Incorporating Service Learning into a General Education History Course: An Analogical Model

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THE POPULARITY OF SERVICE LEARNING has grown in recent years, as educators place more value on active and experiential forms of learning. Service learning is learning conducted through service work in a community setting in combination with coursework that frames the service experience with respect to civic engagement and political power.[1] Proponents view service learning as a tool for translating academic learning to non-academic contexts and for cultivating in students the values and skills embedded in the concept of civic engagement. Yet incorporating service learning into a traditional course curriculum presents numerous challenges, especially for lower-division survey or general education history courses with broad content or multiple thematic requirements. Two challenges, in particular, stand out: 1) assessing student learning from the service experience, which takes place outside the professor's purview, and 2) making service learning an integral, rather than ancillary, component of the course.

In this paper, I am proposing an "analogical" model of course structure—built on educational theorist Donald Schön's concepts of reflective practice—designed to address these challenges. I

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developed and implemented this model for a general education course on the history and politics of Los Angeles that comprises part of the first-year core sequence for students in the Honors College program at California State University, Los Angeles. The community partner for the service project was 826LA, a tutoring/creative writing center located in the Echo Park neighborhood that caters to a largely working-class Latino student population.

Statement of the Problem

It is difficult to develop mechanisms for students to achieve a meaningful understanding of the relationship between service and academic learning and to assess whether they have done so. The problem arises from the pedagogy of service learning itself, which emphasizes a process of reflection to translate the service experience into meaningful learning. Meaningful learning is usually understood to include a personal transformation in the student's "disposition," defined as the student's acquired appreciation for the value of service and civic engagement and a consequent desire to become engaged in civic life. Service learning proponents tend to give this transformation a value equal to more traditional pedagogical objectives like the development of knowledge and skills, particularly in the context of general education courses, which were historically created to promote "good citizenship."[2]

But because the dispositional transformation is internal to the student, the instructor has no independent means of verifying it other than student self-reports. Scholars of service learning pedagogy have already noted that reflection assignments based primarily on self-reporting tend to measure, in Janet Eyler's terms, "self-satisfaction" rather than learning.[3] How does one distinguish students who have become engaged from those who've learned to say they've become engaged? Other scholarship has recognized that service learning, if not monitored properly, can have undesirable results; the student emerges with a superficial understanding of the service environment or, worse, a reinforced set of prejudices and stereotypes.[4] Furthermore, if the student completes the bulk of the service requirement on her/his own time, as is often the case, the source material—that is, the service experience—is hidden from the professor as well.[5] Reflection assignments may inform the teacher

of those experiences, but they do not fix the self-reporting problem, and evaluating those assignments becomes more difficult without access to the experience itself.

Furthermore, the indeterminacy, from the teacher's perspective, of service learning can create a disjuncture between the service and academic components of the course, resulting in the frequent complaint that service learning grafts awkwardly onto course curricula. This is less of an issue in professional/vocational courses where the service work fits closely with the skills being acquired (e.g., a law student who works in a legal clinic) or in courses devoted exclusively to the service experience. But few supporters of service learning want to be limited to these formats, especially given the close relationship between the objectives of service learning and those of general education. And they are ill-suited to a catholic discipline like history, which, especially at the lower-division level, emphasizes the interrelation of diverse contexts—social, economic, cultural, political, etc.—that make up the human experience.

We might classify both of these problems as the consequence of what Lee Shulman has termed the "pedagogy of uncertainty." Shulman identifies learning opportunities in the context of a teaching practicum, where the student confronts a problem in real time and without a blueprint for solving it.[6] Scholars of service learning have tended to attribute an equal degree of uncertainty to the instructor, who must relinquish at least some control over the students' learning to the service experience and then adjust their teaching accordingly. Despite longstanding awareness of this dimension of service learning education, a recent review of the literature concluded that the method by which instructors might "hold the tension of planning and unpredictability in working toward their learning objectives… has not been well studied."[7]

Towards an Analogical Model of Service Learning

In approaching these problems from a historian's perspective, I was attracted to the strategy of guided reflection, as best articulated by one of the most popular pedagogical models for service learning. The DEAL (Describe, Examine, and Articulate Learning) model includes an elaborated framework by which students explain what they've learned from the service activity in a way designed to highlight the

learning process within the service activity and its application to other areas of life.[8] The student must explain this application, and in the process "show," as Eyler puts it, what s/he has learned, rather than simply "tell" about the learning. The structural framework provides a vocabulary for this demonstration that can connect to broader course concepts and learning objectives. At the same time, its simplicity facilitates the process of guiding—via dialog with the instructor and student revision of papers/assignments—that is critical to the success of service learning.

But for a course like HNRS 130, DEAL has certain limitations. Perhaps because it is intended as a generic model applicable across the disciplines, DEAL pays relatively little attention to the relationship between the service and academic components of a course. Presumably, the student draws on academic learning to identify the significance and application of service learning, following the common service learning objective to "bring theory to life outside the classroom."[9] DEAL possesses a relatively internalized structure, in which the desired outcomes seem generated primarily through the students' work with the service experience itself. Two questions thus arise: first, how can we integrate that internalized structure into the more diverse landscape of a general education history course? Second, how can we broaden the model to include a process by which the service experience can aid academic learning, rather than just the other way around? In other words, how can we create what Jeffrey Howard calls a "synergistic model" of service learning?[10]

These questions led me to the educational theories of Donald Schön. Schön addresses reflection from the perspective of professional training. For him, reflection is a constituent element not just of training, but also of professional practice itself. This is because, he argues, the professional confronts situations in his/her working life that are unique, for which technical knowledge alone cannot provide entire solutions. In such a context, problem solving often first requires "problem setting":

> In real-world practice, problems do not present themselves to the practitioner as givens. They must be constructed from the materials of problematic situations which are puzzling, troubling, and uncertain… It is this sort of situation that professionals are coming increasingly to see as central to their practice. They are coming to recognize

> that although problem setting is a necessary condition for technical problem solving, it is not itself a technical problem. When we set the problem, we select what we will treat as the "things" of the situation, we set the boundaries of our attention to it, and we impose upon it a coherence which allows us to say what is wrong and in what directions the situation needs to be changed. Problem setting is a process in which, interactively, we *name* the things to which we will attend and *frame* the context in which we will attend to them.[11]

The skill of problem setting, like the skill of problem solving, involves "reflection-in-action," a process that responds to complex, dynamic information with a combination of prior knowledge, technique, logic, and creativity.

Schön focused his work on the professions, but his idea of reflection-in-action applies equally well to many academic disciplines.[12] Historical research, for instance, consists of an encounter with a succession of unique and uncertain situations, all the more so because history purports to address the full spectrum of human experience. And because they examine the past, historians cannot directly observe the object of their analysis. They depend on fragmentary data created and conserved by others for agendas often quite different from those of later researchers, and must consider not only the relationship between the evidence and the object of study, but also the relationship between the historian's understanding of that evidence and of those who created it.[13] Historians thus often eschew overarching theories and systematic methodologies in favor of flexible strategies that can adjust to the wide variety of evidentiary circumstances that characterize a catholic discipline—a trait that history shares with a number of other disciplines and fields in the humanities and social sciences, and even, perhaps, in the natural sciences.[14] All these traits are consistent with the philosophy of professional practice outlined by Schön.

So, too, does reflection-in-action describe the skills and temperament with which we seek to endow our students in a general education course like HNRS 130, and to which service learning is oriented. As in the professions, civic engagement involves confronting unique, complex situations where the problem to be solved must first be set, where technical knowledge often provides only partial utility, and where the practitioner must respond to unstable, dynamic conditions. A properly devised service learning

assignment should, to a degree at least, manifest these conditions by providing a unique, interactive experience with community members that forces students to reflect on their own actions as they participate at the site and afterwards.[15]

Schön's concept of reflection-in-action can help the instructor transcend the distinction between service learning and academic learning, and provide a framework for cross-fertilization between the two modes. As the highest common epistemological divisor, it can serve as the basis for mechanisms designed to achieve Howard's goal of synergy. This is the key principle of what I call an analogical model for the service learning course; reflection becomes not simply a method for service learning, but for integrating academic and service learning under a common framework.

This integration followed from translating the role of analogy in Schön's theory of reflection-in-action and the development of professional expertise to a course like HNRS 130. The acquisition of expertise, according to Schön, involves more than the memorization of technical knowledge, which in itself cannot solve most problems.[16] A professional acquires expertise by developing a "repertoire" of unique experiences from which s/he can draw when confronted with a new situation. Echoing Thomas Kuhn, Schön suggested that the professional could use an earlier experience "as an exemplar of the [new] unfamiliar" experience. S/he would proceed by the process of analogy, comparing the two experiences to each other and using those comparisons to elucidate a course of action. "Reflection-in-action in a unique case may be generalized to other cases," Schön concluded, "not by giving rise to general principles, but by contributing to the practitioner's repertoire of exemplary themes from which, in the subsequent cases of his practice, he may compose new variations."[17] Scholars in other disciplines have identified similar processes by which analogies or "transfer" function to produce knowledge across contexts, scales, and time; Matthew Gallman, for instance, uses the concept of "metaphor" for history and service learning.[18]

HNRS 130 and the Analogical Model

HNRS 130 is part of a three-course "first-year experience" sequence for beginning students in CSULA's Honors College, and is built on the study of Los Angeles. Each course—one in oral

communication, one in arts and humanities, and one (HNRS 130) in social science—corresponds to a requirement in the CSU's general education program. Most regular GE courses in the social science block are taught within a single discipline. While faculty in the College have generally approached the first-year experience courses from their own disciplinary perspective, they do so by placing that discipline in the context of other approaches to studying the city and of the College's emphasis on civic engagement.[19] Given that many historians have traditionally argued for the significance of their discipline by connecting the past to the present, I have placed the historical analysis in HNRS 130 in dialogue with contemporary debates about Los Angeles's political, geographical, economic and social structure, per the course learning outcomes (see **Appendix A** for syllabus).

The analogical model replaced an earlier chronological survey of Los Angeles history with a series of three unique "experiences," or case studies, that engaged students' academic and experiential learning, while allowing them to draw from their own personal experiences as well. The case studies were chosen in part for their variety of scale, and in part for their common histories of complex civic debates about the allocation of rights, resources, and power involving diverse populations. The Port of Los Angeles, the focus of the first case study, comprises with its neighboring Port of Long Beach the largest port in the United States and is a key engine in the local and regional economy. The debates surrounding it have often turned on balancing the pressures of global economic competition with the wages and public health of local workers and the surrounding community. The Port's history tracks the rise of Los Angeles to global prominence, and the topic serves as an excellent example of the relationship between global forces and local conditions.[20]

The second case study is of the Los Angeles River, which runs for fifty-one miles through various municipalities in the Los Angeles basin. It was a critical resource for much of the city's early inhabitants, but in the 1930s, the Army Corps of Engineers paved over most of its banks to eliminate the persistent threat of flooding. More recently, a coalition of environmentalists, neighborhood groups, developers, and politicians has mobilized to rehabilitate the river. As the movement has gathered steam, various debates

have emerged over the design of this rehabilitation—particularly as it affects both different communities along the river as well as commercial, industrial, residential, and environmental priorities—and who will be responsible for its costs. This debate serves as an excellent example of a regional issue affecting different communities and sectors of greater Los Angeles in multiple ways.[21]

The final case study is of Echo Park, a neighborhood located only a couple of miles from downtown Los Angeles. An original locus of L.A.'s film industry and later a middle-class bohemian enclave, the district witnessed an influx of working-class Latino and Asian immigrants after World War II. These demographic changes followed at least partly from a series of disruptions—including the construction of Dodger Stadium in adjacent Chavez Ravine and eviction of its longtime, mostly Latino residents, and the carving of Highway 101 through the heart of the community—in the neighborhood's environs. The recent gentrification of Echo Park has sparked a new set of debates about cultural interaction, neighborhood autonomy, and allocation of resources. As a neighborhood that in both politics and the arts serves as a symbol of the tangled consequences of gentrification (see, for instance, the film *Quinceañera* and the novel *The Madonnas of Echo Park*), it offers an ideal case study of civic relations at a local scale.

For the Echo Park case study, the students participated in a service learning activity with 826LA, located on the neighborhood's major commercial thoroughfare.[22] The 826 organization was conceived in San Francisco in 2002 by the novelist Dave Eggers and now includes branches in a number of American cities. It offers a series of in-school and after-school tutoring sessions that focus on creative writing, and was designed to recruit writers and workers in the "creative economy" to assist schoolteachers in educating schoolchildren, particularly those from non-English speaking homes.[23] The Echo Park chapter has become popular by drawing working-class, mostly Latino students from nearby public schools and tutors from the "creative class" now living in the area. It thus encapsulates many of the elements of the changing neighborhood and can serve not only as a site of service, but also as a site of learning about how broad forces affect a local area. The work at 826LA offers as an entrée into examining how the city's educational structure affects the life chances of working-class children of different cultural backgrounds.

Together, these three case studies connect historical elements of L.A.'s development to contemporary social and political issues affecting diverse groups of Angelenos. This approach sacrifices a broad overview of the city's history in favor of a deeper exploration of case studies that can serve as reference points for other historical and contemporary investigations.[24]

The case study approach followed Schön's favored educational model, the practicum. Replicating his single instructor-single student model was not feasible, but I tried to approximate it by relegating the acquisition of data/content/experience to course readings, field trips and field assignments (to the Port, the River, a public meeting of the student's choice, etc.), and campus visits/discussions with River activists and a Port engineer. Likewise, the 826LA work functioned as a primary source of learning about Echo Park and local non-profit institutions. The intent was to reduce the distinction between textual/academic modes of learning and experiential modes of learning as represented by the service project. Each mode of learning maintained a similar relationship to the case studies, encouraging students to treat them as consonant, if not precisely equivalent, sources of knowledge acquisition. Finally, many of the assignments and class exercises required students to use their study of the past and present to devise solutions to contemporary issues. Organizing the course this way freed up class time and assignments for reflection work. As much as possible, given the format of the course, I shaped my instructional role along the lines that Schön envisioned—as a mentor who intervenes and helps to guide the students' internalized reflective dialog. Thus, reflection became the primary mode of evaluation and assessment for the entire course, not just the service learning component.

The scaffolding of reflection assignments followed in general terms the progression laid out by the DEAL model. Early assignments focused on descriptive/observational tasks, especially of the field trips to the Port and River, as well as of the initial orientation at 826LA. At the same time, the students engaged in classroom exercises designed to develop the vocabulary necessary for the "evaluation" stage of reflection. To keep the service learning component integrated with the other case studies, I selected readings for the Port and River that included historical analyses of civic activists. These activists served in some ways to model civic

behavior for the students; some evaluation assignments concerned their actions, so that students could draw on exemplars when they imagined engaging themselves in the "articulation" assignments. Much of the evaluation assignments followed Schön's concept of problem-setting in that students identified the key issues and questions that emerged from the various sources they had consulted. For instance, I might organize a class discussion around defining the problem posed by the clerical workers' Port Strike of 2012: did the problem in this case lie in the erosion of local workers' access to good jobs, compared to earlier eras? The disparate impacts of a globalizing labor market? The usurpation of the Port's right to compete with other ports? The economic implications for port-dependent industries? Some combination of these and/or other problems? How would different participants in the Port's network set the problem, and how should the concerned citizen do so? How did the historical legacy of job actions at the Port shape responses to this strike? Students would draw on their study of the Port's history, a review of contemporary journalism, a field trip to the Port itself, and class meetings with Port personnel to apply their knowledge to setting the problem of the Strike.

As the course progressed, our exercises in problem-setting increasingly made comparisons across time—a common historians' practice—and context. One exercise that involved identifying priorities for river restoration, for instance, asked students to base their answers on the historical development of the river and some of the uses it once provided for Angelenos and the watershed. Comparing debates about whether to pave the river in the 1930s with those to "restore" the river in the 2010s helped to expand the students' understandings of the possibilities and challenges of restoration. Making comparisons across case studies could accomplish the same purpose. I often began this bridging work by simply asking students to apply something they learned from their study of the Port to an issue that they confronted in their work at 826LA, and vice versa. Initially, the discussion usually turned on basic issues of communication; students might, for instance, explain how Port activists' attempts to convince the public to support environmental regulation mirrored a tutor's efforts to get a recalcitrant student to focus on their homework. As the quarter progressed, however, students' attention, with some guidance, often

turned to the inequalities in the city's educational system as revealed, challenged, and, perhaps in some aspects, even reinforced by 826LA. At this point, the comparisons to the Port or the L.A. River took on a different tenor; students began to understand that their tutoring work was embedded in a more complex set of social relations than they had realized, and that their experience in 826 could help them learn about how to engage other kinds of social issues.

The last "articulation" phase of the course instantiated the analogical model across time and context by creating a series of scenarios—that is, simulations of political issues or debates combining two or more of our case studies. These scenarios are based on Schön's concept of the practicum as a "virtual world" that "seeks to represent essential features of a practice to be learned while enabling students to experiment at low risk," balancing an approximation of the real-world conditions it mimics while abstracting those conditions sufficiently to permit the engagement of untrained students.[25] They range from brief, hypothetical situations introduced during class discussion to elaborate role-playing assignments involving multiple criteria that prompted students, either individually or in groups, to define and justify a course of action drawn from contemporary analysis and historical research.[26] The class discussions offered me the opportunity to listen to and participate in the students' reflection, and the written assignments offered students the opportunity to develop a more rigorous and contemplated line of argument.

The final take-home exam (see **Appendix B**) is the culminating example of these articulation assignments, so I will use it to describe the approach. In the scenario, students imagine themselves belonging to a typical family residing in an area straddling Echo Park and the L.A. River. They must decide how to respond to a proposed extension of the Port's rail network through the L.A. Riverbed that will drastically alter their neighborhood with multiple and uncertain consequences. The exercise involves both setting the problem, in terms of framing the relevant issues for the family through a combined analyses of the three case studies and their interactions, and "solving" it, in the sense that the student must devise a strategy for achieving a suitable outcome that takes note of the political and social structures we have examined throughout the course. The students draw on comparisons to past events to assess the potential

implications of the project looking forward to the future of their (imagined) children, as well as to guidance for developing their mobilization campaign. Following the analogical model, students are encouraged to draw comparisons across case studies, thereby incorporating their service learning work at 826 as a constituent element in the evaluation along with the other elements of the course.

The analogical model addresses the two challenges of incorporating service learning into a course like HNRS 130. First, it provides a scaffolded method for encouraging students to apply their work to different scenarios or case studies established by the professor, who can guide the reflective process more easily than when reflection remains internal to the service learning experience itself. The process of bridging service learning work with other case studies forces students to "show" what they've learned rather than "tell" about it, and provides the professor with reference points to evaluate the transformation in disposition. Second, the model reduces the distance between service learning and other forms of learning by integrating it into broader discussions and assignments, thereby encouraging students to think of this work as integral, rather than ancillary to the course.

Assessing the Analogical Model

Schön contends that the ultimate learning outcomes of reflection-in-action conducted in a student practicum may occur years later, when the "background learning" from the course is resuscitated by a new and unfamiliar context. "[I]mmediate judgments of what has been learned" at the end of a course, he claims, "are bound to be partial and proximate."[27] This does not excuse us from some attempt at assessment. While student surveys indicate that students found the analogical model somewhat more challenging and appealing than students in sections taught under a different model, this finding, of course, suffers from the self-reporting problem. I am in the process of developing another assessment tool that compares the final assignment to a "pretest" given at the start of the course. In addition to measuring content and skills, it tries to identify how students, in outlining their evaluation of the scenario and devising a strategy for acting in it, might demonstrate that they have imaginatively placed themselves into the role they were articulating, thereby

demonstrating a transformation in disposition that they had not been asked about directly.[28]

My work on this tool has prompted several thoughts about assessing dispositional transformation. The first is that prompts should ask not about the student's general disposition towards civic engagement, but their disposition towards specific issues covered in the course's case studies. Applying the question to the case study may suggest a focus on the case as much as or more than on the student, who is essentially asked to place her/himself into the communities of interest. The students, in other words, may not realize how they're "supposed" to answer. Second, the initial assessment may be conducted in concert with a vocabulary building exercise, and may appropriate some of the vocabulary developed by the class. Again, this practice may mask the object of the question, and prompt more truthful answers. Finally, I intend to conduct more reflection work on dispositions as oral, rather than written, exercises, as students are less liable to think of class discussion as something that's graded. This last point underscores my growing conviction that class discussion is at least as crucial as written work for course outcomes. Dialog maximizes the opportunities for reflection-in-action by requiring real-time responses, and the professor's presence allows for better and more immediate monitoring than in written assignments, where steps must be taken to ensure students read and internalize the instructor's comments on their papers. Classroom dialog exercises allow for more immediate adjustments to the "pedagogy of uncertainty," and foregrounds the communication processes that are crucial to effective reflection work.

Notes

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1. This definition sidesteps the debate about the relationship between service learning and civic engagement; some scholars feel that most forms of

service learning do not adequately address issues of power, and that true civic engagement should involve not only work in the community, but also "active" engagement drawing on the views of community members. Though I agree with many of these distinctions, I still contend that service learning can be valuable if the relations of power embedded in the service work are contextualized and explored reflectively within the course. I would argue further that, in practical terms, civic engagement projects possessing all the qualities described above are much more difficult to build and maintain than traditional service learning projects, particularly on the scale necessary for use in larger general education courses. For this reason, we cannot expect the former to supplant the latter entirely. For more on the distinction between service learning and civic engagement, see Ashley Finley, "Civic Learning and Democratic Engagements: A Review of the Literature on Civic Engagement in Post-Secondary Education," Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2011, <http://www.aacu.org/civic_learning/crucible/documents/LiteratureReview.pdf >.

2. See, for instance, Sarah L. Ash, Patti H. Clayton, and Maxine P. Atkinson, "Integrating Reflection and Assessment to Improve Student Learning," *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 11, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 49-60; Stephanie Taylor Stokamer, "Pedagogical Catalysts of Civic Competence: The Development of a Critical Epistemological Model for Community-Based Learning," Ph.D. diss., Portland State University, 2011, esp. 49-65. Bill M. Donovan makes a similar argument from a historian's perspective in "Service-Learning as a Strategy for Advancing the Contemporary University and Discipline of History," in *Connecting Past and Present: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in History*, ed. Ira Harkavy and Bill M. Donovan (Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2005), 11-26. On the origins of general education and its connection to citizenship, see Louis Menand, *The Marketplace of Ideas: Reform and Resistance in the American University* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010), 23-57.

3. Janet S. Eyler, "What Do We Most Need to Know About the Impact of Service Learning on Student Learning?" *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* Special Issue (Fall 2000): 11-17.

4. For a study critiquing self-reporting, see Nicholas A. Bowman and Tricia A. Seifert, "Can College Students Accurately Assess What Affects Their Learning and Development?" *Journal of College Student Development* 52, no. 3 (May-June 2011): 270-290.

5. Significant instructor observation of service learning work is often a practical impossibility unless all students complete the service requirement at the same time. In the course I taught, students scheduled their hours with the community partner individually, so that my attendance at the field site overlapped with only a small percentage of the forty-four students engaged in the project.

6. Lee Shulman, "Pedagogies of Uncertainty," *Liberal Education* 91, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 18-25.

7. Quotation from Stokamer, "Pedagogical Catalysts of Civic Competence," 100. See as well Jeffrey P. F. Howard, "Academic Service Learning: A Counternormative Pedagogy," *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 73 (Spring 1998): 21-29.

8. Sarah L. Ash and Patti H. Clayton, "The Articulated Learning: An Approach to Guided Reflection and Assessment," *Innovative Higher Education* 29, no. 2 (Winter 2004): 142, <http://www.uwosh.edu/usp/usp-teaching-resources/resource-documents/ash2004-articulated-learning.pdf>.

9. See, for instance, *Service Learning Resource Guide for Faculty and Community Partners*, Center for Community Engagement, California State University Long Beach, 2012, pp. 25, 60, <http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/personnel/cce/faculty/documents/ResourceGuideforFacultyFINAL92212.pdf>; Jeffrey F. P. Howard, ed., Service-Learning Course Design Workbook (Ann Arbor, MI: OCSL Press, 2001), <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED457774.pdf>.

10. Howard, "A Counternormative Pedagogy"; J. Matthew Gallman, "Service-Learning and History: Training the Metaphorical Mind," in *Connecting Past and Present: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in History*, ed. Ira Harkavy and Bill M. Donovan (Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, 2000), 63. Howard and Gallman describe the effect such a model would have on student dispositions, but not the structural features of the model itself.

11. Donald Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic, 1983), 40.

12. The distinction between disciplines and professions may not be so great if James Banner is correct when he argues that the former refers to methods of learning and the latter to the "arena" in which that learning is "enacted." James Banner, *Being a Historian: An Introduction to the Professional World of History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-33.

13. Sam Wineburg calls this last issue in historical investigation "the tension between the familiar and the strange." *Historical Thinking and Other Natural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001), 5.

14. John Lewis Gaddis charts some of these cross-disciplinary connections in *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

15. Schön terms post facto reflection as "reflection-on-action," the second component of reflective practice.

16. This argument parallels the commonly accepted claim that memorizing historical facts does not in and of itself enable the practice of history. See, for instance, Stephanie van Hover, David Hicks, and Stephen Cotton, "Can You Make History Sound More Friendly?: Towards the Construction of a Reliable and Validated History Teaching Observation Instrument," *The History Teacher* 45, no. 4 (August 2012): 603-604.

17. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner*, 138-140.

18. Douglas Hofstadter and Emmanuel Sander, *Surfaces and Essences: Analogy as the Fuel and Fire of Thinking* (New York: Basic Books, 2013). Gallman, "Service-Learning and History."

19. See the College's mission statement at <http://web.calstatela.edu/academic/honorscollege/missionvision.php>. My summary of the Honors College and its curriculum are taken from material on this website.

20. The course text for this case study was written by a journalist who framed his analysis of the Port's contemporary conditions in the context of its historical development, labor relations, and civic activism. Bill Sharpsteen, *The Docks* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011).

21. The course text for this case study comes from a historical geographer who traces the evolution of the River from its pre-human "natural" state through the indigenous and European settlement of the basin to the rehabilitation effort. Blake Gumprecht, *The Los Angeles River: Its Life, Death, and Possible Rebirth* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

22. For more information on 826LA, see <http://www.826la.org>.

23. For a summary of the organization's early history, see Dave Eggers's 2008 TED talk, "My Wish: Once Upon a School," at <http://www.ted.com/talks/dave_eggers_makes_his_ted_prize_wish_once_upon_a_school>.

24. The decision to give up the survey approach was easier in this case because so few students in CSULA's Honors College major in history or the social sciences. The case study model more closely resembled the approaches common to their majors in business, the natural sciences, and public health, and thus proved more effective in convincing them of a given topic's significance.

25. Donald A. Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1987), 170.

26. Role-playing has been long been common pedagogical practice in history, though its connection to service learning and civic engagement remains relatively unexplored. Steven S. Volk, "Empathy and Engagement: Using Avatars to Bring Students Into History," *Peer Review* 14, no. 3 (Summer 2012): 6, <http://www.aacu.org/peerreview/pr-SU12/Volk.cfm>; Kathryn N. McDaniel, "Four Elements of Successful Historical Role-Playing in the Classroom," *The History Teacher* 33, no. 3 (May 2000): 357-362.

27. Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, 168.

28. I have not included a version of this tool in this article because it remains, through trial and copious error, a work in progress. But the final paragraph explains some of the insights I have developed as a result of this work.

Appendix A: Syllabus (abridged)

California State University, Los Angeles - Honors College
HNRS 130: Reading Los Angeles:
Community and Structure in the Metropolis

Catalog Description

Strategies for understanding the social, political, economic, and cultural structures and processes that shape the modern metropolis.

Course Description

HNRS 101 and HNRS 110 introduced you to the resources of the University and the ways of maximizing your education (by, for instance, developing skills like public speaking). In HNRS 130, we build on the fall quarter by turning to an examination of the city in which we live. The design of this course proceeds from the conviction that full participation in society requires an awareness of the different contexts (economic, social, political, etc.) and scales (local, regional, global, etc.) by which that society is organized. Fortunately for us, Los Angeles offers a great encapsulation of all dimensions of society. As a historian, I approach the study of the city primarily from that discipline, but we will be combining different academic perspectives with field and service learning to analyze the myriad issues and processes that have shaped the city, and to argue for changes that might improve urban life. The Honors College sees this course, like the other courses in the sequence, as an opportunity for you to learn how to become a more informed and involved participant in your community, the nation, and the world. Considered in the proper perspective, this opportunity should help you explore how your chosen major and career might serve to influence aspects of urban life beyond its immediate concerns.

Because L.A. is just a little too big to figure out in ten weeks (!), we will be focusing our work on three case studies: 1. The Port of Los Angeles/ Long Beach; 2. The Los Angeles River: 3. The local neighborhood, especially as represented in Echo Park. These three case studies help to encapsulate, respectively, the global, regional, and local contexts in which Los Angeles has developed, although of course each case study embodies all three scales.

Within and throughout these case studies, we will be examining several other elements of modern L.A.: the news media (particularly the *Los*

Angeles Times), the structure of government, the structure of urban development/city planning, and the local educational system. This list leaves out a lot, but it does, in my opinion, provide a workable entry into understanding this city and our place within it.

Course Content Learning Outcomes

Understand and apply the methodologies of the social sciences to the examination of modern urban environments. (GE Goal 5, Objective 2).

Understand the multiple factors that shape modern urban political systems and use that knowledge to make informed, critical assessments about issues affecting urban life and politics. (GE, Block D and HNRS, Civic Engagement section, Objective 2).

Identify and explain the relationship between local and global conditions, practices, and contexts. (HNRS, Global Citizenship section, Objective 2).

Honors College Civic Engagement Outcomes

Integrate their academic work with community engagement, producing a tangible product that has engaged community constituents and responded to community needs and assets through the process.

Connect and extend knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from different disciplines to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbooks

Gumprecht, Blake. *The Los Angeles River*. ISBN: 0801866421
Sharpsteen, Bill. *The Docks*. ISBN: 0520271351
Available at Campus Bookstore and Student Book Mart.

Other Readings

Other readings will be available on the Moodle page I am maintaining for this course. Because our case studies feature ongoing issues, I may assign newspaper articles related to them that appear during the quarter. In addition, students will be conducting their own independent research at various times during the quarter.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Course Participation (20%): This component will assess attendance and participation in class discussion, activities, as well as timely completion of the service requirement at 826LA. Students will not be marked down for the content of their contributions to discussions unless they are disrespectful or disruptive, or unless their participation indicates a lack of preparation. There is no formula for this component—I grade you at my discretion.

Report on Public Meeting Visit (10%): All students will visit and report on a meeting called by some body of local civic government—a city or community council, board of education, redevelopment commission, etc. Instructions to be provided.

Los Angeles Times Report (10%): Instructions to be provided.

Miscellaneous Assignments and "Journal" Entries (25% total): Most weeks, you will be asked to write short entries on various aspects of the course. Topics will be given out the prior week, and should be submitted to the appropriate forum page on Moodle.

Final Exam (35%): Take-home essay project that will ask you to incorporate the various elements of the course with the reading.

Course Schedule
HNRS 130: Reading Los Angeles, Winter 2013

The following schedule identifies the reading schedule for our two core textbooks, the due dates for major assignments, and some other fixed aspects of our agenda. Unless otherwise noted, readings are due on Monday of the Week Assigned. This schedule is NOT comprehensive, and is subject to change with prior notice from the instructor. We will have additional readings, usually posted on Moodle, and each student will be conducting some of their own research. I will make announcements about schedule changes in class and will post the changes on Moodle.

Table 1: Course Schedule

Week	Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Course Introduction/The Orientation to Urban Space - Port of Los Angeles Field Trip - 826 Orientation; Dave Eggers talk (Moodle)
2	Reading: Gumprecht, Intro-ch. 2; - L.A. River Field Trip
3	Reading: Gumprecht, ch. 3-4; Price, "Thirteen Ways" (Moodle)
4	Reading: Gumprecht, ch. 5-6; L.A. River Master Plan excerpts (Moodle)
5	Reading: Sharpsteen, Preface-ch. 5 Public Meeting Assignment due Feb. 6 (Sect. 1) or Feb. 7 (Sect. 2)
6	Reading: Sharpsteen, ch. 6-10 Interview with Sal Zambrano, Port Engineer (TBA)
7	Reading: Sharpsteen, ch. 11-16
8	Reading: Research for *LA Times* Report; Yancey Quinones interview (Moodle); Interview with Yancey Quinones (TBA); group meeting with instructor (TBA)
9	*LA Times* Report due Mar. 6 (Sect. 1) or Mar.7 (Sect. 2) Interview with 826LA staff member (TBA)
10	Individual Meetings with instructor (TBA)
Final Exam	Exam due in my office by 7pm

1. Concordance of 826LA Work and HNRS 130 Learning Outcomes

- HNRS 130 is designed to help students develop the skills to integrate knowledge acquired through various social science disciplines in ways that are analytically valid and useful for civic improvement. Using Los Angeles as a case study, students will examine the historical evolution of the city's communities and community structures from a variety of viewpoints (economic, political, geographical, etc.). Building on their work in HNRS 101 and HNRS 110, students will learn how to assess information from diverse sources in order to engage in civically significant activities.
- Their participation in 826LA programs will provide a venue for students to develop these skills. This course will focus on the intersection of education and civic empowerment and on the ways that persons can improve educational opportunities for different communities in Los Angeles and around the world. 826LA is a tutoring program focused on improving the reading and writing skills of elementary, middle school, and high school children/youths. It provides a way for students to participate in such an effort and to examine how education influences other aspects of community life.
- In order to assess the learning derived from the activity, students will be asked to document their experience through a series of "journal" entries that document aspects of their learning experience. These entry assignments (there will be specific prompts for each one) will follow a pedagogical scaffold that is designed to help students reflect on their participation in the project and its relationship to the academic work conducted in HNRS 130.

2. Activities for Students Involvement

- In addition to the orientation that was done this fall in HNRS 110, students will complete a 90-minute training session at 826LA as part of their 16 hours of community engagement work for the quarter. Students will then be working, generally on a one-to-one basis, with elementary, middle, and high school children/youths who have signed up for 826LA programs. Students will sign up (via the Internet) for sessions that fit into their schedule. At least one staff member (and usually more) will be on hand at the site

at all times. The specific activities that students engage in may vary with different sessions—most, initially, will involve helping the child/youth to complete school homework or assignments. Students may have the options to sign up for "workshops," which are specialized sessions built around a specific concept or idea to improve writing. Students may, in addition, sign up for other specific sessions, such as workshops to help high school students write essays for college applications. Additional training may sometimes be required if the student wants to participate in those sessions.

3. Risks Associated with the Activities

- On rare occasions, students may be placed with children who have learning disabilities. Such children constitute only a small minority of 826LA's client base. Students who feel uncomfortable with a child/youth because of child's/youth's behavior may speak with the on-site coordinator about reassignment to another child/youth.

Appendix B: Final Assignment (abridged)

The Situation

You and your family live in Elysian Valley (I prefer to use its longtime nickname, Frogtown) by the L.A. River. The neighborhood is situated between our first two stops on the L.A. River tour, the Glendale Narrows and the Arroyo Confluence. It's adjacent to Echo Park and has similar socio-economic characteristics (population statistics are available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elysian_Valley,_Los_Angeles>). Your family sends their kids to 826LA and resembles others that do so.

One day, you get a letter in the mail informing you that the Army Corps of Engineers, the city and county governments, the Port of Los Angeles, and numerous private firms have developed a plan to expand the freight and passenger railroad network through the Alameda Corridor, into the Los Angeles Riverbed and past Frogtown. This extension will allow

containers to be shipped to a new distribution hub north of the city (for transfer to trucks and cross-country trains), and it will help strengthen the public transportation network for the city. The plan, if implemented, will have the following consequences.

1. It will displace a number of existing homes in Frogtown, though not all of them, to make room for some of the machinery and industry required to build and maintain the extension. It's not clear at this point whether your home would be displaced.
2. It will reduce the park-space along the River as well as some of its "natural" features (like the open riverbed section along the Glendale Narrows), but the bicycle routes/walkways and some parks will be preserved.
3. The potential impact on property values is uncertain. Although the neighborhood will lose some of its aesthetic appeal, the passenger system will make transportation easier and may thus make the area more desirable; gentrification is a possibility (For this point and for #1 above, I will let you decide whether your family owns its home or rents. If you're renting, keep in mind that older dwellings like those in Frogtown are protected by rent control, so there is a limit to how much your landlord can raise your rent).
4. The project will create two kinds of jobs: 1. a large number of low-skilled, low-paying construction and maintenance jobs; 2. a smaller number of jobs in design, engineering, and operations that pay much better but require at least a bachelor's degree and more often a master's degree. The Port has agreed to give preferential consideration to applicants from areas affected by the development as long as they have the required qualifications.

The letter notifies you that the County has called a public meeting for residents of Frogtown, Echo Park, Atwater Village, and other neighborhoods in the vicinity. After talking with your neighbors and reading the *LA Times*, you learn that there are many supporters and opponents of the plan, both in Frogtown and throughout Los Angeles. Furthermore, an election is coming up, and every one (not totally realistic, but let's say so for the sake of the assignment) of your elected representatives is campaigning to keep her/his seat.

The Assignment

Your assignment is to write up a strategic plan detailing how you would respond to the proposed project. Your plan will have the following components:

1. A position statement on the project, based on the details presented above, which you will justify based on your interest as a stakeholder. How will you benefit or suffer under this plan? In this section, you may take a strong position in favor of or against the project, or you may identify your position as more ambivalent; for instance, you are cautiously supportive but have the following concerns, or you generally oppose it but could change your mind if certain adjustments were made. The important component of this section is that you explain why you're taking the position you're taking.
2. A strategy agenda that explains how you are going to attempt to influence the outcome of the debate over the plan. This agenda should identify those persons, groups, and/or organizations that you would contact for support; included in this list should be TWO (no more, no less) elected office-holders (you know their names and offices because we're going to assume you have the same representatives as the family living adjacent to 826LA that you used to look up this information a few weeks ago). You should indicate why you have identified these office-holders and other stakeholders as particularly useful allies. You will then indicate WHAT you want your allies to do, whether with respect to the public meetings, the elections, or some other strategy you devise yourself.
3. Finally, a statement of principles that explains why the position you're taking is the best policy for the Los Angeles region **as a whole**. This section is different from section one. In section one, you are explaining your position based on your own personal interests. In this section, you are making an argument for your position based on the common good, so you must use the ethical criteria that we've been developing for evaluating disputes in complex urban environments. Your argument here must, therefore, demonstrate an awareness of positions counter to yours.

Resources for Research

No outside research is necessary. You should be drawing from:

1. The historical and contemporary analysis in our readings, both the books and the material posted on Moodle.
2. Your work at 826LA, whether the experience itself, the forum postings, or class discussions (including the visit from Laura/Marisa), especially as it clues you into the circumstances and motivations of the local families.
3. The public meeting assignment you conducted, and our classroom discussions on it.
4. Notes from our "public meeting" presentations on the River and the research you did to prepare for it.
5. The *LA Times* research assignment and class presentations.
6. Any other class discussions or presentations, including the lectures on Echo Park's history (assume Frogtown's history is similar) and on public education in California.
7. Our field trips to the Port and the River.
8. Our classroom visits from Sal Zambrano and Yancey Quinones.
9. Your group assignment to identify the political representatives of the Echo Park area.
10. Remember the vocabulary we have been using to explain urban space, historical developments, and the criteria for making ethical evaluations!

Parameters

Your final paper should be at least 10 full pages, typed, double-spaced, with conventional fonts and margins. The three sections of the plan should be of roughly equal length. These guidelines should help you figure how much detail I'm expecting you to include, assuming that you write clearly and efficiently.

Rationale

Do I need to point out that this is a culminating project designed to encourage you to incorporate the work that we've done this quarter into a single project? I fully expect that this exercise will propel you into spring quarter, HNRS 120, social innovation, the third year globalization seminars, a scintillating honors thesis, and a lifetime of civic leadership! ☺