Larry Blum

NOMOS XLIII

Yearbook of the American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy

MORAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

Edited by

Stephen Macedo, *Princeton University*
and
Yael Tamir, *Tel Aviv University*



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS • *New York and London*

1

CIVIC MINIMALISM, COSMOPOLITANISM, AND PATRIOTISM: WHERE DOES DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION STAND IN RELATION TO EACH?

AMY GUTMANN

Defenders of democratic education argue that democratic governments should publicly subsidize and mandate schooling that tries to prepare students for exercising their civil, political, and social rights and responsibilities. They also argue that democratic governments can and should do this consistently with respecting parental authority to educate their children in their family and in other civic associations of their choice. Parents may also choose private schools that supplement but do not supplant the requirements of civic education.[1]

Some critics charge that democratic education is too demanding and others that it is not demanding enough. Defenders of civic minimalism argue that the civic educational requirements imposed by governments must be minimal so that parental control over children's education can be close to comprehensive. Democratic education is unjust insofar as it imposes educational requirements that exceed what critics call the civic minimum.

In contrast to civic minimalists who argue that democratic education is too demanding of parents, cosmopolitans suggest that democratic education is not demanding enough of citizens, educators, and parents. Whereas civic minimalists challenge democratic education from the perspective of "familial reproduction,"[2] cosmopolitans challenge it from the perspective of cultivating "citizens of the world."[3] Democratic education, cosmopolitans charge, mistakenly focuses on cultivating the skills and virtues of citizenship specific to a single country. A morally good education should aim to educate citizens of the world. Still worse than educating citizens of a single country, according to cosmopolitans, would be educating unreflective patriots. What is the relationship of democratic education to the claims of cosmopolitanism and patriotism? Does democratic education aim to educate cosmopolitans or patriots, neither, or both?

In this essay, I examine the relationship between democratic education, understood as an ideal, and civic minimalism, cosmopolitanism, and patriotism. Civic minimalism, on close scrutiny, does not offer either a substantive or formally coherent challenge to democratic education. The challenge of civic minimalism turns out to be either empty or self-defeating. The challenge of cosmopolitanism, by contrast, is substantive and formally coherent. Democratic education is compatible with a kind of cosmopolitanism, but the kind—egalitarian cosmopolitanism—should not be confused with cosmopolitanism in all its forms. Democratic education is also compatible with a kind of patriotism, but not with a kind that advocates unqualified love and devotion to country. Democratic education is compatible with educating patriots who love their country because—and to the extent that—it makes liberty and justice possible. But democratic education makes neither cosmopolitanism nor patriotism morally mandatory. It recognizes that there are multiple self-identifications that are compatible with being a moral person and living in a way that is compatible with liberty and justice for all.

The response of democratic education to the challenges of civic minimalism, cosmopolitanism, and patriotism suggests its strength as a publicly defensible philosophy. In the first part of this essay, I argue that civic education need not be minimal to be justified to democratic citizens. Democratic education is more

defensible both in form and in content than civic minimalism. Democratic education does not make the mistake of confusing the basic rights of parents with the power to deny children an education adequate to exercising their basic rights and responsibilities as free and equal citizens. In the second part of this essay, I argue that democratic education should welcome the kind of cosmopolitanism and patriotism committed to treating all people, regardless of their citizenship, as free and equal beings. But cosmopolitanism and patriotism per se do not necessarily entail such a commitment. We therefore need to define a particular interpretation of cosmopolitanism, egalitarian cosmopolitanism, and a particular interpretation of patriotism, republican patriotism. And we also need to rid these "isms" of their exclusivist claims to being the only morally right modes of self-identification.

Before I consider the challenges of civic minimalism, cosmopolitanism, and patriotism, I should briefly characterize the perspective of democratic education. At the core of the democratic ideal that informs democratic education is a commitment to treating adults as free and equal beings, and therefore to educating children so that they become free and equal beings, and so that they can relate to one another as citizens as such. Free and equal beings should offer one another morally defensible reasons for the laws that mutually bind them.[4] A deliberative conception of democracy highlights this ideal of reciprocal reason giving, but the ideal is not unique to deliberative democracy. All defensible conceptions of democracy underscore the importance of a universally available education that develops the capacity to deliberate among adults who should treat one another and be treated as civic equals. Deliberative accountability and decision making (including the decision not to deliberate about some matters) presuppose a citizenry whose education prepares them to deliberate, to evaluate the results of the deliberations of their representatives, and thereby to hold their representatives accountable. A primary aim of publicly mandated schooling is therefore to cultivate the skills and virtues of deliberation. Prominent among the deliberative virtues is the ability to think, reason, and discuss public matters publicly.

Why should deliberation be considered primary when the opportunity for most citizens to live a good life today requires many

more basic skills than public deliberation? The capacity to deliberate about civic matters presupposes many other skills and virtues, a bundle that certainly includes the basics of literacy and numeracy. But just as certainly literacy and numeracy are not enough. The basic liberties and opportunities of individuals and their collective capacity to pursue justice also rest on virtues such as veracity, nonviolence, practical judgment, civic integrity, and civic magnanimity.[5] By cultivating these and other deliberative skills and virtues, a democratic society treats its members as free and equal citizens, rather than (more simply but less justifiably) as deferential subjects or self-interested individualists.

The willingness to deliberate about mutually binding matters distinguishes democratic citizens from self-interested individualists who argue merely to advance their own interests and deferential citizens who turn themselves into passive subjects by failing to argue, out of deference to political authority. Justice is far more likely to be served by democratic citizens who reason together in search of mutually justifiable decisions than by people who are not interested in politics or interested in it only for the sake of power. Even when deliberative citizens continue to disagree, as they often will, their effort to reach mutually justifiable decisions manifests mutual respect, which is itself a civic good. Because ongoing disagreement among reasonable people of good will is inevitable in any free society, mutual respect is an important virtue. Good-willed deliberation manifests mutual respect; it demonstrates a good faith effort to find mutually acceptable terms of social cooperation, not merely terms that are acceptable only to the most powerful, or for that matter to the most articulate.

If civic education should aim to cultivate the deliberative skills and virtues of democratic citizenship, it does not follow that these skills and virtues should be the focus of all educators of children. Outside of schooling, parents are and should remain the primary educators of their children. Parents should not be constrained to focus their educational efforts on preparing their children to become citizens or cosmopolitans. Civic education that is publicly mandated is all the more justifiable in a constitutional democracy where educational authority is divided among parents, citizens, and professional educators. I turn now to the challenges, first of civic minimalism, and then of cosmopolitanism and patriotism.[6]

I. Civic Minimalism or Democratic Education?

In a "parentalist manifesto," Stephen Gilles argues that the authority of parents over the schooling of their children should be treated in the same way as their custodial authority:

> States do not substitute their judgments for parental ones when it comes to nourishing or nurturing children; they assert the narrower power to condemn some parents' conduct as inconsistent with any reasonable conception of good nourishment or nurturing.[7]

Analogously, civic minimalists argue, states may outlaw certain clearly unreasonable educational practices but they must otherwise support the preferences of parents with regard to their own children's schooling. Civic minimalism says that the requirements of publicly mandated (and subsidized) education must be minimal so that parental authority over the schooling of their own children may be correspondingly maximal.

A major attraction of civic minimalism, most advocates argue, is that by virtue of minimizing the civic component of schooling, it can resolve the problem of achieving a consensus about civic education under conditions of reasonable pluralism. Parents can decide for their own children how best to interpret the demands of civic education, its ends as well as its means above the mandatory minimum. Democratic disagreement over public schooling can thereby be minimized.

But what are the minimal requirements of civic education? Like ordinary people, philosophers disagree about what the civic purposes of schooling should be. Disagreement per se is no reason for abandoning our efforts to develop and defend a conception of civic education. Quite the contrary. Within a democratic society, the project of defending a conception of the public purposes of schooling is all the more important in the face of reasonable disagreement. The theoretical and practical alternative to publicly defending a controversial conception is imposing one without defending it.

The fact of disagreement per se does not favor a minimalist position over a maximalist position or over a moderate set of requirements for civic education. Civic minimalists argue that the publicly mandated requirements of civic education in schools must be minimal for two reasons: to diminish democratic disagreement and to increase parental control over schooling. Requiring anything more than the civic minimum, they claim, constitutes an illegitimate exercise of political authority on the part of citizens, and therefore should be constitutionally prohibited.[8] A prohibition on publicly imposing more than a minimum set of requirements on schools does not follow from the fact of disagreement over what constitutes a good civic education in schools, even though civic minimalists often argue as if it does.

Civic minimalism is at least as controversial a position as democratic education. Democratic education gives citizens the discretion to mandate more than a civic minimum. Civic minimalism prohibits citizens from mandating more than the civic minimum. The ideal underlying civic minimalism is therefore more plausibly a defense of near-comprehensive parental control over education, including the publicly subsidized schooling of children, rather than an avoidance of public controversy. A defense of civic minimalism is almost always accompanied by a defense of parental choice over schools, often through a voucher system. Many civic minimalists argue that the government should give every set of parents a stipend to use at the school of their choice, public or private, secular or religious. Some civic minimalists do not defend vouchers but argue that dissenting parents, especially those parents who dissent on religious grounds, should be exempted from any educational requirement that cannot be demonstrated to be a necessary part of the civic minimum.

Civic minimalism thereby tries to amalgamate near-comprehensive parental authority with a minimalist civic education. Civic educational requirements are justifiable if but only if they do not exceed the minimum. Beyond the minimal requirements, parental authority must be supreme. Is civic minimalism a defensible alternative to democratic education, which permits democratic governments to mandate more than the civic minimum and thereby to limit parental authority correspondingly?

Let's consider the different implications of the two perspectives in the context of American constitutional democracy. Some school districts in the United States support standards of civic education that civic minimalists say are above and beyond the civic minimum. A school district in Tennessee, for example, teaches elementary school students from basic reading texts that expose them to the idea that boys as well as girls can enjoy cooking. One story reads: "Pat reads to Jim. Jim cooks. The big book helps Jim. Jim has fun."[9] Civic minimalists deny democratic citizens the discretion to require this reading if a student's parents object. Judges should overrule the teaching in the name of the constitutional right of parents to determine all parts of their children's education, including their schooling at public expense, except the civic minimum. (Note that whereas democratic education permits but does not require any school district to mandate this curriculum, civic minimalism requires that no school district mandate the curriculum. A position that recommends but does not require a civic minimum is therefore inconsistent with civic minimalism.)

Whereas civic minimalism authorizes, indeed requires, judges to override any democratic decision that enforces more than the civic minimum, democratic education grants democratic governments discretion over how to interpret the demands of civic education, provided the demands are not discriminatory or repressive. Parents do not have a general right to override otherwise legitimate democratic decisions concerning the schooling of their children.[10] But why, civic minimalists might ask, are democratic decisions to mandate more than the civic minimum legitimate?

Civic minimalists offer a grab bag of reasons for challenging the idea that there is a range of democratic discretion over civic education. One recurring reason is that "the child belongs to its parents." In *Democratic Education*, I criticize this idea, upon which civic minimalists rely when all else fails.[11] Children are no more the mere creatures of their parents than they are the mere creatures of the state. Moreover, claiming that children belong to their parents proves too much for civic minimalism, since the claim leaves no principled room for mandating a civic minimum.

The second recurring argument offered by civic minimalism against democratic discretion is that it opens the door to heated

public debates over schooling, which could be settled simply by ceding parents the right to decide how to educate their own children (over and above the civic minimum). For civic minimalism to be preferable to democratic education on this ground, however, we must believe that avoiding heated public debates is an overriding value (which it is not, in light of the possibility of settling heated public debates by instituting injustice). But if for the sake of argument we set aside the (important) issue of the value of avoiding argument in a democracy, civic minimalists still would need to show that their position is distinctively capable of avoiding heated public debate. To do this, they need to persuade democratic citizens that the civic minimum as they substantively understand it—and nothing more than the civic minimum as they substantively understand it—may limit parental authority. Civic minimalists have failed to do so, and they are probably bound to fail for several reasons.

First, competing conceptions of the civic minimum itself are reasonably contestable. Some of the reasonable conceptions will be more minimal than others, and there is no logical or moral sense to the claim that the most minimal is the constitutionally correct interpretation of the civic minimum. Not surprisingly, civic minimalists themselves disagree on what counts as the civic minimum. Deciding in theory to institute civic minimalism will not close the door to heated public debates over schooling.

Second, reasonable contestation about the content of public schooling is not limited to debates among civic minimalists. Not only civic minimalists reasonably disagree among themselves. Critics of civic minimalism also reasonably disagree with them about whether citizens must be constrained by a civic minimum. Civic minimalists cannot therefore credibly promise that their conception of schooling is the key to ending heated public debates over schooling.

Suppose some citizens at a school board meeting argue that mandating reading texts that teach children about gender equality is within the legitimate authority of their public schools even though a civic minimum might be less demanding of students. Civic minimalists offer no compelling reason why it should be beyond democratic disagreement for citizens to claim the constitutional right to legislate more than what they claim to be the correct civic minimum. Who in a constitutional democracy has the legitimate authority to impose a reasonably contestable conception of a civic minimum on publicly subsidized schools in the face of such deliberative disagreement? To this question advocates of democratic education defend their answer, that citizens and their accountable representatives have this legitimate authority provided they do not use it in a way that is repressive or discriminatory.[12] Civic minimalists do not defend their answer because they resist the most logical and morally consistent answer: citizens and their accountable representatives have the legitimate authority to choose among reasonably contestable conceptions of the civic minimum, of which there are many, including many (such as teaching gender equality) that many civic minimalists refuse to recognize as reasonable.

Suppose civic minimalists grant that democratic governments may decide among reasonably contestable conceptions of the civic minimum, including those to which some parents object, as some parents objected to the Tennessee school district's assignment of the story showing Jim cooking while Pat read to him from the cookbook. If civic minimalism opened itself to citizens' collectively deciding upon a civic minimum for their school districts, then civic minimalism would be far more compatible with democratic education. On this understanding, civic minimalism is no longer a challenge to democratic authority over civic education within any reasonable understanding of the civic minimum. Democratic education certainly authorizes citizens to decide among competing conceptions of the civic minimum. (It authorizes more discretion than this, within the principled constraints of non-discrimination and non-repression, but this discretion—as I will soon show—can credibly be translated into an interpretation of the civic minimum.)

Some of the requirements of civic education that citizens reasonably propose may not present themselves as "minimalist." (It is not clear why they should be required to present themselves as minimalist, but let's set this problem aside for the moment.) Some requirements will be more demanding of schools than others. But the demands—by the very terms of democratic education—are all likely to be made, and credibly so, in the name of civic education. Each competing conception of the requirements

of civic education may be interpreted without distortion as the "minimally justifiable requirements for educating free and equal citizens." One thing to be said in favor of making arguments for civic education in the name of a "civic minimum" is that arguing in these terms may help place some self-restraint on citizens—not to claim more authority over publicly subsidized schooling than civic education *requires*. But there is also something to be said on the other side: Why limit citizens to instituting just the minimum necessary for civic education?

If what civic minimalists are seeking is self-restraint on the part of citizens so that democratic governments do not overstep the boundaries of their legitimate authority, then they should say so and present a more defensible understanding of the legitimate authority of democratic governments. Advocates of democratic education and civic minimalists presumably share the aim of defending mutually justifiable institutions and policies. Civic minimalists have not justified requiring citizens to support only the most minimal form of civic education in schools at public expense. Furthermore, civic minimalists have yet to offer a defensible account of what the most minimal form of civic education would be.

In order to avoid emptiness—to be a real alternative to democratic education that makes good on its claim that democratic citizens have no right to mandate a civic education above the minimum—civic minimalists need to specify what the civic minimum is and why. Without a substantive defense of a specific civic minimum, civic minimalism becomes a hollow conception into which everyone can insert a reasonable understanding of civic education and credibly call it the civic minimum. Alternatively, citizens can reasonably resist being bound by civic minimalism. Civic minimalists offer no good reason for citizens to be bound by the civic minimum since it is so lacking in content, on the one hand, and in constitutionally mandated legitimacy, on the other.

Civic minimalists repeatedly criticize conceptions of democratic education for being controversial and for claiming to justify the imposition of controversial curricula on unwilling parents. But civic minimalists cannot take the avoidance of controversy or the imposition of a curriculum on unwilling parents to be a criterion of justification without rendering their own conception of the civic minimum self-defeating. If civic minimalism cannot be given substantive content, it is hollow, and not a real alternative to democratic education.

But what happens when civic minimalists specify a substantive conception? Some defend no more than the 3R's (and then argue about the minimum amount of reading, writing, and arithmetic that is adequate for citizenship). Others defend teaching toleration as well as basic skills. Still others defend teaching racial and gender nondiscrimination, mutual respect, and other virtues of democratic citizenship. For civic minimalism to avoid emptiness, it must be substantive, and substantive conceptions of the civic minimum are subject to the same sort of reasonable disagreement that minimalists invoke as reason to oppose democratic education.

Since civic minimalists fail to justify the comprehensive educational authority of parents over their children, they cannot claim legitimacy for the most minimal conception of civic minimalism. And even if they could, they would still reasonably disagree about what the most minimal conception is. On its own terms, a conception of civic minimalism must require neither less nor more education than what democratic citizenship demands. Choosing the most minimal of the controversial conceptions is therefore not a defensible default position. Any substantive conception of the civic minimum will impose something controversial on some unwilling parents, and there is no good reason (even internal to civic minimalism) to claim that the conception that imposes the least on the fewest parents is the best. By its own terms of avoiding controversy and not imposing any controversial requirements on parents, a civic minimalism that avoids being hollow (and therefore no real alternative to democratic education) becomes self-defeating (and therefore no real alternative either).

Can civic minimalism be made more defensible than this? A prominent defense of parental choice, by John Chubb and Terry Moe, argues that it is "not built to enable the imposition of higher-order values on the schools, nor is it driven by a democratic struggle to exercise public authority."[13] Can civic minimalism do without imposing "higher-order values" on schools? Only if it does not say what constitutes a school entitled to public subsidy or accreditation. Why should citizens mandate schooling for

all children if they are constitutionally forbidden to require that schooling have the civic content that they believe is necessary for democratic education? If citizens are constitutionally entitled to expect some civic content from schooling, then they are authorized to impose some values on schools.

Suppose the Constitution were amended (or radically reinterpreted) to conform to the mandate of civic minimalism. Let's imagine that as of today citizens are constitutionally forbidden to impose any values on schools, but they are still permitted to give parents the means to educate their own children as they choose. Under these conditions, it makes far more sense for citizens to mandate a general subsidy to parents for child support, which would let parents decide how to spend it on their children. If publicly subsidized schooling cannot have any publicly mandated content, it ceases to make sense as a public good. Civic minimalism implicitly concedes this much by mandating a civic minimum. But civic minimalists like Gilles, Chubb, and Moe take away what they concede: they empty the civic minimum of substantive content in order to advocate near-comprehensive parental authority over schooling that is publicly mandated and subsidized.

Civic minimalism cannot have it both ways. A parental choice plan must satisfy some standard of mandatory schooling to be publicly defensible. Civic minimalists therefore must call for some public oversight over publicly subsidized schools to ensure that schools satisfy the mandatory standards of schooling. Otherwise, a parental choice plan could not even identify what counts as a school for the purpose of satisfying the civic minimum. To avoid being empty, the minimum must be given content. Once given content, it is subject to the very same critique that Chubb and Moe direct against democratic education: a parental choice plan establishes values to be imposed on schools that are to count as legitimate recipients of public tax dollars, and those values are controversial. Not all citizens or parents accept them. The critique makes civic minimalism self-defeating. Civic minimalists would therefore do well to de-escalate their rhetoric.

Might civic minimalism be defended on grounds that a more minimal set of requirements for civic education is likely to be less controversial and therefore better able to achieve a social consensus about schooling? It would be relatively easy, I assume, to reach a social consensus in the United States today on a positive program of permitting states to mandate a very minimal set of requirements, such as the 3R's. But what is distinctive about civic minimalism is not its attempt to justify a minimal set of civic educational requirements. What is distinctive about civic minimalism is its negative program, *which forbids citizens and their accountable representatives to mandate anything more than the civic minimum* (in the case we are considering, anything more than the 3R's). This negative program—which amounts to a prohibition on any public authority mandating anything more than the minimum—is at least as controversial as its opposite, leaving citizens and their accountable representatives with the discretion to mandate more than the minimum. Mandating civic minimalism would entail *constitutionally prohibiting* citizens from requiring any more of schools than teaching the 3R's, or some other clearly specified minimum. This is probably more rather than less controversial than the claims of democratic education. And it is not a morally neutral or defensible default position. (No position is.)

To be a defensible alternative to democratic education, civic minimalism must publicly justify denying citizens the legitimate authority to mandate more than a specific civic minimum. I have suggested that civic minimalists have yet to offer such a justification; the arguments they have offered render civic minimalism either empty or self-defeating. If civic minimalism, as I have argued, cannot publicly justify the constitutional restriction of public authority and the correlatively broad parental right over publicly subsidized schooling, then it ceases to be an alternative to democratic education. Citizens and public officials are welcome to defend their conception of a civic minimum as the best educational option to institute within a system of democratic education. But so presented, civic minimalism is not an alternative to democratic education but an alternative for democratic citizens to consider within a system of democratic education.

What would a system of democratic education look like that makes room for this alternative to be considered within it? I offer only a brief sketch here to highlight some of the similarities and differences with civic minimalism. (In *Democratic Education*, I offer more details and a more systematic defense.) Democratic

education defends decentralization and diversity among public and private, religious and secular schools not as ultimate ends but as means to their achieving civic educational ends. Civic educational ends are publicly binding; they therefore need to be publicly defended.

Deliberation, which takes place at a variety of levels, including individual schools, local school districts, and state legislatures, is a way of publicly defending a civic educational program. Citizens and their accountable representatives deliberate about educating children in ways conducive to their becoming free and equal citizens in a democratic society. Schools may teach more than the mandated civic curriculum. Parents may send their children to public or private schools, religious or secular schools, although only public schools receive complete public subsidy. (I return to address the issue of poor parents not being able to afford private schooling.)

All schools should be constrained to respect the constitutional rights of students, which include rights against repression and discrimination. The basic liberties of individuals must be protected against repression, and their basic opportunities protected against discrimination. If a school, school board, or state legislature fails to respect these individual rights, other institutions, such as courts, should step in to ensure that they are protected.

By contrast, in a regime of civic minimalism, courts and parents together would have almost exclusive control over children's schooling. Judges would enforce the mandated minimum, no more nor less. Parents would control the rest of publicly subsidized schooling. Civic minimalism therefore presumes—before democratic deliberation even begins—that constitutional legitimacy rests on enforcing a single conception of the civic minimum. This presumption, I have argued, has not been defended, much less defended in a way that gives clear content to the idea of a civic minimum or puts it beyond reasonable disagreement. Civic minimalists are therefore presumptuous when they denounce democratic decision making over publicly subsidized schools as illegitimate.

We have yet to consider what the most morally defensible content of a civic minimum would be. The least controversial parts of a mandated civic minimum in the United States—those that can

elicit nearly universal agreement among Americans as necessary (but not sufficient) for every citizen to learn—are some (hard to specify) minimal degree of literacy and numeracy. But it would be morally arbitrary, indeed rather ridiculous, for any of us to conclude that literacy and numeracy—at some minimal level—therefore suffice for an adequate civic education in the United States, and that nothing more can be legitimately mandated of schools in the name of civic education.

A more popular and promising start for defining the civic minimum is identifying it with what is necessary to make liberal democracy work well. If "well" means fairly or justifiably, then the content of civic minimalism converges with what democratic education identifies as a good civic education. For a liberal democracy to work fairly, with liberty and justice for all, the civic minimum would need to be robust. It would need to include teaching literacy and numeracy at a high level. It would also need to include teaching—not indoctrinating—civic values such as toleration, nondiscrimination, and respect for individual rights and legitimate laws. Teaching includes both experiencing the practice of these virtues in schools, and helping students develop the intellectual skills necessary to evaluate these practices along with their alternatives.

Schools cannot possibly remain neutral in their practices—they practice either tolerance or intolerance, racial discrimination or nondiscrimination. Moreover, it is desirable that schools practice toleration and nondiscrimination. But as they mature intellectually and emotionally, students also need to learn to evaluate such practices in the open-minded and deliberative spirit that prefigures the way in which democratic citizens ideally govern themselves, deliberatively rather than dogmatically. Civic education should therefore also include helping students to develop the ability to deliberate about their political disagreements with others. Helping students develop this ability also entails helping them cultivate the deliberative virtues of being well informed, open-minded, and opinionated about politically relevant issues and the performance of officeholders.

I present this conception of civic education not as authoritative but as a reasonable alternative that democratic citizens should have the option to institute. If it is a reasonable alterna-

tive, then civic minimalism—which says that citizens should not be permitted to institute the alternative of democratic education because it imposes more than a specific civic minimum on parents—is deeply problematic. Civic minimalism does not grant democratic citizens the moral or political room to pursue the civic purposes of schooling as best they can. And it denies citizens this room even if their civic purposes are both reasonable and consistent with parents having a large realm of authority over their children's education in the family.

Democratic education does not impose a single set of civic educational purposes on citizens. It grants citizens (morally bounded) authority to pursue civic educational purposes. The moral bounds that I have defended—non-repression and nondiscrimination—express the ideal of free and equal citizenship at the core of liberal democracy. If other bounds are more publicly justifiable, then they should govern. Not only the theoretical principles but the practical implications of those principles should also be subject to critical scrutiny.

William Galston defends liberal democratic principles but disagrees with some of the practical implications that others and I draw from them. Citizens, Galston agrees, should institute standards of civic education that support the ideal of liberal democracy, not just the status quo. This is a high standard, and probably not well captured by calling it a civic minimum.[14] Galston and I disagree about what a civic education adequate to the ideal of liberal democracy would decide in the case of *Mozert v. Hawkins County Board of Education*, where a group of fundamentalist parents claimed the right to exempt their children from a reading curriculum whose content—although neither religious nor anti-religious—conflicted with their religious convictions. Galston argues that the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals failed to recognize a constitutional right of the Mozert parents—based on their right of free exercise of religion—to exempt their children from the mandated reading curriculum of the public school that they attended.[15] Reasoning from the principles of democratic education, I have argued that courts should not overturn the decisions of public school boards on matters of reasonable curricular requirements.[16] The right to free exercise of religion does not entail the right of parents to near-exclusive or comprehensive authority over their children's schooling. Galston agrees with these principles but not with the application of them in the *Mozert* case.

Children, Galston and I agree, are not the mere creatures of the state or their parents. We also agree that the curricular requirements at issue in the *Mozert* case were reasonable ways for the Hawkins County public schools to engage in civic education. The required reading to which the parents objected ranged from the picture of Jim having fun cooking while Pat (a girl) read to him to an excerpt from Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl* to a passage describing a central idea of the Renaissance as belief in the dignity and worth of human beings. None of the requirements entailed forcing the profession of belief by any student (or parent). Where Galston and I disagree is in our answers to the following question: Should the judiciary set the precedent of routinely requiring school boards to exempt children from curricular requirements that their parents regard as inconsistent with their religious beliefs? Galston recognizes the general legitimacy of such curricular requirements but would give greater weight to the religious convictions of parents. I would not. This disagreement, while important and consequential, is far more limited than the disagreement between Galston and civic minimalists.

Civic minimalists criticize Galston's substantive conception as not recognizing a near-comprehensive right to parental control over schooling, but civic minimalism—as we have seen—is far less defensible than a substantive understanding of the civic purposes of schooling. When civic minimalists try to interpret the United States Constitution to cede parents such comprehensive rights over their children's education, the results are even more disturbing. Gilles at first concedes that civic minimalism lacks support in "our existing Constitution, rightly interpreted." But undaunted, he goes on to argue that judges should make parental authority over education into a free speech right. Here is what he advises judges:

> [E]ducational messages to their children, whether delivered directly by parents in the home or indirectly through their agents in the school, should be treated as parental educative speech, and should receive a high level of First Amendment protection similar to that currently afforded to political speech.[17]

The right to free speech, so interpreted, would become an exercise of parental power over all educators. Judges would evaluate educational regulations "in terms of their impacts on parents" rather than on children.[18] The needs, interests, and rights of children would fade from this picture, as the free speech rights of parents are converted into a constitutional authority over everyone who educates children, including for public purposes and at public expense. The suggestion highlights the extent to which civic minimalism fails to give independent consideration to protecting the needs, interests, or rights of children. Civic minimalism radically re-interprets the First Amendment so as to cede comprehensive control of all educators' speech to parents.

Advocates of civic minimalism typically presume that comprehensive parental authority is a default position. They criticize other positions by saying that they do not command a consensus.[19] But no conception—including civic minimalism—can claim a social consensus. Nor would a consensus settle the issue since the interests of children are centrally at stake in this matter, and young children are not part of a meaningful consensus, indeed by virtue of their age they could not be. We have no better alternative but to defend a controversial substantive conception.

Here and elsewhere I have defended a conception of democratic education that respects parental authority over the education of children in the family, and also respects democratic authority over a civic education that aims to prepare students for exercising the rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship. Democratic education welcomes reasonable disagreement, and legitimates a democratic process of adjudicating disagreements over the content of civic education, as civic minimalism does not. Democratic education invites citizens to argue about alternative requirements of publicly subsidized schooling, including what an adequate civic minimum would be.

Democratic education offers no simple procedural panacea to the problems that beset America's inner-city schools. Proponents of parental choice, by contrast, do. "Choice *is* a panacea," Chubb and Moe say. It is "not like other reforms and should not be combined with them as part of a reformist strategy for improving

America's public schools." Choice should be viewed as "a self-contained reform":

> with its own rationale and justification. It has the capacity *all by itself* to bring about the kind of transformation that, for years, reformers have been seeking to engineer in myriad other ways.[20]

If a single sweeping procedural reform could cure all of America's educational ills, or even most or many of them, we should all jump on the procedural bandwagon. But the idea that there is an educational panacea is a recurring theme in the politics of American education. What has changed radically over the years is the nature of the panacea that is promoted as such.

Educating children, whether with the aim of helping them become good citizens or good people more generally, remains so complex that no single procedural reform—whether it be in the direction of democratic education or school choice—can promise to be anything close to a panacea. Kant's cautionary claim remains as true today as it was when he wrote it: "[T]here are two human inventions which may be considered more difficult than any others—the art of government, and the art of education."[21]

Nothing I say is intended to deny the legitimate appeal of parental choice over schools in the context of the United States today. Too many public schools—especially in American inner cities—fail to offer an adequate education to too many children. Democratic education calls for the choice of an effective school for every parent whose child is not now receiving an adequate education in a neighborhood public school. Improving public schools and increasing choice among them is more defensible than subsidizing private schools in a society like ours that constitutionally separates church and state. But as long as a substantial number of public schools are failing to provide an adequate civic education to a substantial number of children, there will be something to be said for subsidizing private schools that are willing and able to provide these children with an adequate civic education on a nondiscriminatory basis.

Morally defensible standards of civic education for citizenship in the United States today go far beyond numeracy and literacy at

a minimal level. Morally defensible standards should include nothing less than what is necessary to supporting free and equal citizenship for all adults. In addition to a high level of numeracy and literacy, teaching civic values such as racial nondiscrimination and religious toleration is certainly necessary to supporting free and equal citizenship in the United States today. It follows that a program of parental choice among schools should be constrained not to increase racial discrimination or religious intolerance. Since students also learn from one another, and students from less educated families tend to achieve more if they attend schools with students from more educated families, parental choice plans also should not increase the segregation of most advantaged and least advantaged students.[22] Schools are probably the best place for children of different socioeconomic, ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds to learn to respect one another as future free and equal citizens. Publicly subsidized schools therefore should be nondiscriminatory in their admissions and they should try to teach these civic values by their practices.

Parental choice is certainly not a panacea. Neither is public control. The efforts at privatizing the Hartford (Connecticut) school system were disappointing in their results. So were the efforts at centralizing public control in the Newark (New Jersey) school system. The results of the recent private-public school voucher experiment in Milwaukee (Wisconsin), which wisely targets the least advantaged students in the city, fall far short of supporting the claim that choice is a panacea. Voucher school students in Milwaukee show very modest improvements in their mathematics test scores but no improvement in their English test scores over non-voucher-school students.[23] More time is needed to judge the reliability of these very preliminary findings (which are also contested). But one preliminary conclusion is almost certain to be sustained: if school systems do nothing more than change mechanisms of control from public to private (or vice versa), the results are likely to be modest at best.

The challenge of adequately educating children who are socially and economically disadvantaged is so great that neither private nor public control, by itself, can promise schools that effectively educate all children for free and equal citizenship. A democratic society needs to offer not only choices among schools but

good choices if it is to fulfill its educational obligations to children. Some competition among schools is likely to be educationally productive, perhaps even necessary to prevent schools from atrophying.[24] But a largely unconstrained voucher plan as defended by civic minimalists almost certainly cannot solve the major problems of inner-city school systems.

There is no procedural substitute for improving schools, and judging them on their educational merits, where those merits include their capacity to contribute to civic education. To what extent do schools succeed in effectively educating every child to literacy, numeracy, economic opportunity, toleration, mutual respect, and the other fundamental skills and virtues of a free and equal citizenry?

Judged by these standards, the school systems of the United States and other contemporary democracies are lacking. But their shortcomings are not attributable primarily to public control. When a democratic government says to parents that they are free to use the public schools at taxpayers' expense or to use any accredited private school at their own expense, it is not being unfair to those who choose private schools for their children, at extra cost. (Nor is a democratic government being unfair when it funds state universities and makes them less costly than private ones.) What is unfair is that some children are not provided with an adequate education judged by any reasonable standards of civic education, while other children are, whether because their parents can afford to live in a better public school district or because they can opt out of a bad one by paying for private schooling. This problem calls not for paying for private schools but for improving public schools and eliminating the poverty and unemployment that make the task of democratic education such an uphill struggle.

Civic minimalists grant that schools should serve civic purposes, and that citizens may therefore mandate teaching the civic minimum. Having granted that schools should serve civic purposes, civic minimalists lack good reasons for insisting that the civic purposes of schooling be minimal. The reasons that they offer—minimizing the pursuit of public purposes and avoiding public controversy—render civic minimalism either empty or self-defeating, or both. The conception of democratic education

that I have defended encourages citizens to support high standards for civic education in schools that therefore do their part to enable all children to enjoy the status, rights, and responsibilities of free and equal citizens. Whether those high standards are called the civic minimum of constitutional democracy is far less important than whether schooling that is publicly mandated and subsidized tries to educate all students as future free and equal democratic citizens.

II. Cosmopolitanism or Patriotism?

But any single democratic society, which oversees democratic education only within its borders, can confer the status of citizenship only on some portion of the world's people. According to the principles that inform democratic theory, all people deserve the status of equal citizens, regardless of whether that status is actually recognized by their society. We all deserve equal consideration when matters of justice are at stake regardless of whether we have been granted the status of democratic citizen somewhere. A democratic education that is true to its basic premise of the civic equality of persons must therefore teach students to consider not just their fellow citizens but all people as equals. The same value that supports the teaching of mutual respect among diverse individuals within a single society also supports the teaching of mutual respect beyond borders, among individuals throughout the world, who represent an even wider range of cultural affiliations and identifications.

Students need to learn a lot about their own society to function as well-informed citizens, but learning only about their own society is not enough to satisfy the moral demands of a democratic education. In an interdependent world, recognizing the rights of all people to live a good life is as important as recognizing the rights of one's fellow citizens. Teaching students to understand foreign people and ways of life presents a similar challenge to teaching them about cultural diversity within their own society. For the sake of achieving greater justice in the world as in our own society, we need to understand people not merely as abstractions but in their particularity, with their own lives to lead and their own ideas of what constitutes a good life to lead. Such

understanding should precede the practical political judgments we make as citizens, whether about our own entitlements, those of our fellow citizens, resident aliens, or foreigners. Understanding other people's ways of life is also important in its own right because how we understand *our* own society and *our* own world is inseparable from how we understand all the other people whose ways of life influence our own. Other people's (and societies') ways of life—including their literature, music, trading, spending and saving habits—influence (and in some instances are part of) ours just as ours influence (and in some instances are part of) theirs.

Global interdependence increases the democratic importance of learning about foreign people and societies, but it does not correspondingly decrease the practical challenge of extending mutual respect among individuals beyond national borders. The challenge beyond borders is considerably greater because the domestic politics of a constitutional democracy, with all its flaws, tends to be more conducive to cultivating mutual respect among citizens than world politics is to cultivating mutual respect among people who live in often hostile societies with radically different cultures and kinds of government. (Recent events in American politics strain this distinction, but it is probably still true over time.) The asymmetrical support of mutual respect offered by domestic and world politics is all the more reason for schools to teach students about people and politics of other societies with which they would otherwise be unfamiliar (or prejudicially hostile), and also about their own society as it interacts with others.[25]

With the ever-increasing interdependency of societies, teaching the history and politics of a single country like the United States lends itself all the more to introducing students to the moral challenge of cultivating mutual respect across borders. One way of cultivating mutual respect while teaching American history and politics is to introduce students to moral exemplars of citizens who reached beyond national boundaries to respect the equal rights of all people. Martin Luther King's speech opposing the Vietnam War is one prominent example. King presumed to speak from a moral perspective available to all human beings:

> [A]ll of us who deem ourselves bound by allegiances and loyalties which are broader and deeper than nationalism and which go beyond our nation's self-defined goals and positions. . . . are called to speak for the weak, for the voiceless, for victims of our nation and for those it calls enemy, for no document from human hands can make these humans any less our brothers.[26]

Democratic education should also help students understand and assess the contributions of institutions that are not specific to a single society, such as the United Nations, Amnesty International, the European Economic Community, and the International Monetary Fund. The United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights is a prominent example of an institutionalized recognition of human rights extending beyond national borders. Students should be encouraged to think about what values are (and are not) mutually defensible in an international context and why. Such reasoning is a prologue to civic deliberation on an international scale, and it is also directly relevant to a great deal of domestic democratic politics (such as the politics of free trade versus protectionism, the disposal of toxic wastes, standards of medical experimentation at home and abroad, and immigration policy).

Should (or must) democratic education therefore support cosmopolitanism rather than patriotism? Cosmopolitanism and patriotism are used in such radically different ways by their defenders and critics that we need to stipulate their meanings before evaluating them. We would beg the question in favor of cosmopolitanism to use it as a synonym for moral universalism and to use patriotism as a synonym for moral particularism or parochialism. Besides, as commonly used and as defined in the dictionary, cosmopolitanism and patriotism are not moral perspectives in their own right. They are sentiments referring to social attachments and self-identifications beyond the self.

Cosmopolitans are worldly individuals who identify with many places and a culture, traditionally a high culture, that spans many societies. They do not identify solely with a single state or solely with the culture of a single society. It does not follow that cosmopolitans are undiscriminating in their attachments. Not only is life too short for anyone to be attached to every place and every

culture but cosmopolitans are committed to discriminating on the basis of criteria—either aesthetic or moral or both—that themselves span the culture of a single society. It is important to recognize that cosmopolitans need not be *moral* universalists. Historically, most cosmopolitans were not moral universalists. They were aesthetic universalists, aficionados of high culture. Whether a cosmopolitan's discriminations turn out to be compatible with *moral* universalism—and therefore with the democratic ideal of free and equal persons—is not foreordained by the fact of being cosmopolitan. The worldly attachment of a cosmopolitan who identifies with aristocrats or aesthetes the world over has little to recommend itself from a universalistic moral perspective, which supports democracy and democratic education.

When Martha Nussbaum recommends cosmopolitanism over patriotism, she defends a particular, morally admirable kind of cosmopolitan. Nussbaum's cosmopolitan is someone whose worldly attachments follow the mandates of moral universalism, someone who is attached to human beings as such wherever they may live and therefore accords equal respect to all human beings, whatever their nationality, ethnicity, religion, race, or gender. This is not the cosmopolitan who is attached to high culture, and is largely indifferent to the everyday problems—such as poverty—of ordinary humanity. A morally admirable, egalitarian attachment to the community of humankind is what Nussbaum defends in the name of cosmopolitanism, tracing this sort of cosmopolitanism back to the Stoics.[27]

Egalitarian cosmopolitanism should not be confused with cosmopolitanism more generally. Not all cosmopolitans are so egalitarian in their attachments.[28] The kind of cosmopolitan sentiment conducive to extending the reach of mutual respect among individuals worldwide incorporates an egalitarian commitment. Egalitarian cosmopolitans are attached to all human beings regardless of their more particular identities. Egalitarian cosmopolitanism flows from the same moral source as democratic education: equal respect for, and mutual respect among, persons.

Democratic education is compatible with—even conducive to—cultivating egalitarian cosmopolitans. But cultivating egalitarian cosmopolitans is not the primary aim of democratic education. Why not? Because there are multiple ways of being attached

to people that are compatible with a democratic commitment to mutual respect among persons. Egalitarian cosmopolitanism is one, but only one, of those ways. One need not feel similarly attached to all people regardless of their culture to live a morally good life. One can feel more attached to a certain culture and to the people who identify with that culture, and still treat all people with equal respect, and do one's part in furthering justice. Schools can engage in moral education without trying to cultivate cosmopolitans.

Can they engage in moral education with or without trying to cultivate patriots? To answer this question, we need to ask another: Is there a form of patriotism that is compatible with mutual respect among persons across national borders? A common contemporary understanding of patriotism—loyalty to country above all other political obligations—is incompatible with cultivating mutual respect across borders. But there is an egalitarian patriotism that, like egalitarian cosmopolitanism, is compatible with the moral aims of democratic education. To see what egalitarian patriotism entails, we need to understand patriotism more generally.

Patriotism, like cosmopolitanism, is a sentiment rather than a moral perspective. Patriotism is commonly defined as love of, and therefore loyalty to, one's country, where one's country is either a nation or a state. There is a big difference between love of a mass institution, whether it be a nation or a state, and love of a single person, the object of love in its most fundamental form. We need to examine that difference to understand why an unqualified kind of patriotism is problematic from the perspective of democratic education.

Love is a notoriously difficult passion to control. If lovers are unqualified or blind in their loyalty to loved ones, the danger to other people pales in comparison to the danger of the unqualified or blind loyalty of millions of people to nations and states. This is the danger of patriotism as it is commonly defended in politics. Nations and states possess massive institutionalized powers to kill, torture, maim, starve, humiliate, demean, and otherwise deny innocent people the most fundamental prerequisites of a decent life. Nations and states not only frequently threaten to employ these powers; they actually do employ them with terrifying and devastating frequency. A democratic education opposes blind patriotism when its curriculum encourages students to think critically, in moral terms, and its practices encourage students to treat all individuals, whatever their gender, race, religion, or nationality, as entitled to equal respect.

But patriotism need not (and should not) be unqualified or blind. Maurizio Viroli asks us to consider a patriotism that ties love of principle to love of country. A patriot, according to Viroli, loves his country because it is a republic that uniquely permits the pursuit of liberty and justice for all.[29] Love of liberty and love of country (in the form of a republic) are compatible, Viroli argues, indeed intimately interconnected, because liberty and justice for all are made possible by a world of republics. Liberty and justice will be forsaken without the active support of citizens, and citizens' active support will not be forthcoming unless they love their country (because liberty and justice are demanding moral causes).

Republican patriots love their country because—and to the extent that—it makes liberty and justice possible. Because this kind of patriotism is fueled primarily by love of justice and only secondarily by love of country, republican patriots are more discriminating than ordinary patriots in what they will do for their country. They will oppose injustices such as slavery, ethnic cleansing, anti-Semitism, racial segregation, and gender discrimination. They will also oppose nationalistic forms of patriotism that subordinate justice to the nationalistic cause of creating states that are thought to be ethnically, religiously, or racially pure. Republican patriotism is anti-nationalistic, and defined in contrast to nationalism.

But republican patriotism includes a requirement that would limit the basic liberty of persons were it to become the only socially acceptable self-identification: "if our country is unfree we have to work to make it free instead of leaving to look for liberty elsewhere . . ."[30] Just as faithful lovers do not leave their loved ones except out of necessity, so republican patriots do not leave their countries unless they are forced to do so: "[I]f we are forced to leave, we have to continue to work in order to be able to go back to live in freedom with our fellows."[31] But there is no moral mandate to work for the good of your compatriots rather than

for some other equally worthy good. If one identifies as a republican patriot, this is surely an acceptable way of discharging one's moral obligations to other people. It is a morally admirable way. But it is not the only morally admirable way; it is one among such ways. Other ways include leaving one's country and helping equally or more oppressed people in other countries. To treat republican patriotism as morally mandatory is as misguided as treating love as morally mandatory. Democratic education should treat republican patriotism as one self-identification that is consistent with its principles, but only by virtue of its not being made a mandatory form of self-identification.

Democratic education may legitimately cultivate both republican patriotism and egalitarian cosmopolitanism. As non-mandatory forms of self-identification, both are compatible with equal respect for persons. But democratic education need not directly aim at cultivating either, or one to the exclusion of the other. In the spirit of open-minded inquiry, democratic education should teach students the history and philosophy of patriotism and cosmopolitanism in its various forms. Its aim in this regard would be to help students understand these internally complex sentiments and attachments of the self to people and places. But democratic education should not convey the sense that only one kind of attachment, whether it be patriotic or cosmopolitan, is compatible with living a moral life or one that is consistent with equal respect to persons.[32]

Democracy should welcome diverse ways of identifying with others as civic equals. Egalitarian cosmopolitans and republican patriots alike respect the equal dignity and basic liberty of all persons. But they manifest their respect in different ways. Some people "nurture the culture and politics of their homes."[33] Others dedicate themselves to helping people abroad. Democratic education can and should prepare students for different ways of living a moral life.

Nobody needs to be a patriot or a cosmopolitan to be a moral person. Many people who are consistently committed to opposing oppression, as best they can, do not identify themselves as (or fit the description of) either. Others do. We are all, as Hilary Putnam describes us, "situated intelligences." But our situation, as Putnam recognizes, doesn't determine our moral outlook:

> [W]ithout inherited ways of life, there is nothing for criticism to operate on, just as without critical reason there is no way for us to distinguish between what should be saved (perhaps after reinterpretation) and what should be scrapped from our various traditions.[34]

Democratic education has the potential for being far more ecumenical and effective if it does not insist on teaching students that all moral beings must identify themselves in any single way, whether as citizens of the world, Kantian ends-in-themselves, Millean progressive beings, cosmopolitans, or republican patriots. Democratic education instead should try to teach students to understand public values such as liberty, opportunity, and justice from multiple perspectives. Why? Because there are multiple ways of reasonably understanding these values, and there are many self-identifications that converge on the idea that individuals the world over are entitled to the liberties and opportunities necessary to live a good life consistent with their own identities and with respect for the equal rights of other individuals. Democratic education welcomes all identifications that are compatible with pursuing justice for all people.

When the aim of democratic education is framed broadly—to encourage the pursuit of justice for all—it embraces a wide range of attachments and identities at the same time as it recognizes that the moral obligations of citizenship do not stop at state boundaries. It also enables students to expand the horizons of their own lives by learning about lives that otherwise would be less accessible. Teaching students about foreign countries and cultures need not be a recipe for homogenizing the world. It is consistent with every society giving greater attention to the history, cultures, and politics of its own country than to any other.

What then, if anything, makes it legitimate for citizens to support a system of public schooling that focuses disproportionately, although not exclusively, on the history, culture, and politics of their country? Homogenization of world culture is not a credible consequence of public schools in the United States focusing on world history rather than American history. But there are at least three other reasons why citizens may legitimately support schooling that focuses disproportionately on the history, culture, and politics of their own country.

The first reason is so basic that it is easy to overlook. Schooling, even more than life, is too short to teach everything. And teaching a very little about a lot of different places is a recipe for conveying very little by way of understanding. It makes more educational sense to focus enough on a few places to learn something in depth.

But this reason does not provide anything positive about an educational focus on one's own country. The second reason does. Although publicly supported schools could randomly select the history, culture, and politics that they teach, teaching children about who they are—besides being human beings as such—is part of what democratic education (and equal respect of individuals) can and should be about. American students are appropriately taught the history, culture, and politics of their country because it is *their* country, just as they are appropriately taught (by their parents) about their family's particular customs, habits, and stories because it is their family.[35] Learning about oneself is part of what education is and should be.

There is nothing wrong with identifying as members of particular families or citizens of particular countries as long as these identities do not carry a sense of moral superiority, particular desert, or privilege with them. Civic education should demonstrate that particularistic identifications are no excuse whatsoever for oppressing or otherwise denying the equal rights of individuals. Quite the contrary, it should teach students in such a way that they understand that their right to enjoy a particularistic identity presumes the equal rights of their fellow human beings.

A third reason for schools in the United States to focus disproportionately on domestic politics is that American citizens can more readily enlist the politics of their own country rather than the politics of another country if they are committed to doing their part to further justice, even beyond the borders of their own country. It is of course not easy to enlist any actual politics in pursuit of justice. And it is also true that less local forms of politics are increasingly important in the pursuit of justice throughout the world. But the politics of our own country (especially when it is a relatively rich and powerful country like the United States) is still the most indispensable collective

means to furthering the cause of justice. Students need to learn how they can enlist the assistance of their own country's political institutions to do what they believe to be right. From the perspective of acquainting students with the most effective means of their doing good in the world, there is no practical substitute to their being educated for effective citizenship in their own society.

These reasons justify teaching students more about their own society than about any other single society, but they do not justify neglecting the politics, histories, and cultures of other societies. To further mutual respect among all people, schools also need to teach about different societies, not all other societies, but enough other societies in enough depth so as not to convey the message that people who live beyond our borders do not count, or count less, or are entitled to less concern or respect than members of our own society.

Democratic education should convey respect for all people regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, gender, color, class, or religion. This civic aim seems to me morally mandatory. It is not a minimal aim. But if I were to defend a civic minimum, I could defend nothing less.

NOTES

1. This is a very short synopsis of the more detailed understanding of democratic education found in *Democratic Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

2. Stephen Gilles, "On Educating Children: A Parentalist Manifesto," 63 *University of Chicago Law Review* 937 (Summer 1996), p. 941.

3. Nussbaum, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," in Joshua Cohen, ed., *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), pp. 6, 15.

4. The principle and practice of reciprocal reason giving is defended as central to democracy in Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

5. For a discussion of deliberative virtues in education, see *Democratic Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 50–52. For a discussion of civic integrity and magnanimity, see *Democracy and Disagreement*, pp. 81–85.

6. My arguments in this essay build on the conception of democratic education that I develop and defend in *Democratic Education*, second edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

7. Stephen Gilles, "On Educating Children," p. 962.

8. There is a weaker form of civic minimalism that makes it discretionary rather than mandatory. It recommends that citizens support only the minimum requirements of democratic education for schools but recognizes the constitutional right of citizens to require more than the minimum. I focus on the stronger form of civic minimalism because the weaker form is not really inconsistent with *Democratic Education*.

9. The case is real, not hypothetical, and it divides civic minimalists and advocates of democratic education. The story is one to which some fundamental Christian parents objected (on grounds that "it denigrates the differences between the sexes" that are affirmed in the Bible) in the case of *Mozert v. Hawkins County Board of Education*, which I discuss in "Civic Education and Social Diversity," *Ethics*, vol. 105, no. 3 (April 1995), pp. 557–579. It is certainly plausible to say—as I later suggest—that this kind of teaching should be part of the civic minimum, but then we would need to ask how the perspective of civic minimalism differentiates itself, except nominally, from that of democratic education.

10. In *Democratic Education*, I defend this position. It is a position that is critical of much educational practice in the United States today, but it is far more consistent with a long line of court cases than is civic minimalism. The American judiciary has quite consistently recognized broad democratic authority over public schooling, consistent with not regarding children as "mere creatures of the state." In *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, the Court recognized "the power of the State reasonably to regulate all schools," 268 US 510 at 534 (1925). Lower courts therefore have typically assessed the legitimacy of state regulation of schools, including regulation of home schooling, under the rational basis test, the easiest test to pass. In *Prince v. Massachusetts*, the Court found that: "The state's authority over children's activities is broader than over like actions of adults." 321 US 158 at 168 (1944).

One significant limit that the Court places on state authority over schooling tracks the constraint that I call "non-repression." The Court has struck down educational practices that compel students to profess belief against their convictions, and it has not rested this restriction on a right of parents to dictate the content of their children's schooling. The state's legitimate power of schooling, the Court argued in *Board of Education v. Barnette*, does not extend to compelling a profession of belief. The legitimacy of the laws of the state are limited to those that do not "force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein." 319 US 624 at 642 (1943). Even in *Wisconsin v. Yoder*, where the Court exempts Amish children from two years of compulsory schooling on the basis of their parents' right to the free exercise of religion, Justice Burger argues that the Amish are an unusual exception to the general rule. Burger notes that: "Nothing we hold is intended to undermine the general applicability of the State's compulsory school-attendance statutes . . . " 406 US 205 at 236.

I discuss the religious freedom of parents as it relates to the state's authority over schooling in "Religion and State in the United States: A Defense of Two-Way Protection," in Nancy L. Rosenblum, ed., *Obligations of Citizenship and Demands of Faith: Religious Accommodation in Pluralist Democracies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

11. See *Democratic Education*, pp. 28–33, 64–70.

12. Ibid., esp. chs. 1–5.

13. See John E. Chubb and Terry M. Moe, *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1990), p. 189.

14. See William A. Galston, *Liberal Purposes* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), esp. pp. 224–227.

15. *Mozert v. Hawkins County Board of Education*, 827 F.2d 1058.

16. "Undemocratic Education," in Nancy L. Rosenblum, ed., *Liberalism and the Moral Life*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989, pp. 71–88.

17. Stephen Gilles, "On Educating Children," p. 944.

18. Ibid., p. 1018.

19. Gilles writes, for example, "there is no consensus in favor of Gutmann's conception of liberal democracy," p. 972. I agree. No consensus exists that favors my conception—or any other conception—of liberal democracy, deliberative democracy, or democratic education. But a person who proposes to convert the First Amendment right to free speech into a right of parents to control the speech of everyone who educates their children cannot consistently count lack of consensus as a criticism.

20. Chubb and Moe, *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools*, p. 217.

21. Immanuel Kant, *Kant on Education (Ueber Padagogik)*, trans. Annette Churton (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1900), p. 12.

22. This was a major (although disputed) finding of the pathbreaking study by James S. Coleman, et al., *Report on Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966).

23. See, for example, Cecilia Elena Rouse, "Private School Vouchers and Student Achievement: An Evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May 1998, pp. 552–602; and John F. Witte and Christopher A. Thorn, "Who Chooses?

Voucher and Interdistrict Choice Programs in Milwaukee," *American Journal of Education 104* (May 1996), pp. 186–217. See also John F. Witte, "Reply to Greene, Peterson and Du: The Effectiveness of School Choice in Milwaukee: Secondary Analysis of Data from the Program Evaluation," unpublished paper, August 23, 1996; and Paul E. Peterson, Jay P. Greene, and William Howell, "New Findings from the Cleveland Scholarship Program: A Reanalysis of Data from the Indiana University School of Education Evaluation," unpublished paper, May 6, 1998.

24. For a balanced overview and analysis of the merits of school choice, see Jeffrey R. Henig, *Rethinking School Choice: Limits of the Market Metaphor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

25. Nussbaum argues for "making world citizenship, rather than democratic or national citizenship, the focus of civic education" (*For Love of Country*, p. 11). But she also seems to agree that world citizenship should not be considered a substitute for democratic citizenship and that democratic citizenship should be committed to respecting the dignity and rights of individuals the world over. It is therefore somewhat misleading to say that world citizenship *rather than* democratic citizenship should be the focus of civic education. We should also recognize that the idea of world citizenship is significantly more metaphorical than the idea of democratic citizenship. No one is (yet or soon to be) enfranchised as a world citizen. This does not detract from the importance of teaching students to identify with human beings the world over. Indeed, I think it makes such an education all the more important because there are fewer institutional incentives that encourage citizens to consider the well-being of non-citizens and people who live beyond their country's borders.

26. Martin Luther King, Jr., "A Time to Break Silence," in *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King*, ed. James Melvin Washington (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), p. 234.

27. See Nussbaum's essay "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," in Cohen, ed., *For Love of Country*, pp. 2–17.

28. See Anthony Appiah, "Cosmopolitan Patriots," in *For Love of Country*, p. 23.

29. Maurizio Viroli, *For Love of Country: An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

30. Ibid., p. 9.

31. Ibid.

32. See Viroli, who writes that "the cause of liberty against oppression does not need cosmopolitans; it simply needs patriots." Ibid., p. 144. The cause of liberty does not need either cosmopolitans or patriots. It needs morally motivated people who can but need not be either.

33. Anthony Appiah, "Cosmopolitan Patriots," and Hilary Putnam, "Must We Choose?" in *For Love of Country*, pp. 22, 95.

34. Ibid., p. 96.

35. Susan Wolf rightly highlights this implication of equal respect of persons for multicultural education within a single society in her "Comment" on Charles Taylor's "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 75–85.