The Youth Civic Web: Charting the Learning Landscape

A slide show illustrating how youth civic engagement sites offer learning opportunities geared to different citizenship styles and civic skills
• Youth culture increasingly defined by:
  – Social networks
  – Distributed political organizations
  – Participatory media

• Research Questions:
  – What kinds of civic learning opportunities are offered by youth engagement sites?
  – How can we assess qualities of civic learning online?
### Theoretical Overview: citizenship orientations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional: Dutiful Citizen (DC)</th>
<th>Emerging: Actualizing Citizen (AC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong sense of duty to participate in government</td>
<td>Weak duty to participate in government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting &amp; civic organizations ~ core of public life</td>
<td>Focus on lifestyle politics: political consumerism, volunteering, social activism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed about issues and government – consumes news &amp; information through Mainstream Media</td>
<td>Mistrust of media and politicians - (do not follow politics in the news) produce &amp; share information via digital media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join social organizations &amp; parties -- sharper public/private distinction</td>
<td>Join online networks: mix personal relationships and social action</td>
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</table>
### Learning Categories by Citizenship Orientation: Dutiful Citizens vs. Actualizing Citizens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Joining Publics</th>
<th>Take Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information that citizens should know</td>
<td>Training in effective public communication skills</td>
<td>Learning to connect to others through networks and groups</td>
<td>Opportunities to act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>DC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>AC</td>
<td>AC</td>
<td>AC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informatio provided by external authorities</td>
<td>Informatio created and shared by peers</td>
<td>Traditional forms of public address</td>
<td>Formal org membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informatio created and shared by peers</td>
<td>Information provided by external authorities</td>
<td>Self-produced digital media</td>
<td>Peer initiated groups or networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informatio created and shared by peers</td>
<td>Information provided by external authorities</td>
<td>Informatio created and shared by peers</td>
<td>Activities defined and offered by authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informatio created and shared by peers</td>
<td>Information provided by external authorities</td>
<td>Informatio created and shared by peers</td>
<td>Activities generated by individuals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Archive Overview:

- 90 Web sites were studied and coded for AC and DC traits.

- Sites were categorized as:
  - Online only: mtv.com; idealist.org; YouthNoise [n=35]
  - Government: epa.gov/students; Obama/McCain/Clinton [n=15]
  - Community Organizations: girlscouts.org, citykids.com [n=20]
  - Interest Groups: unicef.org/voy, studentsforafreetibet.org [n=20]

- The following archive presents representative examples of the four site types representing AC or DC learning opportunities.

- Some Web sites contained both AC and DC traits, while some site categories did not contain any examples of a few learning opportunities:
  - Government: no offerings of AC Take Action
  - Community Organizations: no AC Expression
  - Interest Groups: no AC Expression
Online Only Sites:

- AC Knowledge
- AC Expression
- AC Join Publics
- AC Take Action
- DC Knowledge
- DC Expression
- DC Join Publics
- DC Take Action
Online Only Sites:

AC Knowledge

AC Expression

AC Join Publics

AC Take Action

DC Knowledge

DC Expression

DC Join Publics

DC Take Action
AC Knowledge

Site name: Youthnoise
Site type: Online only
Learning opportunity: Knowledge
Citizenship style: AC
Description: User-generated civic toolkits

Antidote to Disempowerment
Emmagoldman: I hate feeling like a flyspeck, a cog, a statistic, a demographic, or a social security number.

Tell a Story Through Visual Arts
gilliebean: You could tell people about the family of rats nesting in the wall, or you could show them; what’s more effective (and creepy)?

Right To Learn Resources
The one-stop shop for everything you need to make your Day of Action successful. From organizing to ideas, budget info to successful examples, it's all here.
AC Expression

Site name: Progressive U
Site type: Online Only
Learning opportunity: Expression
Citizenship style: AC
Description: Instructions on how to blog and use the site

About Progressive U (11)
Wondering why you should use the site? This guide will answer the following questions:

About the Blogging For Progress Scholarship (12)
Did you know that Progressive U offers scholarship opportunities? This guide will answer any of your questions about winning the Scholarship!

About Blogs and Writing (17)
Answers to questions regarding how to blog, when to blog, and what to blog about. Also explains some added features about blogging at Progressive U.
AC Join Publics

Site name: ThinkMTV
Site type: Online Only
Learning opportunity: Join Publics
Citizenship style: AC
Description: User-created online groups
AC Take Action

Site name: Do Something
Site type: Online Only
Learning opportunity: Take Action
Citizenship style: AC
Description: User-fueled project database
Site name: Declare Yourself
Site type: Online only
Learning opportunity: Knowledge
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Information on voter registration and the party nomination process
DC Expression

Site name: Pearl World Youth News
Site type: Online only
Learning opportunity: Expression
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Expression through traditional letters to the editor
DC Join Publics

Site name: PETA Street Team
Site type: Online only
Learning opportunity: Join Publics
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Opportunity for involvement through membership in organizational teams
DC Take Action

Site name: Wiretap
Site type: Online only
Learning opportunity: Take action
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Donation requests for $10+
Government/Party Sites:

- ✔ AC Knowledge
- ✔ AC Expression
- ✔ AC Join Publics
- ✗ AC Take Action
- ✔ DC Knowledge
- ✔ DC Expression
- ✔ DC Join Publics
- ✔ DC Take Action
AC Knowledge

Site name: Hillblazers
Site type: Gov’t/Party
Learning opportunity: Knowledge
Citizenship style: AC
Description: User-generated promotional material
AC Expression

Site name: Young Democrats of America
Site type: Gov’t/Party
Learning opportunity: Expression
Citizenship style: AC
Description: Information on using Demopolis for communication and organization

SOME HELP USING DEMOPOLIS:

As with any powerful membership management tool, it is going to take a little practice and some guidance to fully use DEMopolis to its potential. Here are a few places you can get some assistance, advice, training, and help!

- DEMopolis User Guide: Support Materials for the Online Tools
- DEMopolis Support Message Board
- Contact the YDA Office for help by calling 202-639-8585 or sending an email to office@yda.org.
AC Join Publics

Site name: College Democrats of America
Site type: Gov’t/Party
Learning opportunity: Join publics
Citizenship style: AC
Description: User-created groups and circles
AC Take Action

NONE
DC Knowledge

Site name: John McCain.com
Site type: Gov’t/Party
Learning opportunity: Knowledge
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Information on issue stances of candidate
DC Expression

Site name: College Democrats
Site type: Gov't/party
Learning opportunity: Expression
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Letter-writing and issue prompts
DC Join Publics

Site name: John McCain.com
Site type: Gov't/party
Learning opportunity: Join publics
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Recruit friends for McCain campaign
Site name: College Republicans
Site type: Gov't/party
Learning opportunity: Take action
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Support major party by donating money
Community Organization Sites:

- AC Knowledge ✔
- AC Expression ✗
- AC Join Publics ✔
- AC Take Action ✔

- DC Knowledge ✔
- DC Expression ✔
- DC Join Publics ✔
- DC Take Action ✔
AC Knowledge

Site name: Youth Venture
Site type: Community Orgs
Learning opportunity: Knowledge
Citizenship style: AC
Description: Share experiences on resource page spaces

Remember to share your Team's questions, best practices, difficulties, and successes in this space and in the comment section at the bottom of each resource page so that others can learn from your experience. The experience and advice of other changemakers is the best resource that Youth Venture and this website can provide for future and existing Venture Teams. Help make the change happen!
AC Expression

NONE
Site name: Youth Venture
Site type: Community Orgs
Learning opportunity: Join publics
Citizenship style: AC
Description: Form and launch your own venture or team
AC Take Action

Site name: Youth Venture
Site type: Community Orgs
Learning opportunity: Take action
Citizenship style: AC
Description: How-to guides on event planning, fundraising, and running meetings, etc
DC Knowledge

Site name: Volunteers.com
Site type: Community Orgs
Learning opportunity: Knowledge
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Stories from the Landmark Volunteers program by former volunteers
DC Expression

Site name:
Teen Ink
Site type:
Community Orgs
Learning opportunity:
Expression
Citizenship style:
DC
Description:
Expression via writing contests and community service
Site name: Youth With A Mission
Site type: Community Orgs
Learning opportunity: Join Publics
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Invitation to join civil society organization

Opportunities

Whether you’re thinking about spending a week or a lifetime, YWAM has many ways to get involved in completing the Great Commission. You can go, by joining up with a church planting team in North Africa, or by spending your vacation doing medical work in Thailand. You can send, by connecting your church to a YWAM team working in an unreached people group far away. You can give, by partnering with one of our staff from India as she does community development in a slum. YWAM has thousands of opportunities to get involved. If you’re interested exploring specific opportunities in YWAM, you can use the search function on this site to browse through YWAM locations, outreach trips, staff and volunteer opportunities, ministry options and even people groups we work with.

If you find something that interests you, you can find out about application procedures, costs and other information by contacting that YWAM location directly. In YWAM, although we do have main offices, we encourage you to contact our field locations directly to explore opportunities to serve.
Site name: National Student Partnership
Site type: Community Orgs
Learning opportunity: Take Action
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Requests for financial donations
Interest/Activist Group Sites:

- AC Knowledge
- AC Join Publics
- AC Take Action
- DC Knowledge
- DC Expression
- DC Join Publics
- DC Take Action
AC Knowledge

Site name: National Youth Rights Association
Site type: Interest group
Learning opportunity: Knowledge
Citizenship style: AC
Description: Information presented, discussed, and debated by youth.
AC Expression

NONE
AC Join Publics

Site name: Students for a Free Tibet
Site type: Interest group
Learning opportunity: Join publics
Citizenship style: AC
Description: Student initiated chapter memberships
Site name: Voices of Youth
Site type: Interest group
Learning opportunity: Take action
Citizenship style: AC
Description: Discussions on individual’s ideas for action, such as attempting to start a charity.
Site name: Out Proud
Site type: Interest group
Learning opportunity: Knowledge
Citizenship style: DC
Description:
An archive of information on LGBTQ issues provided by the organization
DC Expression

Site name: Kids for Saving Earth
Site type: Interest group
Learning opportunity: Expression
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Directions on writing to members of Congress

**Directions:** Create your own card. Politely ask your Senator and House Representative to protect your Refuge. Tell them why you think it is important. Think about what animals and people you want to protect. Use bright colors and draw pictures of the arctic animals that you love. Then send the card to the address on the sample below. They will take the cards to congress. Click on [http://63.66.87.48/cweb4/index.cfm?orgcode=AWL](http://63.66.87.48/cweb4/index.cfm?orgcode=AWL) to find your congressional leaders names. Put their names on the cards. Don't forget to remind them that we can use other forms of energy like sun and wind power. We don't need oil from our Refuge!
DC Join Publics

Site name: Hillel
Site type: Interest group
Learning opportunity: Join publics
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Structured meetings organized by Hillel
Site name: Students for a Free Tibet
Site type: Interest/Activist
Learning opportunity: Take Action
Citizenship style: DC
Description: Top-down action opportunities