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Introduction

Beyond Politeness: The Role of Principled Dissent

Should we teach our student's how to form street protests, wave placards, and be confrontational? In our quest to teach students how to reshape civic space, that is, must our student learn to go beyond civility?

Reflections' Beyond Politeness explores the tension between civility and dissent in our work as teachers, scholars, and community partners. In Diana George's opening essay, focused on her time at Atlanta's Open Door Community, we are introduced to the limitations of "civil" discourse in arguing for social change. Using his activist work in Over-the-Rhine, Chris Wilkey's explores how asking student to engage in provocative rhetoric enmeshes them deeper in the work of social activism, a term his community partner, Bonnie Neumeier, then explores in an accompanying interview. Joe Letter and Judith Kemerait Livingstone build upon these arguments to discuss service-learning classrooms linked to efforts to save City Park in New Orleans, work that led their students to not only build a new rhetoric of "service," but to help re-build an actual park as well. Their essay reminds us of the need to actually "get our hands dirty" in work with community partners. Karyn Hollis completes our exploration of this issue by exploring how students can work with progressive organizations to produce community-based publications.

Reflections then takes a step back in time. Prior to her stepping down as Editor of *Reflections*, Barbara Roswell had worked with two authors, Laurie Grobman and Adrian Wurr, to develop essays that explore questions of difference. Grobman's essay explores her role in assisting



an African-American community recapturing their own history; Wurr's essay asks us to consider the difficulty of non-native speakers of English encounter when engaged in service-learning and community-based classrooms. In their essays, we see both the legacy of work Roswell was able to bring to the journal, but also how issues of race, class, and immigrant status remain issues that those invested in using their role in the academy to foster a more inclusive and open civic society must continually confront and overcome – through civil and, perhaps, sometimes not-so-civil means.

I am grateful to all the authors for allowing *Reflections* to share their work with our readers.

Steve Parks

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