Pattern Workshops and Pattern Games

Generating Civic Intelligence with the *Liberating Voices* Pattern Language

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Introduction

Launched in 2001, the *Liberating Voices* pattern language project focuses on the development and use of a pattern language that helps empower people to use and shape information and communication environments in ways that will help them address complex social and environmental problems. We specifically focus on what have been called "wicked problems" and are characterized by a complex interplay of problems and conflicting needs. The first phase of the project culminated in the publication of a book (Schuler, 2008) and a web site (http://www.publicsphereproject.org/patterns/). The published pattern language consisting of 136 extremely diverse patterns was developed over 7 years, the result of an international collaboration of 85 authors.

As we discussed in our 2009 PUARL paper (Schuler, 2009), we believe that patterns and pattern languages may represent the best approach for capturing the type and scope of knowledge that will be necessary for cultivating the civic intelligence that we will need in the 21st Century. Capturing knowledge, however, is not the same as acting appropriating upon that knowledge. Creation of the book and web site was the not the final objective: participating in a broad discussion about thinking and acting in the 21st Century was — and still is — the objective.

To this end, we are exploring online, in-person, and hybrid approaches. For example, after the book's publication we developed a set of pattern cards which we have used in various workshops for analyzing social issues, formulating strategic responses, and envisioning public engagement. We have also explored a variety of game approaches including student projects as well as a Facebook game that shows what activist role he or she might play and what patterns would be most appropriate. The purpose of this paper is to review some of these steps and to contemplate future ones.

Research Assertions and Questions

From the onset this project was intended to be a research *and* action project. We believe that keeping a focus on both perspectives, by essentially privileging neither, helps ensure that we are generally hewing towards the path that is most likely to help us reach our objectives. This approach may result in findings that appear less definitive or yield less societal influence than hoped for or that is more difficult to discern. We feel, however, that this approach is still more likely to reach our ambitious (and possibly Quixotic) goals than through others. Our approach at least thus far has been an unfunded enterprise and hence has its own dynamic in which we are generally unsure (unfortunately) about our future resources and therefore about task execution and planning overall. Moreover, our pursuit is not commercial so success cannot be measured in dollars. Also, the type of individual and collective action that we're hoping to encourage is much more complicated and nuanced than, for example, that of much administrative work, or, for that matter, typical "web 2.0" online applications. This dual focus imposes a grounded and incremental co-development process where practice informs research and vice versa. Our research focus, for example, on "social objects" ideally will inform the technical directions that we'll follow with our online social objects.

In the following section we discuss pattern cards, "social objects," and generativity as well as research questions and issues that these three areas raise. In addition to being important to our work we believe that this approach will be relevant to other work related to advancing and improving pattern language approaches to collaborative problem-solving in cyberspace and the "real world."

Pattern Cards

As we discussed in the 2009 PUARL paper (Schuler), the cards (Figure 1) were extremely useful due to their accessibility and their manipulability. Each pattern is briefly described on the card thus providing a much simpler, more focused look at the pattern, than the version in the book. Each pattern card has a prominent title and an image that conveys the basic message of the pattern and, hopefully, is compelling to people looking at the card. Also, the very fact

that the cards can be picked up, held in the hand, passed from person to person, and placed on a table with other cards and easily arranged and rearranged, represents some clear advantages over the patterns in the book. At the same time, the abridged pattern on the card provides an access point or a window into the longer, more informative version in the book that should definitely be read if people are seriously considering its use. The pattern cards are currently online on the Public Sphere Project site and we are currently in the process of designating the cards as creative commons to allow remixing.

In workshop settings, the cards' physical characteristics which make them easy to manipulate and the granular nature of pattern languages in general work together, making a strong tool for helping a group of people tackle a design challenge or a problem set. A team of four or five can quite quickly divide all 136 patterns among them and choose the most relevant patterns that relate to the task at hand. As the team reviews each others choices the group is able to refine their collective understanding of the task by affirming choices of others, questioning patterns that do not fit in their perception, and making a case for their own choices. This process not only narrows the range of patterns, but is an important step in fostering the collective intelligence of the team.

Fishkin and Luskin's work with deliberative polling (2005) provides strong evidence that as people gain information, hear the opinions of others on a topic, and refine their own views through deliberation, that as a group opinions change and a sense of cooperation towards mutually beneficial solutions increase. In the simple exercise of sorting through the *Liberating Voices* pattern cards a group goes through a similar sequence to the deliberative polling process. The cards outline ideas that may not have been known to the individual, others ideas are presented to the group, and the individual tests their own ideas against the collective opinions of the group. As the group understanding builds the pattern cards quickly become shared ideas that can be referenced by the group and visually manipulated in relation to other ideas. By acting as common symbols a level of complexity can be dealt with that is often difficult with verbal language alone.

Another layer of generative capability arises as a group begins looking at the pattern cards in relation to each other. The juxtaposition of just three patterns, as in figure 1, can open a large set of territory for a group to consider as it applies to their task. When additional pattern cards are taken into consideration the mathematical permutation of combinations quickly grows, showing the fertile ground of ideas even a relatively small set of patterns can supply. But, in practice teams rarely need to consider every possible combination. The shared framework of understanding built in the first part of the work allows the combinations that make the most sense for addressing the issue to quickly be realized by the group. Once the approach is defined other patterns can be brought into the equation to see how they modify the proposed concept.

Figure 1: Three *Liberating Voices* Pattern Cards

Social Objects

We are cautiously optimistic that thinking about patterns as social objects (note 1) will be advantageous to our project. Some of this optimism has been prompted through our experiences with the cards. While specific patterns (as well as the idea of patterns and pattern languages generally) are somewhat abstract, the patterns became *objects* when they take some discrete form — in which they can be manipulated; i.e. they become "objects."

When objects become "social" they obviously can be called social objects. But when can an object actually be described as *social*? Obviously any object, a rock for example, can trivially be called a social object when it is employed in a social setting. I can climb a large rock and address the masses or I can hurl a smaller rock to smite an enemy. I can also impress people with my spectacular rock collection. But rocks are weak social objects at best. Strongly social objects are objects that are routinely or primarily used by people for communication and/or are intended by their creators to be used in that way.

Our online system now supports annotations. This means that people can associate relevant information, including how they used the pattern, links to other examples or links to other patterns, or pose questions that hopefully another user could address. Annotating certainly qualifies as a key feature of a social object. And while annotating generally means attaching information to other information, an *external* approach to amending or augmenting the meaning of something without altering the original, co-developing a pattern or, even, an entire pattern language can be seen as *internal* annotating where the content itself can be altered. This shared editing approach while somewhat straightforward when people are physically together, while very intriguing, and frankly, irresistible, becomes complex and far less straightforward to implement (and to find willing and adept users) in online use. (note 2)

Generativity

Our working definition of a generative social phenomena is one that weakens or removes one or more barriers to thinking or acting in a way that promotes civic intelligence; and/or makes new opportunities that promote civic intelligence available to the participants. This opens up the idea of generativity that expands the definitions of generativity via patterns raised by Alexander et al and by later pattern language scholars. The generative principle as presented in *The Timeless Way of Building* (Alexander, 1979) as it applies to patterns in a pattern language generally includes a description of a process to reach a state as well as a description of the state that is attained through going through the process. We generally share that view but because of the nature of our patterns and our domain (which is more *immaterial* than architecture), our patterns and the results of pattern use seem to be generative in other ways than Alexander's definition would allow. In other words, other patterns besides the *Civic Intelligence* pattern will help generate civic intelligence. Our definition also allows patterns to be considered within an open system — not within a system comprised of only other patterns.

Our definition of generativity was developed *post hoc* through observing how people employ the *Liberating Voices* patterns through workshops and games. Some results were expected (indeed they were explicit aims of the workshop or game developers) but others were emergent and unanticipated. Based on our experience with workshops and games we have identified a variety of ways in which the patterns can be viewed as generative. Social objects (physical and digital) based on the *Librating Voices* patterns can be used to help…

- people generate new ideas;
- generate interest and expertise in a pattern / pattern language orientation;
- generate new ideas for understanding their particular situation and furthering their mission;
- people realize that they are capable of positive social impact;
- further social imagination;
- create new varieties of generative social phenomena. (i.e. things have been created that can themselves be built upon)
- produce things that non-participants can use;
- generate entire online applications or organizations;
- engender group formation and collaboration;
- "train the trainers";
- help, in the Alexandrine sense, engender the existence of the pattern itself; i.e. the *Civic Intelligence* pattern can begat more civic intelligence while *Everyday Heroism* helps legitimatize more everyday heroism. But, additionally, Civic Intelligence can engender everyday heroism and vice versa.

Research questions

This section includes a number of research questions presented somewhat informally. Some of these questions (such as the first one below) are frankly unlikely to be answered by us. The reason we do list them is because a focus on civic intelligence forces us to acknowledge them; i.e. we acknowledge the gaps in our knowledge that we hope to bridge. The digital environment also opens up new worlds for distribution and collaboration that weren't open to Alexander and his colleagues. Ironically one of the biggest barriers here is the fact that another login name and password is required to use the system at a time when people feel like they have too many already. (But, although theoretically this should be out of scope, we do hope to address that issue also.)

Pattern Cards

- Why do the cards unleash or generate creativity (and to what extent, do they?)
- Why is that people can use multiple cards at a time and readily conceive, design, visualize, conceptualize something that incorporates all the patterns?
- How strong a role does physical manipulability of the pattern cards play and how can it be replicated or otherwise compensated for in online environments?

Social Objects

- How do we improve our patterns as "social objects?" What can be done to make the patterns "good" social objects? Some proposed features include accessibility, transferability, annotatability, manipulability, promiscuity (the ability to interact with many others), clarity, interaction promoting, and learning promoting. (And are these the same attributes that a good word or concept would have?)
- Can the virtual digital world support the same rich, social interplay that using the cards in synchronous in-person environments does?
- What additional value can people obtain from patterns as social objects as opposed to, say, reading them in the book?
- Does the brain think differently about a pattern when they hold the card in their hand? We suspect that the answer is yes. The pattern, perhaps, loses its abstract nature — and hence its inaccessibility —and becomes *actual* — at least in their minds.
- How much mileage can we get from designating our cards as creative commons? In other words, is there an audience for this type of artifact and how can we get the word out to them?
- What types of application programming interfaces (APIs) would be useful for effective sharing of the pattern cards as social objects?
- How can collaborative annotation help people construct — and employ — pattern languages?

Generativity

- How could we measure or evaluate success of our generative efforts?
- How do we improve the quantity and quality of generativity?
- What is the relationship between social objects and generativity?
- How can we link generativity to civic intelligence?

Other Research Issues

- How can our results help promote the production of a viable methodology for an entire life-cycle of pattern language based projects?
- Does playing a game using patterns help prepare people to use them in the real world? What actually is learned? What's going on in people's minds when they're playing a game with patterns as opposed to other interactions around patterns?
- What other workshops, games, and other structured social encounters can we devise to help further our work?

Liberating Voices Workshops

The overall objectives of the workshops were (1) to explore together the *Liberating Voices* pattern language for eliciting the civic intelligence required for addressing complex challenges in public health and other fields; and (2) to gather data for expanding concrete applications of *Liberating Voices* into other fields

A primary assumption behind the workshops was that a pattern language, like *Liberating Voices*, can provide an ever-evolving understanding of problems / solutions as well as ongoing documentation of insights and dialog to inform our perspectives on vexing social issues. We can draw upon that collective wisdom and in turn extend and repair it through specific, concrete applications. A second underlying assumption was that one learns and develops pattern languages in a way that is similar to learning any language, that is, through immersive experiences that reveal the specific meaning and relationships among individual patterns through their interaction in a given social context. Working with the patterns was the quickest way for people to "get" the patterns and to develop fluency with them.

We have convened nearly twenty team-based pattern language workshops over the past few years. Of the approximately 300 participants, perhaps 2/3 have been students while the other 1/3 have been professionals from a variety of fields. The majority of the workshops have been planned and conducted by Kenneth Gillgren and Douglas Schuler, while in one of the two Italian workshops (the one in Milan), the convening was done in Italian after consultation with Schuler. Also, in the 2009-2010 school year, Evergreen students conducted three small workshops with outside non-profit groups, after

receiving a brief training. We are very interested in this generative "train the trainer" approach and will continue to explore how best to do it.

Although a "basic workshop model" exists, at nearly every workshop we have varied at least slightly from this model based on specific participant needs, our quest for data about pattern use and workshop effectiveness, or both. For example, in one workshop all teams focused on the same civic challenge (gentrification), while each team was also assigned different social/financial/time constraints. One team, for example, was to see itself as a neighborhood community council building a three-month action plan with little or no available funding. Our experience has shown that explicitly acknowledging these actual constraints in real-life workshops is a critical component for grounding the use of the pattern language.

In the de facto basic model the teams were organized by pre-existing class projects, with at least 4-5 students in each team (some teams as large as 8-10 members). Each team had the same reference materials, including pocket-sized booklets listing all 136 Liberating Voices patterns for each student, a deck of approximately 65 pattern cards, blank cards for including patterns not yet available in the deck or perhaps not yet documented in *Liberating Voices*, two "worksheets" for plotting the cards, a checklist for documenting the selection and plotting of patterns, and worksheets for team notes. (All of these resources are available for free download at the Public Sphere Project site)

Each team discussed the specific focus of their project and then dealt out cards for each team member to review on behalf of the entire team. This positioned each team member to have greater familiarity with selected patterns, and therefore strengthen the team's ability to work with a relatively large number of patterns without having to take time for everyone to learn them all. Teams then selected their own process for "playing out" the hands, which involved selecting applicable cards and plotting them by their relative weight or priority for the issue at hand as well as a rough sense of sequencing (Fig. 2), that is, which patterns would tend to be more useful earlier, and which later, in the overall flow of resolving the issue. Teams were also encouraged to use the blank cards to add additional patterns from *Liberating Voices* that had not yet been prepared as cards or to even suggest new patterns.

Figure 2: Initial pattern plotting worksheet

In the second phase of the workshop, teams were asked to select one pattern or cluster of patterns from the first worksheet (Fig. 3) that appeared to be the most strategic starting point for action planning. They placed that pattern or cluster at the center of the Action Planning "game board" (Fig. 3) and then worked through the various dimensions of action planning: (1) outcomes, (2) constraints, (3) resources, and (4) action timeline.

Teams generally select one pattern instead of a pattern cluster. An Action Planning game board from the "Aging Population" team, with the pattern, *Wholesome Design for Wicked Problems* at the center is seen in Figure 3.

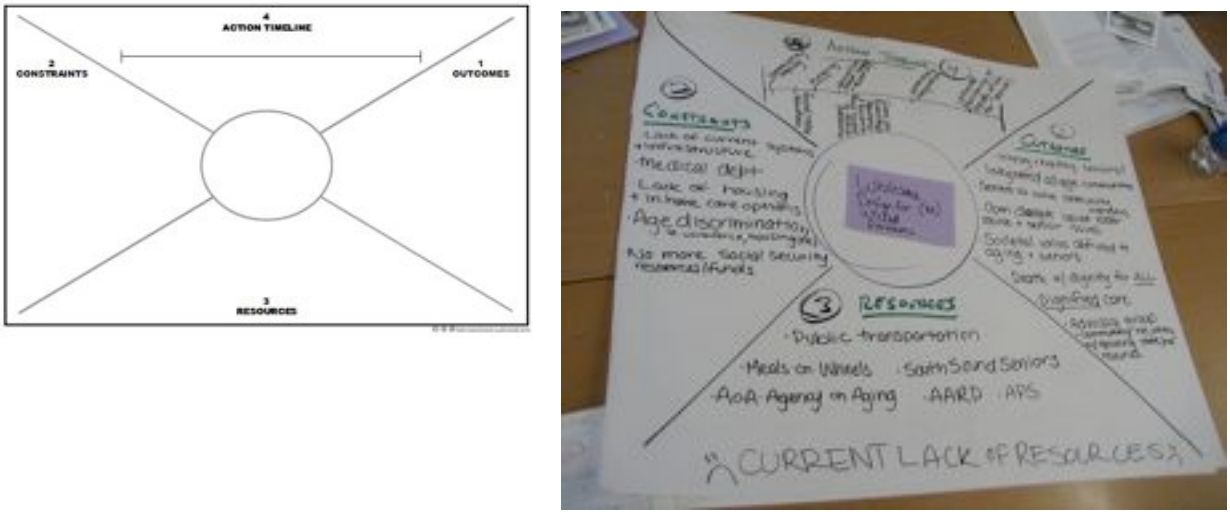

Figure 3: Pattern action planning worksheet

How have the pattern *w*orkshops informed the development of *Liberating Voices* as a practical language of patterns for civic imagination and engagement? Here are some initial thoughts.

First, it appears that we had been making too much of the technical definition of "what is a pattern?" at the onset of the workshops. For that reason we began to structure the workshops more along the lines of a language immersion, hands-on approach than logical step-by-step explanation. Once people begin to work with the pattern cards, the concrete issues/opportunities in the area under focus somehow begin to make sense, in all their rich complexity, still a daunting challenge, but no longer a paralyzing conundrum. Recognizing patterns at work and in context was far more immediately intuitive and useful than defining "pattern" in the abstract.

Second, even using a representative stack of cards (well short of the full 136 patterns) provided enough of a sense of the whole to significantly broaden a team's perspective on its selected scenario. The deck to a certain extent helped to address the natural limitations of "whoever happens to show up" by providing a framework of experience beyond the specific composition of any given team.

Third, working with clusters of patterns in the context of a whole scenario appeared to reduce the temptation to view individual patterns as "best practices" (that is, in the sense of "prefab" solutions — a distinction that merits extended discussion in another venue) while reinforcing creative ideas for the form and content of a communication strategy/tactic shaped by the influence of multiple patterns.

Fourth, the level of energy, creativity and enthusiasm we witnessed in virtually every team convinced us that the application of a pattern language approach is intrinsically social, participatory and collaborative. That is, it can't happen by having any one person independently, off on their own, determining which patterns to apply and how. The collective insights and experiences of a team (optimally around 4-5 people) are required to ground and validate the selection of patterns as well as to sort out the implications of the pattern selection.

Fifth, and perhaps most important of all, the exercises appeared to generate cohesive narratives (yes, *The Power of Story*, LV pattern 114) around the issues and opportunities in any given scenarios, seamlessly drawing upon the specific experience, creativity and imagination of the team. The pattern cards stimulated and guided, but did not limit, the conversations, producing an action-oriented story of how the issues in the situation could be resolved without arbitrarily truncating or compromising their complexity.

Sixth, multiple ways can be developed for extracting learnings from any specific workshop to enrich the development of the overall Liberating Voices framework. The *Public Thinking and Public Health* program, for example, conducted a subsequent session in which new patterns were written and uploaded into the online *Liberating Voices* pattern repository, and the admittedly quick-and-dirty reports that the convener generated simply suggest directions worth considering. Whatever the structure or method, closing this loop reinforces the value of the local workshops in concretely extending

and repairing (to borrow Christopher Alexander terminology) the international initiative, thereby broadening and improving the archive for the use of other organizations and communities.

A secondary objective of the workshops was to explore ways of capturing information that might reveal which patterns or clusters of patterns tend to be more useful in specific settings or domains, and potentially "seed" the development of "sub-languages" for those who would concretely engage in the development and implementation of solutions. For example, in the *Public Thinking and Public Health* program, and using a subset of the pattern (65), reports generated from compiling the Pattern Checklists are best viewed as results from "thought experiments" in response to the question, "Which patterns and clusters of patterns might be most useful for supporting civic engagement in the domain of public health and health activism?" So, for example, these ten patterns (with pattern number provided in parentheses for reference) were independently selected by eight out of the ten projects/scenario teams, and therefore might be considered as the core of a specific pattern language for public health:

- Big-Picture Health Information (27)
- Education and Values (17)
- Citizen Science (37)
- Civic Intelligence (1)
- Community Inquiry (122)
- Meaningful Maps (47)
- Positive Health Information (74)
- Social Responsibility (8)
- Sustainable Design (22)
- Transforming Institutions (19)

Finally, the in-person workshops can be viewed as possible prototypes for online versions where participants are distributed in multiple locations and are unable to get together in person. The snapshot of the "game board" (Fig. 4) from the Aging Population team in the *Public Thinking and Public Health* program at Evergreen shows one possible shared view of a hypothetical online workshop in progress.

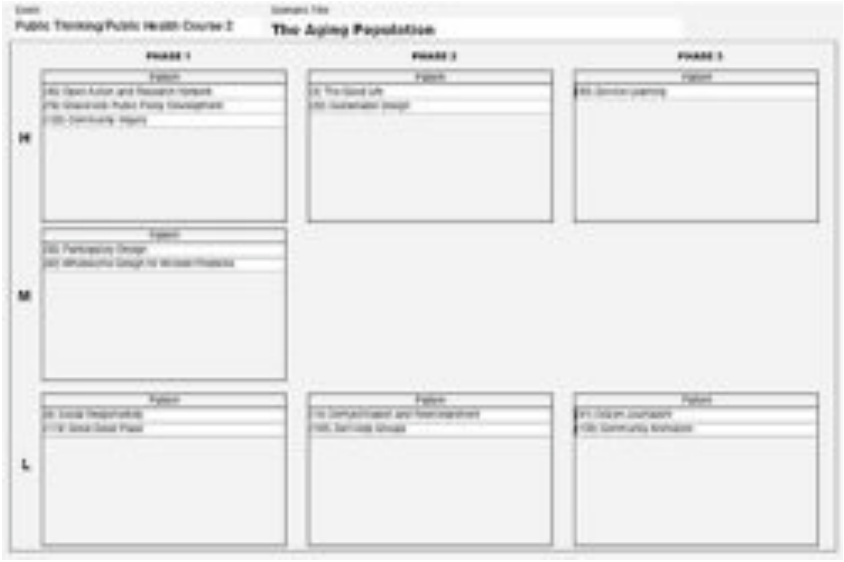

Figure 4: Hypothetical online workshop in progress

Liberating Voices Games

A strong case for examining the generative power of the *Liberating Voices* pattern language can be seen in its use in the game design project students of the Evergreen State College participated in for the program, *Civic Intelligence: Theory and Practice*. The goal of the project was to create a game prototype that emphasized the power of collective intelligence in addressing civic issues (http://wikis.evergreen.edu/civicintelligence/index.php/Game_Projects). Throughout the quarter student met in their design teams to develop and create their games, which were played at the end of the quarter.

Early in the design process the pattern language was used in a workshop to help students develop their game ideas. Prior to the workshop each team had decided on a type of game and a general idea of the issues their game would deal with. One team had decided to rewrite the *Monopoly* game to address cooperative strategies for urban planning. Another team wanted to use a similar *Monopoly* style board but write their own rules to focus on the attributes of civic intelligence. The third design group chose a roleplaying game format set in a city with dwindling resources that could only be saved with cooperative work from the players. The final team chose to make a charades type game that would help players interact with the themes of the pattern cards.

As *Liberating Voices* is already focused on civic intelligence, there were many connections present between the patterns and the games being developed. What was unique about the workshop is that it was focused on using the patterns to address design choices. Each team had a deck of 136 pattern cards and a large sheet of paper with three areas related to design, role of players, connection to real life, and theme/narrative. As the teams looked through the pattern deck they selected patterns related to each area of design. Even though the exercise was fairly simple, applying the pattern language to a specific area of focus allowed the rich interconnections to bring the issues related to each individual game to light. The patterns allowed students to quickly generate problems and solutions that could have taken much longer to arise from simple brainstorming or discussion.

In the debriefing after the workshop each team had made significant progress towards developing their games. Teams had begun with rough sketches of an idea and in just a few hours developed a cohesive plan for building mechanics and the world of their games. The work with the pattern language allowed each team to envision how the way their game worked and the story it told could build an experience that related the ideas about civic intelligence they wished to express. As development continued each of the games incorporated some of the patterns from the workshop in their own way. The most successful games seemed to work beyond just including the patterns as pieces to be interacted with. Structuring the games to show what the patterns were about created experiences that added another level of complexity and enjoyment to the gameplay.

The UrbanVisions (Fig. 5) game fundamentally shifted the standard goal of Monopoly, to acquire as much personal wealth as possible, towards the recognition of multiple types of community assets needed to solve civic issues. To help promote the idea of working within the local community the game developers used street names from Olympia, the city that Evergreen is located in. The only way for the game to be won involved each player participating in building and contributing resources towards a shared vision selected at the start of the game. These Vision Cards were modeled after some of the patterns selected in the workshop. The whole design of the game contributed well towards the themes of social responsibility and cooperative action that the *Liberating Voices* language offers.

Figure 5: The playing board for Urban Vision, one of the games designed by Evergreen State College students, May, 2011

The group designing the Civic Intelligence Roleplaying Game achieved great success in integrating the patterns they identified for the role of players into mechanics that shaped their game. Players were pitted against a doomsday clock moving closer to disaster as the game progressed. The only way for players to successfully move towards a sustainable future required collective decision making and collaborative effort, both represented by pattern cards. The result of this design added a dynamic of cooperation focused on the content of the game that was very successful in addressing the *Social Dominance Attenuation* pattern that the team had identified in the design workshop. Another game, The C.I Attributes game uses sets of three patterns to solve big problems. Players collect patterns by first collecting attributes that relate to each pattern through landing on game board spaces and trading with other players. With this effort, game developers were intentionally developing a proof of concept for a more ambitious (in-person and online) game where all patterns were in play and new scenarios could be added by third parties.

The *Liberating Voices* pattern language played a unique role in the design and development of each game. But, in every game there was a clear relationship of themes to mechanics. As a collection of games, each project spoke a common language of orientation towards addressing civic issues with collective means. The *Liberating Voices* pattern language when used as a design tool places its users within an ethos of holistic approaches to problem solving. It does not need to spell out every possible solution, although it can be expanded to include additional approaches. The connections between ideas that become apparent lead designers naturally towards resolution.

The main thrust of this force that drives problem solving comes from an emphasis on the power of collective intelligence. By focusing on the ways in which groups of people become more intelligent as they pool resources and effort, the connections to viable solutions dwarf the potential of individuals acting alone or separately. The *Liberating Voices* pattern language highlights the many ways in which this power can be channeled towards collective civic issues.

Activist Mirror Game

The suggestion to develop a Facebook game based on the Liberating Voices patterns was made by Fiorella De Cindio (who also hosted a *Liberating Voices* workshop at the University of Milan in Italy) and was implemented by Marco Scirea, a computer science student at the university. We wanted to begin experimenting with the use of the patterns within a social media environment. Our goal was to increase awareness of the patterns and of the possibility of social activism generally. We were also attracted to the viral potential of social media which we hoped would generate lots of interest in our project. Our approach was to develop a project that was as simple as possible since we were (as usual) relying solely on volunteer labor. We weren't in a position to launch into a highly complex, resource-intensive project. We were also especially interested in furthering the use of the patterns as social objects and in developing technological platforms that present solid foundations for us to build on. The portability of the game thus far is demonstrated by the fact that there is an identical version of the game running the same software but in the Italian language. We're also considering developing versions for other domains, notably dialog and deliberation, which would use identical software but use questions and patterns that were most relevant to that domain. Another option is provide photos of different people for the exemplar roles depending on language group (Italian, for example) or the player's country of origin.

The aim of this initial project was to develop a Facebook game that would expose people to the patterns and help open activist inclinations in the individual game players. The form that this ultimately took was an "Activist Mirror" in which, after the player answered eight questions (Fig. 6) the game reflected the activist role that the player would be most likely to assume (one of *reformer*, *rebel*, *change agent*, or *citizen*, based on the MAP framework developed by Bill Moyer and his associates, 2001). A description of the role was given along with a photo of an exemplar of that role (such as Jane Addams and Nelson Mandela) and, finally, four patterns that were most suitable for the player (Fig. 7). We followed up by asking users what patterns they thought were most appropriate. The game was easy to "play" and players felt that the role and the patterns selected for them were generally reflective of their inclinations. Of the 22 patterns used in the first version, the following five patterns were given the highest scores for relevance: *Activist Road Trip*, *Big Tent for Social Movements*, *Open Research and Action Network*, *Power Research*, and *Public Agenda*.

Thus far, the reaction has been minimal although we did mail announcements to various email lists, each of which number in at least the hundreds. Approximately 60 people have played the game so far. Some of the possible reasons for this relatively small participation include (not in order) little incentive to play multiple times, the concept of "activism" has negative connotations to many people, poor marketing, not compelling interface, etc. We believe that the skepticism and distrust of Facebook's perceived and actual policies related to privacy and use of personal data for monetary gain, especially coming from the activist community that was the natural audience for this sort of game, was a strong disincentive to play the game. Facebook's broad disclaimer that the application "is requesting permission to do the

following" which includes, "Access my basic information, send me email, access my profile information, access information people share with me" presents a wall of a different sort than their graffiti-inspired wall that its hundreds of millions of users routinely "write" on. The refusal to play — which was acknowledged to us — led us to develop a privacy policy that was informative — and educational for us besides — is a rarity among Facebook games and helps remind us of the necessity of social media that doesn't exist solely at the pleasure of the owners. For that reason we are planning to also host the game on our site in a non-Facebook environment while looking into hosting it on new non-corporate social media sites like Diaspora and un-like-us as they become available.

Figure 6: Sample question from Activist Mirror game

Figure 7: Screen Shot of Activist Mirror Facebook game results

Future Work

In this paper we've reported on a number of ways that we are exploring new uses for the *Liberating Voices* pattern language including workshops and games. This work has helped us uncover and promote a variety of important generative capabilities. In particular we have made some important observations about the pattern cards which we hope will also be valid in our online "social object" focus. At the same time we still have two significant larger goals before us. The first is working with an actual pattern-based project over much of the project's life-cycle to develop and implement an actual product while simultaneously developing a specific pattern language for that project and refining a

methodology. The second is developing a collaborative online pattern-based environment. We believe that these can be conducted independently or in conjunction with each other.

To these ends we will continue to build on our current work. This includes working on multiple threads and is based on philosophical orientations that we believe will bring us closer to our long-term goals. We will continue to look at generativity, social objects, and civic intelligence. We are also interested in more careful testing of our assertions and hypotheses. We will continue to conduct face-to-face workshops and lay the groundwork for more sophisticated online collaboration. As mentioned earlier this project has been powered almost primarily by volunteers. For this reason we also must continue to get the word out to people who could benefit from this approach. Now that it's clearer what we're doing and our base of volunteers is larger and more knowledgeable we feel that it should be easier to integrate the work of new volunteers with varied backgrounds and aims. One of our outreach efforts involves increased distribution of the pattern cards. Soon they will designated as Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike which will allow anybody to use the cards in any way they please. It's our hope that people use the cards in creative ways that we can also ultimately be part of a loosely-coupled greater effort. Our technical approach involves integrating elements / resources in our evolving online environment to host online workshops, expanded games, and possible integration with our deliberative tool, e-Liberate. As mentioned earlier, we are especially interested in collaborative work (with, say, architects), building computer support (e.g. online pattern workshops and games), and continuing to develop the methodology that helps people to more effectively use the *Liberating Voices* patterns and approach as a foundation.

We hope and believe that the *Liberating Voices* pattern language (and the pattern language approach generally) and our exploration of civic intelligence represent rich perspectives for ongoing research and action for the work that's needed for repairing the world.

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Notes

1. We are using "social object" in a somewhat generic sense since there seems to be little agreement as to exactly what one is.
2. Ward Cunningham, in fact, developed Wiki technology to support online pattern language development. For better or worse, our approach is heading in different directions.