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Résumé de l'article

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Learning to Be Moved: The Modes of Democratic Responsiveness

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Abstract: *Being responsive to the experiences, ideas, and stories of others is an essential trait for democratic citizens. Responsiveness promotes the general welfare, shows respect for others, and allows for what Tony Laden (2012) has called the social practice of reasoning. Political theorists have shown how responsiveness is a middle ground between dominance and acquiescence, where citizens show a willingness to be moved by those around them. Responsiveness is tested, though, when citizens interact with those who hold what are thought to be immoral or unjust beliefs. The key question: Is it possible to engage responsively with those who hold morally suspect beliefs, to be legitimately "moved" by those around us, without necessarily acquiescing to the moral problems? We argue that such engagement is both possible and desirable. There are at least five different ways to be moved by others in a productive, civic sense. We describe these modes, explain their moral depth, and give some examples. Civic educators should be aware of these modes and teach students how they can manifest in democratic life.*

Andrew was a third-grade student attending a local, public school. Andrew's teacher had an idea: the class would initiate a protest involving an issue that the students felt was unfair. The teacher led class discussions exploring issues that were important to the students. The issue that the students wanted to pursue was the school policy banning class pets. The class spent several weeks refining their arguments, organizing a march, and making protest signs. On the day of the protest, they finished their march with a prearranged visit to the principal's office, where the students presented their ideas for a change in policy. She listened silently, and then said, "This isn't going to happen," promptly dismissing the students. Some of the students afterwards felt discouraged, according to Andrew, and that they had wasted their time engaging with the principal.

There may be, to be sure, some good reasons for not allowing animals in classrooms. There is something about the principal's actions, however, that strikes us as unfortunate when viewed in the context of civic education. The principal did not seem to respond appropriately to the individuals attempting to engage with her. She was *unmoved* by their ideas, stories, and concerns. In this paper, we argue that educators have a responsibility to develop a commitment, not only to speak and listen, but to

be moved by others when engaging in democratic discourse. We think of a commitment or determination to be moved as constituting the civic virtue of responsiveness. Developing this disposition through civic education is particularly important during times of deep political division, as appears to be the case currently in the United States and across the globe.

The Civic Importance of Responsiveness

There are several possible ethical reasons to develop a disposition toward responsiveness. First, there are desirable practical consequences of citizens being responsive to each other. We can imagine an increase in social harmony, a better-functioning polity, and perhaps better access to truth as responsiveness lubricates the flow of ideas. Beyond the positive consequences that might emerge from a responsive citizenry, responsiveness demonstrates respect for people as human beings. We are creatures able to formulate and evaluate reasons and explain ourselves to one another. This quality is honored by carefully considering and responding to the reasons that others present to us. In this sense, responsiveness reaffirms political equality, which Hess and McAvoy describe as the idea that "all adult members of a polity [are] equally capable of contributing to public decisions" (Hess & McAvoy, 2015, p. 77).

There are even more intriguing justifications for cultivating a civic disposition toward responsiveness. These justifications are closely tied to the practice of reasoning itself. Tony Laden's (2012) recent social-pragmatic conception of reasoning is an example. On the standard picture of human reasoning, an utterance conforms with reason insofar as it abides by more or less objective standards of rationality and is issued from our faculty of reason. Once established, the conformance of our utterances with reason is supposed to be the source of epistemic legitimacy and social power. With reason on one's side, one is thought to have the authority to command (p. 50).

Laden argues that this conception of reason and authority does not adequately capture what happens, or what should happen, as we reason with one another. Instead of defining reasoning derivatively, that is, as simply the activity of giving reasons or of employing one's faculty of reason, Laden takes the *social practice* of reasoning to be primary. When people reason, they are involved in a special form of conversation. Reasoning, like conversation, turns out to be a fundamentally social activity, one that is more concerned with establishing connections and encouraging cooperation than issuing justified commands (p. 64f). Reasoning "forms the background of our shared lives" (p. 29); its aim is only to keep our common conversation alive (p. 74).

The feature that distinguishes reasoning as a special type of conversation is the increased degree of *responsiveness* that is expected of the participants. Whether because of some pressing problem that demands resolution or because the issue at hand is particularly significant for the participants involved, casual conversation at times yields way to a more engaged form of communication in which the search for common ground becomes prominent. Laden understands this search for common ground to be, at root, an attempt to speak for the other person. If these attempts are to preserve the possibility of the other's response and keep the conversation alive, they must take on the character of an "invitation," according to Laden. Reasoning is therefore defined as the open-ended and self-critical activity in which we offer invitations to others to take our words as speaking for them (p. 142). Our reasons are the invitations. Similarly, others' reasons are their invitations to us, to let take their words speak for us.

Laden uses Sellar's metaphor of a social "space of reasons" to further articulate what it means to

offer an invitation to speak for others. Reasons form a *logical* space in the sense that each reason is inferentially interconnected with numerous other reasons, and they form a *social* space in the sense that not all potential reasons are reasons *for us*. We are thus always situated within the space of reasons, occupying a certain expanse of the space, while others occupy other areas. According to Laden, reasoning is an act of sharing one's corner of the space of reasons, of "hold[ing] my space of reasons open and public" and "offer[ing] to share that space" (pp. 157–158). This means that a failed stretch of reasoning is not as much a matter of logical fallacy or missing evidence as it is of social isolation. When we fail to hold open our own space of reasons or fail to preserve the integrity of another's when we are invited in, we have, in effect, isolated ourselves from the possibility of inhabiting a truly shared, public space of reasons.

The spatial metaphor also serves to fill out Laden's concept of responsiveness. According to the space-of-reasons metaphor, the search for "common ground" in responsive conversation can be understood as a readiness to reorient oneself in the space of reasons. This might entail reformulating one's appeals to speak for others so that the space one occupies is more "inviting" to the others, or, if one's reformulation does not satisfy the reasoning partner's concerns, it might entail reconstructing one's space of reasons to accommodate the new perspective that has come to light. This reconstruction can involve changing the content of our beliefs or commitments, but it can also lead to our changing how we hold those beliefs or commitments (p. 211). A responsive orientation to others thus means holding open the possibility that we are met with different *kinds* of reasons rather than just countervailing evidence or argumentative flaws.

For Laden, the quality of responsiveness is situated between two rational "vices," though he does not use this terminology. As just mentioned, we can be under-responsive to our reasoning partners. This means we do not take seriously what our partners have said and we thus *isolate* our rational spaces from their influence. On the other hand, we can be over-responsive to our reasoning partners. When we are over-responsive, we treat one's invitations to speak on our behalf as a command. In this way, we *insulate* them from potentially helpful sources of criticism, reflection, and resistance. Responsiveness is therefore no mere passive disposition in the face of our reasoning partners. It requires that we learn how to formulate convincing and sensitive invitations to speak for others, to understand others' reasons as invitations into their space of reasons, and to "properly articulate and formulate criticisms" (p. 157) in a way that helps our conversation partners to grow.

In offering this robust notion of rational responsiveness, Laden advances a communicative ideal very similar to Danielle Allen's conception of civic engagement in *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship Since Brown v. Board of Education* (2004). In that book, Allen identifies lack of trust as the central political problem in the relationships among citizens. Members of the polity must feel as though they can trust their fellow citizens to avoid oppressing them significantly with their political powers, such as voting. She writes, "The central challenge for democracy is to develop methods for making majority decisions that, despite their partiality, also somehow incorporate the reasonable interests of those who have voted against those decisions" (p. xix). Trust acts as a bond that holds minorities and majorities together.

For Allen, there are several mechanisms of responsive communication that can help create trustful relationships between citizens. For one, it is important to recognize that no single policy will ever be completely satisfactory to everyone. There will always be some form of loss or sacrifice on the part of the outvoted minority. Yet, as Allen points out, the myth that the citizenry should be entirely unified obscures, or outright ignores, this notion of loss. People from varying groups have very different

experiences of citizenship. When the populace fails to maintain fluid communication between minority and majority groups, these differences ossify. As a result, one group develops the habit of sacrifice or acquiescence, while the other group learns the habits of domination. In a context where these disparities remain, the different experiences of citizenship will disrupt of the notion of "oneness." With that in mind, Allen suggests that we should aim at "wholeness" rather than "oneness." She writes, "[A]n effort to make the people 'whole' might cultivate an aspiration to the coherence and integrity of a consolidated but complex, intricate and differentiated [political] body" (p. 17). In other words, in order to create "wholeness," the beneficiaries of a public policy must acknowledge the groups whose interests have been cast aside. The polity will not always agree, but it can aspire to the ideal of "wholeness" by recognizing sacrifice and practicing trust.

Allen describes the relationship among citizens in a whole society as one of "friendship." She is careful, however, to avoid using a trite or watered-down notion of friendship to exemplify her point. The type of friendship that exists between citizens is not based on emotion as it is in personal friendships; rather, it based in equality and mutual trust. Political friendship, much like Laden's notion of responsiveness, exists as a "midway point between acquiescence and domination" (p. 121). Like Laden's notion of responsiveness, political friendship is the space between isolation and insulation.

Laden and Allen are not the first to recommend responsiveness as a central civic virtue. Bentley and Owen (2001) argue that responsiveness is a core virtue for establishing harmony between majority and minority political communities. On their view, responsiveness is the disposition required for majority communities to hear the concerns of minorities "in their own political voice" (p. 234). It is a "willingness to listen to and engage with subaltern political voices" (p. 234). Engagement with subaltern voices fundamentally consists of a sensitivity to how members of minority communities reason. By engaging responsively with these communities, one learns to accommodate their unique forms of reason into public (majority) reasoning. Because, as Bentley and Owen argue, a major source of political conflict today lies in the mismatch between public forms of reasoning and the particular kind of reasoning employed in minority communities, responsiveness is a primary civic virtue for members of majority communities.

Although quite similar, the conception of responsiveness to which Laden and Allen's communicative ideals lead differs from Bentley and Owen's view. According to Laden, for example, responsiveness is a fundamental element of reasoning *itself* and not merely a duty that derives from the principles of democratic justice. Furthermore, responsiveness, for Laden, is a virtue for all citizens, whether from minority and majority communities. Responsiveness is something both groups should aspire to in their dealings with one another because responsive dialogue is tantamount to successful reasoning between groups. The advantage of Laden's view is his observation that responsiveness must go all the way down, as it were, if our civic dealings are to be both successful and satisfying. We agree with Laden here, but will argue below that the distinction between majority and minority reappears when it comes to how both groups are educated.

The conception of responsive reasoning that we are developing in this paper is closely related to other familiar civic virtues as well. For example, both Laden and Allen explicitly draw a connection between responsiveness and good listening. Laden writes,

> If the activity of reasoning is the activity of sharing the world, of attuning ourselves to others with
> reciprocal relationships, then the good reasoner is going to look … like the good listener: someone who
> is able to hear others' words as invitations, and be affected or moved by them, and someone who is able

to hear and appropriately react to the responses her own invitations prompt. (p. 46)

For Allen, good listening is essential to meaningful political friendship. This connection between responsiveness and attunement suggests that responsiveness is also akin to empathy: a topic, like listening, of extensive research in educational theory.[1] The innovation of Laden's conception of responsiveness in particular is that empathy and listening become part and parcel of the practice of reasoning itself. Finally, this conception of responsiveness hearkens back to what John Dewey in *Democracy and Education* (1916/2008) called "social intelligence." For Dewey, intelligent action requires that the agent comprehend the social meaning of the action and make "responsive adjustments" to inputs from the physical and social environment (p. 34).

In sum, there are a number of voices that consider responsiveness as something fundamental to the lives of democratic citizens, whether for its positive civic consequences, the respect it shows for other people as equal citizens, its role in reasoning, or its ability to create civic "wholeness." As we have seen, another way of saying that citizens have a duty to be responsive is to say that they have a *willingness to be moved* as they enter into dialogue with co-citizens, to shift their position in the space of reasons and to be ready to enter into the spaces of others. We would go further and say that citizens should have a *determination* to be moved by others. The notion of being moved we develop below seeks to incorporate the many senses in which dialogue with others can, and should, alter our views of ourselves and the world. We have, in other words, a responsibility to let others change us.

What Does it Mean to Be "Moved"?

Being moved implies some sort of inner transition from one state of thinking and feeling to another. It could be moving from a state of ignorance to a state of understanding, a state of forgetfulness to a state of remembrance, or a state of emotional insensitivity to a state of emotional connection. It is not, however, simply any sort of transition in our emotional or intellectual lives. One can learn a fact (say, the average summer temperature in London) and this, to be sure, would be a sort of transition from ignorance to knowledge. This transition is not, however, an instance of "being moved." Perhaps we could describe "being moved" as a transition from one state to another that connects to the deeper questions of human experience, questions like, "Who am I?" "Who are you?" and "How should we live together?" To be moved by a person or an event, rather than simply enjoying or despising it, means that it has intersected deeply with our conceptions of our identities, our place in the world, and our relationships with others. In other words, it has connected to the core of our "space of reasons," as Laden and Sellars might say. We could thus define "being moved" as transitioning from one state to another in a way that connects to our basic notions of identity that form the core of our space of reasons.

Allen (2004) provides a striking example of how a story can connect with our space of reasons in the famous photograph of Elizabeth Eckford, member of the Little Rock Nine, attempting to enter Central High School in 1957. The photo depicts an intensely calm and composed Eckford juxtaposed with the angry, white Hazel Bryan spewing curses in her direction. The photograph suggests a story, both about white America and black America. To this day, the passionate hatred exhibited by Bryan in the

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[1] On listening, see, for example, the 2011 special issue of *Educational Theory,* 2010 special issue of *Teachers College Record*, and the 2007 special issue of *Learning Inquiry*. For a review of the literature on empathy, see Verducci, 2000.

photograph unsettles the viewer, especially when contrasted with Eckford's composed reserve. This reaction might trigger empathy for Eckford (an imaginative connection to how we would feel in her place), an admiration for her strength (connecting with the attributes we wish for ourselves), or an anger, horror, or guilt concerning the situation (connecting with our sense of justice). Whatever the case, this photographic narrative had a pervasive psychological effect in 1957. Allen writes that it "forced a psychic transformation of the citizenry" as it beheld the changed meaning of public spaces at the moment of desegregation (p. 3). She continues, "the image of Hazel cursing Elizabeth raises the challenge of transformation not of laws but of ourselves" (p. 5).

Allen's example suggests what it means to have a disposition to be moved by our fellow citizens. Citizens need to constantly ask, in effect, "How might I be transformed by the experiences of others?" This civic responsibility goes beyond listening, or even empathetic listening; rather, it is responsibility to be changed by the experiences related to us. This is quite demanding and involves a continued effort to make ourselves *vulnerable* to others. It means that, in dialogic encounters in a political space, we have a responsibility to be moved by what is said, while also attempting to move others. A sense of this responsibility should be cultivated in education.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that an instance of "being moved' is not just the result of one citizen narrating experiences or expressing ideas to another. It can also come as citizens *share* conjoint experiences. Through a conjoint experience, the individuals are moved in and by the presence of one another. They are able to grasp something about the other person's perspective or the person's inner character through the experience. The shared experience becomes the source of reasons for subsequent interactions. We are not moved by telling stories to each other in these cases; rather, we are moved by creating shared stories.

The Problem of Sharp Moral Disagreement

It is easy to say that a disposition toward responsiveness should be cultivated in education. Yet formulating a list of positive civic attributes is not the only problem that civic educators face. A major challenge of civic education lies in how we conceive of, and ultimately cultivate a fruitful relationship between, these attributes and the norms of critical reasoning. Critical reasoning is the potential wrench in the democratic machine because its demands often seem to conflict with "pro-social" civic qualities such as responsiveness, wholeness, friendship, empathy, listening and social intelligence. Reasoning about various policy options may, for example, lead to the conclusion that some of the proposals are not only wrong but unethical, and thus their supporters morally corrupt. In this way, the efforts of civic educators to cultivate students' ability to question the status quo, work against injustice and contribute productively to civic life can seem to come into direct conflict with the imperative to be responsive to others. In such situations, responsiveness is liable to be seen as counterproductive towards the righting of social wrongs, since it may slow down or defang the oppositional force needed to effect change. This partly explains the backlash from critical theorists to the ideals of (responsive) dialogue and their promotion of the practice of "talking back" (Jones, 1999; Ellsworth, 1989; hooks, 1986). Likewise, it may explain why others have dug their heels into the promises of "critical thinking" and reasoning for civic education, as if their cultivation were the only important aim of public schools (Hand, 2008; Siegel, 1988). Whether on the side of critical theory or critical thinking, responsiveness seems to just get in the way of the kind of civic

interaction we need.

The tension between critical reasoning and responsiveness dissolves, we believe, when the more comprehensive view of responsiveness we are defending in this essay is adopted. An example of this understandable reluctance to be responsive can be found in a 1962 letter from Bertrand Russell to Oswald Mosley, a fascist apologist who had invited Russell to publicly debate their views. Russell writes,

> Thank you for your letter and for your enclosures. I have given some thought to our recent correspondence. It is always difficult to decide on how to respond to people whose ethos is so alien and, in fact, repellent to one's own. It is not that I take exception to the general points made by you but that every ounce of my energy has been devoted to an active opposition to cruel bigotry, compulsive violence, and the sadistic persecution which has characterised the philosophy and practice of fascism. I feel obliged to say that the emotional universes we inhabit are so distinct, and in deepest ways opposed, that nothing fruitful or sincere could ever emerge from association between us. (as cited in Clark, 2012, p. 576)

The temptation is to strongly agree with Russell here: fascism is indeed morally reprehensible. One reason to disengage with such people, we might reason, is that people who themselves do not believe in political equality do not deserve to be treated as political equals and dialogic partners (see, for example, Hess & McAvoy, 2015, p. 76). Or we might avoid responding to their ideas because they are simply, and often wildly, unreasonable, for example because they lack "the support of corroborating evidence or cogent arguments" and thus fail on the "epistemic criterion" (Hand, 2008, p. 217). Our contention, however, is that, yes, we should try to allow ourselves to be moved by those holding morally dubious positions and that responsiveness can have positive civic results even in these circumstances. Aware that this is a controversial contention, we would like to highlight several reasons why we should open ourselves up to being moved, even when faced with what we consider a person holding morally objectionable views.

First, we should maintain a determined stance of responsiveness because of the value of ethical fallibilism. Positions deemed ethically beyond the pale in one historical moment may, with more experience and thoughtfulness, become acceptable over time. One example is the remarkably rapid change in public opinion over LGBT issues in recent years. This sort of moral progress occurs only when people are responsive, or are *made* responsive through protest, to those who were previously considered "immoral" or otherwise outside the boundaries of acceptability. Maintaining a stance of responsiveness, then, holds open the possibility that some truths might lurk behind currently objectionable positions.

Second, we should maintain a determined stance of responsiveness in the face of morally problematic positions because it shows respect for others in their roles as co-citizens, even though the positions they hold might not be supportable. We should show respect to our democratic partners by being open to their influence (and by being willing to influence them in turn). Responsiveness is how we fulfill the meaning of shared citizenship.

Third, we should maintain a determined stance of responsiveness because it brings a valuable discipline to our moral lives. The idea here is that cutting oneself off from the influence of others in one instance might make it easier to cut off others under different circumstances. One person may truly be a moral monster, while another might simply have an ethical blind spot. Ignoring one may make it easier to ignore the other. Eventually, we might stumble into a habit of ignoring people who simply have annoying personalities. This is not to say all individuals will fall down this slippery slope, but maintaining a disciplined approach will ensure that any slide does not begin.

Fourth, and somewhat paradoxically, a determined stance of responsiveness puts citizens in position

to be influential over those who hold problematic views. The idea is that responsiveness, or trying to be moved by another, shows to the other an honest commitment to engage. This has the potential to build relationships of trust and, with those relationships, morally questionable positions might soften. One example of this sort of responsiveness in action can be seen in the 1998 memoir of Daryl Davis, a black R&B musician, who has made it his life's quest to enter into dialogue with white separatist and supremacist groups, such as the various factions of the Ku Klux Klan. Davis's memoir, *Klan-Destine Relationships: A Black Man's Odyssey in the Ku Klux Klan*, initially describes how Davis himself had suffered from serious instances of racism at the hands of white Americans throughout his life. He retained an abhorrence of the beliefs of groups like the Klan. His tactics were to approach Klan leaders in non-threatening ways, often using humor and active listening, presenting himself as sincerely trying to learn about the KKK and its leaders (indeed, he *was* sincerely trying to learn about them). His underlying rationale for engagement was: "Invite your enemy to talk. … You never know; some small thing you say might give them food for thought, and you will learn from them" (as cited in OBrien, 2013, para. 7). Over many conversations, Davis was able to establish deep and lasting friendships with some of the Klan's most prominent figures. Several of his Klan acquaintances have renounced their membership in the organization because of these relationships. While Davis's story may seem to advance an unsettling humanization of Klan members, his belief is that we can engage with repulsive opinions and still see those who hold them as human beings.

We will draw somewhat from Davis's writings for illustrative examples of being responsive in the face of sharp moral disagreement below. In using these examples, we are not saying that all people, particularly African-Americans, have a moral duty to seek out responsive interactions with hate groups, as Davis did. What he did seems to be "supererogatory," going above and beyond the claims of moral obligation. If nothing else, the obligation to be responsive in the context of hate groups is mitigated because of the physical and emotional risk involved. There is also something to the idea that the moral obligation to be responsive belongs much more to White America and to the hate groups themselves, after years of being unresponsive to racial minorities. There are, finally, understandable worries that a responsive posture, and with it some degree of humanization, will be taken as legitimation or normalization of morally repugnant positions. While not holding Davis up as an example for others to follow, however, we do believe that his engagement powerfully illustrates the possibility of responsiveness in *extreme* cases. More precisely, he illustrates both that responsiveness is possible in these extreme cases and that it can yield productive civic achievements. This suggests that responsiveness is also possible and beneficial in less extreme cases.

The Modes of Responsiveness

So there are good reasons to be responsive even in the face of sharp moral disagreement, but what exactly does a determined stance of responsiveness mean? Does it mean we must allow ourselves to be convinced by the morally questionable thoughts and opinions of others? Does it require we turn off our critical reasoning? We believe there are at least five different ways in which one can be responsive to people and their stories. We call these different ways of being responsive the "modes of responsiveness." The modes of responsiveness we outline below not only articulate different ways of being moved by others. We want to argue that these modes are *civically productive* modes of response. That is to say, these modes are not

trivial substitutions for genuinely being moved by another but are themselves profoundly meaningful to democratic life. These modes show how responsiveness is possible, even in the face of people holding unjust or morally problematic views.

Mode One: Changing One's Position

The first mode of being responsive is to let the experiences and ideas of another change our beliefs and opinions about social reality. This is an act of persuasion in the classic sense. The listener follows the other's experiences to the same conclusion—the same opinions and beliefs—as the narrator. This sort of response can be seen in the stories of Daryl Davis, as Klan members come to renounce the Klan because of their associations and friendship with Davis. This marks important epistemic progress. Yet it would be a mistake to construe such experiences as merely cognitive in nature. In Davis's case, it was not so much that Davis gave an argument that changed the Klan members' minds; rather, it seems that their dialogical relationship with Davis itself drew them into a shared story, and this narrative became incompatible with membership in white supremacist organizations. Of course, such responsiveness does not only occur in face-to-face dialogue. Any time we read a thoughtful account about some troubling aspect of political life—about poverty, the climate or inequality—or hear a touching story on the radio that impels us to change our views and our behavior, we have responded in this particular mode.

Mode Two: Changing One's Reasons

Under this mode of responsiveness, one is moved such that one changes the reasons for holding an opinion, even while the opinion itself remains constant. In effect, the listener gives up one or more reasons for holding an existing belief, or changes a reason, while retaining the belief. This may seem like an evasion, avoiding the real work of engaging with others. This is, however, an important civic response. The reasons *why* a citizen holds a position may sometimes matter a great deal. Suppose, for example, an individual endorses a government policy on the basis of a religious belief, but comes to recognize that more publicly shared reasons are important in civic discourse. The person deliberates, maintains the original political belief, but finds reasons for the belief that could be more generally accepted. This seems to constitute real progress in the person's thinking as a citizen. The individual is starting to adhere to norms of reciprocity in public reason. Thus, people can continue to adhere to a belief, after a narrative encounter with another, but hold the belief for improved civic reasons.

One instance where Daryl Davis was responsive in this way is his ongoing friendship with Klan Grand Dragon Roger Kelly. Davis seemed to believe that the sole motivation behind white separatist and supremacist movements was hate, and that this was a primary reason to oppose such groups. In the specific example of Kelly, though, he believes he found something else: "I went looking for a violent man who hates people for no other reason than the difference of skin color. This quest failed. Roger Kelly does not hate, nor is he violent man. Roger Kelly is a very opinionated man" (1998, p. 55). While Davis continued to ardently disagree with many of Kelly's opinions, and continued to be highly troubled by Kelly's Klan membership, he had been "moved" in his interactions and his beliefs had been refined. He feels moved to say that membership in such an organization is not always based on hate (although, to be sure, he found plenty of hate among other Klan members he encountered). Sometimes it is based on a more complex menagerie of social opinions, personal fears and political aspirations. Davis's strong

opposition to the Klan remained, but his reasons for opposing them had shifted.

Mode Three: Softening One's Position

The third mode of responsiveness is changing the degree of certainty with which one holds a belief. Beliefs come with degrees of confidence—some beliefs we hold with high confidence, others not so much. When we are moved by other people, our confidence in the belief might change, even though the opinion remains the same. The movement may be toward greater certainty or increased doubt. There are moments when this movement can be civically productive. Of particular interest are those moments when one becomes less certain of an opinion. If we believe that civic life requires the development of intellectual humility, of the ability to recognize complexity, and of self-criticism, then movement away from absolute certainty can be a positive civic achievement.

This sort of movement can also be seen in Daryl Davis's memoir. Davis listens to stories of "reverse discrimination," when his friends in the Klan suffer infringement on their constitutional rights to speak and when a Klansman is prosecuted on what Davis himself knows to be false charges. He becomes a bit more open to how feelings of reverse discrimination could arise, and less sure that it is complete fiction. He uses this understanding, though, as a teaching moment for his Klan friends, pointing out that this should give the Klan sympathy for how he and other blacks faced more intense systematic discrimination for centuries, often at the hands of the Klan themselves. While Davis does admit that sometimes he was "moved" by his interactions, just as often Davis reports some altering or softening on the part of his Klan acquaintances. When faced with generalized racist statements, Davis reports that his presence alone would often force qualifications of the statements (i.e., people would give "present company excepted" sorts of qualifications). These small statements may constitute an ounce of civic progress—a generalized hate is hemmed and qualified, at least in the moment. The beliefs are still racist and troubling, but those opinions seen to have slightly weakened, at least in one context and with one person.

Another example can be found in Hess and McAvoy's book, *The Political Classroom* (2015). In that book, a student explains how classroom discussion has softened, but not necessarily changed, a pre-existing political opinion: "I think I have thought more about stuff, [including] the Second Amendment," the student said. "I used to be like, 'Oh, everyone should have guns.' And now that I have re-looked at that, I am not so sure, but I kind of still would like that to happen. I don't know." Hess and McAvoy point out: "This student is leaving Mr. Walters' class with less certainty about her views on gun control. From the perspective of autonomy development, this is an important educational outcome. … [T]here is an educational and democratic value in considering the question, 'Could I be wrong?'—even if in the end students reaffirm their initial views" (p. 145).

Mode Four: Changing One's View of the Other Person

The fourth mode of responsiveness is being moved to change how one sees another citizen. This sort of responsiveness has less to do with changing opinions or reasons, but responding to, and validating, the humanity of the dialogic partner. Even if the opinions they share seem unsound to us, or even morally questionable, we may come to see that their ideas were not born of simple cruelty or malice, but may also have been colored by more understandable fears, limited experiences, and hardships in life. The responsiveness required for successful reasoning encompasses a resolve to find common ground. If this

cannot happen in the agreement of ideas, then it might happen in sympathy for people.

Sometimes, changing the view of another person simply involves sharing a moment together and building a narrative of a positive encounter. Daryl Davis was responsive in this mode quite often in his memoir. He notes with sympathy that some of the Klan members did not have the same opportunities to travel that he had, nor did they have the opportunity to have positive experiences with diversity. More simply, he and the Klan members often are able to have a moment together with music. After one difficult and unproductive conversation he had had with a female Klans-lady, he noticed a piano in the other room.

> I immediately took a seat at the piano and asked her what she wanted to sing. She replied, "I don't guess you know any country." I asked her to name the song. To her surprise, every song she named I knew and played for her. … She apologized for her singing, saying she had not sung in a long time, but she sounded great to me. During that time at the piano, we were not a Black man and a White woman divided by our skin colors. … But, although her feelings of dislike for Blacks had momentarily evaporated, I knew that no matter how friendly she was or how hospitable, those feelings were deeply entrenched and alive. Nevertheless, it was a beginning. (1998, p. 277)

There was no change of opinion here, no reformulation of reasons or weakening of hardened opinions. There was, however, a moment of response on a human level. They were, in effect, creating a story together, a story that holds potential for future encounters.

Another example is a story told by Danusia Trevino, a Polish immigrant and ex-punk rocker. Her story, shared on the February 20th, 2016 episode of the *Moth Radio Hour*, began in her libertine years as a member of a New York City punk rock band. Trevino had little respect for conventional people working day-to-day jobs and conservative lifestyles. She was called to jury duty one day and suddenly she found herself in a room with these same people. She was convinced they would condemn the young black defendant before them. "Thank god they picked me," she thought, "so he could have at least one truly liberal open-minded soul on his side." Watching as the jury was selected, Trevino began to analyze her conservative peers: "I was positive they were all Republicans, that they were probably married to their childhood sweethearts, had fantastic jobs, with all benefits and room for promotion, that probably on Sundays they went with their whole families to the park to walk slowly, take in the air and admire the vegetation."

Trevino was determined to be the defendant's lifeline. As it turned out, however, Trevino became convinced of the guilt of the defendant. The prosecution presented a slew of evidence that clearly seemed to evince the defendant's guilt. Because the prosecution's case was very sloppily argued, however, the judge annulled a majority of this evidence. After forty minutes, Trevino grew impatient and was ready to vote. She voted "guilty." An older, "anemic-looking" woman on the jury was also ready to vote. She voted "not guilty." Then, one by one, each of the jury members voted "not guilty."

Trevino was taken aback. She had gone from being the defendant's only lifeline to his sole indicter. Although this came as a great surprise to her, it is what happened next that truly moved Trevino. The other jury members talked to her about her decision with patience and gentleness. They validated her position and emotions, even while they knew she had made a hasty decision based on invalidated evidence. They appealed to her sense of empathy. She changed her vote. Trevino and the rest of the jury members ultimately exonerated the defendant. After hearing the "not guilty" verdict to the court, the elated family of the defendant waited on the jury outside the courtroom to thank them. The thoughts

that occurred to Trevino during that scene demonstrate how much she had been moved by her fellow jurors.

> As [the family members] were hugging everyone, I was hoping that nobody was gonna tell them about me in the deliberation room. And I wanted to say to them, "Don't thank me. Thank these eleven really incredible—probably still Republican—people. Because there is something else. They've managed to crack my heart open against my will." [Trevino's voice is trembling.] Then came a time when I had to say goodbye to my colleagues. And uhh I didn't want to part with them. I wanted grab onto their legs and say, "Take me with you. Don't leave me here alone. Take me to the park. For a walk. Teach me how to admire the vegetation. Teach me how to live."

Of course, the effort of the other jurors to be responsive did in fact lead to a change in Trevino's position. However, this change did not exhaust the civic meaning of Trevino's experience. The jury members' treatment of Trevino and their principled reasoning created the conditions for Trevino to come to a crucial civic insight—a kind of civic epiphany. Trevino realized that the *people* she had previously judged to be hopeless conservatives and conformists were not only capable of sound, impartial and compassionate reasoning, but were admirable people themselves.

Mode Five: Making Time

There is another sort of responsiveness that does not necessarily involve any change of opinion, whether about an issue or another person. The responsiveness involves simply taking time to ponder, think, and study after an encounter with a fellow citizen. These sorts of actions are indications that one has taken seriously what another has said. Questions that can come up after a conversation include: How common is this person's experience? How would I have felt? Is there an alternative interpretation of the events? What other facts are relevant? What, if anything, am I supposed to learn? These questions can initiate a process of inquiry. Obviously, taking time to ponder in this way will connect with the other modes of responsiveness. It is what leads to the change of opinion, in the ways just discussed. In its own way, however, the act of taking time is itself a civic achievement and sends an affirming message. It shows that the views of others are worth a portion of our energy and a portion of our lifespan. At the end of the day, the time spent engaging might not lead to any sort of change of opinion, but the fact that a process of respectful engagement was undertaken is itself a valuable thing.

Of course, not any sort of process of engagement is a responsive process. Upon being exposed to a new perspective, one could simply spend time trying to debunk or ridicule what one has been told. This sort of time is not a sign of respect for fellow citizens. Instead, the time must be spent in a stance of genuine openness and goodwill, of trying to learn from the other. This is the stance from which Daryl Davis wrote his book. From such a perspective, we can see that even Bertrand Russell's disengagement from the fascist apologist Oswald Mosley, which we discussed earlier, may have been a form of responsiveness. Russell had been taking the time to correspond with Mosley and had "given some thought" to the matter. After this process, he found they inhabited different "emotional universes" and denied him the opportunity for a public debate. There is no responsiveness here, if by "being responsive" to Mosley we mean acknowledging or endorsing the theory and practice of fascism. Russell's reasons did not change, his position did not soften, and he did not seem to see Mosley himself any differently. He was not responsive according to the other modes we have discussed. Still, the process of "taking time"

counts for something in civic terms. It signals a respect for fellow citizens.

Responsiveness and Education

If being moved is essential to a democracy, then its citizens need to develop this trait as a steady disposition. Schools have an important role to play in this development. The connection between education and responsiveness is deep. Indeed, another way of thinking about responsiveness, a determination to be moved, is to understand it as a firm commitment and determination to learn from others. To educate for responsiveness is make a certain sort of future learning possible. It is to educate for education; to teach someone how to learn. Responsiveness is not something that is added on, then, to all the other educational goals. To be moved by others *is* education. This gets to a deeper connection between education and democracy, and to the view that democratic engagement is itself educational, a point noted by John Dewey. He argued that both education and democracy involve the communication of shared experience: "It may be fairly said, therefore, that any social arrangement that remains vitally social, or vitally shared, is educative to those who participate in it" (1916/2008, pp. 6–7). Dewey noted that public schools are particularly well-suited as places to practice shared communication or responsiveness. Schools serve as a "concentration" of social life; that is, they represent a broad range of social life and activities in one place.

Schools are also promising sites to develop responsiveness because they present real forms of community life, with underlying norms and values, relationships, power structures, and—most important—mutual goals and purposes. As Parker points out, in schools there are "mutual, collective concerns—not 'mine' or 'yours,' but 'ours.'" (2010, p. 2823). Students and teachers are called on to live together and solve problems, to share a substantive social existence. Schools are also places where students encounter those who come from different backgrounds and have different opinions: "The intermingling in the school of youth of different races, differing religions, and unlike customs creates for all a new and broader environment" (Dewey, 1916/2008, pp. 25–26). It is a place where students encounter strangers, with stories to be moved by. All of this means that schools hold enormous potential as places to develop responsiveness.

This power of schools can be harnessed to promote responsiveness in four different ways. The first way is through direct instruction which helps students to understand and value responsiveness. This view of responsive citizenship may partially be imparted by a formal curriculum that is respectful of different voices, perspectives, and traditions. Second, the value of responsiveness is also conveyed through the ethos of the school environment. An ethos that encourages responsiveness would include prominent examples of people speaking, listening, being moved, and acting based on what they learn from each other. It starts from how teachers and administrators interact with students, treating them as civic partners, but other sorts of school relationships are also relevant (relationships between teachers and administration, for example, should also exemplify responsiveness). Third, students should also practice developing the trust, openness, and listening skills that are prerequisites to being moved. Allen, for example, has some suggestions for how to "sow the seeds of trust" (2004, p. 157), while Parker has discussed strategies of reciprocity, humility, and caution that should guide classroom discussion and that potentially set the stage for responsive encounters.

The fourth and final way to promote responsiveness is to help students to understand the different

modes of being moved that we have discussed. When someone changes their mind based on careful listening, this is something that should be recognized and celebrated as a mature achievement. In addition to celebrating students who change their minds, it is also appropriate, we believe, to discuss and practice with students the other modes of responsiveness that do not involve opinion change. We see no reason why these modes cannot be taught directly. The idea is to undermine the notion that, at the end of an encounter, the stories and ideas from another are either simply accepted or rejected. Instead, the full range of possible responses can be presented and modelled. One tactic, common in civic education, is to have students seriously consider opinions that run contrary to their own (to argue the "other side"). Instead of asking students to argue for the opposing position, a teacher may go a step further and ask students to consider how the opposing view might "move them" according to the modes of responsiveness we have developed.

An important outcome of an exchange between citizens is not only mutual responsiveness, but some sort of *articulation* of what has transpired. Many of the civic benefits of responsiveness only come to pass if there is a mutual recognition of what has occurred. The fact that one party has been moved by another constitutes a civic achievement, a building block of trust for future encounters. Trust will not increase unless the other party knows that their words have been listened to, been internalized, and prompted change in the listener. To articulate this change, a listener can say, "I don't fully agree with you, but you have made me less sure of my opinion" or "I don't agree with you, but I see that some of my reasons have not been supportable" or "I don't agree with you, but I can see you are sincere and your pain is real" or even "I don't agree with you, but I took some time to really think about what you said." Even when an opinion has not changed, in other words, there can still be an articulation of what the speaker has said, what allowance was made for it, and how it has changed the listener.

This articulation requires developing strategies to attend to what Allen (2004) calls the "dissonant remainders": the frustration and pain left over when total agreement is not reached and some are asked to sacrifice. The listener should be taught to find creative ways to recognize and ameliorate such sentiments, often pointing to future action that addresses the speaker's concerns. Suppose a majority votes down a policy idea strongly favored by a minority. That vote is not the end. As Allen suggests, "[t]he conversation might have one additional step after the vote: an initial conversation on how, in the future, the community might address the concerns of those who have lost out in the present" (p. 117). In education, then, we need not only teach the different modes of responsiveness, but also how to articulate the response to deal with dissonant remainders.

A final aspect of teaching responsiveness that should be addressed is the need to be sensitive to the history and context of the students in the democratic classroom. To use Allen's concepts, some students come from groups that have been minoritized and therefore placed into positions of subservient listeners, thus being forced to be "over-responsive" to the needs of the dominant majority. Members of the dominant majority are encouraged to play the role of the dominant speakers and they display the vice of "under-responsiveness." Neither group is accustomed to occupying the middle ground where appropriate responsiveness is found: a state of readiness to both move and be moved. Both majority and minority groups should be moving toward the middle ground of civic friendship, but will be approaching it from different directions: one from forced over-responsiveness and one from under-responsiveness. This suggests to us that the notion of responsiveness, and the modes of responsiveness, might change depending on the cultural background of the students. This point, as we have seen, was also made by Bentley and Owen (2001). So, for example, some of the more exacting modes of responsiveness should

be deemphasized, while the focus remains on developing one's voice, allowing others to be moved by arguments and stories.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have attempted to establish the centrality of responsiveness in our lives as citizens. A responsive citizenry better promotes the general welfare, shows due respect for other fellow citizens, and even allows for the conversations that constitute the heart of reasoning. We have argued that citizens should have a commitment to be responsive, to be moved, by their fellow citizens, even when such citizens hold positions that are considered to be morally wrong. Responsiveness is a middle ground between dominance and acquiescence, where the citizen shows a willingness to be moved by the stories of those around her. Furthermore, we have argued that there are at least five different ways to be moved in a productive, civic sense. We have described these modes, explained why they are morally meaningful rather than trivial, and given some examples of each mode. Finally, we have described what this may mean for schools.

Let us return to the story of the school protest for class pets, and the principal who appeared to have been unresponsive to the students. We do not want to be overly judgmental here: being a principal is difficult work. At the same time, we can imagine an alternative reaction that would have been better for democratic education. The principal could have changed or softened the no-pets policy, obviously. If that was not possible, the principal could have done more to recognize the voices of the students to show that she had indeed been moved by their appeal. After listening intently, she could have stated how the petition "made her think" or changed her reasoning, even while maintaining her current policy. She could have pointed to a process of study and inquiry, saying, "These are interesting ideas that I need a few days to think about." There could have been a discussion addressing the dissonant remainders, perhaps offering to these animal-loving students ideas about what can be done instead of allowing class pets (maybe a field trip to the zoo). Or, at the very least, the principal could have congratulated them on learning to express their voices and commented on how she respected their work and thoughtfulness. As it was, the opportunity was lost. We think educators can do better.

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