

THE KETTERING FOUNDATION'S ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

CONNECTIONS

www.kettering.org

2010



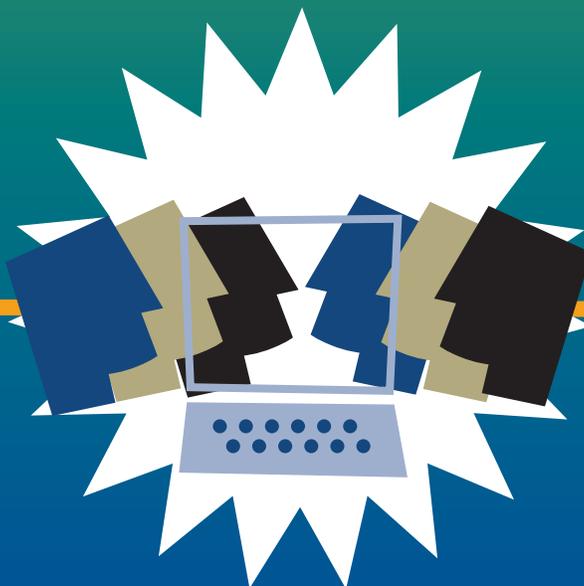
The role of
Civic
Organizations
in today's
society

READERS' FORUM

Your
Connection...

Engage
others,
exchange
stories

in the Readers'
Forum on
www.kettering.org



CONNECTIONS

CONTENTS



4 **Tocqueville in 2030?**

David Mathews

The Challenges of Civic Life

7 **Citizens, Organizations, and the Gap in Civil Society**

Derek Barker

9 **Developing Democracy's Hubs: Building Local Capacity for Deliberative Practice through Passionate Impartiality**

Martín Carcasson

12 **Uncovering Organic Community Politics: A View from the Inside**

Dorothy Battle

15 **Hot Passion and Cool Judgment: Relating Reason and Emotion in Democratic Politics**

Scott J. Peters, Theodore R. Alter, and Timothy J. Shaffer

18 **Multinational Perspectives on Civil Society**

Paloma Dallas and Ileana Marin

New Forms of Organizations

21 **How the "Body Politic" Thinks and Learns: The Roles of Civic Organizations**

Randall Nielsen

24 **The Evolution of Centers for Public Life: NIF and the Return to Civil Society**

Alice Diebel

26 **Collaborating for Education: The Dynamic Citizenry**

Connie Crockett

28 **Governmental Agencies as Civic Actors**

Phillip Lurie

30 **Finding a Different Path**

Janis Foster

32 **Books Worth Reading**

Democracy and Higher Education: Traditions and Stories of Civil Engagement

By Scott J. Peters, with Theodore R. Alter and Neil Schwartzbach

Books Worth Reading

Democracy and Higher Education: Traditions and Stories of Civic Engagement

By Scott J. Peters, with Theodore R. Alter and Neil Schwartzbach
Michigan State University Press, 2010

How should higher education contribute to democracy? Over the years, it has been argued that colleges and universities have a duty to provide equitable access to education, support public intellectuals, or simply discover and preserve the truth. A growing number of scholars and practitioners are investigating the ways colleges and universities might help further participatory democratic ends. Scott Peters, who studies the history of the national land-grant system as well as contemporary land-grant scholars and extension educators, has made a major contribution to this inquiry with the publication of his most recent book, *Democracy and Higher Education*.

While private universities are not subject to any obvious democratic demands, the land-grant system was created to serve a variety of public ends through the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. The land-grant system became obligated to connect the work of academic professionals to the interests and activities of local communities, the states, and the nation as a whole with the Hatch Act of 1887 and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. By tracing this history and telling the stories of those working within the land-grant system, Peters hopes to articulate an often-ignored ideal of higher education

and show how it might be realized.

Democracy and Higher Education is largely comprised of interviews conducted with 12 exemplary individuals at Cornell University, a land-grant institution. These oral histories shed light on the ways professionals at colleges and universities may contribute to democracy, such as by working with communities to name and frame a problem or goal; identify options for what can be done, as well as the consequences of each; decide what should be done, in light of particular interests, values, and commitments; and act and evaluate what has been done (14).

For example, Molly Jahn, a plant geneticist, created the Public Seed Initiative (PSI) in order to better serve farmers whose needs were not being met by global seed production companies. PSI connects university researchers, seed companies, extension personnel, seed producers, nonprofits, and government organizations and has helped increase the availability of vegetable crops that thrive in the Northeast. It has also increased the knowledge and capacities of those involved in ways that further individual, common, and larger public interests (97-112).

Peters suggests that there are four key conditions for public work that surface in the interviews. *Going out and being present in the community*, especially by asking questions and listening. *Becoming an insider*, by taking part in the democratic process

DEMOCRACY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Traditions and Stories of Civic Engagement

SCOTT J. PETERS

WITH THEODORE R. ALTER AND NEIL SCHWARTZBACH

rather than acting as a servant to clients. *Making "I" "we,"* such as by being purposefully inefficient in order to allow everyone involved a chance to claim ownership. And *leapfrogging back and forth* between public and academic roles.

The interviews collected and the conclusions Peters draws are not meant to provide final answers but to contribute to an ongoing conversation about democracy and higher education. Each interviewee tells a singular story of their involvement in public work, and it seems clear that much more could be done to change institutional factors to encourage a more democratic relationship between academics and local communities. How this can be best achieved is a matter requiring further inquiry and discussion.

— Zach VanderVeen

Zach VanderVeen is a research associate at the Kettering Foundation.

**NEW from
Kettering
Foundation
Press**



SELECTED WRITINGS OF LI SHENZHI

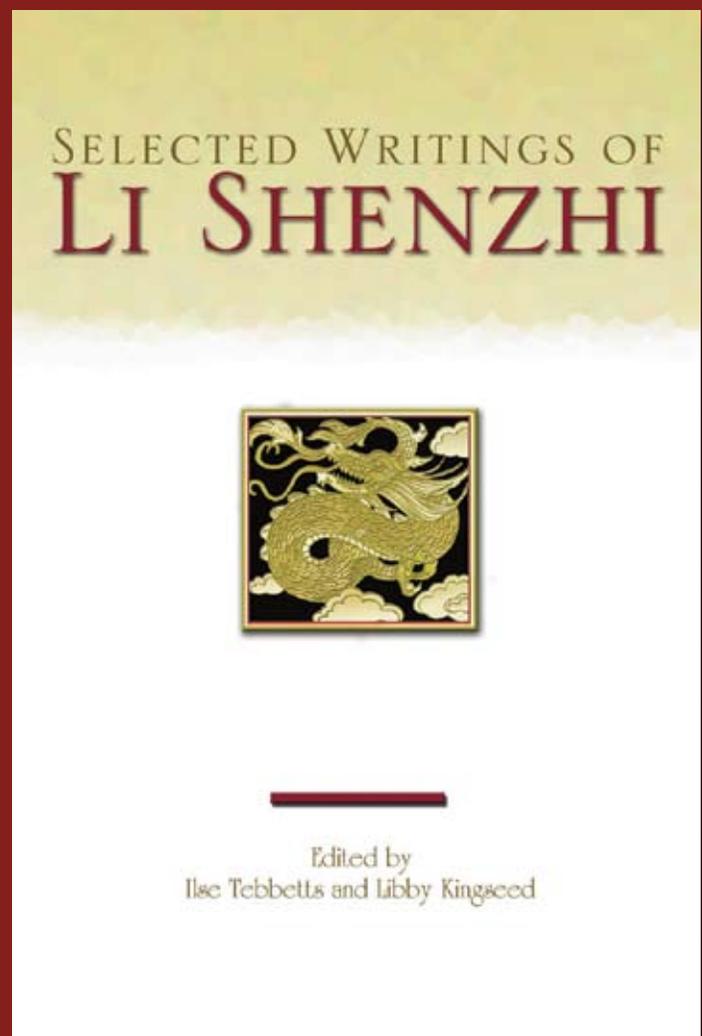
This volume offers the first English translations of work by Li Shen zhi (1923-2003), a leading Chinese statesman and academic, who was a premier architect of China's liberal intellectual revival in the late 1990s and an uncompromising campaigner for political reform and democracy in China.

In these pieces, written between 1991 and 2002, Li Shen zhi considers centuries of history; presents a worldwide view of cultural, social, and political differences; and offers glimpses of the possibilities for a truly free and democratic People's Republic of China.

To order this book:

Contact Agency for Instructional Technology at 1-800-600-4060.

You can also FAX your order to 1-812-333-4218 or send an e-mail to info@ait.net.



Kettering Foundation Press | 2010

\$19.95 • 188 pages

ISBN 978-0-923993-29-0

Visit the Kettering Foundation Web site at www.kettering.org.

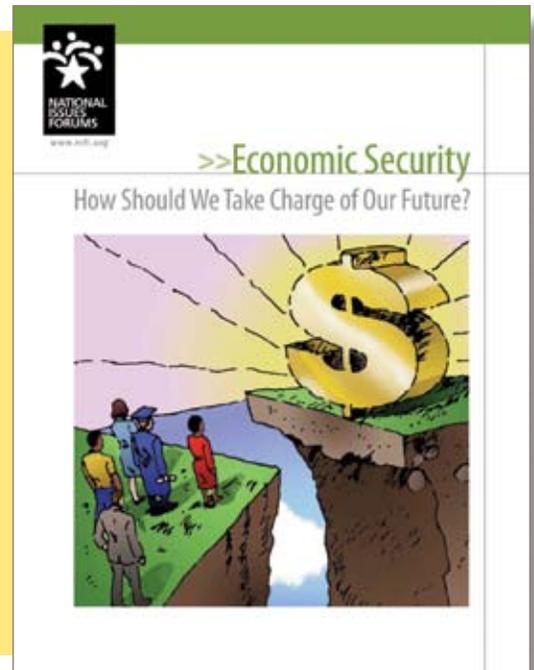
Hot Topics for Deliberation!

New NIF Guides

Economic Security: How Should We Take Charge of Our Future?

As the nation slowly recovers from its worst recession in decades, it is a good time to ask how we can best take charge of the future, so families can feel reasonably secure, parents can help their children prosper, and everyone can move toward a financially stable retirement.

12-page NIF Issue Guide **\$2.49**
Free 4-page Issue in Brief



America's Role in the World: What Does National Security Mean in the 21st Century?

It is time for us to take stock of America's role in the world. How shall we approach the world in an environment of diminished power, increased volatility, more competition, and global threats?

12-page NIF Issue Guide **\$2.49**
Free 4-page Issue in Brief



To order these NIF publications, contact **Agency for Instructional Technology** at 1-800-600-4060. You can also FAX your order to 1-812-333-4218 or send an e-mail to info@ait.net. For a complete listing of NIF issue guides, visit www.nifi.org.

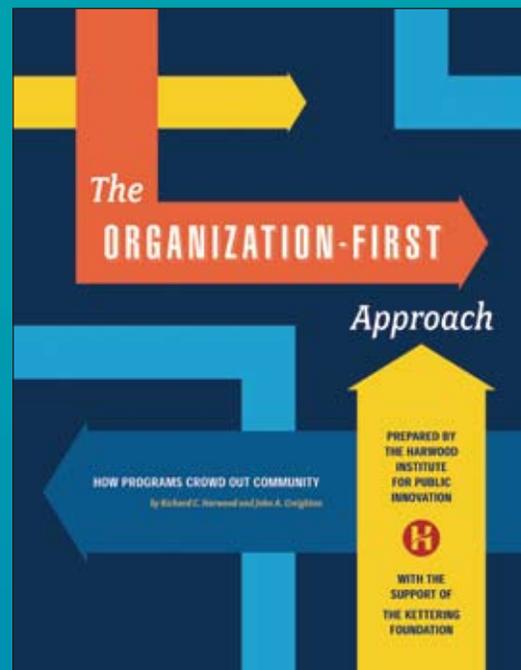
The Organization-First Approach

How Programs Crowd Out Community

by Richard C. Harwood and John A. Creighton

“The Organization-First Approach reveals the troubling trend of nonprofits, foundations, advocacy groups, and others becoming increasingly focused inward, consumed by an ethos of professionalization that leaves little room for authentic engagement or deliberation. The report finds that many of these groups have replaced engagement with outreach and interface with the public around the organization’s programs and agenda instead of the community’s needs or aspirations.”

— David Mathews, President & CEO, Kettering Foundation



Kettering Foundation and the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation | 2009

FREE • 24 pages

<http://64.239.243.19/>

Doing Democracy

A report for the Kettering Foundation

by Scott London

Some organizations are reversing the trend toward a decline in civil society by creating the spaces and the means for public deliberation on a wide variety of local, state, and national issues. This report by Scott London describes how many centers across the country are building the capacity of citizens to tackle tough problems. They promote public life in classrooms by developing skills. And they promote public life in communities by encouraging citizens to work to address problems and by affecting the decisions public officials must make.



Kettering Foundation | 2010

FREE • Coming soon

To order these publications, contact **Agency for Instructional Technology** at **1-800-600-4060**. You can also FAX your order to **1-812-333-4218** or send an e-mail to info@ait.net.



© Copyright 2010 by the Kettering Foundation
200 Commons Road, Dayton, Ohio 45459-2799; (937) 434-7300
444 North Capitol Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001; (202) 393-4478
6 East 39th Street, New York, New York 10016; (212) 686-7016
www.kettering.org

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Dayton, OH
Permit No. 638

Kettering Foundation
200 Commons Road
Dayton, OH 45459-2799

The Kettering Foundation, chartered in 1927, is a research foundation rooted in the American tradition of inventive research. Its founder, Charles F. Kettering, holder of more than 200 patents, is best known for his invention of the automobile self-starter. He was interested, above all, in seeking practical answers to “the problems behind the problems.”

The foundation today continues in that tradition. The objective of the research now is to study what helps democracy work as it should. Six major Kettering programs are designed to shed light on what is required to strengthen public life.

Kettering is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) research organization supported by an endowment. For more information about KF research and publications, see the Kettering Foundation’s Web site at www.kettering.org.

Connections is published by the Kettering Foundation, 200 Commons Road, Dayton, Ohio 45459-2799. The articles in *Connections* reflect the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the foundation, its directors, or its officers.

Editor

Alice Diebel

Copy Editor

Lisa Boone-Berry

Design and Production

Long’s Graphic Design, Inc.

Illustrations

Long’s Graphic Design, Inc.