

Claire Snyder-Hall, PhD; Independent Scholar
Final Report on PACE Faculty Fellowship 2016/17
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It was a great honor to be granted a PACE Faculty Fellowship this year, and I made good progress on my project – sharing my research at a national conference, publishing an article in an internationally respected academic journal, and finding a publisher for the larger book project.

Description of the Project

Civic engagement as done at American universities strives to remain non-partisan, yet participation in political life occurs via political parties. My proposed project puts the politics back into civic engagement with a study of my experiences in electoral and party politics, as well as participation in progressive social movements. An autoethnography, my book uses my own experiences as data and analyzes them in light of political theory and academic literature. The book strives to be a memoir that addresses larger political debates, along the lines of Joan Walsh's *What's the Matter with White People: Why We Long for a Golden Age That Never Was*, J.D. Vance's *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*, or Ta-Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me*.

The research question asks: What happens when a democratic theory professor gets involved in electoral politics? In this autoethnography, I examine my experiences in state politics – running for state senate, lobbying my representatives, and working for progressive change – and put my self-reflections into dialogue with larger conversations about political theory, electoral and social movement politics, gender politics, American political culture, and civic engagement. I discuss how we need to integrate the values and goals of the civic engagement movement into electoral politics, instead of viewing the political realm as disconnected from our civic engagement work. This work aims to inspire students to become more involved in political life, whether running for office, doing advocacy work, or joining a social movement.

Though a memoir, I tell my story in generic form (omitting names), since my experiences most likely exemplify broader phenomena. Although I focus on the internal shenanigans of the Democratic party, the larger issues addressed in the manuscript concern human psychology, institutional power, and political culture, so I suspect my analysis might speak to Republican party activists as well.

After years of encouraging my students to be knowledgeable, engaged, and efficacious, I decided to become involved in small state electoral politics. Far from the democratic culture one might expect to find in the world's "greatest democracy," I encountered a political milieu characterized by an array of anti-democratic values and processes – where a letter to the editor sets off a smear campaign, severed friendships, and a party split.

In contrast to Morris Fiorina, who argues that politics is populated by ideological purists, I found local politics to be characterized, not by polarized values, but by the desire of politicians to achieve and maintain power and, even worse, the desire of insiders to bask in the glow of that power – reproducing what Machiavelli scholar, Maurizio Viroli describes as a dynamic of "Prince and courtiers." These

experiences raise the question: How is republican self-government possible when neither everyday people nor their representatives have any respect for democratic values?

Chapter 1 begins at the university and shares with readers the lessons about democratic theory and practice I sought to convey in the classroom and in my scholarship about the normative values underlying democratic self-government, what could be done to strengthen democracy, and the need for citizens to remain vigilant and active. My scholarship focuses on the civic republican tradition, particularly Machiavelli and Rousseau, American political thought, and the republican roots of socialism. This book uses that theoretical lens to frame my analysis.

Chapter 2 describes my two-year campaign for state senate (2013-2014). Chapter 3 tells the story of my battle with the Speaker of the House (2015). Chapter 4 focuses on the role of parties. It recounts my experiences helping a friend challenge the Speaker in a primary and allowing the Bernie Sanders campaign to use our home as its headquarters. The book concludes with recommendations for the future and lays out a number of pathways for young people to engage in political and civic life.

Dissemination of Research

Over the course of the past year, I focused on the book's third chapter, recounting my battle with the Speaker of the House. I presented a 40-page paper about that experience at the 50th Anniversary Conference of the Caucus for a New Political Science, held on February 26-28, 2017 in South Padre Island, TX. The workshop format of the conference provided lots of time for discussion, and the paper benefited greatly from participants' comments and the discussant's commentary.

The editors of the Caucus journal, *New Political Science: A Journal of Politics and Culture*, told me that they wanted to publish my work in the upcoming special issue on conference proceedings. I submitted a 5000-word essay, based on the longer paper. The editorially reviewed piece, "Battling the Prince: A Political Memoir," is forthcoming in December. I will provide a copy of the article, as soon as it's published.

In addition, I drew on the work done during the PACE Fellowship year for my comments on a roundtable at the American Political Science Associate annual meeting on September 2 in San Francisco, "Backward and Forward: Fifty Years of the Caucus for a New Political Science."

Because of the visibility of my work, Dr. Bradley MacDonald has indicated that he would like to publish my book in the New Political Science book series with the State University of New York Press, which he edits. I plan to submit a prospectus by the end of the fall semester.

The Value of PACE

Thank you very much for granting me a Faculty Fellowship to support my work. Having to present my work at a conference spurred me to make progress on the project, and I now hope to see it come to fruition over the course of the next couple of years.