

*Who Cares? The Weight of Social
Responsibility*

2008 PossePlus Retreat Report

Introduction

PossePlus Retreat: a weekend-long gathering of college students, faculty and administration intended to promote dialogue around an important issue identified by Posse Scholars.

The Posse Foundation was founded in 1989 because of one student who said, “I never would have dropped out of college if I had my posse with me.” That simple concept of sending a team of students—or Posse—together to college so they could back each other up became the impetus for a program that today has identified 2,200 students. These students have been awarded \$220 million in leadership scholarships from Posse partner colleges and universities and are graduating at a rate of 90 percent.

Posse is a national program with offices in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York and Washington, D.C. Posse Scholars are students from diverse backgrounds who have attended urban public high schools and gone on to win full-tuition, merit-based scholarships from Posse partner colleges and universities for their extraordinary leadership potential. By the year 2020, Posse and its partner institutions of higher education expect to have between 5,000 and 7,000 Posse alumni in the workforce. These graduates will form a new professional leadership network, one which will more accurately reflect the changing demographics of the United States.

In 2008, The Posse Foundation and its 26 partner institutions hosted a series of off-campus retreats—called PossePlus Retreats (PPRs)—for nearly 2,000 individuals. Participants included Posse Scholars, members of the general student body, faculty and administrators. Since 1992, PPRs have been part of Posse’s programming and are intended to facilitate dialog within

and among selective colleges and universities. They also serve to build more integrated and thoughtful campus communities.

In the past, retreat topics varied by institution. In 2008, however, in an attempt to leverage the impact of these discussions and connect participants nationwide, the PPRs were unified around a single topic. The theme selected was social responsibility, and the title was *Who Cares? The Weight of Social Responsibility*.

The Posse Institute—a newly established research arm of The Posse Foundation being funded by The Ford Foundation—took advantage of this unified PPR approach to survey retreat participants about political, social and educational topics related to social responsibility. The theme itself was broad, and PPR participants discussed topics ranging from race to politics, from personal investment in communities to presidential responsibilities. The participants discussed the ways in which social responsibility affected their lives, their communities and the world in relation to gender, class, poverty and the environment. Several findings stood out from the survey, which was administered to participants at the beginning of the PPRs.

The most striking findings were that 1) those surveyed were optimistic that they can have a positive impact in their communities and in the world; 2) a significant majority of students (67 percent) believe that racism is still a problem on their campuses; 3) while students say they feel strongly about their communities and the world, they could not answer basic questions about national and local politics or global affairs; 4) over 70 percent of students said they planned to vote in the November 2008 election and sought changes in domestic policies concerning issues of equity; and 5) a majority of students indicated that they have little faith in the ability of the U.S. government to address important issues and problems, to protect the security of its citizens, and to represent the interests of the people.

This report summarizes these particular findings and will be distributed to PPR participants as well as to the presidents of colleges and universities to inform them and, we hope, to encourage additional debate about these important issues. It is the belief of the authors that the results presented here are compelling for two reasons. First, the topic was chosen and explored by students who represent a diverse group of future leaders. Second, the issues that the students raised are issues about which leaders of colleges and universities care deeply.

Context

Social responsibility is a broad term. However, Posse Scholars who were asked to identify a compelling topic for the PPRs felt strongly about addressing the world issues that were the focus of the 2008 presidential campaign and that were monopolizing the media at the time. Taking action in a world struggling with poverty, racism, homelessness and war was the main issue Scholars were hoping to address. Therefore, social responsibility seemed the best umbrella topic for discussion.

PPR Survey Methodology and Group Characteristics

PPRs begin on Friday afternoon and run through Sunday morning. Retreats take place off campus and involve up to 100 participants each. Posse staff designs a series of small- and large-group activities intended to act as catalysts for discussion. This year, at the start of the PPRs and before the activities began, The Posse Foundation administered a survey (see Appendix A), which was designed by The Posse Institute with support from The Ford Foundation and in consultation with Dr. Susan Sturm, George M. Jaffin Professor of Law and Social Responsibility at Columbia Law School. After the participants arrived together at retreat sites, Posse staff introduced the survey and explained that the results would be compiled and

distributed to retreat participants nationwide and to members of the general higher education community, including presidents and other college and university administrators. The survey, which had a response rate of 100 percent, was administered on site to all participants who were given 30 minutes to complete and submit their copies anonymously.

A total of 1,994 surveys were completed, 1,794 by students and 190 by faculty and administrators (see Table 1). Although a relatively small number of faculty and administrators took the survey, there are times when the report compares students to this non-student cohort, since doing so offers an interesting perspective. The majority of these discussions, however, concern the 1,794 students surveyed. (Appendix B lists the 26 colleges and universities participating in the 2008 PPRs. A breakdown of participants in the aggregate is presented in Appendix C.)

The political affiliations of the students taking the survey show that a majority identified as Democrat and liberal. A survey of 1,200 college students from across the United States, conducted by the Harvard Institute of Politics in 2008, indicates that the political affiliations and/or beliefs of this group was not representative of U.S. college students in general (Table 2)ⁱ. These PPR students were self selected in that they chose to attend a three-day retreat to discuss the topic of social responsibility. They consider themselves leaders on campus and see themselves as engaged. These qualities and the fact that they attend highly selective colleges and universities suggest that they may be future leaders in this county.

Table 2.

	PossePlus Retreat	Harvard Institute
Democrat	61.7%	39%
Republican	4.3%	25%
Independent	15.9%	35%
Undecided	18.2%	n.a.
Liberal	66.0%	51.0%
Moderate	29.7%	15.0%
Conservative	4.3%	35.0%

The survey respondents were also from very diverse backgrounds. The group demographic showed much greater diversity overall than college students nationwide. Sixty percent of student respondents identified as black, Latino, or Asian. A recent report by the National Center for Education Statistics in 2007, which provides a breakdown, by race, of students at four-year institutions, shows the contrastⁱⁱ. These values are presented in Table 3 along with the breakdown by race of the PPR survey respondents.

Table 3.

Race	Survey Participants	Enrollment in 4-year colleges (Nationwide)
Asian/Pacific Islander	12.1%	6.5%
Black	28.7%	12.7%
Hispanic	20.1%	10.8%
White	24.2%	65.7%

This group, therefore, represents a purposeful sampling, and surveying them provides us with an opportunity to gain insight into what one diverse group of students thinks about social responsibility. There are very few opportunities for diverse groups like those at the PPRs to talk about such issues in a substantive way, and it is the goal of The Posse Institute to allow the opinions of PPR participants to be heard annually through dissemination of a report. Scott Page argues compellingly in his book entitled The Difference that a group of individuals with diverse backgrounds are more likely to make better decisions and predictions than less diverse groupsⁱⁱⁱ.

Key Finding #1 Those surveyed are optimistic that they can have a positive impact in their communities and in the world.

Students surveyed at the 2008 PPRs showed an overwhelming concern for the welfare of their communities and the world. Eighty percent and 77 percent responded, “Yes,” when asked if they should be responsible for individuals that they don’t know in this country and in the world,

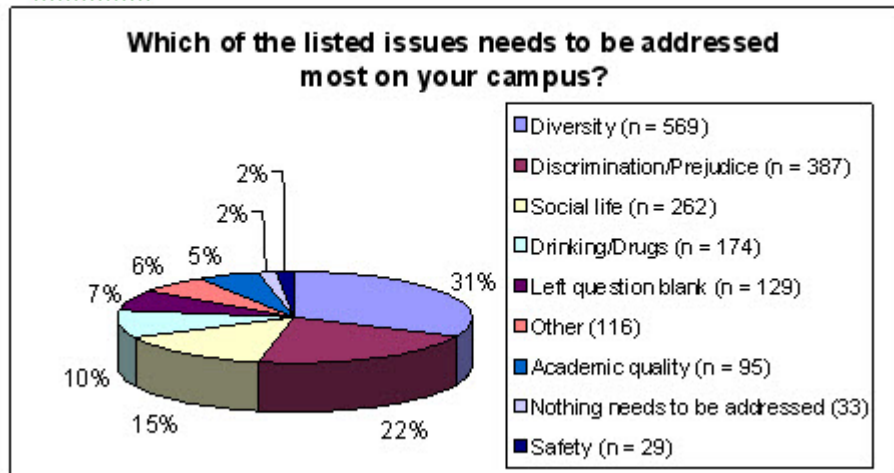
respectively. Additionally, respondents strongly believed that they can have an impact. Ninety five percent, 86 percent, and 77 percent of students answered, “Yes,” when asked, “Do you think you personally can make a positive contribution/difference on your campus, in this country and in this world?” respectively. Eighty five percent of student respondents answered, “Yes,” when asked, “Are you socially responsible?” Interestingly, 87 percent of students answered, “Yes,” when asked if social responsibility will play a role in the career they select for themselves.

Key Finding #2: A significant majority of students surveyed (67 percent) believe that racism is **still** a problem on their campuses.

Sixty-seven percent of students surveyed responded, “Agree,” when asked if racism was a problem on their campus. In addition, when asked to choose which issue most needs to be addressed on their

campus from a list of issues that included social life, drinking and/or drugs, safety, diversity, academic quality, discrimination and/or prejudice or nothing, 53

Figure 1.



percent chose either diversity or discrimination and/or prejudice. These two options were selected more than any other.

Those surveyed were asked to respond, “Agree,” or “Disagree,” to a series of statements. To the statement, “Affirmative action is still important and needed,” 78.7 percent said they

agreed. To the statement, “My campus is diverse,” 30.9 percent said they agreed. Also, when comparing responses to these questions by race, students’ perspectives vary. White students within this group were more likely to think that their campuses are diverse than students of color (44 percent vs. 28 percent, respectively) and far less likely to think that racism is a problem on their campuses than students of color (58 percent vs. 72 percent, respectively).

In PPR discussions, students connected their feeling of safety both on campus and in the United States to race and religion. When surveyed, participants were asked to respond, “Agree,” or “Disagree,” to the statements: “I feel safe on my campus,” and “I feel safe in this country.” The responses indicate that the students of color surveyed were less likely than white students to feel safe on their campuses (80 percent vs. 93 percent, respectively) or in this country (61 percent vs. 85 percent, respectively).

Key Finding #3: Over 70 percent of student respondents planned to vote in the November 2008 election and sought changes in domestic policies concerning issues of equity.

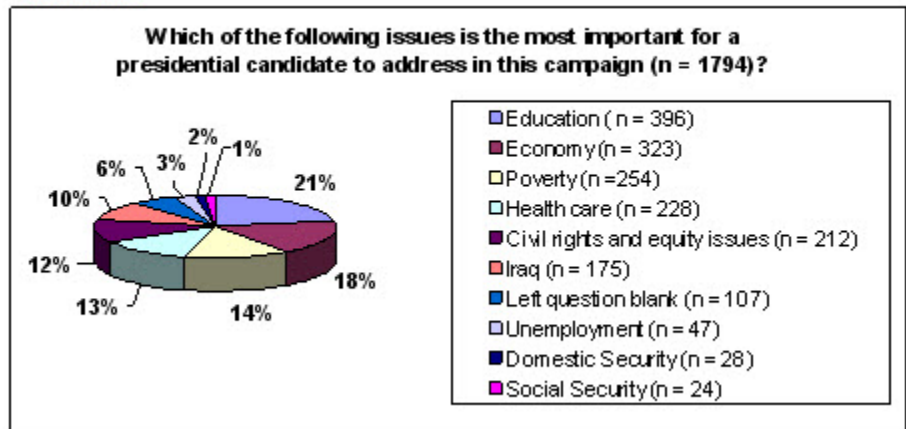
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, at the time of the 2004 presidential election, there were close to 25 million U.S. citizens between the ages of 18 and 24 (12.6 percent of all eligible voters)^{iv}. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that nearly 40 percent of all 18- to 24-year-olds are enrolled in a 4-year college^v. Historically, this age group has had the lowest voter turnout, including for the 2004 election with only 47.6 percent casting a vote^{vi}. This value represents a significant difference from the overall population voting rate of 63.8 percent^{vii}. Despite the lower turnouts among members of this age group in 2004, 11 percent more voted in the 2004 election

71 percent of student respondents planned to vote in the November 2008 election

than had in the 2000 election^{viii}. This increase was the largest among any age group. At the time of the 2008 PPR, there was a general belief that voter turnout among members of this age group for the November 2008 election would be even higher and early analyses of the voter turnout on November 4, 2008 indicate that this was in fact the case^{ix}.

In our survey, 71 percent of student participants responded, “Yes,” when asked if they planned to vote in the November 2008 election. Survey results suggested issues that likely affected

Figure 3.



the choices these particular students made in the election. Although the current presidential campaigns focused heavily on issues of foreign policy and terrorism, when asked if they felt threatened by terrorism, only 31.4 percent answered, “Yes.” When asked to choose which they consider the most important for a presidential candidate to address in his campaign from a list that included the economy, education, social security, poverty, domestic security, unemployment, health care, civil rights and equity issues and Iraq, domestic security was at the bottom of the list. The top two choices selected were education and the economy. (A complete analysis of results to this question is presented in Figure 3.)

Only 14 percent of student respondents chose, “Agree,” when asked if they agree or disagree with the statement: “There is now an even playing field for men and women.” In addition, only 19 percent answered, “Yes,” when asked: “Is the U.S. a true meritocracy?” When

asked to agree or disagree with the statements: 1) “Even if it reduces the quality of my own health care, health care should be accessible to every American,” and 2) “People of the same sex should be permitted to marry under U.S. law,” an overwhelming majority of students—85.3 percent and 81.7 percent, respectively—agreed. These responses all relate to an overall concern about equity and opportunity.

Survey participants were also asked to choose from a list of qualities in a presidential candidate that matters most to them. The list included the following descriptions. “Can bring about needed change,” “Cares about people like me,” “Says what s/he believes,” “Shares my values,” “Has the best chance to win” and “Has the right experience.” The most popular choice was “Can bring about needed change” (64 percent), while “Has the right experience” was the second least popular choice, selected by only 2 percent of respondents.

Key Finding #4: While students say they felt strongly about their communities and the world, they could not answer basic questions about national and local politics or global affairs.

The survey asked the following questions:

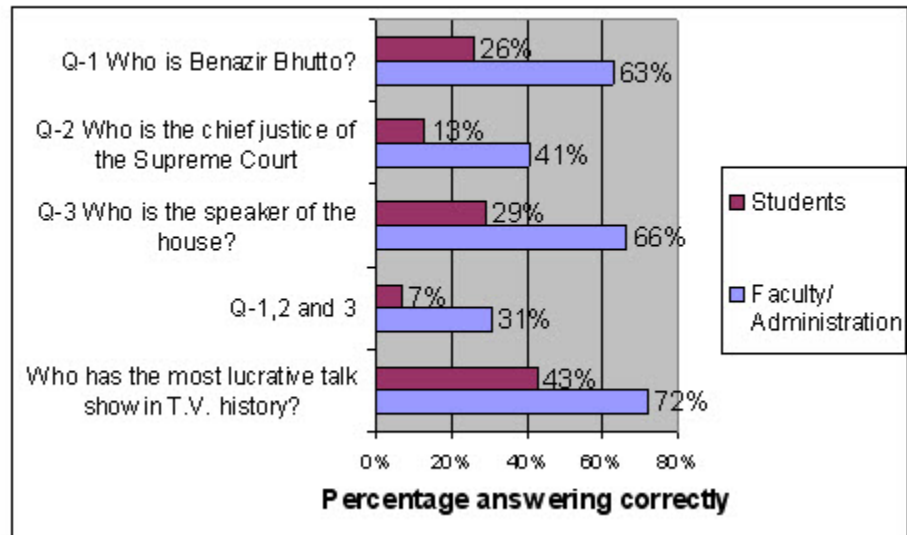
- Who is Benazir Bhutto?
- Who is the Speaker of the House?
- Who is the chief justice of the Supreme Court?
- Who has the most lucrative talk show in T.V. history?

87 percent of student respondents could not name the chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Twenty six percent of student respondents were able to correctly answer the first question, 13 percent the second and 29 percent the third. The question with the greatest number of correct responses was the fourth, with 43 percent answering, “Oprah”. Only 7 percent of student respondents correctly answered the first three questions, and close to 60 percent answered all three of these incorrectly. The results are presented in Figure 2. These results are interesting given that

greater than half of the students said that they spent more than an hour each day talking about social events or news. It is important to keep in mind that most of these surveys were issued

Figure 2.



during February of 2008, only a few months after the assassination of Pakistan’s Benazir Bhutto, an event which made national headlines and was a major television news story in the beginning of the year. Additional qualitative data from the survey regarding these questions were quite striking. There were several places for comments and many students expressed remorse and even shame for being unaware. Comments included, “I can’t believe I don’t know any of this,” “What an embarrassment—I’m really ashamed of myself” and “Ouch!! What a wakeup call; I will do better!!”

Faculty and administration were better able to answer these questions. However, almost 20 percent of the faculty and administration surveyed answered the first three questions incorrectly (see Figure 2).

Key Finding #5: Student response to the Bush administration indicated that they have little faith in the ability of the U.S. government to address important issues and problems, to protect the security of its citizens, and to represent the interests of the people.

Students were asked to rank on a scale of one to five (with one representing no responsibility and five representing a great deal of responsibility) how responsible the government and average

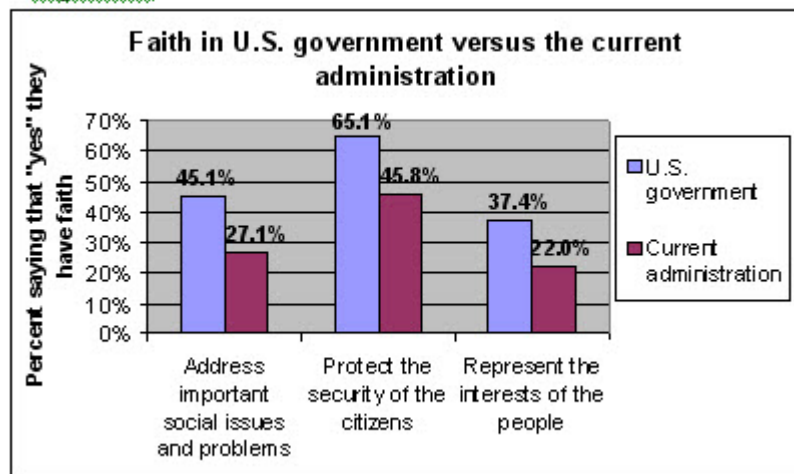
citizens of the country should be for the world's welfare and the nation's welfare. On average, respondents felt that the

government should bear a more significant burden

than the average citizen for the welfare of the world (4.45 vs. 3.90) as well as the nation (4.78 vs. 4.26).

Although the students felt that the government *should* be responsible, the results presented in Figure 4 indicate that they have little faith in the U.S. government and particularly in the Bush administration. Only 45 percent responded that they had faith in the U.S. government to address important social issues. An even smaller portion (27 percent) of respondents had faith in the Bush administration to address important social issues. While 65 percent said that they had

Figure 4.



faith in the U.S. government to protect the security of the citizens, only 46 percent had faith in the Bush administration to protect the security of the citizens. Also, 37 percent said that they had faith in the U.S. government to represent the interests of the people, but only 22 percent had faith in the Bush administration to represent the interests of the people. When asked if they agree or disagree with the statement, “I am proud of the way the U.S. government has handled diplomatic relations abroad,” only 4 percent of respondents agreed. When asked if they support the war in Iraq, only 5 percent answered, “Yes.” The students also appear to distrust the media, given that only 4 percent answered, “Yes” when asked if they believe that the media fairly portrays the news.

Summary

The imagery of Atlas holding an immense burden was the metaphor used during the 2008 PPRs to symbolize the weight individuals feel about their responsibility to care for the world. Over a period of three days, at each PPR location, students across the country discussed how they felt about the conflict in Darfur, homelessness, civil rights and civil liberties, the economy, education and (at the time) the upcoming presidential election. They inspired one another and restated their own sense of commitment to strengthening their communities.

It is encouraging that the majority of the PPR participants felt optimism about their world and believed that they could make a difference. Survey responses indicated that they felt they had a responsibility to care for the welfare of others—even those they don’t know. They clearly felt empowered to get involved, and many of them were already engaged in volunteer work, and said they often engage in discussions about critical social and political issues with their friends, classmates and family.

However, while students were optimistic about the possibility of positive and progressive change, and while they showed an interest in a wide range of issues, they expressed disappointment over a lack of progress related to what they viewed as persistent problems such as racism and sexism on their campuses, the illegality of same-sex marriage and the lack of universal healthcare in the United States. They felt the country was too slow in developing solutions to poverty and global warming and were specifically distrustful of and disillusioned by the Bush administration.

The conflict between their optimism and criticism was further complicated by their fundamental lack of information about general national and global concerns. Since such a large percentage of respondents were unable to answer basic questions concerning national politics and global affairs, it raises the question as to where the responsibility lies in making sure the country has an informed citizenry. It is incredible that 87 percent and 71 percent of student participants, all attending elite colleges and universities in the United States, were unable to name the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or the Speaker of the House, respectively. It is sobering that 74 percent didn't know who Benazir Bhutto was, even though her assassination was one of the top news stories during the time of the retreats.

This particular report highlights only the survey responses from the 2008 PPRs. Discussions that followed over the three-day period allowed this diverse group of young people to explore more deeply the theme of social responsibility. They raised questions about levels of responsibility for the individual, the community and the government. Participants asked whether or not we are all equally responsible and, if not, then who is more responsible.

In comparison to other college students or other groups in the United States, was this particular group highly informed or ill-informed? Were they more engaged or more apathetic?

Does this group shed any light on how American citizens engage issues or make socially responsible decisions? The participants raised the question about the value of voting from an informed position versus an uninformed position. Finally, participants asked about the role of the university in helping to inform each new generation of citizens?

These were some of the highlights from the 2008 PPRs and it is our hope that they will provoke more conversation related to social responsibility.

Appendix A

SURVEY

Background Data

Date: ____ / ____ / 2008 (month, date)

Name of College/University: _____

Gender: *Male* *Female*

Age: _____

Race (circle one):

- *Asian*
- *Black*
- *Hispanic (non-white)/Latino*
- *Pacific Islander*
- *White*
- *Bi-racial*
- *Other: _____ (fill in the blank)*

Current permanent residence: State: _____ Country: _____

Nationality: _____

Religion (circle one): *Buddhist* *Christian* *Hindu* *Jewish* *Muslim* *Other* _____

Please check here if you are a Posse Scholar: _____

You are a: (circle one): *student* *administrator* *faculty member*

If you circled student, please list declared/intended major: _____

What year are you? *1st* *2nd* *3rd* *4th* *5th* *6th* *grad student*

Are you a first generation college student (circle)? *Yes* *No*

Survey Questions

1. Please circle the affiliation that best represents you:

Democrat *Republican* *Independent* *Undecided*

2. Please circle the political philosophy that best represents you:

Very liberal *Somewhat liberal* *Moderate* *Conservative* *Very conservative*

3. How do you get most of your news? (circle one)

- *Magazines*
- *Newspaper off-line (hard copy)*
- *Newspaper on-line*
- *TV*
- *Non-news Web sites/blogs*
- *Radio*
- *Friends and/or word of mouth*
- *I don't pay attention to the news*

4. How much time outside of class do you spend each day talking about social and or political events/news? (*circle one*)

- *No time*
- *Less than 1 hour*
- *1-2 hours*
- *3 or more hours*

5. Have you ever volunteered? (*circle one*): *Yes* *No*

If yes, please check which areas are applicable:

- Educational services*
- Health services*
- Political services*
- Social services*
- Other services (fill-in):* _____

6. Do you think most students on your campus care about what's happening in the world? (*circle one*): *Yes* *No*

7. Do you think you should be responsible for people you don't know in the United States? (*circle one*): *Yes* *No*

8. Do you think you should be responsible for people you don't know in other countries? (*circle one*): *Yes* *No*

9. Are students on your campus focused more on themselves or on others? (*circle one*):

- *Themselves*
- *Others*
- *It's equal.*

10. Do you think you personally can make a positive contribution/difference? (*circle one*): *Yes* *No*

On your campus? *Yes* *No*

In this country? *Yes* *No*

In the world? *Yes* *No*

11. In a presidential candidate, circle the **ONE** quality that matters most to you from the following list:

- Can bring about needed change
- Cares about people like me
- Says what s/he believes
- Shares my values
- Has the best chance to win
- Has the right experience

Of the following issues, which **ONE** is the most important for a presidential candidate to address in this campaign?

- Economy
- Education
- Social Security
- Poverty
- Domestic Security
- Unemployment
- Health care
- Civil rights and equity issues
- Iraq

12. On a scale of 1-5, with one being *not at all* and 5 being *a lot*, rank how much you think the following people/entities can make a difference:

	Homelessness	Global Warming	Darfur	Iraq	Poverty	Terrorism	Racism	Healthcare	Fill in Your Own
People you vote for	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
You	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Community Leaders	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Religious Leaders	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Corporate Leaders	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
The U.S. Government	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
The U.N.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

22. Check all of the following that are true for you.

- I vote.*
- I volunteer.*
- I donate blood.*
- I write to my political representative/s.*
- I share my opinions and/or speak out with my friends about public and social issues.*
- I speak out in my community.*
- I speak out on my campus.*
- I speak out in class.*
- I am a member of an organization that works for a social cause.*
- I am an activist.*
- I donate to causes I care about.*

23.

- Of the following issues...
1. *War in Iraq*
 2. *Immigration*
 3. *The Economy*
 4. *Terrorism*
 5. *Health Care*
 6. *Abortion/Right to Life*
 7. *Same Sex Marriage*
 8. *Poverty*
 9. *International Relations/Diplomacy*
 10. *Racism*
 11. *Education*
 12. *Environment/Global Warming*
 13. *Other: _____*

What is the one issue you feel is most critical to the social welfare of the world? # _____

What is the one issue you feel is most critical to the social welfare of those in the U.S.? # _____

24.

Check the **ONE** issue below you feel needs to be addressed most on your campus.

- Social Life*
- Drinking/Drugs*
- Safety*
- Diversity*
- Academic Quality*
- Discrimination/Prejudice*
- Other: _____*
- Nothing needs to be addressed on my campus.*

25. What social or political issue is most important to you personally? _____

26. Will social responsibility play a role in the career you select (or have selected) for yourself? Yes No

27. List up to three people you respect as world leaders.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

28. List up to three people you respect as national leaders.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

29. Do you feel threatened by terrorism? Yes No

30. Who is Benazir Bhutto?

31. Who is the chief justice of the Supreme Court?

32. Who is the Speaker of the House?

33. Do you support the war in Iraq? Yes No

Agree or Disagree

- | | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------|
| 44. There is now an even playing field for men and women. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 45. Affirmative Action is still important and needed. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 46. The US should remove all troops from Iraq as soon as possible. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 47. Marijuana should be legalized. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 48. Even if it reduces the quality of my own health care, health care should be accessible to every American. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 49. Global Warming is exaggerated. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 50. I feel safe on my campus. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 51. I feel safe in this country. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 52. Racism is a problem on my campus. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 53. I can achieve the American Dream. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 54. My campus is diverse. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 55. My sense of social responsibility comes from my family (how I was raised). | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 56. People of the same sex should be permitted to marry under U.S. law. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 57. Every time the U.S. goes to war there should be a draft. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 58. I'd give up some of my civil liberties if it meant a safer country. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 59. I am proud of the way the U.S. Government has handled diplomatic relations abroad. | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
| 60. What is the most pressing societal problem for your generation? _____ | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |

61. How many hours/week do you devote to being socially responsible? (*check one*):

- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- more

Is this time (*check one*):

- More than your friends?*
- Less than your friends?*
- The same time as your friends?*

Is this time (*check one*):

- More than the average student on your campus?*
- Less time than the average student on your campus?*
- The same amount of time than the average student on your campus?*

62. Are there any other comments you'd like to make?

63. I came to this retreat because:

- I'm not socially responsible and want to be
- I'm socially responsible
- To find ways for me to be more socially responsible
- To find ways for my campus to be more socially responsible
- I had no idea what this was about but came because I was invited
- Other: _____

64. How do the following entities/people contribute to your sense of acting in a socially responsible way:

The Media	<i>Cultivates</i> (encourages me positively)	<i>Does Nothing</i>	<i>Stifles</i>
The president of my campus	<i>Cultivates</i> (encourages me positively)	<i>Does Nothing</i>	<i>Stifles</i>
Our overall campus environment	<i>Cultivates</i> (encourages me positively)	<i>Does Nothing</i>	<i>Stifles</i>
My professors	<i>Cultivates</i> (encourages me positively)	<i>Does Nothing</i>	<i>Stifles</i>
My classmates	<i>Cultivates</i> (encourages me positively)	<i>Does Nothing</i>	<i>Stifles</i>
My friends	<i>Cultivates</i> (encourages me positively)	<i>Does Nothing</i>	<i>Stifles</i>
My family	<i>Cultivates</i> (encourages me positively)	<i>Does Nothing</i>	<i>Stifles</i>
This government	<i>Cultivates</i> (encourages me positively)	<i>Does Nothing</i>	<i>Stifles</i>

65. What forums do you use to make your voice heard?

Voting	<i>Not a great forum for me</i>	<i>Ok forum for me</i>	<i>Great forum for me</i>
Internet	<i>Not a great forum for me</i>	<i>Ok forum for me</i>	<i>Great forum for me</i>
Writing letters/articles	<i>Not a great forum for me</i>	<i>Ok forum for me</i>	<i>Great forum for me</i>
Marches/rallies	<i>Not a great forum for me</i>	<i>Ok forum for me</i>	<i>Great forum for me</i>
Speaking w/ friends	<i>Not a great forum for me</i>	<i>Ok forum for me</i>	<i>Great forum for me</i>
Speaking in class	<i>Not a great forum for me</i>	<i>Ok forum for me</i>	<i>Great forum for me</i>

66. When you care about something, what causes you to go from thinking about an issue to acting on it?

- *The issue itself is enough for me to act in any way/can figure out on my own.*
- *An organized group offers me a chance to act with others.*
- *A logical policy or plan of action (i.e. Donating, recycling) gives me a way to act.*

Appendix B. Institutions Participating in the 2008 PossePlus Retreats

Institution

Babson College
Brandeis University
Bryn Mawr College
Bucknell University
Carleton College
Centre College
Claremont McKenna College
Colby College
Denison University
DePauw University
Dickinson College
Franklin & Marshall College
Grinnell College
Hamilton College
Lafayette College
Lawrence University
Middlebury College
Oberlin College
Pomona College
Sewanee: The University of the South
Trinity College
Union College
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of Wisconsin- Madison
Vanderbilt University
Wheaton College

Appendix C. Demographics of the PossePlus Retreat Cohort.

Sex	n	(% of total)
Male	659	36.7%
Female	1090	60.8%
Left Blank	45	2.5%
	1794	

Race	n	(% of total)
Asian	206	11.5%
Black	514	28.7%
Hispanic (non-white)/Latino	360	20.1%
Pacific islander	11	0.6%
White	435	24.2%
Bi-racial	144	8.0%
Other	95	5.3%
Left question blank	29	1.6%
Total	1794	

Year	n	(% of total)
1st year	692	38.6%
2nd year	536	29.9%
3rd year	270	15.1%
4th year	244	13.6%
Beyond 4th year	14	0.8%
Graduate student	10	0.6%
Left question blank	28	1.6%
Total	1794	

Political philosophy	n	(% of total)
Very Liberal	492	27.4%
Somewhat Liberal	660	36.8%
Moderate	518	28.9%
Conservative	63	3.5%
Very Conservative	12	0.7%
Left question blank	49	2.7%
Total	1794	

Age	n	(% of total)
17	9	0.5%
18	446	24.9%
19	555	30.9%
20	383	21.3%
21	263	14.7%
22	89	5.0%
23	13	0.7%
24	11	0.6%
older than 24	6	0.3%
Left question blank	19	1.1%
Total	1794	

Political affiliation	n	(% of total)
Democrat	1087	60.6%
Republican	75	4.2%
Independent	280	15.6%
Undecided	321	17.9%
Left question blank	31	1.7%
Total	1794	

Endnotes

ⁱ “Harvard University Institute of Politics,” November 1, 2006 The 11th Biannual Youth Survey on Politics and Public Service By Harvard University’s Institute of Politics <<http://www.iop.harvard.edu/Research-Publications/Polling/Fall-2006-Youth-Survey/Executive-Summary>>.

ⁱⁱ “National Center for Education Statistics,” Digest of Education Statistics, August 2007 <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d07/tables/dt07_217.asp>

ⁱⁱⁱ Scott Page, The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies (New York: Princeton University Press, 2007).

^{iv} “US Census Bureau,” Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2004, March 2006 <<http://www.census.gov/prod/2006pubs/p20-556.pdf>>

^v “The Chronicle of Higher Education,” The Almanac, August 2008 <<http://chronicle.com/weekly/almanac/2008/nation/0101203.htm>>

^{vi} Mark Hugo Lopez, Emily Kirby, and Jared Sagoff “The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement,” The Youth Vote 2004 November 2008 <http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/FactSheets/FS_Youth_Voting_72-04.pdf>

^{vii} Ibid.

^{viii} Ibid.

^{ix} “The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement,” Youth Turnout Rate Rises to at Least 52%, November 2008 <<http://www.civicyouth.org>>