the only thing that encompasses politics, but that’s what I always think about when I think of politics. So I don’t know, I don’t like really getting involved with it” (Hector – Scholar with Community House).

To several students, politics also meant navigating tricky or difficult relationships in order to achieve a goal. “I see politics as not like Democrat or Republican, but politics as like non-profit politics, like stupid bullshit, with Learning Lab stuff, like money and

grants, and people being annoying, and people getting their feelings hurt, not wanting to do something, and that sort of stuff. But as far as voting, and looking at legislation, I don't know. I mean, I voted in the election" (Sydney – Scholar with HFA). In this sense, in the minds of several students politics became removed from "real" interactions with the community.

The reason why I wasn't really into politics was I didn't see any differences being made, so it makes it hard to really engage when things stay the same... (Politicians) almost seem like bad guys, which they're not, they're regular people. So that's why I was probably a little deterred to be really involved in politics. I don't know it just seems like too much, you know, politicking... I just didn't want to be involved in that. I'm more of a natural person, no fakes; you just want to communicate with people and somehow make a difference. So that's one thing about doing direct service and that's why I feel people actually enjoy service... they don't have to go through the politics and things like that. (Justin – Scholar with TLC).

When asked how their work relates to politics, several staff members of community partner organizations spoke only about how their work is directly impacted (and often made more difficult) by certain policies, decisions, or interactions with the city or state government.

We had an opportunity to move into a new building, since the city couldn't afford to keep it open for the community or the children, we would take over it, we would run our programming there, it would still be open for the community to come in... They said no, we could not have the building. The mayor wanted to be able to attach his name to what we were doing here, and you know, it's just really not fair. You know, we had secured funding where they would maintain the building, the students would be able to come in, the community could still have access to computers, and they tried and tried, and tried and tried and tried and tried, and still – no, no, no, no, no, no. And so, now it just sits there, and we really needed it, we needed the extra space. I mean, resources there would have helped our older students, but we would be able to offer more to our community as well... and they said no. So, that is one way that we've been impacted by politics, because there was something with the mayor thinking that somebody that was in our organization used to be a part of (the former administration), I mean, it was just so stupid. And it's just like, really? I mean, that's why we can't, that's why books are continuing to accumulate dust, and the library is not open because of this? (Taysha – Manger, Homes for All).

Johanna, the Development Manager with HFA described similar frustrations with what she sees as “politics” in her work.

Unfortunately politics does enter into it, because we have to go through the town; we have to go through the city jungle if you will to get permits and to get everything, inspections and all that. So is it a Democratic or Republican problem, no, it’s just that we have to go through that bureaucracy to get what we need. And if all of a sudden they don’t have people cause they laid off half the staff or whatever that delays our timeline, what can we do, that delays some family getting housing...so is it politics, I associate it with politics again not Democratic Republican kind of thing but just that whole bureaucratic quagmire. And if you know the right people sometimes they can pull some strings to get you what you need.

On the other hand, a number of Scholars defined politics in much broader terms, closer to the Boyte (2003, 2005) definition of engaging with other citizens with diverse interests in order to address public issues. Several Scholars discussed in their own words how defining politics impacts the connection with service. In the focus group, one Scholar noted, “another definition of politics is the power struggle, the power relationships that we have, and how that’s also tied into governance, but mostly how we tie it into our own sites, where we do our volunteer work and everything, and how we operate at Northeast College, and as Scholars, of course it’s very political.”

Some Scholars defined politics in terms of individuals’ interactions and involvement in larger systems of government and politics.

I think every individual becomes a part of that larger system. Whether you be a voting citizen, or you be a congressman, or you be someone who ends up with a job with the state... everything starts with one person. So individual engagement, I think, long term is going to expose you to things. You can’t know something if you just talk about it, you have to see things, you have to be exposed to it, it’s not going to mean the same thing if you’re not. So, I think that that’s where that all fits in, because a person might just be a person, but they’re part of something larger, part of a larger community, and that’s where, within that larger community, influences can have that echo or that domino effect (Brian – Scholar with HFA).

Other Scholars see politics in a broad sense of interactions with others. A Scholar in the focus groups said that he thinks, “everything that we do is related to everything, the fact that every action we have in life, everything that we do in life, is connected to another action... I see it as a symbiotic relationship, you know, I get my education, I get my scholarship, I give kids an education, I work towards being an educator in the future. Everything I do, and going to rallies, all that stuff, makes me more informed and a better teacher” (Javy – Scholar with TLC). Later in the focus group, another Scholar added,

At the heart, politics is simply representing the views of groups, different groups representing their views and trying to incorporate those views into policy, or to be acknowledged in some way. And you know, that is obviously a good goal, so I think there is a way to engage in political discussions without it turning into a debate, and without it turning into an argument. There is a productive way of doing it, and I think at the heart of that is simply laying out the facts, understanding why the person is thinking the way they are, understanding their circumstances, their desires, and to realize that just because someone thinks differently than you, that doesn’t necessarily mean they’re trying to impede upon your liberty or freedom. But they have a reason to think this way, and you have to understand that reason, even if you disagree with it. So I think it’s really, at the heart of it is, getting the facts straight and understanding the person’s perspective.

Other Scholars defined politics as working within these relationships or structures to make an impact on communities. “I’d have to say, working on these issues, it’s hard to do something that’s not political, because... sometimes the only way to make a difference is to enact policies and work that law into government, into legislation, and stuff like that” (Focus Group – Scholars). Penelope, a Scholar with MASK, described the connection between her work and a sense of politics similarly, “It’s political and social, and a little economical also. They’re always involved. I never really was into politics before, but recently I’ve been getting into it because it is directly related. Obviously state officials and government officials are trying to make, always trying to improve a place,

wherever they're working for, and so are we. So, in effect, we're mini-politicians, but in our own way, because we're doing direct service."

Finally, Scholars also defined politics in terms of the impact it can or should have on the issues on which they work. "I feel like everyone has a voice and not everyone uses that voice, I probably don't use mine as much as I should. But I feel like if individuals spoke up more about things the more things would change. I should not be preaching but I don't do it but I should" (Jesse – Scholar with TLC). Bill, a Scholar with HFA also sees politics in a broad sense, as necessary to make an impact. "A lot of politics are sort of mumbo-jumbo but innately every single thing that a politician enacts affects every single person. I follow it on a broader scale....For me it's the broader issue, it's the politics of the issue, it's the legislative, the policies, the bureaucracy of everything. So I'm at the point where looking at the statistics is just sort of trivial at this point. Let's go do something, let's figure it out and stop beating around the bush." A Scholar in the focus group expressed politics in a way that combines both impact and structure, and saw their work as clearly impacted by politics.

I view politics as a way to improve the situation you are in, with whatever partner you're dealing with. So, especially in a school, school funding and different curriculum standards are determined by policy. And that's something that you really can't change unless you're involved in that debate... And the second way I see politics is that within any organization, there is a political structure, especially in education now, and corporations as well – administration has been growing, and the money and the focus has been placed on administration. And this is a highly political system, within administration. So if you have some knowhow, then you can navigate that structure more, and use it to your advantage and help the kids, in the case of education.

Engaged Scholarship Center staff were also asked about their definitions of politics and political engagement. To one staff member in the focus group, the notion of

politics wasn't about specific political actions; it was about a broader conception of systems, structures, and how citizens engage with each other.

Um, for me, the first thing that I thought of when you said politics was systems, and how they're in place to create structure. But it's predicated on our perception of that structure, so everyone has a different kind of standpoint that kind of, I guess it's hard because we're trying to come to a mutual agreement, or a mutual vision, of what politics should be, or what democracy should be, but it's so difficult to come to that agreement or understanding, so I just think of systems and just how they kind of differ. And how we engage with those systems, especially with the work that we do, we have to kind of take from it, use it to our best ability, and see how we can add assistance to those structures, those systems that are already in place. So sometimes we may not always agree with them, but we can work around them to somewhat make them better, or at least aid them.

When asked if they considered their work as political, staff members tended to draw on both narrow and broad conceptions of the concept of politics. Jennifer, the coordinator for the education team sees politics intertwined with many of her relationships and interactions with the community.

It can be (political). You know, when we're at a board of education meeting advocating for someone it is. When we're keeping ourselves at an arm's length from politics and politicians because we're concerned about their image to the people that we're serving, it is, whether we want it to be or not. We need to make friends with certain people in power, so that we can do what we need to do, and that is 100% political and relationship-based. ... You want to get closer to the people making the decisions that are affecting the people you're trying to serve. So yeah, our work, my work more than the students, because I'm at the top of the chain of command, so I'm the one meeting with the principal on a normal basis, or the superintendent, or sitting on a mayor's commission, but I have to make sure we're doing things in some kind of neutral level for the most part. But, you know when we're at the board of ed meeting and we don't agree with it, we're allowed to be oppositional. It's you know, that's part of the work, and then you know, in the schools we're advocating for students, so yeah, we want to be friends and help the counselors, but if you're not doing your job, I'm going to be the angry parent instead of your secretary, you know, like I can play either role.

Interestingly, several staff members mentioned to me, both in the focus group and in their individual interviews, that this was the first time they had thought about how their work relates to politics, or asked about their own conception of political engagement.

These staff members were able to talk at length about these ideas, and provide nuanced thoughts on the ways they think about politics. They recognized that these were important ideas related to their work, however they also said that this is something that they would not normally think about, and definitely not talk about, with their fellow staff members. This seems to support Eliasoph's (2013) findings that people regularly think about the role of politics, yet they are rarely given a space to give voice to these ideas.

Scholars, Vols, and staff members of the ESC and community partner organizations defined "politics" in a number of different ways in our discussions. Those who defined politics narrowly thought of the term as relating only to formal political engagement in electoral politics (such as supporting a specific candidate). Others thought of politics as navigating difficult relationships to get what you want ("playing politics"). In both cases, students and staff thought of "politics" as something they would rather avoid. However, those who defined politics more broadly defined the term to include interactions between individuals and larger systems and structures, or the relationships between different groups and segments of society. Students and staff who defined politics in broader terms were more likely to see their work as political, and contributing to larger change.

As will be discussed in further depth, broad definitions of politics are facilitated in reflection sessions among Scholars, where these students are encouraged to see the connections between their service and larger systems and structures. This can also be seen as the development of a political consciousness. In this way, service makes some of these Scholars realize that they are not just individuals in society, but part of something larger. The Vols are usually not a part of these conversations however, and are more

likely to retain narrow definitions of politics, or avoid thinking and talking about politics altogether. Those who hold narrow definitions of politics are also less likely to see their service as part of a larger contribution to social change. While many of the trends covered in this chapter were present among the Vols as well, this discussion focuses mainly on the ways in which the Engaged Scholars program impacts the ways in which the Scholars think about the connection between their work and a sense of politics. The Vols were much more likely to define politics narrowly, and drew a sharp distinction between their work and politics because they were not part of a structured program which is designed to attempt to explicitly draw this connection.

Talking Politics:

While Scholars discussed politics in both broad and narrow terms, Vols only spoke about politics in a more narrow sense. In conversations with the Scholars, it was clear that their participation in the program has impacted the way they think about the connection between service and politics. Even those who purposefully avoid more demanding types of political engagement are typically still exposed to political events in U.S. society (Colby et al 2007). Simply discussing current events is linked to greater interest in politics, improved critical thinking, civic knowledge, and more interest in public affairs (Youniss and Levine 2009). Scholars and ESC staff both discussed the importance of reflection – both formal and informal – in regularly discussing the issues on which they work. As Brian says of his team at HFA, “we’re all working on the same thing, so it’s going to come up in topic. So I think, being exposed to it all the time, makes it come up more, especially being with a bunch of people who all work within an issue.”

While most Scholars recognize that formal reflection is a necessary component of their work, many of them also mentioned that it can feel forced at times, and some conversations can tend to drag on. “Everyone talks in the circle. And it’s more of you getting off your chest what you want to get off your chest, and no one is listening, because everyone else is just like, by the 15th person, they’re like, ugh, I want to get out of here, because it ends up being like 4 hours long, and some people talk for hours” (Brian – Scholar with HFA). As Matt, a Scholar with MASK described, these conversations can be somewhat hit or miss. “I’ve had really meaningful discussions with some of these students, but I’ve also had discussions where I was the only one talking.” Fiona, a Scholar with TLC, seemed to sum up most Scholars’ feelings on the organized reflections during meetings:

I think it’s interesting just to hear other people’s experiences with their service because it’s inspiring, you get inspired, re-inspired because of the experience someone else had. So I’ll complain about reflections, they take forever, but they do help. I like hearing about other people’s experiences. There’s some sites I’m never, I just don’t have the time to go to and see, like Community House. I never had the time to go there, like MASK, so seeing what they’re doing, all the awesome things they’re doing too is really cool. I do reflections even though we all complain that it takes too long.

Many Scholars also mentioned that informal reflection discussions (discussions that happen on site, in the van, or during social gatherings for example, but are not organized as formal reflection activities) are often just as useful and meaningful to their work, if not more, than structured reflection in meetings. When asked which she felt was more useful to her, Antonia, a Scholar with TLC told me, “the informal for sure because I feel like a lot of times the formal ones are kind of like we have to be there and then a lot of times after a day of service we’re really tired and we really want to leave and it’s not as meaningful. I feel the informal ones, we’re just talking among ourselves and we don’t

feel like we have to say anything we just want to, so that's when we start talking about stuff."

It is usually up to the teams themselves to put together these discussions, but many Scholars find them very useful in their work.

At the end of both semesters we did it, and we went out and just got appetizers, and we talked about what do you think, how do you feel this is running, and trying to get that input, because I think it's like, if you break things down like that, it's going to work, and second semester went a lot better than first semester, because we did that. And maybe next semester will go even better, and so we break it down ourselves. But big group, and like, it's hard with Scholar too, because everyone is doing different things, like this group of people are over here doing this issue, it's more interesting to hear what they have to say than it is like really applying to my stuff (Steve – Scholar with HFA).

Some reflection conversations are even less formal. Many Scholars mentioned that some of the most important and impactful conversations they have had have happened in the van, on the way to or from their service site, and these conversations unfold organically.

Honestly conversations usually start with someone either, two ways, with someone complaining, someone feeling discouraged about something that they're doing. Someone recently came up to me and said –I don't know if the work I'm doing with my organization is meaningful, is actually doing something. So we sit down, you know, we talk about it, we say okay, well, what do you think and how do you want to change this and you know maybe what you're doing is not as impactful as it could be but think about ways you could change it. Or if Bob or someone is ecstatic about something, someone has a new passion, someone has a new vision, an idea and they're like –oh my gosh, I want to share this with you, what do you think, here's my proposal, help me change it and let's do this, make this happen-. It's kind of two ways and I think either way it starts after you have that conversation you definitely feel more focused and sometimes you feel a little more "oh no" , there's so much to do but usually it's positive (Justine – Scholar with HFA).

However, these conversations are not accidental. Reflection is a key component of the Scholars Program design, and it is important for staff members to create space in which these meaningful conversations can unfold. As Donna (Vice-President of the

Engaged Scholarship Foundation) explained, “the structured reflection opportunities magnify the power of the program, and also magnifies the unstructured reflection, which is occurring in the dorm, or in the van.” This type of space is particularly important because a number of Scholars mentioned that outside of their conversation with fellow Scholars, they really do not discuss their work in any depth with other friends, family, or colleagues. When I asked Marie, a Scholar with CH, if she talks about her work with anyone outside of the Scholars program, she told me:

Oh, people don’t get it. My parents...they don’t get it at all. They’re like, why wouldn’t you just be an RA? You get more money being an RA. And like, what is the point of this Scholar? You get so much more stress out of it, why bother? Like, they don’t really understand what it is, and like, my best friend gets it, she goes here, so she kind of understands how Scholar works, but my other friends at home are just kind of like, oh wow, you do a lot of community service. That’s a lot. And I just get those looks all the time, like wow, that’s what you’re doing with your life at college. You’re not having fun, you’re going into Capital City!

Ian, President of the Engaged Scholarship Foundation explained, “Students are really developing through structured or unstructured dialogue and reflection. So unstructured would be in the van, but it’s also not just the faculty but also with community partners. So there’s pretty strong stuff around that, that argues for some of the approaches we ought to take to get there... It turns out you need, our research suggests you need both and they’ve got pretty good numbers to back that up.” Marina, the Associate Director of the Engaged Scholarship Center at NC also explained the importance of reflection in connecting students’ service to a broader sense of politics. “I think for any real change to kind of happen you do have step out of just serving at the soup kitchen, and definitely have those larger conversations. I think that we try to do some of that with the forums and the critical conversations that we’re having. And to me that’s important and I’ve learned a lot. Personally I feel that it has changed me to do

different things myself in terms of political action, I'm more informed now.” Kevin, the Director of MASK, also sees this ongoing conversation as one of the strengths of the Scholars, “It’s the fact that they’re in an educational setting at this point in time and it puts you in a different mindset...I mean a lot of the kids that come from Scholars are studying social justice issues at school so it’s on their mind to start with. They’re a much easier audience to speak to, to talk to and interact with.”

A number of Scholars see these conversations as a key piece of making a connection between their direct service on a day to day basis, and a larger sense of political consciousness.

What Scholars does, is they empower us not to just have this service in college, but to become Democratic citizens and to get more involved in the policy-making processes, and try to become more educated voters, and try to help the future of it. We have these conversations all the time, with people you may or may not agree with, and you think about these issues on a deeper level, like why is this even an issue? Why do we even need volunteers working on this? What are the causes and things that need to change? I don’t think I’d ever even think about these kinds of things if we didn’t talk about it in Scholars (Jessica – Scholar with TLC).

Jennifer, the Education Coordinator with ESC, also noticed this kind of impact when she was a Scholar as an undergraduate.

I’ve seen it myself, but in other people too – you don’t even know what’s out there, you know. And even if you’d been into these cities, like Capital City, you know I’d been to all of those places when I was in middle school and high school, but you’re not looking at the homeless people and really thinking out anything other than, oh there’s a homeless person, you know. And when you come to college and you’re in a program like this, you’re forced to think about it, because you’re going to the soup kitchen to help, or you’re going to the schools in the city, or to HFA to build a house, or wherever we’re going, and you have to think out why. And that’s part of what the Scholar program, and having these conversations, and hopefully taking classes while you’re in school to help connect those things. Because then you are thinking it deeper than, here’s some food, I hope you have a good day. It’s the systemic problems, and thinking about why and what we can do to fix them beyond just the direct service kind of thing.

Connecting Service and Politics:

The Scholars Model, Service, and Political Engagement

As discussed in the previous section, reflection discussions are one of several ways that the Scholars Program attempts to connect direct service experience with the deeper issues underlying the Scholars' work. Donna, the Vice-President of the Engaged Scholarship Foundation (ESF), sees this connection at the core of the Scholars model. "There are six core values, that all the Scholar programs have, and a big one is civic engagement – and that is defined as political engagement, like understanding what I can do through the political process, through the democratic process, voting, you know advocacy, lobbying, etc. And these themes run through all of the Scholars programs, through the reflections and trainings." Donna continued to explain the Scholar model in terms of connecting personal experience to deeper political thought.

We have this developmental model thing, so it's like, in the first year, do you know how to manage your time, do you know how to listen well, do you know how to reflect, do you know how to write. And in the second year, do you know how to be a part of a team, can you balance all your responsibilities, you know, have you started to think about diversity in any real way. And then third year is when people, the programs usually get into more critical thinking, like introducing civic engagement, you know, activism, lobbying, running a team, more facilitating dialogue. And then, if you do it right, then you can get students to those experiences, where they're thinking about, well I've got all these years of experience, I know the people, I know the site, I know the issue, now what?

A survey of alumni from Scholars programs across the country gave Donna encouragement that this model was effective. "I don't think we're graduating a lot of cynical alumni, and that's why we were really excited with what we saw... (the survey) used a scale called civic professionalism, and the Scholars are kind of off the charts compared to the national average on those things – meaning voting, boycotting, all these

kinds of individual civic actions. But I think, again, it's because that sense of community, that they're part of something on their campus, and it's such a close-knit group."

Bill, a Scholar with HFA, seems to be an example of how the developmental model described by Donna above works in practice. "I think my experience with Scholars, I think in my first two years I was really idealistic... And then I think over the years, especially now being a senior, and being more of an adult and a citizen, those issues have come to a sort of broader sense of let's figure this out in a way that can be equal, ethical and fair for everyone. And definitely Homes for All and Scholars has pushed me towards that." Matt, a Scholar with MASK, saw his path similarly. "I like to think they trust us with so much responsibility, they want us to be able to combat these problems with more tools than just regular volunteers, so that we can then be able to take real action with them." Brian, a Scholar with Homes for All, explained how leading the mandatory ELP days is supposed to help make the connection between service and the "big picture" as well. Before the first year students begin their day of service, the Scholars give them a short speech that is "supposed to be a reminder before you get involved that engagement is part of your responsibility living in a democracy, that's what democracy is... I guess that's the idea, part of those days, those programs, is to try to get people engaged, and that is the motivation long-term. You want people to be engaged so that they know, so that they can be a bigger part of the system, so they can have a voice."

When asked if she saw a connection between her work as a Scholar with TLC, Samantha told me, "Yes and I think the Scholars does a good job of bridging the gap as we go along in our years here. As you get older you start doing more trainings on grant writing or getting involved in public policy and things of that nature. So we go from the

micro level, which is our service sites to this macro level where we're working on actual policy." The Scholars realize that making the connections between these issues is an important piece of their Scholar experience as well.

Yeah, I think we realize most of our sites are connected somehow. Even with two sites like TLC, I see how it's also connected to MASK and to all the others. I think when we do reflections we do reflect on our own experiences connected to our service and I think that reinforces ideas about....like some of us may come from like a more privileged background but that doesn't mean that we can't serve in these communities. I do feel it does reinforce the bigger picture issues that Wade talks about, especially because he does want us to get more politically active too. He's always talking about it and I feel like people are just going to get tired of him talking about it and will just read it themselves so they know what he's talking about the next time they go to a meeting (Fiona – Scholar with TLC).

Later in her interview, Fiona explained how she thinks this process works for most Scholars, and why it is effective.

What Scholars tries to do in general is taking kids like at NC, okay they're volunteering with kids at TLC for a couple of hours but in the process they're becoming more aware of how education policies affect these kids and I feel like it's putting a human face to these issues. ... I feel like the service we do is just putting a human face on the issues that we should be caring about and it will make us more passionate in the long run. ... We can look back and say well, if these policies change then the people we care about will benefit from it.

Both Scholars and Engaged Scholarship staff clearly recognize that one of the main goals of the Scholars program is to connect direct service with a recognition of larger structural issues related to their work. Ian, President of the Engaged Scholarship Foundation, gave an example explaining how the Scholars model can make this connection in ways that differ from many other service learning programs.

I think it's a mistake to see it as either service or politics. There's this other stuff in the middle that's not necessarily explicitly about politics, you know, so we have Scholars involved in a Coalition to End Homelessness in Capital City. It was asking, systemically, how do we do a better job ending homelessness? And they distinguish between the chronic homeless and those at risk of short-term homelessness. So there's a different way of thinking about each group. And, for the chronic homeless, the research says, it's more expensive to have them on the

street, than to give them permanent housing. And so they call that housing first. And, so that didn't require any lobbying, didn't require a protest, didn't require a political change of who the mayor was, or the county executive or whatever. What it took was, getting those agencies to work together and the funders at the table, and to look at the research, and to map the current system, and to look at potential other models, and make that happen. Now, it was political in the sense that some of the providers liked the way they did their work, and they were being asked to do something different. But it wasn't political in this larger sense. Now, there are politics involved in whether it's federal funding or state funding for homelessness to begin with. There are opportunities to redirect the nature of those funding streams, and what they'll pay for. So there's policy involved, I mean policy and politics aren't distinct. So again, I think we fall into this trap where, it's service or politics.

Ian's outlook is similar to that of Eliasoph's (2013); that volunteering and political action need not be separate creatures. She argues that this divide is largely due to the common vision that volunteering is warm and comfortable, while political activism is hot-headed and angry. To connect these two seemingly disparate forms of engagement, Eliasoph contends that civic engagement programs must make it clear to volunteers that the issues on which they are working are a result of human decision-making. The definition of what counts as "politics" must also be expanded, and participants must "connect the dots" to see how problems are interrelated (2013). Later in his interview, Ian explained the need for more collaborative work in terms of students' views of politics as well.

I think what students are talking about when they think politics, it's really electoral process, and the legislative process, and all the dysfunction that they see. And I think there are other ways for people to get involved that can in fact have an influence ultimately on those other processes, but students can, it'll be more like their community service work. And therefore, you know, it's collaborative, it's not us versus them, or we're right and you're wrong, it's more, how do we puzzle through this. But again, we're not, we haven't, I fault us, as a field for not providing more of this. You know, there are examples of what I'm talking about, but it's not the norm. It's not the categories people are using.

The Challenges of Connecting Service and Politics

While it is an important component to the Scholars experience, Engaged Scholarship staff also recognize limitations to the program model. Marina, Associate Director of the ESC, recognized that while they aim to create opportunities for Scholars to make the connection between service and politics, it doesn't always happen. "It all depends. I mean, so if a team member was in the education team and he's just doing after-school programming, not political. But if those team members go to the Board of Education and begin kind of pushing a particular something yeah, that's a little bit more political, you know. I think that those things have happened." Marina also felt that college is the perfect time for students to become politically active, although it's often up to the students to take their own initiative.

We certainly encourage our students to get involved, reminding them that they're young and they can do it now because once they have a family, mortgage, and things that they have to do, in terms of responsibility they're not going to have the same opportunities. And some of our students have been arrested at rallies and things like that. We certainly don't discourage that and don't encourage it but it's something that they do and it's something that they should do. I think it all depends; I think the specific group of students really drives some of that stuff, so some people are more involved than others. So you might get radical students that might want to do more rallies and kind of do more of that and then sometimes you just get students that are okay just doing what they're doing right now.

Emily, a Scholars alum and the current Program Manager with TLC explained that while the Scholars program is attempting to move further towards integrating a sense of politics into students' opportunities, most volunteers, like those on ELP days still some way to go.

I think especially those volunteers that come from NC, if they are coming from a class with a specific topic, like prevailing problems of urban education. We have a group of twenty five kids who come every semester and they get to like, talk to kids, find out what's going on, they talk to teachers, write reports, they write little blogs... I would say those focused classes definitely get into it... I don't know even some of our Scholars volunteers they're kind of just...like they're there to fulfill the need, like no one's ever come to me and asked, like why do you think,

what kind of programs can really help this district out? No one has ever come to me with that unless they were looking for information about a paper or some kind of research or something, I never heard anything like that. Scholars, I think again, they're trying to get into policy. I know they have more concrete discussions about what's going on, what's really happening behind the scenes and I've heard them have conversations about like what needs to be fixed, is it the education system, is it the cycle of poverty, is it lack of support, what's actually the problem here? I've heard them have conversations like that. I've, I've partaken, I've been a part of conversations like that in the past.

Donna, Vice-President of the Engaged Scholarship Foundation, discussed the limitations of service learning programs in general in making the connection between service and politics.

Getting to the part where people can propose systemic solutions, coming across party lines, I'm not sure if we're doing that. I'm not sure that anyone is doing that though. I don't know that we're getting students there. That's part of the reason that we're doing those discussions with students, is because we want people to be comfortable analyzing what they think their own viewpoints are, and for example, would they propose, if they were going to run for office or something, what would they propose. And I don't even know if anyone is successful in that, even with an intensive political engagement training program. I don't know.

Ian, President of the Engaged Scholarship Foundation, also discussed the limitations facing the field of service learning in this area, particularly the lack of paths available for students to make the connection between service and politics. "If students aren't experiencing and playing a role in that systemic, problem-solving, collaborative kind of collective work, then their understanding of it is going to be hampered." After discussing how few service learning opportunities actually engage in that type of collaborative, solution-based work, he continued:

While the field has talked about, 'people need to get involved in politics', we haven't really crafted that many direct roles. ... People talk about organizing, and then they talk about letter-writing, and they talk about canvassing, and petitions, and sort of more protest oriented approaches, and while those are important too, obviously, they're not a normal place for students to get heavily engaged. Students want to do more hands on stuff anyway, and so we're trying to figure out how you can do this. We thought we could attach it directly into the site-based

teams, it turns out you can't. Those teams are just too busy doing the direct service, and they're doing it for single organizations. So even if it's the education team, they still work with three different direct service providing groups, you know, two schools and an after-school program, not collaborative work.... The other thing that I think is happening is that most of the staff, few of the staff or faculty on campuses are themselves heavily engaged in, or experienced in, these other modes. So, you do what you know. And so we have a huge learning curve to go up, professionally, if we're going to aspire to have our students learn this stuff.

Frustration as a Necessary Step

Many Scholars, along with staff of both the ESC and community partners, told me that they were motivated by seeing the impact of their work. When I asked them why they were so committed to service, I repeatedly heard about seeing student test scores improve, homes built, lessons learned, meals served, and many other similar successes. However, as detailed in the last chapter, most Scholars also admitted to feeling deep frustration in their service. Rather than being seen solely as negatives in the service experience though, these frustrations seem to be a necessary step for many Scholars in seeing a connection between their work and the larger systems and structures that shape the issues on which they work. As Marina, Associate Director of the ESC explained, “there’s a student right now who is saying, ‘I feel like we’re not doing enough and I want to make sure that we push for more changes and things like that.’ So I think it’s going to happen to that team because of that one person’s drive... Some team members just kind of doing their service, doing good work but just kind of doing that. It takes someone to kind of get a little bit more uncomfortable, or learn about something to rally themselves up to do something more.”

Again, Donna (Vice-President of the Engaged Scholarship Foundation), sees this as an important piece of the Scholars model.

If you're being successful with students in the upper class years, in some ways, you find that they become more disenchanted, or discouraged, as they become more knowledgeable of an issue. Because they come to a place where it's like, well maybe what I'm doing is not making an impact right now, and there has got to be other types of solutions. ... So it's an interesting issue, because a lot of times when we talk with folks in our field, we talk about the value of something like a short-term service project right, it's what some people argue, well that's just stupid, but well, it is if in the wrong place, but if it's done in the right place, like for example, with freshmen at large, like what NC is doing, and opening their eyes to this as being interesting, fun, valuable, then it's actually really important, like as part of that developmental journey. And through that, students might get the part where they're emotionally connected to something, that's an important learning thing.

Many Scholars discussed frustrations in their work that led them to question the effectiveness of volunteer service. Sometimes this was a realization that their work is impacted by a much larger system than just their site. "There are challenges built in, because we can't control it 100%. The school system overall, the teachers have like 30 kids in their classroom, they have charter schools closing every year, just bringing 200 more kids into the school that is already over-capacity. So like, what do you do? You know? And those are the things that you can't really just change, it takes way more, it takes a school board, it takes the state, it takes so many things to change it, you know" (Rachael – Scholar with TLC). Brian, a Scholar with HFA, expressed a similar frustration with the limitations of his service:

I think one of the largest challenges is working within a system that's already messed up. You know, the Capital City school district is third to last in the whole state, as far as school systems go... But, if we weren't involved to the extent that we are involved, if we aren't involved this much, then it's that much worse, you know. So I feel like you're making an impact, and you're trying to help the issue, but solving it has to come from another level. I think it needs to be a top down kind of thing, like here we are at the bottom of the food chain, so to speak, we can't fix this problem ourselves unless we have approval from up here, and a top down thing. So I think it works the same way in society, like you can't fix this if there's this political barrier, and you have to work down, you know.

Ashley, a Scholar with TLC, expressed her frustration with the lack of progress she has seen in her time as a Scholar, and saw the need for much larger changes. “I just don’t even know if it’s realistic, for even a group of 80 people to tackle it. Like, you really need a huge movement to change everything. And you’re not just changing public school, but you need to change politics and economics too, so it’s like, *(pause)* who’s going to do that?! Like, you need an army for that. I don’t even know, yeah, that’s daunting. I don’t see a lot of things changing in my lifetime at all. I think it would take a long time to change a lot of these things.” Some Scholars even begin to question why non-profit organizations are required to meet the needs in their community at all. “You often feel very frustrated or dejected because of your service, and you feel like you’re not actually doing anything, because if you were doing something, wouldn’t you see it? Like why do they need volunteers? Because it should already be in the system. It should already be in. So that’s something that I struggle with sometimes” (Penelope – Scholar with MASK).

While many Scholars feel frustrations and limitations in their work, the key seems to be harnessing and redirecting these frustrations before they lead to despair. Sheila, a Scholar with MASK, feels the limitations of the service she’s doing, and the limitations of the Scholars program overall. However, she is driven forward, even if she can’t quite put it into words.

A lot of times I don’t even see how I’m changing. There’s times when I do see that I really made an impact and sometimes it’s like what am I’m doing? ... I’m wrapping flatware. Okay, every one of these people need forks but... Sometimes I don’t see or feel the connection. So, there is that connection. I wouldn’t keep going unless there was. Sometimes I just think Scholars takes on so many issues and they don’t work on the ones they already have maybe. We have two or three new sites this year but TLC is suffering because they took people off the

Education Team. They do, they try so hard, they want to help everyone but in reality we need more people.

Most Scholars continue to find similar motivation in their work amidst the frustration, and escape falling into hopelessness. However, if programs like the Scholars want to avoid the risk of students just giving up on service work as futile, and becoming resigned to issues like hunger, homelessness, or educational inequality being inevitable, these frustrations must be funneled into productive channels to create social change. As described earlier in this section however, these channels and pathways are often lacking in the current service learning landscape. If Scholars see their work as connected to a sense of politics or policy, these pathways seem clearer. However, even though most Scholars see that changes need to be made to larger systems or structures in order to make a meaningful impact on the issues on which they're working, they often purposefully separate their work, and themselves, from "being political".

I Know I should be political but...:

According to Rankin (2013), college students demonstrate consistently high levels of interest in national politics and world affairs. Despite this prevalent interest, however there is individual disengagement from what Rankin refers to as "distant politics" (107). In other words, students are interested in significant national and world events, yet they are unsure of how to connect such interests to action. Similarly, many Scholars told me that they attempt to follow news or policy and considered themselves reasonably well-informed, particularly with news relating specifically to their work. For example, headlines about housing or education regularly grab the attention of Scholars with HFA or TLC. As noted above, Scholars also spoke about the connections they see between

service and politics, and some even mentioned the meaningful conversations they have around this connection. However, seemingly contradicting these actions, many Scholars also noted that they actively separate their service work from what they define as politics. In other words, there is a disconnect between the development of a political consciousness and actual political engagement. This distinction is key to understanding the ways in which Scholars relate their service work to a broader sense of politics.

Scholars are not alone in keeping service and political engagement as two separate spheres. As mentioned previously, students are volunteering at record high levels. However, by the most obvious indicator of political engagement, voting, young people are increasingly disengaged from electoral politics in recent years. The peak of millennial voting was 2008, with 51.1 percent going to the polls (CIRCLE 2010b). However, the turnout dropped to 45 percent in 2012 (CIRCLE 2013). In the 2010 midterm election, less than a quarter of voters ages 18 to 29 voted (CIRCLE 2011). The rate of voters younger than 30 who could say with certainty that they were registered to vote also fell steadily after 2008. By 2012, it hit 50 percent, the lowest number recorded since 1996 (Pew Research Center 2012a).

There is a common recognition among Scholars that they “should” be more politically engaged, but there are a number of factors that stand in the way. Many offered statements similar to, “I know it’s political, but...” before explaining a number of reasons that they do not consider themselves “political”, and are not politically engaged. Among the reasons that Scholars fail to make a connection to political action are that they see politics as too divisive, or they do not see politics (at least not in its current state) as a viable solution. Scholars also failed to make a connection between their service work and

political action because they said they do not know how to engage politically. Finally, both Scholars and staff said they are often too busy just meeting the logistics of their daily work to make the connection to politics more explicitly. Each of these views contribute to a conception of service engagement stripped of “politics”, where volunteers see making a difference as an individual as their best potential for creating change.

... I Don't Know How to be Political

Some scholars argue that most Americans can, if given the opportunity, reason and think about politics (Gamson 1992; Hochschild 1981; Reinerman 1987). However, citizens are rarely given the space and opportunity develop the skills necessary to engage in politics, and these civic skills must be learned (Eliasoph 1998). A number of studies indicate very low levels of civic learning in the U.S. (National Task Force on Civic Learning 2012). The U.S. ranked 139th out of 172 world democracies in voter participation in 2007 (McCormick Tribune Foundation 2007, 6-7). Only 10 percent of citizens contacted a public official in 2009-2010 (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Only 24 percent of graduating high school seniors scored at the proficient or advanced level in civics in 2010 (National Center for Education Statistics 2011). The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP 2010) civic reports show that only about one-quarter of twelfth graders are at or above the basic level of civic proficiency, while one-third of high school seniors test below what Galston (2004) calls the working knowledge needed by most citizens. The number of civics courses taken in public schools has declined by two thirds since 1960 (Macedo et al 2005). This is not solely a concern for high schools however. A survey of 14,000 college freshmen and seniors conducted in 2006 showed that the average college senior failed in all four subjects of American history,

government, international relations, and market economy; fairing only slightly better than the freshmen (ISI 2006).

These numbers seem to indicate that most Americans are underprepared to participate fully in a healthy democracy. While a number of Scholars indicated that while they know they should be political, or know that they had to engage with the political system in order to really make a difference on the social issues of inequality with which they were engaged, they did not know how to do so. As Hector, a Scholar with Community House told me, simply, “I just honestly think it’s all confusing. I want to be more of an advocate. I don’t know if I have the courage necessarily to do that. I’d love to reach out more and try to address political people or people that are going to have an influence in making change. I just don’t know how exactly how to do that yet.” Ashley, a Scholar with TLC gave a similar statement, “I know Wade talks a lot about policy, like writing different laws or things like that, or creating different programs, and I don’t even know where I would begin, to be honest, to start something like that. And just finding the time to do something like that is a struggle for me right now, but it’s definitely something that I’m interested in working with, down the road.”

Several other Scholars also told me that they would like to be more involved in politics, but they simply never learned how, and have never felt comfortable engaging politically.

My major was very scientifically oriented. I didn’t have any classes based on politics or anything like that. I think without the Scholars Program I wouldn’t really know any ways to get into it. I guess, you know I never realized how big a deal calling a congressman or writing letters was, so that was a pretty big thing. I think that was one of the biggest ways I got involved was participating in things like that; going to political rallies. But yeah I was definitely confused how to get into those things. It felt like it was me versus the entire world (Matt – Scholar with MASK).

Emily, a former Scholar now working with TLC, gave a similar thought:

Policy wasn't part of my vocabulary until I moved from a volunteer to actually a program head where I saw how issues like child poverty and how the lack of education, how that all contributes to what we're seeing now. So I think policy has a huge influence on what we do, I just wish I knew more about it. They tried to get us into it and like looking at resources that are available to help, so we could research how to fix things, doing legislative stuff but I wasn't, I don't know, I've never really been too informed with what's going on with it... When I was a student I just found policy to be so daunting, just like there was so much and they're speaking in all this political jargon and I'm like, what, what are you talking about? Just break it down for me. Like what do you actually mean? ... No one has actually stopped to break it down for volunteers.

A number of Scholars mentioned that they want to be involved politically, and realize it's important for their work, but they don't feel like they have the level of knowledge necessary to participate politically.

I'm not very involved in politics and I probably should be a little more aware of what's going on, the debates and all that. See, there's only a certain amount of change we can make on the ground using direct service and then honestly this goes back to policies and laws and things that are being made up those high levels. So I think that is something I'd really like to get involved in more, just understanding the policies behind it all and try writing congressmen and everything, trying to get certain laws that we as Scholars and the nonprofit world think would significantly help the residents of Capital City...I haven't taken the time to actually, you know, I don't want to just, like if I'm going to be political and really, you know, understand it, I want to be able to understand all aspects of it and both parties and not be just be influenced by like what my parents say. I haven't actually been able to take time to do that so um, yes, it's the time. I think up until now, honestly, I was still kind of that naïve high school student who didn't understand much about it and now as a college student I can understand and kind of learn... I should probably sit down and take some time out to actually do that because I think there's only so much you can do with direct service. There's only so much...you have to be informed about the policies behind them and why they exist (Justine – Scholar with HFA).

While the staff of the ESC acknowledged that connecting service and politics is an important goal in their work, several staff members also admitted during the focus group that it's not something they are comfortable with personally. "For me, the struggle

is how do you do it right. Because I read the Wall Street Journal, I read the New York Times, the Washington Post, I vote, I sometimes know who my local elected officials are. Okay, so then what, what does it look like, and how are we manifesting it in our own lives, and then if we're not manifesting it, in our own lives, in a way that we think is ideal, or even just decent, then how can we promote that to our student body?" Another staff member shared a similar thought shortly after. "I feel like I could do more on a personal level to inform myself, because if I'm requiring that of students, I don't feel like I'm at the level that I would want to be, if I'm requiring that of my students."

...I Don't See Politics as a Viable Solution

Most Scholars and staff members of both the ESC and community partner organizations expressed the idea that large-scale structural change is ultimately necessary to make any real impact on the issues of inequality on which they work. These changes, they admit, involve the political system, and would involve political engagement in order to increase the government's role in addressing these issues. However, many Scholars and staff members also said that while they know such political steps are necessary, they do not see politics, at least in its current state, as a viable solution.

A lot of the issues end with politics, but a lot of us aren't really into politics because we see it as a dirty game. For myself I'm not really interested in politics but just educating yourself is one step but at the same time just educating yourself, is that really going to solve the issue? Not really. You need to really put it in action and a lot of these actions will end with you trying to go to your state or whatever it is, your county, it's going to end with you trying to push a law or something to help these political leaders realize this is going on and we need to do something about it. Other than that if you just educate yourself on it, yeah you're helping yourself become aware of these issues but you're not really doing anything about it (Anjuli – Scholar with MASK).

Responses like this are hardly surprising, given recent levels of faith in the government, as indicated in polls. Only 19% of Americans surveyed by the Pew Research Center (2013a) said they trust the government in Washington to do what is right just about always or most of the time. The share of the public saying they are angry at the federal government reached an all-time high of 30% in October 2013. Another 55% say they are frustrated with the government, and only 12% say they are basically content with the federal government (Pew Research Center 2013a). The number of Americans that say they trust the government in Washington has steadily declined since the late 1960s, while distrust has steadily risen (Pew Research Center 2013b).

Ashley, a Scholar with TLC, expressed her distrust in the government in terms of the response to educational needs.

I'm not very hopeful. I'm not. Because I don't think people are willing to put their personal interests aside, or their political interests... someone in a high position is not going to want to get rid of their six-figure salary, to fix whatever needs to be fixed, or someone in such a high position is not going to want to give up, like the certain textbook curriculum they bought, because they've invested money in it, and because they broke a deal with the company, and that company is making a ton of money now, because they bought the textbooks, even though the textbooks suck, and no one wants to use it, and it's not teaching anything, and it's not standard, and it's like, well, I mean they're not going to get rid of it because of their personal, or their money interests.

Again, this type of response seems in line with national polling data. Roughly eight-in-ten (81%) of Americans believe that elected officials in Washington lose touch with the people pretty quickly, and 62% say “most elected officials don't care what people like me think.” Just 41% of Americans now say the government is really run for the benefit of all the people. This is down from 49% three years ago, and matches previous lows in the early 1990s (Pew Research Center 2012b).

Anjuli, a Scholar with MASK, expressed a similar statement of general distrust, and the idea that politicians are not looking out for most citizens.

We elected them for a reason and if they're not trying to do that then why is there even a government? Why are there people trying to structure our lives or whatever? ... When you become a political figure then your obligation one hundred percent is to the people. You have no other obligation but to help the people in whatever office you're elected into. A lot of these politicians they don't realize that. They only think about what's good for them and the people that they know instead of helping other people, the whole population. Like our Governor, a lot of things that I think he's doing, he's not even aware that there are people suffering in Capital City, and his office is in Capital City! He's not even aware that people are suffering in Capital City, and cities just like it around the state. A lot of the policies that he's implementing, I'm just like why the heck did you go into office, just to help people who are making the same salary as you? I don't understand.... Politicians don't even go out into different communities and try to help others. Come on, you're not there to try to help the people that you already know. You're supposed to be helping to change the world and how are you going to change the world with just helping with what you're familiar with. They definitely have an opportunity but nahhhh I don't see it.

Other Scholars recognize that while political engagement is necessary, they feel like political systems move frustratingly slowly, and they would rather make an immediate impact with their work.

Politics is such a long process. Just trying to put something into effect, just trying to get like a politician to recognize that this law needs to be changed or this law needs to be revised a little, it's going to take so long and like I said I'm a very impatient person so it's hard. Also a lot of people had hopes when Obama came into office that everything would be perfect, everything would change or whatever. And honestly I did kind of have that notion in 2008, but at the same time as I become educated, I realize politics is kind of dirty and getting laws to become effective it's a long, long process and a lot of people don't realize that. Okay, Obama came into office and everything was going to be great and even people back home they were like -oh my goodness, it's going to be amazing... but no, you have to understand it's going to be a long, long time until we see some changes, because we came from a messy eight years. It's going to take a long, long time and a lot of people don't realize that. I just don't have a lot of patience for it, it's sad but that's why I'm not political (Brad – Scholar with MASK).

This is a difficult position for most of those involved with the Scholars program to reconcile – to recognize the limitations of direct service, and see that the government and the political system must be involved to address issues like hunger, housing, education, and health care, yet to not trust the government to do so. Kevin, the director of MASK, expressed this dilemma in his work on hunger. “The answers and solutions are far beyond anything I can ever do... You’re just putting a Band-Aid on things, that’s what you’re doing, just trying to help people get through the day. I hate to say it, but I think this whole country is going to hell in a handbasket anyway if you listen to what’s going on in Washington.”

A number of staff members, both with the ESC, and with community partner organizations, expressed similar frustrations with political systems as the Scholars above.

Well, I think we kind of steer clear. Well, not steer clear. We kind of just do our own thing. I mean, politics and policy, it tends to be slow, right. And nothing we ever do, I mean we grow slow in size, but when we make a decision, we make a decision and we do it. And we’re, we want to do what’s best for the people that we’re serving at that given time. We can’t like, oh we want to change this, so let’s write a letter, and try to get this policy changed. No, in the meantime we’re going to do what needs to be done, and hope that the policy turns out the way we need it. But we kind of work with what we have, I’d say (Melissa – Director of Operations, Community House).

During the focus group with ESC staff, a number of staff members explained how they, and their students, feel on the topic. “I think students are somewhat intimidated by politics, or not really willing to engage in those conversations, because they feel like some of the political systems are unattainable. So I feel like that’s what holds people back from engaging in that, in those systems, because they just see them as stagnant, or stable systems. I know that’s sometimes what students will say.” When another staff member described politics as “broken”, Marina said it’s easy to feel that way, “especially in

Capital City, it's easy to see", particularly as the mayor of Capital City (along with several other city officials) had recently been arrested on corruption charges following an FBI investigation.

Phil, a coordinator with ESC was perhaps the bluntest in his assessment of the state of politics in the U.S.

I just think it's all fake man, I think it's a joke. I just don't want to waste any of my mental capacity on it. I just don't, don't, I don't know. Maybe it's because of how I was raised, like my mom didn't vote and stuff, so as I started to really get into it, and just saw the corruption and things like that, I was just, I don't know, I just feel like it's a false sense of entitlement, and I just don't, I feel like my vote doesn't, until someone can show me how my vote matters, I don't, especially after the situation in Florida (in the 2000 Presidential Election), with the vote. I mean, that just sealed the deal for me. I was like, this is crazy. Why are people voting? The man won, and then it was like, it was insane. That's the actual last time I actually was following politics at all. And even with the Obama race, people were telling me, oh you're a black man, this and that, I'm like, whatever president has been in this country since I been born, and since slavery was ended or whatever, nothing has changed. Nothing, there's no significant change at all, with policy, with law, with regulation, it seems like it's just getting worse, so I don't know what, I think politics in the country, it makes people aware of what's going on, but it just to me, the corruption man, I can't get down with that. So, I don't want to be part of a system that's corrupt like that, and put my energy and emotion, no.... It's corrupt, I think it's a false system, but then again, it's the system that we're in, so I have to you know, deal with it, and try to use it, because that's the only way that at the ultimate level, will get changed. But, it's, you know, that is the structure and society of a democracy we live in, and you have to, if you live in this country, you have to use the structure and abide by the structure, and if you want to change it, that's where the change is at. So, you know, that's where we're at.

Phil recognized that his views on politics put him in an odd position as a staff member of ESC, whose goals include increasing civic engagement among students. When I asked him if he had any hope that increasing political engagement might solve some of the issues he sees in politics, he was not optimistic.

I think the structure of politics is so strong, that no matter who gets engaged in it, they're going to, it's already set. No matter who walks through those doors, you're going to have to mold into what they need you to mold into, and if you

want to get to where you want to get to in the political field. ...The structure's already set. And they already know what they want, so if you can get that done, and get the people behind you, then hey you get it, but you're going to mold to what they need you to mold to. That's just how it is, and if you won't, the next person is willing to, and he's going to get it. So if you won't, then he will, or she will. So, it's, that's just my view of the structure. So I'm not really engaged in the political, and I don't really talk about it, because I don't like to sound uneducated or like I don't really know what I'm talking about.

Thus, while many students and staff recognize that engagement in politics is necessary to create real change, they also see political engagement at this point to be futile. Several Scholars and staff members saw the government as too dysfunctional or corrupt to effectively address the issues about which they care. Other Scholars know that political engagement is necessary, but feel that this approach moves much too slowly. In all of these cases, students and staff say that while they recognize that service may not solve the issues on which they're working, it is at least taking some form of action, and is making some sort of difference – a difference that they do not see political engagement as capable of making.

When I asked Anjuli if doing direct service appeals to her because it has more of an immediate impact than politics, she said, “Yes, because I like the fact that I'm here and I'm trying to change an issue. Even though it's not on a big scale, at least I'm trying to do something at least for a school year or two. I know I'll see a change or I'll see something happen with my volunteering, but with politics you never know. It's sad but politics aren't my thing.” Ashley offered a similar response when I asked if she preferred focusing on direct service because she could see the impact. “The small things. Yeah, yeah, I do. Because at least you're in control of that and you can try to change it as much as you can. At least to help a few people, even if you can't help everyone. And I think that if everyone tried to help just a few people, maybe things will get a little better. I

don't know, maybe. There's my optimism, right there." Susan, a Scholar with TLC said that she does not even like talking about politics, "I hate politics. I hate the conversations that people have about politics. I think it brings out the worst in people...I know it's important to vote but I almost don't want to because I don't want to regret who I voted for after the way things happen anyway. I just feel that no matter which way I go that I'm going to be deciding on information that is probably not accurate because there is no good way to get your information from. I feel very cynical about politics." Later in her interview, Susan explained why she prefers a direct service approach.

I just don't think that me talking about it necessarily convincing another person who is clearly going to disagree with me is going to get me anywhere. I don't think it's going to change anything above us. I'm very much a close to home type of person and that's what's going to affect my life versus things that are probably going to be decided anyway. I know it's really, really bad especially if Wade ever heard me saying this. I have a hard time thinking that my vote on the president is going to affect the things I care about right now and if my vote is really going to change anything.

As will be discussed in more detail below, several Scholars also see political partisanship as a major obstacle that keeps politics from being an effective form of engagement.

Everyone has this agenda, and until people can swallow their pride and get rid of these agendas that they have, and following these political party lines, and like, you know, just catering to the masses when, I don't know, I think there's so much that needs to be changed. I feel like we almost need to just get rid of everything and start clean, and like re-build everything. And I think that's partly the government's responsibility, it's partly our responsibility, so I don't, I don't even know where you would begin with that. Like, it's so stressful, in my opinion, like, I don't like to think too much about it, because then I get really pessimistic, and I start to think like, well, it's just not realistic, because no one is willing to put their personal interests aside to make change happen (Fiona – Scholar with TLC).

... I See Politics as Too Divisive

Perhaps the most common reason Scholars (along with some ESC staff) gave me for purposefully avoiding “being political” was that they see politics as too divisive. Particularly to Scholars who thought of “politics” in the more narrow terms of electoral politics, any discussion of political topics usually just served to divide people among partisan lines, and lead to angry arguments that they would rather avoid altogether. This purposeful avoidance of “political talk” also typically keeps volunteers, staff, and community partners from discussing the root causes or possible solutions to the issues around which they are engaged (Eliasoph 1998).

The Scholar program has what was described to me as “a culture of niceness”, even when there is conflict. Scholars as a whole are, for the most part, a very tight-knit group, and there is a very real hesitancy to cause rifts within that group. “Sometimes we’re just too formal, or too nice, to really debate, or you know, I don’t know, I think we can understand that someone is slightly different with their own ideology about politics, but we really, you know, we can identify ourselves in this corner for this issue, and this corner for this issue, but I don’t think we allow ourselves enough conversations and deep, deep really critical thinking about allowing each other’s voice to be heard on those issues” (Focus Group – Staff). An ESC staff member said later in the focus group that she respects her colleagues too much to engage in much political talk. “That’s what stops me. That level of like reverence almost, like I’m just like, I may not agree, but this is difficult to talk about, and I really respect this person, and I respect their judgment and their opinion, and even though I may never change my opinion to theirs, it’s just messy. Like, what am I sacrificing when I tell them what I really think?”

As such, it is not surprising that many Scholars do not want to engage in discussions that they feel might anger or offend each other. As Jesse, a Scholar with TLC told me, “It’s always so controversial that I try to stay out of it.”

I hate talking about politics; it makes me feel very uncomfortable. I don’t want to know how other people stand; I don’t want them asking me how I stand. At the last meeting when we had a political conversation I was very uncomfortable. I think no matter what your source is it’s going to be skewed and it’s up to you personally to figure out what you believe in or what you don’t. I hate when it becomes a preaching effect of like that’s just stupid that you think that, you should think this, blah blah blah. I’m right, you’re wrong. ... That’s my opinion and you need to not push your political beliefs on me because I’m not doing that to you. I don’t think people think about the bigger picture of it and they become very singled in on it, oh you’re a Scholar that means you’re a Democrat or you’re part of some of other organization that means you’re a Republican. I hate politics. It’s so divisive. I think everyone is type-casted in their role. Oh you’re a college student, you’re a liberal or you’re an old White man who lives in Montana you’re a Republican (Gina – Scholar with TLC).

Brian, a Scholar with HFA, clearly sees his work tied in with politics, but also sees how quickly any discussion of politics can lead to the type of fighting he tries to avoid.

Education and housing are completely political issues... and I’m always very interested in politics, but I hate to talk about them sometimes because people get into fights about them. I actually just posted a status on facebook the other day, like I know you have political opinions, but stop telling me about them on facebook. That’s not going to help anything. And yeah, it’s good to have a conversation, but when people have conversations about politics, especially on facebook, they just yell at each other... People can yell at each other until they’re blue in the face, but what is it going to change unless someone actually does something different? You can disagree about how to get things done, and there’s going to be talk about it, but in a way that’s what politics is. So how can you not be political, and talk about politics?

When I asked Brian if he thought that type of divisiveness is something that limits people from being more politically engaged, he said, “Yeah, because it’s a turn off when you turn on the tv and there’s two people yelling at each other, even in an educated way. And

then sometimes they actually do yell at each other (laughs). And you're like, I don't want to be a part of that. But I guess people have different opinions, that what they do,"

Winograd and Hais (2008) suggest that a penchant for group-oriented, "win-win" solutions among the Millennial generation lead to many young people to be turned off by what they perceive as the endless bickering of partisan politics (253). A national survey of Millennial college students in 2007 indicated that there is tolerance and support of dissent and debate, but a distaste for the bitter partisanship and political gamesmanship associated with much of the media reports on federal politics (CIRCLE 2007). Of course, college students have a reason to feel this way. Republicans and Democrats are more divided along ideological lines – and partisan antipathy is deeper and more extensive – than at any point in the last two decades. Partisan animosity has also increased substantially over this period. In each party, the share of people with a highly negative view of the opposing party has more than doubled since 1994 (Pew Research Center 2014). A Pew Research Center report (2012b) showed that the values gap between Republicans and Democrats is now greater than gender, age, race, or class divides. In recent years, both parties have become smaller and more ideologically homogenous (Pew Research Center 2012b).

I just the way I feel like when I watch the news they attack people, they go back and forth at each other, like what are you doing? I think this past election really; I can't deal with politics anymore. The stuff they were saying about Obama being a citizen, like...the Tea Party (big sigh)...I wish I was more politically active. I wish I was going to these protests but sometimes I just get so frustrated with how, on both sides, it's so vicious almost. In middle school and high school I was more politically active which is weird because usually people get more politically active when they get to college. I tried to go College Democrat meetings and not liking it at all. There's people on both sides, I didn't like the tactics...I hated the Republican side and the same thing the Democrats are doing, this is so frustrating... I wish I was more politically active. I do try to stay ahead with the news and stuff (Fiona – Scholar with TLC).

Several Scholars spoke about how they avoid political discussions outside of the Scholars program as well, at home or in their classes, because they saw them as too divisive with others. “My Mom is a very religious person. She’s a Republican and I don’t always agree with the things that she says but I don’t know how to voice an opinion because she would freak out. So I just don’t say anything. There are things that I do agree with and then when you come to school, especially in the History Department, there are a lot of Democrats it just gets complicated” (Shelia – Scholar with MASK). Larissa, a Scholar with CH explained, “I avoid politics like the plague, because it just makes people angry. I’ve learned from my family. I know what my beliefs are and I feel strongly about them and I know nobody is going to change who I am so I don’t feel there’s any point in trying...you’re not going to change other people, they’re not going to change you.”

Several students also told me they think political partisanship often makes such conversations pointless. “My best friends here at school are very conservative Republicans and I’m a very liberal Democrat and very opposite. So I have a really hard time discussing with them a lot of things that I believe in because we disagree so strongly. So it’s like we have this playing field that’s sort of level but...I guess I hate angry discussions when people are just yelling at each other. I like very calm and intelligent kind of talk” (Samantha – Scholar with TLC). During the focus group with Scholars, Steve (a Scholar with HFA) said, “politics has become such a polarizing topic, especially in recent decades, with the 24 hour news cycle, and especially political pundits on both sides, it becomes difficult to actually talk about any of the actual issues on a deep level, and actually get across the actual points. So, I think with that trend, politics has become especially unpleasant to talk about with most people.”

Staff members of community partner organizations also described avoiding political talk for a number of reasons relating to divisiveness. Julie, the Director for Community House also felt that political conversations created too many negative emotions, and explained that their program likes to focus on the positive nature of their work. “Our world can be very cold, and it can be very political, and it’s very hard to navigate in that system, and in that world when you are not necessarily a person who wants to get into law, or changing policy, you know what I mean?” Dorrie, a Program Coordinator with CH had similar thoughts on always trying to keep things optimistic. “The political environment is getting a little scary. So, we want to be maybe a small light, but a bright light that people are drawn to, and have just the basic values to keep people safe, to value them as a person, just to try to do the right thing, you know, to try to solve a problem.”

Other community partner staff members explained that they need to remain apolitical in their work because they are hesitant to alienate potential volunteers or donors. These community partners feel the same pressures as many other nonprofits to appear as non-partisan as possible in order to cultivate support from as broad a base as possible (Berry and Arons 2003). “Politics make people weird. People don’t really want to come here and hear vote X. I feel like personally, I don’t get involved in partisan politics because it’s divisive towards humanity and not unifying and what we really need is more unity. I find that calling out particular individuals even if they might be responsible doesn’t really help a situation. Making people feel negative about a situation doesn’t produce positive results” (Margaret – Volunteer Coordinator for HFA). Scott, the Volunteer Coordinator from MASK also explained, “We don’t get politically involved.

We certainly advocate for the patrons, but we don't, we really have to stay politically neutral, we can't be advocating one way or the other. I guess, for one thing we're not for profit, so we can't really show any favoritism one way or another. Also, our volunteer base comes from all sorts of backgrounds, so we don't want to be biasing anyone one way or another. That's, so I know for myself, politics and work are completely separate."

... I am Too Busy with Logistics

The final reason Scholars and staff often saw a gap between service and politics was not as intentional as the previous three. Many of those involved with the Scholars program were aware of the limitations of civic engagement projects that keep service and politics as distinct entities. However, they said that they were usually so busy meeting the logistics of their direct service; they did not have time to think about the connection between the two in any meaningful way. So while there is a vague recognition among Scholars and staff that politics is important in their work in some way, it is not something they connect with their ongoing direct service on a day to day basis. Thus, for the Scholars, these issues come up sporadically in meetings, but they are able to keep them mostly separate. For Vols, issues of politics are rarely raised, if at all. As Mark, a Vol with MASK told me, "I guess it really only comes up in politics class".

As Berger (2011) argues, a concern over democratic citizens not having enough time or energy to engage in politics is nothing new (Berger 2011). However, Scholars and ESC staff who already often feel overwhelmed with their responsibilities related to the program, feel as if they don't have the time to engage with important political concerns even if they want to. As Steve, a Scholar with HFA told me, "Usually during the school

year I'm just so frazzled I just don't get around to it. But no, I just can't follow politics. It's something I want to do but I don't." Similarly, Roger a Scholar with Community House told me, "I don't purposefully stay away. I try to keep up on it but honestly I get caught up in my day to day life, I guess. I'm just really busy. I wish I did more. I watched the debates so that's good. I quite honestly don't keep up with it as much as I should."

Ashley, a Scholar with TLC hopes that when she has more time, she would become more politically active. "I probably should be more active... I mean, I put my vote into people who support what I support, but that's about the extent of the political involvement that I'm in. But I think that's wrong, and maybe when I have more time, like when I'm not a student, and when I'm just like, then I can invest more time in it, hopefully." A lack of time and energy is sometimes also related to the first issue discussed in this section, not knowing quite how to engage politically. As Justine, a Scholar with HFA explains, "I don't know where to start. That's exactly it. It's not disinterest, because I would like to be informed, I would like to know and understand it all. I just don't have enough time to watch all the debates and hear from all the candidates or whatever, to keep up to date on everything I need to know. This sounds really dumb but, I don't watch the news because it's just changing every day!"

Staff of the Engaged Scholarship Center at NC also recognize that the time required to meet daily logistical challenges often precludes a focus on making the connection between service and politics.

For me, ideally connected to our work, I see the importance of understanding the structure and understanding the laws, and understanding how policies are made and how they affect people. But our day to day struggle to do what we need to do in the present moment doesn't allow us almost to really engage in that, in that sort of more in-depth politics, or systems. You know, our students are here temporarily, so by the time they come in and they get to know NC, and

academics, and how to work and understanding the importance of it, and wanting to do something and having time to do it, it kind of really affects our ideal of service compared to what we can really get done. We know that you need to get involved in politics so that you can have more impact, but when do we have the time to get there? We are all just really busy, you know. We have that intention, and know it's something we should do, but have to get all of this other stuff done first (Focus Group – Staff).

For their part, the Engaged Scholarship Foundation staff also recognize this as a limitation to the current model of most civic engagement, and see it as a challenge to be addressed in their field. “If you’re a typical local strapped for resources nonprofit agency, sometimes just managing your volunteers is hard enough. To start to think about public policy research, or community based research projects, or tie-ins to faculty members, it’s like ‘I don’t know, I don’t have time for that’. So you have to have help, to build to your capacity, to get to that stage. So that’s one of the key things we’re working on” (Donna – Vice-President of the Engaged Scholarship Foundation). In his interview, Ian, the President of the Foundation, elaborated on this idea as well.

We thought we could attach this directly into the site-based teams, it turns out you can’t. Those teams are so busy doing the direct service, and they’re doing it for single organizations. So even if it’s the education team, they still work with three different direct service providing groups, you know two schools and an after-school program. So we’re trying to craft this idea of a community networking team, and the goal would be to build capacity for collective impact.

Responsibilities and the Role of Ideology:

Many Scholars discuss the issues on which they are working in structural terms throughout the interview, and admit that volunteering alone will not be enough to solve these issues. They have developed a sense of political consciousness, and note that “something bigger” needs to happen, yet when asked specifically if they think the government should play a larger role in addressing their issue, Scholars were often wary

of increased government influence. Several even mentioned that increased services provided from the government would only lead to people taking advantage of these programs. The influence of a “personal responsibility” ideology which insists that hard work and good decisions will be enough for anyone to “make it” was thus very strong in these interviews, so strong that some Scholars regularly offer contradictory statements within the span of minutes. While those who spoke about personal responsibility also tended to define politics in narrow terms, this was not always the case. Some Scholars spoke about politics in broader terms, demonstrated a political consciousness that connects the issues on which they work to broader structures, yet are still wary of government involvement in solving these issues. Several staff members from community partner organizations, who clearly see their work as connected to larger structures, also said that they don’t necessarily think the government should play a larger role in addressing social needs other than increased funding for their programs.

As discussed above, many Scholars see politics as divisive and ineffective. However, the dominant political ideology in the U.S. of personal responsibility also plays an important factor in the ways Scholars think about the solutions to issues of inequality such as hunger, housing, education, and health care. Most Scholars feel a desire to give back, help their community, and make a difference that directly contradicts the powerful ideology that each individual is responsible for their own fate. This tension is what Stone (2008) describes as the “Samaritan’s Dilemma”. Scholars, like most volunteers want to “do good” and feel a real connection with their communities. However, as described above, politics is often seen as something entirely different and separate from “doing good”. While most Scholars felt a moral or civic responsibility to be involved, active,

and helping in communities, many also felt that the government's responsibility should be limited in order to promote personal responsibility, and avoid the risk of encouraging dependence or abuse of government programs. Thus, there is a separation between these types of responsibilities – civic, moral, personal, and governmental that must be explored in more depth, and helps to make more sense of the relationship between service and politics.

Civic and Moral Responsibility

Most Scholars expressed the opinion that engaging in one's community through voluntary service is something that every citizen should do in one way or another. Most of these thoughts came in response to a question about the role of service in solving the issues on which these students worked. These students did not offer any opinions on what role they thought the government should or should not play in addressing social need. For the most part, these responses separated service from any sense of politics, at least in any specific sense, but instead discussed service as a broad civic or moral responsibility. "I think we all have a responsibility to help one another. Unfortunately I don't think everyone sees it that way. I guess it's just basic human nature almost, like I can get selfish with my time and just be lazy and want to sit and do nothing sometimes but, I really do think so. I think that's part of the word society, we are a society we can't get anywhere without people helping each other" (Matt – Scholar with MASK). Steve, a Scholar with HFA gave a similar reply. "I think it's our responsibility, not only as citizens, but as human beings, it's the right thing to do, it's morally just. You're not doing yourself a favor let alone these other people if you don't get involved, if you just worry

about yourself. I think that's one of the biggest things I've taken away from my experience." Justin, a Scholar with TLC, described a responsibility to give back in more general terms of seeing everyone as connected. "No one goes through life without being fortunate enough to be given opportunities. Someone gave you an opportunity or gave you a chance, it's only right that you do it for someone else."

This responsibility was often framed as "giving back" amongst Scholars who recognize they have a certain amount of privilege as college students at NC. "I just enjoy giving back. You look around and you don't realize how bad things are. I know Scholars really opened my eyes to just how bad people's living conditions could be or how bad their situation, how they grew up could be. It's just really a shame, it's not really their fault, just the fact that they were born in this area or they were raised by these parents and so forth. I just feel like I have to...it's my duty to give back because it's not their fault. They deserve better" (Trent – Scholar with TLC). Brian, a Scholar with HFA expressed similar thoughts on giving back.

I feel that for everything we're given, we should give back, you know, I've always been about that. It's just something my family taught me, and being like a spiritual person, I always feel that, like we're given so much, even the people who think they have so little, if you count your blessings, you should give back. You should, if you can, I feel like you have that responsibility. I have that responsibility, to do something with myself, to try to better society. And, you know, maybe I'm not going to be effective, but at least I tried, you know, which is more than a lot of people can say... I didn't choose to be born into a middle-class family in a nice suburb, you know, I was just put there. And I could have just as well been put into a struggling homeless family in Capital City, you know. So why, who am I to not do something with that, who am I to not try to use what I have been given to give back?

Those Scholars that described a responsibility to engage with the community in purely a civic sense tended to focus on their role as a citizen. "Wade has stated numerous times I think - it's about democracy. I think it is our duty as citizens of this country to not

lock ourselves in our own personal bubble. We have to get out there and we have to help the people that help us out, because we're all connected. It's just quid pro quo. It's only fair that we give eight to ten hours a week of our time to help them." Many Scholars also brought up the point that they attend a public, state college, so their tuition is supported in some way by the taxes of those that live in the state. This is a point that Wade raises often, and most Scholars bring up during ELP days. In this sense, service is seen as a way for students to give back to the communities that are contributing to their higher education.

Those Scholars that described a responsibility to engage with the community from a moral perspective tended to say that service shouldn't be required. "I don't think people necessarily have a responsibility but I think you should be inclined, you should try and help people who are less fortunate than you. ... The way I look at it is that I'm just trying to improve, just help, be there for someone who needs it. But responsibility as far as responsibility, that seems like it comes with a lot of stipulations. You should just be happy and more than willing to help someone" (Brad – Scholar with MASK). Clint, another Scholar with MASK expressed similar concerns with calling service a "responsibility", but agreed there is a moral component.

Yeah, you should be doing it, but no one should be forcing you to do it, because then it's not service. And, if you're required to do service, it's not service, it's a requirement. It's an obligation. And if it's not freely taken upon, it defeats the purpose of serving, of the whole meaning of service. So, I want everyone, in a perfect world everyone would be helping one another, but the fact of the reality is that if they're not motivated to do it, then they're not going to get anything out of it, and I don't think the patrons, the people that they will be attempting to serve, will get anything out of it either.

Other Scholars saw service as simply something very nice from a moral standpoint, something that everyone should do. "I want to help people, and I think

everyone should be helping people at some point. If you can help, if you have the means and the ability to help someone you should” (Justine – Scholar with HFA). Ashley, a Scholar with TLC, also sees service as a responsibility in a broader moral sense, and something that can bring people together.

I think it is a responsibility to care, because if you don’t care, then things are going to get worse, and when you’re in a country, and you know, the people at the bottom are suffering, suffering, suffering, suffering, that doesn’t look good for the big picture. And I think it’s our responsibility to make sure that everyone has a chance to elevate themselves, up the social ladder. And it’s for the sake of the good of the country, and for the sake of just like, being a good person. I think we’re just so individualistic, so we just don’t care what other people need, from us, and that’s something that other countries tend to do a little better on.

Personal responsibility

A number of Scholars did speak specifically about the role of government in meeting social need, and many of these Scholars reflected a strong ideology of personal responsibility. These responses tended to focus on the importance of individualism and being responsible for one’s own position in life, along with the worry that increased government support for social welfare programs would lead to dependence and abuse of the system. When discussing solutions to the issues on which they are working, many Scholars mentioned that parents just needed to be more involved, or kids just needed to be more motivated (education), or people just needed to have more hope, or make better decisions and be more willing to put in the hard work (housing and hunger). Penelope, a Scholar with MASK expressed her frustration on a service trip with the Scholars program when she felt that the people she was helping didn’t show much appreciation for their work, and she wondered, “why are we doing this work that they could be doing

themselves?” Jessica, a Scholar with TLC also explained the importance of individual accountability.

I’m all about self-reliance. I believe there is an element of self-reliance, that every individual needs. I know that, like, your place in life obviously stops you from being able to get you to those new places in life, but do I feel like we should be spending all of our national budget on helping people, with like creating all of these new programs? No, I don’t think it’s the government’s responsibility... I don’t know if it’s intentional or not, but I think the rich are just going to keep getting richer. But I don’t feel like, even in a private way, I don’t think that if I have \$15 Million in my bank account, I don’t think it’s my responsibility. I don’t think it’s a responsibility to give that to anybody. I don’t believe in communism. I don’t think that everyone should have to give back to other people. I feel like we need to focus on things that are going to help, but I don’t think that it’s the responsibility of the government. Some people feel like, if you’re poor, you should be on welfare, you should be able to have your section 8 apartment and everything, but I don’t think that giving our money to every individual is going to promote self-reliance. I think that there needs to be more education, instead of throwing money at issues that it’s not going to help.

These feelings are also reflected in the thoughts of community partner staff members as well. Ray, the Volunteer Services Manager at MASK told me:

I think it comes down to personal accountability. I honestly feel like that, you know, because you can fund places like soup kitchens and food banks, for years, but there’s always going to be a need for them. As long as people know that they have something for free, you know what I mean? ... As long as something is free, someone is always going to take it. As long as it’s free. As long as you know you always have that cushion, you’re going to rely on it eventually. It starts with the individual person, you know, you have to choose to go out there and live like that, you know what I mean. Through whatever circumstance, it’s usually mental illness, drugs, or worst-case scenarios you know, but at the same time, it’s you doing it. It’s the individual person, you’re bringing that on yourself, no one is saying go outside and sleep under that bridge out there, you know. That’s your choice to do that. You know, you can get up every day and go look for a job, but you choose not to. So that’s kind of how I feel, you know. It’s kind of sad, but it is what it is... When we come in and deal with the same people, every day, day in and day out, that are going through the same circles, and are doing the same things that are ultimately bringing them back to the same place, it all comes down to personal accountability.

A number of responses from both Scholars and staff indicated a concern about social service programs leading to dependence.

I think that programs can be enabling in a way, and it gives people something that they can always count on and they're not necessarily doing things for themselves. ... It comes to a point where that's your responsibility, it's now your choice... I think a lot of service out there, not necessarily Scholars, but other volunteering out there is like people thinking, oh I have so much let me give back and then you become an enabler and you become the person that's like oh, this person is going to come every Sunday and make me dinner so I don't have to worry about it. They become more of a hindrance on giving people independence than a help. I think with Scholars we're very good about knowing where the structure needs to be and knowing where we need to sit back and be like, you need to start taking responsibility, we can only do so much. I think that's what's so great about it... A huge problem in America is people just not taking responsibility for their own actions. I firmly believe that the people that we work with should take responsibility for their actions. They should know that they either messed up or they know that they've done something great. I think that's why Scholars works so well with the community because it's not just us infiltrating, it's a merge. It is taking ownership of the fact that you messed up and now we need to help you. I don't think people do that, I think they spend outside of their means, I think they get themselves in trouble and then I think they look for people to bail them out. That is very frustrating for me but I also think that there's always extenuating circumstances and there's always something beyond our control. You cannot help it if you work for a corporation that decides they're going to lay off ten thousand people, you can't help that. I think that's when the government needs to be stepping in as in helping these people get back on their feet, not just giving them a check, giving them a check and responsibility; take a class, beef up your resume because people aren't always going to be there to pick you up... But, the way I see it is you're in control of yourself, you're in control of how your life goes (Gina – Scholar with TLC).

Again, community partner staff shared some of these concerns about creating dependency. Todd, a program manager with HFA told me:

In some cases it's people not wanting to help themselves, I think we need to do a better job of challenging people to apply themselves rather than pat them on the back and give them a little bit just so they can get through it. I don't think that's the answer. I think the answer is responsibility... You've got people that have been collecting welfare, no disrespect, because there's a lot of families that need it, but I think in some cases, these are people, families, etc. that aren't really trying to do better. They have, a somewhat of a minimal income that they can survive on, and they'll do that for the rest of their life. I think we need to do more. I think we need to say, okay, we can do this for you but, let us help train you in job skills, let's get you, that's what solves the problem, is to get that responsibility back. Rather than just taking what's given for free.

A number of Scholars also expressed concern that social welfare programs just lead to recipients abusing the system. Penelope, a Scholar with MASK explained that she struggles with homelessness as an issue, because, “there’s a stereotype there, and I definitely do fall into thinking that stereotype because, it’s like so hypocritical of me, and it’s important for people to know that there are people out there that are not that stereotype, but there are also people that are just like, mooching off of welfare, not actively trying to get a job, like why don’t they just go find a job? Or like, how did they get there? They must have been really lazy, which is not true for all groups. But there are instances where that is true.” Clint, another Scholar with MASK, also expressed concerns about dependability and abuse of social welfare systems.

I do not think that the government should be continuing to fund programs. It should be able to sustain itself, because there’s a lot of problems, I feel, with a lot of government run programs. A lot of abuse. I’m not saying that these programs shouldn’t be in existence... but there is an individual that my family knows, well, there is a family, through the grapevine, we know of people that are abusing food stamps and are buying new cars, and aren’t doing what a responsible citizen should be doing. They’re finding loopholes, and doing loopholes that are irresponsible. So, I definitely think that if government wasn’t so involved, it would help create programs that were sustainable on their own. That would be more beneficial than having a government program continuing and continuing.

Even Scholars who felt that the government has a responsibility to provide greater assistance to those in need reflected a concern about assistance programs leading to abuse.

Yeah, I think the government has a responsibility, but, again, it’s a sticky situation, because some people feel like, you know, some systems get abused. You know, you put something in place, it’s going to get abused, and that’s the only thing that is going to happen to it, and all of these people are living off of this and abusing the system. But if the system wasn’t in place, then the people who don’t abuse it would have nothing to lean on, and would just be getting worse. So yeah I think the government has a responsibility.

Sheila, a Scholar with MASK expressed a similar tension when I asked her if she thought the government had a responsibility in solving social issues.

I have a real problem with that because they do, they absolutely do. But then there's the flip side where people really abuse it, likes seriously abuse it. I see that a lot, it's just completely out of control. Some people are just, from every source that they can...and it's unnecessary. They're perfectly able to go out and go to work. Yes, I think the government has a huge responsibility to help people out but I feel like they should crack down on who they're helping because it becomes where everyone is given things they don't need anymore.

Government responsibility

Finally, there were a number of Scholars who believed that the government should play a larger role in meeting social needs. When I asked Marie if I thought the government has a responsibility to help those in need, she said, "I think it should, and I don't think it's following through on it right now... Because it can't just be the people trying to pick themselves up off the ground, like, we all help each other, and they're supposed to be the ones really, like, they're laws are the only ones that can force change. Like, we can try, and we can push it, but we can't totally follow through."

Fiona, a Scholar with TLC, sees educational inequality clearly linked with other social issues like employment and crime, and thus thinks the government has a responsibility in addressing the issue.

It's all connected. If you hate giving money to urban schools so much don't complain when you drive through a city and you might get robbed cause these people who are robbing you didn't have the same opportunities...I know there are people out there who are bad people and who are probably not going to change, I'm not naïve enough to think that everyone if they just had the opportunity they wouldn't, no...I know there are going to be people out there who are going to follow a certain lifestyle because that's their choice but a lot of times people get forced into situations that if they didn't receive a good education they're going to fall back on to it, like a criminal lifestyle. So I feel like it's all connected. If we don't help these kids now what's going to happen when they're older. And that's everywhere too, not just in the cities. It's kids everywhere, if we don't give them a

good education there's not much choice for them to have but to resort to a criminal lifestyle. ... I've heard all the arguments about the nanny state government or whatever but you can't just let people starve, you just can't...there needs to be some kind of safety net, I guess would be the word. ... We have a responsibility to look out for each other that's just the way it is. If we don't start caring about the person next to us it's going to eventually affect us in the future. I see education as tied to much bigger issues. If we start when the kids are young in school we can help just change communities. I do feel it's all connected and we need to help each other. ... I feel like if we invest our money in certain social programs instead of, I'm going to sound like a hippy, but instead of like these war things like more, like getting technology for war and all this. I understand why that's important too but we have to worry about our people here and helping them to make our whole country better. I think other problems people talk about can be fixed by education. I think if people had more access to education they'd be able to get better paying jobs. Not even just college education, some kids aren't meant for college like my brother, my parents aren't sure if he's college ready like, he's more of a, let's fix cars, like vocational stuff. I feel that's just as important but those programs are getting cut in education too. They're not leaving these kids with any options.

Fiona was not the only Scholar who made a direct connection between her work and greater needs that could be met with increased government support.

The whole reason CH was started was because the waiting list for accessible housing for disabled people was so long. It wasn't moving. They had a resident, he got on the list in his mid-twenties, he's in mid-fifties now and he just got called. That to me is ridiculous because you just can't have people as numbers on a list. They're not getting any younger and what are they supposed to do. They can't live on their own but they don't have any options. So I don't know if it would be the government's responsibility or just private non-profits like CH but something has to change because there are too many people that are getting left behind. It's not fair (Larissa – Scholar with Community House).

Several other Scholars discussed the importance of government responsibility in addressing issues of inequality, but it was often in somewhat vague, broad terms. "I feel the government could do a little bit more than what they're doing now ... These less fortunate areas, areas that suffer from poverty they could give them more money, build them better schools, better communities, things like that. It's kind of sad because they just, it seems like they just turn their shoulder and they don't really care. That's just how

the world is, I guess. The next step is for us to do something” (Trent – Scholar with TLC). Steve, a Scholar with MASK also felt strongly that the government should play a larger role, but did only in broad terms, “I absolutely think so... I mean the government was formed for the purpose of helping its citizenry. I think if we take away the government’s power to do things like that then it’s counter-productive and counter-intuitive. I think more legislation, pro-social justice organizations needs to be brought forward.” Later in his interview, Steve continued to discuss some additional thoughts on government responsibilities and priorities. “I definitely think there’s political implications and concerns (with my work) especially with the Governor and the cuts that he’s made to many of these non-profit organizations and other organizations that are involved with these social injustice issues....It’s just something that’s based on basic humanity, that we should be willing to help these people. Instead of cutting taxes for millionaires I think we should probably be giving more money to these programs that actually help people.

Sydney, a Scholar with HFA also believed in a broad sense of government responsibility. “I believe there should be more help for people that are honestly struggling. And I don’t know if that’s all in place right now, but that’s what I believe. I believe that government has a responsibility to help people. Help the people that need it.” This belief led Sydney to be frustrated when programs she viewed as successful were cut.

Yeah. I think programs like Head Start need to be more. Head Start is a great program. Everyone agrees with that, everyone agrees that Head Start is a good program. We can all agree on this. Yet they’re cutting Head Start, they’re cutting funds for Head Start. Which is, starting to cut those social workers, those social workers at Head Start are identifying problems before they even start, and you’re cutting those kinds of programs. So stuff like that bothers me, because everyone agrees it’s ok. Everyone is like, yeah it’s a great program, but when it’s time to they’re like, but yeah, I don’t really care about that as much, so they’re cutting it. Just because they don’t care. And it’s just annoying to me, the taxes for the wealthy, if you cut that like 7 percent, you’d have like x amount of money, or if

you cut this budget. And it's just annoying that these things are constantly being cut, even though they're proven that they work, and I really wish that more attention was paid to them. And maybe more media coverage or whatever it takes, but I really like programs like Head Start. I think they're good programs that are just getting unfair treatment.

When I asked Wade, Director of the ESC, the question of government responsibility, he explained how it would impact many of the issues on which the Scholars work.

You know, if there was a concerted, major governmental program that invested in job creation in cities like Capital City, the number of people who are going to soup kitchens, or in a weak or bad moment trying to make money another way, those numbers would go down. I mean, there's just too many, domestic violence goes down, when people are financially stable, they're not as stressed out. So yeah, I think the government has done a very poor job, across all administrations, in terms of diverting the resources to, even if they're heavily subsidized industries, there's a larger value of having people work. So yeah, so I think the government should do a lot more.

Taysha, a manager at Homes for All, saw the potential for similar impact with greater government investment.

I think if the goal of the city is for a reduced crime rate, or more working people in the environment, or the goal of the state is for more people to be competent enough to be a part of the working force, or staying off the street, then yes! I think that they should put more dollars into being proactive, versus when these same children don't have competent reading skills, and fall below in school, and then they drop out of school, and then they don't have any real working skills, and then they resort to crime, to feed their family, and then they're part of the prison population, then they're paying for it on that end. You know, so if the state or the city, if those are the goals, to have a more intelligent, a more literate, a more competent working force, then yeah, it should be their goal, to invest now. Because the children will prove to you that they're worth it, and I guess, non-profits end up with it because they have a sense of service, so, I wouldn't say it's only the job of non-profits, or only the job of city and state, but it's all of our, to really raise and make sure the children are having a great rearing.

Service as a Solution: Reforming Rather than Revolutionizing

While many of the volunteers and staff expressed their distrust of politicians, or lack of knowledge about politics, when asked directly if the government should have a responsibility in addressing the social issues on which they are working, many said that the government should be doing more to address these issues. However, even these responses were usually framed in terms of what the government can do to support existing non-profit efforts, or to expand volunteer efforts, not to change the provision of social support. Thus, most proposed solutions, or goals around service were based on reforming current structures, rather than challenge the overall social structures that create and reinforce such issues in housing, hunger, education, or health services.

When I asked Hector, a Scholar with CH, about his thoughts on government responsibility, he said, “I think they just need to cough up money. Because it’s sad how many after school programs or organizations like Community House, they don’t get funding from the government, they have to raise all that money themselves, and that sometimes can be really difficult. Schools don’t have enough supplies for kids after school, it’s like after school programs aren’t really valued like they should be. Like I don’t know, I think the government needs to cough up some money.”

Damon, the Vice President of TLC, envisioned a similar role of support for the government. “I wish we could miraculously come up with this criteria where you can prove you’re trustworthy of your funding. I would not like the government to control it, but I would love the funding that they could provide for some of those other wrap-around services. ... Fiscally, yes, but as far as administratively, I would not want the government to deal with it, because they would limit where we can go, what we can do, and who we can touch...”

Rachael, a Scholar with TLC thinks the government has a clear responsibility to help citizens, “Of course! Of course, please, come on, without a doubt. I feel like that’s one of their main responsibilities, you know. And sometimes it’s like, it’s given the blind eye, but that’s definitely something that I feel like the government has the responsibility to do, and something that I think people should hold them accountable for doing actually.” However, when I asked what she thought that role might be, she focused on the government’s ability to get more people involved with volunteering efforts. “I get back to the education part of it, because sometimes people kind of don’t know. You know? And if you say hey, this is available, you want to help out? You can go do this, then they’re like aha, I can do that! You know, so now it’s something they know about, and it’s something that they now can be willing to help out with because, and the government is a huge medium, like, they can disperse information to a large group of people, I guess easier than say Scholars could. So, get the word out there.”

Several of the most committed Scholars, who said they wanted to dedicate their lives to addressing the issues on which they were working as students framed their ultimate goals as opening their own nonprofits, or continuing to get others involved in volunteering once they graduated. Most of these goals are well outside the realm of political engagement.

If I could create a socially conscious business, then you don’t have to go through politics. If you want to give someone one hundred million dollars or a thousand dollars, you just do it. But if you going through the school board, oh we have to write this proposal, we have to do this; we got to get it approved by the superintendent. Nobody wants to go through all that. And that goes back to the legal side of things. They put the laws in that are in place that restrict you from doing this. So you know what I mean that kind of frustrates me. I don’t like that kind of stuff. I want to be able to say, hey, they need book bags or they need this, hey we got it for you. And if that’s embedded into your business, which it will be

eventually when I create it, it will be an easy way to make a difference without anyone controlling your decision (Justin – Scholar with TLC).

Anjuli, a Scholar with MASK described how she has made connection between her service work, and broader social structures, but her realization is still framed in terms of volunteering. “I used to not get the full grasp of why I needed to volunteer, or why people needed us to volunteer. But with our meetings and staff they bring awareness to different issues and students bring awareness to different issues, and why they exist in the first place. So it’s really helped me understand why we still need to volunteer even after our Scholars career is over.”

It is worth considering then, if the Scholar model serves to reinforce the role of nonprofits in meeting needs, rather than challenging them. When discussing the goals she has in mind for graduates of the Scholars program, Marina, the Associate Director of the Scholars Program, said:

My hope is whether they choose to work in social justice, non-profit organizations, academia or corporate world, that somehow the experience that they have now is not just an experience. I hope that they will get involved in boards or they will donate their time or donate their resources to non-profit organizations or to kids or to the school system in their own, their own area, where they go from here. So that it’s not something they did in college and they have no connection to it. So that’s my hope, is that they keep that engagement going in some form...It doesn’t have to be...you know if they’re working in the corporate world, definitely financially, you know, kind of letting their corporation know about things outside of it and being engaged. And if they’re working in non-profit organizations learning from this experience and doing it better, you know.

Conclusion:

The Scholars program is successful in many cases, with most Scholars, of getting students to think structurally about the issues on which they work. This is a goal that is clearly built into the Scholar model, and in a number of ways, Scholars begin to think

about the connections between their work and the policies and political structure that shapes these issues. However, even a program that is very successful in meeting this goal (which is also a very common goal of most service learning programs), faces a severe limitation. To Berger (2011), the term civic engagement tends to conflate social engagement, moral engagement, and political engagement; all of which are necessary for a healthy democracy. The Scholars program seems very effective in promoting social and moral engagement amongst students, but falls short in political engagement.

If students drew on a very narrow conception of politics, they were unlikely to see their volunteer work as “political”. If students saw politics in a broader sense however, they were much more likely to see their work as “political”. In these cases, they were more likely to see their volunteer work as a step, albeit a small and local one, towards contributing to larger political and social change efforts. However, even in cases where Scholars defined politics broadly, and recognized the need for large-scale structural and political action beyond individual volunteering as necessary to solve the issues on which they are working, they still actively separated their work from a sense of politics.

While many Scholars readily discussed how their work is political in nature, or at least connected to politics and policy in some way, they themselves did not consider themselves political, for a number of reasons. Scholars often see politics as overly divisive while service was noble and meaningful. Many Scholars also see the current state of politics as ineffective, overly partisan, and very slow. Meanwhile service is something they knew could be impactful, and with which they could see immediate results, even if they were only on a small scale. Several Scholars also said that while they realize politics are at the root of the issues on which they work, they did not know how to

engage politically. Both Scholars and staff admitted that while they see the need to connect their service with political concerns, they were often too busy with logistics to do so. Thus, many of Scholars see the issues on which they are working (housing, hunger, education, health/disability rights) as inherently structural, and even political in nature, but at the same time say that they themselves are not, and often do not want to be, political.

Ideology clearly plays a role in the ways Scholars thought about the solutions to the issues on which they work as well. While some Scholars thought the government should play a larger role in meeting social need, many reflected a strong sense of personal responsibility. Even among those who think the government has a responsibility to address social issues, this is often framed in terms of supporting existing nonprofit or volunteer organizations. Thus, most proposed solutions are reform-based, and do not challenge existing structures. Many students have developed a sense of political consciousness in the sense that they have a structural understanding of inequality, and understand that the issues on which they are working are not just a result of individual failure. However, an ideology of personal responsibility frames the role of “politics” in the form of greater government involvement as harmful.

At least among those involved in the Scholars program, low levels of political engagement are not due to apathy or self-absorption, as some may suggest (Davis and Mellow 2012; Kohnle 2013; Twenge 2007). It is also not a case of excessive individualism, undermining a commitment to others in society, or eroding concern about the public interest (Bellah et al 1992 for example). These students care deeply about their issues and the communities in which they engage. They often see service as a

responsibility, and they commit tremendous amounts of time and energy to their work. Many Scholars have developed a strong political consciousness, yet are not “political”. They see a connection between their work and the larger social and political structures that create and reinforce the issues on which they work. However, there are a number of barriers remaining that keep these students from becoming politically engaged. Students and staff recognize that service may not solve the issues on which they’re working, but at least they are taking some form of action, and making some sort of difference – a difference that they do not see political engagement as capable of making. Any service learning or civic engagement program built on similar models using service-based partnerships must consider ways to overcome these barriers. There is enormous potential in students, particularly those who see the connection between their work and politics, but it is too often this potential is currently not being met.

Chapter Six:

Collective Identity and Service

I think it's important having a group to relate to, and you just get so close to people, because we're all likeminded individuals. Some of my best friends are Scholars, and some of the strongest bonds I have with the school is because of Scholars... There's something that's different about being a Scholar, because you genuinely want to help others and like, make a difference, and I think that's what brings us together. And I think having our teams, and having people to talk about those issues with, and relate to them, and then reflect on them after... it shows that underneath it all, we do understand that we all share this bond, and that it's really important to know that we're doing this genuinely. And one thing that gets us really riled up is when we see people are not putting forth their best, like certain individuals are definitely shunned from the group really, because they're just not, even though we're all from very different backgrounds, and like on campus we all do our own thing, but then when it comes to Scholars we are all engaged and have that connection, and when we see that one person is not doing their best to really genuinely care and put forth their best, we don't like that (Hector – Scholar with CH).

As mentioned in Chapter Four, while discussing the strong relationships between Scholars (as well as between Scholars and staff), working together as a group made a number of Scholars feel like they could make a greater difference with their work, and motivated them to continue with their service. This chapter will explore these ideas in much further depth, and apply a strand of social movement literature to examine the role of collective identity in further depth. Scholars clearly identify as a collective group, with a clear identity, and this comes with both benefits and drawbacks.

The previous chapter explained that many Scholars do not consider themselves “political”. In fact, many actively separate their service from a sense of political engagement. Thus, social movement theory may seem like a strange fit with which to analyze a group that includes a number of individuals who do not identify as politically engaged. However, as mentioned earlier, service-learning and civic engagement programs are often referred to as a “movement” in the literature (for example Marullo

1996; Saltmarsh and Zlotkowski 2011; Stanton, Giles and Cruz 1999). Several of those involved in the Scholars program also refer to their own work as part of a social movement.

I feel like you sometimes have to start small to create a huge change, and a huge permanent change too. And, I think this is one of the Scholars stories, like Scholars started with 5 people, and it's like 100 people now, you know, and 100 people making a huge difference. Imagine in 10 years, Scholars is probably going to be like the biggest student organization on campus. I definitely feel like it needs, sometimes when people start smaller, that's when they're more passionate about it, and that's when they can cause a larger impact, because if you just think about it like, 'oh I'm just going to do this, because someone told me to do this,' and you're not passionate about it, it doesn't motivate you. The passion is what motivates you to go forth and want to continue doing this for years. How many Scholars are NC alumni that are now Scholars staff members? They're passionate people, that passion never goes away. So, I think that's what makes the biggest change (Rachael – Scholar with TLC).

Initially, I did not plan on having a chapter dedicated to collective identity in this dissertation. However, these themes emerged from the analysis of the interview data, along with my observations and interactions with the Scholars program. It became obvious that being a part of this program comes with a strong identification as part of a collective group. Collective identity theory is admittedly not a perfect fit for analysis, particularly because the Scholars fail to develop a collective political consciousness. However, collective identity theory can be useful in exploring the meaning the Scholars attach to their work. As noted, there is a shared sense among Scholars that they “should” be political, and most acknowledge that to create any real change beyond their service, they would have to become politicized. This line of questioning was not included in interviews with Vols (nor was there a focus group with Vols to further explore this topic) because it became clear that this collective identity was exclusive to the Scholars themselves.

As described in Chapter Four, there is a clear difference between the Scholars and Vols, and part of this distinction can be explained by the Scholar identity. In other words, there is a clearly defined “we” and a clear “they”, constituting an in-group and out-group (Gamson 1992a). As Penelope, a Scholar with MASK explains, there is a culture associated with the Scholars program, which is conveyed from Scholar to Scholar within the program.

I think the fact that we have such an organized process of having these community partners who work with our staff members, who work with us and having this range of students who can teach you about their experiences is just much better than going out by myself. Because going in as a freshman I had seniors, juniors, sophomores who could tell me, who could prepare me for what I was going into: this might be a cultural shock and this is how the students act and this is how you have to behave to get their respect. If I went in by myself I don’t know whether I would have been prepared and I think I might have ended up being discouraged.

While the Scholars may not all identify themselves as political, they clearly identify themselves as part of a collective, and the Scholar identity carries quite a bit of importance to these students and their work. Gamson (1992a) identifies three embedded layers of collective identity: organizational, movement, and solidary group (84). The collective identity of the Scholars is most clearly seen on the “organizational” level, as each student identifies as a member of the Engaged Scholars program. Some Scholars like Penelope (MASK), also see themselves as involved in the larger “movement” layer, as participants in a larger service movement beyond the bounds of the Scholars program. “I think one person doing a lot of things with the intention of changing social issues and improving upon what’s obviously wrong and corrupt in society, I think that inspires others, and especially with the Scholars program, it inspires us to really get other people more involved, and then that becomes a larger movement.” However, there is very little

Scholars-wide shared solidary group identity based on people's social location (beyond the identity of student). However as will be discussed, there are certain solidary identity groups within the Scholars program.

In the interviews, focus groups, and during observation, the Scholars explained how their identity as Scholars impacts not just the way they go about their service and think about their work, but impacts their lives as a whole, even outside of their service with community partners. This "identity extension", according to Snow and McAdam (2000), is one potential piece of the identity construction process (in which personal and collective identities are aligned so that a movement's collective identity also comes to function as a significant piece of an individual's orientation and motivation). Identity extension involves the expansion of an individual's personal identity so that its reach is congruent with the movement's. Many Scholars told me that the majority of their social circles at Northeast College were made up of other Scholars as well. "A lot of my friends, I would say about sixty percent of my friends here on campus are Scholars. We, especially talking with the TLC friends, we do nothing but talk about TLC. Sometimes it's gossiping, sometimes it's talking about a student but we definitely talk about Scholars a lot." When asked about the benefits of being a part of the Scholars program, several students mentioned their strong identification as part of a group.

Scholars gives you a community to really talk about it with, you know, there's not that many people who are so passionate about these issues. Especially because we're a group based on our issues, and what we are passionate about, it's really easy to relate to everybody, and it's really easy to see, to grab ideas from other people, or to see like, how they made a difference, like, you're not the only one who has felt defeated, you know, there's all of us, we can stick together. Like, if you're having a bad day, like, you can call someone in to help you. Having a team behind you, no matter what, is a really incredible thing to have. Just having people you can relate it to, and discuss it with, having people you can talk about the issues with, and like, they get it, you know what I mean? It's really incredible,

so much more than just being there on your own (Marie – Scholar with Community House).

Resource mobilization and political process theories posit a shared and implied political interest among movement members, who recognize political opportunities, and mobilize resources for political purposes. Thus, these theories would not be applicable to the Engaged Scholars Program. Collective identity theory, however, allows that movements may form around a shared moral, cognitive, or emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution (Poletta and Jasper 2001). Collective identity is particularly useful in this sense, as Scholars fall along a broad spectrum of political beliefs (or varying levels of political engagement to political ambivalence). However, the Scholars come together around a shared commitment to engaging in their local community through long term service with partner organizations. Once involved in this “movement” of service learning through the Engaged Scholars, their collective identity forms and grows stronger.

Tarrow (1998) explained that social movements are defined as “collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities” (4). In the case of the Scholars, they identify as a group working together for the common purpose of addressing the collective challenges of hunger, housing, education, and health care (among others), in sustained interaction with a set of community partners in Capital City. While these community organizations are seen as partners rather than opponents, the Scholars do attempt to engage with elites and authorities through their work in the community. The Scholars’ work is typically not contentious (and as explained in Chapter 5, contention is often purposefully quelled), but the Scholars do share a broad common purpose around which they build consensus, and

develop the deep-rooted feelings of social solidarity and identity required of a social movement (Tarrow 1998).

Taylor defines collective identity as “the shared definition of a group that derives from members’ common interests, experiences and solidarity” (1989, 771). The concept of collective identity has been used by social movement scholars to examine how groups define themselves (Taylor 2000; Gamson 1992a; Giddens 1991; Melucci 1989, 1995). Theories of collective identity are thus useful in analyzing what the Scholar identity means to participants and how this identity is formed out of shared interests, experiences, and solidarity. A collective identity impacts the Scholars’ work, as well as the ways they think about the issues on which they work, and the meaning they attach to their service. As discussed in Chapter Four, there are a number of key components of the Scholars Program that shape the Scholars’ experience and contribute to themes of commitment, accountability, and sustainability. Several of these key components relate to the formation and sustainment of a Scholar collective identity, including developing deep relationships, the feeling of being able to make more of an impact as part of a collective, feeling support from fellow Scholars, being held accountable to one another, and being part of a diverse group of Scholars who can teach and learn from one another. The Scholar collective identity takes on different levels of salience depending on the situation in which volunteers find themselves, so this collective identity can also come into conflict with other pieces of the Scholars’ social identities.

It is important to note that the Engaged Scholars program is intentionally structured by the Engaged Scholarship Center and Foundation to foment and solidify a collective identity among the Scholars (although it is not discussed with these specific

terms by ESC or Foundation staff). Thus, in this case, the ESC serves as the “mobilizing structure” (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). Wade, the Director of the ESC, sees this identity as key to Scholars recognizing themselves as “agents of a bigger vision”. Part of this identity is about building confidence in Scholars as social change agents, helping them realize the potential of being part of a collective effort, and recognizing the power they have to make a difference. These are all key components to the Scholar identity. Scholars noted that they felt like the program offers a community of its own, but they also felt a greater connection to their local community through the Scholars program. There is clearly a social aspect to this identity, which is cultivated through orientations, trainings, and regular meetings with other Scholars.

To many Scholars, the collective identity helps motivate them, gives them a sense of purpose, and makes them feel as though they are making a difference, even if the impact is not always immediately clear. Scholars are seen as campus leaders, and are charged with getting other students involved in service work. Several Scholars noted that they thought their involvement in service was a statement in and of itself about their concern over social issues. However, as was discussed in the previous chapter, specific outlets to connect this identity with larger movements to address issues of hunger, housing, education, and healthcare at a systemic or political level are limited. This is also something that ESC and Foundation staff members readily admit, and see as their greatest challenge going forward.

Simply put, acting collectively requires a collective identity. Group identification involves deriving meaning from belonging to a group and taking pride in being a member of that group, its symbols, values, and the fate shared by group members (Klandermans

and deWeerd 2000). At Northeast College, the Scholars are a well-known group. As Marina, the Associate Director of the ESC explained during the staff focus group, the Scholars appear at an assembly in front of all incoming students during the freshmen orientation, and as mentioned, interact with first year students during the required Engaged Learning Program day of service. “So within their four years of being here, everyone is going to know, or be introduced, or engaged with the Scholars at one point in time.” Marina continued, “As an NC student group, they are one of the big, big groups, and then you have the clubs, so people may have different identities depending on where they are, but I think every group tries to have that collective branding, whether it’s the shirt that they wear, or the jacket, or the colors, or the traditions.” Justin, a Scholar with TLC shows a clear pride in his group membership with Scholars, and the identifying characteristics of this group are well known to his fellow students.

I want to say camaraderie, it brings people together, it’s a community, it’s community service, a community of people, like-minded people. It just makes your service experience more rewarding, more enjoyable when you have people that think just like you, see the world just like you, the same issues and you want to make a difference. When you’re trying to make a difference and you’re by yourself it can be the hardest thing. It can be depressing; you don’t think anyone else cares. But when you get to see people right there with you in the thick of things, it’s like oh man, I can do it, we can do it, we can get a couple more people to do it as well. That’s the biggest thing. Especially with Scholars, we’re affecting the college campus, just seeing us, a group of people that just go out, we’re known for impacting people. All freshmen have to complete eight hours of community service with the Scholars. That’s huge. That means they know who you are, they’re always hit with it: Scholar, Scholar, who’s Scholar? They’re the community service people. You know us by the time you graduate. That’s what matters (Justin – Scholar with TLC).

What is the Scholar Identity?

According to Gamson (1992b), collective identities are expressed in the shared language, symbols, and labels used by those who embrace the group identity. Melucci

(1996) sees collective identity as a process, one that is constructed and negotiated through a repeated activation of the relationship that links individuals. In the shared language, symbols, and labels, and in the process of interactions between individuals, the Scholars express a clear collective identity. To Scholars, their identity involves a shared commitment to making an impact in communities (although, as noted in Chapter Five, not a common vision of how to achieve social change); working collaboratively as a group and supporting one another; and challenging and learning from fellow Scholars. The Scholars identity also includes an ongoing representation of the group to the outside community.

A collective identity serves as the basis for collective action (Melucci 1989; Taylor and Whittier 1992). Scholars clearly see collective action as a key component of their work. “I guess that’s what drew me to Scholars itself, is the fact that I always like to do stuff with groups, because you get to know new people, and you can make a bigger impact when you’re a group, rather than just me shooting down to Homes for All for the day” (Brian – Scholar with HFA).

This collaborative effort gives Scholars a greater sense of efficacy, a key component to the Scholars program discussed earlier. Another key component of the Scholar identity is the belief that doing work as part of the Scholars allows you to make a greater impact. “I think it’s more focused and ultimately it’s more beneficial to the people, the community members that we help. We’re able to mobilize such large numbers and powerful people. As much of an impact that you have just going alone, just showing up to do something like MASK, it’s just more rewarding to both parties, the helper, like us and the people that we assist to have such an organized focused group that is so bent

on helping people” (Steve – Scholar with HFA). During their focus group, one of the Scholars also explained, “the work that we do, is definitely important to be in a group, for it to be a group effort, not just the teams, you know we all are together in it. Like if I’m on the environment team, it doesn’t mean that there aren’t skills that I could learn from Sydney in the education team, because we do education stuff with the environment team. You know, it’s a huge collaborative effort, we’re all in it together for social justice.”

For the most part, Scholars do not see themselves as exceptional as individual student volunteers. However, their involvement in the Scholars program changes this perspective. “I think that we do have the potential to make a big difference together, and it’s not that we’re so special as individuals that we can make this big difference, we’re not these incredible people, we’re just trying to help, you know what I mean? Like, I don’t think of us as some outstanding, amazing people, making a huge difference, but I think a collective effort like ours, like anyone could do this. Anyone could get involved, and together we could make all make a big difference” (Marie – Scholar with CH).

Shelia, a Scholar with MASK, explained a time where she felt this piece of the Scholar identity clearly. “I remember doing a reflection activity at the end of the semester where Wade specifically asks every single person in the room to share a story. So you get to hear how other people impact the community and you get to tell your own story of how you feel you have helped someone. And so you kind of get a feel of what all eighty-six of us are doing in Capital City and that is very powerful for me to see that. My three hundred hours and everyone else’s three hundred hours are really making a difference.”

Part of this belief in efficacy is the knowledge among Scholars that they can count on each other to meet responsibilities. “Another thing is just like a general team effort,

not like the sappy corny shit, like oh we're all together and let's watch Barney, but like, you know you can rely on other people to do what they have to do. And if I plan a program, and Justine has to do this part of it, I can know that she is going to do it, and not freak out and all that stupid stuff – ideally. There is a general competence level, it's just high, so you can get more stuff done” (Sydney – Scholar with HFA).

The Scholar identity imparts a certain commitment to one's ideals and views as part of their engagement. During the staff focus group, a team coordinator who is also a former Scholar explained this belief.

The thing that Scholars gave me, maybe not necessarily this plethora of knowledge that I needed in order to enter a conversation, and defend my views, but I got like this political muscle, where I didn't necessarily always know the history, the knowledge, the presidents, whatever, but I had this gut feeling that told me, okay, essentially, or existentially, this is wrong. Or this is right. I really think that, and I think our students have that, where they may not necessarily know the ins and outs of that topic, or that political subject, but they do have this gut feeling, and that's really valuable, because it doesn't allow you to become complacent.

“Natural” or inherited identities often form the basis for social movements to come together (Tarrow 1998, 119). In the case of the Scholar identity, several Scholars mentioned that they seem to have a certain passion or drive even before entering the program. To Hector, a Scholar with CH, this common motivation is another component of the collective identity that draws the Scholars together. “Believe it or not, I feel like every Scholar has this one similar quality – and I feel like it's that passion, that understanding that there is something wrong and it needs to be fixed, like there are issues out there and it needs to be fixed. Like I feel like that's something about every single Scholar, and it's crazy, to be part of a group of people that everyone is passionate about helping other people....Everyone has that same, like that push I guess.” In the staff focus

group, a coordinator said that she noticed a similar commonality among the Scholars, and even ESC staff.

I think a lot of Scholars are geared towards action being done. You know, like everything is kind of action driven... So being able to come into a situation in the community, or the ESC and be respected, that's based on the action you do both in and out of the program, where you're actually going to your sites and getting things done. Or the same can be said for our staff, I guess, like we all have to do reports, so everything has to be captured, and so it's based on not just data, but the action and the results that are being implemented.

During the focus group with Scholars, Burt, a Scholar with MASK explained that students who do not share this passion and commitment tend not to fare well in the Scholars program, and are eventually excluded. While Vols may share this type of passion and commitment (particularly those Vols who become "back-door" Scholars after volunteering alongside the Scholars teams), the Scholars seem to see these characteristics as important to the Scholars collective identity, and in defining in- and out-groups.

The way I see Scholars, trying to define the community of Scholars, is basically people who have opted in and said I care, about whatever issue it might be. Because college tends to be sort of an egotistical period, just because you have a lot of academic things, you're trying to meet people, it's kind of all about you a lot of the time, but a lot of Scholar students realize that there has to be another component to your life, and so you start caring about other things in the world. And that's really difficult to do, and I think Scholars is good at promoting that, and the kids who don't view it that way, and are just doing it for the scholarship tend to just get weeded out, because they can't finish their work. So, I think that genuine spirit of caring about others, which is pretty rare, is what is cultivated in our general message.

At this moment in the focus group, another Scholar joined in to further explain and clarify her view on this point:

But I think it's not only people who are caring, because I think there are a lot of people who are caring, but I think it's something that goes past that, because with Scholars there are people who care, but the thing that makes them Scholars is the fact that they're willing to put themselves into something 100 percent, whereas you know, it's one thing to say I care, okay, I go volunteer at the soup kitchen once a month and at Christmas, and to say I care. But if someone spends 10, 20

hours a week dedicating themselves to their community, to bettering other people's lives, to bettering their own lives, it just, there's that extra commitment, that's like who they (ESC staff) find, and who they seek out is people who have that commitment inside of them.

Collective identities are defined in opposition to other groups in society, and groups enact boundaries to distinguish between members and non-members (Taylor and Whittier 1992). Because students must apply and be accepted to a formal organization to become a Scholar, there are clear boundaries between the in-group of Scholars, and the out-group of Vols and others. This differentiation allows members to create a sense of community with their defined group (Buechler 1990). In addition to the belief in their collaborative impact, another key component to the Scholar identity is this sense of community.

I think it's one thing to feel passionate about something and then just work towards it alone but when you're backed by eighty other students, and they might not be working on the same project as you and they're not all on the HFA Team, but they all do care about their service. So having that and then the staff as well, they all care about the service we're doing...they have an investment in me and what I'm, you know, involved with and working towards. So I think having that foundation of people supporting my efforts, supporting my ideas, supporting my passions really helps when you're going out and actually going...when you're driving to Capital City to do the work, having that foundation of a common experience certainly helps. It's also knowing you're not doing it alone and knowing that if you don't understand something, you have someone you can go back to and either they explain it to you, or just brainstorm with them, or you say I have an idea. And you sit down with Marina for an hour and then she allows you...you have a vision and she allows you to focus it to something (Justine – Scholar with HFA).

Ashley, a Scholar with TLC expressed a similar thought on this sense of support in the Scholar program.

The support helps so much, like knowing that you know, I have Jennifer, or Marina, or Wade who have my back in what I do, is really helpful. And then I have a community of people who are trying to affect change in other areas. I think it's really helpful. I think if I was just doing this on my own, I'd feel more like a loner, like I didn't have people that agree with me, especially because I really am

facing a lot of people who don't agree with me, while I'm going through it, like teachers, or just people that I'm encountering, on a day to day basis. So I feel like the sense of community here really encourages me to keep going, because otherwise I would just feel like I'm the only person who cares. And I'm not, so it's nice to know that there are other people doing something.

This sense of community and support serves as motivation for a number of Scholars, like Sheila. "I love that I get to go to MASK with my team and create a relationship with my team and by the end of the year we're really close... You create a connection. So I do love that I can go with my team and even if we're just sitting in the back wrapping cookies, there's someone to talk to, someone to interact with." Susan, a Scholar with TLC expressed a similar thought about feeling supported by her fellow Scholars. "I think the fact that we're with a bunch of people that have the same desires and passions, as cheesy as it sounds, it's really cool. It's very motivating. I feel like doing a lot of the service that we do without a big group of people it would be kind of hard to stick with it, you know, and not because you don't want to but because it can be really tough sometimes." This support system is most apparent when Scholars face difficulty in their work, as Javy (TLC) explained during the focus group.

If there was a day where we just, we knew we didn't teach a kid something, we knew we didn't do well, you could tell when we went back, you know, took the van back, had dinner, went back to our rooms, and did our homework, and we're like, well that was quite a day. There were days when I would walk into my next-door neighbor's room and she would be in tears. And I would say, why are you crying right now? And she said, because none of my students can read, and they're all in first grade already. We had so many issues in our classrooms... but we spent every single day thinking about what's going on, because we know we're completely invested. We have our classroom, these are our kids, this is who we're going to have for the year, and we're going to watch them grow up and watch them go through the grades. And when we went back to the dorm, when we left the classroom it would never stop there. When we went to our rooms at night, people would be in tears, there would be nights that I would be in tears, thinking every one of my kids just failed that test, that assessment... And it's like, we had each other, so we didn't have to go to faculty or staff in the Scholars office, we could kind of rely on ourselves, because we all had that common experience.

The process of working together and supporting each other on a regular basis reinforces the Scholar identity.

Just having that sort of community of young people like myself who are interested in community service and interested in serving the community around them is just, it's shaped my service in that I know I'm not alone in it. So I can lean on them for support if I need to, if I'm having a bad day or whatever. If I have a bad day at MASK I can just talk to them about it... I can know that they have gone through the same experiences and when they tell me something like keep your head up it's not that bad, it's coming from a place of knowledge, not if I was just talking to a friend and they were trying to cheer me up. I'd be like what do you know? But the Scholars program is really real support, sort of a brotherhood (Josh – Scholar with MASK).

Collective identity is constructed, activated, and sustained through interactions in social movement communities (Melucci 1996; Taylor and Whittier 1995). The “free space” created by a sense of community is important for group members to define their culture, ideologies, and collective action goals (Buechler 1990). Scholars utilize the “free space” of the Scholars community to challenge each other and learn from each other, thus constantly defining and redefining their group culture. The Scholar model brings together students with a variety of individual identities, and asks them to engage together, and learn from each other.

The people that you meet, I never thought that I would be really good friends with, um, with, uh, someone that is so liberal. Like she's, my, a good friend of mine, she has a very liberal perspective, but we hang out like all the time, we're always together. And then having Wade, who is a Democrat, take me under his wing and say be my summer intern, meant a lot because he's potentially helping me progress to my final goal, even though I have different opinions on a lot of the things that he holds dear, political views he holds dear. So it means a lot, to see that, and that he's still willing to guide me and help me grow as a person. And that has meant a lot... So being in Scholars, and having people that are willing to say, look, this is what I believe on this issue, and I believe very strongly on the issue, and often times I disagree with them, significantly, but having that very honest feedback is important (Clint – Scholar with MASK).

Sydney, a Scholar with HFA, made a similar point about the diverse makeup of Scholars adding to the overall collective identity. Thus, while Scholars describe themselves as like-minded in their commitment to their service, this does not mean that they have the same orientation towards their work as it relates to a sense of politics, or even the same orientation about what it might mean to create social change. However, the collective identity among Scholars is typically strong enough to overcome these differences, allowing them to work together.

It also gives you a big community, like you're working alongside these people, so you get to share your experiences with them, and you know, everyone kind of understands what it's like, and I think, it takes people, like it took a person like me, that came from a privileged background, that already did a lot of service, and it takes other people that come, that without this opportunity and without the money, may not have had the opportunity to go to college. And it puts us all in a room, and mingles us with each other. Like me, I've never actually had a full conversation with a Black person before I came to NC and Scholars. And without Scholars, I may have never had these experiences. I would never have talked to someone that has been homeless, never talked to someone that has been discriminated against, and Scholars gave me that opportunity to. So it's kind of like doing the service, but also educating us on the world more, and building a community with all these people, which I like.

Scholars also bring their individual personalities, skills, and talents to contribute to the Scholars collective identity.

The way the Scholars program is organized you got all races, all nationalities involved in our organization, but they all come together for one common thing and that's to give back that service. If you bring people together... a different group of people has different talents. I know for instance with TLC, we have people that are artistically skilled. And now we're bringing in people who are teaching art, bringing in people who are involved in music. So imagine seventy people doing that same thing and bringing more talent to a common goal. It enhances the opportunities that you can possibly have to make a difference (Justin – Scholar with TLC).

The collective Scholar identity within the program also allows Scholars to challenge and hold each other accountable to group expectations. During the staff focus

group, an ESC coordinator who was a former Scholar gave an example where she felt like a fellow Scholar wasn't meeting the ideals and beliefs of the Scholar identity.

We have an expectation that we hold everyone to, so for example, when I was a student, there was a peer of mine in Scholars that posted something on facebook regarding, like an incident that happened to a citizen in Capital City, and she was making fun of that incident. And I wrote her a message immediately, it was second-nature, and I said you're wrong; you represent something that completely goes against that act. And she responded immediately and she said, you know what, you're right, and she took it down, and she apologized. And that, I feel like in other student groups, I never would have seen that. It would have kind of been like, who do you think you are? How dare you? This is my opinion, kind of like flip it off and keep moving. But that sense of responsibility to one another, because of this common belief that we have, turns it into this awkward family/not family unit. And I think that has happened in many other instances, even in personal situations, where let's say a Scholar might have done something that is just not cool in the Scholar world, you'd be like, that's not okay, and it's acknowledged by the individual and the group that that's not okay. But that sense of, I don't know, respect or integrity, isn't necessarily the same as you'd expect from a citizen outside, even though they're really the same, like in terms of their role, it's no different.

These students know that they represent the Scholars in all of their interactions. Due in part to the Engaged Scholarship Center's many existing long-term relationships in Capital City, the Scholars and ESC staff are also aware that the Scholars program, and the Scholar identity, are recognized outside of the program as well. Matt, a Scholar with MASK, told me "when you become a Scholar, you realize that people, you know, complete strangers trust you because you're in such a prestigious program with such a great reputation. You've given a lot of responsibility right away. They really do trust you with a lot." Matt continued a bit later in the interview, "There's a lot of the people in the area that are used to the Scholars program, they know our vans when we drive around, and people will scream stuff at you, say thank you so much as you're driving past them or something like that. I have had a lot of opportunities to see people in the community who appreciate the work that we do."

The Scholars program is also recognized as a distinct group on campus as well. As Rachael, a Scholar with TLC explained, “Scholars on campus, it already has its reputation. So, most people, freshmen obviously, they get brainwashed in their little seminar (*laughs*), so Scholars has the reputation as being a group of people who work on changing our community, like, are civically responsible, and are willing to dedicate 300 hours of their year to changing this community. So, the reputation is already set.”

The focus group with ESC staff discussed this reputation from the outside at some length as well. “As a Scholar group, there is this identity that is presented to the college, or to the community, as this hub of volunteer activity, this hub of civically minded individuals, who will spend their time doing things out in the community, you know, essentially spending your free time doing things for people.... If I lived in Capital City, I would be like wow there’s this group at NC who spends all this time helping us, helping the community, helping the city.” Later in the focus group, another staff member expanded on this idea, and explained that the view of Scholars from the outside can be fluid.

I think how the NC student body sees Scholars is interesting, and it depends, I remember like our year, there was times when I felt like the student body despised the Scholars, because of our role. We were freshmen coming in, and yet we were running ELP days, and who am I to tell you? Like that was weird, but then there’s also like, now, and maybe because I’m a staff member, so who knows if that’s changed or not, but I feel like I get a bunch of random students coming up to me that are like, I want to be a Scholar, I want to be a Scholar, how do I get into the program? How do I apply? And so I don’t know what the accurate vision is, or the identity, whatever, but it’s weird. I think even from a community partner perspective, we hear all the time, we love the Scholars, and they’re like, I tell Wade that I love my Scholars and I want to keep them forever. There’s a sense that, it’s a recognized group, and it depends on where you are.... people kind of know the brand or know what Scholars stands for, and the actions we take within the community, so I feel like that’s where we’re able to be recognized, because every time you have an ELP day, students are recognizing what Scholars is doing.

We're introducing our different sites, our different divisions. Like the first week, welcome week, they all are introduced to what Scholars stands for.

The components that make up the Scholar identity include a sense of community and support amidst strong relationships between Scholars and staff, and the Scholars themselves. The sense of community allows Scholars the freedom to challenge and learn from one another. This collective identity also includes a shared set of goals in the sense that Scholars share a genuine sense of caring and commitment to improving the communities in which they serve. The Scholar identity also includes a shared belief in the Scholars' collective impact and ability to create change; even if the Scholars do not share a common understanding of what this social change should look like from a political engagement perspective. This Scholar collective identity is recognized within the Scholars group, but also defined in part by their relationship with the community.

How is the Scholar Identity Formed?

While it was never explained to me using terms of social movement theory, the formation of the Scholar collective identity is far from accidental. The components that make up the Scholar identity are all formed and cultivated very intentionally by Engaged Scholarship Center staff (in part following models recommended by the Engaged Scholarship Foundation). Organizational profiles - including strategies, tactics, and targets - are shaped by movement ideologies, which in turn influence the construction of organizational structure (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Zald and Ash 1966). In this case, the Scholars program is shaped by service learning ideology and best practices, which have a clear influence on the organizational structure.

During the focus group with ESC staff, Marina (Associate Director of the ESC) explained the design behind this identity development.

I think it's very intentional, when the Scholars Foundation sets up a new program, you have to call it Scholars. It's very much a trademark, and a brand. So it's really tricky, because there's sort of Scholar Love, and Scholar Family, Wade is sort of like Dad, and it's very lovey-dovey, and kumbaya type of thing. But then there's dollars, and responsibilities, and expectations. So you're getting a scholarship, and you're expected to perform. And when you don't perform, as an administrator I have to ask people, or hold people accountable and have really serious conversations about not meeting expectations, what's going on? It's a really weird dynamic because it's business also. It's business in terms of community partners are expecting you to show up. You're expected to perform not only here, but there. So, I think it's necessary to have a collective identity that helps the process, it's very intentional with our orientation, and the team meetings, and the team-based stuff, and all the activities. I think collectively we can certainly do better, I think I would be completely crazy if I didn't have really great people to count on, and I think that all helps. But like everything else, it's also a business, and it's also sometimes not until your fourth year, when you're almost coming out, that you really appreciate it, that you can appreciate the experiences, and appreciate like, wow, this brought a lot of positive things. But you're learning from your freshman year to your fourth year.

Group boundaries are marked symbolically through the use of language, signs, symbols, or organizational structure (Reger 2002). The Scholars program uses language, and a number of symbols to mark group boundaries and strengthen collective identity.

One important factor I think, is the sense of belonging, the feeling that you are part of something bigger. Which, I don't know, we call it Scholar Love, I don't know if the NC folks (*at this point in the interview I laughed and nodded, because I had heard the term Scholar Love many times*), yeah, ok, they do. So that happens through things like orientation, or retreats every year, or meetings, all-Scholar meetings that happen. But that's actually critical I think, to the program. Otherwise, it's like, you could just be like 'I'm a Scholar, I'm getting my little check, I'm doing my hours, but you know, so what?' You know, just like any other kind of placement initiative. And then, so I think the programs work hard to create that. And probably are the best at that, in a sense, like even the programs that might be weaker in management, or not have as many staff, or doing sophisticated things, are really good at community-building and that sense of morale in the program.

I heard repeatedly from students and staff throughout the research process about the importance of Scholar families, and Scholar love. Tarrow (1998) explains that social movements require solidarity to act collectively and consistently. Solidarity in collective identity groups is often based on intimate and specialized communities (Tarrow 1998). The use of language and symbols about family, love, and community is effective in building solidarity around a common identity, and is built into the Scholar program design at NC. “They have a sense of belonging to an organization, there’s a lot of Scholar love and all that Scholar family from the beginning” (Marina – Associate Director, ESC). Wade, the Director of the ESC elaborated on the benefits of this focus.

There are all the benefits of being a part of a family too. It sounds cliché and corny and everything, but you even hear staff kind of say that. I mean, they become very supportive of each other, in personal ways, you know, these become their closest friends. Graduating Scholars and alum will come back and they’ll talk to freshmen and say, you are forming your closest friends that you’re going to have for the rest of your life, because you’re going through this experience together. So I think there are a number of benefits to help them academically, and personally, and emotionally, and socially, by being part of a supportive family. And also that family includes the staff. ... There’s a staff person as well, that can kind of help students out in very concrete ways. Whether it’s trying to find more scholarship money, or buy them a book, or give them a ride, or helping them deal with a crisis.

Scholars agreed that this model was effective in building a very tight-knit community. “I love the people. I’ve made a lot of really good friends out of Scholars... We do so many non-Scholar things, it’s not necessarily an organization that just makes people do service. We do it without getting hours or things like that. We did a beach clean-up last week and we didn’t have to do that. It wasn’t like a Scholar ELP sponsored deal. We go hiking all day sometimes. It’s fun.” This identity development is not entirely driven by staff. The Scholars themselves are heavily involved in negotiating and reinforcing the Scholar identity. During the focus group, a Scholar told me, “I think a lot

of the pride is actually student driven, like the staff is involved, but I feel like a lot of that bonding stuff is all student driven.” At this point, another Scholar jumped in and added, “I think every Scholar has a moment where they realize what Scholars really is, like more than just the hype that we’re presented with, but like where you internalize what’s happening.” Thus, while the Scholars are presented with a version of what the staff think the Scholars program should be, there is an additional step when the Scholars themselves connect with this collective identity. Later in the focus group, Javy described this moment for him.

There’s a point where every Scholar kind of wakes up from that initial fantastical thing that they’re thinking. I remember, it was like one of the first few weeks of Scholar, and I took a walk with Sydney through one of the schools. And she just kind of warned me about some things, and she kind of just told me like, just be wary how you’re treading in the future, and what you’re doing in the future, because you’re going to see that it’s not, you know, the happy picture that everyone likes to paint of what service work is. And I told a few people, like oh I had a nice chat with Sydney, and they were all like, ohhh what’d she say? *(everyone laughs)* And you know, it was something that, at first people don’t really want to admit, that there are going to be a lot of times when you do service work, there are a lot of times when you volunteer, that it’s just like, you’re not going to see instant results, you’re not going to see success. You may never see success from some of your students, like, you have to be, you have to know that, because a lot of people go in with the mindset that they’re going to change lives, that they’re going to make everyone happy, and everyone is going to love them. And they go into the classroom and it’s the complete opposite. I think some Scholars try to let other Scholars know that before they start volunteering, that, just going in a few days a week and expecting huge results isn’t going to work for you.

According to Taylor and Whittier (1992), the formation of collective identity consists of three processes: “(1) the creation of boundaries that insulate and differentiate a category of persons from the dominant society; (2) the development of consciousness that presumes the existence of socially constituted criteria that account for a group’s structural position; and (3) the valorization of a group’s ‘essential differences’ through

the politicization of everyday life” (122). There are clear boundaries created that differentiate the Scholars from other students and volunteers. There is also a consciousness developed among Scholars in the form of a strong sense of community, dedicated to their service engagement. However, as discussed in Chapter Five, this consciousness is most often stripped of a sense of politics. Thus the Scholars do not necessarily perform Taylor and Whittier’s third step, as the group’s “essential differences” are not explored through a politicization of everyday life, at least not on a regular basis.

While explaining the difference between volunteering on one’s own and being a Scholar, Wade (Director of the ESC) touched on this topic of politicizing everyday actions. While it is not happening often, he sees it as an important goal for the Scholars program.

It’s a four year conversation with them, what we’re asking, what we’re pushing them too. When you’re just volunteering, you’re volunteering on your own terms, and it’s a unique person that pushes themselves to get to higher and higher levels on a regular basis. But in Scholars, we push them, and hold them accountable ... so they’re not volunteering in a vacuum, they’re volunteering with a group of other people. So you grow, and develop, and you’re exposed to different perspectives, and different opinions, and all those issues. So that makes it, it’s not an individual journey, it’s a group journey. And with all these perspectives, there are deliberate efforts for people to at some point hopefully understand what justice means, and what our obligations are as a citizen, or why we should get involved politically. There aren’t a lot of spaces like that, unless you’re political science majors, there’s not a lot of, it’s pretty appalling the percentage of students who just don’t know how many assembly people represent them in Capital City, or how a bill becomes a law, or you know, they would probably fail a citizenship test. So at least we’re trying, as we get more and more staff, and we can have slightly calmer and calmer days to reflect on what we need to do better, there’s more and more of an effort to get to those issues.

Managing Multiple Identities and Identity Conflict:

Group identification is just one piece of a person's overall social identity. A person's social identity is made up of all of his or her identifications with different groups (Klandermans and deWeerd 2000). The self is composed of multiple identities which are linked to interactions in social networks. These identities can thus compete in producing behavioral choices, and different identities within the self can take on varying salience depending on roles (Snow and McAdam 2000; Stryker 2000). People can be members of the same group or movement in different ways, and with varying degrees of commitment and identification. The collective Scholar identity is an important piece of each Scholar's social identity. However, Scholars also spoke about the need to manage multiple identities, including times when multiple identities conflicted.

Snow and McAdam (2000) claim that the essence of a collective identity resides in a shared sense of "one-ness" among the individuals who compose the collectivity, and emphasize the importance of the connection between individual and collective identities. "Identity correspondence" is the alignment or linkage of individual and collective identities and their relationship to action. Participation in a social movement almost always modifies, and sometimes even transforms participant identities. As such, movement identities can reflect an individual's experience in a movement just as much as their preexisting identities (Snow and McAdam 2000). Identity correspondence is achieved through either identity convergence (the coalescence of a movement and the individuals who already identify with it) or identity construction (the process by which personal and collective identities are aligned, so individuals regard engagement in a movement as consistent with their own self-conception) (Snow and McAdam 2000). Robnett (2005) argues that partial identity correspondence accounts for the fact that

actors can embrace a movement, but remain in a state of conflict regarding some dimensions of its identity.

Several Scholars mentioned feeling a conflict between their Scholar identity and other pieces of their personal social identity. As Brian (HFA) told me, “I like to hang out with my own friends when I’m not at Scholars, because I have to sometimes get a break from seeing people all the time (*laughs*). I know a bunch of people who are like, all their friends are in Scholars, and they always drive each other insane, because, you know, you’re around each other all the time. I like to have separate groups of friends. Different groups, bounce back and forth.” During the focus groups, a former Scholar and current ESC coordinator gave another example of identity conflict.

When I was an undergrad, I joined a sorority, and during that time period, I remember I was a little more disengaged, and even after I finished. And even though I would say I was still doing things that Scholars would probably approve of in terms of social justice and those type of issue areas that we talk about, I was still engaged in those things, but if it wasn’t with Scholars, I kind of felt conflicted, because I felt like my role as a Scholar was being seen as less, and even though I was still proactive on my campus, and in my organization, that wasn’t seen on the same page. And so, I think in terms of my personal, like I felt like I went through that wave of freshman year being into Scholars, and then sophomore year, you know, seeing around campus and seeing what other things I can join, that’s hard. Even as a staff member now, it’s hard to encourage students to take opportunities that they’re given, when the expectation is so high within Scholars, and then I get concerned about students. I have to tell them that it’s okay to be involved, and you want them to have that experience, but how do you ensure that their commitment is here, is not more important than someone else? Because their personality and their actual personal identity might be met through the other organization, and not just within Scholars. And so I think I struggle with that a lot, and even as a staff member, ensuring that my students are comfortable enough to go to their sites, on a personal level, and then come back and feel like, alright, I’m still a good Scholar, even if I just did the direct service and didn’t do more of whatever else is asked of me. So, I don’t know.

As mentioned in Chapter Four, many Scholars feel challenged when their service experience fails to match up with their academic or career goals. This can lead to a

conflict in social identities as well. “I have two paths, like I really want to go into humanitarianism, and just work directly in the field, like the Peace Corps, or just really grungy work. But on the other side, I know I’m really good at business, and advertising, and all that stuff. And I love, because I’m a double major, and I really love literature, and reading. So there’s a lot of goals ... and I suffer from having too many interests”

(Penelope – Scholar with MASK). Justine, a Scholar with HFA described a similar tension.

That’s where it gets a little sticky for me. I’m currently a nursing major, and surprisingly I do not work with the Health Team we have. But as I entered college it was always, I want to do nursing, this is exactly the path I want to do and I’m going to do Scholars as a great club to do while I’m in college and kind of gear towards that. But my passions are kind of going towards the work I do with Scholars and volunteering with non-profits and such. So I’m, you know I’m trying to understand how I can fit my major into that now. Getting a nursing degree is great and it will be beneficial and healthcare is great to go into so I’m just trying to see how I can um, kind of manipulate that aspect of myself that I like about healthcare and kind of see where I can go with a non-profit, towards that.

In the focus group, ESC staff explained that this pull between personal, academic, and Scholar identities is one of the most common conflicts they hear from students about being a Scholar.

For most people, you’re not going to be a political science major, which goes hand in hand with Scholars. But for the rest of us, you’re like, okay, my college life is kind of split three ways, one is kind of personal, with friends, another is my academics, what I’m actually learning and doing in college. And the other is Scholars. So then when you have such a split identity, it’s like how do you reconcile each with each of these halves? And when you can’t, that’s when it starts to get tricky. Because when you treat Scholars and your own personal life as two separate things, then you’re living two lives, and that’s a really heavy burden. And you’re going to end up hating one or the other, or both. So I definitely feel like if you’re not able to integrate the fact that you’re both these halves, then they really clash with each other, and you’re not going to do well as a Scholar, because you might view it as just this job, and you have to show up and do your stuff, and you end up not really caring about it. And that’s really detrimental, even if you complete the program... But then, I just feel like the ideal is being able to love both, and that might be really hard, but then ultimately that’s the best goal that

you can achieve, after your four years of Scholars, is that you, on one hand you are academically whatever major, but on the other hand, you are a Scholar, and then that kind of stays with you, and then you enjoy that aspect of you, and you carry that forward, even after you graduate... So you've got those students who are like, well I'm an education major, and I'm on the ed team, so it works perfectly, I see this thing, and when I talk to your other friends about this stuff, they'll say, well all my friends are Scholars, so it's like you have everything so lined up. But then, when you have all separate groups, that's a big struggle to make this work.

In the focus group with Scholars, another student on the HFA team explained that the Scholar identity can take on different levels of salience depending on the situation.

I think it definitely shows after difficulty. We go through, it seems like a lot of stuff is thrown on top of us, and it's tough, and we kind of come out at the end emerging and feeling really good about it. It's like, kind of after you've gone through the thick, and you kind of come out of it, and you've had this horrible, horrible two months, and everyone kind of has, and then reflection comes around and you kind of break out and talk about what you've done, you start realizing, like wow, maybe I did do a lot, and this is what it feels like to be a Scholar, and I'm happy. For a while I was having a really time with Scholars. I mean, a lot of people have a hard time with Scholars, it's a difficult thing. But once we come together, like at orientation, you start realizing, and you get pumped up, and you get all these inspiring talks from people, and you start realizing, like, you start thinking and reflecting back on yourself, and you're like, wow, I might have had a really hard time... but in the end, we worked really hard, and we have these results, and whether they be a little bit, or a lot, we did something, and you know, it's a feeling of pride and definitely I think that's when that identity comes in.

During the focus group with Scholars, they also discussed the role of smaller identity groups within the Scholars program. Each Scholar recognized that they felt a connection to the overall Scholar identity, but depending on the situation, other Scholar sub-groups could take on greater salience.

Well there's the Scholar identity, and then individual team identities too. Like the HFA team, we used to be really close, like our site leader used to make breakfast for us every time we would go out. I'm not going to do that, because I'm lazy, but he used to make eggs and stuff, and we'd go out and do service together, and it was really nice, people wanted to be on the HFA team. Now, with the after-school team, we're pretty close, because there's only three of us, and we have to do a ton of stuff, but there are other teams, like the high school team that I've worked on with you before, it's just not close, because of the issues itself, and we don't get a

lot of support, and there's like inter-fighting, and no one knows how to deal with, everyone has different styles, no one's on the same page.

As another Scholar in the focus groups explained, solidary groups (Gamson 1992a) also emerge within the Scholar program based around race and sexual orientation.

With Scholars the thing is, you learn to find your community within Scholars. You know, you might not love every other Scholar, but you learn to find your community, and there is an LGBTQ community with Scholars, and so when I had issues in my classroom that I couldn't talk about with my fellow teammates, or I couldn't talk about with other people, I would go to them. I remember that there was a good period of like two weeks where there were really intense issues that I was having with not only my students that were misbehaving, because they weren't my students that I had in my classroom where I had established respect and rules, it was in a classroom where they were trying to be buddy-buddy with all the students and not correcting them when they were having, when they were saying inappropriate things, when they were using inappropriate behavior. And so I remember just having to go into meetings and be like alright, here we go again, and I would call you know, I call her my Scholar mom, I would call her and say, listen, I am freaking out because I have to go to this meeting, and sit here and tell my whole team why it's inappropriate for a kid to yell 'faggot' across the room. I have to explain why it's inappropriate for them to yell 'bitch' at a female teacher, why it's inappropriate to do these things, and I don't understand why I have to go do this, for the fifth time, for the sixth time. And it's like, I even had a site team leader, who was like, well, it wasn't really inappropriate that they yelled faggot. It wasn't aimed toward you, so it wasn't inappropriate, but things like, when I'm the only person that has to continuously correct that behavior, then it becomes inappropriate, because the rest of the team is not doing their job. And suddenly it's, you know, a situation. And so, I just remember having to like, not being able to communicate with some Scholars, and having my own little queer family within the program, who I would be able to have these conversations with, and who would be able to speak when I wasn't able to.

Challenges of the Scholar Identity

Beyond conflicting social identities, there are a number of other challenges associated with the Scholar identity. Despite many positive relationships, the Scholars program can have a negative image among fellow students on campus, which leads to some friction with Scholars. Tarrow (1998) explains that identity politics can sometimes produce insular, sectarian, or divisive movements incapable of expanding membership,

broadening appeals, and negotiating with prospective allies. Again, while the Scholar identity cannot be defined as “political”, the program does face the challenge of seeming insular and divisive. Clint, a Scholar with MASK explained, “there is a stereotype that Scholars are very mighty about themselves. Like, ‘oh, I do service, and I help change the world, and you should be doing it too, you lowly creature.’” During their focus group, one Scholar elaborated. “There’s almost a stigma, like I never talk about my Scholar work with people who aren’t in Scholars... As soon as they hear Scholars, they don’t want to hear it, because they might have had a bad experience with ELP, partly their own fault, or they like, they automatically think you’re trying to brag, or say you’re better than them and they have to compete, and it’s not about that.” Fiona (TLC) confirmed that she has also felt this discomfort on campus. “A couple of my friends will be like – oh there’s a Scholar, saving the world. I understand that and the Super Scholar shirts don’t help, that’s kind of annoying, okay that’s a little much. I think that can sometimes be the perception, but I think they mistake preachiness (sic) for being passionate about what we do and I feel that the people that I work with are all very passionate about what they do.”

If identity convergence is achieved through identity extension (the expansion of an individual’s identity so that it is aligned with the movement’s), individuals are expected to utilize or invoke their movement role identity in virtually all encounters (Snow and McAdam 2000). During the focus group with ESC staff, a former Scholar and current staff coordinator acknowledged that she felt pressure to live up to the ideal Scholars identity as an undergraduate.

I wouldn’t necessarily share this in any other space, because it’s a difficult, anyways. But um, as a student Scholar, there were times where I was in a situation that I could have been a bigger person. And with my Scholars identity, I should have been a bigger person, but I didn’t want to be the bigger person (*slight*

laugh from another staff member). I'm serious, this is very serious. And then I felt like, I felt pressure, and then I felt upset, because this Scholar identity has so much power over, it has so much influence over my own identity, and are they inseparable? Am I a Scholar forever because it has to do with the social justice value, the core value that I want to have in my life? But I don't always want to have it, like, when it comes to smaller things, like daily interactions, like I don't always want to be the perfect Samaritan for every single individual that I come by. It's unrealistic (*laughs from others*). I'm being so real though, it's unrealistic, and I think it's sacrificial to a degree that I don't think we should all practice.

Some Scholars felt like they were not connected enough to their fellow Scholars, and thus were not fully connected to the collective identity. Marie (CH) was a "back door" Scholar, joining mid-way through her sophomore year, instead of as a first year student. During her interview, which took place during the summer orientation session for all Scholars (her first, after being a Scholar the previous semester), I asked Marie if this was difficult. She explained, "It was tough, yeah, it was tough. I still don't really know where my place is, because everyone kind of has like their own little groups who they relate to most, whether it's their sites, or their times, or just their friends. So like, I've been hanging out with the freshmen a lot, because I feel like I can relate to them, not knowing everyone yet. So it was a little tough." Ashley, a Scholar with TLC who lives off-campus with family (rather than on-campus or near campus with friends, like most Scholars) explained that she also feels disconnected from the Scholar identity at times.

It doesn't really help with bonding with the other Scholars either. Because yeah, I was only really working with them for a year and a half, because I came in as a junior, but like half way through, like in November. So I didn't even have that welcome week to get to know people. So that was a big deal, because that's a big bonding experience for everyone. And because I'm off campus, and I have responsibilities with my grandmother at home who is really ill. I didn't really get to stay and have, so I really just don't know everyone as a group, I just kind of have my friends outside of Scholar instead.

On the other side of the spectrum, a number of Scholars said that they were so connected to the Scholars identity that other relationships felt closed off to them. "I'm not

in a lot of groups outside of Scholars, just because Scholars is so all-consuming. So I like, can't do other stuff, and even if I did, like have the time for the meetings, I don't mentally have the time to just listen to other people babble. So Scholars can be its own isolated world sometimes, as much as I hate it to be" (Sydney – Scholar with HFA). In their focus group, a number of other Scholars expressed similar concerns about not being able to connect with non-Scholars. "Only other Scholar students realize, like it's a very different world. I've never had a conversation about Scholars, like a serious conversation about my work with a non-Scholar. And so in that sense, it is difficult, because this whole part of my life is like, I can't talk about it with people who aren't in it."

According to a number of Scholars, this sense that only other Scholars can understand such an important piece of their identity leads to difficulty forming relationships outside of the program. "It's really difficult to explain my passion for Scholars and why I do as much as I do" (Justine – Scholar with HFA). According to Javy, a Scholar with TLC, "When you are with your friends you just don't talk about Scholars. They just shut off, like okay here comes the Scholars talk. The only people that care are all other Scholars, and no one else cares." In the focus groups, Sydney described how this tension has led to complications in romantic relationships as well.

I dated a Scholar, and we were dating before he became a Scholar, and then he actually became a Scholar with me. And that just made everything easier, and he was on the same team as me, and we had that whole thing, so I didn't have to explain that to him, or to anyone else, and our team was really close-knit, we were all together, we were all hanging out all the time, and it was just like everything was working nicely, as far as the Scholar part of that relationship (*laughs*). But then I've dated other people since, and it's just so annoying. I don't know how many times I had to explain to this guy what I was doing with Scholars, all the different projects I was doing....it's just like, they don't get it, and it's annoying, and I don't have patience for that.

A bit later in the focus group, Sydney explained another example of this difficulty communicating with others outside the Scholars program.

I worked with this one student all year, and I finally got his transcripts and they were really bad, his GPA was so low, that no matter, I literally must have put in 60 hours with him, with SAT prep, and no matter if he got a perfect score, he wasn't getting in to college anywhere. And like, I heard that information and I was just, totally distraught, and I, like was going to talk to my other team members about it, but they were so distraught too, like no one could understand it, and I ended up going to my ex-boyfriend, because in that moment, I needed someone who knows what this is like. Like I need someone that knows what's going on, because no one else would get it. And like, I just went and literally cried for like an hour. And like, after that I got better, and everything like that, and I took that moment and moved on, but everyone else would have not known what to do, at all. And I just cried, because it was just like, you put in all that work for nothing, and he was a good kid, he wasn't a bad kid.

Conclusion:

Collective Identity theory can be quite useful in analyzing the ways in which Scholars attach meaning to their work. Although there is a lack of contentious political engagement among Scholars, this strand of social movement theory still offers a number of useful insights, particularly into the role of identity in the Scholars program. It is clear that the Scholars identity is formed around a number of shared goals and beliefs, utilizing culture, language, and symbols to build a sense of solidarity and community. This sense of community is quite strong among most Scholars, and reflects a shared identity of Scholars as impactful change-makers, working collaboratively and supporting one another, and willing to challenge and learn from one another. The Scholar identity is also reflected and reinforced through relationships with others around the NC campus, and with partners in Capital City.

The collective Scholars identity is formed intentionally by staff at the Engaged Scholarship Center and Engaged Scholarship Foundation through the program's

organizational structure, internal relationships, and activities such as orientations, weekly meetings, and reflections that build Scholar Love, and form Scholar families. However, the Scholars themselves actively participate in shaping the Scholar identity for themselves.

The collective Scholar identity is just one of many social identities that form the full self among each Scholar. Each of these multiple identities takes on different levels of salience depending on the situation, and can occasionally come into conflict. Those who manage to align their multiple identities the best seem to get the most out of the Scholars program. Some Scholars also find an even stronger connection with smaller identity groups within the broader Scholars program.

There are a number of challenges associated with the collective Scholars identity as well. Scholars have a negative image among some of their fellow students at NC, and this may contribute to a difficulty among Scholars to form relationships outside of the Scholars program. If Scholars are unable to participate in some of the collective identity forming activities like orientation, informal discussions, or social events, this may impact their overall connection with the program, and with the Scholars identity as well. The salience of collective identities within social movements is likely to vary based on interactions in a situation, and in the range of situations to which they are relevant (Snow and McAdam 2000). This variance is important to understand the limitations of the Scholar identity. When Scholars are engaged in their service work, or even in their role as students, the Scholar collective identity is pervasive and strong, but as has been shown, most Scholars have difficulty transferring this identity into other realms, particularly political engagement.

Chapter Seven:

Conclusion

Volunteering has become increasingly common among young Americans, particularly college students. Service learning programs abound at colleges and universities across the nation, and many proponents see such programs as a way to effectively mobilize students to engage in their communities. At the same time, fewer young people in the U.S. are engaged in electoral politics, and increasing numbers in the Millennial generation disapprove of the government, and see our political system as bitterly partisan and dysfunctional. Students in the U.S. have also demonstrated very low levels of even the most basic civic knowledge. These facts present young adults in the U.S. as increasingly engaged morally and civically, yet disengaged politically.

This dissertation sought to come to a better understanding of these seemingly countervailing trends. More specifically, the research question for this dissertation asks how individual volunteers attach meaning to their service experience, and how these meanings are constructed. In other words, what is the process by which students come to make sense of the volunteer work in which they are engaged? Of particular interest are the potential connections between these constructed meanings and a sense of politics or a sense of social change strategies.

A review of relevant literature situated these research questions within the broader context of engagement, ideology, and the provision of social services, as well as an increase in the need for, and popularity of volunteering. This literature review also offered a review of the debate over the potential benefits and limitations that engagement

in service learning can offer, and discussion the role of higher education in a functioning democracy.

To explore the ways in which volunteers attach meaning to their service experience, I conducted participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups with a number of college students currently participating in the Engaged Scholars Program, along with staff members of this program and of community partner organizations and a group of comparison volunteers. This is a long-term service learning program requiring participants to commit to 300 hours of service with a community partner over the course of an academic year. Most Scholars participate in the program for four years, following a developmental model designed to give each student increasing responsibility over the course of their work with their partner.

The Scholars program has a clear impact on participating students. Chapter Four: *Comparing Engagement: Partnerships, Relationships, and the Meaning of Volunteerism* provided an overview of the Scholars program design and structure - including the roles and responsibilities of the Scholars, and the partnerships between the Engaged Scholarship Center at Northeast College and their community nonprofit organizations. When comparing participation in the Scholars program with volunteering on one's own, there are many benefits to the Scholar model. The Engaged Scholarship Center provides structure, organization, resources, and ready-made opportunities for the Scholars. There are very strong relationships between Scholars, ESC staff, and the community partners. The Scholars program also requires commitment and consistency of students, which many partners see as crucial to their work together. Participation in the Scholars program also provides the Scholars with increasing depth and responsibility in their work, which

can lead to a greater sense of impact. Scholars tend to gain valuable experience, growth, and can make useful connections to their academic work.

There are also a number of challenges and frustrations associated with the Scholars program however. Both Scholars and staff complain about logistical and organizational limitations. The Scholars program is large, with many moving parts, and at times it proves difficult to keep track of everything. Transportation logistics are an ongoing challenge for everyone involved in the program. Scholars also expressed the challenge of completing 300 hours of service, particularly if they have other obligations and responsibilities. Many Scholars are also deeply critical of their responsibility in leading the Engaged Learning Program days of service required of first year students. Relationships within the Scholars Program can also lead to frustration, particularly a perceived lack of communication between Scholars and staff. The relationship between Scholars and community partner organizations also leads to frustration at times. While community partners are typically understanding of busy college students' schedules, a lack of communication again can lead to tensions between the two. Scholars can also be critical of their roles with community partners, particularly if they feel unprepared or unsupported in their work.

This description of the structures, roles, and relationships of the Scholars program provides a useful exploration of a service learning program that is successful in many ways. The Scholars program does many things very well, and offers many benefits to the students who participate in the program. However, it still faces several challenges, frustrations, and limitations. This discussion, particularly the comparisons between the

Scholars and Vols, should be useful to service learning practitioners interested in the inner workings of a leading civic engagement model.

Chapter Five: *Connecting Service and a Sense of Politics* explored the connection between the Scholars' service and a sense of politics. Scholars defined politics in a number of ways, and these definitions of politics are important in understanding whether or not they see a connection between their work and larger political systems. If students defined politics in the narrow sense of supporting a specific politician or party in electoral politics (or "playing politics" by navigating tricky relationships in their work), they were unlikely to see a connection with their work. However, if students defined politics in broader terms encompassing the relationships, power, access to resources, systems and structures in their communities, then the connection with their work was clear. The Scholars program attempts to build in structured reflections to discuss politics. Scholars can find these activities forced though, and often find unstructured reflection discussions that come up organically more rewarding.

The Scholars program is structured with the goal of engaging students politically. Over the course of their service work in the program, many Scholars begin to see the connection between their direct service on a day to day basis, and the larger structural issues on which they work (hunger, housing, education and health care). A sense of frustration among Scholars, over the limited impact of their service work, seems to be an important step in making this connection. A Scholar working on education, for example, can spend 10 hours per week tutoring a student, and perhaps see the student's grade increase. However, frustrations arise when the Scholar realizes how little impact their work has had on the overall education system in Capital City, let alone the overall issue

of educational inequality across the U.S. The key is harnessing this frustration in a productive manner, so that it does not lead to a sense of defeat or resignation.

Many Scholars recognize the limitations of direct service work in solving issues such as hunger, housing, education, and health care. They also realize that to make any real impact, or create any real change on the issues on which they are engaged, new policies would have to be enacted, and social structures including the political system, would have to be involved. However, a large portion of these Scholars do not consider themselves “political”. This leads to a very real contradiction for many Scholars - knowing that to solve these issues, political action must be taken, yet remaining unengaged politically. Many Scholars communicated a version of the phrase, “I know I should be political, but...” before providing four key reasons that they do not consider themselves politically active: 1) ... I don’t know how to be political; 2) ... I don’t see politics as a viable solution; 3)... I see politics as too divisive; or 4) ... I am too busy with logistics. These responses could often overlap as well

Each of these reasons for separating service from politics fits with larger trends across the U.S. By most measures, Americans are lacking in the skills necessary to engage politically. Scholars also see political engagement as an intimidating next step, one they feel unprepared, and too uninformed to take (1). Even when Scholars make a connection between service and a larger sense of politics, there are very few opportunities to take direct political action. This is a real limitation for the Scholars program, and similar service learning/civic engagement programs. While there are numerous pathways to direct service opportunities available to students, there are very few direct paths to political engagement. The Engaged Scholarship Center and Foundation both recognize

this limitation in their field, and several staff members spoke about plans and initiatives to create more collaborative projects that would hopefully engage students with policy and politics on a deeper level.

Many Scholars also see political systems as ineffective, slow, corrupt, or dysfunctional (2). Several Scholars said that they do not think politicians represent their interests, and are disconnected from real issues. So while they think the government should play a role in solving social issues, they do not trust the government, at least in its current state, to create effective change. In the meantime, they know they can make an impact through service, even if it is on a small local level, so they invest their energy in this way instead. This trend fits with overall polling data that indicate record low levels of trust in the federal government. Scholars also often see politics as bitterly partisan, divisive, and nasty (3). Again, this seems to align with national polling data that indicates increasing partisan animosity in recent years. Thus, they choose to focus on the much nicer form of engagement through service. To these Scholars, “politics” indicated yelling and being told what to do, something they’d like to avoid. Finally, Scholars (along with staff) indicated that while they think political engagement is necessary to create change, they simply do not have the time to focus on this connection (4). The day to day requirements of making these service learning partnerships function do not leave enough time to engage with the “big picture” questions about politics.

Thus, many of the Scholars see the issues on which they are working as inherently structural, and even political in nature, but at the same time say that they themselves are not, and often do not want to be political. This is an important finding for the field of service learning and civic engagement in higher education. Many service and engagement

programs include the goal of providing students with experiences that will make them think about issues of inequality on a deeper, more structural level. However, even when programs meet this lofty goal of deeper, structural, political thinking, it may not lead to students being engaged politically. This is not necessarily a weakness on the part of the programs, nor should it be seen as a personal failing among students. There is something larger going on here. At least among those involved in Scholars program, low levels of political engagement are not due to apathy or excessive individualism. These students care deeply about their issues and the communities in which they serve. They often see service as a responsibility, and they commit tremendous amounts of time and energy to their work.

These students realize that they *should* or even *need* to “be political” to effect structural change, but many still purposefully disengage with politics. Based on the opportunities (along with political knowledge and skills) available to them, their views of the effectiveness of the U.S. political system, the partisan nature of contemporary U.S. politics, and facing limited time and energy, Scholars seem to be making a reasonable decision to keep service and “politics” as separate entities. Any service learning or civic engagement program that hopes to create politically engaged students must take these factors into account.

Ideology plays a key role in the ways in which Scholars think about their service experience as well. Many Scholars discussed engagement in terms of a civic or moral responsibility. In other words, these Scholars saw service as something that they and others should feel called to do as a citizen, or as a good person. When asked about the role the government should (or should not) play in addressing social issues such as

hunger, housing, education, or health care, many Scholars reflect a strong sense of personal responsibility. A number of Scholars spoke about the importance of individualism, and being responsible for one's own position in life. Scholars also said they worried that increased government support for social welfare programs would lead to dependence and abuse of the system.

There were a number of Scholars believed that the government should play a larger role in meeting social needs. These Scholars clearly linked the issues on which they work with other pressing social issues, and said that the government is the only institution with the power and scope to address them. Many of these responses were quite vague in the specific role the government should play however. Even among Scholars who felt strongly that the government should play a significant role in addressing social needs, this role was often defined as supporting existing nonprofit agencies or expanding volunteer efforts. Thus, most proposed solutions are reform-based, and do not challenge existing social structures.

Chapter 7: *Collective Identity and Service* explored the role of collective identity in the ways in which the Scholars attach meaning to their service work. This piece of social movement theory offers a number of useful insights into the Scholars' experience, and deepens the understanding of several of the themes that emerged in earlier chapters. This theory is particularly useful in offering insight into the role of identity in the Scholars program. It is clear that there is a distinct collective identity among Scholars that is formed around a number of shared goals and beliefs. This identity is formed through the use of culture, language, and symbols to build a sense of social solidarity and community. A sense of community is very strong among most Scholars. Scholars and

ESC staff described a big piece of their collective identity as a group of individuals coming together to impact communities and create change more effectively than they could alone. Collaborative work and supporting one another are other key components of the Scholars identity, as is the willingness to challenge and learn from one another. The Scholar identity is also reflected and reinforced through relationships with others around the NC campus, and with partners in Capital City.

The Engaged Scholarship Center and the Engaged Scholarship Foundation work intentionally to form elements of the Scholars collective identity through the program's organizational structure, internal relationships, and activities such as orientations, weekly meetings, and reflections that build Scholar Love, and form Scholar families. However, the Scholars themselves actively participate in shaping the Scholar identity for themselves, and several Scholars noted that they could look back on particular moments when they truly connected with the collective identity of the group.

The Scholars collective identity is just one of many social identities for each individual Scholar. These multiple identities take on different levels of salience depending on the social situation. Several Scholars and staff described times when these identities occasionally come into conflict. Those who are best able to connect their Scholars identity to their other social identities seem to get the most out of the Scholars program. Several Scholars also noted that they have found an even stronger connection with smaller identity groups within the broader Scholars program.

There are a number of challenges associated with the Scholars collective identity as well. A number of Scholars noted that there is a negative image of the Scholars program among some of their fellow students at Northeast College. Several Scholars also

discussed a difficulty forming relationships outside of the Scholars program, because they felt that others don't understand the Scholars identity. Activities like orientation, informal discussions, or social events are very important in forming the Scholars collective identity. A number of Scholars said that because they were unable to fully participate in these activities, it has impacted their overall connection with the program and with the Scholars identity as well.

Scholars see their work as connected to social change, but it is often framed in terms of service, and distinctively not in terms of politics. They see their identity as part of a collective effort, but the solutions to the issues on which they work are often seen in individual terms and often echo an ideology of personal responsibility. Service is seen as an answer in that if everyone "gave back" to their communities by participating in service, it would clearly impact these social issues. When Scholars discussed the role of the government in addressing social issues, it was often framed in terms of nonprofits, service, and volunteering. Scholars see clear connections between the issues they are working on and other issues of inequality, and they realize that their volunteering alone will not solve them. There are seeds of a call for greater communitarian efforts, but these ideas are rarely expressed in political terms. Scholars see a definite moral and civic responsibility to be involved in addressing issues of inequality, but usually not a political responsibility.

Collective Identity theory may be a way to make sense of this seeming disconnect between service and political change, and potentially a way to reframe this work in a way that helps meet the promise of service-learning programs. Service Scholars undoubtedly see themselves as part of a collective effort, and this sense of identity seems to empower

them as agents of change. They see that working as part of a collective effort enables them to make a much larger difference in their local community than they would on their own. However, these service efforts are often seen as the goal in and of itself to many volunteers. They see the impact of their work as a group in the provision of direct service, but they do not often see how they can take the next step to connect this work to larger political or structural change even though most realize that these steps must be taken to truly address the issues on which they work. If service learning programs were more clearly geared toward providing the skills and opportunities for participants to make changes on the structural level, it would go a long way in meeting the lofty goals of these programs.

This dissertation provides a number of lessons to be learned about the links between civic engagement and the potential for social change. The research contributes to the understanding of a model of service learning that can produce critical thought on the service experience, and how this work relates to broader systems of inequality. The data provided in this study show that students engaged in service learning are hardly apathetic. These students dedicate a tremendous amount of time and energy to their service work. They devote over 300 hours each year to a structured program that emphasized the key components of commitment, accountability, and sustainability. Through a combination of their direct service experience, formal and informal reflection discussions, trainings, and other program activities, most Scholars develop a sense of political consciousness by drawing a connection between their service and the larger structures that shape the social issues on which they work: hunger, housing, education, and health care.

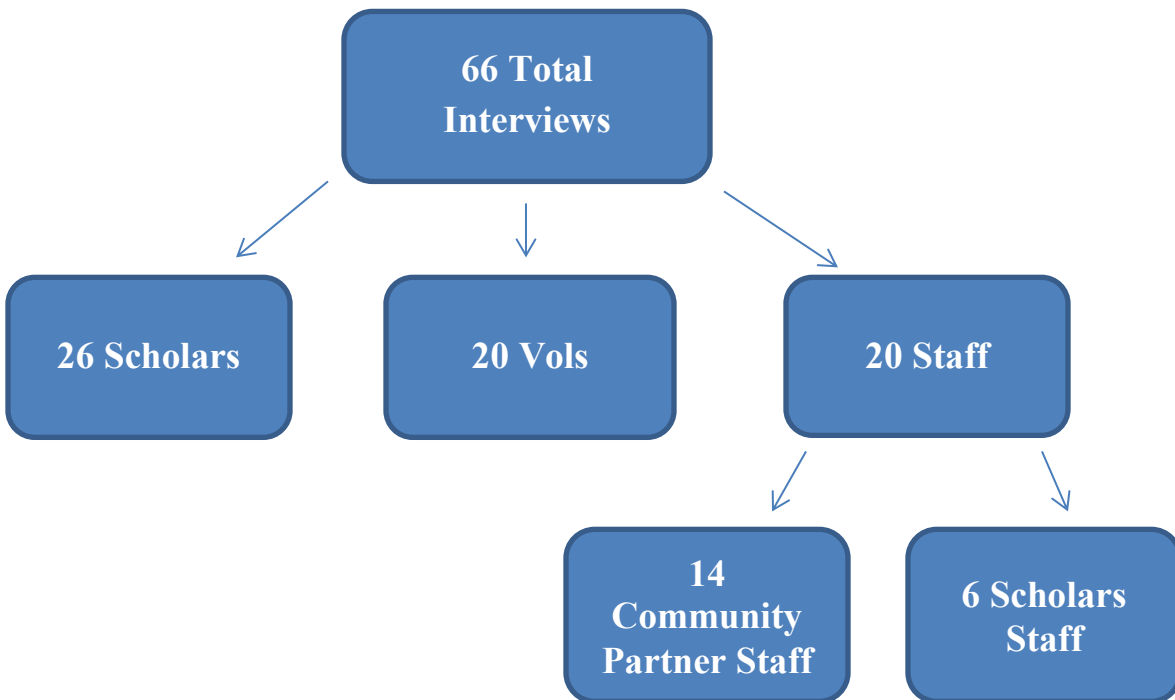
The meaning of “politics” is clearly important in this study. While many Scholars develop a level of political consciousness through their work, most do not consider themselves “political” if using a narrow definition of political engagement. While this may seem contradictory, there are a number of reasons that Scholars build political consciousness, yet fail to make a connection between their service and political engagement. Many Scholars indicate that they “know they should be political, but...” they do not know how to become politically engaged, they see politics as too divisive, they do not see politics as a viable route to social change (while they do see service as contributing to social change, even if in a limited sense), or they are too busy with logistics and meeting more immediate responsibilities. Thus, a separation between service and political engagement is often a purposeful and rational response to the Scholars’ views of the current political climate. Based on the data in this dissertation, it appears in many cases to be unrealistic or overly ambitious to expect students to translate their experience with service directly into political engagement. By looking narrowly only at levels of political engagement (which like many of their peers, is low among Scholars) it limits the understanding of civic engagement and social change among college students, particularly those engaged in service learning.

This study also informs the literature on collective identity in building political consciousness and facilitating sustained commitment among social movements. The Scholars have built a definite collective identity, with a strong sense of community and support, with the freedom to challenge and learn from one another. This collective identity also includes a shared sense of caring and commitment to improving the communities in which they serve, and a shared belief in the Scholars’ collective impact

and ability to create change. Scholars describe themselves as like-minded in their commitment to service, but this does not mean that they have the same orientation towards their work as it relates to a sense of politics, or even the same orientation about what it might mean to create social change. However, the collective identity among Scholars is typically strong enough to overcome these differences, allowing them to work together. Thus, this dissertation also offers a useful discussion that speaks to how unity can be formed among differing political orientations and understandings of social change within a social movement. This is a fragile unity however, and is dependent in large part on students avoiding discussion of difficult topics (considered too “political”) that may cause conflict or division.

Overall, this dissertation contributes to a greater understanding of service engagement, particularly among college students. While no claims can be made about the causal impact of the Scholars program, it is clear that engagement in a structured service learning program like the Scholars drastically shapes the service experience, especially when compared to volunteers who do similar service on their own. Participation in a structured service learning program also shapes the ways in which students think about their service as it relates to a sense of politics and social change. However, the connection between service and political engagement is often complicated by a lack of political opportunities, a perceived lack of civic skills or political knowledge, and views of politics as divisive and ineffective. This dissertation also contributes to a greater understanding of the collective identity that can develop among student service learners, and how this identity may impact their work.

Appendix A – Interview Diagram:



Appendix B – Interviewee Information:

Pseudonym	Role	Staff/Student	Organization	Gender	Class Year (Student)
Alex	Manager	Staff	HFA	Male	n/a
Damon	Vice President	Staff	TLC	Male	n/a
Donna	Vice-President	Staff	ESF	Female	n/a
Dorrie	Assistant	Staff	CH	Female	n/a
Emily	Program Manager	Staff	TLC	Female	n/a
Ian	President	Staff	ESF	Male	n/a
Jennifer	Coordinator	Staff	ESC	Female	n/a
Johanna	Development Coordinator	Staff	HFA	Female	n/a
Julie	Director	Staff	CH	Female	n/a
Kevin	Director	Staff	MASK	Male	n/a
Margaret	Volunteer Coordinator	Staff	HFA	Female	n/a
Marina	Associate Director	Staff	ESC	Female	n/a
Melissa	Director of Operations	Staff	CH	Female	n/a
Pete	Director	Staff	HFA	Male	n/a
Phil	Coordinator	Staff	ESC	Male	n/a
Ray	Volunteer Services	Staff	MASK	Male	n/a
Scott	Volunteer Coordinator	Staff	MASK	Male	n/a
Taysha	Manager	Staff	HFA	Female	n/a
Todd	Manager	Staff	HFA	Male	n/a
Wade	Director	Staff	ESC	Male	n/a
Anjuli	Scholar	Student	MASK	Female	Junior
Antonia	Scholar	Student	TLC	Female	Freshman
Ashley	Scholar (“back-door”)	Student	TLC	Female	Senior
Bill	Scholar (“back-door”)	Student	HFA	Male	Senior
Brad	Scholar	Student	MASK	Male	Freshman
Brian	Scholar	Student	HFA	Male	Sophomore
Brielle	Scholar	Student	TLC	Female	Freshman
Clint	Scholar	Student	MASK	Male	Sophomore
Fiona	Scholar (“back-door”)	Student	TLC	Female	Senior
Gina	Scholar	Student	TLC	Female	Senior
Hector	Scholar	Student	CH	Male	Junior

Jessica	Scholar	Student	TLC	Female	Freshman
Josh	Scholar	Student	MASK	Male	Junior
Justin	Scholar	Student	TLC	Male	Senior
Justine	Scholar	Student	HFA	Female	Junior
Larissa	Scholar	Student	CH	Female	Junior
Marie	Scholar (“back-door”)	Student	CH	Female	Sophomore
Matt	Scholar	Student	MASK	Male	Senior
Penelope	Scholar	Student	MASK	Female	Senior
Rachael	Scholar (“back-door”)	Student	TLC	Female	Junior
Samantha	Scholar	Student	TLC	Female	Freshman
Sheila	Scholar	Student	MASK	Female	Junior
Steve	Scholar (“back-door”)	Student	HFA	Male	Freshman
Susan	Scholar	Student	TLC	Female	Senior
Sydney	Scholar	Student	HFA	Female	Junior
Trent	Scholar	Student	TLC	Male	Senior
Bogdan	Vol	Student	HFA	Male	Senior
Constantine	Vol	Student	HFA	Male	Sophomore
Dawn	Vol	Student	HFA/TLC	Female	Sophomore
Gail	Vol	Student	HFA	Female	Freshman
Howard	Vol	Student	MASK	Male	Freshman
Jerome	Vol	Student	TASK	Male	Sophomore
Jesse	Vol	Student	TLC	Male	Sophomore
Mark	Vol	Student	MASK	Male	Sophomore
Naoma	Vol	Student	TLC	Female	Freshman
Nora	Vol	Student	HFA	Female	Senior
Paul	Vol	Student	TLC	Male	Junior
Rebecca	Vol	Student	HFA	Female	Sophomore
Robin	Vol	Student	TLC	Female	Junior
Roger	Vol	Student	HFA	Male	Junior
Serena	Vol	Student	HFA/MASK	Female	Senior
Stella	Vol	Student	HFA	Female	Freshman
Valerie	Vol	Student	MASK	Female	Freshman
April	Vol	Student	HFA	Female	Sophomore
Dayshon	Vol	Student	MASK	Male	Junior
Victoria	Vol	Student	HFA	Female	Sophomore

CH – Community House

ESC – Engaged Scholarship Center

ESF – Engaged Scholarship Foundation

HFA – Homes For All

MASK – Mid-Atlantic Soup Kitchen

TLC – The Learning Coalition

References:

- Allahyari, Rebecca Anne. 2000. *Visions of Charity: Volunteer Workers and Moral Community*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Angrosino, Michael V. 2005. "Recontextualizing Observation: Ethnography, Pedagogy, and the Prospects for a Progressive Political Agenda", Pp 729-745 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research: Third Edition*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Arendt, Hannah. 1958. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Astin, Alexander W., Lori J. Vogelgesang, Elaine K. Ikeda, and Jennifer A. Yee. 2000. *How Service Learning Affects Students*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute. Accessed April 12, 2011. <http://heri.ucla.edu/pdfs/rhowas.pdf>.
- Bacon, Nora. 1999. "The Trouble with Transfers: Lessons from a Study on Community Service Writing." *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. 6(1): 53-62.
- Barber, Benjamin. 1984. *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Battistoni, Richard M. 1997. "Service Learning and Democratic Citizenship." *Theory into Practice* 36: 150-156.
- Bennett, W. Lance. 2007. *Civic Life Online: Learning How Digital Media Can Engage Youth*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Beem, Christopher. 1999. *The Necessity of Politics: Reclaiming American Public Life*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bell, Shannon M. and Rebecca Carlson. 2009. "Motivations of Community Organizations for Service Learning", Pp 119-37 in *The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning*, edited by Randy Stoecker and Elizabeth A. Tryon. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Bellah, Robert N., Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M. Tipton. 1992. *The Good Society*. New York, NY: Vintage Press.
- Berger, Ben. 2011. *Attention Deficit Democracy: The Paradox of Civic Engagement*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Berry, Jeffrey M., and David F. Arons. 2003. *A Voice for Nonprofits*. Arlington, VA: Oakland Street Publishing.
- Bickford, Donna M., and Nedra Reynolds. 2002. "Activism and Service Learning: Reframing Volunteerism as Acts of Dissent." *Pedagogy: Critical Approaches to Teaching Literature, Language, Composition, and Culture* 2: 229-52.
- Binder, Amy J., and Kate Wood. 2013. *Becoming Right: How Campuses Shape Young Conservatives*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Boyer, Ernest L. 1996. "The Scholarship of Engagement." *Journal of Public Service and Outreach* 1: 11-20.
- Boyle-Baise, Marilynne. 1998. "Community Service Learning for Multicultural Education: An Exploratory Study with Pre-Service Teachers. *Equity & Excellence in Education*. 31(2): 52-60.
- Boyte, Harry C. 2003. "A Different Kind of Politics: John Dewey and the Meaning of Citizenship in the 21st Century". *The Good Society*, 12(2): 1-15.
- _____. 2005. *Everyday Politics: Reconnecting Citizens and Public Life*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

- Bringle, Robert G. and Julie A. Hatcher. 2002. "Campus-Community Partnerships: The Terms of Engagement." *Journal of Social Issues*. 55: 503-516.
- Britt, Lori L. 2012. "Why We Use Service-Learning: A Report Outlining a Typology of Three Approaches to This Form of Communication Pedagogy." *Communication Education*. 61(1): 80-88.
- Brown, Danika. 2001. *Pulling it Together: A Method for Developing Service-Learning and Community Partnerships Based on Critical Pedagogy*. Washington, DC: Corporation for National & Community Service.
- Buechler, Steven M. 1990. *Women's Movements in the United States*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Campus Compact. 2011. *2010 Annual Membership Survey Results: Executive Summary*. Boston, MA: Campus Compact. Accessed September 3, 2011. http://www.compact.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/2010_Annual-Survey_Exec_Summary-4-8.pdf.
- CIRCLE. 2007. *Dissonant Discourse Turning Off College Students to Formal Politics*. Medford, MA: The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. <http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/CSTPrelease.pdf>
- _____. 2010a. *Civic Skills and Federal Policy*. Medford, MA: The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Accessed October 4, 2011. http://www.civicyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Civic-Skills-and-Federal-Policy_final.pdf.
- _____. 2010b. *Voter Turnout Among Young Women and Men in the 2008 Presidential Election*. Medford, MA: The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Accessed March 11, 2013. http://www.civicyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/fs_gender_09_final1.pdf
- _____. 2011. *The Youth Vote in 2010: Final Estimates Based on Census Data*. Medford, MA: The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Accessed September 14, 2014. <http://www.civicyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/The-CPS-youth-vote-2010-FS-FINAL1.pdf>
- _____. 2013. *The Youth Vote in 2012*. Medford, MA: The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. Accessed September 14, 2014. http://www.civicyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/CIRCLE_2013FS_outhVoting2012FINAL.pdf
- Charmaz, Kathy. 2005. "Grounded Theory in the 21st Century", Pp 507-5355 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research: Third Edition*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Clayton, Patti H, Robert G. Bringle, Bryanne Senor, Jenny Huq, and Mary Morrison. 2010. "Differentiating and Assessing Relationships in Service-Learning and Civic Engagement: Exploitative, Transactional, or Transformational." *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. 16(2): 5-22.
- Clemens, Elizabeth S., and Doug Guthrie. 2011. "Introduction: Politics and Partnerships." In *Politics and Partnerships: The Role of Voluntary Associations in America's Political Past and Present*, edited by Elizabeth S. Clemens and Doug Guthrie, 1-24. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Colby, Anne, Elizabeth Beaumont, Thomas Ehrlich, and Josh Corngold. 2007. *Educating*

- for Democracy: Preparing Undergraduates for Responsible Political Engagement*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Conrad, Daniel, and Diane Hedin. 1982. "The Impact of Experiential Education on Adolescent Development" *Child and Youth Services* 4: 57-76.
- _____. 1991. "School-based Community Service: What we Know from Research and Theory." *Phi Delta Kappan* 72: 743-49.
- Corporation for National and Community Service. 1993. *National and Community Service Act of 1993*. Washington, DC.
http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cncs_statute_1993.pdf
- _____. 2010. *Civic Life in America: Key Findings on the Civic Health of the Nation*. Washington, DC. Accessed June 7, 2011. http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/factsheet_cha.pdf.
- _____. 2010b. *Volunteering in America 2010: Fact Sheet*. Washington, DC. Accessed October 3, 2011.
http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/factsheet_via.pdf.
- _____. 2006. *College Students Helping America: Executive Summary*. Washington, DC. Accessed October 18, 2013.
http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/06_1016_RPD_college_exec.pdf
- _____. 2013. *Volunteering and Civic Life in America 2013*. Washington, DC. Accessed January 11, 2014.
<http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/infographic.cfm>
- Dalton, Russell. 2008. *The Good Citizen: How a Younger Generation is Reshaping American Politics*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- Danziger, Sheldon, Koji Chavez, and Erin Cumberworth. 2012. *Poverty and the Great Recession*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality. Accessed September 20, 2014. http://web.stanford.edu/group/recessiontrends-dev/cgi-bin/web/sites/all/themes/barron/pdf/Poverty_fact_sheet.pdf
- Davis, Angelique and Brian Mellow. 2012. "Preaching to the Apathetic and Uninterested: Teaching Civic Engagement to Freshmen and Non-Majors." *Journal for Civic Commitment*. 18: 1-24.
- Deans, Thomas. 1999. "Service Learning in Two Keys: Paulo Freire's Critical Pedagogy in Relation to John Dewey's Pragmatism." *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 6: 15-29.
- Delli Carpini, Michael, and Scott Keeter. 2001. "What Should Be Learned through Service Learning?" *Political Science* 33: 635-38.
- DeNavas-Walt, Carmen and Bernadette D. Proctor. 2014. *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2013*. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed September 20, 2014.
<http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2014/demo/p60-249.pdf>
- Dewey, John. 1927. *The Public and Its Problems*. New York: H. Holt and Company.
- _____. 1994. *The Moral Writings of John Dewey*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.
- Dey, Eric L., Cassie L. Barnhardt, Mary Antonaros, Molly C. Ott, and Matthew A.

- Hopsapple. 2009. *Civic Responsibility: What is the Campus Climate for Learning?* Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Dodson, Lisa. 1998. *Don't Call Us Out of Name: The Untold Lives of Women and Girls in Poor America*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Dodson, Lisa and Leah Schmalzbauer. 2005. "Poor Mothers and Habits of Hiding: Participatory Methods in Poverty Research." *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 67(4): 949-959.
- Downton, James Jr. and Paul Wehr. 1998. "How Activist Commitment is Developed and Sustained." *Journal of Peace Research*. 35(5): 531-550.
- Eby, John W. 1998. "Why Service-Learning is Bad". Mechanicsburg, PA: Messiah College. Retrieved February 4, 2014.
http://www.messiah.edu/external_programs/agape/servicelearning/articles/wrongsvc.pdf
- Edwards, Bob and Michael W. Foley. 1997. "Social Capital, Civil Society and Contemporary Democracy." *American Behavioral Scientist*. 42: 882-894.
- Edwards, Michael. 2007. "Love, Reason and the Future of Civil Society." In *Higher Education and Civic Engagement: International Perspectives*, edited by Lorraine McIlrath and Iain Mac Labhrainn, 13-24. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company.
- Ehrlich, Thomas. 2000. *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*. Westport, CT: Oryx Press.
- Einfeld, Aaron, and Denise Collins. 2008. "The Relationships Between Service Learning, Social Justice, Multicultural Competence, and Civic Engagement." *Journal of College Student Development* 49: 95-109.
- Eliasoph, Nina. 1998. *Avoiding Politics: How Americans Produce Apathy in Everyday Life*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 2011. *Making Volunteers: Civic Life after Welfare's End*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Eyler, Janet. 1997. "The Impact of Service Learning on College Students." *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 4:5-15.
- _____. 2002. "Reflection: Linking Service and Learning-Linking Students and Communities." *Journal of Social Issues* 58: 517-34.
- Eyler, Janet. 1997. "The Impact of Service Learning on College Students." *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 4:5-15.
- _____. 2002. "Reflection: Linking Service and Learning-Linking Students and Communities." *Journal of Social Issues* 58: 517-34.
- Eyler, Janet, and Dwight E. Giles, Jr. 1999. *Where's the Learning in Service Learning?* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.
- Ferguson, Thomas, and Joel Rogers. 1986. *Right Turn: The Decline of Democrats and the Future of American Politics*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Flanagan, Constance A. 2004. "Volunteerism, Leadership, Political Socialization, and Civic Engagement." In *Handbook of Adolescent Psychology*, edited by R. M. Lerner and L. Steinberg, 721-45. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons.
- Fontana, Andrea and James H. Frey. 2005. "The Interview: From Neutral Stance to

- Political Involvement”, Pp 695-727 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research: Third Edition*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Freire, Paulo. 1985. *The Politics of Education*. New York: Bergin and Garvey.
- Friedman, Milton. 1962. *Capitalism and Freedom*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Frum, David. 1994. *Dead Right*. New York: Basic Books.
- _____. 1996. *What’s Right: The New Conservative Majority and the Remaking of America*. New York: BasicBooks.
- Galston, William. 2004. “Civic Education and Political Participation.” *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 37: 263-266.
- Gamson, William A. 1992a. *Talking Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 1992b. “The Social Psychology of Collective Action.” Pp 53-76 in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, edited by Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1991. *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Ginwright, Shawn and Julio Cammarota. 2002. “New Terrain in Youth Development: The Promise of a Social Justice Approach.” *Social Justice*. 29(4): 82-95.
- Glaser, Barney and Anselm Strauss. 1999. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Green, Ann E. 2001. “‘But You Aren’t White’: Racial Perceptions and Service-Learning.” *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. 8(1): 18-26.
- Habermas, Jurgen. 1985. *Theory of Communicative Action, Volume II*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Hacker, Jacob S. 2002. *The Divided Welfare State: The Battle Over Public and Private Social Benefits in the United States*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 2008. *The Great Risk Shift: The New Economic Insecurity and the Decline of the American Dream*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hacker, Jacob S., and Paul Pierson. 2006. *Off Center: The Republican Revolution and the Erosion of American Democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Harkavy, Ira, and Lee Benson. 1998. “De-Platonizing and Democratizing Education as the Bases of Service Learning.” *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 73: 11-20.
- Hatcher, Julie A., and Robert G. Bringle. 1997. “Reflection: Bridging the Gap Between Service and Learning.” *College Teachers* 45: 153-58.
- Hays, Sharon. 2004. *Flat Broke with Children: Women in the Age of Welfare Reform*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- HERI (Higher Education Research Institute). 2005. *The American Freshman: National Norms for 2005*. Los Angeles: HERI.
- _____. 2006. *The American Freshman: National Norms for 2006*. Los Angeles: HERI.
- Holland, Barbara A. 2005. “Reflections on Community-Campus Partnerships What Has Been Learned? What Are the Next Steps?” Pp 10-17 in *Higher Education Collaboratives for Community Engagement and Improvement*, edited by P.

- Pasque, R. Smerek, B. Dwyer, N. Bowman, and B. Malloy. Ann Arbor, MI: National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good.
- Holland, Barbara A. and Marie Sandy. 2006. "Different Worlds and Common Ground: Community Partner Perspectives on Campus-Community Partnerships". *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. 13(1): 30-43.
- Hochschild, Jennifer. 1981. *What's Fair?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hidayat, Dadit, Samuel Pratsch, and Randy Stoecker. 2009. "Principles for Success in Service Learning – the Three Cs", Pp 147-161 in *The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning*, edited by Randy Stoecker and Elizabeth A. Tryon. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Intercollegiate Studies Institute, National Civic Literacy Board. 2007. *Failing Our Students, Failing America: Holding Colleges Accountable for Teaching America's History and Institutions*. Wilmington, DE: Intercollegiate Studies Institute. http://www.americancivilliteracy.org/2007/summary_summary.html.
- Iverson, Susan V. and Jennifer H. James. 2013. "Self-Authoring a Civic Identity: A Qualitative Analysis of Change-Oriented Service Learning." *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 50(1): 88-105.
- ISI (Intercollegiate Studies Institute). 2006. *The Coming Crisis in Citizenship: Higher Education's Failure to Teach America's History and Institutions*. Wilmington, DE: ISI.
- Jacoby, Barbara. 1996. "Service-Learning in Today's Higher Education." Pp 3-25 in *Service-Learning in Higher Education: Concepts and Practices*, edited by Barbara Jacoby. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Julian, Tiffany, and Robert Kominsky. 2011. "Education and Synthetic Work-Life Earnings Estimates." *American Community Survey Reports*. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed November 3, 2011. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/acs-14.pdf>.
- Kamberelis, George and Greg Dimitriadis. 2005. "Focus Groups: Strategic Articulations of Pedagogy, Politics, and Inquiry", Pp 887-907 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research: Third Edition*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Kahne, Joseph, and Joel Westheimer. 1996. "In the Service of What? The Politics of Service Learning." *Phi Delta Kappan* 77: 592-99.
- King, John J. 2004. "Service Learning as a Site for Critical Pedagogy: A Case of Collaboration, Caring, and Defamiliarization Across Borders." *The Journal of Experiential Education* 26: 121-37.
- Klandermans, Bert and Marga deWeerd. 2000. "Group Identification and Political Protest." Pp 68-90 in *Self, Identity, and Social Movements*, edited by Sheldon Stryker, Timothy J. Owens, and Robert W. White. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Kohnle, Ian. 2013. "Angry, Yet Apathetic: The Young American Voter". *Harvard Political Review*. Accessed August 2, 2014. <http://harvardpolitics.com/hprgument-posts/angry-yet-apatetic-young-american-voter/>
- Kuttner, Robert. 2008. *The Squandering of America: How the Failure of Our Politics Undermines Our Prosperity*. New York: Vintage Books.

- Latham, Andrew. 2003. *Liberal Education for Global Citizenship: Renewing Macalester's Traditions of Public Scholarship and Civic Learning*. St. Paul, MN: Project Pericles of Macalester College.
- Lisman, C. David. 1998. *Toward a Civil Society: Civic Literacy and Service Learning*. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.
- Longo, Nicholas V. 2005. "Recognizing the Role of Community in Civic Education: Lessons from Hull House, Highlander Folk School, and the Neighborhood Learning Community." *CIRCLE Working Paper 30*. Medford, MA: The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement (CIRCLE).
- Macedo, Stephen. Yvette Alex-Assensoh, Jeffrey M. Berry, Michael Brintnall, David E. Campbell, Luis Ricardo Fraga, Archon Fung, William A. Galston, Christopher F. Karpowitz, Margaret Levi, Meira Levinson, Keena Lipsitz, Richard G. Niemi, Robert D. Putnam, Wendy M. Rahn, Rob Reich, Robert R. Rodgers, Todd Swanstrom, and Katherine Cramer Walsh. 2005. *Democracy at Risk: How Political Choices Undermine Citizen Participation, and What We Can Do About It*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.
- Mann, Sheila, and John J. Patrick. 2000. *Education for Civic Engagement in Democracy: Service Learning and Other Promising Practices*. Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education.
- Martin, Amy, Kristy SeBlonka, and Elizabeth Tryon. 2009. "The Challenge of Short-Term Service Learning." Pp 57-72 in *The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning*, edited by Randy Stoecker and Elizabeth A. Tryon. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press
- Marullo, Sam. 1996. "The Service-Learning Movement in Higher Education: An Academic Response to Troubled Times." *Sociological Imagination*. 33: 117-137.
- _____. 1999. "Sociology's Essential Role: Promoting Critical Analysis in Service-Learning." Pp 11-28 in *Cultivating the Sociological Imagination: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in Sociology*, edited by James Ostrow, Garry Hesser, and Sandra Enos. Washington, DC: American Association of Higher Education.
- Marullo, Sam, and Bob Edwards. 2000a. "Service Learning Pedagogy as Universities' Response to Trouble Times." *American Behavioral Scientist* 43: 868-81.
- _____. 2000b. "From Charity to Justice: The Potential of University-Community Collaboration for Social Change." *American Behavioral Scientist* 43: 895-912.
- Marwell, Nicole P. 2011. "Privatizing the Welfare State: Nonprofit Community-Based Organizations as Political Actors." Pp 209-236 in *Politics and Partnerships: The Role of Voluntary Associations in America's Political Past and Present*, edited by Elizabeth S. Clemens and Doug Guthrie. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Mathews, David. 2000. "How Concepts of Politics Control Concepts of Civic Responsibility." Pp 149-196 in *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Matthews, Catherine, and Barbara B. Zimmerman. "Integrating Service Learning and Technical Communication: Benefits and Challenges". *Technical Communication Quarterly*. 8: 383-404.
- McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald. 1996. *Comparative*

- Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McCarthy, John, and Mayer Zald. 1977. "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory." *American Journal of Sociology*. 82: 1212-1241.
- McCormick Tribune Foundation. 2007. *Civic Disengagement in Our Democracy*. Chicago: McCormack Tribune Foundation.
- McEachern, Robert W. 2001. "Problems in Service Learning and Technical/Professional Writing: Incorporating the Perspective of Nonprofit Management." *Technical Communication Quarterly*. 10: 211-224.
- Mead, Lawrence M. 1993. *The New Politics of Poverty: The Nonworking Poor in America*. New York: Basic Books.
- Melucci, Alberto. 1989. *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- _____. 1995. "The Process of Collective Identity." Pp 41-63 in *Social Movements and Culture*, edited by Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- _____. 1996. *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mettler, Suzanne. 2007. "The Transformed Welfare State and the Redistribution of Political Voice." Pp 191-122 in *The Transformation of American Politics: Activist Government and the Rise of Conservatism*, edited by Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Miles, Matthew B., and A. Michael Huberman. 1994. *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook (Second Edition)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mills, C. Wright. 1959. *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mills, Steven D. 2012. "The Four Furies: Primary Tensions between Service-Learners and Host Agencies". *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. 19(1): 33-43.
- Mitchell, Tania D. 2008. "Traditional vs. Critical Service-Learning: Engaging the Literature to Differentiate Two Models." *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. 14(2). 50-65.
- Monard-Weissman, Kathia. 2003. "Fostering a Sense of Justice through International Service Learning." *Academic Exchange Quarterly* 7: 164-69.
- Morgan, David L. 1997. *Focus Groups As Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Mott, Andrew. 2005. *University Education for Community Change*. Washington, D.C.: Community Learning Project.
- Murray, Charles. 1984. *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950-1980*. New York: Basic Books.
- _____. 1997. *What it Means to be a Libertarian*. New York, NY. Broadway Books.
- _____. 2006. *In Our Hands: A Plan to Reduce the Welfare State*. Washington, DC: The American Enterprise Institute Press.
- Myers-Lipton, Scott J. 1998. "Effect of a Comprehensive Service Learning Program on College Students' Civic Responsibility." *Teaching Sociology* 26: 243-58.

- NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress). 2010. *Nation's Report Card: Civics 2010*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- National Center for Education Statistics. 2011. *The Nation's Report Card: Civics 2010*. Washington, DC: Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education.
- The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement. 2012. *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Nenga, Sandi Kawecka. 2010. "The Value of Volunteering: Comparing Youths' Experiences to Popular Claims." *Sociological Studies of Children and Youth: Children and Youth Speak for Themselves*. 13: 295-318.
- Nenga, Sandi Kawecka. 2011. "Volunteering to Give up Privilege? How Affluent Youth Volunteers Respond to Class Privilege." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*. 40(3): 263-289.
- Newman, Katherine S., and Elisabeth S. Jacobs. 2010. *Who Cares? Public Ambivalence and Government Activism from the New Deal to the Second Gilded Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press
- Noley, Sherry. 1977. "Service-Learning From the Agency's Perspective." *New Directions for Higher Education*. 18: 87-92.
- Ostrander, Susan. 2004. "Democracy, Civic Participation, and the University: A Comparative Study of Civic Engagement on Five Campuses." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 33: 74-93.
- Pavetti, LaDonna. 2011. "Taking Stock of the Safety Net, Part 2: Meeting Families' Basic Needs Through TANF". *Off the Charts: Policy Beyond the Numbers*. Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.
- Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. 2010. *Few Say Religion Shapes Immigration, Environment Views*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. Accessed September 10, 2011. <http://www.pewforum.org/Politics-and-Elections/Few-Say-Religion-Shapes-Immigration-Environment-Views.aspx>.
- Pew Research Center. 2010a. *Distrust, Discontent, Anger and Partisan Rancor*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. Accessed August 19, 2011. <http://www.people-press.org/2010/04/18/distrust-discontent-anger-and-partisan-rancor/>.
- _____. 2010b. *Public Trust in Government: 1958-2010*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. Accessed August 19, 2011. <http://www.people-press.org/2010/04/18/section-1-trust-in-government-1958-2010/>.
- _____. 2011. *Fewer Are Angry at Government, But Discontent Remains High*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Accessed September 9, 2011. <http://www.people-press.org/2011/03/03/fewer-are-angry-at-government-but-discontent-remains-high/>.
- _____. 2012a. *Youth Engagement Falls; Registration Also Declines*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. Accessed September 14, 2014. <http://www.people-press.org/2012/09/28/youth-engagement-falls-registration-also-declines/>
- _____. 2012b. *Partisan Polarization Surges in Bush, Obama Years: Trends in*

- American Values: 1987-2012*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. Accessed July 10, 2012. <http://www.people-press.org/2012/06/04/partisan-polarization-surges-in-bush-obama-years/>
- _____. 2013a. *Trust in Government Nears Record Low, But Most Federal Agencies are Viewed Favorably*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Accessed June 15, 2014. <http://www.people-press.org/2013/10/18/trust-in-government-nears-record-low-but-most-federal-agencies-are-viewed-favorably/>
- _____. 2013b. *Public Trust in Government: 1958-2013*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Accessed June 15, 2014. <http://www.people-press.org/2013/10/18/trust-in-government-interactive/>
- _____. 2014. *Political Polarization in the American Public: How Increasing Ideological Uniformity and Partisan Antipathy Affects Politics, Compromise and Everyday Life*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Accessed June 15, 2014. <http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/12/political-polarization-in-the-american-public/>
- Pierson, Paul, and Theda Skocpol. 2007. "American Politics in the Long Run." In *The Transformation of American Politics: Activist Government and the Rise of Conservatism*, edited by Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol, 3-16. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Piper, B., M. DeYoung, and G.D. Lamsam. 2000. "Student Perceptions of a Service-Learning Experience". *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*. 64(2): 159-165.
- Piven, Frances Fox and Richard A. Cloward. 1997. *The Breaking of the American Social Compact*. New York: The New Press.
- Poletta, Francesca and James M. Jasper. 2001. "Collective Identity and Social Movements". *Annual Review of Sociology* 27: 283-305.
- Poppendieck, Janet. 1998. *Sweet Charity? Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Putnam, Robert D. 2001. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Quigley, Charles N. 2011. "Statement on the Nation's Report Card: NAEP 2010 Civics". National Assessment Governing Board. <http://www.nagb.org/content/nagb/assets/documents/newsroom/naep-releases/2010-civics/statement-quigley.pdf>
- Rankin, David. 2013. *US Politics and Generation Y: Engaging the Millennials*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Redman-MacLaren, Michelle, Jane Mills and Rachael Tommbe. 2014. "Interpretive Focus Groups: A Participatory Method for Interpreting and Extending Secondary Analysis of Qualitative Data." *Global Health Action*. 7: 1-6
- Reger, Jo. 2002. "More Than One Feminism: Organizational Structure and the Construction of Collective Identity." Pp 171-184 in *Social Movements: Identity, Culture, and the State*, edited by David S. Meyer, Nancy Whittier, and Belinda Robnett. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Reinarman, Craig. 1987. *American States of Mind: Political Beliefs and Behavior among*

- Private and Public Workers*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Rhoads, Robert A. 1997. *Community Service and Higher Learning: Explorations of the Caring Self*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- _____. 1998. "Critical Multiculturalism and Service Learning." Pp 39-46 in *Academic Service Learning: A Pedagogy of Action and Reflection*, edited by Robert Rhoads and J.P.F. Howard. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- _____. 2000. *Freedom's Web: Student Activism in an Age of Cultural Diversity*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Robnett, Belinda. 2005. "We Don't Agree: Collective Identity Justification Work in Social Movement Organizations." Pp 199-237 in *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change, Volume 26*. Edited by Patrick G. Coy. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Rosenberger, Cynthia. 2000. "Beyond Empathy: Developing Critical Consciousness Through Service Learning." Pp 23-42 in *Integrating Service Learning and Multicultural Education in Colleges and Universities*, edited by C.R. O'Grady. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Rosing, Howard, Susan Reed, Joseph Ferrari, and Nancy Bothne. 2010. "Understanding Student Complaints in the Service Learning Pedagogy." *American Journal of Community Psychology*. 46(3-4): 472-481.
- Salamon, Lester M. 2003. *The Resilient Sector: The State of Nonprofit America*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings University Press.
- Saltmarsh, John and Edward Zlotkowski. 2011. "Putting into Practice the Civic Purposes of Higher Education." Pp 1-8 in *Higher Education and Democracy: Essays on Service-Learning and Civic Engagement*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Schlozman, Kay Lehman, Sidney Verba, and Henry E. Brady. 2012. *The Unheavenly Chorus: Unequal Political Voice and the Broken Promise of American Democracy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Seider, Scott. 2007. "Catalyzing a Commitment to Community Service in Emerging Adults." *Journal of Adolescent Research* 22: 621-39.
- Skocpol, Theda. 2004. *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Skocpol, Theda and Morris Fiorina. 1999. *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Smith, Mark A. 2007. *The Right Talk: How Conservatives Transformed the Great Society into the Economic Society*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Snow, David and Doug McAdam. 2000. "Identity Work Processes in the Context of Social Movements: Clarifying the Identity/Movement Nexus." Pp. 41-67 in *Self, Identity, and Social Movements*, Edited by Sheldon Stryker, Timothy J. Owens, and Robert W. White. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Solt, Frederick. 2008. "Economic Inequality and Democratic Political Engagement." *American Journal of Political Science* 52: 48-60.
- Stanton, Timothy K., Dwight E. Giles Jr., and Nadinne I. Cruz. 1999. *Service-Learning: A Movement's Pioneers Reflect on its Origins, Practice, and Future*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.
- Stoeker, Randy and Elizabeth A. Tryon. 2009. "Unheard Voices: Community

- Organizations and Service Learning.” Pp 1-18 in *The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning*, edited by Randy Stoecker and Elizabeth A. Tryon. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press
- Stone, Deborah. 2002. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- _____. 2008. *The Samaritan’s Dilemma: Should Government Help Your Neighbor?* New York: Nation Books.
- Strand, Kerry, Nicholas Cutforth, Randy Stoecker, Sam Marullo, and Patrick Donohue. 2003. *Community-Based Research and Higher Education: Principles and Practices*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Stryker, Sheldon. 2000. “Identity Competition: Key to Differential Social Movement Participation?” Pp 21-40 in *Self, Identity, and Social Movements*, Edited by Sheldon Stryker, Timothy J. Owens, and Robert W. White. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Sullivan, William M. 2000. “Institutional Identity and Social Responsibility in Higher Education.” In *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, 19-36. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Tarrow, Sidney. 1998. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics, Second Edition*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, Verta. 1989. “Sources of Continuity in Social Movements: The Women’s Movement in Abeyance.” *American Sociological Review*. 54: 761-775.
- _____. 2000. “Emotions and Identity in Women’s Self-Help Movements.” Pp 271-299 in *Self, Identity, and Social Movements*, edited by Sheldon Stryker, Timothy J. Owens, and Robert W. White. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Taylor, Verta, and Nancy E. Whittier. 1992. “Collective Identity in Social Movement Communities: Lesbian Feminist Mobilization.” Pp 104-130 in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, edited by Aldon D. Morris and Carol Mueller. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- _____. 1995. “Analytical Approaches to Social Movement Culture: The Culture of the Women’s Movement.” Pp 163-187 in *Social Movements and Culture*, edited by Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Tedlock, Barbara. 2005. “The Observation of Participation and the Emergence of Public Ethnography”, Pp 467-481 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research: Third Edition*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Tryon, Elizabeth, Amy Hilgendorf and Ian Scott. 2009. “The Heart of a Partnership: Communication and Relationships.” Pp 96-115 in *The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning*, edited by Randy Stoecker and Elizabeth A. Tryon. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press
- Twenge, Jean. 2007. *Generation Me: Why Today’s Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled – and More Miserable Than Ever Before*. New York, NY: Atria Books.
- Uslaner, Eric M. and Mitchell Brown. 2005. “Inequality, Trust, and Civic Engagement.” *American Politics Research*. 33: 868-894.
- US Census Bureau. 2010. “Current Population Survey, November 2010: Civic

- Engagement Supplement File.” Washington, DC:
<http://www.census.gov/prod/techdoc/cps/cpsnov10c.pdf>
- Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wade, Rahima C. 2000. “Beyond Charity: Service Learning for Social Justice.” *Social Students and the Young Learning* 12: 6-9.
- Walker, Tobi. 2000. “The Service/Politics Split: Rethinking Service to Teach Political Engagement.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 33: 646-49.
- Wang, Yan, and Golden Jackson. 2005. “Forms and Dimensions of Civic Involvement.” *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 11: 39-45.
- Wang, Yan and Robert Rodgers. 2006. “Impact of Service-Learning and Social Justice Education on College Students’ Cognitive Development.” *NASPA Journal*. 43(2): 316-337.
- Ward, Kelly, and Lisa Wolf-Wendel. 2000. “Community-Centered Service Learning: Moving From Doing For to Doing With” *American Behavioral Scientist* 43: 767-80.
- Whitbourne, S.K., K.J. Collins, and K. M. Skultety. 2001. “Formative Reflections on Service-Learning in a Course on the Psychology of Aging”. *Educational Gerontology*. 27: 105-115.
- Wing, Kennard T., Thomas H. Pollak, and Amy Blackwood. 2008. *The Nonprofit Almanac 2008*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press.
- Winograd, Morley, and Michael D. Hais. 2008. *Millennial Makeover: MySpace, YouTube, and the Future of American Politics*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Wu, Jean. 2007. “Race Matters in Civic Engagement Work”. Pp 158-182 in *Acting Civically: From Urban Neighborhoods to Higher Education*, edited by Susan A. Ostrander and Kent E. Portney. Lebanon, NH: Tufts University Press.
- Yates, Miranda and James Youniss. 1998. “Community Service and Political Identity Development in Adolescence.” *Journal of Social Issues*. 54: 495-512.
- Youniss, James. 2011. “Service, Public Work, and Respectful Public Citizens”. *Liberal Education*. 97: 28-33.
- Youniss, James, and Peter Levine. 2009. *Engaging Young People in Civic Life*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Youniss, James, and Miranda Yates. 1997. *Community Service and Social Responsibility in Youth*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Youniss, James, Jeffrey A. McLellan, and Miranda Yates. 1997. “What We Know About Engendering Civic Identity” *American Behavioral Scientist*. 40: 620-31.
- Youniss, James, Jeffrey A. McLellan, Yang Su, and Miranda Yates. 1999. “The Role of Community Service in Identity Development: Normative, Unconventional, and Deviant Orientations.” *Journal of Adolescent Research* 14: 248-61.
- Zald, Mayer, and Roberta Ash. 1966. “Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change.” *Social Forces*. 44: 327-341.
- Zlotkowski, Edward. 2007. “The Case for Service Learning.” In *Higher Education and Civic Engagement: International Perspectives*, edited by Lorraine McIlrath and Iain Mac Lbahrainn, 37-53. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company.

Zukin, Cliff, Scott Keeter, Molly Andolina, Krista Jenkins, and Michael X. Delli Carpini. 2006. *A New Engagement? Political Participation, Civic Life, and the Changing American Citizen*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.