Holding Civic Tech accountable for Civic Learning

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6 October 2016

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"Slacktivist"
or
"Actualizing Citizen"

Bennett 2008

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Participatory Politics

"interactive, peer-based acts through which individuals and groups seek to exert both **voice and influence** on issues of public concern"
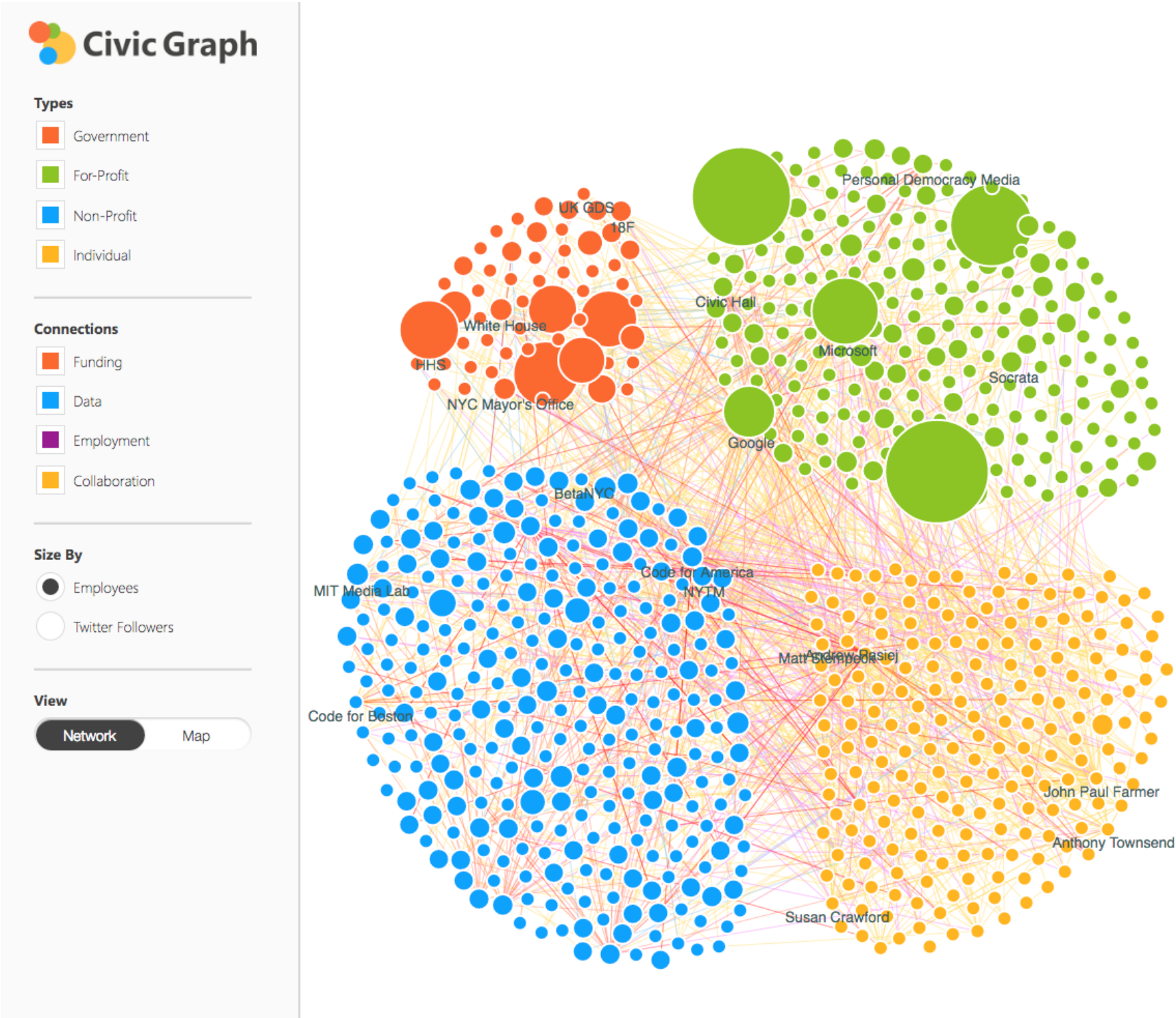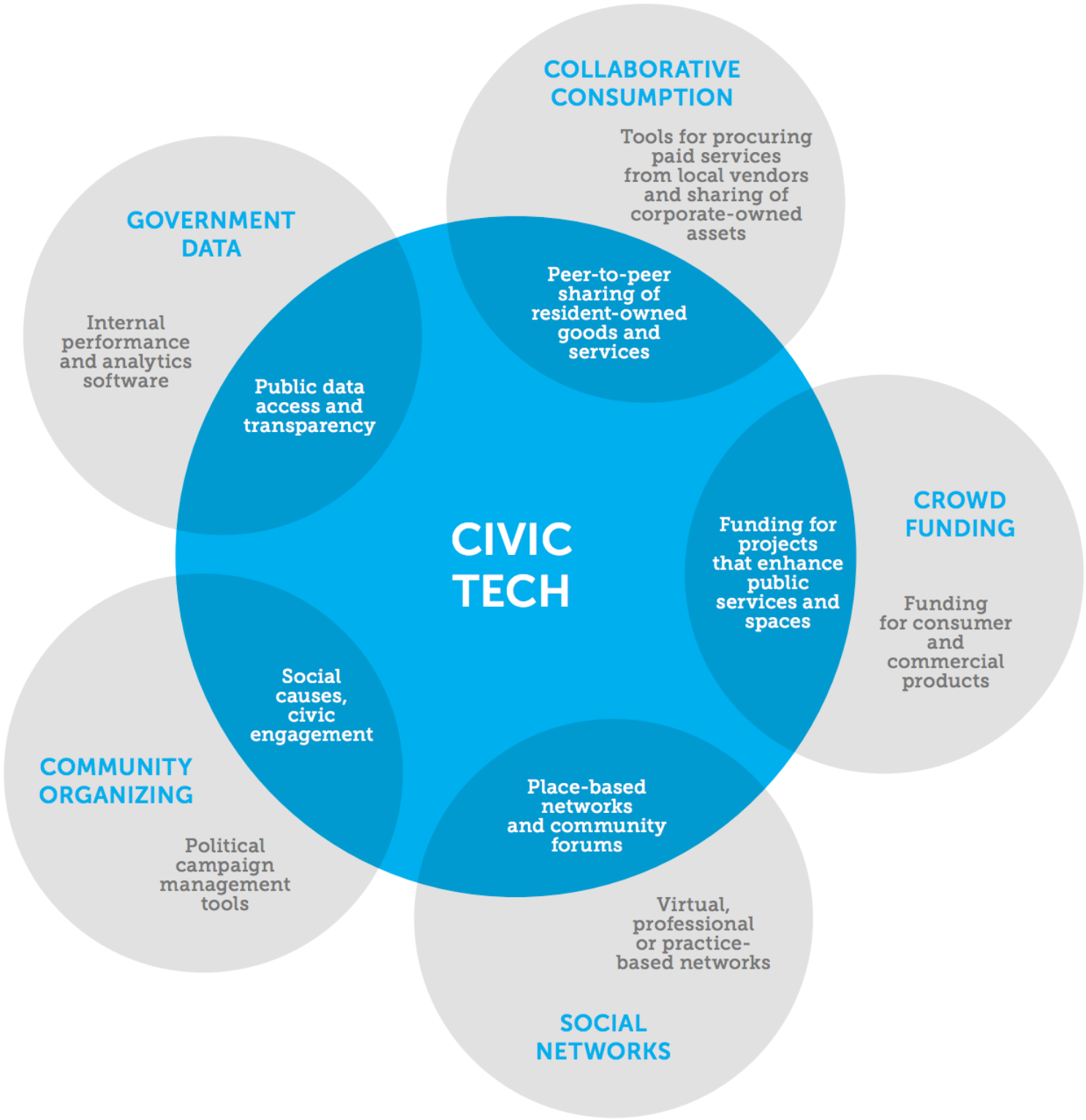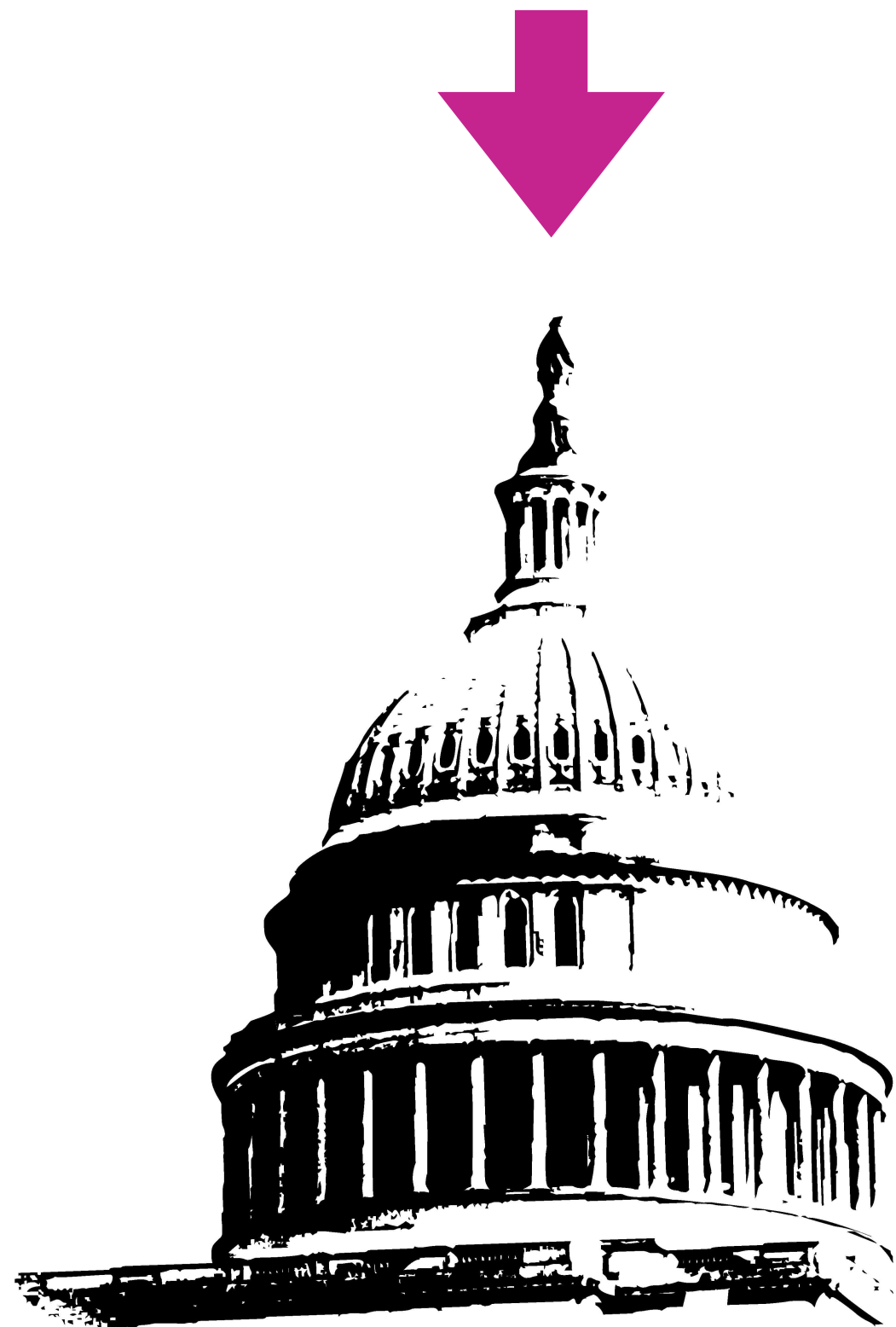
Cohen & Kahne 2013

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Civic Tech is where we participate

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external political efficacy

internal political efficacy

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external
political
efficacy

internal
political
efficacy

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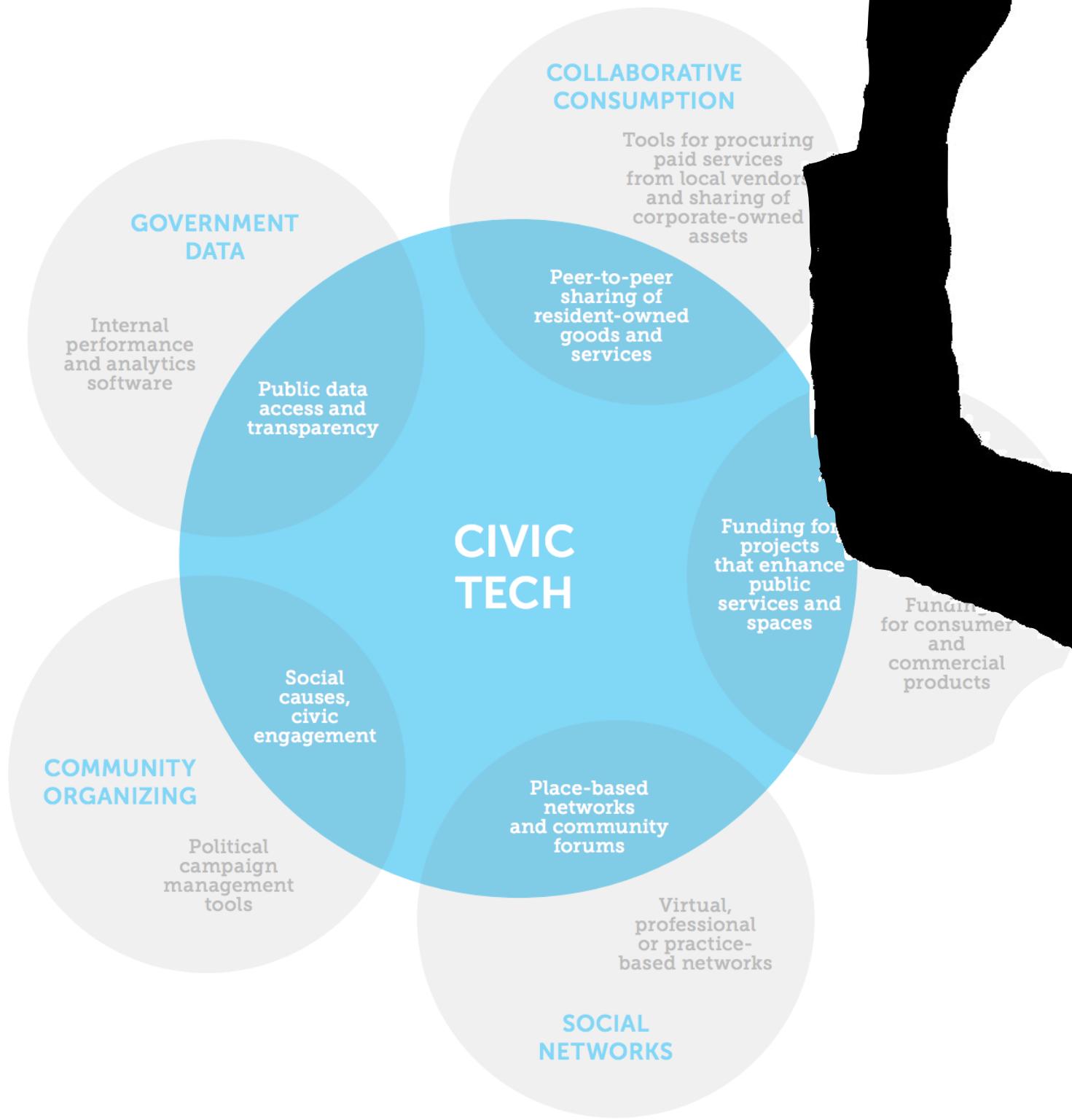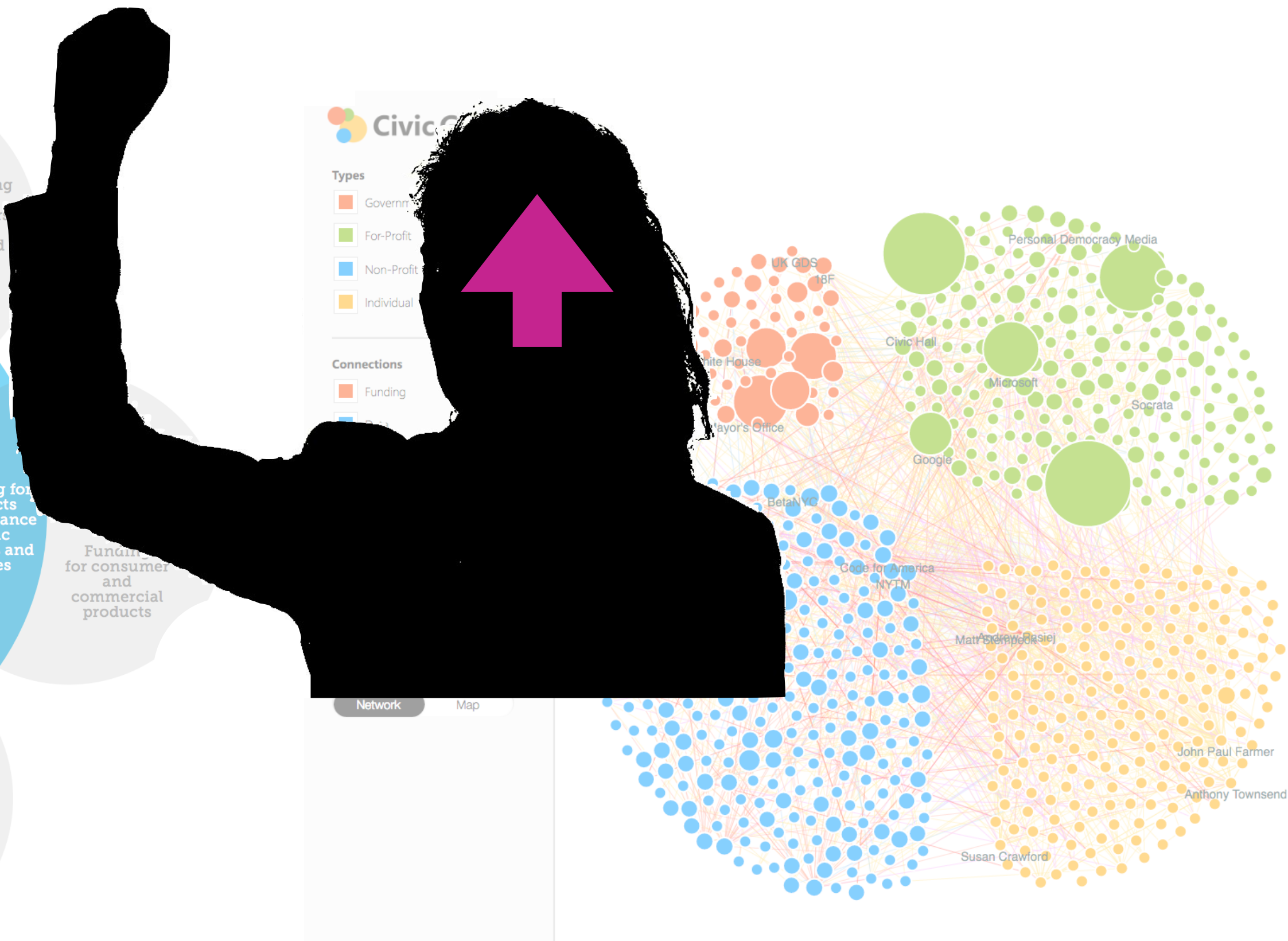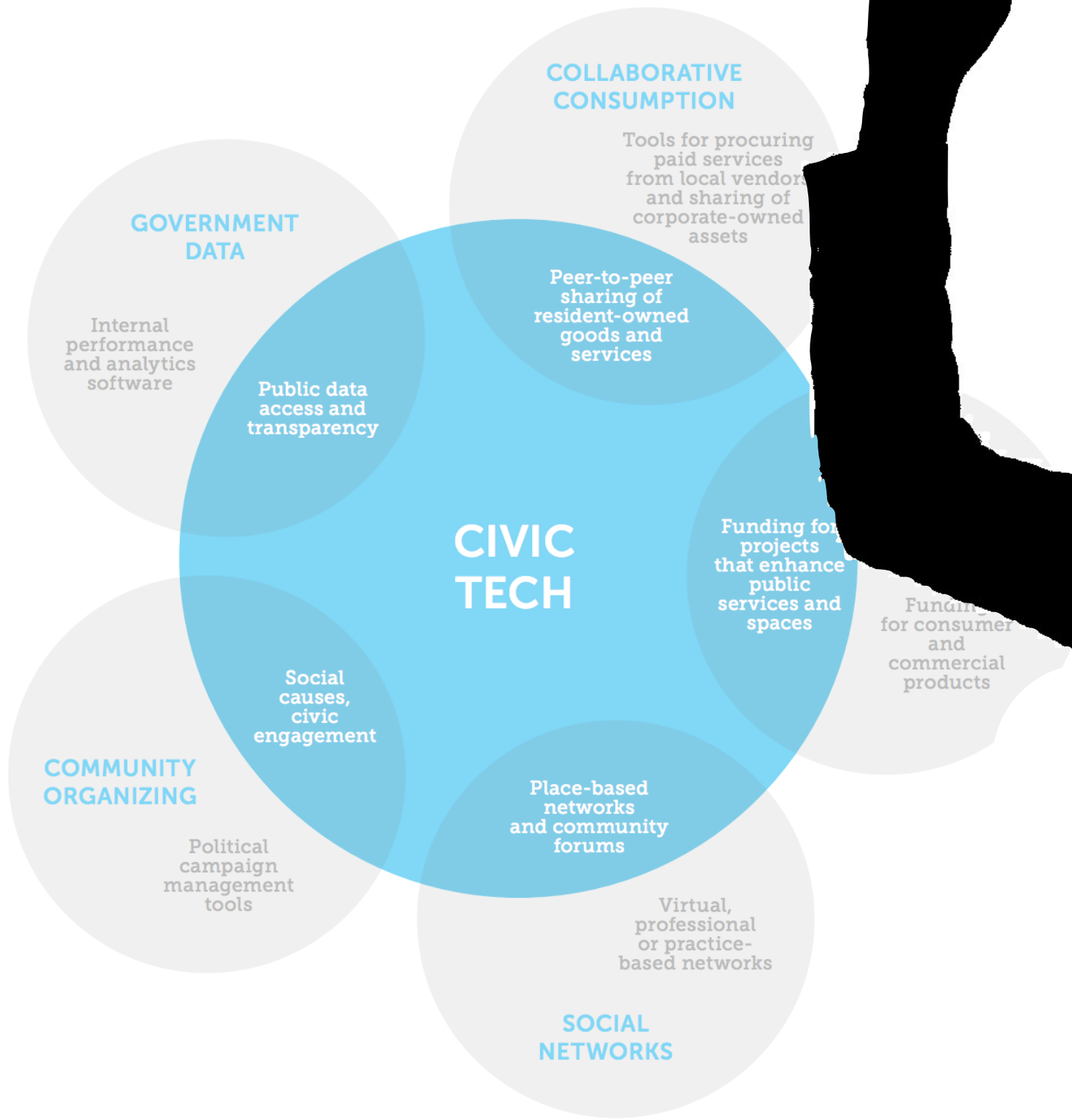# Civic Tech should support internal political efficacy

Civic Tech should support internal political efficacy
Civic Tech should support civic learning

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Civic Learning

- **Knowledge**
  developed by linking together authentic
  practices / problem-solving over time

- **Abilities**
  developed by working and reflecting on
  harder and harder problems

- **Dispositions**
  developed by engaging with values and
  diverse communities of practice

Merrifield 2001

Civic Learning

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Civic Learning

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- **Abilities**
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- **Dispositions** → **Internal Political Efficacy**
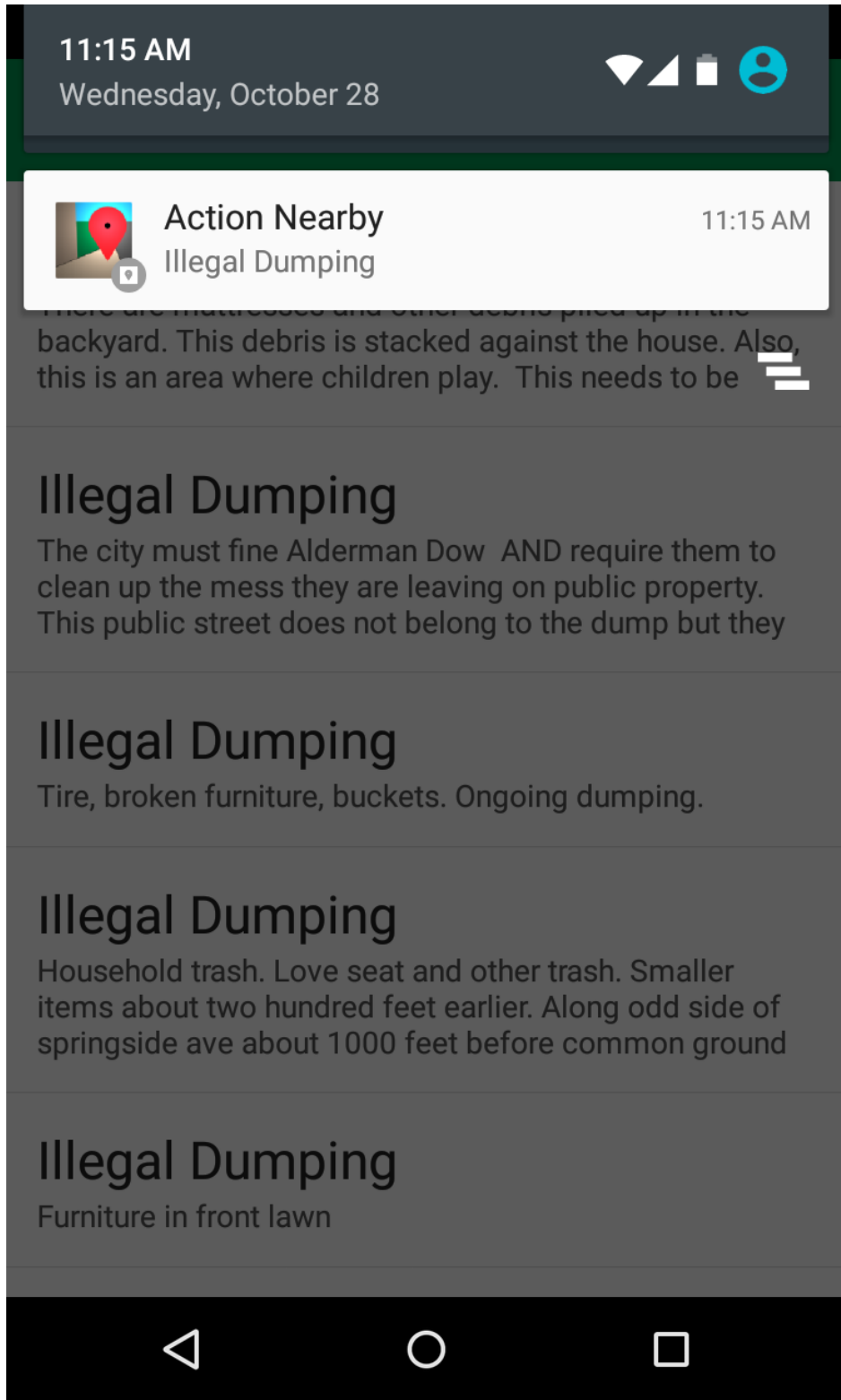 developed by engaging with values and diverse communities of practice
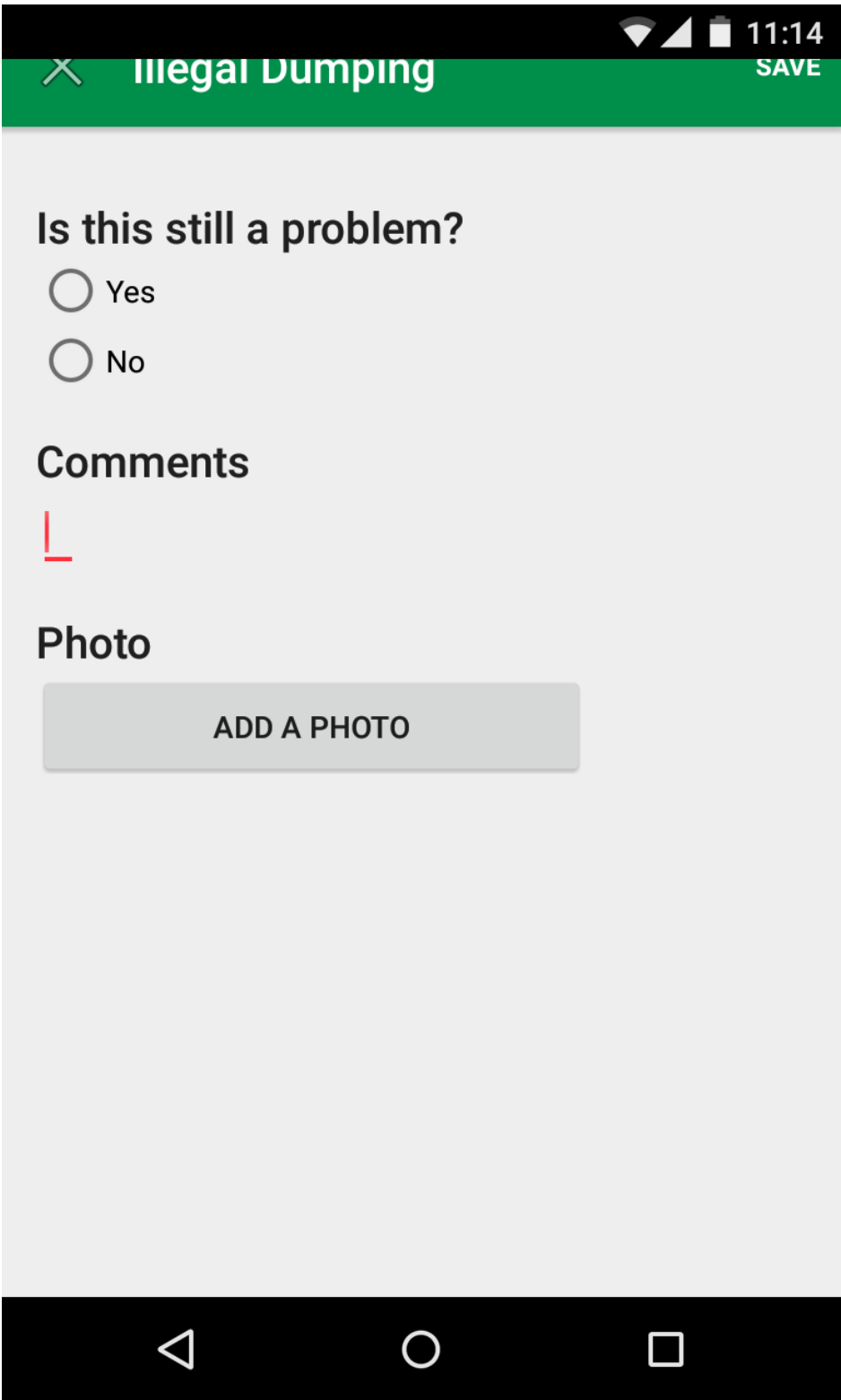
Merrifield 2001

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Civic Tech Designs for Civic Learning
ex. Action Path

notification > action > following

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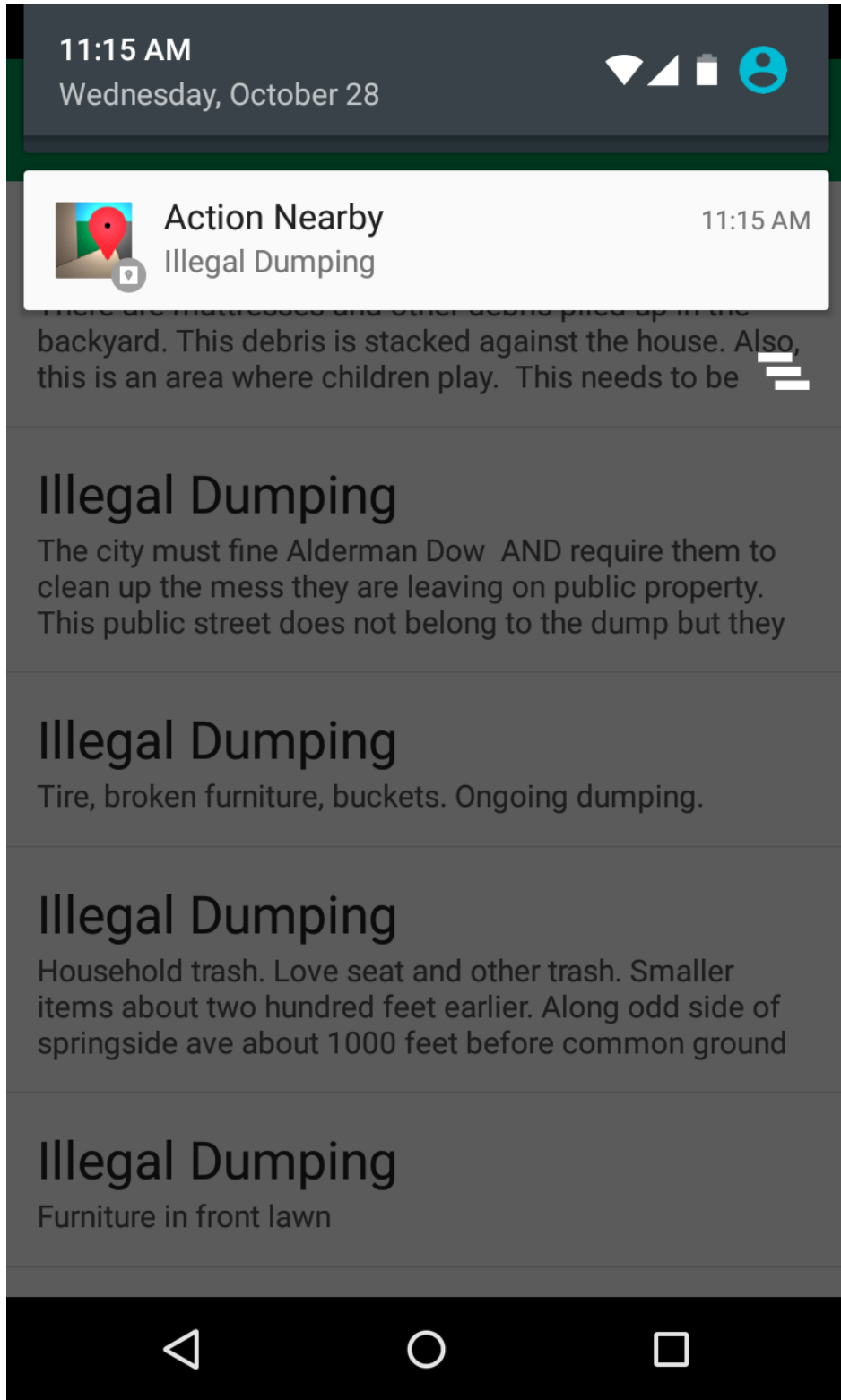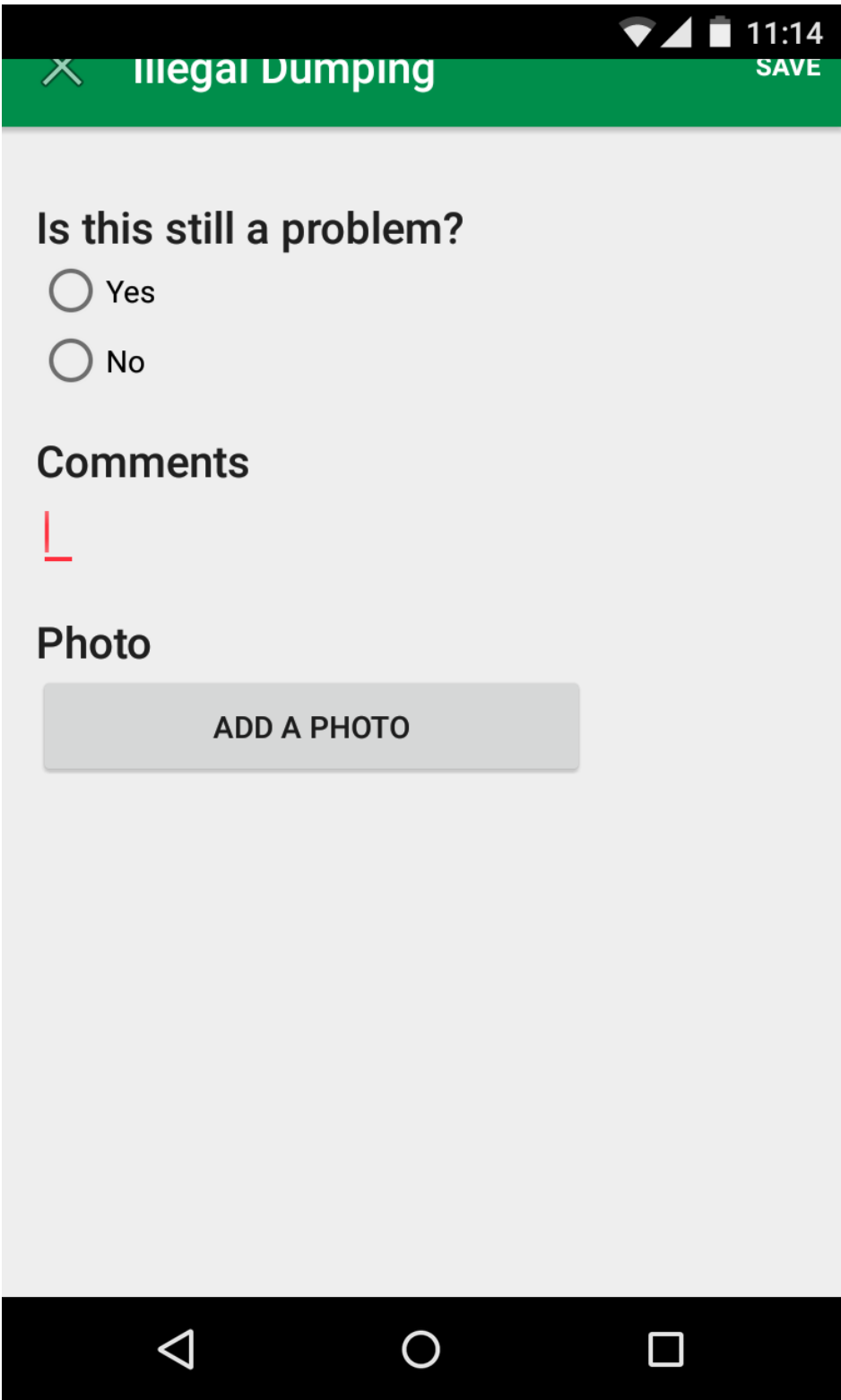@erhardt
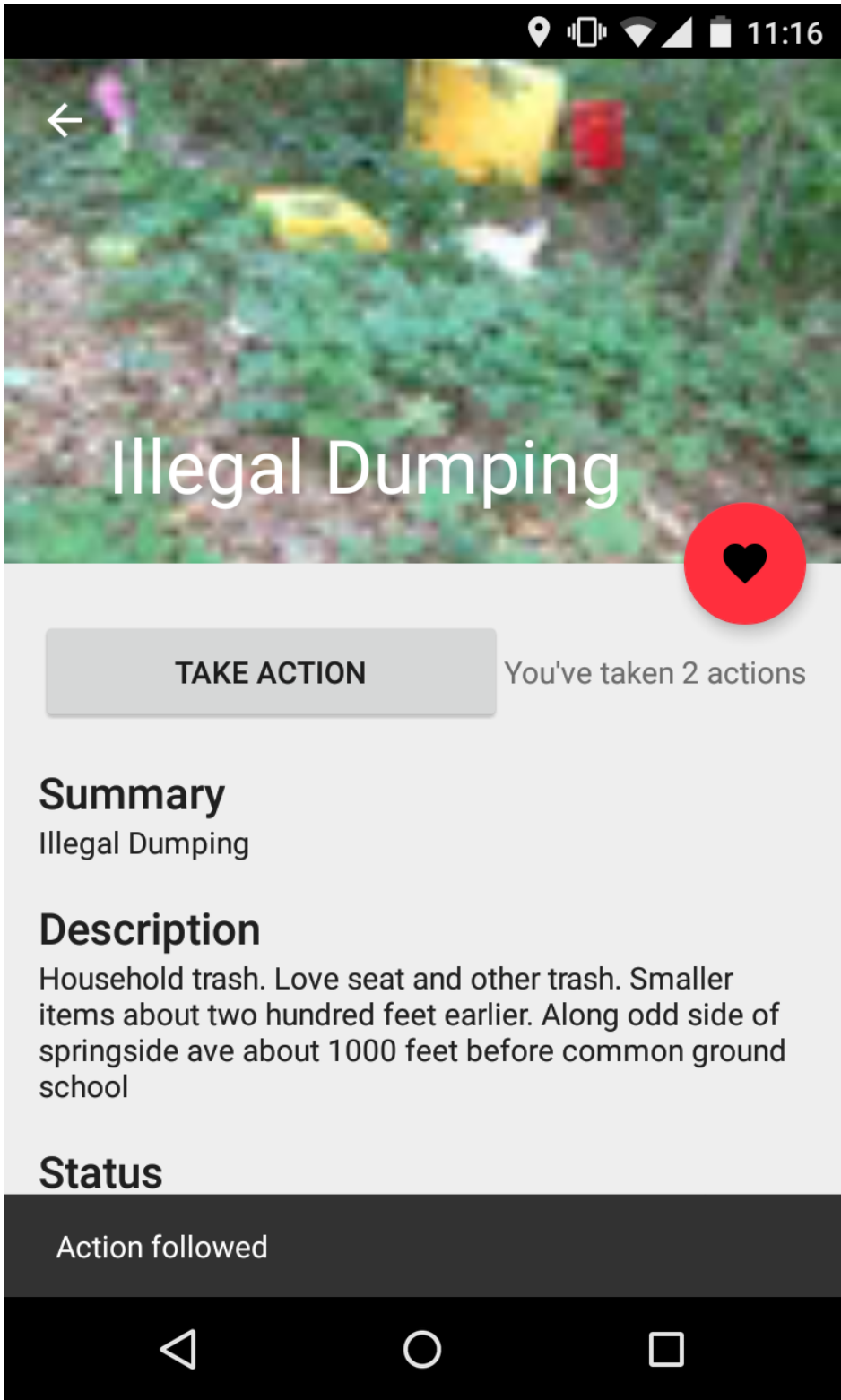
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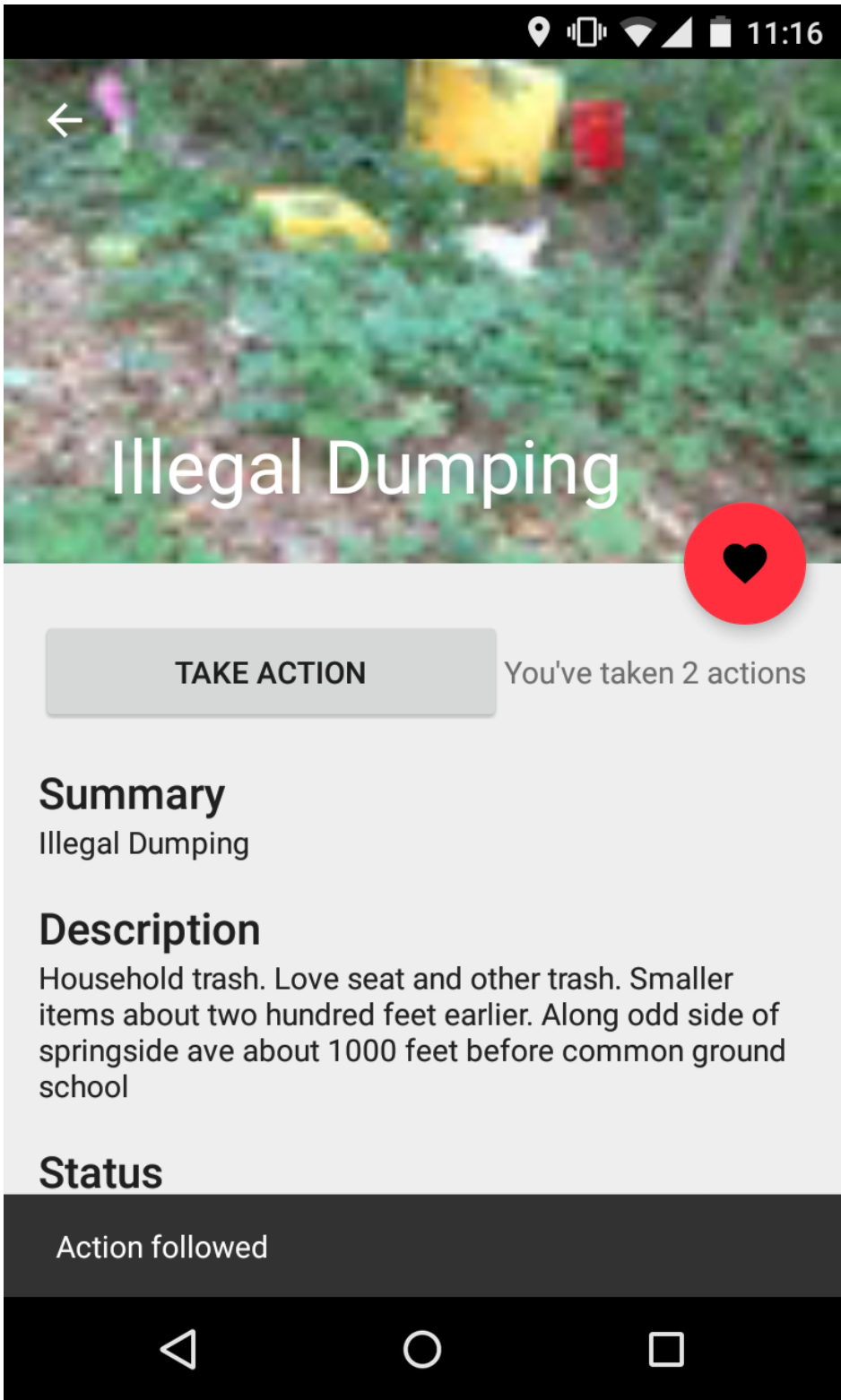
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Action Path: New Haven Deployment, Nov 2015
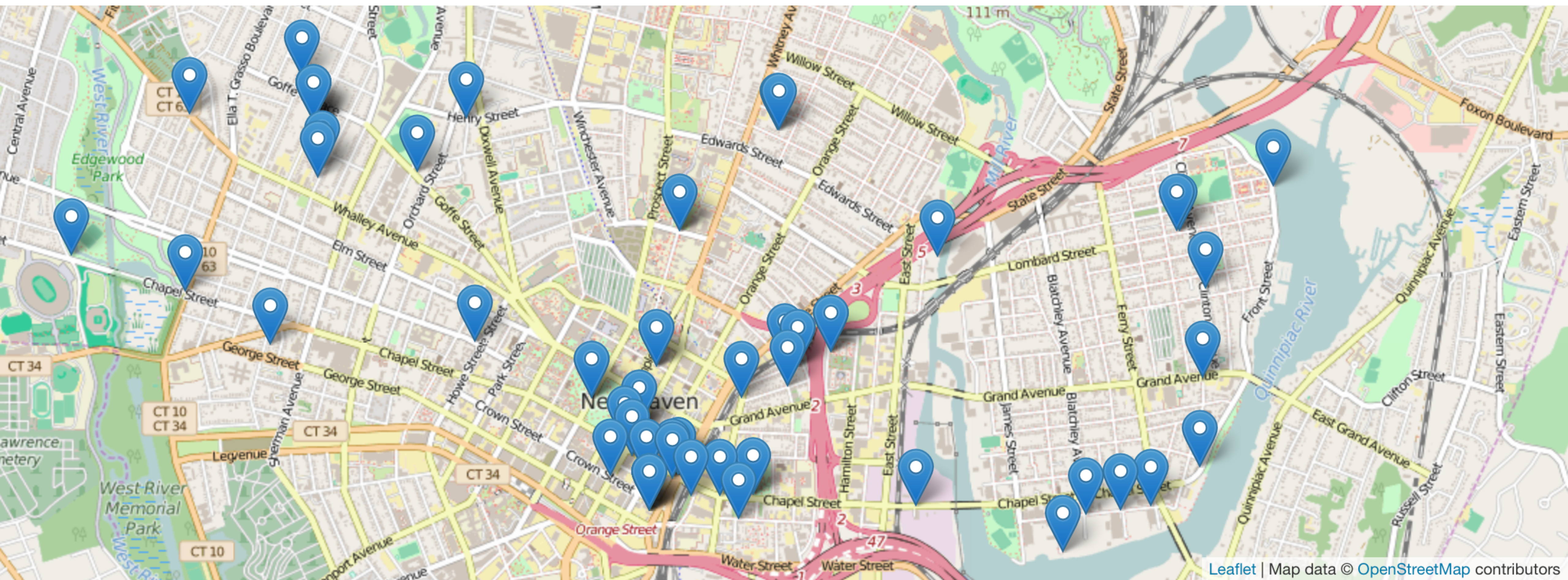
Action Path: New Haven Deployment, Nov 2015

Did it change how you viewed the city?

"Fundamentally... There are zones—
pockets of problems and personalities."

"Surprised at how much had been
reported and was still open... It opened
my eyes to what was going on... Although,
I don't see how my comment matters."

"Someone else caring about this issue makes
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Action Path: New Haven Deployment, Nov 2015

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Measuring Civic Learning
(traditional survey for internal political efficacy)

- "I consider myself well-qualified to participate in politics" Y/N

- "I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country" Y/N

- "I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people" Y/N

- "I think that I am as well-informed about politics and government as most people" Y/N
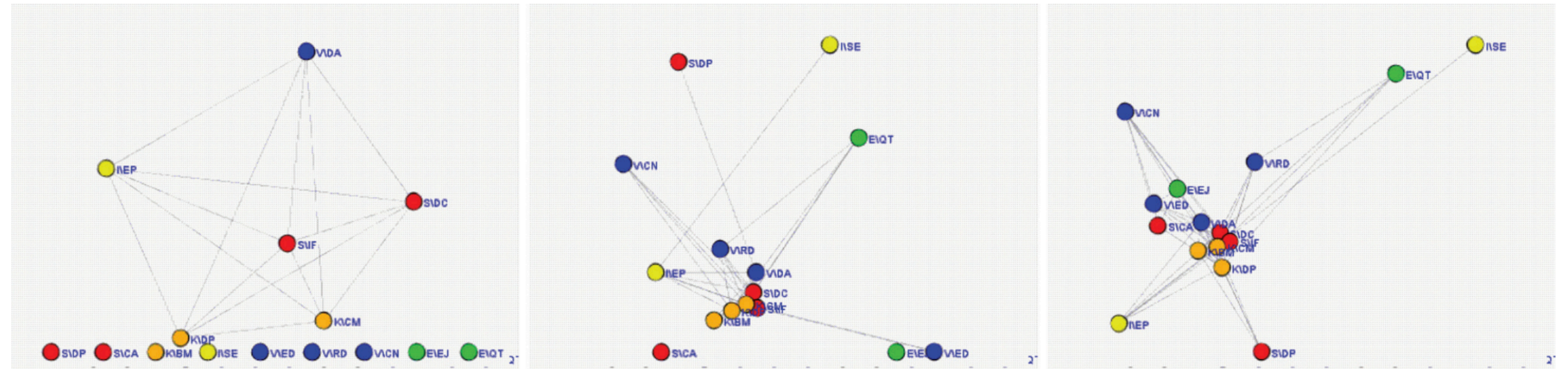
Niemi, Craig, and Mattei 1991

Measuring Civic Learning (computational approaches)

- Online Experiments

- Educational Data Mining

- Epistemic Network Analysis

- …

Shaffer, et al. 2009

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To hold civic tech accountable, we need scalable, evaluative frameworks for civic learning.

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