I'm convinced that students, as an essential part of civic education, need to understand that learning is for living, that education means developing the capacity to make judgments, form convictions, and act boldly on values held. In response to this challenge, we proposed in *High School* a new Carnegie unit, one based on service. The idea is that every student should be asked to volunteer his or her time at retirement villages, daycare centers, or youth camps, or to tutor other kids at school.

But there's a caution here. While such projects can generate within students a sense of worth, they must be viewed as part of the educational experience and not just an after-school activity. Specifically, service projects should include a written evaluation by the student, linking community activity to classroom theory.

I'm suggesting that civic education, by its very nature, means helping students confront social and ethical concerns and apply what they have learned. We must help them understand that not all choices—in thought and action—are equally valid. Such an education does not dictate solutions or suggest that there are simple answers for every complicated question. Rather, it means helping students develop responsible ways of thinking, believing, and *acting*.

Today's Window of Opportunity

We stand at a strategic time in the history of public education. Interest in schools has run high during the past six years. But public attention cannot be indefinitely sustained. Today's window of opportunity hinges to a great extent on the ability of the schools to pursue, not just the economic, but the civic ends of education.

When all is said and done, the nation's schools should encourage each student to develop the capacity to judge wisely in matters of life and conduct. Time must be taken in classrooms to explore ambiguities and reflect on the consequential social issues of our time. The goal is not to indoctrinate students but to provide a climate in which civic choices can be thoughtfully examined and convictions formed. These are the characteristics by which, ultimately, the quality of public education must be measured. □

[1]T. Jefferson, *Letters*, arranged by W. Whitman, (Eau Claire, Wis.: E.M. Hale, 1940), pp. 338, 339.

[2]The National Assessment of Educational Progress, (1990), *The Civics Report Card*, (Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service), p. 65.

[3]J. D. Carroll et. al., (1987), *We the People: A Review of U.S. Government and Civics Textbooks*, (Washington, D.C.: People for the American Way), p. iv.

[4]R. Rothman, (May 16, 1990), "Panel Urges Education to Revitalize Citizens' Participation," *Education Week*, p. 8.

[5]The National Assessment of Educational Progress, *The Civics Report Card*, p. 87.

[6]Ibid., p. 85

[7]D. C. Bricker, (1989), *Classroom Life as Civic Education*, (New York: Teachers College Press), p. 1.

Ernest L. Boyer is President, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 5 Ivy Lane, Princeton, NJ 08540.

CIVITAS: A New Curriculum Framework for Civic Education

Elaine Craig

What should students learn in school, kindergarten through 12th grade, to be good citizens? That question is being addressed by CIVITAS, a project sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts. Over 25 distinguished scholars, including R. Freeman Butts, Fred Newmann, and John Patrick, have written sections of the CIVITAS curriculum framework, intended for use by curriculum planners in state departments of education, local school districts, and private schools. The framework is being developed by the Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California. When completed early in 1991, it will be disseminated by the Council for the Advancement of Citizenship, Washington, D.C.

The draft framework has been critiqued at several meetings of a National Review Council chaired by Ernest Boyer, at which representatives of education and civic organizations, including ASCD, have commented and offered suggestions. The project also has a Teachers Advisory Committee made up of selected social studies and civics teachers.

CIVITAS seeks to revive the idea of Civic Virtue, which, in its classical version, meant putting the public good before private interest. CIVITAS expands the notion to include such values as individual responsibility, self-discipline, open-mindedness, patience, and compassion. The document also lists goals and objectives under the headings of Civic Knowledge and Civic Participation. It notes the close relationship between the two:

> Knowledge is often best assimilated in the process of solving a problem considered important by the student. For example, rather than studying provisions of the First Amendment abstractly as part of the Bill of Rights, one might present students with a case involving school censorship of a student newspaper. After discussing students' opposing viewpoints on the issue, one could then introduce the First Amendment and relevant court decisions that would presumably help students to further understand or resolve the problem of whether the school's action was justified. Civic participation is more likely to be well-informed if the knowledge base itself is learned in the process of addressing real issues of civic action.

Because knowledge is pointless without participation, the CIVITAS framework advises that "students should be introduced to a wide range of forms of participation and given experience in their use." Still, in keeping with the tenets of democracy, "the student's decision to participate in any given activity with any particular frequency should be a matter of individual choice. The goal of the CIVITAS framework is to enhance the competence and opportunity of students to participate, while leaving choices as to where, when, and how to participate up to the adult citizen."

Especially useful to curriculum developers will be the Civic Knowledge and Skills section, which attempts to summarize everything of a nontechnical nature that citizens ideally need to know. Few, if any, adult citizens will in fact have this knowledge, and it is certainly not expected that any high school student will acquire all the knowledge contained in the framework. The purpose of such a comprehensive list is to provide curriculum planners with a broad spectrum of civic knowledge from which to choose as they make curriculum decisions. To help local developers decide what knowledge and skills to teach at the different stages of development, the framework offers a suggested scope and sequence.

For more information, contact the Council for the Advancement of Citizenship, 1724 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036; (202) 857-0580.

Elaine Craig is Director of Testing and Evaluation, Center for Civic Education, 5146 Douglas Fir Rd., Calabasas, CA 91302.

Copyright © 1990 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.