

**SERVICE – LEARNING:
A TOOL TO DEVELOP STUDENT PUBLIC
INTELLECTUALISM?**

Hannah Lebovits, Doctoral Student, Cleveland State University

Del Bharath, Doctoral Candidate, University of Nebraska - Omaha

TAKING A STEP BACK

Original Topic: Beyond Service-Learning: Using Experiential Courses to Promote Public Intellectualism and Negate Town-Gown Tensions

- ➔ Service-learning
- ➔ Public Intellectualism
- ➔ Town-gown Tensions

OVERVIEW

- Background and Problem Statement
- Public Intellectualism
- Service-Learning
- Service-Learning and Public Intellectualism
- Additional Research Question
- Methodology
- References

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

- Academic – practitioner divide
- Theory and practice is not connected
- Ivory tower complex isolating researchers from issues
- Decline of public intellectualism
- Role of educational institutions: to teach or to develop students?

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT CONT'D

- Abundance of university-based service-learning programs
 - what greater goal can be achieved?
- Service-learning as a tool to cultivate public intellectualism
 - How does service-learning develop student public intellectualism?

IMPLICATIONS

- Implications for the PA field:
 - Creates more collaboration and innovation
 - Government is not really creating public value but recycling old public values
 - Cultivating students to be democratic citizens

PUBLIC INTELLECTUALISM

History

Coined by Russell Jacoby in 1987

- Public intellectual was a non-professor who lived in a big city – preferably New York – and wrote profoundly but accessibly about politics from a Leftist perspective

Richard Posner

- “public intellectuals were actually professors who wrote for an audience that was not, or no exclusively academic. Their political ideology was irrelevant. In fact some of them didn’t write about politics at all, though what they wrote generally had some political implications.”

Today it has become a buzzword

(Clausen, 2003)

PUBLIC INTELLECTUALISM

Definition

“A scholar or artist who gains respect and fame (due to his/her intellectual work) from the population of a society at large”

- A rare achievement

“A public intellectual merges his/her scholarship with direct involvement with those who live and work outside of academe”

- Make a commitment to work beyond the academy – intellectuals need to get their “hands dirty” with the practical issues
- Academic individuals who get involved (national or local politics, community project and/or philanthropic initiatives)

(Becker and Goodman, 2006)

PUBLIC INTELLECTUALISM

Our Definition

“It is less important to get the public to see how intelligent we are and to invest in our leadership than it is about recognizing in our democratic community the venue where we can share our knowledge with other knowledgeable citizens as a means of coming to democratic ends” (Becker and Goodman, 2006)

- **Knowledgeable in topic/issue**
- **Shares knowledge with democratic community**
- **AND becomes involved with practical issues and the community to create public good**

PUBLIC INTELLECTUALISM

The Public
Intellectual as a
Sharer of Knowledge

Students:
Lectures/teaching

The Academy:
Publishing,
conferences

**General Public: Media
exposure, open-access
journals, service-
learning**

SERVICE-LEARNING

Definition

“A teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities” (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, n.d.)

Service-learning not only allows for the sharing of knowledge with community and students, but allows for a greater involvement in issue and community.

SERVICE-LEARNING AND PUBLIC INTELLECTUALISM

Service-learning can be a tool to empower students towards a degree of public intellectualism.

Knowledgeable in topic/issue

Shares knowledge with democratic community

Becomes involved with practical issues and the community to create public good

AND is empowered to make change

However, the type of service-learning project matters.

SERVICE-LEARNING SPECTRUM

No/Little engagement

- Lectures/Seminars
- Students learn in professor-driven, low-impact environment with mostly research-based material; industry professionals visit the classroom
- **Little Reinforcement-Students**

Labor engagement

- Service-learning (Task-oriented model)
- Students reinforce classwork and engage with community in a curriculum-directed manner
- **Patronization-Student/Organization**

Citizen engagement

- Service-learning (Engagement model)
- Students, professors and industry leaders partner for growth; symbiotic relationship; student-driven public intellectualism
- **Empowered- Student/Professor/Organization**

METHODOLOGY

RQ: How does service-learning develop student public intellectualism?

Unit of analysis: Students

- Review of service-learning courses and student outcomes from 4 different institutions
- Determine characteristics of courses that show increased development of public intellectuals i.e. EMPOWERMENT

METHODOLOGY CONT'D

Urban Area	Public University	Jesuit University
Cleveland	<p>Cleveland State</p> <p>Student body size: 17,260 total enrollment</p> <p>Service-learning: Center for Student Life, Center for Engaged Learning</p>	<p>John Carroll University</p> <p>Student body size: 3,673</p> <p>Service-learning: Center for Service and Social Action</p>
Omaha	<p>University of Nebraska – Omaha</p> <p>Student body size: 15,526</p> <p>Service-learning: Service-learning Academy</p>	<p>Creighton University</p> <p>Student body size: 8,435</p> <p>Service-learning: Office for Academic Excellence and Assessment</p>

Data retrieved from U.S. News & World Report,
Specific university websites; 5/24/2017

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

Do service-based universities more often utilize the engagement-model over the task-model?

Do service-oriented universities create more student public intellectuals?

THANK YOU!

Contact information

Hannah Lebovits: h.lebovits@vikes.csuohio.edu

Del Bharath: dbharath@unomaha.edu

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