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Civic Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Alternative Paths to the Development of Political Knowledge and Democratic Values

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Despite the proliferation of civic education programs in the emerging democracies of Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Europe, there have been few recent evaluations of the effectiveness of civics instruction in achieving changes in democratic orientations among student populations. We present findings from a study conducted in 1998 that examined the impact of democratic civic education among South African high school students. Using a battery of items to gauge democratic orientations, including measures of political knowledge, civic duty, tolerance, institutional trust, civic skills, and approval of legal forms of political participation, we find that civic education had the largest effects on political knowledge, with the magnitude of the effect being approximately twice as large as the recent Niemi and Junn (1998) finding for the United States. Exposure to civic education per se had weaker effects on democratic values and skills; for these orientations, what matters are specific factors related to the quality of instruction and the use of active pedagogical methods employed by civics instructors. Further, we find that civic education changed the structure *of students' orientations: a "democratic values" dimension coalesces more strongly, and in greater distinction, from a "political competence" dimension among students exposed to civic education than among those with no such training. We discuss the implications of the findings for our theoretical understanding of the role of civic education in fostering democratic attitudes, norms, and values, as well as the practical implications of the results for the implementation and funding of civic education programs in developing democracies in the future.*

KEY WORDS: civic education, democratic values, civic competence, political knowledge, South Africa

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The question of whether civic education can instill political knowledge, values, and skills among citizens in democratic political systems is "once more on the radar screen of contemporary political science" (Galston, 2001, p. 271). Some of this renewed interest is rooted in concerns that young Americans are increasingly disengaged from political affairs and that increased efforts to instruct students in democratic political processes will stem this potentially dysfunctional trend (Bennett, 1997; Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Hibbing & Theiss-Morse, 1996; Putnam, 2000). As recent political science scholarship has demonstrated, the clear link between levels of political knowledge and engagement with the political system (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Nie, Junn, & Stehlik-Barry, 1996), the notion that civics instruction can stimulate higher levels of participation, interest, and perhaps commitment to democratic values and processes among American youth has become increasingly appealing.

At the same time, there has been a virtual explosion of civic education programs in the past decade in the newly emerging democracies of Eastern Europe, Africa, and Latin America. Operating from the belief that democracies are most likely to function effectively when the populace endorses the values and norms inherent in democratic regimes, civic education programs among primary and secondary school children, as well as among some adult populations, have become commonplace in developing democracies (Brilliant, 2000; Carothers, 1999). Many such programs are supported with contributions from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other U.S. and European donors in efforts to help the process of democratic consolidation by inculcating knowledge and supportive values among citizens who previously had little exposure to pro-democratic socializing agents.[1]

Despite this renewed interest in the potential impact of civic education, there have been relatively few recent evaluations of the effectiveness of civics instruction in achieving changes in democratic orientations among student populations. In the United States, the most notable exception is Niemi and Junn's (1998) analysis of the effects of civic education among high school students based on a 1988 National Association for Educational Progress (NAEP) survey, which showed much stronger effects of civic education on political knowledge than much of the earlier literature (e.g., Langton & Jennings, 1968; see reviews in Ehman, 1980; Ferguson, 1991; Galston, 2001). Outside of the U.S. context, though, analyses of the effectiveness of school-based civic education programs since the "third wave" of democracy in the late 1980s and early 1990s have been surprisingly few (Morduchowicz, Catterberg, Niemi, & Bell, 1996; Slomczynski & Shabad, 1998; Soule, 2000; Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001).[2] Consequently,

[1] According to one recent estimate, the total investment in civic education activities in the 1990s reached over $230 million (USAID Office of Budget, 2000).

[2] There is also an emerging literature on adult civic education programs in newly emerging democracies (Bratton, 1999; Finkel, 2002, 2003; Finkel, Sabatini, & Bevis et al. 2000), though we focus in this paper on school-based programs.

we know little about the conditions under which civic education may influence democratic development or about whether such programs are "worth" the investment made by international donors.

In this paper, we present findings from a study conducted in 1998 that examined the impact of civic education among black and coloured South African high school students. In addition to analyzing civic education conducted by regular high school instructors, the study examined a special USAID-sponsored program, *Democracy for All*, which has been implemented since the early 1990s by the South African nongovernmental organization Street Law under the auspices of the University of Natal's Centre for Socio-Legal Studies. The program involved sending trained university students into South African high schools to teach students about issues related to democracy, human rights, elections, conflict resolution, and how citizens can participate responsibly in democratic politics (Brilliant, 2000). We administered surveys to 600 students in eight provinces in the country, 385 of whom had been exposed to formal civic education training—either through the *Democracy for All* program or through their high school teachers—and 215 students from the same or similar schools who were not exposed to formal civics instruction.

Using a battery of items to gauge democratic orientations, including measures of political knowledge, civic duty, tolerance, institutional trust, civic skills, and approval of legal forms of political participation, we find that civic education had the largest effects on political knowledge, with the magnitude of the effect being over twice as large as the Niemi and Junn (1998) finding for the United States. At the same time, exposure to civic education per se had weaker effects on democratic values and skills. For these orientations, what matters are certain factors related to the quality of instruction and the kinds of pedagogical methods employed by civics instructors. When students are taught by instructors of highly perceived competence, likeability, interest, and the like, more significant gains are registered on democratic values and skills; similarly students whose civics classes were taught with a high degree of active, participatory instructional methods showed significant gains on virtually all of the democratic orientations that were examined.

Moreover, we find that civic education changes the *structure* of students' orientations: a "democratic values" dimension, comprised of political tolerance, trust, civic duty, and approval of legal political behaviors, coalesces more strongly, and in greater distinction from a "political competence" dimension comprised of knowledge and civic skills among students exposed to civic education than among those with no such training. We conclude that, under the right pedagogical and "classroom climate" conditions, civic education can be an effective agent not only for increasing democratic values and skills, but also for facilitating the integration of these orientations into a more general democratic belief system. We discuss the implications of the findings for our theoretical understanding of the role of civic education in fostering democratic attitudes, norms, and values, as well as

the practical implications of the results for the implementation and funding of civic education programs in developing democracies in the future.

The Effects of School-Based Civic Education: Theoretical Perspectives

For nearly three decades following the publication of Langton and Jennings' 1968 *APSR* article, "Political Socialization and the High School Civics Curriculum in the United States," the conventional view among political scientists was that civic education had only marginal impact on students' democratic orientations. In numerous early studies (e.g., Langton & Jennings, 1968; Somit, Tannenhous, Wilke, & Cooley, 1958), differences in political knowledge and democratic attitudes and values such as efficacy, trust, and tolerance among students who were exposed to various levels of civic education were "extremely weak, in most instances bordering on trivial" (Langton & Jennings, 1968, p. 858). While effects of civic education were sometimes found to be larger when students were exposed to specialized text materials and instruction (Patrick, 1972), the vast majority of early studies supported the view that the school civics curriculum has "little or no impact on [the] political attitudes of students" (Ehman, 1980, p. 107). Such views still resonate within the political science community, as seen, for example, in Leonard's recent assertion that future civic education programs are likely to end in "pure futility and waste" and his call for more research into why civic education efforts "have failed in the past, and *why they are likely to fail today*" (1999, p. 749).

Over the past few years, however, this "conventional wisdom" has undergone significant revision, owing largely to the reassessment of previous literature and the novel empirical findings reported by Niemi and Junn (1998). At least in the realm of political knowledge, Niemi and Junn (1998) argue that much work since the 1960s and early '70s shows that civic education can have more positive effects than previously acknowledged. Denver and Hands (1990), for example, showed considerable differences—some as large as 28%—on many factual and issue-knowledge questions between British students exposed to a new "Politics" curriculum and those exposed to a more traditional legalistic "Constitution" approach. Westholm, Lindquist, and Niemi (1990) found similar effects in Sweden on political knowledge, and Morduchowicz and colleagues (1996) found differences of up to 12% on basic knowledge questions in an analysis of a "Newspapers in School" program instituted among younger students in Argentina. Even Langton and Jennings (1968) found some effect of civics courses on factual political knowledge, though they downplayed the importance of this result in an analysis "heavily weighted toward attitudinal items" (Galston, 2001, p. 2227).

In their own analysis of a large-scale national survey of U.S. high school students in 1988, Niemi and Junn (1998) provide the most compelling evidence to date that civic education can have a "far from trivial" effect on factual political knowledge. Students with more exposure to civics classes, and those who took

those classes more recently, scored up to 4% higher on an overall knowledge index than students with little or more distant civic education exposure. When the topics covered in those classes were more varied, additional increases of nearly 3% were registered as well. Importantly, Niemi and Junn also examine the effect of the "classroom climate," that is, the extent to which current events are discussed in civics classes, and show that frequent discussions of politics in the context of current events increases factual knowledge by an additional 4%—leading to an overall potential effect of civic education of nearly 11%. Taken together, factors related to the civics curriculum and classroom environment represent "major positive influences on student knowledge . . . above and beyond individual motivation and family-socialization" (Niemi & Junn, 1998, pp. 148–149).

At the same time, Niemi and Junn (1998) and other recent research shows that, aside from political knowledge, democratic attitudes and values appear to be stubbornly resistant to change. In each of the studies cited above, the effects of civic education on political knowledge far exceeded the effects on political values. In most instances the effects on knowledge were nearly double the magnitude of those found for attitudes and values such as trust, efficacy, approval of political participation, and the like. Niemi and Junn, for example, found only a slight effect of civics courses on students' views of "the amount of attention government pays to people" and whether "elections make government accountable"; Denver and Hands' (1996) results for the new British "Politics" class in multivariate analysis showed nearly twice as large an effect on knowledge as any other orientation; Morducowicz et al. (1996) found percentage differences no larger than 6–7% on all nonknowledge orientations among Argentinean youth. In the sole published work examining the effect of specialized civic education curricula in Eastern Europe, Slomczynski and Shabad (1998) find no increase in pro-democratic orientations among 14–15-year-old Polish youth exposed to a new "Education for Democratic Citizenship" program, instead finding that civic education leads to less extreme responses—less antidemocratic but also less democratic responses compared to control groups. Thus, while recent research has rehabilitated the potential role of civic education in instilling basic political knowledge, there has not been much change in the long-standing view that such instruction can do relatively little to alter democratic attitudes, values, dispositions, and skills related to political participation (see also Ferguson, 1991, pp. 385–399; Patrick & Hoge, 1991).

We concur that civics instruction has strong potential for increasing students' basic political knowledge. Indeed, there may be even greater effects of civic education on knowledge among students in a developing democracy such as South Africa than in long-standing democracies such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Sweden, where the bulk of recent research has taken place. In situations of radical political and social change, the messages that students receive through civic education are less likely to be, in the words of Langton and Jennings (1968), "redundant" to messages received from parents, the media, and

other sources, and hence civics classes may exert a greater independent effect on political learning. And the more civics instruction the student may receive, the larger the knowledge increases may be, as "more time and effort spent on teaching any type of codified knowledge . . . leads to students' greater mastery of this knowledge" (Slomczynski & Shabad, 1998, pp. 770–771).

The potential impact of civic education on democratic attitudes, values, and skills, however, has not yet been adequately explored in the context of newly emerging democracies. This is so primarily because the successful acquisition of these kinds of democratic orientations is likely to depend even more on favorable teacher and classroom characteristics than does the acquisition of knowledge and factual information. As discussed above, variables related to teacher quality and the "classroom climate" were included in a host of early civic education studies (Ehman, 1972; Goldenson, 1978; Leming, 1985; Torney, Oppenheim, & Farnen, 1975; see the review in Harwood, 1992), but have been largely unexplored in recent research. This is regrettable, as there are strong theoretical reasons to expect these factors to matter for the ways that civic education in new democracies may exert impact on individual democratic dispositions.

As we have argued in previous work, civic education may be viewed as a formal mechanism for attempted attitude, value, and behavioral change in newly democratizing societies: through the means of classroom instruction for students and through workshops, community problem-solving activities, and voter education drives among adults, it is hoped that individuals will be *persuaded* by the messages conveyed, that they will internalize and integrate orientations such as efficacy, tolerance, generalized support for democracy, and the like (Finkel, 2002, 2003). As such, it may be expected that the conditions that facilitate attitude change in general should facilitate attitude change via the mechanism of civic education. And as the vast literature on attitude change in psychology and political psychology makes clear, attitude change does not occur uniformly across populations upon exposure to persuasive messages, but rather depends *conditionally* on a series of variables related to the message, the message context, and to individuals themselves (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; McGuire, 1969; Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumnan, 1983; see Gibson, 1998, for a recent example in understanding message-induced changes in Russian political tolerance). Such a view points to the critical importance of teacher and classroom factors in the transmission of many in the civic education process, factors that are likely to be more consequential than simple exposure to civics instruction.

First, a large body of evidence supports the notion that source characteristics such as attractiveness, likeability, and credibility serve as important cues in the persuasion process (Eagly & Chaiken, 1983; McGuire, 1969). As the source of democratic messages in the civics classroom is the individual instructor, it may be expected that the effects of civics training will depend on students' views of the credibility and likeability of their civics instructor. Factors such as source credibility, moreover, are thought to be more important when individual involvement

in the subject matter is relatively low and "heuristic" information processing strategies are employed (Chaiken, 1980; Petty & Cacioppo, 1980; Petty et al., 1983). Given the lack of centrality of civics classes to most students' daily lives, it seems reasonable to assume that "peripheral cues" such as source credibility will dominate the attitude change process, so that students' positive emotional response to the teacher and his or her perceived credibility will enhance the acceptance of the messages contained in civic education instruction.

Despite the theoretical relevance of source judgments for assessing the impact of civic education, less than a handful of studies—none in the past twenty years, and none outside of the U.S. context—have examined this process directly (see Print and Smith, 2000). The most promising results were reported by Goldenson (1978) in an analysis of a specialized civic education program for the development of civil liberties in Minnesota: students who rated their instructors as more "knowledgeable," "interesting," "understandable," and "fair" became significantly supportive of civil liberties after the "treatment," while students who rated their instructors poorly on those dimensions became significantly more *opposed.* Thus, attitudes about instructors themselves are likely to be significant factors in the successful transmission of important democratic values, and we may expect that the extent to which students view their instructors positively or negatively either facilitates or impedes the democratic learning process. In emerging democratic contexts, moreover, this process may be even more enhanced due to the relative paucity of alternative sources of democratic messages for school-age children.

The psychological literature also points to a second important classroom factor, the effect of active versus passive teaching methodologies in the transmission of democratic orientations. Much research in social psychology suggests that a significant source of attitude change is role-playing behavior, as individuals come to adopt attitudes and cognitions consistent with the behaviors that they are acting out (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, chapter 10; Zimbardo & Leippe, 1991, 102–108). It may be expected, therefore, that civic education programs that make use of more active methodologies to instruct participants—role playing, dramatizations, group decision making, and the like—will have greater effects on individual orientations than lecture-based instruction. Individuals who participate in mock elections, mock trials, or dramatization of civil liberties disputes are practicing democratic participation, exercising democratic skills, and adopting democratic values as part of the instruction itself, and we may expect that engaging in these kinds of classroom behaviors will greatly enhance the internalization of support for democratic values, institutions, and processes. Such findings have been shown consistently for the effects of civic education among *adults* in developing democracies, as workshops that use more active, participatory teaching methods, and programs that emphasize community decision making and group problem solving exert significantly greater impact on individual attitudes and subsequent political participation than more traditional "chalk and talk" instructional

programs (Finkel, 2002, 2003). Soule's (2000) recent report on the positive effect on several democratic orientations of more active involvement by students in developing and implementing actual public policy recommendations that grew out of the *Project Citizen* civic education program in Bosnia supports this process as well. Students, then, are likely to internalize democratic norms, values, and behavioral dispositions by playing democratic roles and participating in democratic behaviors inside the civics classroom and not from mere exposure to lecture-based civics instruction.

A final classroom-related variable relevant for the impact of civic education is the general extent to which the classroom may be considered "open," that is, a context where controversial political issues are discussed frequently and where a range of views on those topics are presented neutrally and objectively in a climate where students feel encouraged and free to express their opinions (Harwood, 1992, p. 57; Ehman, 1980). Such a climate has been found to foster knowledge and, to a lesser extent, other democratic orientations at least since Torney et al.'s seminal cross-national work in the mid-1970s, where "students characterized by high exposure to rote of ritual learning generally performed less well than students characterized by low exposure . . . and . . . students who felt that independence of opinion was encouraged generally performed better than students who did not . . ." (Torney et al., 1975, 149; see also Leming, 1985; Wilen & White, 1991; and Blankenship, 1990). These hypotheses have a prominent place in more recent civic education literature as well (e.g., Niemi & Junn, 1998; Hahn, 1998; Torney-Purta et al., 2001), but there has been virtually no examination of their effects on democratic attitudes and values in newly democratizing contexts.[3] Moreover, the potential effects of classroom discussion and "open" environments have yet to be compared to the effects of the other classroom-related variables discussed thus far, that is, perceptions regarding the students' civics instructors and the use of active, participatory methods of instruction. While these variables are likely to covary positively, it is nevertheless the case that classrooms where students feel free to express their opinions on controversial issues need not be led by particularly credible instructors, nor will they necessarily expose students to other kinds of active instructional pedagogical techniques aside from class discussions.

In short, we suggest that the primary factors that promote successful learning in one area of civic education, the imparting of basic factual political knowledge, are not likely to be the same factors that promote successful learning in

[3] Torney-Purta et al.'s recent (2001) study of civic education in 28 countries, including many developing democracies such as Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and the Baltic states, develops an explanatory model that finds a positive effect for "open classroom climate" on the dimensions of political knowledge and civic engagement, but there was no comparison of the effects of this variable or other classroom related factors on democratic values, attitudes, and skills.

other, more value-based and attitudinal realms. As noted above, frequent exposure to traditional teaching methods may be sufficient for achieving the limited ends of knowledge-based civic lessons, but the successful transmission of political attitudes, values, and participatory dispositions, however, is likely to require additional factors related to credible and likeable instructors, active methodologies, and an open environment for political discussion. And to the extent that students in these contexts have less experience with democratic processes both inside and outside the school environment, we expect that favorable classroom characteristics and active teaching methodologies should impart less "redundant" information regarding democratic values, skills, and attitudes than in developed democracies and thus exert potentially greater classroom effects than have been found in previous U.S.- and European-based research.

We shall examine the effects of all of these civic education and classroom variables on a variety of democratic orientations among South African high school students in the late 1990s. Following the theoretical exposition above, we expect that exposure to civic education per se will have positive effects on political knowledge, while factors related to teacher and classroom environments will be necessary conditioning factors for civic education to impact other orientations such as skills, participatory dispositions, and democratic values. Further, we shall examine the potential impact of civics training on the overall *structure* of students' democratic beliefs. Civic education attempts not only to alter, for example, the individual's sense of civic responsibilities, but also to encourage students to see how the responsibilities of democratic citizenship may be linked to values such as tolerance and trust; in other words, to learn how certain values, skills, and dispositions fit together in an overall system of supportive democratic beliefs. Civic education, then, may make "better democrats" of high school students in several ways, by increasing individuals' adherence to important democratic principles, norms, and values, as well as by increasing the degree to which these particular dispositions cohere into a more general democratic belief system.

Research Design

As part of an effort begun in the mid-1990s to evaluate the impact of civic education in various countries around the world, USAID commissioned a study in 1998 to assess the effects of post-apartheid civic education programs in South Africa among both high school students and adults (Finkel & Stumbras, 2000). One of the most prominent school-based civic education programs in the country since the mid-1990s has been the *Democracy for All* program run by Street Law, a democracy and human rights organization housed at the University of Natal's Centre for Socio-Legal Studies in Durban, South Africa. Given that *Democracy for All* receives some of its support from USAID, it was decided to focus on

students who had been trained in this program, as well as students who received normal civics training from their regular high school teachers.

The Democracy for All Program

Since the early 1990s, Street Law has operated the *Democracy For All* civic education program in South African high schools in an effort to institutionalize and implement democracy and human rights education in formal school education in the post-apartheid era. Street Law provides training in democracy education for student volunteers from law, social work, and education faculties in various South African colleges. In most instances the students received course credit as compensation for their efforts. These student trainers then provide civic education instruction to pupils in grades 11 and 12 in high schools across the country. According to Street Law figures, it trains on average over 16,000 high school students annually using 400–500 trainers.

The goal of the program, in the words of the 1994 *Democracy for All* manual, is to "help create a culture of democracy": to begin building an understanding of, and concern for, democracy," a particularly "urgent task for South Africa, which has [a] history of intolerance, human rights abuse and lack of democracy" (cited in Brilliant, 2000, p. 56). The program contains several topic areas, such as law, human rights, and general principles of democracy, each of which has its own student manual providing guidelines for how the subject matter should be taught, along with suggestions for "interactive classroom activities" such as "case studies, role playing, debates, field trips, games, group discussions, opinion polls, mock trials, ranking exercises, and participant presentations" (Brilliant, 2000, p. 57). The training is sometimes conducted in conjunction with the pupils' regular teachers, while other times the *Democracy for All* trainers were the only instructors for democracy and civics topics. The program was designed at minimum for weekly instruction, though, as will be seen below, there is considerable variation in the success of the implementation in terms of both students' frequency of exposure and the types of teaching methods that are employed in the classroom.

Data Collection

Given a total sample size of 600, it was decided to interview as close to 300 students from the *Democracy for All* program as possible, and 300 other students, some of whom would receive civics training from their normal high school teachers and some of whom would receive no civics training whatsoever. A random sample of areas within six of South Africa's eight provinces where the *Democracy for All* program was in operation was selected for inclusion in the study. Markinor, a respected survey organization based in Johannesburg, worked with Street Law representatives in each of these areas to identify particular schools and classes where the training was conducted. Lists of participants in the program

between 1998 and 1999 were obtained wherever possible, and these names were selected systematically to be included in the sample according to the overall stratified sampling scheme laid out in Table A-1 of the appendix.[4] A total of 261 students trained in the *Democracy for All* program were interviewed between May 10 and June 1, 1999.

Non-*Democracy for All* students were selected to "mirror" the participant sample. Interviewers were instructed to find students, matched on age, race, and gender, who had not received *DFA* training in the same school as a *DFA*-trained student if possible. If students in such schools could not be found, a matched subject was interviewed at a nearby school. This strategy resulted in 221 control group students being interviewed from schools where the *DFA* program was in operation; with the remainder being interviewed from other schools in the vicinity. Students were contacted by Markinor representatives and arrangements were made to conduct the face-to-face interviews either during school hours if permission were granted by the school authorities (65% of all interviews) or at the student's home or other arranged location after school hours (35%). The survey instrument was translated into Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, and Afrikaans so that students could be interviewed in the language that was most familiar to them.

Overall, the sampling strategy resulted in three groups of students: those who were exposed to the specialized *DFA* training (N = 261), matched students who were exposed to some formal civics instruction as part of their normal high school classes (N = 124), and matched students with no formal civic education exposure (N = 215). Table 1 shows that the three groups are largely similar on important demographic variables, while differing somewhat on variables related to political interest, media exposure, and family politicization.

As can be seen, there are virtually no demographic differences between the three groups, and in some cases (parent's education and employment status) *DFA* students are even somewhat lower than the other two kinds of students. On variables related to political interest and the family's political background, however, students with some civic education exposure typically show relatively higher values than those who had been exposed to no civics training. Although the differences for political interest and media exposure may plausibly be interpreted as the *result* of civic education exposure, we decided to take the more conservative route in the analysis and use these variables as controls for prior engagement and

[4] After ascertaining the schools in each province that had participated in the *DFA* program, schools were randomly selected for inclusion in the study. In some cases, however, the policy of the school system did not allow for personal information regarding students to be given to parties outside the educational system, and hence our sample of *DFA* schools was restricted to areas where local school officials were willing to cooperate with Markinor, and were in possession of lists of students who had undergone DFA training or who otherwise could provide Markinor with means of identifying and contacting DFA participants. These unavoidable restrictions may have resulted in somewhat "better" DFA schools being included in the study, though we find little difference in the kinds of students exposed to *DFA* and non-*DFA* civic education in our sample (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Demographic and Political Differences Between *Democracy for All* and Other Students

	Democracy for All Students (N = 261)	Students with Other Civic Education (N = 124)	Students with No Civic Education (N = 215)	Significant Differences?
Age	18.1	18.0	18.1	NO
Black (Percent)	80%	75%	82%	NO
Female (Percent)	58%	56%	56%	NO
Intend to Study at University? (Percent)	36%	36%	35%	NO
Parent's Education (1–9 scale)	3.9	4.1	4.1	NO
Father Currently Employed? (Percent)	57%	64%	59%	NO
Political Interest (1–3 scale)	2.1	2.1	1.9	YES
Media Exposure (1–4 scale)	2.9	3.0	2.6	YES
Family Political Participation (0–10 scale)	4.6	4.1	3.5	YES
Family Political Discussion (1–5 scale)	3.5	3.5	2.8	YES

Source: USAID Civic Education Survey, South African High School Students, May–June 1998.

knowledge and not as outcomes themselves of civic education. We will therefore include all of these variables as controls for the student's possible preexisting levels of politicization, as these factors may also have led to some preexisting differences between the groups on support for democratic norms, values, and processes.

We also note that there are virtually no differences on any of these variables between the *DFA* students and students who had received civics training in their normal classes. We shall show below that *DFA* students were exposed to a significantly more positive teacher and classroom environment than students exposed to "normal" civic education; the fact that the two groups are nearly identical in terms of interest and other variables related to political motivation will strengthen our claim that these teacher and classroom characteristics themselves are the decisive factors in bringing about beneficial civic education outcomes.

Measurement of Dependent Variables

The analysis presented below divides the data collected from the survey into three basic categories—questions that measure political knowledge, questions that

relate to democratic attitudes and values, and questions related to participatory orientations and skills. Within the knowledge category, we measure basic recognition of important political leaders and understanding of the structure of South African government. Within the attitudes and values category, we measure the students' views of the duties and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy ("Civic Duty"), their tolerance for individuals espousing doctrines of racial superiority, and their degree of confidence in a series of emerging South African institutions. Within the participatory orientations and skills category, we measure students' approval of a wide range of legal political behaviors, including voting, contacting officials, community action, and peaceful protest, as well as their assessment of their skill-level in such actions as communicating ideas, speaking in public, and cooperating with others, skills that Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) have shown in recent work to be important antecedents to political participation more generally. The questions, scaling procedures, and reliability coefficients for the dependent variables where appropriate are summarized below.

Political Knowledge

Eight questions were included to assess the political knowledge of students. They included questions regarding the names of key political figures and the structure of South African government, such as the length of term for the President and the branch of government that elects the President. For each student, the correct answers to these questions were summed to create a knowledge index score ranging from 0 to 8. The reliability of the scale was .60.

Democratic Attitudes and Values

Civic Duty. Three questions were asked to measure civic duty among students. A civic duty index score was created by adding the number of times a respondent felt "voting in local elections," "paying taxes," and "taking part in political decisions" were "very important" responsibilities in a democracy. The reliability of the three-item scale was .64.

Political Tolerance

Students were asked whether an individual who believes that "blacks are racially inferior" should be allowed "to make a speech in your community," to vote, and "to organize a peaceful demonstration to express his or her views." Response categories ranged from "1" for "strongly disagree" to "4" for "strongly agree." A Political Tolerance variable was constructed from the average of the three items, with the reliability of the resultant scale being .55.

Institutional Trust

Students were asked how much trust they had in the following social and political institutions: the legal system, the press and media, the church, the President, the police, the National government, and the African National Congress, and the traditional authorities. Response categories ranged from "1" for "none at all" to "4" for "a good deal." An Institutional Trust variable was constructed from the average of the six items, with the reliability of the resultant scale being .75.

Participatory Orientations and Skills

Civic Skills. Students were asked how to rate the extent to which "in general, you communicate your ideas with others (cooperate with others, solve problems, lead a group) better, worse, or the same as other high school students that you know?" Answers of "better than" were scored as "2," "worse than" scored as "0," and "the same as" scored as "1." Responses were averaged to create the overall scale. The reliability of the scale was .64.

Approval of Participation

Students were asked how strongly they approved of a series of political behaviors as "ways that ordinary citizens try to influence politics and the decisions of elected officials." The behaviors were voting in national elections, voting in local community elections, joining groups to solve problems in the community, taking part in peaceful protests against government policies, contacting a local elected official or government department, and contacting a national elected official or government department. Response categories ranged from "strongly approve" (4) to "strongly disapprove" (1), and the responses were averaged to create the overall scale. The reliability of the scale was .62.

Measurement of Civic Education Variables

We measured several variables related to the student's frequency of exposure to formal civic education, their views of the teacher responsible for the instruction, the kinds of pedagogical methods that were used, and the degree to which political discussions and an open classroom environment were encouraged. These variables were measured in the following ways.

Frequency of Instruction

Students were asked how often they received "formal civic instruction," that is, instruction about "issues related to democracy, human rights, and current

political affairs." The possible responses were "never," coded as "0," less than once per month "1," once or twice a month "2," once or twice a week "3," and every day "4." Twenty-eight percent of students who received civic education training were instructed less than once per month, 25% once or twice a month, 33% once or twice a week, and 14% every day. There was no difference in the frequency of exposure to civic education for *DFA* students (mean of 2.27) and non-DFA students trained in their normal classes (mean of 2.23).

Teacher Quality

Students were asked to evaluate the extent to which the following words describe their civic education instructor (knowledgeable, interesting, likeable, understandable, and inspiring). A principal components factor analysis of the items showed that they loaded strongly on a single factor. Therefore, the responses were combined into a single index score, representing a count of how many of the five qualities the students believed described their instructors "very well." Students who did not receive civic education were assigned to the study's default category and assigned a score of zero. The reliability of the resultant scale was .89. The mean rating of instructors for *DFA* students was 3.44, while the rating for "normal" civics instructors among non-*DFA* students was 1.86, indicating that the *DFA* program attracted instructors who were much more likely to be perceived as more credible and likeable sources for the transmission of democracy messages.

It is important to note that the Teacher Quality variable measures only the perception of the quality of the instructor, as we have no objective evaluation of what methodologies or teaching styles were actually employed, nor the exact information that they conveyed, nor other indicators of classroom competence. We may interpret these ratings as one might, for example, interpret student evaluations of a professor at a university. They capture how students feel about their professor and his or her teaching qualities, rather than whether the professor in some objective sense is a good instructor. Of course, student feelings about their instructors' qualities are important predictors of how well they learn, and in this sense the evaluations used here are expected to have the same effect.

Active Teaching Methods and Classroom Openness

We measured the extent to which active teaching methods were utilized in the classroom, and the student's overall perception of the openness of the classroom, by presenting students with a list of 13 different activities and asking whether each was used by their teachers in civic education classes. The list of activities, many of which are those that are described in the *Democracy for All/Street Law* guidebook for trainers in democracy and human rights, included:

1) Did your teachers encourage students to voice their opinions during lessons on democracy and public affairs?
2) Did your teachers lead discussions on current political events like the activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission or other issues and problems facing the country?
3) Did your teachers lead discussions about newspaper articles or television or radio broadcasts?
4) Did you sometimes divide into small groups to discuss issues and problems?
5) Did you make presentations to the class based on some topic that you prepared in advance?
6) Did your teachers bring in people from the community like government officials, journalists, or human rights workers to talk to your class?
7) Did you visit local government offices?
8) Did you go outside the school and visit places like prisons, police stations, or hospitals?
9) Did you play games that were designed to illustrate democracy and human rights issues?
10) Did you participate in mock court trials?
11) Did you conduct role-playing or simulations of different situations where democracy and human rights issues might be relevant?
12) Did you do artistic work like draw pictures or cartoons or sing songs during your civics classes?
13) Did you conduct mock elections to learn about voting and political parties?

A principal component factor analysis of these 13 items yielded a four-factor solution. The first factor comprised items 9 through 13, that is, all of the items measuring interactive participation in games, role-playing, mock courts, or trials in civics classes. We refer to the variable created from the factor scores on this dimension as "***Participatory Teaching Methods***." The second factor comprised items 7 and 8, referring to class visits to government or other public places to learn about politics, democracy, and human rights. We refer to the variable created from this factor as "***Government Visits***." The third factor comprised items 4 and 5, the extent to which students worked together in small groups and made classroom presentations. We refer to this variable as "***Group Projects/Presentations***." Finally, items 1, 2, and 3 loaded on the fourth factor, indicating a common "***Class Discussions***" dimension that comprises the extent to which students engage current issues in their civics classes and feel encouraged to express their opinion.

We note that previous work has focused primarily on the "Class Discussions" dimension as a general indicator of an "open classroom" environment (Niemi & Junn, 1998; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). As noted above, an exclusive focus on class discussions ignores the potential impact of the active, interactive teaching methodologies stressed in the *DFA* as well as other contemporary civic education programs. To be sure, students exposed to the *DFA* program perceived a more open classroom environment than non-*DFA* students (mean of 1.9 versus 1.6 dis-

cussion-type activities), but they also reported an average of 2.1 active teaching methods such as games, simulations, and mock elections being used in their civics classes, compared to 1.6 being used in "normal" civics training. Similarly, 57% of *DFA* students worked on small group projects and class presentations compared to 43% of non-*DFA* students. The two groups of civics students did not differ significantly on Government Visits, however, though *DFA* students reported slightly more frequent trips to government or public offices (mean of .61 to .53).

Control Variables

We include controls for a series of political and demographic factors, as well as characteristics of the student's family life, as these variables are known from previous research to influence young adults' democratic orientations, skills, and knowledge (e.g., Niemi & Junn, 1998; Torney et al., 1975). Moreover, as discussed above, the controls allow us to estimate the effect of civic education more accurately, as it may well be that many students exposed to civic education were already knowledgeable about politics, oriented toward democracy, possessing important civic skills, and the like. In the absence of random assignment and a pre-test we cannot be certain of the equivalence of the experimental and "treatment" groups, and thus we include as many known outside influences on political attitudes and values as possible in an effort to isolate the effect of civic education variables.

The control variables included in analysis are:

Age (15 to 23 years);
Race (1 = Black, 0 = Coloured);
Gender (1 = Male, 0 = Female);
Education (grade 9 through 12);
Political Interest (self reported interest in politics, from "1" for "not at all interested" to "3" for "very interested");
Media Exposure (average of attention paid to news about politics on the radio, television, and newspapers, with responses from "1" for "never" to "4" for "almost every day");
Parent's Education (average of mother's and father's highest level of educational achievement on a 1 to 9 scale);
Father's Employment Status (1 = yes);
Family Political Participation (count of whether any immediate family member is involved in a series of 9 groups, including "church or religious organization," "women's group," "youth organization," "local community problem-solving group," and "union");
Family Political Discussion (report of how often family members discuss politics when together, with responses ranging from "1" for "never" to "5" for "daily").

Results

The Effects of Civic Education Exposure

We show first the effects of simple exposure to civic education in the context of multivariate regression models in Table 2. These models include only the *Frequency of Exposure* variable and the control variables discussed above in an effort to isolate the unique impact of civic education on all of the dependent variables in the analyses, over and above the effects of preexisting political interest, motivation, or demographic and family factors. The results show that exposure to civic education has relatively strong effects on political knowledge and to a

Table 2. The Effects of Civic Education Exposure on Student Democratic Orientations

	(1) Knowledge	(2) Civic Duty	(3) Tolerance	(4) Institutional Trust	(5) Civic Skills	(6) Approval of Legal Behv.
Frequency of Civic Education	**0.20****	0.05	0.03	0.02	–0.01	**0.04****
	0.18	*0.06*	*0.04*	*0.04*	*–0.02*	*0.13*
Age	**–0.09****	0.04	**–0.06****	**0.05****	–0.00	–0.00
	–0.08	*0.05*	*–0.12*	*0.14*	*–0.01*	*–0.02*
Race	**1.27****	**–0.52****	–0.10	**0.20****	–0.05	**0.14****
	0.31	*–0.19*	*–0.05*	*0.15*	*–0.05*	*0.14*
Gender	**0.40****	–0.04	–0.03	0.03	0.05	**0.06***
	0.12	*–0.02*	*–0.02*	*0.03*	*0.06*	*0.08*
Education	**0.22****	0.09	–0.06	**–0.06****	**0.05***	**0.04***
	0.10	*0.06*	*–0.05*	*–0.08*	*0.08*	*0.08*
Political Interest	0.14	**0.18****	0.09	**0.22****	0.03	**0.08****
	0.06	*0.11*	*0.07*	*0.26*	*0.04*	*0.14*
Media Exposure	**0.36****	–0.01	–0.01	–0.04	**0.06****	**–0.05****
	0.16	*–0.00*	*–0.01*	*–0.06*	*0.11*	*–0.10*
Parent's Education	–0.04	0.01	0.00	**–0.05****	0.02	–0.01
	–0.03	*0.01*	*0.01*	*–0.12*	*0.05*	*–0.02*
Family Political Participation	0.05	–0.01	0.00	**0.02****	**0.03****	–0.01
	0.06	*–0.01*	*0.01*	*0.10*	*0.13*	*–0.07*
Family Political Discussion	**0.17****	**0.11****	0.05+	0.02	**0.04****	**0.03****
	0.14	*0.13*	*0.09*	*0.04*	*0.13*	*0.11*
Constant	–0.44	–0.27	**3.94****	**2.24****	**0.58****	**2.88****
Observations	589	589	586	589	589	589
Adjusted R-squared	0.24	0.07	0.03	0.18	0.08	0.07

Source: USAID Civic Education Survey, South African High School Students, May–June 1998. Number of cases is 589. Top cell entries are unstandardized regression coefficients; italicized cell entries are standardized regression coefficients. Coefficients in bold with two stars, significant at the .05 level (two-tailed); coefficients in bold with one star significant at the .10 level (two-tailed).

weaker extent, approval of political participation, while having no impact on values such as civic duty, tolerance, trust, or the acquisition of participatory skills.

For political knowledge, the estimated effect of civic education exposure is .20, indicating an increase of about 2.5% in the number of correct answers on the knowledge scale as students are exposed to civic education at increasing frequencies. That is, moving from the control group to monthly civic education instruction (a change from "0" to "2" on the Frequency variable) leads to an estimated 4.0 or 5.0% increase in the number of correct answers, moving to weekly civics instruction leads to an 7.5% increase over the control group, and moving to daily instruction leads to a 10% increase over students who receive no civics training, controlling for all other variables that affect political knowledge. This is the strongest single effect of civic education in the entire study, and is approximately two-and-a-half times as large as the 4 percentage point increase between students with more frequent and recent civics courses and students with no exposure to civics courses in Niemi and Junn's recent evaluation of civic education in the United States (Niemi & Junn, 1998). Civics training thus appears to have a relatively strong and direct influence on basic political knowledge among high school students in a developing democratic context as well as in more established democratic settings.

Moreover, the effect of civic education is one of the strongest in the overall equation predicting student political knowledge. That is, civic education matters in predicting students' level of political knowledge as much as their exposure to the mass media, their age and grade level, whether they come from a family that discusses politics often, and whether other members of their family are politically active. These other factors are important determinants of knowledge, but civic education exposure is at least their rival in magnitude.

We also note that, taking into account the frequency of civic education exposure and all of the control variables, there was no additional effect of receiving *Democracy for All* training for the student's level of political knowledge. That is, what matters for increasing knowledge is simply the amount of civics instruction that a student receives, not whether they were trained in a specialized civic education program.

For the other dependent variables, however, the results are less impressive. Civic education exposure has absolutely no impact on students' levels of civic duty, tolerance, institutional trust, or civic skills, once other variables such as family political discussion and the student's own level of media exposure and prior political interest are taken into account. This confirms the result from previous research that exposure to civics training has weaker attitudinal than pure knowledge effects and that it is more difficult to impart values and political orientations in the classroom than simple factual information (Langton & Jennings, 1968; Ehman, 1980; Niemi & Junn, 1998). Only one attitudinal factor, approval of legal political participation, showed significant exposure effects. Students who were trained on a daily basis, for example, were found to have a .21 higher average

value on the approval scale than students in the control group, corresponding to a .40 standard deviation change, a value of not-inconsequential magnitude. However, it should be noted that approval of legal participation among *all* South African high school students in our sample was extremely high, as even the control group registered an average value of 3.45 on a 4-point approval scale. So we may say that civic education contributed to an increase in the approval of different forms of participation among a student population that was already quite supportive of using these political behaviors as a means of influencing elected officials and government policies.

The Effects of Teacher Quality and Participatory Pedagogical Methods

The results suggest thus far that civic education per se has large effects on basic political knowledge among South African students, but relatively weaker effects on democratic values, skills, and participatory orientations. This is consistent with our theoretical exposition above, where we hypothesized that mere exposure may be sufficient to inculcate political knowledge but that only *certain kinds* of exposure—training by credible and knowledgeable instructors and those who employ active, participatory pedagogical methods in an open classroom environment—will lead to changes in democratic values and skills. The effects of all of these civic education variables on knowledge, values, and participatory orientations are shown in Table 3.

The results from Table 3 show clearly that teacher- and classroom-related variables matter for each of the dependent variables and that these factors matter more than mere exposure to civics training for all variables except for political knowledge.[5] The results show first that the students' overall perception of *Teacher Quality* is a significant factor for affecting positive change on several dependent variables, including civic duty, institutional trust, and civic skills. The effects, moreover, are of moderate magnitude, indicating that the credibility and likeability of the source of democratic instruction is an important additional factor in the inculcation of certain democratic values and skills. For example, students whose teachers are rated as having all five of the positive qualities in the index show a .40 increase in civic duty compared to the control group, which represents over a one-third standard deviation change in the dependent variable. Similarly, high quality instruction represents over a one-quarter standard deviation change in the skills variable and about one-fifth of a standard deviation change in institutional trust. And along with race, political interest, and the extent of family participation and political discussion, *Teacher Quality* is one of the most important predictors of each of these three dependent variables. Thus, instilling several

[5] As in Table 2, there was no additional effect of the *Democracy for All* program on the results, once the factors that distinguish *DFA* from non-*DFA* classrooms—greater use of active methodologies, group projects, and more open classroom environments—are taken into account.

Table 3. The Effects of Civic Education Exposure, Teacher Quality, and Pedagogical Methods on Student Democratic Orientations

	(1) Knowledge	(2) Civic Duty	(3) Tolerance	(4) Institutional Trust	(5) Civic Skills	(6) Approval of Legal Behv.
Frequency of Civic	**0.22****	–0.03	0.03	0.00	–0.02	**0.03****
Education	*0.18*	*–0.04*	*0.05*	*0.00*	*–0.07*	*0.10*
Teacher Quality	–0.03	**0.08****	–0.01	**0.02***	**0.02***	0.01
	–0.03	*0.16*	*–0.02*	*0.08*	*0.09*	*0.03*
Participatory	**0.13***	0.08	**0.08****	**0.06****	**0.09****	**0.05****
Teaching Methods	*0.07*	*0.06*	*0.08*	*0.09*	*0.19*	*0.11*
Government Visits	**0.14****	0.03	0.04	0.00	0.01	0.02
	0.07	*0.02*	*0.04*	*0.00*	*0.01*	*0.05*
Class Projects/	0.01	**0.19****	**0.08****	–0.02	–0.00	**0.06****
Presentations	*0.01*	*0.15*	*0.08*	*–0.03*	*–0.01*	*0.13*
Classroom	–0.03	0.01	**–0.08****	–0.01	0.01	–0.00
Discussions	*–0.02*	*0.01*	*–0.09*	*–0.02*	*0.03*	*–0.00*
Age	**–0.08***	0.04	**–0.06****	**0.05****	–0.00	–0.00
	–0.08	*0.06*	*–0.11*	*0.14*	*–0.00*	*–0.00*
Race	**1.26****	**–0.56****	–0.12	**0.22****	–0.03	**0.12****
	0.31	*–0.21*	*–0.06*	*0.17*	*–0.03*	*0.12*
Gender	**0.38****	–0.03	–0.04	0.04	0.05	**0.06***
	0.12	*–0.01*	*–0.02*	*0.04*	*0.06*	*0.07*
Education	**0.25****	0.05	–0.05	**–0.07****	0.03	0.04
	0.11	*0.03*	*–0.05*	*–0.09*	*0.06*	*0.07*
Political Interest	0.12	**0.15***	0.08	**0.21****	0.01	**0.07****
	0.05	*0.09*	*0.06*	*0.26*	*0.02*	*0.11*
Media Exposure	**0.37****	–0.01	0.00	–0.04	**0.06****	**–0.05****
	0.16	*–0.00*	*0.00*	*–0.06*	*0.11*	*–0.09*
Parent's Education	–0.04	0.02	0.01	**–0.05****	0.02	–0.00
	–0.03	*0.03*	*0.02*	*–0.11*	*0.05*	*–0.01*
Family Political	0.03	–0.02	–0.00	**0.02***	**0.02****	**–0.02****
Participation	*0.04*	*–0.04*	*–0.01*	*0.08*	*0.10*	*–0.10*
Family Political	**0.16****	**0.09****	**0.05***	0.02	**0.04****	**0.03****
Discussion	*0.13*	*0.11*	*0.08*	*0.04*	*0.12*	*0.09*
Constant	–0.67	0.21	**3.83****	**2.31****	**0.71***	**2.94****
Adjusted R-squared	0.25	0.10	0.05	0.19	0.12	0.09

Source: USAID Civic Education Survey, South African High School Students, May–June 1998. Number of cases is 589. Top cell entries are unstandardized regression coefficients; italicized cell entries are standardized regression coefficients. Coefficients in bold with two stars, significant at the .05 level (two-tailed); coefficients in bold with one star significant at the .10 level (two-tailed).

important democratic values and skills through civic education appears to depend in significant ways on the quality of instruction. Though changing these orientations is difficult in general, it is accomplished most readily when democratic messages are imparted from a credible, knowledgeable, and likeable source.

Variables related to the specific kinds of teaching methodologies that teachers employ in the classroom are even more important in the civic education process. The most consistently influential classroom factor is *Participatory Teaching Methods*, which shows a significant effect on five of the six dependent variables. The effects of active, participatory methods are strongest for generating civic skills and positive attitudes towards legal forms of participation, as students come to support the importance of participation and develop the skills to do so by participating in games, role-playing behavior, and other kinds of simulated political action. The impact of participatory methods, however, is seen on the development of democratic values such as tolerance and institutional trust as well. The sizes of these effects are not of overwhelming magnitude, yet in the case of tolerance, the impact of *Participatory Teaching Methods* is among the strongest of any effect in the model, rivaling family participation and surpassing all demographic factors except for age (which shows a negative effect) in predictive power. South African students, like adults, do not appear to tolerate their political opponents "naturally" (Gibson & Gouws, 2003), but these results suggest that they are able to begin to learn such a value through acting out democratic roles and other behaviors in the classroom. The importance of such methods is also seen for political knowledge, as more active teaching methods in the classroom stimulate greater familiarity with South African political leaders and institutions. We may say, therefore, that individuals both learn about democracy *and* internalize important democratic values and skills through civics training that involves students directly in simulated democratic politics.

Further support for the role of active pedagogical factors in the civic education process is seen from the effects for *Group Projects/Presentations*. The more students engaged in small group projects and made class presentations—both "active" kinds of classroom activities—the more they increased in levels of tolerance, civic duty, and approval of legal behaviors. For tolerance and approval of legal behaviors, the effects of *Group Projects/Presentations* augment an already significant impact of *Participatory Teaching Methods*, with the effects of each factor being of roughly equal magnitude. For civic duty, engaging in group projects and presentation is the only variable related to classroom activities that shows significant impact, with the standardized effect of .15 being one of the strongest values in the entire model. Taken together, the hypothesis that students will learn important democratic orientations by engaging directly in democracy-related classroom activities—either simulated democratic politics or in small group behaviors—receives strong overall support.

Other teaching methodologies variables were of minor consequence in terms of their impact on democratic orientations. Trips outside the civics classroom to

government offices were associated with small effects on political knowledge and had no impact whatsoever on any other variable. Interestingly, once teacher quality and the active teaching variables are taken into account, the extent to which civics teachers encourage *Class Discussion* and the presentation of student views has no impact on any democratic orientation, save for a *negative* impact on political tolerance. What matters in the classroom for teaching democracy and its supportive values, then, is not simply the amount of political discussion, or even an environment where students feel they can express their views. What matters is mainly whether students engage directly in democratic role-playing, simulations, and the like, whether they participate actively in group projects, and whether they are taught by instructors whose perceived credibility, knowledge, and likeability facilitates the acceptance of the democratic messages contained in the civics curriculum.

The impact of active teaching methodologies, moreover, goes beyond their *direct* effect on democratic orientations. In a regression analysis predicting students' perception of Teacher Quality, we found that Participatory Teaching Methods (standardized beta coefficient of .23), Group Projects (.11), and Class Discussions (.16) each had a significant impact in a model that included Frequency of Instruction (not significant), and all of the control variables in Tables 2 and 3. Thus, a more open and participatory classroom climate contributes greatly to more positive evaluations of civic education instructors, and these positive evaluations in turn facilitate the transmission of democratic values such as civic duty and democratic satisfaction. We may say, also, that active teaching methodologies influence democratic values and attitudes directly as well as indirectly, while political discussions and an open classroom environment contribute mainly indirectly, through their positive influence on teacher evaluations.

Civic Education and the Structure of Democratic Orientations

We have shown that exposure to civic education had substantial effects on political knowledge among black and coloured South African high school students and that variables related to the students' teacher and classroom environment had effects on a variety of other democratic orientations such as institutional trust, political tolerance, and civic duty. We also investigated whether civic education influenced the *interconnectedness* of these different orientations, that is, whether exposure to civics training influenced the extent to which students learned "what goes with what" in terms of democratic values, norms, and skills. As civic education has been found to positively affect each of the separate orientations, it stands to reason that there should be a greater degree of cohesion among the values and skills among those who received civics training compared to students who did not. Yet it may also be the case that more complex structures emerge as a result of civics exposure. Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock (1991, p. 26) suggest that belief system "complexity" involves two fundamental qualities: their "dif-

ferentiation," that is, the "number of evaluatively distinct dimensions of judgment an individual takes into account in interpreting events or in making choices"; and their "integration," or the number of conceptual connections among differentiated idea elements." Following this distinction, civic education may result in more complex democratic belief systems by fostering greater differentiation between, for example, democratic values and democratic knowledge and skills, and also by fostering a greater degree of integration or consistency *between* the overall "values" and "skills" dimensions.

We investigate these questions by conducting a principal components factor analysis of the six democratic orientations for two groups—students who were exposed to no civic education whatsoever in their classes and students who were exposed to at least some civics training, either through their normal classes or through the specialized *Democracy for All* program. The results are shown in Table 4 below.

The results indicate that the factor structure of democratic orientations differs substantially between the two groups. Among students receiving no civic education, two factors emerge: one dominated by the democratic values of civic duty, institutional trust, and approval of legal political behaviors, and the other a factor comprised of political knowledge and political tolerance. What is particularly noteworthy, however, is that tolerance loads *negatively* on this dimension, indicating a negative relationship between knowledge and tolerance among this group (the simple correlation is −.15), and a delineation of knowledge and (in)tolerance from the other democratic values examined in the study. Among this group, political competence and tolerance towards unpopular political groups move in opposite directions, and both in relative distinction from other supportive democratic orientations.

The structure of democratic orientations among students who received civics training is markedly different. The most important difference is the relatively

Table 4. The Effects of Civic Education on Factor Structure of Democracy Orientations

	Students Receiving No Civic Education		Students Receiving Civic Education	
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 1	Factor 2
Knowledge	.30	**.52**	.05	**.76**
Civic Duty	**.67**	−.36	**.63**	.18
Tolerance	.14	**−.83**	**.50**	−.31
Institutional Trust	**.60**	−.10	**.62**	−.02
Civic Skills	**.41**	.30	.19	.62
Approval of Legal Behaviors	**.60**	.20	**.66**	.20
Cumulative Percent of Variance Explained	.24	.45	.28	.45

Source: USAID Civic Education Survey, South African High School Students, May–June 1998.

strong loading of political tolerance on the "values" factor, along with civic duty, trust, and approval of legal behaviors. Such a result implies that civic education had the effect of linking political tolerance in students' minds with other supportive democratic values, an accomplishment that is perhaps as important as the simple effect of civics training on the *extent* of political tolerance shown in Table 3. In recent work, for example, Gibson and his colleagues (1998, 2003) lament the distinctiveness in public opinion in many emerging democracies between the individual's adherence to political tolerance and other "minoritarian" values from "majoritarian" values such as support for elections and democratic institutions. The results here suggest that this distinctiveness can be altered, at least among youth, through exposure to civic education that may make the linkages between all of these democratic values explicit.

A further difference in the factor structure between the two groups is the clearer delineation among those receiving civic education between a values dimension and what may be termed a "competence" dimension comprising political knowledge and civic skills. In the terminology of belief system complexity discussed above, we may say that the "values" and "competence" dimensions are clearly more differentiated among students exposed to civics training. In contrast to the no civic education group, those who received civics training were much more likely to bring their sense of skills in line with their level of political knowledge, and these orientations were more distinct from the dimension encompassing four democratic values. In this way, civic education produced the kind of dimensionality among democratic orientations seen in public opinion in both new and emerging democracies—a dimension comprising political competence or the individual's ability to grasp and influence the political process, and a dimension comprising support or opposition to the values and norms inherent in democratic systems. Civic education in South Africa, then, both facilitated cohesion among disparate democratic values, and facilitated a finer distinction between different aspects of democratic citizenship.[6]

Conclusion

This study of civics instruction in South Africa has sought to contribute to the resurgence of scholarly attention into the effects of civic education among

[6] In terms of belief system "integration," the results are somewhat ambiguous due to the fact that the dimensions themselves differ considerably between those students who received civics training and those that did not. The correlation between the "values" dimension and the "knowledge-intolerance" dimension among those with no civics training is .17; the correlation between the "values" dimension, which includes tolerance, and the "competence" dimension, which includes knowledge and skills, among those receiving civics training is .12. We may say that the values and competence dimensions are more clearly differentiated as well as more *internally* consistent among students receiving civic education, but there are not necessarily stronger linkages *between* the two dimensions.

students in both the United States and in developing democracies. Using survey data gathered on 600 South African high school students in 1998, we arrived at three main conclusions, one that amplifies previous findings, and two that have not yet been previously demonstrated in the emerging literature from new democracies. First, in line with Niemi and Junn's recent U.S. study (1998), civics instruction in South Africa had substantial effects on students' basic political knowledge. Students who received civics instruction on at least a weekly basis were far more likely to identify correctly the names of key South African political leaders and possess basic knowledge of the South African constitutional structure than students who received civics instruction less often, or not at all. The differences between these groups on political knowledge was upwards of 10%, roughly double the effect attributed solely to exposure to civic education in the United States by Niemi and Junn (1998). The findings, along with those reported in several other studies of developing democracies (Morduchowicz et al., 1996; Soule, 2000; Torney-Purta et al., 2001), suggest that civic education has much potential to increase students' basic store of political knowledge, perhaps more so than in advanced settings where civics instruction may be redundant to other sources of political information.

Second, we found that the effects of civic education on democratic attitudes, values, and orientations towards political participation were in general more modest, but that even these orientations could be changed through civics instruction under certain conditions related to the classroom and instructional environment. As suggested by theories of attitude change and political persuasion, the "low-involvement" learning environment for democratic orientations appears to have increased the influence of "peripheral" cues such as the credibility and likeability of a message's source. When students perceived their teachers to be highly knowledgeable, competent, likeable, and inspiring, they appeared to internalize attitudes and values supportive of democracy, such as an increased sense of the responsibilities of citizens in a democratic system and trust in political and social institutions, to a greater extent than students who received training from "poor" instructors or not at all. We found little effect of exposure to civic education *per se* on these orientations: what matters for changes in democratic values, attitudes, and skills is not merely receiving the message itself, but the environment and the methods in which the messages are imparted.

Similarly, when students were trained in the civics classroom using interactive and participatory teaching methods, they developed political tolerance and trust, as well as important civic skills and supportive participatory attitudes to a greater extent than students who were trained using more traditional pedagogical approaches or who received no civics training whatsoever. Importantly, the kinds of pedagogical methods that had the greatest impact were those that involved students directly in interactive democratic behaviors such as participation in mock elections, trials, or role-playing activities, and not, as much previous work asserted, those related to open classroom discussions or the voicing of student

opinions on current issues. Students learn democratic values and skills much as adults do: by practicing and engaging in democratic participation in the venues available to them and not necessarily through discussing controversial issues or being encouraged to their opinions. To this extent, the results suggest that the best civic education will involve students as directly as possible in both simulated and, we may speculate, actual political activities as well.

Finally, we found evidence that civic education affects not only the levels of key democratic orientations, but also the interrelationships between them. Students exposed to civics instruction were much more likely to integrate the "difficult" minoritarian value of political tolerance into their overall democratic value structure than students who did not receive civics training; without the benefit of civic education, tolerance judgments loaded negatively on a relatively diffuse political competence dimension. Theoretically, the findings suggest that civic education successfully taught students "what goes with what" in terms of democratic values and skills. On a more practical level, the results point to some optimism for the potential for future increases in levels of tolerance in South Africa, and the potential use of civic education in that country to promote the integration of tolerance judgments within more general democratic belief systems (Gibson & Gouws, 2003).

Along with these positive findings, however, the study points to a critical limitation of civic education as a means of developing supportive political values and attitudes among students in emerging democracies. The results demonstrate that when individuals are trained by high-quality instructors *and* with active, participatory methodologies, changes in democratic orientations can be of reasonable magnitude. But in most cases, only a minority of students who receive civic education instruction are exposed to these beneficial pedagogical conditions. For example, only 18.5% of all students who received civics instruction from their normal high school teachers rated them as "high" on teacher quality *and* reported that they used many participatory teaching methods; this number only rose to 40% for students trained in a specialized program, *Democracy for All*, that was specifically designed to provide high quality, active civics instruction.

These results point to the difference between the *potential* for civic education effects and the *actual* magnitude of the effects in practice, as it appears difficult to train students in the ways that we have shown to be effective in influencing important democratic orientations and behaviors, even in a specialized civics program specifically designed toward those ends. If more students could be trained in the ways that we have demonstrated are effective, then democratic orientations would exhibit greater change. But, given the considerable barriers to the implementation of proper civic education in emerging democracies, ranging from financial constraints, logistical difficulties in reaching potential beneficiaries, the lack of trained instructors, and political turmoil, the utility of school-based civic education programs in many instances should be seriously questioned

(Carothers, 1999). If done "correctly," however, civic education has the potential to be a vital resource in the democratization process.

Much work needs to be done in order to push our theoretical understanding of civic education in developing democracies further, as well as to build a more extensive set of empirical findings on which to base firmer policy recommendations. We know little, for example, about the relative magnitude of effects for high school versus younger students in emerging democratic contexts and little about whether the effects found here and elsewhere in the literature are enduring or whether they tend to fade as students reach political age. And we have little evidence regarding whether a finite amount of civic education funding is better spent on students or on adult education, where perhaps the more immediate relevance of the messages may lead to more "central" information processes that may be more enduring and more consequential in terms of the individual's active involvement in the political system (Finkel, 2003). All of these questions deserve greater attention as emerging democracies around the world attempt to build political cultures that support and sustain the democratic process.

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APPENDIX: Sample Characteristics of Civic Education Participants and Matched Control Groups

		DFA/Street Law 300	Non-DFA/Street Law 300
PROVINCE	**AREA**		
Eastern Cape	Port Elizabeth (Blacks)	40	40
	Port Elizabeth (Coloureds)	30	30
	Mt. Fletcher		
	Qumbu		
		70	**70**
Free State	Bethlehem		
	Bloemfontein	50	50
	Botshabelo		
	Phuthaditjaba/Witsieshoek		
		50	**50**
Gauteng	Bronkhorstspruit		
	Johannesburg	60	60
	KwaMhlanga/Bronkhorstspruit		
	Pretoria		
	Soweto		
	Vaal Area		
	West Rand (Johannesburg)		
		60	**60**
KwaZulu-Natal	Cornfields		
	Durban	70	70
	Eshowe		
	Muden		
	Pinetown		
	River View		
	Sankotshe		
		70	**70**
North West	Coligny		
	Lichtenburg		
	Mmabatho	20	20
	Vryburg		
		20	**20**
Western Cape	Cape Town	16	16
	Dysselsdorp	5	5
	Genadendal		
	Malmesbury		
	Oudtshoorn	9	9
	Riviersonderend		
	Zoar		
		30	**30**
Totals		**300**	**300**

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