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

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

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

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

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

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