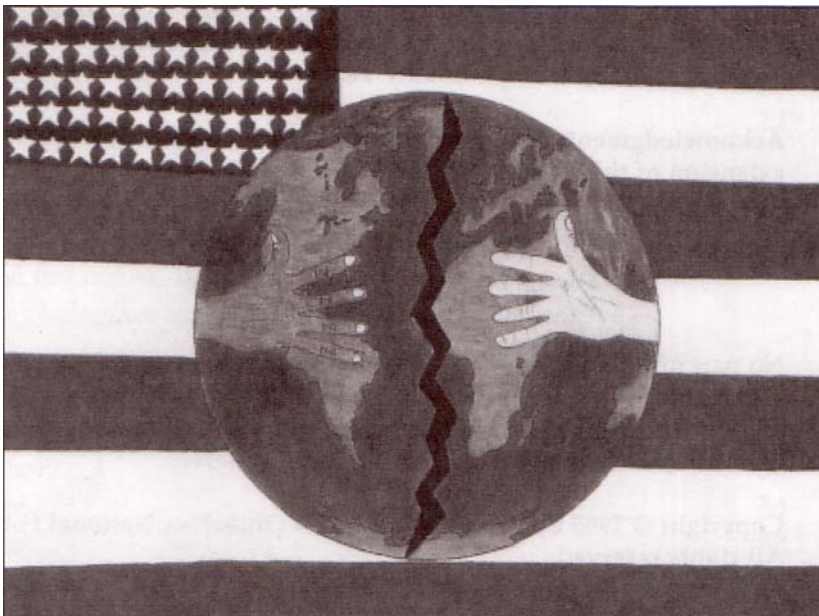


Participating in Democracy:

CHOOSING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, Inc.
Brookline, Massachusetts

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For a fuller treatment of ideas developed in this guide, see *Facing History and Ourselves Resource Book: Holocaust and Human Behavior*. Consult, too, *Choosing to Participate*, a history of the various ways individuals and groups have used the First Amendment to the Constitution as an avenue for outrage and advocacy. *Choosing to Participate* also addresses the question of how one person can make a difference by introducing students to models for participation and traditions of care.

A variety of videos available from Facing History Resource Center can be used to extend and enrich *Participating in Democracy*. Possibilities include: *At the River I Stand*; *Bill Moyers' Creativity Series Focuses on Maya Angelou*; *Billings, MT: Not in Our Town*; *Down and Out in America*; *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years*; *Fires in the Mirror*; *The Hangman*; *Names Can Really Hurt*; *A Passion for Justice: The Life of Ida B. Wells*; *Stand and Be Counted: Reacting to Racism*; *The Second American Revolution*; *The Survival of Sontheary Sou*; *A Time for Justice*; and *We the People: Who's in Charge?* Also available are speeches by physician Deborah Prothrow-Stith and actor and writer Gregory Alan-Williams, an interview with architect Maya Lin, and a talk on hate crimes by William Johnston of the Boston Police Department. See *Audio-Visual Resources* for further information on these and other videos.

The following books can be used to explore specific topics and/or concepts:

- Alan-Williams, Gregory. *A Gathering of Heroes: Reflections on Rage and Responsibility*. Academy Chicago Publishers, 1993.
- Bode, Janet. *Beating the Odds: Stories of Unexpected Achievers*. Franklin Watts, 1991.
- Block, Gay and Malka Drucker. *Rescuers: Portraits of Moral Courage in the Holocaust*. Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1992.
- Coles, Robert. *The Call of Service: A Witness to Idealism*. Houghton Mifflin, 1993.
- Children of Crisis: A Study of Courage and Fear*. Little Brown, 1967.
- Children's Express. *Voices From the Future*. Ed. by Susan Goodwillie. Crown, 1993.
- Hoose, Phillip. *It's Our World, Too!* Little Brown, 1993.
- Rittner, Carol and Sondra Myers, eds. *The Courage to Care: Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust*. New York University Press, 1986.
- Thompson, Marcia A., ed. *Who Cares What I Think? American Teens Talk About Their Lives and Their Country*. Close Up Foundation, 1994.
- Wigginton, Eliot, ed. *Refuse to Stand Silently By*. Doubleday, 1992.

PREFACE

Participating in Democracy explores the challenges and possibilities of citizenship by highlighting the stories of four young Americans. Their work deepens and expands our understanding of the word *citizen* and helps us see good citizenship as a creative act—a work of the imagination. As Bill Moyers, a noted journalist, reminds us, creativity is not simply what goes on within an individual, but “a process connecting that person with the world.” And as Professor Benjamin R. Barber points out, it is through the imagination “that we render others sufficiently like ourselves for them to become subjects of tolerance and respect if not always affection.”

The four individuals highlighted in this study guide and the accompanying video are recipients of the Reebok Human Rights Award. Each year, the Reebok Foundation honors men and women under the age of 30 who have made a significant contribution to social justice. They come from many different nations, reflect a broad range of individual styles, and have chosen many avenues for participation. The four Americans featured in *Participating in Democracy* illustrate the many non-violent ways that exist in our society for expressing not only outrage but also compassion. Their stories suggest the complexities of the choices citizens make in a democracy and teach important lessons about positive participation.

The four stories also reveal that no one is born a good citizen. As Barber explains, “We are born fragile, born needy, born ignorant, born unformed, born weak, born foolish, born dependent—born in chains. We acquire our freedom over time, if at all. Embedded in families, clans, communities, and nations, we must learn to be free.” How do we learn to be free? How do we come to believe that we can make a difference? That we can turn citizenship into a creative act? *Participating in Democracy* explores those questions through video-taped interviews, readings, and activities. Each views citizenship as an ongoing process in which everyone can participate meaningfully. It is a view that contrasts sharply with the one admired in Nazi Germany. There a good citizen was obedient, passive, and above all silent.

The history of the events that led to the Holocaust shows that apathy and indifference stifle hope and that violence can destroy both families and nations. As Facing History students come to understand the dangers of neighbor turning against neighbor, they seek occasions to right wrongs, overcome obstacles, and work for meaningful change. As one student wrote:

One of [the things the Holocaust teaches] is that when you do the right thing, you still may not be able to prevent tragedy... When you do the right thing, the difficult thing, you do it in the hope that it will do others some good, but also in the knowledge that if it doesn't, at least you will be able to look at yourself in the mirror... No one could imagine anything worse than each unfolding stage of the Holocaust. So

The four Americans featured in *Participating in Democracy* illustrate the many non-violent ways that exist in our society for expressing not only outrage but also compassion. Their stories suggest the complexities of the choices citizens make in a democracy and teach important lessons about positive participation.

it was in some ways a failure of people's imagination that escorted them to tragedy... Because of this course... I can imagine... so I will try to do the right thing.

Participating in Democracy is designed to stimulate and inform that process of thinking and imagining. We are deeply grateful to the Reebok Foundation for the opportunity to bring these materials to teachers and students. Both the video and the study guide can be used alone or to supplement the last chapter in *Holocaust and Human Behavior*, Facing History's main resource book, or *Choosing to Participate*, which provides case studies of Americans who have tried to make a difference. These materials also reflect the interests, concerns, and ongoing research of the Harvard/Facing History and Ourselves Project. The initiative was created to help teachers engage adolescent and pre-adolescent students of diverse backgrounds in critical thinking about history and ethics and in exploring lessons of civic courage and individual responsibility. It therefore provides opportunities for innovative research on issues related to moral education and to the violence and intolerance that threaten many students across the nation.

MARGOT STERN STROM, Executive Director
Facing History and Ourselves

OVERVIEW

No two people are exactly alike. Each of us is an individual with unique talents, interests, and values. As we strive to define our identity, we look to families, clans, communities, and nations for support. Everywhere, to be human means to live with others. In groups, we meet our most basic needs and reach for our most cherished dreams. In groups, we satisfy our yearning to belong, receive comfort in times of trouble, and find companions who share our hopes, values, and beliefs. Even as we struggle to find our voice, groups have expectations for us that may differ from those we would choose for ourselves. The task of a democratic society is to nurture and value both the individual and the group. Perhaps that is why building such a society has been called a nation's greatest challenge.

Meeting that challenge requires what Judge Learned Hand once called "the spirit of liberty." He defined it as the spirit "which is not too sure it is right," the spirit "which seeks to understand the minds of other men and women," and "weighs their interests alongside its own without bias." That spirit is expressed in the Declaration of Independence with these words: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

The Declaration did not describe life in the United States in 1776. Rather it voiced the new nation's ideals. In the years that followed independence, many Americans would struggle to bring the nation, little by little, step by step, closer to those ideals. In doing so, they would express opinions, exchange ideas, associate with others who shared their views, publicly protest injustice, and petition lawmakers for reform. From the start, the freedom to do so was protected in every state and later safeguarded by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Indeed, in 1787, many Americans refused to support the new plan of government unless it defended that freedom.

Marian Wright Edelman, a lobbyist for children's rights, is among the millions of Americans who have benefited from the ways individuals and groups have used their First Amendment rights to expand the meaning of citizenship. As an African American woman, Edelman's early life was defined by segregation and exclusion. As late as the 1960s, the laws of many states limited her right as an African American and a woman to fully participate in American life. Yet she writes:

My life is one of the countless lives that attest to the vibrancy of the American Dream under circumstances harder than today's. The segregated world of my childhood in the 1940s and 1950s seemed impenetrable. Never could I have envisaged the positive changes I have seen since my youth. But my parents and elders dreamed of them and never lost hope. So neither will I lose hope that America's best self will overcome growing racial and class divisions.

The task of a democratic society is to nurture and value both the individual and the group. Perhaps that is why building such a society has been called a nation's greatest challenge.

Edelman never lost hope because she grew up among adults who tried to change the world around them in small ways and large. They taught her to see herself as part of a long civic tradition of caring and compassion. It is a tradition that has made a difference in many lives. Bill Moyers proudly notes that every school he attended was a legacy created “brick by brick, dollar by dollar, classroom by classroom, book by book” by people he had never met, many of whom had died long before he was born. Through that same process, they created not only schools but also a community and a nation. Each was the work of dedicated people who felt they were part of something that was bigger than themselves. *Participating in Democracy* examines that tradition by focusing on individual efforts to build caring communities.

The study guide and the video-taped interviews also explore what it takes to be a good citizen. Sociologist Ervin Staub insists that “people become brave by doing brave acts. People become compassionate by doing compassionate acts. People become good citizens by engaging in acts of good citizenship.” The individuals highlighted in *Participating in Democracy* have no easy answers to the problems they perceive. They do, however, offer insights into the process of growth and change. The interviews and the readings encourage students to think about how an individual can make a positive difference in the life of a community or a nation. In examining the choices others have made, students consider their own decisions as individuals within a society, the consequences of those choices, and their responsibilities to themselves and others.

This study guide is divided into two parts. Each contains a variety of readings and activities that can be used independently or as a unit. Part One explores the meaning of such terms as *community*, *democracy*, and *citizenship*. Students then expand their understanding of those terms by applying them to the four individuals featured in the video. A biographical sketch of each of the four is included in this part of the guide. The second part adds new voices and perspectives to discussions prompted by the four interviews. It also considers some of the moral questions inherent in the choices we make as individuals and as citizens.

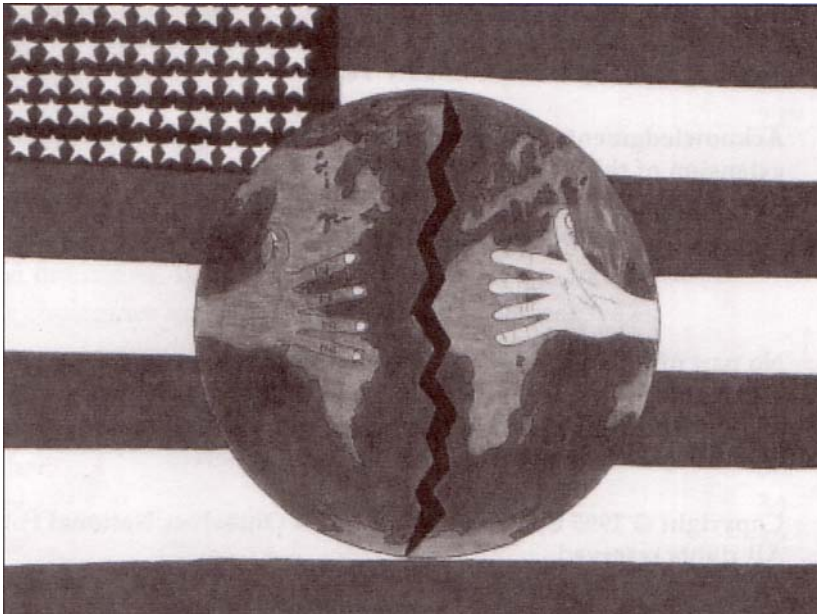
MARGOT STERN STROM, Executive Director
Facing History and Ourselves

Part One: Participating in Democracy

To build community requires only the ability to see value in others; to look at them and see a potential partner in one's enterprise.

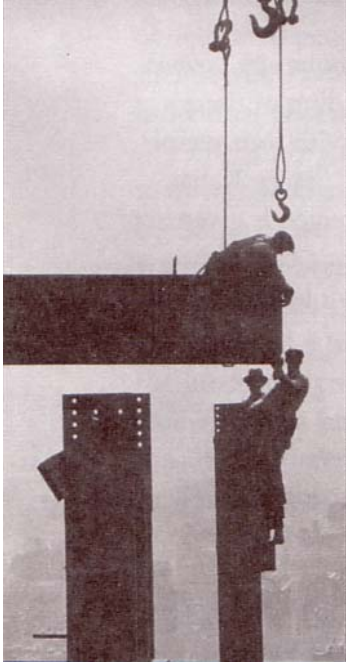
SUZANNE GOLDSMITH

Part One builds working definitions of such key terms as *community*, *democracy*, and *citizen*. Students apply and deepen their understanding of these words as they read about and watch video-taped interviews with four recipients of the Reebok Human Rights Award: Arn Chorn Pond, Stacey Kabat, Carl Washington, and Winona LaDuke. The award they received is given annually to young men and women who have made important contributions to social justice. Their stories reveal the variety of nonviolent ways one can make one's voice heard in a democracy.



BUILDING

Journalist Bill Moyers proudly notes that every school he attended was a legacy created “brick by brick, dollar by dollar, classroom by classroom, book by book” by people he had never met, many of whom had died long before he was born. Poet Gwendolyn Brooks says of such legacies:



When I see a brave building
straining high, and higher,
hard and bright and sassy in the seasons,
I think of the hands that put that strength together.

The little soft hands. Hands coming away from cold
to take a challenge and to mold this definition.

Amazingly, men and women
worked with design and judgment, steel and glass,
to enact this announcement.
Here it stands.

Who can construct such a miracle can enact
any consolidation, any fusion.
All little people opening out of themselves,

forging the human spirit that can outwit
big Building boasting in the cityworld.

CONNECTIONS

Why do you think Gwendolyn Brooks calls her poem “Building”? What other titles might she have chosen for it?

Author Suzanne Goldsmith writes:

Communities are not built of friends, or of groups of people with similar styles and tastes, or even of people who like and understand each other. They are built of people who feel they are part of something that is bigger than themselves: a shared goal or enterprise, like righting a wrong, or building a road, or raising children, or living honorably, or worshipping a god. To build community requires only the ability to see value in others; to look at them and see a potential partner in one’s enterprise.

Are the people Gwendolyn Brooks describes in her poem a community? If so, what is the role of a citizen in such a community?

Helen Fein has defined *community* in terms of a “universe of obligation”—a circle of individuals and groups “toward whom obligations are owed, to whom rules apply, and whose injuries call for amends.” How is her definition like Goldsmith’s? Brooks’s? What are the chief differences?

The word *community* and the word *communicate* both come from a Latin word that means “to make public or common.” What kind of communication is needed to build the structure Gwendolyn Brooks describes? What role does communication play in building a community? Sustaining a community? For example, how do you think the invention of the telephone altered the way people communicate? The invention of radio and TV? How did each invention affect the way people define a community? How is the “information superhighway” altering the way people communicate today? The way they define a community?

Throughout *Participating in Democracy*, you will encounter words that you know but may have difficulty explaining. Instead of relying only on a dictionary to define those words, develop your own working definitions. The following is an example of a working definition that builds to encompass more and more information. It is one to which you will want to add your own ideas.

Community:

- a group of people with a shared goal
- a group of people who live near one another
- a group that is part of one’s universe of obligation
- society as a whole; the public

You may want to include pictures or diagrams in your working definitions. Often they reveal more about a complex idea than a definition that relies only on words. What would a picture of a community look like? Draw one and add it to your working definition.

Based on your working definition of a community, list all of the communities to which you belong. What do you have in common with other members of these communities? What responsibilities or obligations does membership involve?

As you read the definitions of democracy that follow, try to decide how a democratic community is like other communities. In what ways is it different from other communities?

E pluribus unum. Out of many, one.

MOTTO OF THE UNITED STATES

Democracy is based upon the conviction that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people.

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

Democracy is a process, not a static condition. It is becoming, rather than being. It can easily be lost, but never is fully won. Its essence is eternal struggle.

JUSTICE WILLIAM H. HASTIE

Chief among our gains must be reckoned this possibility of choice, the recognition of many possible ways of life, where other civilizations have recognized only one.

MARGARET MEAD

Democracy means not "I am as good as you are," but "You are as good as I am."

REV. THEODORE PARKER

The government is us; we are the government, you and I.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

DEFINING A GOOD CITIZEN

A citizen is a member of a community, a state, or a nation. The role of a citizen varies from place to place. Yet everywhere, people define a *good citizen* as someone who reflects the ideals and values of his or her society. Who then is a good citizen of the United States? In 1994, teens from many different communities and ethnic groups were asked that question. A few of their answers are given below.

A good citizen understands the government and how it works, even though they might not accept what it is trying to do, but, you know working with them, instead of going out there and setting up protests or riots or anything like that. A good citizen works with people instead of against them. I don't think they have to be smart or anything like that: they can be anyone. Black, red, white, deaf, hearing, mentally retarded, physically handicapped people. I mean *anyone*.



Hanging out your flag would be one of the things a citizen should do. I think during the holidays you have to show [patriotism]. I also think [reciting] the Pledge of Allegiance is a big thing. And believing in your country also. You know how some people are saying, "Oh, Americans are all so bad"? They should just do something about it instead of complaining. I think that's what they should do.

It's like, basically, being able to do what you choose. You have a right to do certain things that you wouldn't have in other countries. Here, you have freedom of religion, freedom of speech, to a certain extent.... That's what being an American citizen means to me—having my freedom. We must also obey the law. We must defend our country whenever we are called. We have a responsibility to vote. We must voice our opinion. You don't have any say-so in the government if you don't voice your opinion and vote.

Someone who is not perfect, you know, like the Cleavers [from *Leave It to Beaver*]. Everyone has their faults. But someone who respects the place that they live in, their town, their country, respects the people that they live with, regardless of their age, race, whatever it may be. Someone who volunteers their time, makes their own effort to do what they can, to take part. Someone who works, not lives off welfare. Someone who tries to work with others and doesn't have any prejudices against anyone else is what I would consider to be an [ideal] American citizen.

I think a good citizen of the country does something for American society. Like becoming a judge. Or some way helping out our society or the economy. I think a good citizen would vote. And volunteer to help their communities. That's better than always looking for material things. They could do something spiritually and from the heart. Like helping out to keep the place clean, volunteering to answer calls, just little bitty things that add up.

CONNECTIONS

According to the quotations provided in this reading, what are the qualities of a good citizen of the United States? Interview other students to get their answers to the question. How are their responses similar to the ones included in this reading? What differences seem most striking? What qualities would you add to the list based on your interviews? Based on your own ideas about the qualities of a good citizen? Which qualities would you delete from the list?

Compare and contrast your list with those of your classmates. On what qualities does everyone agree? On what qualities is there disagreement? How do you account for those disagreements?

Interview adults to get their definitions of a good citizen. How are the qualities they identified similar to the ones students suggested? How do the qualities they suggested differ from those identified by students?

Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter once said that the highest office in a democracy is the office of citizen. What do you think he meant by that statement? Do you agree? Every office of government has rights and responsibilities. What are your rights as a citizen in a democratic society? Your responsibilities? Which do the students quoted in this reading stress—rights or responsibilities? What is the relationship between rights and responsibilities?

CHOOSING TO PARTICIPATE

Each year the Reebok Foundation honors young men and women who have made important contributions to social justice in their communities. Facing History has interviewed four Americans who have been recipients of the Reebok Human Rights Award. Although the work of each is unique, they have much in common. As you read about the four of them and watch their videotaped interviews, think about what we can learn from their stories about the role of the citizen in a democracy.

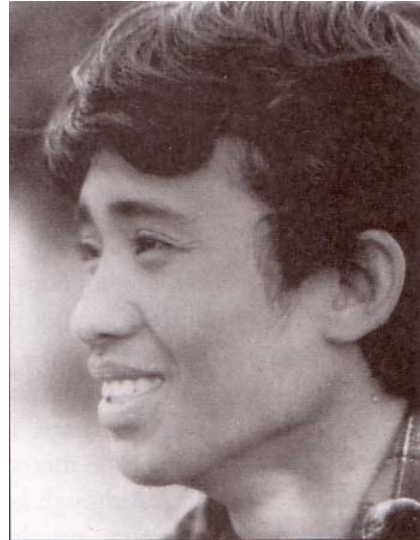
Arn Chorn Pond

As a survivor of a genocide in Cambodia, Arn Chorn Pond has witnessed terrible violence. In 1975, a Communist named Pol Pot and his fanatical followers, the Khmer Rouge, overthrew the government of Cambodia and systematically tore apart the country, killing over a million and half people. They targeted minorities, urban dwellers, people with some education, and the middle class. As the terror spread, towns were emptied, schools closed, and temples destroyed. Anyone known or even suspected of being educated or well-to-do was murdered. Among the dead was Arn Chorn's family.

At the age of nine, young Arn became one of thousands of orphans held in forced labor camps. In one of those camps, he learned to play the flute. Today he is reminded of the man who taught him whenever he appears before a large group. He tells audiences, "My teacher told me that before I played this flute I had to speak a little bit. I have to, because when he taught me he was killed five days later by the Khmer Rouge. He was killed because he taught me to play. So I will always remember my teacher when I play this song."

In 1979, life for Arn and other Cambodian children became even more dangerous. Their nation was invaded by Vietnam, a neighboring country in Southeast Asia. The Khmer Rouge responded by arming the orphans and sending them into battle against trained Vietnamese troops. Many youngsters did not survive their first skirmish. Arn Chorn not only survived but eventually found an opportunity to escape in the confusion of battle. He fled into the jungle and somehow managed to make his way to a refugee camp in Thailand. There Peter Pond, a Lutheran minister and an American aid worker, befriended and later adopted him along with several other orphans.

When Arn Chorn arrived in the United States, he had to learn not only a new language and new customs but also how to be a member of a family and a student. Although it was a painful process, his family and his teachers



refused to give up on him. As a result, Arn managed to learn English, become an American citizen, and graduate from both high school and college. Yet he never forgot his past. His experiences in Cambodia have deeply influenced his view of the world. As a result of those experiences, he helped organize Children of War, a group that empowers young victims of violence. Harry Belafonte, an entertainer and civil rights activist who met Arn Chorn through Children of War, wrote in support of his nomination for the Reebok Human Rights Award:

I have been deeply impressed by Arn and his remarkable ability to interpret the truth through the lens of his own horrendous experiences. The losses he has suffered and the madness he was forced to witness might turn others away from ever regaining hope in humanity. But Arn through his eloquence and passion has found a way to appeal to those who hear him and at the same time lift himself from despair. His journey back to fully reclaiming himself has been one which engages the rest of us along with him.

His impact on the young has been particularly moving. Through Children of War, he has trained over 100 other young war survivors from over 18 countries to be role models of hope and courage for other youth. They have together traveled to 60 US cities and met with hundreds of thousands of US high school students. These students have responded beyond expectations, moving to begin youth groups in their own communities in solidarity with young people from war zones and areas of oppression and violence.

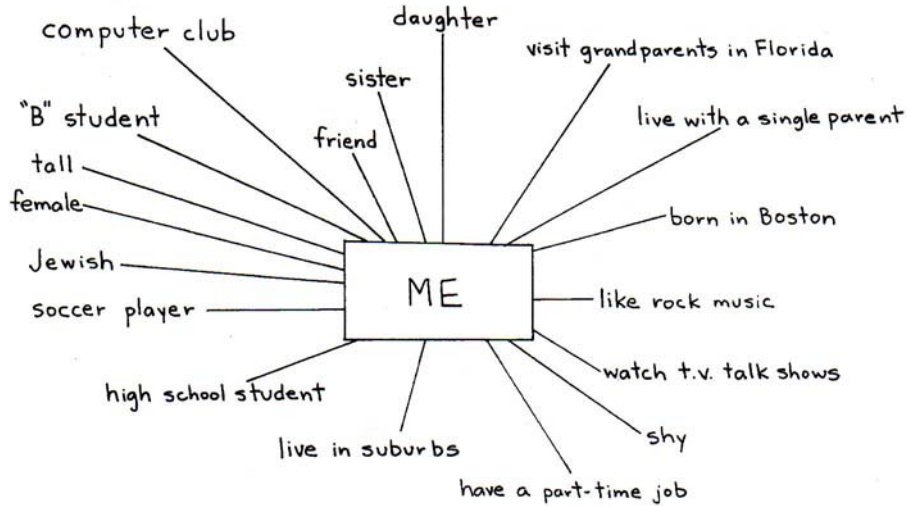
Arn Chorn's experiences have also led to an involvement with Amnesty International, an organization that uses publicity to fight human rights abuses. And those experiences have encouraged him to reach out to individuals caught up in the violence of gangs. While still in college, he initiated a number of programs for young Asian Americans in Providence, Rhode Island. Since receiving the Reebok Human Rights Award, he has been helping yet another group—young Cambodians. In 1992, he returned to Cambodia to found a community service program, modeled after the Peace Corps and City Year (see page 49). Wherever he goes, Arn reminds the young men and women he meets that “You have to make choices every step you go in your life.” Although he believes that everyone has the potential to change. He tells the young people he works with that “nobody is going to do it for us... and if somebody is kind enough to help us, then you should take advantage of it.”

Wherever he goes, Arn reminds the young men and women he meets that “you have to make choices every step you go in your life.”

CONNECTIONS

“Who am I?” is a question that each of us asks at some time in our life. In answering, we define ourselves. The word *define* means “to separate one thing from all of the others.” What distinguishes Arn Chorn Pond from everyone else? What sets him apart? The diagram on page 17 is an example of an

identity chart. Individuals fill it in with the words they call themselves as well as the labels society gives them. Make an identity chart for Arn. How does he define himself? What words do others use to define him? Include these words on the diagram.



What values and beliefs have shaped Arn Chorn Pond's responses to injustice? What individuals or experiences have motivated him to take action?

How does Arn Chorn Pond use the First Amendment to the Constitution to express his outrage at injustice and to advocate change? How important are the rights protected in that amendment to his work?

What skills does Arn Chorn Pond use to help young victims of violence? How did he acquire those skills?

Stacey Kabat

Stacey Kabat grew up in a suburb of Detroit, Michigan. As a college student, she, like Arn Chorn Pond, became involved in Amnesty International. After college, she worked abroad for the group for a few years. When she returned to the United States, she took a job as a counselor at the Massachusetts Correctional Institution for



Women in Framingham. There she met eight women convicted of killing abusive husbands or boyfriends. Outraged that they had been jailed for defending their lives, she founded Battered Women Fighting Back! The group, recently renamed Peace at Home, has worked not only to free the eight women but also for fairer laws and a wider recognition of the seriousness of domestic abuse.

Kabat sympathized with the women she met in prison because she grew up in a family marked by domestic violence. She points out that even though both her father and grandfather are well-educated and hold important jobs, they are violent men. Kabat can still recall being told to keep quiet about the violence that marked her family. It was to be a secret. Today Kabat views that silence as “damaging and dangerous.” She has come to believe in the importance of speaking out against domestic violence. In doing so, she uses the tools she acquired in working as a human rights activist for Amnesty International. For example, as part of her effort to educate people about domestic violence as a human rights issue, she co-produced a documentary about the eight women she encountered in Framingham. The film won an Academy Award in 1994.

Sarah M. Buel, supervisor of Domestic Violence Prosecution for Massachusetts, wrote in support of Kabat’s nomination for the Reebok Human Rights Award. She says of Kabat:

As a formerly battered woman and now prosecutor in domestic violence cases, I can attest to Stacey’s empathy for victims and legal sophistication. She combines those talents with a fierce commitment to ending the travesty of justice which keeps behind bars battered women who have attempted to defend themselves.

When Stacey’s former employer was forced to lay her off due to budget cuts, Stacey spent that week-end on the phone, pulling together supporters to keep “Battered Women Fighting Back!” alive. Within weeks, she secured a new home for the organization and short-term funding. In the midst of this, over the past year, Stacey has organized an educational breakfast for the Boston Globe editorial staff, has met frequently with top legislators to draft relevant statutes to expand protections for battered women who fought back in self-defense, has organized scores of

TV and radio talk show appearances to educate the community on these issues, and has recruited and coordinated the team of defense attorneys now representing the battered women in prison.

...Seldom have I met anyone with more drive to help others and whose enthusiasm and passion for service are so contagious. Stacey has changed the way many people think about and deal with incarcerated battered women. Her success in recruiting the attorneys and necessary documentation for clemency petitions means that these victims now have hope. She has been a mentor and continuing inspiration for many of us.

“...Seldom have I met anyone with more drive to help others and whose enthusiasm and passion for service are so contagious. Stacey has changed the way many people think about and deal with incarcerated battered women.”

CONNECTIONS

Create an identity chart for Stacey Kabat. What values and beliefs shape her response to injustice? What individuals or experiences have motivated her to take action?

Where did Stacey Kabat acquire the skills necessary to bring about nonviolent changes? How does she use the First Amendment to the Constitution to express her outrage at injustice and to advocate change? How important are the rights protected in that amendment to her work? How did she learn to act on those rights? For more information about the way other Americans have used the First Amendment to reform and improve their communities and their nation, consult *Choosing to Participate*.

Sociologist Ervin Staub has studied individuals who show courage and compassion for others. He has focused in particular on those who rescued Jews during the Holocaust. Based on that research, Staub believes, “People become brave by doing brave acts. People become compassionate by doing compassionate acts. People become good citizens by engaging in acts of good citizenship.” How do Arn Chorn Pond and Stacey Kabat support his conclusions? What can we learn about the way people become good citizens from the choices each has made?

Carl Washington

In 1993, Carl Washington, a young Baptist minister, negotiated a peace agreement between the two largest street gangs in Los Angeles, the Bloods and the Crips. Since then, he has tried to find opportunities for gang members to become positive participants in the life of the community. In doing so, he is working to change the way they see themselves and the way others view them. He believes that it is their



responsibility to “say I’m not living like this... and [I’ll do] whatever it takes to achieve that.” He insists that others in Los Angeles have responsibilities too. In his view, it is their responsibility, “as a society, to back those folk up whenever they start taking a stand.” Only then, Washington believes, will we begin to solve the problems that plague our communities. Everywhere, he tells audiences, “The first thing we need to do is come together. It’s not a black thing... it’s not a Latino thing ...It’s a human thing.”

One of seven children, Washington grew up in tough circumstances. His parents were divorced when he was just six years old. Unable to find work, his mother applied for welfare. It was not an easy time for any one in the family. Two of Carl’s brothers were lost to the violence of the streets. Both were eventually jailed for murder. Carl did not want to follow in their footsteps. So with the guidance of the pastor at his

church, he decided to become a minister.

Olivia E. Mitchell, Director of Los Angeles’s Office of Youth Development, has known Washington since his high school days. She wrote in support of his nomination for the Reebok Human Rights Award:

“The first thing we need to do is come together. It’s not a black thing... it’s not a Latino thing ...It’s a human thing.”

[Carl] was a student at Washington Preparatory High School when he was appointed to the Los Angeles City Youth Advisory Council (YAC). Carl distinguished himself as an advocate of young people in those early days. He was active in the Imperial Teen Post and recruited many young people from the area, especially the housing developments, to participate in our programs.

Each member of the YAC serves a term of two years. He served from 1981 through 1983. During the intervening years he continued to be devoted to the people in the area in which he was raised. He chose religion as his vehicle to help raise the level of hope amongst his peers. That choice has given him the inner strength to confront the problems of poverty, drugs, abuse, declining education, alienation, death and destruction which defines the lives of too many of the people he cares about and ministers.

Washington views his ministry as more than serving the members of his church. He reaches out to the community as a whole in his efforts to improve life in South-Central Los Angeles. To influence policy and make his voice heard, he acts as a deputy to the county supervisor. He also works with a variety of local and state groups that offer positive alternatives to gang violence. In addition, he seeks opportunities to speak directly to young people—in schools, at churches and community centers, and on the streets. In the hope that his successes will inspire theirs, he tells them, “I didn’t grow up under the best of circumstances.... Yet I was determined to make a difference in my own life if nothing else. I wanted to be somebody. I wanted to be a productive part of society and I did that. I took that on all by myself.”

CONNECTIONS

Carl Washington negotiated a peace agreement between two rival gangs. What skills are needed to negotiate such an agreement? How important are those skills in a democracy?

Create an identity chart for Carl Washington and compare it to the ones you created for Arn Chorn Pond and Stacey Kabat. What similarities do you notice? What differences seem most striking?

How did Washington break the stereotypes that defined him and become “somebody”? What values and beliefs have shaped his response to injustice? What individuals or experiences have motivated him to take action?

Bill Moyers writes that “it is not a scientifically certifiable fact that with each child born into the world comes the potential to create. It is rather a statement of faith. But I can’t imagine any declaration more important for our society to make.” Who helped Washington bring his creativity to life? How has he, in turn, touched the lives of others?

Winona LaDuke

Like Carl Washington, Winona LaDuke was born in Los Angeles. Her father, an Anishinabe from the White Earth Indian Reservation in northern Minnesota, moved to the city to find work as an actor. There he met her mother, an artist of Jewish descent. Winona traces her belief that she can make a difference to her parents and grandparent. Both parents were deeply involved in the civil rights movement. So was her maternal grandmother who, at the age of eighty, was still marching for causes she believed in.



Winona's parents divorced when she was very young. After the divorce, Winona lived with her mother who took a job in a small town in Oregon. From the start, the child felt like an outsider there. But as a youngster, she was not able to express her outrage at the treatment she received from her teachers and classmates. Today, she advises others to channel anger like hers into efforts to bring about meaningful change.

Winona LaDuke did not begin to speak out until she went to college. There she became involved in efforts to expand opportunities for Native Americans. In a letter to the Reebok Foundation, novelist Louise Erdich described how Winona's commitment to Native American people grew during her years at Harvard University:

“From the first, she impressed me as a young woman with a committed heart, although it was to be years before she finished her education and found the skills and voice to match that commitment in word and deed.”

From the first, she impressed me as a young woman with a committed heart, although it was to be years before she finished her education and found the skills and voice to match that commitment in word and deed. Since those first years, I have been aware of Ms. LaDuke's work on behalf of Native American people as she has traveled far and wide speaking on issues that affect Native American rights. She is well-known as a speaker, and an activist, and perhaps most importantly as a tribal member who has returned to her community on the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota, and worked on a local as well as a national level to make life better for her people.

At college and in graduate school, LaDuke took courses that would help her make a difference in the life of her people. After graduation, she settled on the White Earth Reservation and set out to protect the land set aside for the Anishinabe people, preserve their culture, and open new economic opportunities. She also committed herself to regaining the land they, like many other Native Americans, have lost or had taken from them over the years. Through her leadership, the Anishinabe have begun to win back one parcel at a time. It is an effort that she considers essential to their survival and her own, because

“our land reaffirms us, makes who we are. If you lose control of your land, you lose your essence.”

Winona does not work alone. She has joined with others on the reservation to bring about these changes, because she is convinced that there are no limits to what can be accomplished if people work together. She reminds audiences everywhere that “together we can make a change, not overnight but over years. We each have our own skills. Together we can make a change in our community. And it’s not something you see overnight, but it is something you see over years. And we make a change.”

CONNECTIONS

Louise Erdich says of Winona LaDuke, “From the first, she impressed me as a young woman with a committed heart, although it was to be years before she finished her education and found the skills and voice to match that commitment in word and deed.” What does she suggest about the way individuals make a difference in their community? How do her words apply to the other three individuals? To other people you have known or read about who have made a difference in their community?

Create an identity chart for Winona LaDuke. What words does she use to describe herself? What words do others use to describe her? How is she like Arn Chorn Pond, Stacey Kabat, and Carl Washington? In what respects is she unique?

Review the list you made identifying the qualities of a good citizen. What qualities would you add to the list after watching the four interviews? What qualities might you delete? How closely do the four match your criteria for a good citizen?

What words are used to describe the four individuals featured in this reading and the accompanying video? Use the identity charts you created to brainstorm a list of the characteristics they seem to share. Do the similarities lie in the causes they fight for? In the nonviolent methods they use to bring about change? In the experiences that shape their work? In the values and attitudes that motivate them? What differences seem most striking?

A character in a play written by George Bernard Shaw once said, “Some men see things as they are and ask why. I dream things that never were and say why not.” Which of the four shares that view of the world? What other people you have read about or known have had a similar view? How important is that attitude to their ability to make a difference in their own lives and those of others?

Part Two: Choosing to Make a Difference

Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

Part Two adds new voices and perspectives to discussions stimulated by the video-taped interviews. It also considers some of the moral questions raised by the decisions we make as individuals and as citizens in a democracy. And it helps students understand when and how a “tiny ripple of hope” can become a wave. The readings in this part of the study guide can be used independently or as a unit.



THE VIBRANCY OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

Winona LaDuke speaks of what she learned from her parents and grandparents. As a mother, she is also deeply concerned about the legacy she will leave to her own children. So is Marian Wright Edelman. As a college student, she challenged laws that denied African Americans citizenship rights. She later helped register black voters in Mississippi and in 1965 became the first African American woman to practice law in the state. About 20 years ago, she founded the Children's Defense Fund, which has since become the nation's leading research and lobbying group devoted to the needs of children. Edelman has eloquently described the people who inspired her work:

South Carolina is my home state and I am the aunt, granddaughter, daughter, and sister of Baptist ministers. Service was as essential a part of my upbringing as eating and sleeping and going to school. The church was a hub of Black children's social existence, and caring Black adults were buffers against the segregated and hostile outside world that told us we weren't important. But our parents said it wasn't so, our teachers said it wasn't so, and our preachers said it wasn't so. The message of my racially segregated childhood was clear: let no man or woman look down on you, and look down on no man or woman.

We couldn't play in public playgrounds or sit at drugstore lunch counters and order a Coke, so Daddy built a playground and canteen behind the church. In fact, whenever he saw a need, he tried to respond. There were no Black homes for the aged in Bennettsville, so he began one across the street for which he and Mama and we children cooked and served and cleaned. And we children learned that it was our responsibility to take care of elderly family members and neighbors, and that everyone was our neighbor....

We learned early what our parents and extended community "parents" valued. Children were taught—not by sermonizing, but by personal example—that nothing was too lowly to do. I remember a debate my parents had when I was eight or nine as to whether I was too young to go with my older brother, Harry, to help clean the bed and bedsores of a very sick, poor woman. I went and learned just how much the smallest helping hands and kindness can mean to a person in need....

I was fourteen years old the night my daddy died. He had holes in his shoes but two children out of college, one in college, another in divinity school, and a vision he was able to convey to me as he lay dying in an ambulance that I, a young Black girl could be and do anything; that race and gender are shadows; and that character, self-discipline, determination, attitude, and service are the substance of life.

I have always believed that I could help change the world because I have been lucky to have adults around me who did—in small and large ways.... I and my brothers and sister might have lost hope—as many

"The message of my racially segregated childhood was clear: let no man or woman look down on you, and look down on no man or woman."

“We always thought we could change the world, and that sense of empowerment is something that has to begin young.”

young people today have lost hope—except for the stable, caring, attentive adults in our family, school, congregation, civic and political life who struggled with and for us against the obstacles we faced and provided us positive alternatives and the sense of possibility we needed....

My life is one of the countless lives that attest to the vibrancy of the American Dream under circumstances harder than today’s. The segregated world of my childhood in the 1940s and 1950s seemed impenetrable. Never could I have envisaged the positive changes I have seen since my youth. But my parents and elders dreamed of them and never lost hope. So neither will I lose hope that America’s best self will overcome growing racial and class divisions.

CONNECTIONS

Marian Wright Edelman notes, “We always thought we could change the world, and that sense of empowerment is something that has to begin young.” What opportunities do young people have to bring about change in your community? How might those opportunities be expanded? Every community has unsung heroes and heroines. Who were they in Edelman’s community? Who are the unsung heroes in your community?

Robert F. Kennedy said, “Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope.” Who are the people who inspire you with “a tiny ripple of hope”? When does a ripple become a wave?

Edelman speaks of the American Dream. What is that dream? On August 28, 1963, over 200,000 Americans gathered in Washington, D.C., to peacefully demonstrate on behalf of equal justice for all Americans. Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. told the crowd that he had dream “that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: ‘We hold those truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal.’” How does King define the American Dream? Compare his definition with yours and with that of a young migrant worker who told an interviewer:

To me the American dream right now is college. My dream is doing what I want to do, what I feel in my heart that I want to do, being happy.... That is my American dream—making it in the world. Beating the odds. Because there are enough odds against the minorities. In this country and with my values, I know I can beat the odds and make a difference.

FINDING VOICE

A teacher in Cambodia helped Arn Chorn Pond find his voice. Stacey Kabat found hers in stories told by women who had experienced domestic violence. As a result, she views silence as “damaging and dangerous.” How does one break that silence and find one’s voice? Thylia Moss, a teacher and writer, offers some insights into that process by describing how she lost hers:

For me what made Sundays exceptional was the man elevated in the center front of the sanctuary [in church], golden white lights turned upon him, the rest of the sanctuary dim and cool. He wore white robes with gold brocade tippets, and the sleeves were full as wings; as he gestured through his sermons and speeches, he seemed to be flying. Then there was his voice itself, soothing as distant thunder, then loud and pointed as if his tongue were a whip, then rhythmic and hypnotic like singing and dance, a hula of the voice. It was delicious when those sounds entered my ears and filled them. With just his voice he was able to bring women and men in the congregation to tears. They would shout and writhe, jump and run through the aisles, or simply stand and quiver, so overwhelmed were they by the power and intensity of the spirit that the voice of the minister stirred within them. And I was mesmerized and awed; I learned what a voice could command; I learned just what a force of words could do, how words could touch and hammer and catapult and bring down joy like rain. I wanted to do that, too. Only with words. Nothing but words. I could get words easily; no one and nothing could keep words out of my mind, my mouth, my hands once I started to write them down. I could go anywhere with words, the places my mother is named for, the places she’ll never see.

Although I stopped talking in school in fourth grade, I still wrote words, and so did not lose myself. We moved, in the middle of fourth grade, to a house on Durkee Avenue, homeowners for the first time, in a safer, mostly white, mostly Croatian neighborhood, and I almost immediately went from being an outgoing, popular girl to a withdrawn, shy, almost invisible girl. I don’t know for sure why I stopped talking, why I would not speak up for myself and did not learn to do so again until I was in college, but it seems likely that it had to do with the way I was judged in the new school without my even opening up my mouth once....

In the new school, I was placed in a regular classroom although I’d been in accelerated classrooms since first grade. The violin I had been



Some people find their voice through art rather than in the written or spoken word. A silk-screen by Daniela Fabricus, a student at The Dalton School, New York City.

“I learned just what a force of words could do, how words could touch and hammer and catapult and bring down joy like rain. I wanted to do that, too. Only with words. Nothing but words.”

given in first grade was taken away. The French I had studied also since first grade was discontinued. New teachers and principals did not know that I had been selected for private instruction at the Phyllis Wheatley Institute beyond the once-a-week music lessons in my school. New teachers and principals did not know that I was thinking about becoming a concert violinist. I can't get past how fulfillment of a dream was so easily fractured by assumptions that a little black girl was somehow not as capable as paler children being educated in a better, more affluent public school. They did not know; they did not ask. I did not tell them that in second grade I had given an oral report on Susan B. Anthony for which I made protest signs and had girls march around the classroom dressed in old clothes from Janice Skipper's attic with only the flashlights they held for illumination. After I spoke, I marched with them, carrying a sign and chanting the poem I wrote. They didn't know, didn't ask, and I didn't tell them just how much thunder was in my voice as I spoke about equality for women. A seven-year-old girl in the inner city did this, a girl believing she could make anything happen until she moved to a better place and found out how utterly ordinary she was. Brown as a curled up leaf off the tree, a nuisance on the lawn, raked into a heap for an autumn bonfire.

CONNECTIONS

How do you account for Thylias Moss's silence? Why would a child who loves words choose to remain silent for so long? What does her story suggest about the role society plays in shaping one's identity? In finding one's voice?

Both Stacey Kabat and Marian Wright Edelman believe that silence can be damaging. But must all voices be heard? What about those that teach hate? That turn neighbor against neighbor? How does one separate the voice from the message?

Psychologist Deborah Tannen writes, "We all know we are unique individuals but we tend to see others as representatives of groups. It's a natural tendency; since we must see the world in patterns in order to make sense of it; we wouldn't be able to deal with the daily onslaught of people and objects if we couldn't predict a lot about them and feel that we know who or what they are." Although Tannen considers it "natural" to generalize, she views stereotypes as offensive. A *stereotype* is more than a judgment about an individual based on the characteristics of a group. By reducing individuals to categories, stereotypes obscure the qualities that make a person special or unique. How did stereotypes affect the way that others saw Thylias Moss? The way she viewed herself?

For a television series on creativity, Bill Moyers interviewed writer Maya Angelou. She described her childhood years as a time when she thought of herself as “in disgrace with fortune, being black and poor and female in the South.” She spoke too of a trauma that left her silent until she found her voice through her grandmother’s love and the compassion of Mrs. Flowers, a neighbor who read to the child. Moyers says of these experiences:

For the inner life to flourish everyone needs to be touched by someone.... With Maya Angelou, it was a grandmother who loved her vastly and a radiant black angel who read Dickens to a little girl not quite turned eight. They signified her worth, they said, “You matter,” they turned her suffering rage upward and brought the poet to life. It is not a scientifically certifiable fact that with each child born into the world comes the potential to create. It is rather a statement of faith. But I can’t imagine any declaration more important for our society to make.

What is Moyers suggesting about the responsibilities a community has to its children? About the relationship between the individual and the society? Does Thylias Moss’s story support that view or call it into question? For more information on Maya Angelou, see *Choosing to Participate*. Moyer’s series on creativity is available on video from the Facing History Resource Center.

JOINING TOGETHER

Carl Washington believes that we can solve the problems that plague our communities by joining together. A high school student in a small town in Idaho made a similar discovery after overhearing a number of adults make racist remarks at a football game.

Ernest “Neto” Villareal lives in a community where he and other Latinos are considered outsiders. For much of his childhood, Neto, like many of his friends, got into almost daily fights with white students. For Neto, however, the fighting ended when he made the high school football team. Playing on the team gave him a sense of belonging. It made feel that he was a valued part of the community. On Friday nights, hundreds of people from miles around would pile into trucks, cars, and vans to watch him and the others play.

Then one evening after a difficult game, Jesse Paz, a teammate and friend, asked Neto if he ever got tired of listening to white fans hurl racist remarks at the Latino players. Neto told him that he never paid much attention to what the fans said. He was too busy concentrating on the game. Although Neto seemed to shrug off Jesse’s comment, it bothered him. He later told writer Phillip Hoose:

The next game, I decided to see if I could hear what Jesse was hearing. In one play, we were running a pass pattern that ended up very near the Marsing cheering section. Our receiver, who was Hispanic, dove for the ball and missed it. Suddenly I could hear voices in our crowd saying, “Get that stupid Mexican off of there! Put in a white player! G-D those f-- Mexicans!” I looked up. Most of the voices belonged to parents. One was a guy on the school board.

All game long I kept listening. When a white player would drop a pass, they’d go, “Nice try.” But they were always negative toward us. Our whole race. I guess I had been blocking it out. Jesse was right. We couldn’t just ignore it anymore.

After the game, Neto and Jesse called a meeting of all of the players—white and Hispanic. The two boys repeated what they had heard and told their teammates that they could not ignore the remarks. After discussing the issue at great length, the entire team decided to sit out the next game to show their disapproval of the fans’ racist comments.

Before heading home, Neto, Jesse, and another teammate told the coach what the team had decided and turned in their uniforms. The coach told the boys that they had made the wrong choice. People would call them losers and quitters. Later that evening, as Neto thought about the events of the day, he realized that the coach was partly right. It wasn’t enough just to quit. He and the others had to let the community know why they were quitting. But how could they be heard? Neto decided to ask Andy Percifield, the president of the student council, for advice. Although Neto didn’t know him, friends who did spoke highly of him.

When Andy heard the story, he immediately offered to help the players. He began by asking the principal for his support in responding to the remarks. To his surprise, the principal insisted that Neto was mistaken. After all, he told Andy he had never heard anyone call the Latino players names. Andy left angry and frustrated.

Neto also had a difficult day. His teammates were having second thoughts about the decision they had made the night before. One by one, most of the boys decided to play, including many of the Hispanic players. In the end, only four players—Jesse, Neto, Rigo Delgudillo, and Johnny Garcia—remained committed to staying off the field until the fans changed their behavior.

That afternoon Neto decided to seek advice from a teacher named Baldimar Elizondo. Elizondo told Neto that he had to tell the school board about the racist remarks. Unless members of the board knew exactly why he was protesting, they could ignore the protest or find another explanation for it. That evening Neto, accompanied by Elizondo, told members why he was quitting the team. He later recalled that only one man seemed to really listen. Still when he finished, the members thanked him for coming even though they did not respond to his charges.

Andy Percifield was also busy. The next morning, he announced two meetings over the school's intercom system. The first was a student council meeting. Attendance was required. The second was a meeting of all students. Attendance was encouraged. Andy told both groups about the racist remarks at the games and explained how some members of the team had decided to respond to those remarks. He then read aloud a letter that he wanted to distribute at the next game. A number of students suggested ways it might be improved. Andy then asked for and received their unanimous approval to read the edited version at half-time. The letter stated:

We, the student body of Marsing High School are appalled by the racist behavior of certain people in the audience. Not only does this set a bad example for some younger students, it also reflects very badly on our entire school and community.

Although we appreciate the support of our fans for our team, which is composed of students from many ethnic backgrounds, we do not need bigots here.

We are asking the authorities to eject from the premises anyone making such rude and racist remarks.

“Although we appreciate the support of our fans for our team, which is composed of students from many ethnic backgrounds, we do not need bigots here.”

After the meeting, Andy showed the letter to the striking players and asked if they would be willing to play if it were read to the crowd. The four agreed. Andy then took the letter to the principal and asked permission to have it read at the game. When the principal refused, Andy decided to show the letter to the superintendent of schools, his principal's boss. Baldimar Elizondo went with him. After the superintendent heard the story and read the letter, he told Andy that he was proud of him and the other students. He even volunteered to read the letter at the game. Andy thanked him for the

offer but turned it down. He and the other students wanted to handle the matter themselves.

On the day of the game, several students distributed copies of the letter to everyone who entered the stadium. Then at half-time, a member of the student council went to the microphone and asked for everyone's attention. She then read the letter to a silent crowd. In his book *It's Our World, Too!* Phillip Hoose describes the effects of the incident:

Since that letter was read, there have been no more racial slurs from the Marsing Husky fans, at least none loud enough for the players to hear. Neto and Andy know that they and Jesse and Rigo and Johnny didn't do away with racial prejudice in their town. Many white parents still won't let their sons and daughters date Hispanics, and the two groups still don't mix much outside school. But they also know that they did what no one before them had done. "At least," says Neto, "we made it known that we wouldn't accept racism in our school or from our fans. We made a difference in the part of our lives that we really could control."

"At least, says Neto, "we made it known that we wouldn't accept racism in our school or from our fans. We made a difference in the part of our lives that we really could control."

CONNECTIONS

What words describe the actions of the students described in this reading? Compare your list to the one that you created to describe the recipients of the Reebok Award (page 23). How do you account for similarities? What differences seem most striking? Were Neto Villareal, his fellow teammates, and Andy Percifield good citizens?

Sociologist David Schoem writes that isolation among ethnic and racial groups in the United States is a "human and national tragedy." As a result of that isolation, he says that we learn "to place heavy reliance on stereotypes, gossip, rumor, and fear to shape our lack of knowledge." How did "stereotypes, gossip, rumor, and fear" shape Neto Villareal's attitude toward white classmates when he was in elementary and middle school? Their attitudes toward him and other Latinos? How did the incident described in this reading alter those attitudes? What does the change suggest about the way groups that regard one another with suspicion and fear can be brought together?

Winona LaDuke believes that "having a sense of who you are allows you to do what you have to do." Do Neto Villareal's decisions support that idea? List the choices he had and the possible consequences of each. Which choice do you think he would have made a few years earlier? What factors might have influenced his decision then? What choice did Neto make? What factors influenced that choice? Why, after years of fighting with Anglos, did he choose a nonviolent response? How does your identity shape your choices? Make it easier to know what to do in a crisis?

Compare the choices Neto made to those of Andy Percifield and to those of other players on the team. Which student or students took the greatest risk? Who had the most to lose? The most to gain? How did each decision lead to the next? How do you think this incident will affect other decisions Neto, Andy and other students make? The decisions other students at the high school will make in years to come?

Did the teacher who helped Neto and Andy take a risk? What do you think motivated his choice? What may have motivated the choice the principal made? The coach's decision? The superintendent's? What were the consequences of their decisions?

In *Before the Mayflower*, historian Lerone Bennett, Jr., describes how segregation became “the law of the land.” He likens its growth to the building of wall “brick by brick, bill by bill, fear by fear.” He notes that the struggle to end segregation has taken a similar course. Laws separating black and white Americans are being torn down “brick by brick, bill by bill.” How does this story support that view of change? Of progress? Call it into question?

Is it true that “sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me”? What power do words have—particularly words that define our identity or label us in some way? What names have you been called? What labels have been applied to you? What have those experiences taught you about the power of the spoken word?

Excerpts from *House on Mango Street* cannot be published online. The quotation is available in the printed guide.

MAKING CHOICES

Carl Washington says that it's the responsibility of those who are experiencing a problem to solve it. And "it's our responsibility; as a society, to back those folk up whenever they start taking a stand." How does society "back those folk up"? Michael Worsley's career offers some insights into the process. Worsley's job is to help kids in trouble. A newspaper reporter described his impact on not only those kids but also the New Hampshire town in which he lives:

"If you can just get through one thing—if they take one thing and remember that, then you say to yourself, 'I made a difference,'" Worsley said.

Worsley is a tall man, and strong; a man not accustomed to his own tears. But the tears flowed hot on his face as he read. The letter had come from prison, from a young man Worsley had known as a teen-ager. "Martin" was a victim of childhood neglect, Worsley says, a real "wild child." In the short time he knew Martin, Worsley had tried hard to get through to him—to listen, to talk, to respect. He was never sure he had succeeded.

Then the letter came. Through tortured penmanship and punctuation, Worsley read; "I've done a lot of soul searching... and [I am] looking forward toward a better future. I'm going to need strong support when I get out, so if you don't mind I would like to stop by to talk to you. You [have] always been out to help people, and I really do need that... I'm end this letter appreciating the fact that you always been a big brother."

Worsley cried not because the wild child had landed in jail for petty thievery. He cried because the letter was proof that the wild child had been reached—and was finally capable of reaching back.

"If you can just get through one thing—if they take one thing and remember that, then you say to yourself, 'I made a difference,'" Worsley said.

Making a difference is what Michael Worsley does.

For eight years, Worsley, 32, has been a child care worker at the Webster House, a group home in Manchester for children removed from their families by the state. His job description: professional role model and surrogate parent....

Michael Worsley stands 6 feet 1 inch, is bald by choice and has a deep, rich voice. He looks children right in the eye and does not talk down.

At the Webster House, children come trailing demons. Demons of abuse and neglect. Demons brought on when parents cared more about their next drink or fix than their child's next meal. Worsley helps keep the demons at bay.

On a recent Monday afternoon, Worsley made the rounds at Webster House. Every time he entered a room—kitchen, pool room, living room—something happened. Children came and stood near him. Often, they did not even speak. It was as though they just took comfort in standing close.

Frank Catano, who directs Webster House, said Worsley is blessed with the "gift" that it takes to reach teen-agers and help turn them around. "He doesn't do it for work," said Catano. "He does it for life."

The youths Worsley works with often do not have much reason to smile.

But Worsley seems able to coax a grin out of even the most sullen.... Worsley says it's no mystery. Kids need four things from him—"to be wanted, to be valued, to have structure and honesty."

"A lot of people get the impression that these are bad kids," Worsley said. These are victims."

Jay, 17, looks every inch the tough guy in a baseball cap and jersey. But the facade fades when asked why kids like Worsley. It's simple, Jay said, and obvious.

"He loves us."

Worsley grew up in an all-black neighborhood in Youngstown, Ohio. He and seven siblings were raised by their mother—who recently moved, along with Worsley's grandmother, to Manchester. As soon as the children could, they went to work and pitched in to keep the household running. Worsley started working with youths as a Salvation Army summer camp counselor when he was a teen-ager.

Worsley intended to join the army, but a college basketball recruiter changed those plans. At Mount Vernon Nazarene College in Mount Vernon, Ohio, Worsley majored in communications—and got his first taste of culture shock. Of a student body of 3,800, Worsley was one of two African-Americans.

"I never realized how black I was until I got there, Worsley said with a laugh. Worsley was the first in his family to get to college, but his grade point average did not keep pace with his scoring average. He dropped out after his second year. And when the Salvation Army asked him to move to Manchester to help with a youth program, he agreed.

The young man from Youngstown was in for an even bigger culture shock.

"It was almost two weeks before I saw my first black person," Worsley said.... Despite that isolation, Worsley stayed in Manchester. He married a Manchester native and set about making this town home. Now he and his wife, Diane, have three youngsters of their own, Dominique, 8; Shaquille, 4 (yes, named for NBA hoop stars Wilkins and O'Neal); and Kayla, 2. And Worsley is back in college full-time, taking classes on weekends and off-hours to earn a degree in counseling.

But Worsley is still disturbed by the attitudes he sees toward African Americans here. He said he has been pulled over by police 12 times in 10 years—often for no legitimate reason. He is a clean-cut man, well-dressed and polite. But people cross the street when they see him coming.

Those stereotypes and fears spark Worsley into community activism—from co-chairing a racial diversity task force to co-founding a multiracial families group and working with Outreach for Black Unity and the Haymarket Foundation.

And people in the community have come to depend on him....

"There's a lot of work to be done, and I can make a difference," Worsley said. "I really can make a difference."

It's a difference that is made one child at a time.

Last year, Worsley was invited to a local high school to speak. When he got to the front of the room, he noticed a boy in the class outfitted in the garb of white supremacists—head shaved, combat boots laced tight.

When the talk was finished, the youth told Worsley he belonged to a skinhead group. Worsley asked the boy if he knew any black people. The boy admitted he did not. So Worsley gave him his home phone number.

"Give me a call sometime," Worsley offered. "We'll talk about it."

The boy called a few times, just to talk.

Worsley must have made an impression. Because when the boy was moving out of Manchester, he tracked Worsley down at work to say good-bye.

"You know what?" he asked Worsley. "I'm not a skinhead no more."

"Why not?"

"Because that was stupid, man."

Remembering that one not-so-small success, Michael Worsley smiled.

CONNECTIONS

Create an identity chart for Michael Worsley. What do you think motivates him to help others? What does Worsley's story suggest about the way a society supports people who want to make a change in their lives?

Michael Worsley serves as a *mentor* to the young people of his community. Create a working definition of the word. How is a mentor like a counselor? Like a big brother or sister? How does a mentor differ from both?

Based on his study of individuals who rescued Jews during the Holocaust, sociologist Ervin Staub believes, "People become brave by doing brave acts. People become compassionate by doing compassionate acts. People become good citizens by engaging in acts of good citizenship." Samuel and Pearl Oliner have also studied rescuers. In their book *The Altruistic Personality*, they suggest that participation was not only determined by circumstances but also by personal qualities. "Changes sometimes provided rescuers... with an opportunity to help, but it was the values learned from their parents which prompted and sustained their involvement." Which view does this reading support? Which view do the four interviews support?

Write a working definition of the word *altruism*. Can altruism be taught? If so, how would Michael Worsley teach it? How would you teach it?

Ron Fox grew up in a tough neighborhood in San Francisco. He hung out with the wrong crowd, got involved with gangs, sold drugs, and stole cars.

Time in jail convinced him that he had “Potential to be somebody” but he needed help in realizing that potential. A teacher encouraged him to go to a boys club. He writes that when he met the co-founder of the club, his rehabilitation began. “He started showing me that being a man wasn’t what I thought it was. He told me that a true man gets out and goes to work for a living instead of hanging out on the block and slinging rocks (drugs).” Fox, now a writer, says that because of such role models, “I was salvageable. Now I’m looking to get trained for my life-long battle, helping at-risk kids. I’m still out there listening for the youth’s solemn cry.” What does Fox’s story suggest about the importance of Worsley’s work? About the legacy of that work? Does Worsley “make a difference”?

TURNING POINTS

When Winona LaDuke encounters stereotypes, she works to change them. She says, “What I think you do when you’re angry is you try to make a change.” She has discovered that one seemingly small change often leads to another and yet another. Some choices, however, matter more than others. These decisions mark turning points in a person’s life.

In 1961, a federal judge ordered an end to school segregation in New Orleans. Robert Coles described the choices people made as a result of that order. For many, those decisions marked a turning point in their lives and in the life of the community. Some gathered each morning to taunt and jeer as four African American children made their way to school escorted by their parents and police guards. Three of the four six-year-olds were assigned to one school and the fourth child, Ruby Bridges, to another. Although these children attended school each day in spite of the crowds, most white parents chose to keep their children out of school rather than confront the mobs. Only a handful took a different course. Coles interviewed one of those parents, a woman with nine children—four of whom attended the elementary school to which Ruby Bridges was assigned. He says of the woman:

She lived near the school, near enough to see it from her backyard; near enough to see and hear the crowds from her front window. She was born in Louisiana as were her parents, and their parents. She and her husband were “ordinary” people, or at least so it seemed. That is to say, they lived with their children in a small, lower-middle-class area, their home like thousands of others, their life distinguished by little except its daily routine of care for one another and the children. They were both high school graduates.

Just before the crisis which came upon their city they had no interest in politics and were against school desegregation. “We never really thought they would do it, and then we found that not only did they mean to go ahead, but ours was slated to be one of the schools.” That was the way she summarized her surprise, her previous attitude of mild or unexcited opposition to what the newspapers less indifferently called “mixing.”

In a matter of weeks this mother and her children were subjected to a degree of danger and intimidation which rivals for violence any I’ve seen in the South. Her house was assaulted, its windows broken, its walls stained with foul inscriptions. Her husband’s place of work was threatened and picketed. It became necessary for the police to protect her children as well as the little Negro* girl whose lone entrance precipitated disorder in the streets and sporadic violence destined to last for months.

*The word *Negro* was commonly used in the 1960s to refer to African Americans. Its use reflects the time period.

In watching this Southern white lady walk through those mobs with her small children, one could not but wonder why she persisted. Why did she take on that challenge, and how did she endure it?...

Here is how—word for word—she once described her attitude when the conflict of school desegregation, hovering over the city for months, settled upon her children’s school.

“I couldn’t believe it. First I became angry at the nigras.** I figured, why don’t they leave well enough alone and tend to their own problems. Lord knows they have enough of them. Then, I thought I just couldn’t keep four children out of school; not on one little... girl’s account. So I thought I’d just send them and see what happens. Well, the next thing I knew, mothers were rushing in and taking their children out; and every time they did it, they would get cheered. The end of the first day of it there wasn’t much of a school left.

“The next day I decided to give it one more try. I was going to stay away, keep my children away, but to tell the truth the idea of having four children home with me, squabbling and making noise and getting into trouble, was too much for me. So I thought I’d just stick it out and maybe things would quiet down, and then we’d all forget one little [black child] and our children would go on to school.

“The crowd was there the next day and they were more of one mind now. They started shouting at each white mother that came to the building, and one by one they pulled back. It was if the building was surrounded and only the police could get through and *they* weren’t doing anything. The mob let Ruby through, because they said they wanted her to be there alone. They screamed when the minister [one of two white Protestant ministers who sent their children to school] brought his girl, and I decided to withdraw. Well, I was walking back home, and I saw a back door to the building. They were so busy with the minister and shouting at the reporters, they weren’t looking at the rear. So I just took the children there and let them go in. At that moment I thought, ‘It’s better than their being at home, and better than their listening to those people scream all day from our porch.’ It was bad enough I had to hear it, and my baby too young for school.

“The *next* day I really decided to join the boycott. I couldn’t see fighting them, and they weren’t going away like I thought. Well, my husband stayed home a little later than usual, and we talked. I said no, no school for the kids, and he agreed. Then he said maybe we should try to move to another part of the city, so that the kids could continue their schooling. Then I said I’d try *one more day*. Maybe the mob would get tired and go away. After all, they had their way—there was only the

“In watching this Southern white lady walk through those mobs with her small children, one could not but wonder why she persisted. Why did she take on that challenge, and how did she endure it?...”

**A variation of the word Negroes, used primarily by white southerners. Although people today consider the term derogatory, it was acceptable at the time.

children of a minister or two left out of five hundred families. I snuck the kids in, and later that day one of the *teachers* called, to ask me if I was sure I wanted to do it. She sounded almost as scared as me, and I think she would just as soon have had the whole school closed, so she could be spared listening to that noise and that filthy language.

“That night, I think, was the turning point. A few of the mob saw me leaving with the children, and started calling me the worst things I’d ever heard. They followed me home and continued. Thank God the police kept them away from the house, but I had the sickening feeling on the way home that I was *in* something, unless I got out real fast. In the morning I couldn’t send them, and I couldn’t *not*. One woman came here instead of to the school, to swear at me just in case I tried sending the children off. I guess she thought that just her being there would take care of me. Well, it did. I became furious; and I just dressed those children as fast as I could and marched them off. Later that day those women from the Garden District [well-to-do women who opposed the mobs] came, and they said they’d stand by me and help me and even drive the children the one block, and I guess I soon was a key person in breaking the boycott.

“But I didn’t *mean* to. It was mostly, I think, their language, and attacking me so quickly. I didn’t feel any freer than the [blacks]. I think I gained my strength each day, so that I was pretty tough in a few months. After a while they didn’t scare me one bit. I wouldn’t call it brave; it was becoming *determined*. That’s what happened, really. We all of us—my children, my husband, and me—became determined.”

Robert Coles says of her choice:

Certainly there was no one reason that prompted it. I have talked with enough of her neighbors to realize the dangers of saying that her past actions or beliefs might easily differentiate her from others. Many of her nearby friends are decent, likable people. Before a mob they simply withdrew themselves and their children. This woman had also planned to do so. Yet she never did, or she never did for long or for good. She drifted. She tried to resolve the mixed feelings in her mind. She weighed her fear of a mob against her annoyance at her children’s loss of schooling and their bothersome presence in the home. She was a hopeful person and she assumed—wrongly indeed—that the riots would end quickly. She is a sound, stable person, and once under fire she did not waver. She is the first one to remind me that her husband’s employers stood by him. Had they wavered, she is certain that she would have quickly withdrawn her children from the school. For that matter, were her husband different—that is, more of a segregationist, or generally more nervous and anxious—she might never have dared stand up to a mob’s anger.

In sum, there were a number of reasons which helped this woman’s courage unfold, each of them, perhaps, only a small part of the explanation,

though each necessary... A crisis found her strong and in possession of certain ideals. Those ideals gained power through a cumulative series of events which eventually became for one person's life a "Point of no return." She puts it this way: "After a few days I knew I was going to fight those people and their foul tongues with every ounce of strength I had. I knew I had no choice but that one. At least that's the way I see it now.

"After a few days I knew I was going to fight those people and their foul tongues with every ounce of strength I had. I knew I had no choice but that one. At least that's the way I see it now."

CONNECTIONS

Coles says of the woman and her husband, "Just before the crisis which came upon their city they had no interest in politics and were against school desegregation. 'We never really thought they would do it, and then we found that not only did they mean to go ahead, but ours was slated to be one of the schools.' That was the way she summarized her surprise, her previous attitude of mild or unexcited opposition to what the newspapers less indifferently called 'Mixing.'" The couple was not alone in their decision to remain bystanders. Many other adults made similar choices. What happened as a result of such decisions?

What was the turning point for the woman in this reading? How was the decision she made that day different from those she had made earlier? What event marked a turning point for other individuals featured in *Participating in Democracy*? What do each of these turning points have in common? In what sense is each unique?

How do negative feelings about "others" turn into acts of hatred and violence in times of crisis? What is the relationship between intolerance and fear? Between humiliation and hatred? What characterizes a mob? What happens to an individual in the midst of a mob? How does mob violence threaten democracy? The rule of law?

Was the woman *courageous* because she stood up to the mob? Or was she simply *determined*? What is the difference? How important is the difference?

What motivated the two ministers who sent their children to school? How do you think their children regarded those choices at the time? A few years later when they were more mature? What motivated the woman Coles interviewed? What values underlay the choice she made? How would you assess the role her husband played in the crisis? His employer's role? The role the couple's children played? How do you think they regarded their parent's choices at the time? A few years later when they were more mature?

What did the woman mean when she said that she was "no freer than the [blacks]"? In what sense were they not free? In what sense, wasn't she free?

Is there a hero in this story? If so, who is the hero? The white woman? Her husband? Their children? Ruby Bridges and her family? The white ministers who insisted that their children attend school with Ruby Bridges? The judge?

After facing down a mob day after day for well over two months, Tessie, one of the children who desegregated the other elementary school in New Orleans, received a letter. It was not the first letter she received. Dozens arrived each day with messages praising her courage and determination. But this letter was different. It did not come from an outsider but from someone in her hometown. It read:

Dear little girl,
I stand there with them and sometimes I've shouted, along with everyone else, but I feel sorry for you, and I wish all this trouble will end, soon. You're good to smile at us, like you do sometimes, and I want you to know I'm praying this will be over, and my kids will soon be back in school with you and the other two.
Sincerely, X

That note meant a lot to Tessie, her parents, and her two grandmothers. It was a letter that the family read often in the difficult months that followed. Why do you think it meant so much to the family? Tessie and her family shared the letter with their minister who in turn read it aloud to the congregation and even gave a sermon based on it. Why do you think he chose to do so? What lesson did he want his congregation to learn from the letter? What idea was he trying to communicate?

Two years after Tessie received the letter, long after the mobs had disbanded, the mother of one of her classmates came to school. After talking to the teacher, the woman asked if she might speak to Tessie. The teacher agreed. After staring at the child for a moment or two, the woman leaned over and whispered that she had sent Tessie a letter a long time ago and was glad to finally meet her. She told the child that she was glad her son was in Tessie's class. The girl later told Coles:

I could barely wait to get home, so I could tell my momma and my dad, and my granny, both my grannies. I couldn't believe it was actually happening, but it was, it did. My granny wasn't even surprised. She said the lady had been wanting to meet me, for sure, because she'd tried to shake my hand and pat my back through her letter, and that's how she had sent her friendship, and that's how God does things: He brings people together in "strange ways," and they help each other.

What does friendship mean in this case? Why do you think the woman wanted to meet Tessie? Compare the choices this woman made with those of the mother described in this reading. In what ways were the choices the two women made similar? What difference seems most striking? Which woman was the better citizen? Would her neighbors agree?

“IT’S A HUMAN THING”

During the struggle for civil rights in the 1960s, most citizens saw themselves as bystanders—as people who lacked the power and influence to make a difference. Were they right? Winona LaDuke would probably argue that they were not. She is convinced that there are no limits to what people can accomplish by joining together. She reminds audiences that “together we can make a change, not overnight but over years.” And her work supports that view. So does the work of Carl Washington who tells audiences, “The first thing we need to do is come together. It’s not a black thing... it’s not a Latino thing It’s a human thing.” In 1994, the people of Billings, Montana, discovered the power a united community can exert. The Associated Press reported:

“Hate crimes are not a police problem,” Chief Inman said. “They’re a community problem. Hate crimes and hate activity flourish only in communities that allow it to flourish.”

When swastikas appeared here in Montana’s largest city, Chief Wayne Inman was determined to halt the hatred early. As a police officer in Portland, Ore., in the late 1980s, he had watched skinhead racism and antisemitism mushroom and turn deadly.

“Hate crimes are not a police problem,” Chief Inman said. “They’re a community problem. Hate crimes and hate activity flourish only in communities that allow it to flourish.”

So he and others stirred the city to a level of outrage that at least for now appears to have cowed the racist groups.

The first signs of bigotry came last year when fliers started showing up in mailboxes on doorsteps, under windshield wipers, vilifying Hispanic Americans, Indians, blacks, homosexuals, lesbians, and welfare recipients. The fliers reserved special venom for the 48 Jewish families among the city’s 81,000 residents.

Then in January, people attending a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day observance returned to find their parked cars papered with Ku Klux Klan material.

In the spring, skinheads began showing up in twos and threes at Wayman Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, glowering in the back pews.

In August, a black swastika painted on white poster board was nailed to the door of Beth Aaron Synagogue, and tombstones were toppled in its cemetery.

In October, swastikas and racial slurs were spray-painted on the home of a husband and wife of different races.

Chief Inman recognized an emerging pattern: hate literature to intimidation to vandalism to personal attacks. In Portland that evolution culminated in the November 1988 beating death of Mulugeta Seraw, a young Ethiopian, by three skinheads returning from a meeting with recruiters from a white supremacist group.

“I saw the emergence of the hate groups and a community’s denial,

and I saw a wake-up call that was the death of a black man by baseball bat because he was black,” Chief Inman said. “That’s what it took to wake up Portland. We didn’t have go through that here to get the wakeup call.”

The 100,000 people living in the Billings area reacted swiftly in unison.

“There was not silence,” Chief Inman said, “There was community outrage, saying, ‘If you harass and intimidate one member of this community you are attacking all of us.’”

And the resistance was more than bluster. Within five days of the spray-painted vandalism, 27 volunteers from Painters Local 1922 swarmed over the defaced house and obliterated the slurs in 45 minutes.

Bigotry resurfaced the next month. On Nov. 27, a beer bottle was hurled through a glass door at the home of Uri Barnes, conductor of the Billings Symphony. Five nights later, a cinder block thrown through a window sent shards of glass flying over the bed of 5-year-old Isaac Schnitzer.

Both houses were decorated with Hanukkah menorahs, and in both houses baby sitters were watching children.

Symbol of Resistance

The city reacted immediately. Christian churches distributed photocopies of menorahs. The Billings Gazette published a black-and-white picture of a menorah with an editorial, then a full-page version in color. Several businesses began providing paper menorahs.

Within days, the nine-candled symbol of Jewish perseverance and resistance was displayed in thousands of windows across the city.

The menorah idea started with Rev. Keith Torney of the First Congregational Church and Margie MacDonald of the Montana Association of Churches.

“This was just getting to be too much,” Mr. Torney said. “First the gays, then the black community, but it seemed to me, they kind of hit their stride in the Jewish community. It’s like they’re searching around to get attention.”

Civic leaders, churches and businesses declared their revulsion. The Universal Athletics Company replaced its billboard display on a busy thoroughfare with this message: “Not in Our Town! No Hate. No Violence.”

But the hatemongers returned. In December, they broke windows at two Jewish homes and two churches that displayed menorahs, shot bullets through windows at Billings Central Catholic High School and stomped and battered six vehicles at homes displaying menorahs, telling two owners in phone calls, “Go look at your car, Jew-lover.”

Too Many Targets to Hate

The spasm of hate created more resistance. Many more people put menorahs in their windows.

“It became physically impossible for the hate groups to harass and intimidate thousands and thousands of Billings citizens,” Chief Inman said.

On Dec. 10, about 100 people attended a Hanukkah service at Beth Aaron Synagogue. Outside, neighbors discreetly stood vigil in the dark.

The city is not proclaiming victory, but Chief Inman thinks the hate groups have backed off. No vandalism has occurred since the incidents in December, and the literature and the anonymous calls have diminished.

“I would hate to predict we have stopped the influence and impact of hate crimes, but something appears to be working,” he said.

A grimmer outlook comes from Clinton Spies, a former skinhead who did time for assault, armed robbery and burglary, and now runs a program to help youngsters leave racist groups. He said, “A year from now, we’re going to have racial assaults, vandalism, all kinds of violence.”

But Sheriff Charles Maxwell of Yellowstone County remains optimistic. “It may happen again,” he said. “But the reaction will remain the same.”

Six months later, Roger Rosenblatt of *The New York Times* visited Billings to see how the town was faring. After interviewing a number of townspeople, he noted that many in the community were reexamining their attitudes and beliefs as a result of the menorah campaign.

Wayne Inman admits that it took a long while for his own sense of social justice to develop. As a child in Plains [a small town in Montana], he saw no African Americans, no Jews and only a few Hispanic migrant workers. “We grew up calling blacks ‘niggers.’ It was as common as the sun coming up in the morning. Nobody ever confronted the issue. It was ‘normal.’ But when I got out into the larger world, I found that it wasn’t normal, or if it was normal, it should be opposed. When you have a person present, not just a word, you see that you’re talking about a human being whose skin is black. I saw that for myself. I saw the hurt and pain in his eyes. It became a very personal issue for me.”

People are also wondering if the strong community response to the Schnitzers would have been accorded a black or Hispanic family. The Schnitzers are Jewish, but they are also respected white, middle-class citizens. Some people feel that it was relatively painless for the community to rally behind them. Others simply believe that the timing of the menorah movement was propitious and that people were lucky to have a dramatic visual symbol to substitute for more layered, and perhaps more contradictory, thoughts.

Others wonder among themselves if the town was opposing violence or hatred.... In recent years, there have been more fights in bars and incidents of vandalism that have no connection with hate crimes. Like most cities, the town is fed up. Even a Gazette editorial titled “Violence Begets Violence” asked: “In the long run does it matter” whether the smashing of the high school “Happy Hanukkah” sign was a hate crime or vandalism?

And there is discussion, as well, about the difference between encouraging diversity in the community and opposing bigotry. Several evangelical churches did not participate in the menorah movement because it was led by the Human Rights Coalition, whose support of homosexual rights they do not endorse.... Once there was a visual act of bigotry, it was easy to get people involved,” [Kurt] Nelson says. “Personal tolerance is harder to achieve.”...

Sarah Anthony, a member of Human Rights Coalition, reflected on the struggle and why it matters to her. She told the reporter:

I believe in this community because of what it gives back to me. When someone tells a story of pain, a lot of people in Billings think, “Your pain is my pain.” And when people decide to alleviate someone’s pain, there’s something very serious happening. I can’t put my finger on it, but it’s there.

I mean, what have we done so far? Come up with a plan. Make a few phone calls. Put up menorahs. That’s all we did. Pretty simple stuff, actually. But you have to build the sentiment, to forge the real feeling that goes deep. We did something right here, and we will do it again if we have to. If we don’t, there are people who would break every window in Billings, and we would look in those windows and see ourselves.

“We did something right here, and we will do it again if we have to. If we don’t, there are people who would break every window in Billings, and we would look in those windows and see ourselves.”

CONNECTIONS

What lesson did Chief Inman learn from his experiences in Portland? How important was that lesson? How did he apply it to the antisemitism and racial incidents he encountered in Billings? How does he define the term *hate crime*? How do you define the term? After a rock was thrown through the window of a Vietnamese family’s home, Deputy Superintendent William Johnston of the Boston Police Department noted that the rock did more than shatter glass. It also shattered a family. What do you think he meant? How do his words apply to Billings? A video of his talk is available from the Facing History Resource Center.

Martin Niemoeller was a minister who voted for the Nazi party in 1933. By 1938, he was in a concentration camp. After the war, he is believed to have said, “In Germany, the Nazis came for the Communists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn’t

“speak up because I wasn’t a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn’t speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time there was no one to speak for me.” How do his remarks apply to Billings? To the community you live in? To communities you have read about or visited? An animated video entitled “The Hangman” is available from the Facing History Resource Center. It describes citizens who made choices similar to the ones Niemoeller describes.

What does the menorah movement suggest about the way people get involved? About the way one act leads to another and yet another? How does the menorah movement confirm Stacey Kabat’s observations about the slowness of progress? Chief Inman says that it took a long time for his “sense of social justice” to develop. What helps it develop? How necessary is it that a citizen have a sense of social justice?

Albert Camus, a French philosopher who resisted the Nazis during World War II, wrote: I know that the great tragedies of history often fascinate men with approaching horror. Paralyzed, they cannot make up their minds to do anything but wait. So they wait, and one day the Gorgon devours them. But I should like to convince you that the spell can be broken, that there is an illusion of impotence, that strength of heart, intelligence, and courage are enough to stop fate and sometimes reverse it.” How did the people of Billings break that “illusion of impotence”? What opportunities do you have to “stop fate and sometimes reverse it”?

What does Sarah Anthony mean when she says “We did something right here, and we will do it again if we have to. If we don’t, there are people who would break every window in Billings, and we would look in those windows and see ourselves”? Would she agree with Marian Wright Edelman’s belief that “the good people’s silence” can be “as damaging as the bad people’s actions”? With Stacey Kabat’s view that silence is not only “damaging” but also “dangerous”?

TRAINING FOR CITIZENSHIP

Carl Washington speaks not only to gang members but also to individuals who would never dream of joining a gang. He believes that it is as important to reach them as it is to reach those in gangs. As he told one reporter, “Everyone has a role to play. Everyone.” Alan Khazei and Michael Brown agree. They founded a community service program to encourage people to get involved.

“It is fundamental to human nature to want to get involved and make a difference, says Alan Khazei. Michael Brown expanded on that idea by pointing out, “We are the most diverse nation in the world. That’s both a strength and a challenge.” He maintains, “It is only by working in everybody’s interest that we can push the nation forward.”

In 1987, the year the two men graduated from Harvard Law School, they designed a year-long program that they called City Year. As Brown explained in an interview, “The idea behind City Year is to bring young people from diverse backgrounds—rich, middle class, and poor, from different city neighborhoods as well as from the suburbs—for one year to concentrate on what they have in common and to work for the common good.” To raise money for the project, they spent months seeking donations from private corporations and wealthy individuals.

Once they had enough money to set up a program, the men established guidelines. Recruits were to be between the ages of 17 and 22. Each was to have an “excellent attitude.” And each was expected to register to vote, obtain a library card, prepare a resume, complete a workshop on tax preparation, and if not already a high school graduate, earn a GED by the end of the year. For nine months of community service in the Boston area, each recruit would earn \$100 a week and a \$5,000 scholarship. The first year, 50 young people signed up. By 1992, there were 220 recruits.

After observing the program, Anthony Lewis, a columnist for *The New York Times*, wrote:

The Mason School in Roxbury, a largely black area of Boston, has problems typical of an inner-city school: not enough money, an old building, children who speak different languages. But it has a determined principal in Mary Russo, respected teachers and 10 young men and women helping out as aides. They come from a service group known as City Year.

One of the City Year aides, Lucius Graham, is in the first-grade classroom. Three children—Andrea, Shamekia and Alvin—hang on to him, hugging his legs. He talks with them, then goes to the corner and helps three girls paint T-shirts with colors that glow in the dark.

Lucius, 18 years old, dropped out of high school in the 11th grade, last year. “The school had too many problems,” he said. “You were labeled as part of a gang. I went every day with a weapon to protect

“The idea behind City Year is to bring young people from diverse backgrounds—rich, middle class, and poor, from different city neighborhoods as well as from the suburbs—for one year to concentrate on what they have in common and to work for the common good.”

myself.”

How did he end up in City Year, helping in the Mason School? “There was a City Year group building a little park in our neighborhood. The more I watched, the more I liked it.”

Now he is in high school equivalency classes that City Year offers its corps members. If he keeps up with the work, and most do, he will get a diploma.

Stephen Noltemy, 21, got his diploma that way, as a City Year corps member, and now teaches in the diploma program. He comes from South Boston, the white stronghold of working-class Boston. He was in trouble, in a halfway house, when he joined City Year.

“I didn’t care about too many things then,” Steve said. “I was angry, prejudiced, negative. I was less than zero.

“City Year saved my life. I don’t want to sell anything to you, but there it is. I like to wake up in the morning—know what I mean?”

One day last week I watched City Year at work and talked with staff and corps members. Like Steve Noltemy, I feel I should discount it and say I am not trying to sell anything. But what I saw was impressive, even moving—and quite without what I had been half afraid I would find, the aroma of do-goodism.

Daina Sutton, 19, had a baby in 1991 and dropped out of school. The father was arrested in June 1992.

“I really didn’t want to do anything,” she said. “Except I wanted to do something for my son. City Year wasn’t a big deal at first. Now it’s everything.”

The team Daina was on started by making a garden in a run-down area. Then she helped 225 school kids train at the Boston Ballet. Now the team is at a school in East Boston, giving an environmental curriculum it helped design: “basics like what to do with litter.”

“One of the people on my team was a rich white girl, Daina Sutton said. “I thought, I don’t want to be her welfare case. But we got really close.”

Diversity is a major theme of City Year. Teams are mixed in race, class, education. About a quarter of the 220 young people in the corps are dropouts, a third in college or on the way.

Black and white, rich and poor spoke of how daunting it had been at first to be with different people.

“It was not just skin color,” said Andre Berry, 20, a black corps member who is now on the staff as a team leader. “One girl on my team had a parent who was a brain surgeon! It was weird to me: Someone who’s got money—what’s she doing here? But she became one of my close friends.”

Lisa Schorr, 22, of Washington D.C., a graduate of Sidwell Friends School and Harvard, is a corps member this year. “I started out skeptical, she said. “I thought the diversity would be forced and superficial. But it isn’t.”

Diversity is a major theme of City Year.



Alan Khazei explained to Lewis why City Year works despite the initial skepticism. “The common ground is service. People have lost the sense that they can make a difference. Everything is so imposing: the homeless problem, drugs, the ghettos. What can I do as one person? This shows people that they can make a difference: bring life to a community under siege, build a playground, improve a school, rehab housing for the homeless.”

Michael Brown told another interviewer, “Essentially, City Year is a community of idealism.” A corps member said of his own experience:

City Year corp members work with elementary school students.



City Year has given me a chance to do something positive with my life. Before this year, I was in a gang, hanging out on street corners. This year, I worked as a teacher’s aide at the Blackstone School in my own neighborhood, I renovated green spaces in Chelsea, and organized my own project to work with elderly people. I want to always serve the community because this year I have seen that I can be a positive role model—that I can change other people’s lives the way City Year has changed mine.

City Year corp members clean up a neighborhood.



A young man from an affluent suburb near Boston agrees:

Being part of City Year has been an experience not to be matched anywhere. There are no neighborhoods, no workplaces, no social groups, no places anywhere, where such a diverse group of people work so closely together. I've learned a lot at City Year about Boston's neighborhoods and its problems. But I have learned the most from my teammates.

In 1990, Suzanne Goldsmith spent nine months with a team of City Year volunteers. Her team renovated a building, reclaimed a community garden from drug dealers, and organized a community street-cleaning day. She writes of the experience:

When I tell people about my time in City Year, they usually ask me what my teammates are doing now, and in their hopeful faces I can see an expectation that I will tell them dramatic success stories, uplifting tales of lives turned around through service. Listeners are sometimes disappointed to learn that one of my teammates is in jail, that one is unemployed, one now has an out-of-wedlock child, and one still struggles with his drug and alcohol abuse. I, too, have felt discouragement at the [paths the lives] of some of my former teammates [have taken] since leaving City Year.

But... life changes often happen slowly, incrementally. Small gains are sometimes more profound than they first appear. And seeds planted at one time may not bear fruit until a month, a year, or even ten years later.

After recounting the small but significant changes that have taken place in the lives of her teammates, Goldsmith recalls an exchange between two members of the team.

“We’re never going to all like each other,” Brendan said. “We’re just too different. We’re never even going to be able to work together!”

“Oh, yes, we will.” David replied. “I’m shooting for family.”

Families are not always the best model. They fight a lot, and sometimes within a family, dire things go wrong. But siblings can love each other even when they don’t like each other. And when something bad or good happens to the one, the others feel it. In a way, it happens to them all.

It was the same for us, the Reebok Team. Like a family, we became connected. For nine months we breathed the same dusty air, hefted the same tools, locked eyes across the same long pressure-treated boards. We tolerated the same hours, confronted the same obstacles, met the same people, relished the same successes, and suffered the same disappointments and losses. We made some small improvements in the city where we lived. We shared a history, an enterprise, a portion of each other’s lives. And because we value that history, we value each other....

Communities are not built of friends, or of groups of people with similar styles and tastes, or even of people who like and understand each other. They are built of people who feel they are part of something that is bigger than themselves: a shared goal or enterprise, like righting a wrong, or building a road, or raising children, or living honorably, or worshipping a god. To build community requires only the ability to see value in others; to look at them and see a potential partner in one’s enterprise.

“We shared a history, an enterprise, a portion of each other’s lives. And because we value that history, we value each other.”



National service offers an opportunity to create a sense of shared interest that crosses barriers of race, class, and culture—to create an understanding and respect for the essential humanity and individuality of others; a sense that trust and communication across racial and social boundaries are possible, and a willingness to try to open channels for that trust; a sense of optimism, that by putting our heads and hands to work, each of us has the power to effect change; a feeling of responsibility for one another....

Our triumphs as a group—the Reebok Team—were small. But multiply them: by ten, a hundred, or a hundred thousand. What if every seventeen-to-twenty-two-year-old could join a City Year? What if every neighborhood could have a crew of energetic youths come in and provide the human power to meet pressing needs? What if every inner-city school could have a team of “City Years”?

What if every young person could experience belonging to a group that included people like Earl, like Alison, like Charles and Amy, Jackie, Will, all sharing an identity and a motive for their days? What if every person who ran for public office had known a Tyrone [a teammate who was shot]? Had tried to teach a child with learning disabilities? Had cleaned a street and seen it littered the next day? Had dug a hole in earth that drug dealers trod at night and plunged his hands into the soil to plant a rose? What would that mean for our society as generations of City Year graduates grew up and took their places in the ranks of adult citizens?

CONNECTIONS

The founders of City Year are recipients of the Reebok Human Rights Award. How does their work further human rights?

Sociologist David Schoem believes that as a result of isolation among ethnic and racial groups, we learn “to place heavy reliance on stereotypes, gossip, rumor, and fear to shape our lack of knowledge.” To what extent does City Year break the barriers that exist between individuals from different racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds? How might City Year serve as a model for other communities, including your own?

Suzanne Goldsmith writes that “life changes often happen slowly, incrementally. Small gains are sometimes more profound than they first appear. And seeds planted at one time may not bear fruit until a month, a year, or even ten years later.” Give an example of a small gain you have made that is more profound than it first appeared to be.

How would you answer the questions Suzanne Goldsmith raises at the end of her book? Would it make a difference if everyone took part in a community

service project? If you were to design the ideal one, what would it be like? What issues would it tackle? How would it address those issues? How would it build a sense of common purpose among participants?

When Arn Chorn returned to Cambodia in 1992 to found a community service program for the city of Phnom Penh, he modeled it after City Year. Why do you think he and others see community service as an important step toward democracy?

THE HABIT OF CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

“We make a change in our community. And it’s not something you see overnight, but it’s something that you see over years. And we make a change. So that’s what I think you do when you’re angry is you try to make a change.”

In reflecting on the wrongs she would like to right, Winona LaDuke says, “In my experience, hoping someone else will take care of [the problem] does not get you too far. It’s better to try to do what you can yourself. I can’t do every thing. I can only do some things, but there’s a lot of people who have a little bit of skill or have a little thing they can do.” In her view, if everyone does his or her share, “We make a change in our community. And it’s not something you see overnight, but it’s something that you see over years. And we make a change. So that’s what I think you do when you’re angry is you try to make a change.”

Winona LaDuke is not alone in believing that changes do not happen overnight. Others are also convinced that one small step leads to another and yet another. Seventeen-year-old Holly Haynes expressed a similar view in an interview:

My mom encouraged me because she would see people on TV, like working in soup kitchens. She would say, “We really don’t have money to do stuff, but we have all this spare time. We should volunteer.” So she called up a nursing home—my mom always starts things for me [*laughing*—and I went in. I would talk to the patients and stuff like that. Later, I started volunteering at the hospital. I would work on the surgical floors maybe, do little errands for the nurses, or maybe restock blood. And I would talk with the patients and help with feeding the patients if they couldn’t feed themselves.

My most memorable volunteer experience was in the nursery, where I volunteered the most. What I did was rock the babies if they were crying, change them, feed them, bring them up to their mothers. When the doctors were there, I would help hold them or quiet them down. And I’m really glad that I did that because I got a lot of self-satisfaction out of it because I enjoy helping people. The reward is there when they smile back at you. It makes me feel so good about myself.

When asked if she believes she can make a difference, Haynes insists she can and does: “I’m not talking about like, I’m going to win a Nobel Prize or something, but just work within one community, a small community that nobody’s heard of, or just one person’s life. I could do something like that.”

Holly Haynes lives with her mother and grandparents in a middle-class suburb of Chicago. A young woman that writer Jane Bode calls “Keisha” makes her home with her mother and four brothers nearly 1000 miles away, in New York City. Over the years, Keisha’s family has lived in rat-infested apartments, a shelter for the homeless, and a “welfare hotel.”

When Keisha was 13, she decided to become a writer. So she paid a visit to a weekly newspaper a few blocks from the place she was then living. She told a woman who worked there her dream. Keisha recalls:

She said, "This is a joke, right?"

"I'm serious," I told her.

"Look, sweetheart," she said, "how old are you?"

"I'm thirteen."

"Where do you live?"

"Down the street."

"At the Hotel Imperial?"

I was embarrassed to have people know I lived there, but I said, "Yes."

"Well, we're starting a program for homeless kids."

"I'm not homeless," I said. I just live in temporary housing."

After she told me I had a smart mouth, she said the newspaper and some neighborhood people were starting a program to take back a park from drug dealers. They would teach me to help round up little kids, go to the park, and counsel them about drugs, sexual assault, that kind of thing.

"But does that have anything to do with writing?"

"We might do some articles about it," she said.

"I'll be there."

I loved it! My first paying job and the beginning of my career! I was so excited.... You need positive things in your life. You need to be able to say: "I did that kids' workshop and, damn, it went well." You need things you can brag about inside yourself. Things to soup up your mind, to keep you going.

"You need positive things in your life. You need to be able to say: 'I did that kids' workshop and, damn, it went well.' You need things you can brag about inside yourself. Things to soup up your mind, to keep you going."

Eighteen months later, Keisha's family moved to another part of the city. Her job came to an end but the habit of helping others continued. She told the interviewer:

The apartment is on a block with abandoned buildings, a Chinese carry-out, two empty lots, and dealers. It doesn't matter. I'm busy with my life. After school, now, I volunteer at a community center. I help little kids with their homework and watch them play.

I walk in and smile at them. They say, "What are you smiling at us for? See something funny?" "No," I say, I want you to smile back." Too many kids have sad faces. I think when you smile, you feel happier. When you don't you start frowning on the inside, too.

I tell them, "Sad things happen, but they don't need to bring you down. Let's think about something that was funny, like the day you fell up the stairs."

The kids used to think I'm crazy. Now they say, "Keisha, it *works!*"

CONNECTIONS

Keisha says of herself, “If I have to do bad things to be in the *in* crowd, forget it. I won’t do those things to get someone to like me. What I do instead is find people who like me for who I am. Part of life is that you have to make decisions. You can’t just sit back and let life happen to you.” In what respects is Holly Haynes’s attitude similar to Keisha’s? What other qualities do the two girls share?

Interview people at your school who are in the habit of volunteering. How did they acquire the habit? How did they become involved? What part did mentors or role models play in their decision to help? Compare their stories with those of Holly and Keisha. What similarities seem most striking? For more on volunteerism, see *Choosing to Participate*.

“When you do the right thing, the difficult thing, you do it in the hope that it will do others some good, but also in the knowledge that if it doesn’t, at least you will be able to look at yourself in the mirror.”

In some Facing History classes, students are asked to choose a service project to link their study of the past with a social issue in their community today. One California student chose to work on a recycling project. In a paper explaining her choice, she wrote:

The Holocaust teaches many lessons. One of them is that when you do the right thing, you still may not be able to prevent tragedy.... When you do the right thing, the difficult thing, you do it in the hope that it will do others some good, but also in the knowledge that if it doesn’t, at least you will be able to look at yourself in the mirror ... No one could imagine anything worse than each unfolding stage of the Holocaust. So it was in some ways a failure of people’s imagination that escorted them to tragedy. I can imagine terrible things about our future if toxic waste is ignored. Because of this course... I can imagine... so I will try to do the right thing.

How are the student’s reasons for participating similar to Holly’s? Keisha’s? How do the student’s decisions differ from theirs? To what extent do all three reflect Bill Moyers belief “that we can never look at creativity in terms simply of what goes on in a person, but what’s occurring is always a process connecting that person with the world”?

INVENTING ONE'S HUMANITY

Bill Moyers believes that “it is not a scientifically certifiable fact that with each child born into the world comes the potential to create. It is rather a statement of faith. But I can’t imagine any declaration more important for our society to make.” As part of his commitment to that declaration of faith, Arn Chorn Pond helped found the Children of War. It brings together teens from wartorn countries around the world. As they tour cities in the United States, they share their stories in the hope that they will inspire people to join together and stop the violence.

When Arn Chorn speaks of stopping the violence, he is not referring just to the place he lives. He defines the word *community* more broadly. So does pianist Marc Ponthus. In 1995, he raised money to bring a young Bosnian musician to Boston to study. Ponthus explained to a reporter why he is committed not only to helping her but also to playing concerts in war-torn cities like Sarajevo.

“For me, art is about inventing one’s humanity; it is not an escape from life.”

I have always been looking for contexts where art and music have a place which is meaningful. Too often people in America and in Europe live in a sleeping democracy; they do not think they need art to define their humanity, which is the reason why they are not awake and vibrant to what is going on around them in Bosnia, or Rwanda, or Chechnya—the deterioration of the human spirit we see there. For me, art is about inventing one’s humanity; it is not an escape from life. For me it was important to go into a place where people have to reach to their very limits just in order to survive; they must define their sense of self and of their relationship to the world or they have no reason to want to survive. Food and water are not enough for people to survive. In Sarajevo, I met people who were passionately interested in art, because it gave them a reason to attempt to continue living; some other people resented very much my being there, and I can understand that, too.

Ponthus went on to say that he considers “it part of my responsibility as a musician to involve myself in these situations; I must take some political responsibility—I went there to play, but I also wrote articles about it when I came back.” Russell Sherman, also a pianist, described the risks Ponthus took to bring music to Sarajevo.

What Marc wouldn’t want to tell you is how dangerous all of this was. The car he was riding in was shot at and it crashed; to leave he took a nine-hour jeep ride to travel a distance that usually takes only an hour. It took a great deal of personal courage to do what he did. One of the reasons he has become such a strong presence in my life and in the lives of my students is that he really represents the artist who takes part, who shows up.

CONNECTIONS

In honoring the memory of poet Robert Frost, President John F. Kennedy said that artists play a special role in a society. They contribute “not to our size [as a nation] but to our spirit; not to our political beliefs but to our insight; not to our self-esteem but to our self-comprehension.” He went on to say that “the nation which disdains the mission of art” invites the fate of the hired hand in one of Frost’s most famous poems—“the fate of having nothing to look backward to with pride and nothing to look forward to with hope.” How does Marc Ponthus reflect that view of the artist as citizen?

What does Ponthus mean when he says that “art is about inventing one’s humanity; it is not an escape from life”? What is the relationship between art and humanity? How does that relationship affect the way Ponthus defines his community? Whom he regards as his neighbors? What does he suggest is the role of a citizen in a democracy? Of an artist who is a citizen in a democracy?

In the early 1990s, Elie Wiesel, a writer and a survivor of the Holocaust, traveled to war-torn countries around the world to call attention to violations of human rights. Shortly after he returned from one such mission, he was asked why students should care about events in distant places. In response, he told them:

It is because of you I went to Sarajevo. Have you seen pictures of emaciated children in Somalia? And of wandering orphans in Sarajevo? Look at them. If they don’t move you to rage or compassion, look at them again.

I know: You will say, “What can we do about them? If great powers and the United Nations are helpless, what impact could our response have on their fate?”

Your question is valid but its implicit conclusion is not. From past experience we have learned that whenever people speak up on behalf of their more unfortunate fellow human beings, their protest does have an effect.... But even if our efforts left the tormentors indifferent, they would still be fruitful, for they bring comfort and consolation to their victims.

In other words: It may very well be that you are powerless to change the course of history on a decision-making level but it is incumbent upon you to improve the psychological condition of those who suffer...

Find a way, any way, to give voice to your outrage at the young racists in Germany, to your abhorrence of bigotry on our own streets, to your solidarity with the prisoners in former Yugoslavia and to your determination to combat hunger in Somalia.

Do not tell me you are voiceless.... There are adolescents in Somalia who will die if help does not arrive soon. They are younger than you.

It is because of young students like you—and for you—that I went to Sarajevo.

How does Elie Wiesel seem to define the word *community*? *Citizen*? How are his definitions similar to those of Marc Ponthus? To those of Arn Chorn Pond? What differences seem most striking? How do you account for those differences?

Building a civil society has been called the greatest challenge of our century. Civility, in the words of Benjamin Barber, requires the ability “to participate in democratic communities, the ability to think critically and act with deliberation in a pluralistic world, and the empathy to identify sufficiently with others to live with them despite conflicts of interest and differences in character.” How do efforts like Ponthus’s foster civility? You may want to research other individuals and groups that reach beyond national borders. Possibilities include Amnesty International, Doctors Without Borders, and Habitat for Humanity. How do such groups define the word *community*? The word *citizen*?

NON PROFIT RESOURCE CENTERS SERVING YOUNG PEOPLE

Listed below are a few national organizations that provide opportunities for young people to participate. There are many others in every community. Consult your public library or city hall for the names of voluntary associations in your community.

Amnesty International USA works to free prisoners of conscience; ensure fair and prompt trials for political prisoners; abolish the death penalty, torture and other cruel treatment of prisoners; and end extrajudicial executions and “disappearances.” Student groups in about 2,000 high school and colleges help Amnesty International with its mission. The organization’s headquarters are located at 322 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10001. The phone number is (212) 807-8400.

City Year – a service organization that promotes national service at the grass roots level. City Year accepts young people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic levels in a growing number of cities across the country. City Year’s main headquarters are located at 11 Stillings Street, Boston, MA 02210. The phone number is (617) 451-0699.

Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) seeks to instill an understanding of citizenship through an exploration of the values expressed in the Constitution and its Bill of Rights. A wide range of law-related, business, citizenship and youth leadership programs and publications emphasize challenging content and student interaction and involvement in the classroom, school and community. CRF is located at 601 South Kingsley Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90005. The number is (213) 487-5590.

Facing History and Ourselves Young Leadership Network unites a diverse group of individuals interested in issues of social justice and community participation. The group provides forums for discussion and develops programs that enhance Facing History’s mission. For information, contact Facing History’s national headquarters at 16 Hurd Road, Brookline, MA 02445 or call (617) 232-1595.

Habitat for Humanity uses volunteers to build low-cost houses for families that might not otherwise be able to afford their own homes in communities across the nation. The organization’s headquarters are located at 121 Habitat Street, Americus, GA 31709. The phone number is (912) 924-6935.

The National Conference (formerly National Conference of Christians and Jews) is dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry, and racism. The National Conference promotes understanding and respect through advocacy, conflict resolution and education. The National Conference's headquarters are located at 71 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003. Call (800) 352-6225 for more information.

United Way Volunteer Center is committed to the promotion of volunteerism. It identifies a community's needs, recruits and refers volunteers, and provides training and networking opportunities for volunteer directors. The Center is located at 424 West Superior Street, Suite 402, Duluth, MN 55802. The number is (218) 726-4776. For information about similar centers across the nation, contact the Points of Light Foundation at (202) 223-9186.

Volunteers in Action (VIA) provides information and placement services. VIA aids organizations interested in developing a volunteer program as well as individuals eager to volunteer. VIA is located at 168 Broad Street, Providence, RI 02903. The phone number is (401) 421-6547.

Youth Service America is an advocate and clearing house for youth service programs (ages 17-24) across the country. YSA seeks to strengthen collaborative relationships among organizations in the youth service field. YSA provides affiliates with networking, public relations, information sharing, legislative updates and fundraising sources and strategies. It is located at 810 18th Street, NW, Suite 705, Washington, DC 20006. The number is (202) 783-8855.

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