EDITORIAL

Citizenship Education in the Era of Globalization: Canadian Perspectives

Important and challenging theoretical debates and questions arising from considerations of the role of citizenship education in the current “global era” are evident in academic literature. Ultimately, our scholarly work must also engage with what happens in our elementary, secondary, and post-secondary classrooms. Much important scholarly attention is being directed to debates about the nature of globalization, and about national and, increasingly, global concepts of citizenship, multiculturalism, and social movements of global resistance. However, much of this work is done outside of a direct engagement with teachers, students, and classroom practices and is consequently left at a level of abstraction that appears disconnected from the day-to-day work of public schooling. Indeed, when working through significant theoretical interjections and conversations that engage with the complexities and possibilities to which we are drawn, we can never forget that the “what” and “how” of teaching and learning, and the values that circulate within classrooms, reflect the global movements of contemporary history and are shaped by a sense that we must take-up global issues. We must, therefore, recognize what Pashby (this issue) refers to as the global imperative that exerts particular pressure on educational theory, practice, policy, and politics. To do this we must struggle with questions of theory that inform our scholarly and our practical work as educators, be that practice in faculties of education or in K to 12 classrooms. This special themed issue presents important questions, concerns, and possibilities that mark both theoretical discourses and classroom practice.

The essays in this collection were inspired by a set of questions that the co-editors feel define democratic theory and practice in contemporary Canada. Within the dynamic between globalization and education, important debates are occurring and new discourses emerging. How are these terms defined in Canadian society today? How do they overlap and interrelate? How do new discourses such as on global citizenship education contribute to the renewal of the field? How do these intersect with new thinking on multiculturalism and multicultural education? How are the promises of new ways of thinking and doing being appropriated for Canada’s increasingly diverse cultural landscape? What is distinctive about them and how applicable are these promises to democratic
citizenship education? Conversely, have global, cultural, and democratic education had their run? While these questions are wide-reaching and intersect with and even challenge the delineation of local, regional, national, and global contexts; the contributors to this issue, writing within and often about the geopolitical context of contemporary Canada, weigh in on these complexities in a range of ways and from a range of perspectives.

Our collection opens with two articles that query the concept of global citizenship. Pashby examines a global orientation to citizenship from a critical engagement with the liberal-democratic notion of citizenship itself and its history of exclusion and inclusion. In this sense, she positions global citizenship as more a metaphor than a viable political institution and as a representation of values which inform the world view and practice of globally-minded individuals who increasingly desire to see the world in terms of community. While recognizing that the precise nature of globalization continues to be contested, Pashby argues that, regardless of the outcome of this debate, there is a global imperative whereby educators feels both pressed and inspired to promote a sense of global responsibility and global consciousneses. While she argues for more theoretical attention to how this imperative is taken up in scholarly work, she also recognizes the real complexities that face teachers when they attempt to attend to “the global.” Her review of contemporary academic literature reveals particular tensions marking the reinforcing relationships between citizenship diversity and schooling. A main theme of her paper is the increasingly complex notion of belonging integral to democratic citizenship and the related questions of inclusion and exclusion inherent to citizenship and schooling. Pashby demonstrates that despite its complex and even contested history, citizenship continues to be called on as an ideal through which to push for social justice from local and global orientations. Consequently, much is demanded of citizenship and citizenship education. She argues for a new, flexible theory of citizenship and for giving consideration to what constitutes the essential elements of a program of global citizenship education as an educational response to the global imperative.

Wood contends that global citizenship can neither be realized literally (citizenship being bound to the nation-state) nor should it were it possible because citizenship is a mode of political domination. Thus while Wood disputes the very possibility of global citizenship based on her critique of the history of the core concept of citizenship, she notes a dialectic between citizenship which serves simultaneously as a means of political control and as a mechanism that accords rights. In support of those social forces organizing to counter the negative effects of neoliberal globalization, the space that this dialectic creates for social action allows her
to conclude that non-scalar thinking about governance, and a broader understanding of being political than is commonly captured by the concept of citizenship, offer strategic possibilities for civil society. In her treatment of and resistance to a notion of “global citizenship,” Wood offers a more politically charged version of the impact of a global imperative on democratic citizenship than does Pashby; however, both pieces reveal that much is at stake in positioning “citizenship” as central within discourses of globalization.

Pike, long known for his work on global education, offers a critique of the plethora of citizenship education models currently in circulation. This includes the difficulty of imagining citizenship as a transnational concept and an examination of the intersecting pedagogical and theoretical terrain marking citizenship education, global education, and global citizenship education. Yet, similar to how Wood recognizes possibilities within the sense of governance and rights inherent to democratic citizenship, Pike finds room for collaboration in the overlapping ideals embodied by both global and global citizenship education. He offers what he refers to as an ethos of global citizenship – a set of moral principles and codes of conduct – that is global in scope while recognizing that citizenship will continue, for the foreseeable future, to be national in practice. This observation coincides with Pashby’s critique of the global citizenship literature which has not made a significant epistemological break with the traditional national citizenship literature. Pike’s observation that we are still working very much within the framework of the national citizenship paradigm (even as the forces of globalization work to weaken the ability of nation-states to preserve their traditional policies) constitutes a call for a dialogue between the advocates of global education and global citizenship education. Pike’s article proposes that potentially contending schools of thought that are engaged in the struggle to implement progressive education from a global perspective find common ground. He calls for an engagement in school based practice that is centered on an ethos shared by both approaches and which demarcates it from neo liberal approaches.

Hébert, Wilkinson and Ali focus our attention within the wider discussions of national and global citizenship on the dynamics of identity formation among second generation youth in Toronto, Winnipeg, and Calgary. They demonstrate the complexity of a process whereby multiple factors contribute to how individual, second generation youth construct a complex self identity which simultaneously includes elements of the cultures of their parents as mediated through each young person’s individual ways of identifying and engaging with their Canadian surroundings. According to
their findings, contrary to traditional assumptions, these young people do not simply accept authorized packages of what it means to be Canadian as defined by their teachers or any other authority. Rather, these second generation young people retain a pride in, and a connection to, the language and culture of their parents. In fact, many have the opportunity to visit their parents’ homelands and thereby reinforce the influence of the culture, language, and family ties. Yet, they form their identities on their own terms just as they seem to integrate their understanding of what it means to be a Canadian into their lives in very personal ways. Particularly interesting from the perspective of educators is the absence of the school as prominent within this process. Instead, the school is depicted in this study as simply another site where young people congregate (just like the malls, community centres, or the streets). No mention is made of the influence of teachers or curriculum in this process of identity construction. While the authors do comment near the end of their study on the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum as a potential contributor to this process, in effect, they suggest that further study is required to discover the extent that formal schooling and curriculum does or could impact on the process of second generation youth identity formation.

The next two contributions, by Larsen & Faden and Vetter, bring classroom teachers into the picture. Interestingly, the contributors taking up classroom practice are writing from perspectives outside of the urban-school settings that are so often the center of discussions around diversity, citizenship, and schooling. Larsen and Faden argue that “mainstream,” “average” teachers are both interested in and willing to teach global citizenship provided they have the proper professional support and access to the relevant teaching materials. While they distinguish the teachers featured in the study from more highly politicized social activist teachers, they note the openness of these “typical” classroom teachers to tackle topics that, before they entered into a process of professional development and support described in the article, they considered too “political” or controversial. The essential message of this contribution is that the teaching of global citizenship education and of what are considered to be controversial topics can be undertaken by regular teachers in schools in small urban and rural areas, and not just by highly motivated, politicized teachers in pluralistic classrooms of large urban centres. In order for this engagement to occur, administrators need to provide the administrative support and professional development that is required to make teachers feel comfortable with the political nature of global issues and make the task feel less onerous.
Vetter provides another model with respect to coming to the conclusion that global issues need to be integrated into the classroom. Unlike the teachers in Larsen and Faden’s study who participated in a special board-wide initiative, Vetter seems to be unique in her small town school in practicing critical citizenship education. She situates her own learning about the importance of “global” practice in her rural primary classroom where the interaction with the complex reality of an urban setting such as Toronto occurs in a special field trip, and encounters with “diversity” and “difference” are perceived as rare. Yet, in this reflective piece, she realizes that values and attitudes that will accompany her students for a lifetime are being established now and that she must enrich her students’ learning with critical democratic learning not despite but because the school and community culture sees itself as “outside” questions of diversity. A common theme that arises in both of these articles is the particular way that teachers come to an understanding of the importance of teaching from a global perspective. For the teachers in the Larsen and Faden piece it is the opportunity to participate in a pilot project with the accompanying supports, for Vetter it was the result, metaphorically at least, of an incident with her students on a Toronto street viewed through the particular lens of the strategy of rich classroom talk.

In the last article of the issue, O’Sullivan also addresses the multiple ways teachers come to a global perspective in his treatment of the experience of N.C. and her elementary school colleagues who, similar to Vetter and the teachers in Larsen and Faden’s study, work in a small-town school. He relays how, first one, then other teachers came in very personal and idiosyncratic ways to understand the importance of teaching their K to 8 elementary students from a global perspective. Before long, there was a critical mass of teachers in a single school doing so throughout the grades and across the curriculum.

Despite the existence of success stories of individual teachers, small groups, and school-wide groups of teachers learning to teach from a global perspective, O’Sullivan raises a basic question: to what extent can the average teacher be an agent of change in the tradition of Dewey, Freire, and Giroux? His questioning of this role which is so frequently assigned to educators by critical pedagogues arises from his observation that the large majority of teachers are high achieving graduates of the very school system to which they have returned; and, as a result of spending their formative years in largely untroubled middle-class circumstances, they are steeped in the dominant neoliberal ideology and consumer-orientation of the global market society. O’Sullivan implicitly raises the issue, especially given his concerns about the power of the dominant ideology, as to just how critical
and how transformative the actual classroom practice of global education and global citizenship education is or has the potential of being. In posing the question, O’Sullivan turns our attention back to the Pashby, Wood, and Pike articles that deal explicitly with the theoretical work of engaging with and responding to the global imperative; to Hébert et al whose work can be interpreted, because of the silence surrounding the role of teachers, as questioning the extent to which young people rely on teachers at all as they construct their world views; and to Larsen & Faden and Vetter’s account of successful classroom interventions from a global perspective.

This collection is entitled Citizenship Education in the Era of Globalization: Canadian Perspectives. As a group, the proceeding papers represent significant desire for democratic education in Canada to respond to and even interject into the way that contemporary globalization is taken-up in classrooms. At the centre of this challenge, and at the heart of all of these papers, is the significance of citizenship as the corner stone of democratic life and schooling. According to the contributors, citizenship continues to be firmly national in orientation and practice even as the duties associated with it with respect to our sense of responsibilities to others increasingly have a global pull. Pashby, Wood, and Pike are explicit in asserting this; Hébert, Wilkinson, and Ali imply it strongly in their notion of what it means for the second generation youth they studied to be Canadian through a process of identity formation mediated by their Canadian surroundings; Larsen and Faden employ the term global citizenship education (GCE) in order to talk about bringing global awareness and a sense of global responsibility to quintessentially Canadian young people; while Vetter does not explicitly mention this term, her piece espouses a sense of GCE being a duty of citizenship to encourage a respect for diversity; and O’Sullivan writes about critical transformative pedagogies from a global perspective.

Pike’s suggestion that we consider “an ethos of global citizenship” which, while global in scope, recognizes “that citizenship will continue, for the foreseeable future, to be national in practice” articulates a fundamental dualism of our time: the national versus the global. The tensions inherent to any treatment of this dynamic can be couched as mutually exclusive, mutually inclusive, or dialogical. When taken-up within a conversation that takes classroom practice and the lives and identities of young people in Canada as central, this special issue highlights the importance of a dialogical approach, for the papers all see the possibilities inherent to opening the idea of citizenship to a consideration of the connections between people all over the world. Thus, Pike’s call for “an ethos of global
citizenship” constitutes a guide to classroom practice that can occur even as the debates about global and national citizenship, critical and transformative pedagogies, and global impulses continue. Teachers can and must respond to the global imperative, and the concept of citizenship is a place from which to begin to conceive of an approach to global issues from the confines of provincial curricula and national institutions and discourses. This collection of papers is significant in reminding us that theoretical debates on the subject will benefit from the reflections of those classroom teachers and students who endeavor to contribute to democracy in these complex times.
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Demands on and of Citizenship and Schooling: “Belonging” and “Diversity” in the Global Imperative

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Abstract

Educational theory and practice are contending with a sense that it is imperative to take-up “the global” in schools so as to promote a sense of global responsibility and global consciousness. A review of contemporary academic literature reveals particular tensions marking the mutually reinforcing relationships between citizenship, diversity, and schooling. A main theme of this paper is the increasingly complex notion of “belonging” integral to democratic citizenship and the related questions of inclusion and exclusion inherent to citizenship and schooling. By demonstrating that, despite particular paradoxes, citizenship continues to be called on as an ideal through which to push for social justice on local and global levels, the paper contends that a great deal is demanded of citizenship and citizenship education. This paper argues for a new, flexible theory of citizenship that interrogates the assumptions on which a “neutral” notion of citizenship is based. In examining what is demanded of citizenship, the paper looks at what demands must be made of a notion of citizenship. The paper ends with a strong consideration of global citizenship education as an educational response to the global imperative.

Citizenship is central in discussions of educational responses to the global imperative, a premise that defines the contemporary moment. A growing sense of interdependency and interconnection within “the global” coupled with increasing diversity within the nation state places particular demands on extant notions of citizenship and schooling. There is a desire for schooling to equip students with an awareness of global connectedness and thus to encourage young people to develop a consciousness of themselves as citizens of the world. In this sense, the global imperative is associated with a development of a sense of global responsibility and a heightened sense of a need to respond to globalization in educational theory and practice. At the same time, the global imperative is related to existing and developing issues around diversity within the nation. On both fronts, much is desired of a notion of citizenship.

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This paper reviews contemporary academic literature on citizenship and citizenship education to tease out several key tensions arising from the debates surrounding the mutually reinforcing relationships between citizenship, diversity, and schooling in a “global era.” Within the context of globalization and within the backdrop of critical theory, citizenship is both problematized and evoked as a site of social struggle and justice. While the historical roots of exclusion inherent to the notion of citizenship are recognized, complex notions of identity characterize contemporary subjectivities. Citizenship is being taken up as a “global” notion – as in “global citizenship,” “cosmopolitan citizenship,” or “citizens of the world” – in order to promote a sense of global responsibility; meanwhile, within nations, the identities of citizens are increasingly defined by multiple and overlapping loyalties. Accordingly, a main theme of this paper is the increasingly complex notion of “belonging” integral to a governing notion of democratic citizenship. Thus the paper will argue that within a context of the global imperative, main points of tension in debates and discussions among theorists, particularly around questions of how to handle notions of diversity and equity within a framework of globalization, result in particular demands being placed on citizenship and on schooling for citizenship that will require a new, flexible theory of citizenship. It ends by posing some critical questions to the emergent agenda for global citizenship education (GCE) arising from a critical engagement with the demands on and of citizenship in the global imperative.

Citizenship, Nation-States, and Belonging: Identity in Flux

In a broad sense, citizenship refers to membership to a group and more specifically to a political community. Thus much of the debate about citizenship relates to varying understandings of the nature of group membership. Most agree that citizenship involves a set of relationships between rights, duties, participation, and identity and that these components are the defining tenets of membership (Delanty, 2000). Debates have centered on different interpretations of these components, and because they are mutually reinforcing, critiques of or changes to one component affect the way other components are understood (Scott & Lawson, 2002). Patten (2001) identifies three key questions that characterize debates around citizenship. The first relates to citizenship status and who can be considered a full member of the community. The second concerns which entitlements a citizen can claim as a result of that status. The third pertains to what the community expects of those who are full members. These three questions relate in legal and social ways to construct notions of “who belongs.” Accordingly, critiques of identity – the who of citizenship –
are integral to the way that citizenship is taken up and understood today. For a citizen to participate in, be dutiful to, and claim rights as a member of a political community, s/he must “belong.”

Debates about the definition of and relationship between the main components of citizenship give rise to divergent understandings of what citizenship does and should entail. Questions around identity become paramount to these debates as a sense of belonging is central to establishing a notion of membership on which citizenship relies. In particular, evolving understandings of identity – influenced by a discourse of globalization, new social movements, and critiques of modernist frameworks – have challenged key assumptions around citizenship. Indeed, citizenship is coterminous with the history of modernism and modernist notions of subjectivity. As McAfee (2000) posits, since the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the term citizen has rested on modern notions of individualism: “Even though the Greeks had an analogous term, the word citizen is peculiarly modern” (p. 13). Citizenship has paralleled modernism’s design of belonging to a political community and being an individual subject. It is not surprising then that evolutions in theoretical understandings of identity have resulted in much debate around citizenship, as “our notions of citizenship rest upon our notions of subjectivity” (McAfee, p. 13). Accordingly, these changing understandings of subjectivity have given rise to new criteria for “belonging.” If citizenship is membership in a political community, then the basis of that membership is at the heart of current debates and these understandings will affect the interpretation and practice of rights, duties, and participation.

T. H. Marshall’s work articulated a historical typology of citizenship that marked a shift from strict political definitions of citizenship emphasizing the relationship between the individual citizen and the state, to a broader definition emphasizing the relationship between the citizen and society as a whole (Isin & Wood, 1999; McCollum, 2002). Concerned with the strict class segregation in England in the mid-twentieth century, he expounded on the seemingly straight-forward idea of defining citizenship according to geopolitical territory. He argued that the development of citizenship since the eighteenth century had been defined by the acquisition of three categories of rights: a) civil rights – based on individual freedoms of speech, thought and faith, and associated with the development of a judicial system establishing rights to property, contracts, and justice; b) political rights – enabling participation in public decisions and political life and associated with the development of the electoral system; and c) social rights – based on rights to things of vital importance, namely economic and social security, and associated with the development of the welfare state which ensured the
right to a certain standard of living (Isin & Wood; McCollum; Painter 2002). Marshall thus pressed the relationship of citizenship to social inequalities, raising the question of whether modern citizenship had become a provision of class inequality (Isin & Wood; Kymlicka 1995). In this sense, the criteria of belonging to the political community, and thus of being able to exercise citizens’ rights and duties as active participants, was undermined by class stratification. While Marshall’s work has been criticized for its exclusive class focus, strict emphasis on citizenship as rights, and lack of attention to the sites of social struggle that surround the development of citizenship, it has remained significant to a critical view of the relationship between citizenship and inequalities (Isin & Wood; Patten 2001). Isin and Wood express how Marshall’s work has served as a jumping-off point for further critiques of citizenship as related to complex and dynamic understandings of identity. Indeed, there is now a demand for a notion of citizenship that accounts for an evolved understanding of multiple, overlapping, and shifting identities, and that responds to the exclusionary nature inherent to the modern ideal of citizenship. Thus, there is a desire for a more socially just citizenship that redresses these inequities. Citizenship must now negotiate the various and diverse identities within and between group members as modern assumptions regarding the equality between citizens as discrete and autonomous social agents are now problematized.

So-called “new social movements” and critical theoretical frameworks have built on the acknowledgement of this colonial past and have contributed to the posing of important challenges to extant notions of citizenship. Many of these influences have pointed to complex understandings of identity that pressure both the modern assumptions of what constitutes the community to which a citizen “belongs” and the basis of equality between citizens. While Marshall presents his narrative of citizenship as an extension of rights, from another perspective, civil, social, and political rights, rather than establishing an increasingly stable, just, and common relationship between individuals and the states, have been defined by tensions and conflicts. New social movements such as the women’s movement, civil rights movements, and aboriginal movements, among others, along with theoretical frameworks influenced by postmodernism and postcolonialism, have given voice to groups and subjectivities that do and have not fit the culturally and historically normalized “citizen” (Arnot & Dillabough, 2004; Rosaldo, 1999).

Some, such as Torres (1998) are optimistic, claiming that new theories of critical modernism – including feminism, critical race theory, and subordinate social spaces theory nested within the theoretical net of postcolonialism – and
the practice of new social movements have enhanced the possibilities of citizenship, particularly in multicultural democratic societies. (p. 432)

However, these possibilities are contingent on a theory of citizenship that problematizes simplistic ideas of citizen autonomy and accounts for a complex understanding of identity while negotiating a diversity of claims on the political imaginary. In this sense, there are new demands on citizenship which is no longer seen as neutral, for far from being a universal concept, it “embodies the multifarious and complex character of the political subject” (Isin & Wood, 1999, p. 25). These perspectives expose the modern citizenship narrative as one of systemic exclusion wherein the central motif, rather than being universal equity, is social conflict and the struggles of marginalized groups for equality and recognition (McCollum, 2002). They have also challenged the assumption of homogeneity underlying conceptions of cultural communities so essential to the sense of belonging required of and by citizenship (Delanty, 2000).

“Loyalty/Loyalties” and “Belonging”: The Demands of Difference

i. Identity and Pluralism: The National Context

The demands on citizenship arising from evolved and complex understandings of identity within a framework of diversity are particularly evoked in discussions of multiculturalism. As Isin and Wood (1999) claim, group rights are the “riddle of modernity” (p. 25). Delanty (2000) identifies a “rupture” in the discourse of citizenship, namely “the concept between citizenship as the pursuit of equality and as a recognition of difference” (p. 10, see also Castles, 2004). This bears on the way that citizen rights are understood under new formulations of identity.

Some liberal theorists have worked on adapting modern notions of citizenship to address issues of diversity. Kymlicka (1995) has argued vehemently from a liberal theoretical perspective for group-differentiated rights. He maintains that an exclusive focus on the rights of the individual have left certain minorities vulnerable to injustices at the hands of the majority. Further, he observes that certain challenges have arisen from the twin pressures resulting from increased polyethnic dimensions in virtually all Western democracies coupled with an increase in nationalistic sentiments from minority groups. As a result, he insists, “[t]he settled rules of political life in many countries are being challenged by a new ‘politics of cultural difference’” (Kymlicka, p. 193). Habermas (1994) has added that “[a] correctly understood theory of rights requires a politics of recognition that protects the integrity of the individual in the life contexts in which his or her
identity is formed” (p. 113). Thus citizenship is intrinsically connected to and increasingly complicated by notions of identity.

Tully (2000) has also taken up the demands of difference on modern concepts of citizenship. He notes that the varying forms of recognition and accommodation sought within a “politics of difference” are as numerous as the struggles they represent – including: feminists, gays-lesbians, refugees, immigrants, and indigenous peoples – and he insists that these challenges are not new:

these types of struggles for recognition all have histories which pre-date by centuries the emergence of the concept of ‘identity politics’. Nevertheless, they are referred to as ‘identity politics’ because they often exhibit … characteristics in the present which render them significantly similar to each other and significantly different from their past forms. (p. 218)

Thus, he calls on a reformulation of liberalism to include diversity and highlights the interplay between identity, rights, duty, and participation. He reveals the role that the democratic freedom of citizen participation plays in engendering a sense of belonging and the complex forms this freedom takes in multicultural and multinational societies, the freedom not only to participate in accord with one’s cultural and national identities when they are publicly recognized…., but also to participate in the ongoing contests over how these are to be acknowledged, recognized and accommodated. (p. 212)

Therefore, not only must a multicultural nation accommodate diversity, but, drawing on Taylor’s (1991) notion of “deep diversity,” Kymlicka (1995) notes that it must recognize the diversity of approaches to and experiences of diversity among its citizens in order to account for the various ways members of particular groups belong to the larger polity. He warns that “a vague commitment to the value of cultural diversity, by itself, may not generate a strong sense of identification with the existing country, or the particular groups that cohabit it” (p. 191). Accordingly, Kymlicka acknowledges that more work must be done towards a comprehensive theory of social unity in pluralistic states (p. 192). Indeed, much is at stake in this endeavor given the colonial history of nation building. As Banks (2004) reminds us, “[u]nity in most nation-states has been achieved at the expense of diversity. Unity without diversity results in hegemony and oppression; diversity without unity leads to Balkanization and the fracturing of the nation-state” (p. xx). Similarly, Torres (1998) insists that contemporary conceptualizations of citizenship are defined by a conundrum of national
identity. He posits the ultimate dilemma for multiculturalism as “the understanding of the connection between diversity and the commons, that is the question of unity in diversity” (p. 445).

In practice, the attempt to accommodate difference within the nation through multiculturalism, as interpreted by federal policy in Canada – where polyethnic and linguistic diversity has been characterized by a “mosaic” approach to managing difference – remains to a certain extent tenuous. Despite the fact that the “multicultural mosaic” has become integral to the discourse of national character in Canada and is performed regularly through public celebrations of diversity in festivals, concerts, and textbooks, it appears that the trope of the mosaic has not fully encouraged a socially just approach to “unity in diversity.” The mosaic approach can be criticized for defining the ethno-cultural minority as “the other” in relation to a neutral dominant culture in such a way as to commodify and tokenize rather than properly recognize culture and lifestyles. In this way, the dominant culture remains unquestioned and rather than recognizing the workings of prejudice and inequities, the neutral, dominant culture is lauded for being so benevolent as to acknowledge various minority cultures (Day, 2000). Thus, as Yon (2000) notes, multiculturalism can be critiqued for its cultural relativism that “sees cultures as discrete, bounded, and contending for positions on the multicultural Canadian stage…” (p. 37). Multiculturalism has both attempted to manage questions of pluralism within a liberal democratic notion of citizenship and exposed particular challenges and tensions within an inclusive notion of citizenship. It represents particular demands being placed on citizenship to include a recognition of group-differentiated rights and a desire for citizenship to accommodate such diversity while maintaining a notion of community, belonging and “unity” within the nation.

ii. Loyalty and Belonging - The Global Imperative

The very tensions that have defined theories of citizenship that respond to cultural diversity within nations continue to emerge along with new issues within a discourse of globalization. In an editorial piece that looks back on their collaborative tenure as editors of Citizenship Studies, Isin and Turner (2007) identify the problems of defining citizenship in the global moment. They note that citizenship is both a legal status conferring an identity on persons and a social status that determines the redistribution and recognition of economic and cultural capital. The existence of citizenship is confirmed by an identity card or passport, yet citizenship practices and virtues expand beyond the borders delineated by passports. They point out that “While citizens may be contained within state
boundaries with their rights and obligations, neither their social existence nor the practices of their own states follow such containment” (p. 14). The sense of a causal relationship between the intensification of communication and transportation technologies and an intensification of social relations across borders complicates the escalation of struggles over the redistribution of resources and recognition within and between nations.

Yet, importantly, many theorists warn against simply accepting the inevitability of globalization and insist on a more nuanced understanding. Rizvi and Lingard (2000) raise some questions about the relationships between the economic and social phenomena associated with globalization. They pose an important question:

The rhetoric of globalization… implies that the apparent shortening of distance, changes in the experience of time, the multiplying of global links, the proliferation of global flows of myriad kinds, and the deepening of interdependence has benefited all. But has it? (p. 419)

Also identifying the problematic acceptance of globalization as “progress,” Popkewitz (2004) notes that while globalization appears ubiquitous, it often is treated ahistorically as a “condition that encapsulates contemporary life, one that… is accepted almost fatalistically” (p. vii). He adds that “while the talk of globalization may function as an empty signifier, there are things happening in the world for which the word acts as a convenient fiction” (p. vii). Further, Benhabib (2002) also warns against a “global.com civilization” that “will create a permanent flow of individuals without commitments, industries without liabilities, news without a public conscience, and the dissemination of information without a sense of boundaries and discretion” (p. 182).

Despite the fact that the term “globalization” is as ubiquitous as is it problematic and contentious, this paper presumes that the sense of imperative that schooling take-up “the global” represents and highlights particular complications for citizenship and citizenship education that are especially relevant to a critical understanding of “loyalty” and “belonging.” Indeed, contemporary phenomena including immigration trends, the decline of the welfare state, and postmodern thinking require a fundamental reconsideration of citizenship theory (McCollum, 2002). The current historical moment is marked by multiple loyaltyes – cultural, social, and political – that overlap with multiple geographical positions – regional, inter-regional, national, international, and super-national. Indeed, Scott and Lawson (2002) observe that a prevailing sense of insecurity as to where one’s loyalties lie is a condition of and conundrum of globalization: “Loyalty
It is important to recognize the complex nature of identifications under current geopolitical conditions. As Banks (2001) reminds us, “[c]ultural, national, and global experiences and identifications are interactive and interrelated in a dynamic way” (p. 8). Li (2003) also challenges the tendency to bifurcate the notions of the local and the global, insisting that they are conceptual constructs and “[w]hile the globalization of the political economy seems to form a global monoculture, the emergence of postmodern, postcolonial, and multicultural theories demonstrates an increasingly complex understanding of the diversity of human cultures” (p. 55). Indeed, issues present at a national level are encountered at a regional or transnational level. As Appiah (2005) notes: “[I]f it is true that there are difficulties in what we think of as cross-cultural dialogue, they are often no more and no less substantiated than those of dialogues within societies” (p. 254). This suggests that theories of citizenship that look “beyond” the nation-state to a more global orientation, such as “global citizenship,” may well face similar tensions around equity and diversity and the various claims for recognition that have emerged at the national level.

A major concern remains: Drawing upon a notion of citizenship in a global discourse may prove to persist, mask, and even encourage inequities as it has in a national context. For example, Ong (1999) reveals problems with imposing a notion of global citizenship on immigrants of colour suggesting that citizenship privileges are bestowed to Western democracies and are thus granted by and through hierarchy. He observes that attaining global citizenship might help “the immigrant to scale racial and cultural heights but not to circumvent status hierarchy based on racial differences” (p. 262). Indeed, the democratic agency demanded of citizenship in contemporary discussions is complicated and tested in an era in which citizenship is being evoked within, at, between and beyond the level of the nation-state.

Another possibly negative impact of a global orientation to citizenship is raised by Kenway and Bullen (2005) who recognize the potential for new spaces of imagined belonging but also warn against the possible persistence of power inequities:

Our view is that cultural globalization deterritorializes and hybridizes mundane places and institutions. In so doing, it complicates their relationship to the cultural practices, experiences, and identities of those who occupy them. Alongside this, it offers new transnational cultural spaces and identifications and new ways of imagined belonging. At the
same time, it reconfigures certain geometries of power and re-inscribes others. (pp. 33-34)

Further, Benhabib (2002) identifies an optimistic view of global citizenship that includes a world-wide discourse of human rights, the development of transnational solidarity across cultures and religions around global issues, and the rise of NGOs taking on issues of global concern, among other important developments. Yet, she questions whether all aspects of democratic agency remain preserved when citizenship is exercised across national boundaries and within transnational contexts. Therefore, a global orientation to citizenship is wrought with tensions around agency and justice that are tied back to the questions of what notions of identity and loyalty define what it means to “belong.” As with national citizenship, divergent understandings will affect the interpretation and practice of rights, duties and participation.

The Demands on Citizenship

Through a review of contemporary literature, the first section of this paper has argued that a new and relevant model of citizenship must engage in differences and promote the agency of socially embedded individuals and the communities that give meaning to citizens’ sense of self. It must negotiate at the symbolic level of imagined communities in order to re-envision a diverse and complex citizen. Complex, multiple, and overlapping identities challenge traditional assumptions about who is identified by others as members of a political community and who self identifies with that political community. Multicultural responses to plurality within the nation state are implicated in the criticisms of modernist understandings of citizenship. Also, as difference is encountered within, at, and beyond the nation state level, these tensions are persistent. In order for citizenship to provide a framework for a sense of belonging and loyalty to a “global community,” it must be flexible enough to serve as an axis to the multiple and shifting identities and allegiances that characterize the current global moment. In this sense, much is demanded of citizenship in the contemporary global context.

Citizenship and Schooling

An evolving and contested concept of citizenship raises important questions about how schooling should respond to these new demands. The global imperative in education can be defined by a growing call for the inclusion of a sense of global-mindedness that encourages students to develop a consciousness of global connectivity and responsibility. This
section of the paper will first consider the traditional relationship between citizenship and schooling before examining the main debates about citizenship education in light of increasing pressure for schooling to respond to concerns surrounding globalization. This will lead to an identification of key demands being made of citizenship education in the global imperative out of which global citizenship education (GCE) has emerged as an orientation.

Public schooling has traditionally been an important apparatus of the state as a fundamental means through which to disseminate and build notions of citizenship and is thus strongly and intimately tied to constructions of what Anderson would call the imagined nation (Anderson, 2006). As Richardson (2002) notes, national curricula function to perpetuate and even manufacture national myths “for the twin purposes of grounding national consciousness in some kind of legitimizing historical tradition and garnering the allegiance of the people to the existing political status quo” (p. 54). Education is also tied to the critique of citizenship as masking and even perpetuating social inequities. Isin and Wood (1999) demonstrate that particular economic interests were served through the initiation of mandatory schooling in Western democracies in that civil and political rights that had already been established and were supporting modern capitalism required an educated society and a trained workforce. Public schooling, like citizenship, served to hide inequities and re-establish the status quo at the same time as it was to open up new possibilities for expanding membership and participation.

Discussing citizenship education in New Zealand, Olssen (2002) contends that schooling reproduces inequalities by treating equally students from very different circumstances who have different orientations towards the future, distinct language systems, particular motivational patterns, and varying access to cultural capital. In this sense, schooling is an instrument in the enterprise of citizenship, providing an institutional implementation of modernist notions of equality and universality of opportunity, and is consequently criticized for enabling and propagating a status quo that benefits those who enjoy a degree of capital. However, while Isin and Wood’s reminder of Marshall’s exposure of the reproduction of inequities systemic in public education raises important alarm bells and Olssen’s recognition of the unequal distribution of power within state sponsored school systems is significant, according to Osborne (2000), the process of creating national citizens has and will continue to be fraught with divergent and competing interpretations as schooling has never been a
simple matter of imposing and reinforcing the hegemony of the dominant class. Yet, as Glass (2000) identifies, there is a key paradox inherent to schooling. While it ultimately reproduces the status-quo, “with all their faults and despite questions about their own causal role in the injustices, [schools] remain crucial to a hope for creating more fair and equitable communities” (p. 279). This is why citizenship education continues to be evoked as a site for social justice.

Citizenship Education on the Theoretical Agenda

While citizenship is a governing principle of public education, citizenship as a topic has been given particular and explicit attention in schooling through specific courses in citizenship education which have historically been viewed as a central obligation of public schooling (Sears & Hughes, 1996). Particular understandings of citizenship have influenced the aims and objectives of citizenship education. Historically, citizenship education was focused on an individual’s relation to the nation state, and its principle aims were to establish a shared identity and history among citizens-in-making and to foster patriotism and loyalty to the nation. The perceived fragmenting effects of globalization have called into question citizenship education’s premise of a monolithic nation state (Scott & Lawson, 2002). Citizenship education is thus inevitably implicated in the contestations around citizenship characterizing those contemporary debates that take up a complex notion of identity.

Osler and Starkey (2003) criticize national citizenship education as propagating the myth of the objective, autonomous citizen and note its failure to engage with the lived experience of students whose identities are shifting and multiple and whose senses of belonging are not necessarily tied primarily to the nation state. Demonstrating that this is particularly true for minority students, they reveal a paradox of citizenship:

In democratic states, citizens are constitutionally entitled to equal rights to participate in and to influence government. However, in practice, this formal equality is undermined by discriminatory practices and public discourses that exclude minorities or which marginalise them within the imagined community of the nation. In such discourses the nation is often portrayed as having a homogeneous cultural identity into which minorities are expected to integrate. (Osler & Starkey, p. 244)

They studied young people in multicultural communities in Leicester, U.K. and found that students demonstrate an interplay of multiple and dynamic identities and do not identify with a single notion of being “British.” In light
of a similar Canadian study by Hébert et al (this issue), this suggests that education for national citizenship that is premised on a knowable and stable notion of “national identity” will not provide a context complex enough for students to integrate the various and overlapping geo-political perspectives that define their experiences and identities.

The increasing pressures of the perceived realities of the current global order have put citizenship education on the forefront of theoretical discussion. Osler and Starkey point to three key factors that have led to the recent peaked interest in citizenship education. To begin with, citizenship education has been paramount to enabling populations in recently democratized states in places such as South Africa, Central Europe, and Latin America to understand democracy and its system of rights. Secondly, the perceived crisis of confidence in time-honored political processes in established democracies – as indicated by low voter turn-out and apparent voter apathy – has led to the promotion of citizenship education as the key to reinstating confidence in democracy. Finally, the effects of demographic changes resulting from increased migration have resulted in a turn to citizenship education to respond to a resultant sense of fragmentation. Indeed, the increasing of cultural diversity in school populations, particularly those in urban areas, calls upon citizenship education as a means through which to enable young people from differing backgrounds to live together.

A main problem with citizenship education has been that despite being called upon to respond to new demands on citizenship characterized by complex notions of belonging and recognition, its inclusion in curricula has been as “value-added” content rather than integrated throughout disciplines and practices. Sears and Hughes (1996) lament the exercise of limiting education for citizenship to social studies curriculum. They insist that while citizenship education has become central to social studies, the total lack of consensus on citizenship itself has become embedded in the continuous and unforgiving debate about the purpose of social studies. As a result, education has pursued a normalized understanding of citizenship through educational slogans (see also Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). The meaning of citizenship remains contingent on interpretation of these models and thus remains abstract and varied.

Contributing to the problem of ambiguous interpretations of citizenship in education is the pressure for schooling to respond to the fact that globalization is advancing a sense of competitiveness and survival of the fittest that could marginalize those unable to contend in the global arena. Therefore, while there is a sense of needing to reach out to others locally,
nationally, and globally, there is the added dimension of needing to compete.\(^1\) Ghosh and Abdi (2004) articulate this predicament:

> Since one cannot call a timeout in the course of the game of globalization, those who may be jeopardized by their difference from the mainstream in societies where they are minorities, must incessantly, it must be said, use one of the best weapons available, i.e., education, to move, as much as possible, to the relativized political-cultural and socio-economic center. (p. 143)

In this sense, despite the tensions acknowledged, schooling will play a significant role in mediating the globalization of difference:

> While education cannot serve as a ready panacea that solves all the livelihood hindrances that people’s differences might aggravate, it will, nevertheless, remain an important and primary forum that facilitates the critical and positive understanding of people’s differences as something that could be good for interpersonal and international understanding, and would make our world a better place. (Ghosh & Abdi, p. 162)

Schooling for citizenship is presented as an agenda with the potential for significant change and progress, particularly within the context of the global imperative (McCollum, 2002).

> Evidently, much is demanded of and expected from education in the current global moment. Schooling remains a main apparatus through which notions of citizenship are disseminated and governed, and demands on schooling are implicated in new pressures on citizenship. Guilherme (2002) identifies that the need for reflective and critical citizens holds consensus among theoreticians and documents on citizenship. She insists that the closer ties between nations and the growth of complex multicultural societies require the preparation of critical and committed citizens able to negotiate the intricate balance of respect for the universal with a legitimization of the particular and to establish “personal and professional relationships across cultures in the search for individual and collective improvement and empowerment, at different levels” (p. 1). The political, economic, and social contexts of future citizens will demand a notion of citizenship education that is both flexible and empowering. This flexibility is necessary for imagining a citizenship that is responsive to changing national and global imperatives and that attends to demands for the construction of non-linear narratives to describe multi-faceted global and national relationships (Singh, 2005).
Essential to an agenda for change through education is the inclusion of the voices of those who offer a first hand view of the myth of citizenship as a neutral category. A repositioning of any approach that claims to do “what is best” must take up the apparent disconnect between neutral assumptions about citizenship on the one hand and the diverse and dynamic experiences and desires of democratic populations on the other hand. It must involve a negotiation of diversity that resists reinscribing power inequities through assumptions of equality among “autonomous” agents and that interrogates the status quo preserved through modern, liberal notions of multiculturalism. Drawing on the Canadian context, Jones (2000) insists that visible minorities have important contributions to be made in this regard:

The argument in the communities of the “visible minorities” is that extant approaches to the articulation and management of educational policy have been constraining, not facilitating, the progress of multiculturalism….Like other voices in mainstream society, they are pressing for the re-invention of citizenship and citizenship education in Canada….This new brand of citizenship education, unlike a multicultural education for all, would need to offer a framework that is capable of bridging the gap between “we” and “they,” for, currently, there can be no assumption that negative social attitudes toward the concept of multiculturalism will not influence decisions surrounding deeper issues of about citizenship. (p. 116, see also Osler, 2002)

Indeed, many erroneous assumptions are made about minority youth who, according to Osler and Starkey’s (2003) study, are involved in a variety of political engagements. Instead of appreciating and engaging the significant insights of minority students, policy makers tend to further denigrate these youth by assuming that they require more teaching in citizenship than do majority students.

Li (2003) insists that power inequities be taken up without a simple reversal of perspectives. He lauds the contributions of postcolonial perspectives as a corrective to dominant liberal views but insists that educators avoid any romanticization or normalization of those perspectives: “It would be just as dangerous for them to become the new hegemony” (p. 70). He argues that educators should focus on demonstrating how hybridity, whether in the context of colonization or globalization, is not centered on reciprocal cultural relations but is engaged in dominant and subordinate interactions. Thus, simply legitimizing complex identities and acknowledging different views and lifestyles will not result in transformative education. Li
demands a citizenship education that is self-conscious and that goes beyond an appreciation of complexity, refusing the assumption that a mere encouragement of hybridity will shift power relations:

[I]t is a mistake to assume that cultural hybridization necessarily entails a radical departure from cultural assimilation in the colonial and postcolonial contexts. Without continuous efforts to demystify established institutions and without the kind of radical human reflectivity that entails auto-criticism, postcolonial cultural hybridization can be just as threatening as the cultural assimilation embraced by Western imperialism. (Li, pp. 70-71)

Yet, citizenship education in Western democracies has not been characterized by even an acceptance of let alone engagement with hybridization. Instead, it remains conservative and superficial. A recent study of citizenship education initiatives through an analysis of textbooks in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom by Davis and Issitt (2005) suggests that despite a rhetoric among policy-makers that seems to support a radical conception of citizenship education and that aims to engage in the challenges and complexities characteristic of the current historical moment, the textbooks reveal only shallow attention to citizenship education and thus present no real challenge to existing norms. Instead, the focus rests almost exclusively on the promotion of knowledge, understanding, and involvement for democratic purposes in the system as is, and although there appears to be a concern with the promotion of diversity and democracy, the interpretations are entirely positive and do not engage in real concerns around power imbalances. Notable in the study, the Canadian material is relatively more conservative. Sears and Hughes’s (1996) study of citizenship education across educational jurisdictions in Canada similarly found support for citizenship education that encourages a notion of activism, but they warn that in practice, this tendency is limited. Significantly, textbooks from all three countries focus entirely on national rather than global issues. In this context, a new form of education for citizenship is being called on that responds to a sense of a global imperative.

Global Citizenship Education: Negotiating Belonging and Diversity

Citizenship education must renegotiate a sense of belonging that re-imagines political community, encounters and engages diversity, and in exposing the symbolic level of citizenship, constructs citizenship as a site of struggle. As citizenship relies on a clear notion of identity that espouses a sense of belonging, it must negotiate a sense of group membership through various, overlapping, and socially contextualized individual and group
identities. These weighty demands frame a consideration of Global Citizenship Education (CGE) as an educational agenda for schooling for citizenship in a global era.

As is evident from international conferences and recent attention in anthologies and academic journals (e.g. Banks, 2004; Davies, 2006; Davies, Evans & Reid, 2005; Openshaw & White, 2005), the concept of GCE is emerging as alternative to nation-centric approaches to citizenship education. While there are divergent views within these discussions and between those writing for and about GCE, some themes appear to define it as an educational agenda (Pashby, 2006). GCE moves beyond an exclusively national perspective of world affairs, and seeks to avoid a social studies approach that may tend to tokenize and exoticize foreign places and peoples. As an ideal, it encourages students to adopt a critical understanding of globalization, to reflect on how they and their nation are implicated in local and global problems, and to engage in intercultural perspectives. It is significant to point out, however, that the bulk of the writings on GCE are from England, Australia, Canada, and the U.S. which begs the question, “How global is global citizenship education?” Yet, the move is significant as citizenship is taken as central to what is desired for a more socially just understanding of membership to local, regional, and global communities. A “global” approach to citizenship education appears to push for a more contemporary notion of citizenship education that promotes social justice and democratic principles in an increasingly interconnected world marked by multiple identities, loyalties, and political, cultural, and social allegiances. Discussions of GCE reflect a desire to construct a global orientation to citizenship that works to promote social justice in such a way as to incorporate the nation-state as a main site of political organization while also recognizing that the main tenets of citizenship – rights, duties, participation, and identity – are being evoked in new and multiple ways that are not limited to the spaces defined by the nation-state (Pashby, 2006).

Given that citizenship and globalization are both contested concepts, but also given that citizenship education remains tightly bound to a normative and persistent paradigm of democratic education, GCE merits serious consideration. Yet, this paper has raised some important questions for those of us desiring a more critical approach to citizenship education: Can a global orientation to citizenship as evoked in an agenda such as GCE promote an evolved theory of citizenship that accounts for the perception of increased global flows of capital, ideas, and peoples; accommodates the complex and multiple identities that influence how one belongs to a political community; and avoids re-inscribing power imbalances while striking a balance between universal commitments and the context specific
particularities so essential to the agency of the citizen? Or is GCE really a more critical version of global studies and not a new theory of citizenship? If so, what effect does such schooling have on how citizenship is understood within the global imperative? Can we separate basic theories of citizenship and the use of “global citizenship” as an educational agenda?

What is evident is that the literature on GCE endorses an approach to citizenship education that acknowledges the significance of and possibilities in the strong global connections that are currently evoking a sense of global citizenship through the popularity of such phrases as “citizens of the world” and “global consciousness.” In fact, as Davies (2006) insists, even if GCE is currently an ideal, “an abstract term can in theory be turned into a highly valuable and radical curriculum area” (p. 22). However, in supporting GCE, it is important to recognize the potential for struggle and unintended results. Banks (2004) reminds us that “citizenship education within any social and political context is likely to have complex and contradictory consequences that educators and decision makers are not always able to envision or predict” (p. 11). Indeed, globalization defines a particular problem space in which difficult and complex questions arise. Taking up a critical and self-reflective view of global issues will require an engagement with controversial contemporary issues arising from current geo-political dynamics such as terrorism, surveillance, religious intolerance, and illegal immigrants (Pashby, 2006). These questions begin to identify the points of tension and confusion inherent to discussions of diversity within the global imperative. Indeed, in arguing that global orientations to citizenship – as in an agenda for global citizenship education – result from and contribute to what is desired of citizenship in a global imperative, more questions arise than answers, and complexity, rather than certainty, prevails. However, as Apple, Kenway and Singh (2005) insist, the effort espouses hope, for “[a]n understanding of complexity does not mean paralysis” (p. 23).

Despite the tensions laid out in this paper, citizenship, as a concept, remains a desirable governing principle of democratic schooling. GCE represents an alternative approach to purely nation-centric versions of citizenship education; however, in persisting with the notion of “citizenship,” it is implicated in the historical difficulties the term represents. In this sense, it may not prove to be any more transformative than earlier versions of citizenship education. A central theme of this discussion has been the ways that citizenship serves to mask inequities, and I call on those theorizing GCE to be careful and cognizant of the ways a global orientation to citizenship education may, despite its intentions, reinforce a global hegemony and re-inscribe the problems inherent to citizenship. It remains to
Citizenship & Schooling

be seen whether or not GCE will meet the contemporary demands on citizenship so as to define what it means to “belong” in global context and encourage global responsibility within and across national boundaries. However, it appears that within the global imperative, “citizenship” continues to represent what is desired of schooling for social justice.

Endnotes

1 Openshaw & White (2005) lament that a “good citizen” has become one who “fits” into society and contributes to development for economic progress: “The ideal of democracy has been co-opted by the concept of capitalism as the “ideal” system. And capitalism now has even been replaced by the “ideal” of globalization. Globalization is the exporting (and importing) of capitalism as the political and economic system of the entire world. A “good citizen” is one that buys into the inevitable and works to facilitate its growth” (p. 9). Fitzsimons (2000) also complains that a citizen-as-consumer model is limited and problematic for democracy: “In terms of social justice, measures of consumption are a very limited notion of citizenship –especially for those in poverty, which is estimated to be about one-half of the world’s population. By and large, for them, such consumption is simply not attainable”. (p. 510)

References


The Impossibility of Global Citizenship

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Abstract

In this essay, I dispute the possibility of global citizenship, presently receiving support in activist circles (academic and otherwise) and educational communities. I attempt to dispel the celebratory conceptualization of citizenship as a status benevolently awarded by the state, and the state as a reasonable and moral partner in the exchange. Global citizenship is challenged on two fronts: as an impractical (and undesirable) scale of government, and through a critical exploration of the production of citizenship as a technology of governance by the state whose language of equality not only serves to include and empower, but also to exclude and justify such exclusion. Nonetheless, in support of those organizing to counter the negative effects of neoliberal globalization, I conclude that non-scalar thinking about governance, and a broader understanding of being political than is commonly captured by citizenship, offer strategic possibility for civil society.

Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both.

Frederick Douglass (1857/1985, p. 204)

…I want to strengthen our ability to block the privilege of citizenship to those with a criminal record. After all, British citizenship is a privilege, not a right.

Jacqui Smith, Home Secretary, United Kingdom (Government News Network, 2007)

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Introduction

In this essay, I dispute the possibility of “global citizenship,” and attempt to dispel the simplistic understandings of citizenship as a status benevolently awarded by the state, which I fear underpin the idea. This connotation of “citizenship” is prevalent in Western democratic societies, where the institution (along with democracy) is exalted as a privilege of political enlightenment. Citizenship in these societies is a cherished and coveted status: it means you are included and, significantly, equal. Citizenship provides the foundation for a democratic society, as it is the basis for fundamental political rights such as the vote. Holding or achieving this status carries the subtext of a reasonable and noble exchange: in return for behaving conscientiously, you are rewarded with rights and protections. Oaths of citizenship in Western states and other democracies (such as Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, India, and Singapore) speak of faithfulness and fulfillment of duties, such as the promise to observe the law: i.e. obligations of the citizen to the state. The state’s reciprocal commitment to the citizenry resides in its constitutional articulations of rights and liberties. Occasionally, the reciprocity of the arrangement surfaces plainly, as it did in Canada in 2006, for example, over the dual citizenship (Canadian/Lebanese) held by many residents of Lebanon. The then Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Monte Solberg observed, “If we’re in a situation where somebody’s absent, isn’t paying taxes but is going to be using our social programs down the road, I think Canadians would feel that that is unfair,” (CBC News, 2006). The rights and entitlements (measured here partly in terms of their financial cost) derived from citizenship have their cost, and yet the implication is clearly that the status merits the cost, that citizenship has a value which must be protected.

Citizenship thereby confers its positive connotation to the Western democratic state, and citizens in turn identify with the state and with the positive attributes they have created for it. It is through citizenship that residents (and, in some cases, non-residents) directly participate in the creation and recreation of the state, and adhere their own fate to that of the state. Indeed, as Faizullaev (2007) states, “State related legal identity is citizenship” and, as he emphasizes, this identification may occur “legally, morally, culturally, politically and psychologically;” he goes so far as to argue that citizens have a sense of having “interpersonal interactions” with the state (p. 549). In this relationship, the state commonly dissolves into a singular, holistic entity (and it shall be treated as such for the purpose of this argument, for it is the existence of a state apparatus that concerns us here, not the specifics of a government) and reduces to a monolithic, paternal figure, often personalized to express positive or negative attributes or feelings.
towards its citizenry and other states (Faizullaev, 2007; see Neumann, 2004 and Wendt, 2004 for a full debate as to whether the state literally is a person). In securing their borders and screening immigrants, states demonstrate themselves to be responsible actors in the protection of the privilege of citizenship.

The present enthusiasm for an idea of “global citizenship” in activist (academic and otherwise) and educational communities derives from this celebratory conceptualization of citizenship as a status, and the state as a reasonable and moral partner in the exchange—even as its promoters express reservations about the acts of individual governments. In legal and political-sociological scholarship there lies also an optimism that sovereignty (if not precisely citizenship) “can be stripped away from the idea of fixed borders and territories and thought of as, in principle, an attribute of basic cosmopolitan democratic law which can be drawn upon and enacted in diverse realms…” (Held, 2002, p. 32). Scholars such as Barbara Arneil (2007) argue that “the dual forces of economic globalization…and the rise of American empire” make global citizenship a “required” response (p. 302). For some, the idea is nothing short of exciting: “Globalism’s optimists suggest that rule of law may become unhinged from the nation and its sovereignty. (…) This potential is so breathtaking it is worth considering imaginatively and fostering through advocacy, even if its theoretical supports remain shaky” (Dauvergne, 2004, p. 615).

In all these cases, the hope is that barriers between nation-states might be transcended by a commitment to the higher cause of our common humanity, providing a “brighter side” to globalization, perhaps even the antidote to poisonous aspects of the global economy, as Arneil advocates. Global citizenship implies the harnessing of an enormous collective of human resources and good will. Fully embraced, global citizenship will surely put an end to war, poverty, racism, gender inequality, environmental degradation, the exploitation of children, HIV/AIDS, and any other scourge we might wish to extinguish.

The mission statement of CHANCE, a student organization at the University of Toronto that assembled a February 2007 conference, “Embracing Global Citizenship,” confirms these impressions, and reveals the ways in which students in particular have derived inspiration from this idea and played a strong role in its perpetuation. Its articulation is not unique, but strongly representative of a larger movement to which many individuals, organizations, and institutions subscribe, from NGOs such as Oxfam (Oxfam Education, 2007) to mega-corporations such as Microsoft (2007). The CHANCE statement reads, in part:
Global Citizenship

The mission and foundation of Chance is fostering global citizenship within youth and establishing the platform necessary to live and act beyond borders. With this idea, we have focused on several key issues that have defined our world beyond borders, and are pressing issues of our generation; issues of migration and immigration, sustainable development and the environment, nuclear war, poverty, HIV/AIDS among other health related issues, cultural consciousness and globalization. With a constantly changing world and the onset of globalization, which may, or may not be a beneficial entity, it is critical for students and youth to develop a sense of global responsibility and a global consciousness, and embrace the world that we all live in. As the future leaders of the new millennium, it is vital that we as students can understand the importance of global citizenship in order to effectively change the world we live in for a more peaceful and equitable world. (CHANCE, 2007)

Such goals and sentiments unquestionably inspire. Citizenship, however, is not a synonym for “consciousness” or “responsibility.” While I do believe in the potential enrichment and political advantage from the transnational organization of social movements, international political alliances, and an environmental consciousness that is not limited by national borders (in recognition that neither pollution, nor pollen, nor a black bear will stop for customs agents), it is misplaced and potentially counterproductive to advocate these positions under the banner of “global citizenship.” Global citizenship is an impossibility. There are two reasons: first (as others have argued), because citizenship functions as part of a formal political structure that is absent at the global level; second, because I remain skeptical about citizenship as an unambiguously emancipatory, empowering institution. I view citizenship instead as a technology of governance enacted by the state in which “citizens” (regardless of formal status) participate to varying degrees (Isin & Wood, 1999). As such, citizenship is an institution with as many pitfalls as windfalls. Citizenship may serve as a discursive device to assist in the creation of political space, but it may (just as easily, if not more so) serve to regulate and dis-empower the individual even as the state alleges to empower, liberate, and trust that same person.

In the paragraphs that follow, I elaborate on the reasons for which I believe global citizenship is an impossibility; nonetheless, I want to assert my clear and strong support for student-led and other initiatives that take our common humanity and collective responsibility as their premise of social and political organization. In a democratic society, civil society contains the
Potential for political engagement and activism through actions that reveal and make productive the state-citizen relationship, which in turn creates citizenship in practice. If “citizenship” is to be invoked in grass-roots organizations, it may be more logical to remove it entirely from scales of governance, and modify it as “cosmopolitan citizenship.” Such terminology would maintain the ground-up mindset and cosmopolitan ethic that frames the activism in the first place. Still more productive might be to use words such as “consciousness” or “activism;” the latter in particular would dissociate political action from corporate branding exercises that employ “global citizenship.” In any event, the essay closes on a more optimistic note, with some thoughts about the possibilities for achieving the stated goals of “global citizenship” through localized acts of citizenship which are real and transformative.

Globalities

It is commonplace by now to acknowledge that what we commonly call globalization is not a new and original phenomenon unique to the late 20th or early 21st century. There have been global networks of trade, global flows of people for hundreds and thousands of years. What is frequently raised to distinguish the present configuration (since about 1973) is that, due to particular technologies, we are able to move capital, people, and information at an exponentially faster rate and greater volume than previously. More significantly, however, we have achieved this mobility and flexibility via a set of structures and practices that have transformed labour markets, state tariff barriers, property rights, environmental regulations, intellectual property and so on (McCarthy & Prudham, 2004; Peck, 1996, 2001; Sonnenfeld & Mol, 2002). This set of restructuring practices is what constitutes neo-liberalism, and it properly distinguishes the character of today’s “global economy” from other global economies at earlier points in history.

This social, cultural, economic, and political restructuring has been actively facilitated by individual states, by corporations, and by associations such as the IMF, the WTO, and the World Bank. While states send political representatives to these latter institutions, they are not formal political structures. None of them act in a democratic, representative fashion. Some have argued that the nation-state has consequently been “hollowed out” (Jessop, 1994), but these organizations have not replaced the nation-state. Not only do the usual political lines of national borders remain on the maps, but the state has not absented itself from or in this process. Quite to the contrary, the state has been deeply embedded in these negotiations and has actively facilitated the consequent reconfigurations.
Global Citizenship

Due to the state’s participation (we might say complicity), neoliberalism has commodified and otherwise eroded the rights of its citizens (Falk, 2000). Reduced oversight and regulation on the part of the state through the neoliberal transformations noted above have shifted the responsibility for safety and well-being to corporations (to behave conscientiously) and to civil society (for individuals to inform and take care of themselves). If the state does not monitor or even regulate, for example, the environmental safety of industrial emissions, then the individual business becomes socially (not necessarily legally) responsible for such monitoring and residents must take it upon themselves to become aware of the potential dangers in their area. Commonly, the community lacks the knowledge, access, and time to conduct their own research at the same standards achievable by the state or the industry (see Walcott, 2003 for details of the challenges and frustrations).

Despite such difficulties, hope for a “global citizenship” to counter the nation-state’s withdrawal from protection of its citizens comes from the realization that the pathways of infrastructure through which capital, people, and information flow for the purposes of capitalist accumulation also create spaces of possibility for movement for other purposes. As Jelin (2000) notes, “An increasingly dense web of worldwide exchanges, facilitated by Internet and other means of communication, results in the realization that governments do not have a monopoly on information flows” (p. 51). Protesters can use the internet to organize massive gatherings; refugees can take advantage of trans-oceanic flights; celebrity activists can harness the mass media to raise awareness and funds to fight poverty and disease; and so on. These connections, roads to freedom, and popular mobilizations are real. They truly connect, engage, and even liberate people. The technological infrastructure that spans the globe offers the possibility of a global mobilization of ordinary people, resistance on a massive scale.

Despite the optimism we may derive from civil society’s use of this global infrastructure, if it remains in place for those resisting the neoliberal status quo, then that infrastructure will remain in place for those who created it and maintain it in the first instance. It will continue to serve capital and the neoliberal state. Furthermore, the political and financial infrastructure that constructs and governs, for example, the internet retains the ability to exert its authority to exclude what it deems undesirable. The anarchistic democracy of cyberspace continues to be tied to the hardware reality of servers governed by something other than democracy. Examples of intervention and control are numerous, such as China’s screening of internet access (and Google’s collusion), and Russia’s successful pressure on the Lithuanian, Finnish, and Swedish governments to shut down Chechen websites hosted on private servers in their countries.
There is no global political organization that can represent, advocate for, and protect the rights of its so-called citizens. Rights are politically contingent and need to be backed by a state (Janoski, 1998). As Isin and Turner (2007) have recently written:

A citizen exists originally within the political confines of a state, and until a genuinely global state exists that has sovereign powers to impose its will, it is misleading to talk about the “global citizen.”…Citizenship does extend beyond the state but through institutions that cannot be captured by the concept “global citizen.” (p. 14)

Possibilities for citizenship “beyond the state” here do not refer to citizenship “above the state” but rather to conceptualizations removed from such “scalar thought” (Isin, 2007, p. 211). We shall return to this idea in the conclusion. Here, it is important to note that there are hard political realities to face (Halliday, 2000): even international law and the United Nations are designed, operated, and funded by nation-states. Global political organizations with any sovereignty or powers of enforcement do not and can not fully transcend that political order of the nation-state nor divorce themselves from it; if they do, they cease to function. No state elects to put itself out of business. States only yield to an international body when they are compelled to do so – in which case, they still act in their best interests. The gains in international acceptance and support outweigh the domestic gains in resisting and ignoring international judgment. Acting in its own best political interests, to secure its greatest chance to survive and thrive, is what the state always seeks to do (Krasner, 1999, makes a similar, but more Machiavellian, argument about individual rulers rather than states). To place our faith in such institutions as the UN or the World Court suggests these political institutions could negotiate successfully with the global economic organizations that have successfully territorialized much of the world. While international civil society has successfully assisted in the redistribution of wealth and struggles for justice, there is no basis for believing that a global government would defend the marginalized and dispossessed more effectively than existing states—especially those elected by their citizens—presently do. Moreover, the argument implicitly states that the problem (the ills wrought by neoliberal globalization) is principally one of scale, and that it can successfully be attacked by matching that scale; as Muetzelfeldt and Smith (2002) have noted, however, institutions of global governance may frustrate or facilitate civil society action, just like states.

The leverage of a state’s sense of obligation and desire for legitimacy is the most secure weapon activists wield. Even in transnational activism, possessing citizenship is not essential. Michael Peter Smith’s (2001) work
Global Citizenship

confirms that transnational networks may be profitably mobilized and further
documents that official citizenship or even legal status is not necessarily a
prerequisite for successful outcomes of protest. This citizen-state relationship
emerges from the existence of democracy and the related principle of
accountability, rather than the actual institution. This appears to counter
Arneil (2007) and others who argue for the urgency of a parallel form of
governance and status in order to contend with the neoliberal global
economy.

The temptation to raise the question of the possibility of global
citizenship from below – citizens “jumping over” the nation-state to function
as a kind of United Nations or united humanity – appears understandable. The
desire for global citizenship itself implies that the cumulative series of national
citizenships fails to get the job done. What job needs to be done? On the
surface, this is easily answered: clearly the goals set out by CHANCE are what
need to be done. The search for global citizenship is motivated, at least in part,
by a legitimate frustration with the nation-state’s apparent inability or
unwillingness to act, and/or a sense that the state has become inaccessible to
those pushing for change.

This impetus for global citizenship, then, in some ways mirrors
multinational corporations’ parallel “jumping over” national governments and
markets to access raw materials, labour pools, and consumers around the
world. Activists believe that a similar global mobilization of “citizens” will
increase their leverage. Certainly, when a massive scale of protest achieves
increased media coverage, which in turn increases the embarrassment factor
that is often key to bringing about change, this may be interpreted as
increased leverage (Jelin, 2000). Leverage, however, does not constitute
citizenship. Unelected, even non-political, organizations can and do respond
to public protest, but only in an ad-hoc fashion; corporations in particular are
unable to do otherwise (see Bakan, 2004, for an elaboration of the
corporation’s singular and psychopathic accountability to its shareholders,
i.e. profit). Citizenship is rooted in the establishment of rights and
responsibilities—and mechanisms to enforce them—that would transcend
individual negotiations. Citizenship allocates a space for a political process
that legitimately involves the citizen; state responses to protests against
meetings of global organizations such as the WTO strongly contest the
legitimacy of citizen public action (Wainwright, Prudham, & Glassman, 2000).

Technologies of Governance

One of my favourite academic pastimes is to wonder why we have
certain rights in our Constitution (specifically the Canadian Charter of Rights
and Freedoms, but this game can be played with any country’s
institutionalization of rights), but not others. I ask students, for example, why do we have the right to freely and independently contract our labour, but not the right to shelter? Why do we have the right to express ourselves freely, but not the right to eat? Why do have the right to vote, but not the right to camp in public? At heart lies the question of the purpose of the creation of rights, and the ways in which populations are governed by them, as much as they may be liberated or empowered. Another of my favourite pedagogical exercises is related to the first, but is more cynically rhetorical: to question the reasons for silence and exclusion in the history of the creation of citizenship rights. Do you suppose that when the state allocated the right to vote only to men, or only to Whites, or only to property owners, that it was an accident or oversight? Do you think, for example, that they meant to include women, but just forgot? Is it possible that no one, even those excluded, understood that they were being excluded and appreciated the significance of such exclusion? Students’ first response to such questions is sometimes confusion and even annoyance, until they realize the significance of the intentionality of the state’s privileging or exclusion.

These are more than annoying little questions. These kinds of questions comprise entry-points into a critical historical unpacking of the development of citizenship, capitalism, and the nation-state that should radicalize our understanding of how citizenship functions as an institution, and what it means to be political and act politically. There is and has always has been a strategic purposefulness in the state’s decisions to provide specific rights, and in their allocation or application to specific populations. A common defense offered by my students and others of historical discrimination is that earlier times were less enlightened; however, there has always been consciousness of and resistance to exclusion and discrimination.

Nearly 60 years ago, the sociologist T.H. Marshall (1950) wrote *Citizenship and Social Class*. In this work, he traced a historical relationship between the development of different types of citizenship rights (such as civil, political, and social) and the development of capitalism. The kinds of rights we hold today in Western democracies did not emerge all in one moment; for the most part, rights were extended to citizens as it best served capital and/or the needs of the state. Education, for example, became a social right when capital needed a literate, skilled workforce. Various populations got the vote when the state needed their allegiance: so men got the vote before women because the state needed the support of men (for things like military service), but did not need (or did not think it needed) similarly to purchase the support of women. When women protested loudly enough and became a public disruption, thereby challenging the state’s capacity to govern and keep order—and before and since, Blacks, gays, workers, and so on, have done the same
thing— only then did the state extend rights to populations it had previously excluded. This point is not to suggest public protest immediately guarantees change (and is not an attempt to oversimplify any of the above rights struggles), but rather endorses Giorgio Agamben’s contention that “the voluntary creation of a permanent sense of emergency…has become one of the essential practices of contemporary states”(2005 p. 2). The state excludes portions of the population as a normal course, and often must be strongly and noisily challenged to do otherwise.

The radical qualities of Marshall’s work have been frequently overlooked. His chronological order of the emergence of rights should not indicate a Whiggish theory of progress, but lay bare a strategic relationship between capital and the state, and the potential for subsequent strategic activism on the part of citizens. This type of analysis has been taken further by Janoski (1998), whose comparative work on different countries as examples of different forms of democracies has precisely documented the historical contingency of the development of citizenship rights.

Our various founding fathers did not accidentally argue for the rights they did. They chose them – but not due to the inherent, rational superiority of a given political philosophy, but because they were (often personally) well-served by the rights and freedoms for which they advocated (see Krasner, 1999). As Catherine Mackinnon (1991) has argued, what is deemed to be “rational” is that which justifies and legitimates the status quo. Citizenship as an institution became a way of empowering some people directly at the expense of others. History is replete with examples of legalized privilege and the consequent production of inequality and conflict (one of the more (in)famous examples is the creation and governance of the “difference” of Tutsis and Hutus in present-day Rwanda via the privileging of one group over the other by colonial and post-independence governments; Prunier, 1995). Indeed, it is through such differentiated allocations that difference itself is produced, made meaningful, and sustained. Establishing certain rights for certain individuals and communities thus was (and remains) a technology of governing both the excluded and the included. A discursive discipline hinged on the morality of the “good citizen” (justifying the privileged group) created models of citizenship often impossible to achieve (e.g. maleness, whiteness; see Fanon, 1967). This process entrenches the idea that citizenship is a reward that is earned through good behaviour (see White, 2006), and continues to be reinforced through requirements for naturalization such as the United Kingdom’s “good character” condition (Home Office, 2007).

Much good work in citizenship studies focuses on the contradictions between what the state does and the values it alleges to hold, as set out in such documents as the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Why did Chinese and
White residents of British Columbia have different rights? Why have gays and lesbians been prevented from adopting children? Again and again, scholars detail the ways in which various communities, such as Natives, Muslims, persons with disabilities, gays and lesbians, have been and continue to be treated less than equally despite our stated moral and legal commitment to do so (Backhouse, 1999; Frazee, 2002; Harring 1998; Lister, 2003). Even Canada’s relative success with multiculturalism should not prevent a clear critique of the intolerance and racism exercised by the state, past and present. Throughout its history, the Canadian state has openly ranked and even barred immigrants based on their racial/ethnic origins and their religious faiths (Backhouse, 1999; Wood, 2002; Wood & Gilbert, 2005). Underpinning many of these works is the often-unspoken faith that these inequalities are anomalies. I am arguing that they are instead the norm, and that they are often enacted through the very institution that purports to prevent them.

Many have pointed out the ways in which Canada’s self-identification as a caring, humanitarian, and multicultural nation clashes with its treatment of migrant workers, refugees, and persons without status (Basok, 2002; Mountz, 2003). Like other Western states with more aggressively imperialist foreign policies, Canada creates what Agamben (2005) identified as spaces and “states of exception” for its refugee populations, as it did for First Nations; both were and are excluded in practice by the terms of their inclusion. Classified as non-citizens and “irregular” migrants, refugees can “legitimately” be denied the full protection of the state (Isin & Rygjel, 2006; Pratt, 2005). Lack of formal status is invoked even when it is clear that individuals “belong” nowhere else, that Canada is all they know; Canada’s refugee and immigration policies include the deportation of those who have lived all but a few months of their lives in Canada. Unlike the United States, Canada even deports minor children who are citizens when their non-citizen parents are deported.

We may critically observe that in the examples of immigrants and refugees, these are not citizens. But notice: historically, there has been little-to-no difference between the treatment by the state of official citizens and those without any legal status. Legal status has not, historically, insulated groups from racist or sexist policies of their governments. The state does not base its treatment on the possession of formal citizenship. We must recognize the actions of the state as intentional and strategic: it does not do what, on moral or even legal grounds, it “must” or “is supposed” to do; it does what it deems necessary.

If we think critically about the role of the state in a capitalist society, we can see that it serves to mitigate as well as justify but, in either event, hide the inequality produced by the capitalist system. Indeed, I would argue it is the institution of citizenship itself, with its overt promises of equality, which is
used not to provide equality but to hide massive inequality. In the very act of providing rights, the state actively dis-empowers its citizens. The institution of citizenship creates a vocabulary of democracy and equality for the state to employ in legitimating its government. “Citizenship” declares everyone equal; “democracy” ensures inclusion; the material deprivations brought about by capitalism appear, at best, solvable, and at worst, natural or invisible. But if the state declares everyone is equal before it, then inequality, the logic runs, cannot be the fault of the state, nor its responsibility. Even as the state privileges one group over another, its language of the equality of citizens naturalizes the hierarchy and justifies exclusion.

The most common discourse of citizenship by advocates of “global citizenship” is that of “human rights” – ideas and ideals of natural, universal, fundamental, or transcendent entitlements. Such rhetoric can be very effective as affect, but substantively, it is more an abstract distraction or a decorative mask than a tool in the actual battle for rights. Rights are specifically, contingently, politically and actively produced; they are negotiated in specific historical and geographical contexts and circumstances. They are, therefore, the antithesis of politics mobilized by ideas of inherent and universal “human rights.” The universalist language of human rights implies a process of moral enlightenment of states: lawmakers “merely” need to adopt these specific protections. A particular law will not provide justice on its own: “[c]itizenship is always in the process of construction and transformation” (Jelin, 2000, p. 53; Isin & Wood, 1999). The fuel to sustain that fire is voice: to act as a citizen, demanding to participate in the decisions that affect you. While I recognize the vote is a voice and do not underestimate the importance of the achievement of suffrage where it had been denied, I grow increasingly concerned at the manipulation of that “right” through the rhetoric that accuses people of apathy if they do not vote, or suggests that if they fail to vote, they lose the right to complain. This discourse suggests there exists a singular time and place for the struggle for social justice, and that it is the ballot box on voting day, full stop. As we consider manifestations of “voice,” I recommend, as Habermas (2001) has elaborated, we move well beyond vote in our understanding and practice of democracy and citizenship.

Conclusion: Civil Society and Citizenship

The state is not benevolent. The state is the state (as sportscasters like to say, “It is what it is”). It does not have a morality. Anthropological approaches to the individual components and actors within the state may serve to show us its humanity, its diversity, its lack of uniformity, but still, the state is going to act in the interests of its own self-preservation and authority to govern. If it did otherwise, it would cease—by definition—to be the state.
State policies have different impacts on the societies they purport to govern, and these may be assessed as positive or negative, moral, or immoral. The institution of citizenship does not protect residents from unjust treatment by their governments. States have enacted very violent policies against their own citizens; my point here is not to excuse or minimize such instances, but to argue for a continuum (rather than a stark distinction) among such actions and those that are apparently less violent. Thinking in terms of a continuum should eliminate descriptions of “good” and “bad” states who “like” or “dislike” their citizens (see Faizullaev, 2007). Regardless of the manner in which a state acts, it is acting towards its self-preservation. Thus, even its most apparently benevolent acts, such as the allocation of rights and privileges, are as strategic as its most violent.

Citizenship is not a gift of the state; at most, the state constitutes only half of the equation in the production of rights. To be a citizen is not to be “good”; it is to be political, to make claims to rights and space (Isin, 2002). In turn, then, I would prefer to emphasize the role of civil society in the process of challenging inequality and struggling for social justice as another form (or, more accurately, the other side of the state’s conception) of citizenship (Edwards, 2004), in which the state exists as the tool with which civil society acts. I suggest we focus on the ways in which we may act politically, socially, and economically that are removed from the state’s direction: the “citizenship beyond the state” mentioned earlier (Isin, 2007). There are two ways in which this happens: the first disregards the state to the point of ignoring it; the second directly engages and employs it.

Often in direct response to a sense of the absence or recent retraction of the state from social services, we find individuals, communities, and non-governmental agencies stepping into the vacuum to organize and serve the needy. The impact of these actions must be fully acknowledged for the enormous contribution they make. The value of volunteer work to public education, the provision of food, gifts, emotional support of religious institutions (not only for their constituencies, but the society-at-large) and so on, has repeatedly been calculated as equal to contributions of the state. Studies of collective efficacy—the ability of communities to care for themselves, especially to reduce harm (see, for example, Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997)—similarly demonstrate the significance of social organization and regulation.

The second role played by civil society may be found in the demands of the state made by individuals and groups. Recognizing the actual process of producing rights, the relationships and struggles involved, is key to moving away from a perspective of rights as a privilege determined by and in the custody of the state. The state should instead be invoked as an
Global Citizenship

instrument of moral authority with powers of enforcement to execute the wishes of the citizens. Such mentalities and commitment lie at the heart of many communities and organizations advocating for “global citizenship.” While I am not trying to argue for an over-simplified and allegedly unified force, nor a “global civil society,” a phrase for which John Keane (2003) urges a similar caution, I do assert the critical role of citizens in the production of their own governance – and I would argue further that it is in that enacting of that political participation that citizenship is practiced, regardless of formal status. While recruitment and the sharing of information on a global scale may contribute to activists’ success, governance or “citizenship” at the global level is neither essential nor critically sound. “Cosmopolitan citizenship” or “global activism” might better capture the essence of the goals and purposes of those seeking to challenge neoliberal globalization and neo-imperialism.

Voting, carrying a passport – these are the so-called “rights” of citizens, often policed discursively into moralized forms of behaviour instead of political engagement that could be disruptive and transformative. The state’s harsh response to massive public protest, noted above, reveals how grounded and territorial the struggle for rights remains. As Michael Schudson (1999) has written, “[A public sphere] is the playing field for citizenship; democratic citizenship may bear fruit in the formal act of voting or legislating, but it germinates in the soil of a free public life” (p. 12). Collective action, claiming public space – these are the acts of civilized, politicized people (Edwards, 2004). Their acts constitute citizenship if they address the state and demand rights that may be institutionalized beyond the immediate negotiation of the protest, or if they otherwise create a recognized legitimate space for subjects to participate in the decisions that affect them. Their acts, however small, should never be taken lightly: they could bring about an enduring, fundamental restructuring of the neoliberal order of things, locally and globally, and there is little chance anything else will.

References


P. B. Wood


Citizenship Education in Global Context

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Abstract

Citing the need to choose a broader vision than that provided by the plethora of citizenship education models currently in circulation, Pike challenges the fundament of GCE with a view to exposing some tensions and difficulties inherent in its implementation within schools. Following an exploration of six such tensions and difficulties, many of which are central to GCE, Pike suggests possible dimensions of an ethos of global citizenship – a set of moral principles and codes of conduct – that is global in scope all the while recognizing that citizenship will continue, for the foreseeable future, to be national in practice.

The idea that citizenship education should be conceptualized within a global context has been pursued, in many different ways, for more than half a century. In the UK, the League of Nations Union, the Council for Education in World Citizenship, and the Parliamentary Group for World Government all vigorously promoted the concept at various times during the twentieth century (Heater, 1984). From the 1960s, the development education, global education and world studies movements made significant contributions, especially in teacher education and curriculum development, in several countries, including Canada. Funding from the Canadian International Development Agency, which established global education projects in eight out of ten provinces between 1987 and 1995, fomented a groundswell of interest among teachers which, though lacking co-ordination and leadership, has served to lay the foundation for a renewed interest in global citizenship education (Mundy, 2007). It is not the goal of this paper to reiterate the already well documented arguments for global citizenship education; rather, my desire is to stimulate further debate by examining some problems that global citizenship education has encountered in the past, or may face today, and to suggest some possible ways forward. The time is right for such

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discussiuon: the progress – and the setbacks – experienced by development and global educators over the past thirty years can be effectively exploited by those interested in choosing a broader vision from among the plethora of citizenship education models that are currently in circulation. However, it is worth trying to understand the difficulties inherent in that vision so as to develop more effective strategies for the future.

In the current debates on the nature and purpose of citizenship education, a range of broader visions of citizenship have been proposed by educators from several countries. Among these are Heater’s concept of the “multiple citizen” (Heater, 1990); Selby’s description of “plural and parallel citizenship” (Selby, 2000); and Hébert’s construction of “a new flexible citizenship” (Hébert, 1997). From the field of multicultural education, Lynch (1992) suggests that “education for active global democracy” is the real challenge for educators; and Banks (2001) depicts “globalism and global competency” as the sixth and ultimate stage in individuals’ development of cultural identity. From a peace education perspective comes Boulding’s idea of “building a global civic culture” (Boulding, 1988). Dower (2003) provides a thoughtful articulation of the concept of global citizenship from a philosophical standpoint and Noddings (2005) expands her notion of “caring” to include peace, social justice, and environmental protection at the global level. Two relatively full, research-based models of global citizenship education are described by Griffith (1998) and by Cogan and Derricott (1998), who prefer the term “multidimensional citizenship.” Non-governmental organizations, including Oxfam UK (2006), the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (1996), and the Bahá’í International Community (1993), have also published their visions of global citizenship. It is not my intention here to explore the merits of these various conceptions, merely to note that ideas for global citizenship education abound and are derived from various educational standpoints.

The Problematic Concept of Global Citizenship

A fundamental principle of global citizenship models is that an individual’s awareness, loyalty, and allegiance can and should extend beyond the borders of a nation to encompass the whole of humankind, an idea variously termed “post-nationalist consciousness” (Ignatieff, 1993) or “the cosmopolitan ideal” (Kingwell, 2000), or the development of a “global moral community” (Dower, 2003). This is the bedrock upon which other dimensions of global citizenship, such as rights, responsibilities and active participation, are built. It is frequently argued that such consciousness is no more than due acknowledgment of the realities that link all humans in an interlocking network of global systems. As Giddens (cited in Griffith, 1998, p. 37) puts it, “the level
of time-space distanciation introduced by high modernity is so extensive that, for the first time in human history, ‘self’ and ‘society’ are interrelated in a global milieu.” It is a principle that underlies much of my own, and others’, work in global education and upon which associated curriculum and school reforms have been founded. My goal here is to critique this fundament of global citizenship, not in terms of its theoretical merit or even its desirability, but with a view to exposing some tensions and difficulties inherent in its implementation within schools. These challenges will be summarized under six headings.

1. Citizenship is tied to nationhood

As many writers have noted, the idea of citizenship being defined “by birthplace and bloodline” is as old as the concept of citizenship itself and certainly pre-dates nationhood. As nations were defined, and re-defined, over the past few centuries, citizenship and nationhood have become inextricably linked and the history of citizenship has become a never-ending struggle within nations to determine just who should, and should not, claim the right to be called a citizen. It is a process that was born out of an exclusionary mindset and, to varying degrees, remains so today (Kingwell, 2000). The multiple impacts of globalization, however, have begun to seriously challenge the logic of citizenship’s fixed association with nationhood in two fundamental ways: firstly, the increasing influence of supra-national bodies, including inter-governmental alliances and transnational corporations, has forced citizens to consider “the inconsequence and impotence of national sovereignties” (Ignatieff, 1984, p. 29) in determining their own fate; secondly, cross-border migration continues to transform many societies into complex pools of multiple ethnicities and nationalities, including many people with legitimate claims to more than one citizenship and yet many more who are denied access to the rights and privileges of a single citizenship.

As significant as the challenge to its hold on citizenship may be, the nation’s grasp remains firm. It is the nation that confers a citizen’s legal identity and instills, in so many ways, a sense of belonging. The process of schooling is a powerful force in this regard. Public education, through its choice of curriculum and its affirmation of cultural norms, has long been a purveyor of national values and ideals, a perpetuator of the national status quo rather than an agent of social change (Green, 1990). The traditional tenets of nationalism abound in schools today, from the deliberate focus on national history, geography, and culture (often to the exclusion of minority groups) in various curricula to the more opaque – but nonetheless powerful – influence of everyday life in the classroom that fails to recognize the connectedness of individuals to global systems. The fact that historical wars represent the world
issue most frequently addressed in school suggests that students’ preparation for contemporary global realities is hardly adequate (War Child Canada, 2006). If schools are to promote global citizenship as an ideal, the nationalist grip on schooling has to be loosened.

2. *Globalization does not nurture global citizenship*

   The current forces of globalization are mounting the most robust challenge ever to the nation’s hold on education (O’Sullivan, 1999). The needs of the global marketplace are profoundly influencing decisions over funding, curriculum, and teacher education, with a view to producing graduates who can compete in the global economy. The language of contemporary educational debate is telling: entrepreneurial skills are paramount, learning is defined by outcomes that are measurable, and a school’s worth is judged by the quantifiable performance of its students as measured in international comparisons of achievement. Some of the global market’s influences are unashamedly direct, such as the creeping privatization of public education through corporate involvement in educational decision making and schools’ sponsorship deals with transnational corporations (Barlow & Robertson, 1994). The ultimate products of such an educational process, suggests O’Sullivan (1999), are not citizens but consumers. Ironically, globalization, propelled by the relentless pursuit of economic growth, would seem to be working against the higher ideals of global citizenship.

   As Saul (1995) has pointed out, corporate success in the global marketplace depends upon individuals’ desire for inner comfort, for the satisfaction of desires through the consumption of goods and services. In affluent societies, consumerism has become a means by which we search for answers to a fundamental need, a sense of identity and belonging (O’Sullivan, 1999) – a need that lies at the very heart of citizenship. But, suggests Kingwell (2000), acquisition per se does not appear to lead to satisfaction and happiness:

   We are, finally, happier not with more stuff but with more meaning: more creative leisure time, stronger connections to groups of friends, deeper commitment to common social projects, and a greater opportunity to reflect. In short, the life of the well-rounded person, including crucially the orienting aspect of life associated with virtuous citizenship (p. 218).

   Virtuous citizenship, and the establishment of the “global moral community” (Dower, 2003), seem unlikely to be fuelled by the juggernaut of economic globalization, driven by the principles of profit, competition, and efficiency. As Osborne (1996) notes, the claims of citizenship – whether national or global in orientation – will largely be ignored while schooling is oriented to the imperatives of the global economy.
3. We don’t “think globally”

The maxim “think globally, act locally” resonates meaningfully among global citizenship advocates, combining in one pithy phrase the twin ideals at the root of their cause. Both, however, are problematic. More than two hundred years of intellectual and social development based on the mechanistic thinking of the rational-industrial world view have left their mark on our ability to conceptualize whole systems, to understand the big picture, to think globally. Our “loss of the cosmological sense”, suggests O’Sullivan (1999), is at the root of many global crises we face, notably our inability to live sustainably within the limits of the planet’s resources. The conceptual dimension of humankind, argues Head (1994), lags many decades behind evolution in the spatial and temporal dimensions, resulting in a “mental insularity” that blinds us to the global connections that are an integral feature of our contemporary lives. Increased connectedness, suggests Homer-Dixon (2003), has not resulted in greater understanding by those in the rich world of the everyday realities lived out by the poor majority: “Never before have we been so connected together on this planet and never before have we been so far apart in our realities” (p.15). More cynically, Kingwell (2000) contends that the forces of economic globalization demand that we remain disconnected, lest we should understand the less wholesome practices of the global labour market and decide to reduce our consumer spending. Global thinking is not in the interests of the global market.

The mechanistic world view pervades our school systems, thereby perpetuating difficulties in global thinking for at least another generation. The compartmentalization of knowledge into rigid disciplines, the favouring of analytical over synthetic or relational thinking skills, the dearth of global and holistic perspectives in practically every area of the curriculum, an obsession with the “hard” sciences and concurrent suspicion of the “soft” – and more integrative – arts; such priorities within education reflect our collective inability – and, perhaps, our lack of will – to think globally. My own research among global education practitioners suggests that even they find it difficult to release themselves from the shackles of world views which perceive nations and cultures as separate and distinct. Global education itself is imbued with mechanistic thinking (Pike, 2000). Until the dominant paradigm of schooling shifts towards more holistic visions, thinking globally – in its fullest sense – will remain an ideal. Perhaps the intuitive global connectedness of today’s youth, who shift loyalties easily from local to global and for whom technology has dissolved the former boundaries of their social networks, will mount a serious challenge to this paradigm. For the time being, however, schools appear to view such global connectedness more with suspicion and alarm than with encouragement.
4. We are less inclined to “act locally”

The current interest in citizenship education in Western democracies would seem to stem, in part at least, from a concern over declining rates of participation in civil society, especially in the formal democratic process. Voter turnout at significant elections is falling; disenfranchisement – actual and perceived – among minority groups is rising; cynicism towards the political process and apathy among young people are widely reported. “I cannot recall a time,” wrote Rollo May in 1972 (cited in Murphy, 1999, p. 13), “... when there was so much talk about the individual’s capacities and potentialities and so little actual confidence on the part of the individual about his power to make a difference psychologically and politically.” More than thirty years later, the phenomenon which May describes as “a paralysis of will” would seem to have intensified in established democratic societies, despite the significant victories by peoples’ movements over totalitarian regimes in other parts of the world. Canadian youth may be increasingly worldminded but their frustration with their perceived lack of power to influence decision makers is also growing (O’Neill, 2004).

In the absence of any instruments of world government (which do not feature in most models of global citizenship), active participation at a local level is of paramount importance. National citizenship continues, albeit imperfectly, despite citizens lack of engagement, because the necessary civil and political structures are in place. Global citizenship is virtual; its essence depends upon the collective participation of citizens worldwide to give substance to an otherwise unrealizable ideal. The notion of “conspiracy” (Ferguson, 1982; Murphy, 1999) – the “breathing together” of separate groups with common visions in multiple localities – has been used to describe the character of participation required for global citizenship to thrive. But active civic participation requires the development and practice of a range of skills, especially if it is to extend beyond the superficial activities, such as fundraising for global causes that appear to be predominant in Canadian schools (Mundy, 2007). As Hart (1992) has noted, schools’ attempts at encouraging active participation among students, and thereby refining the necessary skills of global citizenship, are often more tokenistic than meaningful.

5. Post-nationalism is a luxury of the prosperous and secure

Advocates of global citizenship, principally from Western industrialized countries with a recent history of prosperity and security, would do well to remind themselves that their nation’s stability is built upon a legacy of nationalism. The cosmopolitan ideal is the privilege of those who no longer
have to fight for their national identity (Ignatieff, 1993). We should also remember, with humility, that even within our well-ordered and seemingly inclusive nation states, regionalist and separatist passions frequently surface to challenge the model of citizenship that we have constructed. Racial conflict, violence against women, and persistent poverty are, in a different way, reminders that the benefits of national citizenship are not equally shared and still have to be fought for by some of our fellow citizens.

Tussles between nationalism and globalism are occurring in many education systems: Tye’s (1999) survey of global education in 52 countries points to the persistence of nationalism as a major barrier to the spread of global education in many parts of the world. Global education initiatives in the Middle East would appear to have accommodated such tensions by incorporating nationalist and pan-Arab regionalist perspectives into global education classroom materials (Pike & Selby, 1999). Merryfield’s (2001) solution to the dilemma is to argue for a reconceptualization of global education with a view to examining the assumptions underlying the earlier, Eurocentric and Cold War frameworks and illuminating the world views of the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized. Only when we have examined “the pedagogy of imperialism,” she contends, will global education become truly global. Such challenges to prevailing visions of global education serve to highlight the elitism that can easily suffuse the rhetoric of global citizenship education: for the countless millions of people worldwide who daily struggle for survival and the satisfaction of basic human rights, or for recognition of their cultural identity, global citizenship is not even on the agenda.

6. Citizenship is an anthropocentric ideal

The concept of civic culture originated in the need to accommodate the disparate needs and customs of diverse groups as they congregated in self-governing cities and then, over time, as these urban communities coalesced into national societies and empires (Boulding, 1988). Citizenship has its roots in urbanism. Throughout its history, the ideal of citizenship has had little to say about the conduct of humans in relation to other species, nor about the natural world in general. This anthropocentrism was heightened during the period of modernization as nature came to be regarded as a stock of abundant resources to be used in the great manufacturing centres in order to create goods for human consumption. Citizenship was about the right to enjoy the fruits of industrial societies, not about individuals’ responsibilities towards the planet. Up to the present point in human history, the ideal of citizenship has been able to remain aloof from concerns about the natural environment, but it can be divorced no longer. Our “collective ecological blindness” (Wackernagel & Rees, 1996) has resulted in unsustainable patterns
of living that are already wreaking havoc on ecological systems worldwide. Though urbanization continues to spread around the planet, no longer can citizens feel secure in their urban environments from the perils of climate change, deforestation, pollution, and loss of species. In fact, urbanization goes hand in hand with economic growth and the development of societies that are placing greater demands on the earth’s resources.

Quite naturally, citizenship education has traditionally reflected this anthropocentric stance; the dimension of environmental citizenship remains largely unexplored. Global education, too, has been critiqued from a biocentric perspective (Selby, 2000), based on the argument that interpretations of concepts such as interdependence are still infused with mechanistic rather than holistic thinking. Thus, nations and cultures – though regarded as dependent on each other – are not viewed as part of the entire biotic community. In focusing on global citizenship, we have the opportunity to open up the citizenship debate, to argue that the rights and responsibilities of citizens should be conceptualized within the context of the interdependent relationship of human beings and their environments. To fail in this task will be to seriously limit the freedoms and choices of future citizens. In this regard, there would be merit in a cross-fertilization of ideas between the two contemporary movements of education for global citizenship and education for sustainable development.

**Some Possible Dimensions of an Ethos of Global Citizenship in Education**

Notwithstanding the problems outlined above, the ideal of global citizenship education is worth further exploration. The concept of citizenship has proven to be immensely adaptable over time, changing to meet various geographical, political, and cultural pressures, moving from an exclusionary force towards ever greater inclusion. In an era of human history in which global interdependence is one of the defining characteristics, it is time for our understanding of citizenship – and citizenship education – to shift once more, to expand as an ideal that more closely befits the world we have created. More pragmatically, in an era in which the major engines of economic power, transnational corporations, have extended their allegiance and their influence beyond the borders of a single nation, it is surely time for global consumers to reexamine the responsibilities and privileges of living in a global community. Expansion does not necessitate dismantling the present construction of citizenship: the arguments presented here do not call for an end to national citizenship, nor for the institution of world governance. Rather, they challenge educators to acknowledge the ever-changing patterns of relationships among human communities, and between humans and their environments, and to help students explore the implications of such trends in terms of their rights and
responsibilities, their allegiances and loyalties, and their opportunities for meaningful participation. Citizenship, in a constitutional sense, may continue to be granted by the nation state for a long time to come, but that should not negate the exciting possibilities for the development of an ethos of global citizenship in our schools. In such a suggestion is an acceptance that, despite globalization, it is the nation that will continue to provide citizens with their primary sense of belonging. The challenge, however, is to imbue the concept of citizenship with an ethos – a set of moral principles and codes of conduct – that is global in its scope. While the state will confer the constitutional rights and duties of citizenship, education should play a critical role in expanding young citizens’ understanding of the responsibilities, and potential pleasures, of living in a global community. The result will be active national citizens with an informed global conscience.

Mindful of the problematic concept of global citizenship, the following six dimensions would seem to be critical to the development of that ethos. They are offered as starting points, not an exhaustive list, for the discussion and evaluation of present and future models of global citizenship education.

1. **An expansion of loyalty**
   - an acceptance and valuing of multiple identities and loyalties, including family, community, region, bio-region, country, continent, species, and planet;
   - an understanding that co-existent loyalties may conflict and a determination to use informed judgment in the resolution of such conflicts;
   - an understanding that loyalties may shift over time, that identity “is no museum piece, sitting stock-still in a display case, but rather the endlessly astonishing synthesis of the contradictions of everyday life” (Galeano, cited in Murphy, 1999, p. 147).

2. **A critical appraisal of both nationalism and globalism**
   - a predisposition to critically assess the claims and conduct of national governments and transnational agencies from the perspectives of justice, equity, and human rights;
   - an understanding that global interdependence often results in inequitable benefits and outcomes;
   - an understanding that individual consumer decisions have multiple impacts in the global marketplace.

3. **The development of global thinking**
   - development of the skills of synthetic and relational thinking, to aid the process of seeing connections and relationships between various phenomena;
development of futures thinking skills, to provide insights into the interrelationship of past, present, and future;
• a deep understanding of the concept of sustainability and of its implications for present lifestyles and behaviour.

4. Understanding citizenship as “doing,” not just “being” or “knowing”
• an understanding that action and participation are the essence of citizenship;
• an understanding of the multiple roles that each citizen plays in the global community;
• refinement of the skills and attitudes required to engage in constructive social change at local, regional, national, and transnational levels.

5. Acceptance of the moral responsibilities of global citizenship
• an understanding of the consequences of imperialism and of the present struggles for national identity taking place around the world;
• an understanding of the effects of the attitudes and lifestyles of the affluent minority on the choices and freedoms of the poor, the dispossessed, and the disadvantaged around the world;
• a commitment to a continuous assessment of personal values and behaviour with a view to increasing actions that serve the needs of others.

6. Understanding citizens’ roles in determining the future health of the planet
• an understanding of the interdependence of all life forms and of the importance of bio-diversity to the health of the planet;
• an understanding that the functioning of the planet is increasingly dependent upon human wisdom and decision making;
• development of the “knowing, caring and practical competence ... of ecological literacy” (Orr, 1992, p. 92).

References


Abstract

Based on narrative data recently collected from youth's in three Canadian cities, our paper focuses on second generation perceptions of youth's identifications in a society increasingly influenced by the forces of globalization and how these perceptions may or may not be reflected in programs of study dealing with citizenship education. We utilize a framework consisting of a continuum of mobilities of mind, body, and boundaries to situate their sense of self. The facade of globalisation is examined in terms of its impact on identity formation and these youths' impressions of diversity and multiculturalism. Finally, we consider the relevance of the findings for citizenship education in Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta.

Second Generation Youth in Canada, Their Mobilities and Identifications: Relevance to Citizenship Education

Yvonne Hébert, Lori Wilkinson, and Mehrunnisa Ali
University of Calgary

Résumé

À la base de données narratives récemment recueillies dans trois villes canadiennes, ce papier examine les perceptions de jeunes de la 2ième génération de leurs identifications dans une société influencée par les forces accrues de la mondialisation et comment ces perceptions sont reflétées ou non dans les programmes d’étude portant sur l’éducation à la citoyenneté. Un continuum de mobilités mentales, corporelles et frontalières nous sert de cadre théorique pour situer leur soi. La facade de la mondialisation est aussi examinée par rapport à son impact sur la formation identitaire et les impressions des jeunes au sujet de la diversité et du multiculturalisme. Finalement, nous considérons la pertinence des résultats pour l’éducation à la citoyenneté en Ontario, au Manitoba et en Alberta.

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Introduction

The proliferation of new cultural flows, new modes of belonging, and new practices of citizenship mobilize minds and bodies with identifications beyond nation-states. These referents stretch beyond nationality, ethnicity, religion, culture, nation, minorities, majorities, and territorial belongings (Hannerz, 1997; Hoerder, Hébert, & Schmitt, 2006). New arenas of interaction, deliberation, and influence are created, where diversities are taken for granted and where people are not defined as minority or majority, where transcultural modes of belonging are accommodated, organised, and lived, bypassing existing political, territorial, and cultural boundaries between peoples (Appadurai, 1996; Sicakkan, 2005). These concepts are of interest to the understanding of the diversity in identity formation amongst second generation adolescents who receive much research and policy attention, as these youth’s integration patterns are unlike those of other generations (Reitz & Somerville, 2005).

Mobilities of mind, body, and boundaries are particularly relevant in understanding how identities are formed. Three mobilities are defined by Sicakkan (2005) with respect to adults of diversity, public places, and civil society. Mobility of mind allows for mobile identities and shifting belongings between different references of identification, whereas mobility of bodies refers to migration and frequent movement across places and different spaces of interaction. Mobility of boundaries recognises shifting territorial, political, cultural, economic, social, and individual boundaries. In a Canadian context then, and especially for youth, an openness to others that is part of multiculturalism in practice would require forms of mobility, so as to be able to imagine oneself as another, to take up new belongings, and to move across cultural, linguistic, religious, ethnic, racial spaces of interaction and boundaries.

The concept of transculturation which refers to the phenomena of converging and merging cultures has gained acceptance internationally. Detaching the concept from its original colonial and nationalist contexts (Ortiz, 1940, 1983/1995), several scholars have recently proposed its use in contemporary settings (Bernd, 2002; Gunew, 2002). In this translation, transculturation is extended from being a concept situated in economically dependent regions in a post-colonial process to take up an emphasis on creativity and performativity that links past with present. Transcultural approaches offer possibilities of opening up the notions of culture and cultural belonging, so that the negotiating and networking of individual and collective identifications and differentiations are better understood. More a perspective than a fixed concept, transculturation permits re-readings of homogenised histories that construct belongings as fixed and that
essentialised cultural, ethnic, national, gendered, religious, racial, and/or generational dimensions. Transculturation reconceptualises difference and diversity as negotiable, intersectorial, strategic, and mobile (Hoerder, Hébert, & Schmitt, 2006). This concept is of particular interest in terms of citizenship education, as most major societies today are plural as a result of massive migration around the world which is accompanied by calls for recognition and an exploration of the relevance of multicultural policies.

Our purpose is to discuss Canadian youth’s perceptions of their identifications in a society increasingly influenced by the forces of globalization and the relevance of the findings to identity formation, knowledge construction, and citizenship education curriculum. Of particular interest are second generation youth, born in Canada, whose parents moved across national and territorial boundaries to settle in the new world, as these youth are called upon to construct and situate themselves in terms of multiple frames of reference. In this light, we examine second generation Canadian youth’s patterns of interaction, deliberation, and influence, where mobilities and transcultural modes of belonging are created and lived in three cities, namely, Winnipeg, Calgary, and Toronto.

Important to the study of adolescent integration, the school as institution is a micro-society in which relations of power, inequality, injustice, and privilege play out and can be observed. Social stratification within classes, between the rich and not-so-rich, the brilliant students and less brilliant, those who succeed and those who fail, those in mainstream classes and those in alternative forms of schooling, all are evident in school settings. The three cities, in two contrasting regions, are extremely diverse within the ideological construct that is “English Canada,” which allows us to problematize specificities which may be perceived as natural and non-problematic. The two Prairie cities, Winnipeg and Calgary, represent small-scale immigration in mid-sized urban centres, with an increasing rate of ethnic diversity. Metropolitan Toronto represents large-scale immigration and a long history of ethnic diversity, receiving nearly half of Canada’s immigrants and refugees (Citizenship and Immigration Canada [CIC], 2002).

**Methodology**

Situated within a three-year inquiry into processes of negotiating difference and understanding democracy of Canadian youth, we ask two questions in this paper. *How do young people who are the second generation view their identity within Canadian society? How are their identities reflected in the formal curriculum of Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta?* Situated within a critical qualitative paradigm (Back, 1996; Cohen, 1999; Back, Cohen, & Keith, 1999), we work with several analytic techniques including
describe statistics, content and textual analysis, as necessary to deal with
complex, nuanced data (Creswell, 1998; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997; May,
1999; Popkewitz & Fendler, 1999). To address these two questions, we draw
from a variety of narrative data, specifically, written responses, interviews,
notations of graphic images, and demographic profiles of up to six second-
generation youth per city, enrolled in secondary schools. The gender,
ancestral ethnicity, and religion of the participants in each city are shown in
Table 1 below.

Table 1: Self-Ascribed Characteristics of Selected Second Generation Youth,
2004-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unicorn</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Jamaican/ Antiguan/ Canadian</td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm X</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educ07</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Filipina</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSP MEST</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Filipina</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber Duckie</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Filipina/ Spanish</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LueRue</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Lebanese/ Syrian</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Calgary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiquita</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Mexican-Mennonite</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Calgary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbie</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramel</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Libyan</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonzo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>English/ Canadian</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Crack</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White/ Blackfoot/ British/ Romanian</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shana</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Guyanese</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorissa</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gelato</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4Lyfe</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Flag</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Spanish; parents</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baron</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chiliean/ Columbian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The code names were self-selected by the participants whereas ethnicity was
identified using a demographic profile form. In Toronto, the project was
accepted in a Catholic high school, while in the other two cities, the project
was located in secular high schools. While this may account for the
predominance of one religion, it should also to be noted that this is the largest
religious group in Canada.

Based on an examination of these youths’ narrative data, recently
collected in Calgary, Winnipeg, and Toronto, the three step analysis focuses
first on their mobilities of mind, body, and boundaries, and then examines the
façade of glocal spaces wherein the voices and perspectives of the youth reveal the unpleasantness behind the attractive mask of globalisation and the ideal of multiculturalism. Constituting a social syntax, these illustrate how today’s youth locate themselves as subjects and represent contexts that shape them and vice versa. Finally, the relevance of the findings to the formal programs of study in the three provinces is examined to determine whether or not these varied identities are adequately reflected.

**Youth’s Mobilities of Mind, Body, and Boundaries**

The three mobilities are re-defined for youth in secondary schools, with respect to their preferred places, so as to serve as criteria for data analysis and for understanding identity formation. While mobility of the mind generally allows for mobile identifications and shifting belongings, (a) *mobility of mind for youth* includes being able to imagine oneself as an other, as living elsewhere in another place or time, as being comfortable with having different references of identification, moving beyond tolerance and openness to the acceptance and negotiation of difference. This type of mobility also includes the ability to recognize in their local surroundings, symbols which have international, transcultural, and/or global reference. While mobility of body generally refers to migration and frequent movement across places and different spaces of interaction, (b) *mobility of body for youth, especially second generation youth*, is further defined as a familiarity with and an awareness of parents’ journeys as well as their own journey of moving across cultural and other spaces of interaction, developing complex forms of attachment and identification in youth specific and friendly places. Whereas mobility of boundaries generally recognizes shifting boundaries, (c) *mobility of boundaries for youth* recognizes moving across and beyond linguistic, cultural, religious, ethnic, racial spaces of interaction and boundaries, to take up new belongings in transcultural modes.

With these concepts, we present and illustrate below several themes in the youths’ data sets, including immobility/mobility of mind, body, and boundary; the façade of globalisation, multiculturalism, and democracy; the shoppers; and the angst of second generation youth.

**Mobility of Mind**

For second generation adolescents in a plural society, being comfortable with multiple attachments is particularly salient, as is being able to symbolize, to think about world problems, to imagine being in other situations, and to cross over. The participants exhibiting mobility of mind make use of symbols, including metaphors of identity, and recognise significant relationships within local spaces with global reference. Travelling often
Second Generation

involves shifting thoughts as a means of adapting to the area being visited. While the physical act of travelling is evidence of mobility of body, experiencing a culture and interacting with people suggests mobility of mind and boundaries.

Two participants reveal a willingness to take up the tourist metaphor of identity, characterizing a person who explores, takes notes, learns transit schedules and how to get around, samples and gathers souvenirs, without necessarily being moved by the experience and having a home as safe haven for eventual return (Bauman, 1996). “The will to travel and the freedom to fly.” These are the words Chiquita used to annotate a photo of a symbolic mosaic depicting a flamingo and the sun in her scrapbook, symbolizing her connections to Mexico and her willingness to explore the world. While considering that being Canadian means being able to state her opinions freely, Unicorn puts medium-sized flags of Antigua and Jamaica on the left and right sides respectively of a drawing, as symbols of her own identity.

Other forms of evidence for mobility of mind include use of symbols or metaphors for living with many cultures and ethnicities, and thinking deeply about the problems of the world in a reflective public space. These approaches take up the metaphor of pilgrim searching for truth, usually elsewhere, while embarked on a long life journey for understanding of self, other, and the world. For Rubber Duckie, a multi-coloured floral lei is “the best way to express myself as a cultural individual living with so many different ethnicities in Canada.” This floral lei has great meaning for her; as reflected in the note on the exterior of her cultural collage in the shape of a shoebox, she has both an individual and socio-cultural perspective, which are both arguably Canadian multicultural values, which she expresses as “diversity without losing the courage and value to be yourself.”

“This place, I just do nothing and just think of the problems of the world.” Mobility of mind for Captain Crack means focusing on the school as a micro-society, using some of its spaces to think about world problems and to observe struggles for power. Referring to a low walled space in front of the school, he credits the Relaxation Space for providing an opportunity for relaxation and reflection, for this is where he thinks at a global level and across boundaries. Very politically-minded and philosophical, he disagrees with democratic systems and prefers a more socialist-communist system, putting his views in writing in a response. He feels that these approaches are more effective and work quickly versus a democratic system that involves long, drawn out voting processes. Observant of political processes, he takes a revealing photo of a school area, “This is where gangs fight for control over the principle of power” and draws religious symbols on this page of his
scrapbook, thereby imaging his insight that there may be underlying religious influences in the struggle for power.

**Mobility of Body**

Referring to an awareness of journeys, their own and their parents’ across cultural and other spaces of interaction, developing complex forms of attachment and identification in youth-specific and friendly places (White & Wyn, 2004), several participants illustrate this type of mobility, expressing a variety of reasons: search for enlightenment, exploration, and forms of appreciation and attachment.

Three participants reflect upon their journeys. Gonzo has travelled to the desert but shrugs about which one. He “loves it” and feels relaxed when he is there. When asked what he feels he could accomplish in this space, he replies: “I could hope for knowledge or enlightenment, but I don’t really expect anything”. Another participant, Unicorn, says about her travels that “where I live, I am very relaxed and the places that I have traveled [to], I am filled with energy and ready to go exploring”. Rubber Duckie, as a third intrepid traveler, comments, “In the Philippines, I felt both foreign and at home. In Minneapolis, Calgary, and Las Vegas, I felt like I was experiencing a whole different taste of the world.” She describes her travels in Canada in similar positive terms. “In Vernon [BC], I felt comfortable and got used to the conditions they set us in.”

While 4Lyfe evinces complex forms of attachment tied to parental restrictions and cultural belongings, he sees himself as a Portuguese citizen, with Aveiro, Portugal as his first choice of preferred place beyond Toronto:

I like the fact that I am Portuguese and I like to watch and play soccer. I am proud of myself more as a Portuguese citizen than a Canadian citizen because my parents are both Portuguese. Almost 17, I am more mature and responsible in Portugal without my parents there. I love listening and dancing to [Portuguese] music. And I have a passion for soccer. I spend time and have fun; and the drinking age is 16. In Portugal, I am free, could basically do anything I want, my parents trust me 100% in Portugal. In Canada, I am sorta trapped, doing the same thing everyday, my parents never trust me here. As for being Canadian, I was born here and I live here. Canada is very multicultural and people are not usually against people’s colour or race.

Thus 4Lyfe conflagrates political and cultural attachments; this is understandable as these typically overlap especially in historically
Second Generation

homogeneous countries such as Portugal. The symbols of his cultural collage illustrate the importance of Portuguese symbols, such as *futebol*.

Appreciative of transcultural and transnational dimensions of her life situation, Shana states that she is:

- in favour of multiculturalism because you can eat other people’s food and if the whole country was just one culture – it would be very boring. You can see everybody’s food, their culture, the way they dress, their traditions. Because I enjoy learning about other people – how they live their lifestyle and how it is different from the way I live mine. In my neighbourhood, everybody treats everybody fairly. You are not judged because of the colour of your skin. There are a lot of different cultures in our neighbourhood – not just one specific culture. Our neighbourhood is pretty multicultural and the kids in the summertime – they usually – we all come together and play.

Reflecting upon transnational connections, Shana continues,

- um, I like buying clothes and stuff for myself but also sometimes we send barrels back home, so we usually buy things for my cousins back home or my aunts or uncles and buy things like all of our family, and we ship it off to my country because things sometimes are expensive and they can’t afford it.

*Mobility of Boundaries*

Moving across and beyond linguistic, cultural, religious, ethnic, racial spaces of interaction and boundaries, participants take up new belongings in transcultural modes, revealing their awareness of change and their own creative role, either in redefining identifications beyond and across boundaries, or by disregarding boundaries.

Redefining ancestral origins to create anew, Lue Rue is proud of being Canadian because “it accepts me in its country, especially because I am not from here. It accepted me for being Lebanese,” as noted in her life story. In her urban map, Beirut is her preferred place outside of Calgary, without further explanation. In her scrapbook, she stresses the importance of her computer in her room as internet makes everything accessible. Her cultural collage combines many elements of “Leb Pride”: flags from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Jordan; a symbol of a Christian cross, the crescent moon and star symbol associated with Islam, connected with a + symbol, as well as pictures of Arab celebrities, the term, “romance,” a picture of some roses, and a picture
of two heart shapes and rings. Later on in her interview when queried about the Lebanese/Syrian/Middle East influences in her collage, Lue Rue responds:

I think that whole area is one and it will always be one, no matter whatever is going on… but we will always be one language, same culture, same people, like for me when people say that I am Lebanese, like, yeah, I am Lebanese but I am Syrian too, and I can say I am Syrian, I am Jordan, I am Lebanese, I can say whatever because I think they are all my people, they are all one.

Acknowledging all influences to the region, this redefinition of ancestral identification moves beyond boundaries – be they ethnic, country, or religious – to create a new general territorial identification.

Aware that cultures evolve, adapt, and change over time, several participants stretch cultural, geographical, and relational boundaries. Capt Crack explains in his final interview about a centered photo of petroglyphs in a national park in the US with people walking trails in the background, in his cultural collage: “I found it interesting, the old culture clashing with the new culture,” referring to symbols and providing evidence of his awareness of changing boundaries and creating anew. Penning a poetic parody about neighbourhoods, Gonzo clarifies the notion of “neighbourhood in the sense that anywhere I feel comfortable and at home is my neighbourhood. From the White Cliffs of Dover to the White Rocks of BC, my neighbourhood stretches the expanse of oceans.”

Experiencing cultural crossings when he goes to the Bollywood movie shop that his Indian friend introduced him to, Gelato represents this co-existence in his photoscape, noting that,

yeah, well, my Indian friend showed me there, and just, I don’t usually get anything from there, it’s just cuz [because] he goes there and it showed like – it just goes to show – and then beside it there are different cultures. There’s like an Italian store down the street and a Portuguese store and it just shows all the different cultures.

Reflecting further upon multiculturalism, Gelato writes,

I’m in favour of multiculturalism because we are all multicultural. I’m not going to be a hypocrite and say that I don’t like immigration when my parents were immigrants and I wouldn’t be here if they didn’t immigrate and I like how we are all different – something interesting.

In this statement which goes beyond duality to multiplicity, he reveals that he is familiar with his parents’ journey and aware of its meanings for him and for his appreciation of difference around him. This is highly significant for him for
he puts an airplane in his cultural collage to represent immigration, thus modernising the notion that immigrants come by boat, landing in yesteryear at Pier 21 in Halifax.

Disregarding relational boundaries in choosing her friends, Mina explains, “if I look at my school, no one cares what colour skin you are, or what religion you are. They don’t care about that. Like, when I met my friends, that’s not the question I asked them or they asked me”. This reflects what she believes of the labour market: “I think if you’re going for a job, then I don’t think people look at skin colour here ’cause everyone’s from a different culture, a different country, no one is Canadian here, original Canadian, so really, very few people so...” Her views are consistent with her understanding of citizenship in a comparative context,

To me, being a Canadian means to express my thoughts, being free to express my opinion. Rights to my own religion. The reason I think this way is because in Sri Lanka, there are many wars and we don’t have the right to express my thoughts. It’s a free country, I think it’s good, like its freedom, like it’s not like back home, teachers can’t hit you or stuff like that.

Whether female or male, these profiles provide ample evidence of mobility of mind, bodies, and boundaries among participating Canadian youth, of their own participation and awareness of the processes, places, and images involved in the transcultural process of creating new modes of belonging. All is not sweetness and agreement; however, for ideologies are not the same as realities.

**The Façade of Globalization and the Ideal of Multiculturalism**

Second generation adolescents are particularly susceptible to being concerned with fitting in with everyone and being accepted. These young people also reflect on multiculturalism and democracy, finding them both laudable for their human rights, but mostly also decrying their shortcomings, as there is still racism and discrimination in Canada. While this may or may not be connected to consumerism as an expression of one’s Canadian identification, such positions may result in limited or partial mobility and may be accompanied by angst.

Finding multiculturalism to be advantageous, Gelato explains his thinking:

I don’t think anything bad could come of it. Maybe more people, more culture – would liven the culture. I don’t have any bad feelings toward it. I like how the different cultures are here. I like how it’s welcoming. It’s free. Freedom.
He goes on to elaborate on the meaning of freedom in terms of the rights of free speech and worship: “well, you can express all your views and opinions without anybody putting you down. Like, there’s mosques, there’s temples, there’s churches, there’s everything”. When asked about equity issues, he replies more tentatively, relying on his own personal experiences:

Well, if they don’t speak English, it might be a bit harder because English is a big language here, but I don’t know. At my job, we have plenty of people that don’t speak English and we’re welcoming to them but and maybe in perhaps higher levels – a job like, maybe, if you don’t speak English, it would be very tough. It is a free place; I don’t think they are judged upon the colour of their skin.

His views more generally are consistent with an understanding of diversity as civic pluralism and provide considerable evidence of mobility of mind. Another view emphasises nationalist and environmental issues, while revealing his facade which hints that his strong views may be part of his brave public face. Admittedly shy, Malcolm X, for example, is trying to be more outgoing. His development of a somewhat more extraverted personality is based on a transparent facade of self-confidence. An underlying tone of sarcasm apparent throughout his activities supports his self-doubt and uncertainty. Malcolm X is “uncomfortable, quiet, and lonely” in new places whereas his close friends provide him with a level of comfort and acceptance, as they engage in many activities, including the YMCA and a philanthropy programme at his school. He shops infrequently, centering his activities on his home area which encompasses where he lives, where his friends are, where he attends school, and where his recreational activities take place. When referring to international issues, Malcolm X takes up nationalistic perspectives. In his written responses, he sees Canada’s role in environmental issues as needing to protect its own environment and to act as a role model for the rest of the world. Titled, Politics, his cultural collage focuses on politicians in Canada and the USA, again indicative of Canadian nationalism. Although Capt Crack thinks that multiculturalism is great because it provides perspective on every culture, he disagrees in a mini-interview with the ideal of having a multicultural society without racism. He sees no hope for removing racism from the world, even with multicultural policies, as this does not seem possible to him for racism is seen as cyclical and static:

Even if you educate them [children] through government systems and non-racist camps and what not, and if you tell children that a guy is okay even though he is a different colour, there is nothing to fear from him. There will always be the parent out there that is afraid of what they do not
know and they will teach their children to fear and hate what they do not know, as well. And it will continue forever, we will never be a non-racist world.

This view stems from his personal experiences whereby he has been subjected to racism, a fact that he feels cannot be avoided. Commenting further on the power of globalisation, Capt Crack explains in his exit interview:

I believe that there is not real culture any more. It is all media and corporations tying to vie for business. There are religions but they don’t really contribute to culture much any more, nobody really cares about that, everybody’s trying to get away from religion and everybody’s trying to make their own culture, but really they are following the same culture, which is advertisements.

More cynically, he comments on icons and social class, in that “jewellery is hip hop’s hold on culture” and that “People define you by what kind of car you drive. So if you drive a sports car, you’re a rich person. If you drive a truck, you’re a working guy.”

Expressing discouragement and even despair, these Canadian youth are particularly astute thinkers, worried that society is too far gone to retreat from the internal impact of a global consumer economy upon western civilization. This contrasts markedly with those who are decidedly drawn to the malls.

The Shoppers

Several other participants see themselves primarily as consumers, shopping frequently, with a strong preference for certain shops, usually for leisure items and fashion. True to this pattern, Educ07 lists eleven different stores in Winnipeg where she shops for clothes, jewellery, and electronics. Under the photo of a store called Esprit on the first page of her scrapbook, she writes, “I feel glamour and happy, sophisticated clothing shop, I consider it to be ‘my’ store”. She expresses her feelings about jewellery shopping with the words, “I feel like I am on clouds, a breathless scene.” Having a strong commitment to consumerist life and responding without any depth of thought, this participant lacks understanding of globalization and its critiques. Although she has traveled to the USA, Europe, and Asia, she does not like any of the cities visited because of her strong ties to Winnipeg. Despite this, she wants to travel to the world to see different forms of architecture, here too consuming and collecting images, rather than being moved and energised by international travel experience.

Another participant is also true to the overall pattern. Unicorn strongly prefers Best Buy, Kildonan Place, Future Shop, Aldo accessories,
Athlete’s World, and Sport Check, shopping for CDs, DVDs, and clothes five times a month. For food, she goes to Subway, Burger King, A&W, Mac’s for candy, Dairy Queen for ice cream, Lisbon Bakery for cinnamon buns. Her cultural collage shows three computers, two cell phones, nine items of jewellery, six games, chocolate bars, as well as fashionable women and men.

Insight into this pattern is provided by another participant, Rubber Duckie, who considers that Canadians express themselves by means of brand names and commercials. She attaches a note to her cultural collage in the shape of a shoebox to explain that the outside of the box consists of “brand names, which we are privileged to experience, different representation of our weather and nationality.” Inside a note states, “the freedom to be yourself, speak your own opinion, love and marry at your own discretion, and genuinely be the person who you feel you are inside.” The shoebox itself symbolises her ability to reflect on her identity from both inside and out.

The Angst of Second Generation Youth

Being conscious of their parents’ previous experiences with immigration and cultural practices while attempting to fit into Canadian life, second generation youth have been characterised in the literature as having two identities (Simard, 1999) rather than as weaving in elements from two sources of culture to create something new, that was not there before in either old or new country, that is, negotiating their transcultural lives (Hoerder, Hébert, Schmitt, 2006; Ortiz, 1940, 1983/1995). Such bi-polar identifications are not however a generalized phenomena in our data. A few of the participants experience some angst, which manifests itself specifically as having two countries or more generally, as immobility of mind. In the latter case, such immobility appears to be linked to other personal experiences, such as family breakdown, and may be revealing of a more general difficulty with change.

Tensions in having more than one cultural source are revealed by two participants. One, who has never been to Vietnam, lives in a happy family and is proud to be a Canadian. In explaining what citizenship means for her, Barbie obliquely compares the two countries, which is typical of second generation youth. However, in doing so, she refers to her country, later clarified as Vietnam: “to have freedom, to do what you want and freedom of speech because, in my country, it’s more of an age thing,” thus revealing an imagined mobility and incertitude about the realities of her multiple attachments.

Recently moved and now living in another Canadian city, another participant, Chiquita, is similarly conflicted by multiple attachments: “When I visit my family in Ontario, I feel like I’m ‘home’ again. Well, I went to Mexico and felt shy because I didn’t know my cousins. When I went to France, I was so
happy because I love it there; when I first moved to Calgary, I felt scared and nervous because I had just moved here.”

Exemplifying immobility of mind, three participants see themselves narrowly, as “normal,” as strictly Canadian, or as rejecting adventure and change, thus revealing a discomfort with plurality, but more likely, a discomfort with change per se. In discussing the various groupings within her high school, one student articulated many pre-conceived notions and did not indicate any desire to cross boundaries and meet others; although, later Chiquita did admit that “there might be some truth to stereotypes”:

…particular cliques that you can immediately notice, for example, the popular clique always wear in-fashion clothing; they are the ones with boyfriends; they might be nice when they are older but, at my age, they are very, like, “I am better than you.” Others wear black and are smoking; all have long hair and a whole bunch of makeup on their eyes; they are... kind of..., like, scary looking. There is a normal group that is a bit harder to find, but they are just the kids who are your average, not too black or smoking or whatever; and not too popular-looking. And I think that this is the kind of group that I hang out in. The Lebanese are so many; another group is Korean. The Arab males are really full of themselves and I don’t communicate with them.

Another participant, Ramel, had traveled extensively, in the US, Italy, England, Germany, Africa, Holland, and different parts of Canada, as indicated in his urban mapping, and yet, “I feel like a tourist and a foreigner in each country I have visited. My favourite places outside of Calgary are the Red Deer soccer field and the West Edmonton Mall.”

A third participant does not revel in adventure or change, which suggests that an immobility of mind may be lodged in a deeper fear of change. When queried, GCSPMEST explained,

I feel shy, quiet and awkward anywhere I visit because I have not been there before. When I changed schools, I did not know what to expect and how others would treat me or if they would like me or not. It was difficult because I wasn’t used to the changes. I needed time to be comfortable with everything because I thought nothing would be the same.

Citizenship Education Curriculum and Identity Formation

Since the 1990s, there has been a quiet revolution and resurgence of interest in the concept of and approaches to citizenship education, including conceptual, curricular, and pedagogical renewal in many educational
jurisdictions. An important part of citizenship education is the development of political and national identifications, as well as social, cultural, and supranational belongings. Models of citizenship include national identity which refers to the collective identity of their society which includes civic and societal culture; geographical, historical, artistic heritages; allegiance; and patriotism. Social, cultural, and supranational belongings are also included in a Canadian citizenship model to refer to the belongings of various types of minorities and diversity (Hébert & Pagé, 2002). Further to that, rights and responsibilities including civic participation are considered part of citizenship. Emphasis may be placed on inclusive democratic citizenship and student engagement in active participation to build trust, cooperation and networking skills (Print & Coleman, 2003).

Of considerable relevance to such models of citizenship, our analysis suggests that the political and national identifications of second generation youth are secure and that it is the cultural identifications that may be difficult to balance, compose with, and work through. Travel to other cities and countries is not sufficient to bring youth to reflect upon the experience and to develop a balanced point of view on the benefits and problems in living in complex situations. Our findings also support the importance of inclusion of multiple attachments, their negotiation to the understanding of democracy and its social practices in everyday life. The translation of such conceptual models into formal curriculum, such as official programs of study in the three provinces is germane to our study’s findings.

Interestingly enough, the formal programs of study for Social Studies for secondary levels of schooling in the youth’s three provinces, Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta, make references to global connections, diversity, and inclusion of others, but without necessarily explicitly including multiple attachments characteristic of second generation youth. In the Ontario Curriculum for Grades 9 and 10, 11 and 12, history, geography and civics courses include many important concepts: systems and structures; interactions and interdependence; environment; change and continuity; culture; and power and governance. The civics 20 course is organized into three strands: informed, purposeful, and active citizenship. However promising and relevant to world studies and to learning about the fundamental principles of democracy and of active, responsible citizenship, none of these concepts play out in their details to provide a legitimate basis for taking up contemporary realities of adolescents’ own complex transcultural and transnational identifications and multiple mobilities.

In Manitoba, new mandatory programs of studies for Social Studies include identity, culture, and community among general and specific learning
outcomes in which students explore these concepts in relation to individuals, societies, and nations. A critical consideration of these concepts provides students with opportunities to explore the symbols and expressions of their own and others’ cultural and social groups. Through a study of the ways people live together and express themselves in communities, societies, and nations, students enhance their understanding of diverse perspectives and develop their competencies as social beings. This process enables them to reflect upon their roles as individuals and citizens to become contributing members of their groups and communities. (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (2006), p. 17)

More specifically, students would be able to describe factors that shape identities; evaluate effects of assimilative policies on cultural and linguistic groups in Canada; describe effects of stereotyping and discrimination; evaluate the influence of mass media and pop culture on Aboriginal and Francophone identities and cultures; describe ways in which identity, diversity, and culture are protected in Canada; analyse current issues surrounding Canadian culture and identity; identify ways of addressing social injustices; be willing to consider diverse social and cultural perspectives; and appreciate Canadian cultural pluralism (p. 69). The attention to diversity focuses most explicitly with respect to francophone identities and cultures, and to First Nations, Inuit, or Métis languages and cultures. While these general and specific learning outcomes make possible a critical consideration of the students’ own complex cultural attachments to better understand themselves as emerging from a previous generation’s migration, and within the process of integration, these are not explicitly included in the learning outcomes.

The Alberta program of study for Social Studies is based on two core concepts, citizenship and identity, from Kindergarten to Grade 12 which form the bases for skills and learning outcomes. The goal of social studies is to provide learning opportunities for students to:

understand the principles underlying a democratic society;
demonstrate a critical understanding of individual and collective rights; understand the commitment required to ensure the vitality and sustainability of their changing communities at the local, provincial, national and global levels; validate and accept differences that contribute to the pluralistic nature of Canada; and respect the dignity and support the equality of all human beings. (Alberta Education, 2007, p. 3)
This would include “the provision of opportunities to understand the complexity of identity formation in the Canadian context; understand how identity and self-esteem are shaped by multiple personal, social, linguistic and cultural factors; demonstrate sensitivity to the personal and emotional aspects of identity; demonstrate skills required to maintain individuality within a group; and understand that with empowerment comes personal and collective responsibility for the public good” (p. 4). The program’s foci on Aboriginal and Francophone perspectives and experiences, as nations within the Canadian state, are accompanied by a focus on pluralism with respect to diversity and cohesion with an explicit goal to foster understanding of the roles and contributions of linguistic, cultural, and ethnic groups in Canada. Here, the program specifies that “students will learn about themselves in relation to others… to function as citizens in a society that values diversity and cohesion” (pp. 4-5). The processes to address diversity and social cohesion include “a commitment to respecting differences and fostering inclusiveness” for as is pointed out, “the accommodation of diversity is essential for fostering social cohesion in a pluralistic society” (p. 5).

Using an issues approach to teaching, the Alberta program of study is organised in six interdisciplinary strands: time, continuity and change; the land: places and people; power, authority and decision making; economics and resources; global connections; and culture and community. To do so, the program groups skills and processes around: dimensions of thinking; social participation as a democratic practice; research for deliberative inquiry; and communication. Within a scope and sequence chart of social studies topics to be taken up in the classroom, grade three already includes communities in the world and global citizenship whereas grade four introduces the stories, histories, and people of the province. In grade five, the topic, shaping an identity, foresees the presentation of events and issues that have impacted on citizenship and identity in the Canadian context over time. In grade nine, issues of governance and rights focus on citizenship, identity, and quality of life and how these are impacted by political and legislative processes in Canada. Identity returns in grade ten, with explorations of multiple perspectives on the origins of globalisation and its local, national and international impacts on identity, lands, cultures, economies, human rights, and quality of life. Grade eleven explores the complexities of nationalism in Canadian and international contexts, whereas grade twelve explores the origins and complexities of ideologies. Thus, there is ample room within social studies in this province for teachers and students to take up the complexities of contemporary students’ transcultural and transnational identifications as realised within their mobilities.
Ontario is the only province of the three under consideration with little mention of Canadian youth’s complex identifications to more than one culture and of attachments to country of parental origins. Manitoba’s, and especially Alberta’s social studies curriculum allow for and even prescribe opportunities for critical consideration of multiple belongings and cultural allegiances, while developing strong national and political attachments to the Canadian state. We understand this scalar response to the realities of youth’s contemporary identity complexities to be a function of time. Those programs that have undergone recent deep change, i.e., Manitoba and Alberta, offer the most opportunities for teachers to take up a nuanced but critical consideration of multiple cultural attachments. Thus, Ontario’s formal curriculum does not yet fully captured ethnic diversity, nor has it contributed much to the shifting and multiple identities held by second-generation youth. This is particularly problematic as Toronto receives nearly half of all immigrants to Canada. This is where such curricular responses are most needed to facilitate the role of the school in assisting on-going integrative processes of second generation students.

Moreover, only Alberta’s formal program of study takes up the influence of the market on identifications. In our view, it is quite problematic that some young people, especially females, perceive the Canadian identity as being a prolific and frequent consumer, to the extent of allowing the incessant neo-market, via certain shops and icons, to influence the very core of young human beings. This suggest that the young people who are sensitive to market pressures are finding support among their adults, so that the nature of the problem is much greater than second generation youth. Since the school has a very important contribution to make to the successful integration of all generations including second generation youth, these conceptual, curricular, and pedagogical issues must be addressed.

Conclusions

Second generation youth who participated in our study are characterised by the weaving of complex identifications. We find that most adolescent participants in this study are well aware of the possibilities and tensions inherent in their situation. While all are quite clear that they are Canadians and proud of political and national identification, some find it difficult to hold dual cultural identifications while others revel in this as part of the adventure that is life. Increasingly, most participants are aware of globalisation, and some of them are also very critical and see through its glittering facade.

The findings are coherent and insightful of the process of identification and its multi-layered contexts. First, most but not all participants
are able to imagine themselves as a Canadian and recognize that they are on a journey of life. Second, the mobility most likely to be possible for these adolescents is mobility of mind which allows them to think, imagine, and try out cultural identifications as part of the integration process. Mobilities of body and boundaries are more difficult, especially the latter, as these youth are centred upon their homes and schools, live with their parents, and are subject to the limitations of family budgets, projects, and objectives. Both immobility of mind and the tensions of dual cultural attachments are central to the angst typical of some second generation youth.

Third, most participants recognize the benefits of globalisation and the ideals of multiculturalism. Some of the participants, however, are highly critical of globalisation and multiculturalism, seeing beyond the facade and the ideal to recognize the unpleasantness behind the scenes. More specifically, many second generation youth in this study tend to be susceptible to the intense messages of the market, taking up the identification of “shopper,” whereas those who do not are more likely to strongly and critically identify the issues of over-consumption, environmental issues, racism, and human rights issues inherent in the human and environmental exploitation that sustain current approaches to globalisation.

Finally, the study brings innovative data collection and analysis techniques which inform the process of social integration as well as the types of mobilities that are possible among youth. It is clear from this study, that the youth in question are facing difficult challenges with variable clarity and coherence and variable awareness of themselves and their possibilities. The nuances brought to bear nonetheless distinguish between political and cultural identifications and how the latter are symbolised in variable ways by the participating youth. Cultural flows are uneven; transcultural negotiation of young lives create new identifications that weave in elements of diverse sources, and their mobilities are similarly variable, with mobility of mind most likely to be possible for the second generation at this time of their lives.

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Supporting the Growth of Global Citizenship Educators

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Abstract

This paper presents the results of a study, which was a part of a broader project to develop and pilot test a global citizenship education (GCE) teaching kit. This study involved examining a group of typical teachers’ perceptions, attitudes and beliefs about becoming global citizen educators. The study posed the question, “Can providing teachers with global citizenship education resources and supporting them in the implementation of these resources improve their capacity to be effective global educators?” We can infer from our study that there is mainstream appeal amongst social studies teachers for GCE. However, there are a number of limitations and barriers that prevent even those committed to global citizenship education from implementing GCE in their classrooms. Therefore, we argue that it is critically important to provide teachers with sustainable supports such as curriculum aligned teaching materials and professional development opportunities to become global citizenship educators.

The increased importance of globally-minded models of citizenship is reflected in recent research in citizenship education (Davies, 2006; Davies, Evans, & Reid, 2005; Demaine, 2002; Gaudelli 2003). Bottery (2006) argues that education professionals “are at an important crossroads” at which they must choose to either embrace a global awareness in order to promote the public good or else retreat into insularity (pp. 111-112). To support those who decide to choose the path of global awareness, various curricular initiatives, such as the one described in this paper, have been recently developed.

This paper presents the results of a study that was a part of a broader project to develop and pilot test a global citizenship education teaching kit. The study involved examining a group of elementary school teachers’ perceptions, attitudes and beliefs about becoming global citizen educators. The study posed the question, “Can providing teachers with global citizenship education resources and supporting them in the implementation of these resources improve their capacity to be effective global educators?” We can infer from our study that there is mainstream appeal amongst social studies teachers for GCE. However, there are a number of limitations and barriers that prevent even those committed to global citizenship education from implementing GCE in their classrooms. Therefore, we argue that it is critically important to provide teachers with sustainable supports such as curriculum aligned teaching materials and professional development opportunities to become global citizenship educators.

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teachers’ perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about becoming global citizen educators. We were particularly interested in the views of “typical” teachers, those who identified themselves as not exceptionally committed to global citizenship education (GCE) and as non-activists. The study posed the question, “Can providing teachers with global citizenship education resources and supporting them in the implementation of these resources improve their capacity to be effective global educators?” The answer, as demonstrated through our study, is clearly yes.

The paper is organized into three sections. In the first, we introduce the ACT! Active Citizens Today: Global Education for Local Schools project, describing the process behind the development of this curriculum resource and the methodology of this research study. We then turn our attention to analyzing the data from the study in order to understand the role of the teacher in GCE. We review the participants’ attitudes towards GCE, the limitations and barriers they claim to face in implementing global education in their classrooms, and finally the degree of their growth as global educators over the course of the study. In the last part of the paper we locate our findings in the context of other literature on teachers’ attitudes towards GCE and conclude with the implications of our study.

We can infer from our study that there is mainstream appeal for GCE amongst social studies teachers. However, there are a number of limitations and barriers that prevent even those committed to GCE from implementing it in their classrooms. Therefore, we argue that it is critically important, especially in an era of educational accountability and standards, to provide teachers with sustainable supports such as curriculum aligned teaching materials and professional development opportunities to become global citizenship educators.

Defining and Implementing GCE: The Active Citizens Today (ACT!) Project

Definitions of global education, global citizenship education, and citizenship education, have been hotly debated in the research literature for many decades. Gaudelli (2003) has noted the confusion about global education from within the field itself, pointing out that the vastness of the field makes an inclusive definition elusive. Indeed, as Popkewitz (1980) has noted, rather than being a tightly defined field, “global education” operates as a slogan, designed to create a mood with which people can affiliate particular pedagogical practices. Similar arguments have been made about the contested and complex nature of citizenship education and GCE (Tanner, 2007).

In their Critique of “Global Education” and “Citizenship Education,” Davies, Evans and Reid (2005) state, “The question for education is how to come to grips with the changing nature of citizenship in a
globalising world” (p. 72). Davies et al. argue that current nation-centred models of citizenship education are outdated and that citizenship education curriculum needs to develop post-national conceptions of society. While national citizenship is a political reality formalized by laws and political institutions, global citizenship is a more abstract concept that indicates a recognition that individuals have ethical responsibilities to the global community. L. Davies (2006) argues that while global citizenship is an abstraction, it is one that captures a growing consensus on the importance of teaching students to understand their actions, as well as their rights and responsibilities, within a global network. L. Davies also concludes that GCE goes beyond global education’s emphasis on global interconnectedness in order to promote an active model of citizenship. This active approach to citizenship is evident in GCE’s emphasis on social justice, human rights, and peace activism:

These imply action in that if one perceives injustice and/or abuse of rights, one is more likely to seek ways at least to publicize these; similarly, if one learns about the links between conflict and interpretations of culture, one is less likely to accept passively the imperative of unquestioning adherence to cultural traditions (L. Davies, 2006, p. 6)

Within the framework of this active approach to citizenship within a Canadian context, the Active Citizens Today (ACT!) project was designed to meet the need for instructional materials for social studies teachers following the 2004 Ontario grade 6 curriculum change from the economics-focused “Canada and Its Trading Partners” to the more globally-minded “Canada’s Links to the World.” Together individuals from the school board, the faculty of education, and Free the Children, a non-government organization, conceptualized, wrote, and edited the ACT! Active Citizens Today: Global Education for Local Schools teaching kit, which provides educators with over 35 ready-made lesson plans, black line masters, and assessment tasks.

The rationale behind the ACT! teaching kit recognizes that schools must teach students that they live in an interconnected and interdependent world and that education for global citizenship requires educators who can help students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that they need to effect change both locally and globally. According to L. Davies’s (2006) model, GCE fosters in students a sense of belonging to this global world and aims to build a global culture of peace and social justice through the promotion of values, attitudes, and behaviours which enable the realization of democratic ideals, sustainable development, and human rights for all.

The ACT! project is dedicated to promoting an active model of citizenship that helps students to be socially aware, to reflect critically about
social, political and economic issues, and to enact positive social change (Crick, 2007; Davies & Evans, 2002). Through the lessons and assessment tasks in the teaching kit, students come to understand how their actions affect the lives of people around the world and how they can change people’s lives, for better or worse. Project writers worked from the premise that developing a global perspective would enrich students’ understanding of human cultures so that they can respect people with diverse beliefs and experiences. In line with accepted understandings of the activist component of GCE (in relation to global education), the teaching kit aimed to support global citizenship educators in teaching students to take an active role in confronting injustice and inequality, both locally and globally. In this respect, the ACT! teaching kit project recognizes the potential and responsibility of both teachers and students as global citizens to be change agents in an interconnected and interdependent world (Bickmore, 1999; L. Davies, 2006; Oxfam, 2006).

**Research Methodology**

**Research Design: Data Sources and Timeline**

The ACT! Active Citizens Today teaching kit was written and edited in the summer of 2006. In the fall an information letter about the project and request for teachers to participate in a study to pilot the teaching kit was sent out to all junior division educators in the local public school board. The teachers who volunteered for the study attended a professional development workshop in November to provide them with an overview of GCE, the ACT! project and to review the expectations for being involved in the study.

Using a qualitative research approach, the broader project examined four data sets. Participants were asked to complete an online pre-survey before beginning to teach the ACT! lessons in order to measure their values, attitudes, and perceptions about GCE. A post-survey to measure teachers’ values and perceptions about being involved in the study was administered at the end of the study. In total, thirteen teachers completed both the pre-survey and post-survey. From January to June 2007, the researchers visited classrooms and were able to observe twelve social studies educators teaching lessons from the resource kit. Each of these observations was followed by a semi-structured interview eliciting the teacher’s feedback on their experience with the teaching kit and views about being a global educator. These interviews comprised the second data set for this study. At the end of the school year, the teachers completed a detailed questionnaire about each lesson, the assessment tasks, and overall objectives of the teaching kit. They also attended a debriefing session in June to share their feedback about being involved in the study, challenges and successes they encountered, and
general impressions of the lessons and assessment tasks of the teaching kit. The final data source was the tape recording of this three-hour professional development and debriefing session.

Although the ACT! teaching kit project involved four data sources, the study which we are reporting on here draws its data only from the pre and post-surveys, semi-structured interviews, and debriefing session. Taped data from the interviews and debriefing session was transcribed, coded, and triangulated with the survey data to carry out the final analysis presented below.

Research Participants

Data for this paper is drawn from the 13 teachers (11 females and 2 males) who participated in piloting the teaching kit and completed the pre and post-surveys. Three-quarters (10) identified themselves as being from white-European ethnic background, two Native Canadian/First Nations and the remaining as “Other.” There was a range in terms of teaching experience with 25% having taught fewer than 3 years; 25% 4-6 years; 18% 7-15 years and 30% more than sixteen years. All of the participants volunteered for this study, thus limiting the sample to those teachers who have already indicated their interest in GCE. The sample for this study is small for two reasons. First, one of the roles of the project facilitators was to support the teachers who have volunteered to pilot the teaching kit. To this end, it was deemed necessary to limit the number of participants so that the support offered would remain substantive and meaningful. In addition, the smaller sample size, a common feature of qualitative research methodology, provided a more in-depth understanding of teachers’ values and attitudes towards global education, as well as the challenges they faced in implementing GCE in their schools. Finally, all teachers involved in the study were teaching in elementary schools in a public school board that serves the third largest student population in Ontario in an area spanning over 7,000 square kilometers. Approximately half of the participants worked in sub-urban (or semi-urban) schools and the other half in rural schools or schools in small towns.

In recognition of the previously discussed social justice component of GCE, we were interested in documenting the participants’ levels of political awareness and their perceptions of themselves as social and/or political activists. The thirteen teachers taking part in the study did not describe themselves as unusually politically aware or politically active. When asked, “Do you consider yourself politically aware?” only three respondents (27%) answered “yes”; six answered “somewhat”; two answered “no”; and two did not respond. More significantly, when asked, “Do you consider yourself a political or social activist?” none answered “yes”; five answered “somewhat”;
six answered “no”; and two did not respond. These findings, along with the
demographic makeup of these teachers (primarily female and white), and range
of teaching experience led us to conclude that our sample was comprised of
typical teachers, largely reflective of the general make-up of the Ontario
teaching profession.

Findings and Discussion

Teachers’ Attitudes toward Global Citizenship Education

Despite the contested nature of global education and GCE in the
literature (discussed in previous sections), some common understandings
amongst the participants of this study emerged when they were asked at the
start of the study what they thought “global education” means. Two key
themes emerged from their responses. The first was an awareness of the
global issues and events and the diversity of the world’s cultures. The second
theme was interconnections between students and the world around them and
how one’s own actions can affect others.

When asked to define “global citizenship education,” the majority of
participants remarked upon the action aspect of GCE. Most noted that the
citizenship element of GCE indicated an emphasis on a more activist-based
pedagogy, moving from teaching students about the world, to acting “to
promote change.” One respondent eloquently explained,

We are each a citizen of the globe. As we become more
educated on what events and issues are taking place
worldwide, then we have a duty to respond to them. We
have to become educated and then we have to respond as
citizens who care and want to act responsibly with a global
conscience.

Others noted the need to go beyond teaching students about global issues to
focus on their responsibility as global citizens to consider not only their own
interests, but those of others outside of their own communities. Almost 80
percent of respondents defined GCE as teaching students to take action or
teaching students that they have responsibilities toward the global
community. Further, in order to gauge their attitudes about GCE, respondents
were also provided with a list of statements about GCE and asked to indicate
whether or not they agreed with them. All of the respondents strongly agreed
or agreed with the following statements, demonstrating their commitment to
GCE:

- It is important for students to learn about people and issues in
  other parts of the world.
Global Citizenship Educators

- It is important to teach students about cultural diversity, both locally and globally.
- I often teach students to value and respect cultures that are different from their own.
- Middle school students should learn about the gaps in poverty that exist locally and globally.

We can see how the participants in our study were attentive to both the perceptual or attitudinal dimension of global education, which has been emphasized by many of the main proponents of the field (Case, 1999; Werner & Case, 1997); and to the activist component of GCE. Overall, these teachers’ responses aligned with the most commonly accepted understandings of global education and GCE in their emphasis on learning about the world, its conditions and concerns. These findings are not surprising and are supported by other studies; thus there is a strong attitudinal predisposition toward global education and GCE amongst social studies teachers (Schweisfurth, 2006; Tucker, 1983).

Limitations and Challenges to Teaching Global Citizenship Education

Participants were asked what they consider to be the limitations and challenges to teaching GCE. Our research data shows that there are a number of related barriers or limitations to teaching GCE. First, all of the participants indicated that they felt limited by their own lack of knowledge about global issues and how to teach about global issues in the social studies classroom. As Tucker (1983) and Robbins, Francis, and Elliot (2003) have demonstrated, while the majority of teachers considered it important, many feel unprepared or unqualified to teach global education and GCE. This is related to the second barrier, the absence of existing accessible global education curriculum materials and teaching resources. Not surprisingly, given the lack of materials, all of the participants concurred that lack of time to develop new curriculum materials with a GCE focus presented another limitation. Along these lines, respondents also noted the lack of related professional development workshops or activities.

The absence of references to GCE in the official curriculum, and pressures to cover too many other important topics in the curriculum were viewed as full or partial barriers. One teacher, in the comments section of the survey, claimed that the emphasis on language and math in grade 6 and on EQAO (Education Quality and Accountability Office) testing in these subject areas preclude teachers from focusing on social studies at this grade level. Also, the majority of respondents also noted their own discomfort or fear in teaching controversial issues. In the pre-survey, 71% of respondents indicated that “feeling that these topics are too political” was either a barrier
or a partial barrier to teaching GCE; 59% indicated that “fear of teaching controversial issues” was a barrier or a partial barrier. Indeed, one teacher elaborated as follows:

I do feel some areas are a little “touchy” in that I don’t want to convey my own bias to the children, because I know that they take what I say as the “truth.” I also don’t want to scare them or “disturb” them emotionally too much. I want them to be aware, but not scared.

Likewise, one other teacher noted that he did not like teaching about global issues because of their depressing and overwhelming nature.

Fewer teachers regarded lack of support from their administration or other teachers as barriers to teaching GCE. However, one respondent noted that parental perspectives might present a barrier. Further, three teachers thought that the inappropriateness of teaching global issues to middle school students presented an obstacle to work in this field. This is surprising given that research literature has unequivocally demonstrated that children should be introduced to global issues and perspectives as early as possible and that the elementary years are the most appropriate time for doing so (Diaz, Massiasas, & Xanthopoulus, 1999; Evans, 1987; Giese & Downing, 1994).

Teachers’ Growth as Global Citizenship Educators

One of the main goals of the ACT! project was to support participating teachers in their growth as global citizenship educators. The teaching kit itself was developed with the needs of local teachers in mind. In addition, we provided teachers with support through professional development workshops, visits to their schools, and phone call and email correspondence.

Teachers responded to questions about their growth as global educators in the post-survey and during the post-observation interviews. The survey posed the question, “To what degree do you attribute any changes in your perceptions, values, and attitudes about global education to your involvement in this study?” Almost 85% claimed that they had experienced changes that were partially or completely related to their involvement in the study. Survey responses indicated that teachers’ involvement in the ACT pilot study provided them with opportunities to connect their students to GCE. Some teachers described the advantages of being involved in the pilot project, as in this response:

Having access to the resources, ideas, and activities would be the most significant advantages to this pilot project. The information and activities prompted many conversations and learning opportunities for my students. They began to
develop an understanding of the world beyond their community and their role in the larger picture.

Access to resources and related professional development opportunities was a recurring theme amongst participants and illustrates the urgent need for further on-going support and GCE teaching materials that are relevant and user-friendly.

Teachers also described their experiences participating in the study as enjoyable, as affecting their teaching practice, and as fulfilling a need to bring an activist-oriented global perspective to their students. Many noted the teaching kit’s strength in enabling students to make connections between the local and the global, and how much the students in sub-urban and rural areas enjoyed the lessons, as illustrated by these quotations:

Most of the students in my class quite enjoyed the unit and several listed learning about the UN as one of their favourite activities of the school year. I felt the unit was relevant and very informative … Students were very keen to take on a Social Action project and it has me wondering if we will start a small-scale NGO as a school committee.

Fabulous activities that students enjoyed and opened their eyes because it sparked their interest [and] reminded me how important the big picture is even in a small town school.

Participants recognized that the teaching kit provided them with an organized framework of lessons through which they could structure their social studies program. For example, one experienced teacher noted in an interview that the teaching kit gave him a framework or structure to work with and build upon. He explained, “I have believed strongly in the importance of this type of teaching, but I’ve never really approached it in an organized, thematic way, so it’s given me the resources and the ideas to do that.” Moreover, participants noted the importance of having access to GCE teaching materials that link directly to the Ontario social studies curriculum objectives, as they increasingly feel the pressure to ensure that they “cover” the curriculum.

Finally, the teachers, both experienced and those new to the profession, indicated that they learned a lot about global issues through their involvement in the study. Even those who professed to have come to the study with significant background in global issues and activism claimed that the resource provided them with a completely new way of approaching these issues in the classroom. As one teacher explained:

As a student I used to be involved in Oxfam and other organizations. But as a teacher and as an educator, it’s a totally...
new take for me. So this is really nice, like framing things in a way that first world or northern kids will understand and the way that they’ll understand their privilege, these are all really interesting questions for me.

Teachers with less background in global issues described their involvement in the ACT! pilot study as eye-opening, as is evident in these two interview responses:

It’s changed me a lot, and I have learned so much. I’m a geographer, but not this kind of geography, where you’re looking at world issues and organizations . . . . It’s got me being more aware of it and wanting to do something. It’s really been educational for me. I’ve enjoyed the learning.

Anytime you have to teach something globally, you always are learning new things. As someone who’s not, say, up on all the global issues or whatnot, you know, it’s definitely an eye-opener to see how much things are connected and how much we are definitely dependent on other people.

Finally, feedback from the professional development workshops revealed the real need to provide educators with ongoing opportunities to learn about how to incorporate GCE into their teaching, and to develop sustainable professional networks with like-minded educators.

Teachers’ Attitudes Towards Global Citizenship Education

Empirical research on the implementation of global education in the classroom is limited (Gaudelli, 2003). Much less focuses on the role of the teacher as global citizenship educator, mirroring the paucity of literature on GCE itself. For this reason, we discuss literature here on teachers as global educators and citizenship educators, and hope with our own study to contribute to the newly emerging field of literature on GCE.

Merryfield’s (1998) study on teacher implementation of global education noted that

Although there has been considerable rhetoric about the need for global education, little attention has been paid to how teachers are actually teaching about the world, its peoples, and global issues…We know very little about what actually happens in globally-oriented classrooms. (p. 345)

Three recent studies examine the role of teachers’ beliefs and knowledge in shaping citizenship education and GCE – Schweisfurth (2006), Myers (2007),
Global Citizenship Educators

Schweisfurth (2006) and Myers (2007) both examine the practices of teachers who are exceptionally committed to citizenship education. Schweisfurth’s study involved 6 teachers in the Toronto, Ontario area, while Myers’ study included politically active teachers in Toronto and in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Both of these studies found that teachers who are committed to teaching students to be active citizens can do so, even if these practices require that teachers depart from the state-mandated curriculum and locate teachers outside of the mainstream of their profession.

Myers (2007) studied politically active teachers to understand how their political experiences and their beliefs about the nature of democratic citizenship shaped their teaching practice. Myers argues, Official curricula at best provide “openings” for the type of citizenship education that aims to deepen democracy rather than maintain its elitist practice. It seems that for teachers to make use of such openings they may need to be active in politics themselves. (p. 20)

He concludes that without actual experience in political or social activism, professional-development activities may be insufficient to prepare teachers to develop active citizenship in their students. Similarly, Schweisfurth (2006) found that the commitment to GCE motivated teachers to stretch the provincial curriculum so that they could teach the topics that were meaningful to them. Teachers in this study devoted considerable time and energy to gathering the resources necessary to teach global citizenship. They utilized a network of likeminded teachers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other institutions in order to share resources, ideas, and encouragement. However, unlike the teachers in Schweisfurth’s Toronto-based study, the teachers in our study were not a part of a network of GCE educators. Further, our participants did not claim to have similar high levels of political experience as demonstrated by Myers’ sample. If Schweisfurth and Myers shine a light on the practice of exceptional citizenship educators, then our study is designed to reveal how more typical teachers outside of urban centres may approach the subject of GCE.

Davies’s (2004) study of teachers’ perceptions of citizenship and enterprise in England and Hungary found that in both countries, teachers located in a provincial town reported a greater reluctance to break rules or disobey authority than those who taught in the national capitals. Davies’s observation that the provincial teachers were more reluctant to deviate from the prescribed norms concurs with our observation that teachers were uneasy about the prospect of teaching controversial issues. It also was reflected in the insistence of the curriculum writers, who were also teachers in the local
Schweisfurth (2006) and Myers (2007) research describes education for active global citizenship that is practiced on the margins by exceptionally motivated and politically active teachers. However, the ACT! project revealed that teachers who were provided with GCE teaching resources that are engaging and that are aligned with the provincial curriculum guidelines, were able to implement an active GCE curriculum and find the experience to be professionally satisfying. Thus, this study casts doubt on Schweisfurth’s and Myers’ contention that GCE appeals only to a small group of radical teachers. Moreover, our findings are consistent with Robbins et al.’s (2003) conclusions that pre-service teachers overwhelmingly support the teaching of global issues though the majority feel that they are insufficiently prepared to do so.

Conclusions and Implications

We can draw a number of conclusions from this study. We can infer from the broader study (and subsequent promotion of the teaching kit) that there is a desire amongst social studies school teachers for GCE teaching resources. The study demonstrates that teachers are likely only to embrace GCE with appropriate supports such as resources that are user-friendly, explicitly aligned with official curriculum expectations, and related professional development opportunities.

The reported success of the ACT! teaching kit suggests that GCE has a broad appeal among teachers, students, and school boards. Students as young as grade 6, and presumably younger, can understand sophisticated concepts such as international development, nongovernmental organizations, social justice, and human rights, when these concepts are linked to their own experiences. All of the teachers who provided feedback for the study found the GCE content to be engaging for students, and were surprised and gratified by the degree to which their students became personally invested in their global studies. In fact, the ACT! pilot project was so successful that the Toronto District School Board has ordered 1000 hard copies of the ACT! teaching kit, despite the fact that the resource will be available for free in PDF form. Four other Ontario school boards also have ordered hard copies of the kit, in addition to the school board that sponsored the original project.

The need for teacher-friendly GCE materials is related to the limitations and barriers that participants noted. While a few noted their own lack of knowledge about and discomfort with teaching about global issues, the majority indicated that there were other “external” factors that prevented or limited them from engaging in GCE with their students. The most significant external factors included the pressures they are facing from accountability-
based demands on their time. Participants noted that with the emphasis on time-consuming accountability practices such as performance appraisals and standardized testing in Language Arts and Mathematics, there is less time for curricular development in subjects such as social studies. This echoes other research that demonstrates the effects on teachers’ work of managerial type reforms that privilege system efficiency, individual and organizational performance, and accountability (Larsen, 2005; Travers & Cooper, 1996).

Survey and interview data also supports the conclusion that the study succeeded in addressing the question, “Can providing teachers with global citizenship education resources and supporting them in the implementation of these resources improve their capacity to be effective global educators?” Teachers indicated that their participation in the ACT! pilot study allowed them to incorporate desirable content, skills, and values related to GCE. Eleven of thirteen participants responded in the survey that positive changes in their “perceptions, values, and attitudes about global education” were either partially or completely related to their participation in the study. The evidence suggests that the study achieved the goals of promoting in teachers increased understanding of their roles as global citizens and global educators, as well as an increased efficacy in promoting GCE in their own classrooms.

The ACT! teaching kit and related professional development workshops were successful with teachers because they supported engaging and interactive learning and because the kit was compatible with (i.e. “covered”) the official Ontario curriculum guidelines. To support the implementation of GCE, teachers should be provided with materials that are engaging, interactive, and compatible with curriculum expectations. The “Enabling Effective Support” strategy of the Department for International Development (U.K) concluded that there is a real and pressing need for the provision of supports for teachers involved in integrating the global dimension into their teaching (Department for International Development, 2003; see also Davies, Gregory & Riley, 1999; Robbins, et al., 2003). Furthermore, curriculum initiatives such as GCE, according to Evans (2003) face unavoidable setbacks when they are disconnected or incompatible with broader school directions and/or contextual factors. Schools, organizationally, have tended to reinforce the norms of hierarchical control, and in so doing, have undermined the impact of certain types of curricular reform. (p. 37)

Therefore, in order to mobilize the potential teacher support for GCE, it is essential to provide teachers with engaging curriculum materials and related professional development opportunities that respond to their practical needs and constraints they face in their work as elementary school teachers.
There is some debate within the citizenship education and global education literature as to how politically informed and politically active teachers need to be in order to teach students to be active citizens. As noted earlier, the teachers in this study do not represent an unusually politically active sample, in contrast to the participants in studies of global citizenship educators by Schweisfurth (2006) and Myers (2007). These were a group of typical teachers in terms of their background knowledge, activist and teaching experience, gender, and race. While our pre-survey results indicated that the majority of teacher participants were concerned that the controversial or “too political” nature of global issues represented a partial barrier to teaching about them, teachers did not find this to be a problem with the GCE approach presented in the ACT! teaching kit.

The question that hangs over the enterprise of implementing GCE curriculum is whether a critical pedagogy like GCE can become part of the mainstream curriculum. In the mid-late 1980s, the political right attacked global education and world studies, predecessors to GCE, for being forms of indoctrination and politicization, contributing to the marginalization of those fields of study (Hicks, 2007). However, what this study shows is that GCE is not viewed by teachers as a radical concept. Both students and teachers in Ontario are interested in learning about social justice on a global scale, and there is widespread support for institutions, such as the United Nations and various international NGOs, that build international cooperation and peaceful conflict resolution. However, the constraints imposed by limitations on teachers’ planning time and knowledge of global issues, as well as current pressures on teachers to cover the official curriculum, mean that GCE, which represents a new paradigm for citizenship education, can only be widely implemented with the development of curriculum aligned instructional materials that meet teachers’ needs.

References


Toward a Critical Stance: Citizenship Education in the Classroom

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Abstract

In this paper the author presents the argument that through the use of rich classroom talk, students can be motivated to take a critical stance on issues of citizenship, such as social justice, equity and environmental concern. Suggesting that students who are not part of the solution are, indeed, part of the problem, the author advocates giving young children a voice through the integration of citizenship education and critical literacy across the curriculum to promote student awareness and to empower students to become pro-active global citizens.

As a teacher with a keen interest in issues of equity and social justice, I struggle to make apparent to my students the issues of global citizenship that rarely impact their lives in a small Ontario town — knowing that many of these issues have a huge impact on my teaching colleagues and their students in larger urban centres.

This discussion looks at the value of classroom talk as a means of empowering students to global awareness and examines what empowerment of students toward a critical stance that facilitates the education of global citizens might look like in the primary or junior classroom.

The Roots of My Enquiry

The basis of my work is the exploration of a powerful lesson that my students taught me. The lesson was the result of an unexpected finding during my Masters’ thesis research, which demonstrated significant empowerment of the children in my study toward a critical stance, through the implementation of oral communication teaching methodologies. While there have been numerous subsequent examples in my teaching and research work that have supported these initial learnings, it is the following lesson that was the catalyst for this discussion.

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During a six-month research period, I studied the oral interactions of students in a Grade 1 classroom. Throughout the six months, we did a great deal of reading and talking about important issues that affect our world such as environmental concerns and social justice – at a primary level. At the end of the school year, our class was invited to perform a song for the parent volunteer appreciation tea. We chose to sing *One Small Voice* (Moss, 1989). After our song, the principal congratulated the students on their performance and asked them to share with the parents what they had learned in grade one. The first few students provided the expected responses – I learned to read – I learned to do “pluses” – I learned to write; however, the next student stunned the parents, and me, when he proudly declared, “I learned that I can make the world a better place.” His classmates nodded their heads in agreement.

The intent of my research in the grade one classroom had been to allow students the opportunity to engage in rich talk (Vetter, 2003), by providing them with the opportunity to learn through engagement with peers, teachers, and classroom guests. In our classroom, we made our voices heard through discussion, debate, and information sharing. To do so, we hosted a Canadian peacekeeper, worked on an eco-garden outside our window, and made critical connections to the world by reading powerful, illustrated texts that told stories of our environment and our world. However, as my research demonstrated, giving these young students a voice in the classroom led to their empowerment – to the belief that they could, indeed, make the world a better place.

Based on my research findings, I theorize that if children are provided with the opportunity to engage critically with issues of social justice, equity, and diversity that exist in the world around them, and, importantly, are shown that their voices are valued and respected, they will develop the ability to discern injustice and the confidence to speak out about social justice issues. In doing so, they will be building a foundation of global awareness, from which they may begin the process of becoming pro-active global citizens.

**Why Empowerment of Students is Important**

Darling-Hammond (2002) remarks on the frustrations of pre-service teachers in her class who were attempting to engage fellow students in discussions around issues of “equity, marginalization, discrimination, and oppression” (p. 2) only to find that the majority of their classmates who had been raised within mainstream society were unaware of the issues.

Ten years from now, the students to whom I have referred in the preceding paragraphs may be graduating as teachers themselves. I suggest that today is not too soon to be raising their awareness of citizenship issues such as equity and social justice in society. Teachers have the opportunity to
empower children to change the inequitable or quietly discriminatory practices that underlie student interactions and societal norms. I theorize that empowering all students to think critically and act justly today will work to create dialogue and action in the teachers, and indeed the citizens, of tomorrow.

Upon reading Darling-Hammond’s (2002) remarks, my first reaction was to wonder how the pre-service teachers she refers to could be so naïve about the issues. Certainly, there is plenty of newspaper coverage about equity issues in society. Considering this question led me to some noteworthy Canadian statistics.

The Community Profile statistics from Statistics Canada (2005) demonstrate that, at the time of the last census, almost half of the people living in and around Toronto identify themselves as belonging to a visible minority. However, outside of the Toronto area only one-tenth of Ontarians self-identify as belonging to a visible minority group. The percentage of visible minority students in the small-town Ontario school where I conducted research for my Master of Education thesis was less than 1%. These simple statistics tell me that outside of Toronto, many Ontarians may not be faced with daily issues of equity, discrimination, and marginalization based on race or ethnicity; therefore, the question arises as to what motivation teachers in these communities have to undertake multicultural initiatives, move toward a socially-just, anti-bias curriculum, and empower students to examine the role of marginalizing power within our society and globally. Although issues of discrimination and equity may be highly publicized in the news, removed from the reality, it is easy to say, It’s not my problem.

As an example of the previous point, allow me to relate my experience taking a Grade 5 class to Toronto to visit the Legislative Assembly and the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM). After our visit to the Legislative Assembly, we enjoyed lunch in Queen’s Park before walking to the ROM. As we made our way up Queen’s Park, one of the students hollered to me from the back of the line, “How come there’re so many Chinese people in Toronto?” My immediate reaction was to cringe at this loud question on a sidewalk that was, indeed, crowded with many Asian faces, and I quickly replied that he should save his questions for the classroom. However, looking at his sincere face, I realized that his question was valid and his choice of language and location were not intended to be disrespectful or racist. In that moment, that student taught me a valuable lesson about what I had neglected to teach in my classroom. How could I expect the students from our relatively homogenous school community to be sensitive to issues of diversity if I had never explicitly taught them about multiculturalism in Canada? How could I expect these children to know that Asian faces reflect a diversity of nations and cultures.
D. Vetter

that are a part of our Canadian multicultural society if I had never facilitated their knowing?

Within the budget restrictions of our rural school, the opportunity to travel to an urban centre is rare. Certainly, we have Internet access; however, the reading level of many global education websites makes them inaccessible to many of our young students. Therefore, I have now learned to encourage my students to explore the world through conversation with classroom guests, reasoned discussion and debate within the school community, and critical engagement with media and children’s literature – a process supported by the *Ontario Ministry of Education Expert Panel Report on Literacy* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004), which highlights the importance of critical literacy to focus on issues of “fairness, equity and social justice” (p. 9).

In addition, as a teacher in a Catholic school, I refer students to the guidelines of the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (Institute for Catholic Education, 1998), which call every Catholic student to become a global citizen who:

- respects the faith traditions, world religions and the life-journeys of all people of good will, (p. 6)
- acts morally,
- witnesses Catholic social teaching by promoting equality, democracy, and solidarity for a just, peaceful and compassionate society,
- respects and affirms the diversity and interdependence of the world’s peoples and cultures, [and]
- respects and understands the history, cultural heritage, and pluralism of today’s contemporary society (p. 9).

Through the integration of rich talk initiatives which facilitate the understanding of global issues, awareness of the responsibilities of global citizenship (such as those detailed in the Catholic Graduate Expectations, Institute for Catholic Education) and a focus on cross-curricular critical literacy programmes, educators have the opportunity to teach social justice and equity issues to all students — including those who live in a social milieu that may shelter them from the daily reality of the issues. After all, if these students are not part of the solution, they become part of the problem.

What Empowerment Looks Like in the Classroom

As educators, we must accept responsibility for the power that we wield to effect societal change or uphold the status quo. Giroux (1999) challenges teachers to make schools into places of “critical education in the service of creating a public sphere of citizens who are able to exercise power over their own lives and especially over the conditions of knowledge
Critical Stance Classroom

acquisition” (p.41). He further exhorts teachers to organize “around the practice of empowerment for the vast majority of students in this country who need to be educated in the spirit of a critical democracy” (p.41).

Effective facilitation by a skilled and enlightened educator is required to ensure that classroom dialogue reaches deeper than the put a penny in the plate mentality. As Mohanty (cited in Brown & Strega, 2005) reasons, the mere recognition of cultural diversity does little but create “sentimental charity” (p. 138). However, as educators of global citizens, it is incumbent on us to reflect critically on our own stance. While the implementation of global citizenship education practices in the classroom aims to develop a new and deeper understanding of the world for students, the practice also seems to require the development of a new understanding for teachers who are willing to accept that evolving power relations in the classroom must be “relative, productive and negotiated” (Morgan, 1997, p.15) in order to facilitate the implementation of democratic citizenship education. A teacher who facilitates the empowerment of students is willing to concede that his/her knowledge may not be “most worthy” and that there are, indeed, alternate ways of knowing.

In an empowered classroom, students know that their choices and their actions have an impact on their societal environment. They are encouraged to think critically about text and media — a practice that requires engagement and motivation on the part of the student. Engagement and motivation result from the implementation of authentic and purposeful activities (Dudley-Marling & Searle, 1991; Vasquez, 2004) that provide students with relevant experiences and reflect a student’s location and ways of knowing (Gee, 1996; Heath, 1983; Power & Hubbard, 2002). In my classroom, such authentic and purposeful activities have included the creation of multimedia presentations about equity issues, fundraising campaigns for local and international social justice initiatives, publishing a quarterly news magazine, and engaging in community action projects.

Lindfors (1999) supports the power of inquiry acts to deepen a child’s “understanding of her own (and others’) humanness” (p. 237) through three basic human urges which are present in inquiry, “to connect with others, to understand the world, [and] to reveal ourselves within it” (p. 237). Empowerment of the child recognizes the value of the child’s voice. Gallas (1994) affirms, “I have learned that when each member of the classroom community strives to affirm the importance of all voices, the benefit for every child is much greater” (p. 11). Gee (1996) concurs stating, “Schools ought to allow students to transform and vary their Discourses, based on larger cultural and historical understandings, to create new Discourses, and to imagine better and more socially just ways of being in the world” (p. 190). The findings of my research have convinced me that there is great value in opening up our
classrooms to improved oral curriculum in order to promote relationship building and the development of respect for others within the classroom and within the community.

**Why Rich Talk in the Classroom is Essential**

In reflecting on how to further encourage student empowerment in my classroom, the notion of rich talk has been very useful. Oral communication is the basis for implementing a programme of empowerment in the classroom. Rich talk facilitates the engagement of all participants and allows students to acquire and appreciate alternate discourses. All voices are respected and heard. The opportunity to be heard is, in itself, an empowering experience.

If students are expected to freely express their thinking and ideas, they must feel confident that their contributions will be respected by their teacher and their peers. Research demonstrates that students' confidence to express themselves effectively is increased by their comfort level within the environment in which they are required to speak (Dudley-Marling & Searle, 1991; Gallas, 1994; Lindfors, 1999; Wells & Chang, 1988).

In a classroom that practices rich talk:

1. All participants in the conversation speak and listen with respect.
2. A student is never fearful of ridicule or teasing when articulating his/her thoughts.
3. Conversation, discussion, or debate is meaningful, authentic, purposeful, and relevant to the students.
4. Teachers are communicative partners who encourage critical thinking and independent expression, while avoiding judgement or censure (Vetter, 2003).

The role of the teacher is to empower the students toward productive talk and critical thinking, and to facilitate classroom discussions. This is done by discussing and modeling effective communication strategies, explicitly teaching the social expectations of group discussion, and allowing students the freedom to interact – to practice with each other without constant intervention by the teacher who responds to each comment and nominates subsequent speakers. In a rich talk classroom, the teacher becomes a collaborative partner (Wells & Wells-Chang, 1992) who introduces powerful and thought-provoking text and discussion, welcomes interesting guests, and poses carefully constructed questions to elicit higher level thinking while respecting the rights of all students to contribute to the discussion. When students and teachers share authentic, purposeful, and meaningful talk,
students have the opportunity to explore and expand their global awareness and critical thinking.

**Conclusion**

I do not presume this discussion to be the cornerstone of a prescription for change. The issues of discrimination, inequity, and marginalization are too far-reaching in their social implications for one solution. The implementation of teaching methodologies which facilitate critical literacy and a discourse of empowerment to fight social injustice is not a quick fix. However, until today’s students become part of the solution, they will continue to be part of the problem – they will prolong a dominant discourse that works to silence and subjugate a significant portion of our citizens and uphold discriminatory practices.

As I reflect back on the remark made by my student about the number of Asian people on a crowded Toronto street, I can see clearly how the implementation of citizenship education in my classroom would have rewritten that remark. To become global citizens, today’s children need to be empowered toward a critical stance through the careful facilitation of citizenship education initiatives. Students need to know and understand the issues, value the diversity of others, and be empowered to stand up against the discourse that attempts to subdue or silence any voice. I believe the integration of meaningful, purposeful, and authentic classroom talk – rich talk – and critical literacy in the classroom is the foundation for effective citizenship education.

Indeed, a classroom that encourages opportunity for engagement in societal issues and welcomes the diverse discourses of the classroom, even in the primary grades, takes a major step toward creating an equal platform from which all students can expand their critical literacy skills, broaden their thinking on issues of social consequence, and inaugurate actions that demonstrate pro-active global citizenship.

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**References**


D. Vetter


You Can’t Criticize What You Don’t Understand:
Teachers as Social Change Agents in Neo-Liberal Times

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Abstract

Despite the existence of success stories of individual teachers and even school-wide groups of teachers successfully teaching from a global perspective, this paper raises a basic question: to what extent can the average teacher be an agent of change in the tradition of Dewey, Freire, and Giroux? The questioning of this role arises from the observation that many teachers are high achieving graduates of the very school system to which they have returned; and, as a result of spending their formative years in largely untroubled middle-class circumstances, are steeped in the dominant neoliberal ideology and consumer-orientation of the global market society. The author implicitly raises the issue, especially given his concerns about the power of the dominant ideology, as to just how critical and how transformative the actual classroom practice of global education and global citizenship education is or has the potential of being.

“Our knowing is deeply intertwined with our world views, with our histories, our families, our social groups, our experiences.” D. Flannery (2002, p. 112)

Introduction

Advocates of global and global citizenship education (GCE) implicitly or explicitly assign to classroom teachers the role of social change agent. We need look no further than this volume to see examples of that. Larsen & Faden and Vetter, for example, explicitly assign such a role to teachers, while Pike (1996) does so implicitly. I have done so myself (O’Sullivan, in press; O’Sullivan & Vetter, 2007). In so doing we are building on the work of John Dewey (1938/1997, 1916/2000) and Paulo Freire (1970, 1985, 1987, 1993, 1998) to

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mention only those two prominent radical educational reformers. Their strategies for educational reform placed socially conscious teachers at the centre of classroom-based pedagogies that - or so they envisioned - would prepare learners to participate in processes of political and personal transformation.

Yet, it is not self-evident that even a critical minority of 21st Century Canadian teachers can be expected to assume the role of classroom-based social change agent. This is especially so when we add the proviso, as the more overtly politicized literature does (e.g., the work of Freire, 1970, 1985, 1987, 1993, 1998 and of Giroux, 1988, 1995, 1997, 2001, 2003), that to be considered social change agents, educators must teach from a critical and transformative (hereafter C/T) perspective. This C/T perspective is often presumed to be sharply demarcated from other perspectives which, while they are innovative and progressive, are nonetheless, not viewed as being as overtly political, and thus are seen to be less critical, less transformative, than the perspectives advocated, for example, by Giroux. ¹ I speak of a presumed contrast with these latter approaches because I am not convinced that the assumption that these approaches are somehow antithetical to C/T pedagogy is well founded. When professionally well-prepared and politically well-informed global and global citizenship educators teach from a social justice perspective, when they encourage students to consider the impacts of war, of worsening poverty, racism, sexism, and so forth—even if they do not do so from an explicitly C/T perspective, they are creating the space for an important dialogue within the profession and among students.

The Importance of Clarity

Which pedagogies, even if they are not explicitly C/T, are part of a progressive consensus that forms a community of social justice-oriented educators? Pike (1996) struggled with the question of inclusion/exclusion – specifically in his case with the question of what was (and was not) included in the field of global education – and why such distinctions were important. He considered the ambiguity in the literature with respect to what constituted global education. Pike noted that “it could be argued that an academic preoccupation with definitions is unimportant” and that “the existence of a variety of definitions, encompassing diverse perspectives and even ambiguities, is not antithetical to some central tenets within global education” (p. 8). Though he was open to ambiguity, he also observed that “definitions … are often highly revealing of the nature and scope of the thinking that lies behind them” (p. 8). He wrote that deficiencies in global educators’ understanding may limit their abilities to seize opportunities to build global education into
their classroom practice. [A] survey of graduate students suggests that those teachers who are able to define global education are more likely than others to be promoting global awareness. (p. 8)

Are, then, definitional issues important? As I have suggested by the title to this essay, with apologies to Bob Dylan, you can’t criticize what you don’t understand. If an educator’s understanding of how the world works is “deficient,” his/her ability to teach insightfully about that world from any perspective much less a critical and transformative perspective will be compromised.

The context in which I frame these considerations includes the belief that teachers can and must play a role as social change agents both within the school and, indeed, beyond. Yet, despite efforts dating back to Dewey’s progressive educational movement, this strategy has not been successfully integrated into K-12 schools in any significant way. It is essential that we understand why this is so and continues to be so as reflected by Schweifurth’s (2006) observations about global educators being consigned to the periphery of the interests of the teaching profession (p. 49). We need to learn from those failed experiences in order to move the 21st century C/T agenda forward. To do this, at a minimum, we need to ask the following questions:

- How do we define critical and transformative pedagogy, and what is the goal of such a pedagogy?
- What evidence is there that past (and present) generations of progressive and other C/T educators have failed to inject critical pedagogies into the curriculum?
- Can pedagogies, that raise students’ awareness of social, economic, political, and environmental problems but that fall outside of the strict parameters of critical and transformative pedagogy, contribute to the movement to transform schools into centers offering such a pedagogy?
- How best can C/T educators support their colleagues to reach the level of critical consciousness required to teach from a shared perspective?

**Defining Critical and Transformative (C/T) Pedagogy**

Before addressing the assertion that past generations of progressive educators failed to inject C/T perspectives into the curriculum, we must come to understand the nature of the pedagogy that our predecessors supposedly failed to implement. This brings us to the highly contested territory regarding the relationship between the personal and the political and pedagogical efforts
to address that relationship. Much of the more politically explicit critical pedagogical literature, while it stresses issues of power, the ongoing struggle to achieve social justice locally and globally, and concerns such as working for a sustainable environment, is silent on personal transformation. Furthermore, and in contrast with this silence by many critical educators on this aspect of change, much of the mainstream literature that has so strongly influenced curriculum delivery (the most recent example being character education; see Noddings, 2002) emphasizes personal change without any reference to social context. Brockett and Hiemstra (1991), speaking of this divide as it manifests itself in the context of adult education, note that “one school of thought holds that the emphasis should be on the growth and development of individuals while another school argues that social change should be the primary function of adult education” (p. 131). They argue that this “notion of individual vs. social emphasis is a false dichotomy,” as “one cannot exist without the other” (p. 131). I agree with this observation; even so, I caution that a great deal of care must be taken to ensure that balance is maintained and that, in classroom practice, the focus on the individual does not take over. This can happen all too easily in our highly individualistic, consumer-driven society, in which teachers are personally disposed and professionally encouraged to stress individual growth in the virtual absence of critical discussions of the “social.” That said, those critical educators who are perhaps more oriented toward the social need to keep in mind that people who cannot care about themselves (or who, at the other extreme, are so busy caring about themselves that they have no time or inclination to care for others) are unlikely candidates to involve themselves in movements for social change.3

Maslow’s (1970) theory of self-actualization includes what he calls a “democratic character structure,” which involves relating well with people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs. In a multicultural society like Canada, this constitutes a precondition for effective participation in a broad-based movement for social change.

What are the prospects for combining teachers’ concerns (indeed, a passion) for realizing each child’s individual potential cognitively and emotionally, socially and personally, with the planet’s pressing need for social, political, and environmental change? Brockett and Hiemstra (1991) raise this issue when they refer to perspective transformation, which, though it is a process of personal transformation, they see as having the capacity to “lead to action in the social arena” (p. 133). Yet, they also realize that this perspective is open to criticism precisely because there is no necessary link between personal transformation and engagement in social change. To establish this link, educators who teach from a perspective that poses issues
from a critical point of view (i.e., one that relates to who exercises social, political, and economic power, on whose behalf it is exercised, and the adequacy or inadequacy of our democratic institutions and practices) must also employ pedagogical practices that focus on personal transformation understood as development of the individual student’s ability to act in concert with others. Pedagogical strategies designed to prepare students for collective social engagement, when such strategies are not fused with curricular strategies designed to promote personally transformative change, are highly unlikely to have a transformative impact, be it personal or political.

The definition of transformative learning developed by the OISE/UT Transformative Learning Centre articulates this link between the personal and the social. Transformative learning involves a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; sexual orientation, our body-awarenesses, our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy. (Transformative Learning Centre, OISE/UT, n.d.)

Fusing the Politically Critical with the Personally Transformative

Many compelling and worthy pedagogies have emerged over the years (critical literacy being one of the better known examples) that provide a framework for educators to teach from a C/T perspective. I contend, however, that of these many approaches, global education – or, more recently, global citizenship education (GCE) – constitutes the most promising and inclusive framework for C/T educators in our elementary, secondary, and postsecondary institutions. Global education and GCE are world-minded and student-centered pedagogies (Selby, 2004). I would argue that this is equally true of GCE and that both contain the three essential elements that characterize all good curricular practice – namely, thinking, feeling, and doing (Miller, 2007). Global education and GCE have as their central concern an understanding of the interconnectedness of local, national, and global events with issues of race, class, gender, peace, the environment, and so forth, from a C/T perspective.

This fusion of the political and the personal is nicely captured by Selby (2004). His notion of outer and inner dimensions, corresponding to the
political and the personal, provides a succinct summary of what this approach entails pedagogically. As Selby addresses a single aspect of the “outer dimension” – in this case the one he calls the spatial – he weaves in the “inner dimension” of the personal:

At a personal level, this [spatial] dimension focuses on the interconnectedness of an individual’s mental, emotional, physical and spiritual make-up. Learners, it is argued, should develop an understanding of the interdependencies that, in so many forms and at so many levels, personal to global, influence their present and future lives. They should learn to understand, too, the nexus between humans and all life forms. In curricular terms, this dimension calls for forms of integration, interdisciplinarity or other-than-disciplinary, and speaks to forms of learning that enable learners to cultivate an holistic mindset and the attendant skills that are usually marginalized within the citadels of [the] mechanism we recognize as schools. Intuition, for instance, the ability to immediately perceive and be sensitive to the whole … is recognized as a quality to be honed in the learning. (p. 2)

Selby’s article is important because it demystifies the fusion of the political and the personal and holds out the real possibility that, once they are provided with professional development and the proper supports, teachers will be able to integrate politically critical and personally transformative curricular approaches into mainstream classrooms.

**Past Failures to Implement Transformative Pedagogies**

Progressive educators ever since Dewey have failed to inject C/T pedagogies broadly into the curriculum or to connect schooling with movements for social reform and democracy. Even so, we need not be pessimistic. Indeed, this observation is useful, for it reminds us that stubbornly doing more of the same and expecting different results will not help us achieve C/T outcomes.

One of the important lessons to be drawn is that curricular reform is an unavoidably political process. Many classroom teachers carefully avoid bringing politics into the classroom. When teachers fail to bring public issues (e.g., politics) into the classroom in a nonpartisan and grade-appropriate way, they are undermining both their own capacity and that of their students to develop into critical pedagogues. Dewey would not agree with this apolitical approach to “social problem solving.” In the early decades of the 20th century, he was deeply worried about a *democratic deficit* (Carr & Hartlett, 1996). For him, the solution to the crisis of democracy was to avoid limiting
popular political participation to occasional voting, leaving the serious business of public life to professional politicians; indeed, he favored reforming the public education system so that citizens would develop the motivation and intellectual tools to participate in processes of deliberative democracy (Kadlec, 2007; Westbrook, 1991). To prepare students for such participation requires classroom discussion of public issues. Dewey would later posit that the failure of his generation of educational reformers to link their proposals for schools to their proposals for the broader society was the main reason why both reform projects failed (Tanner & Tanner, 1995). Of course, many of Dewey’s specific educational proposals were, in fact, adopted in schools in the United States and Canada, and elsewhere; but because they were taken out of context, they were reduced to being new techniques for teaching old curriculum. In other words, Dewey’s reforms were incorporated into the curriculum, but his vision was not (Glass, 2000, p. 278).

The fate of Dewey’s educational reforms is an example of mainstreaming. By mainstreaming we understand the process by which ideas with C/T intent are adapted for use in regular classrooms (Ibrahim, 2005). Mainstreaming is not inherently good or bad, though, generally speaking, the mainstreaming of progressive ideas invariably involves a blunting of their critical edge. When a progressive idea loses its essential criticality, mainstreaming serves no progressive purpose. Indeed, it is not at all far-fetched to suggest that the explicit purpose of Ministry curriculum developers who mainstream a particular critical pedagogy may be to blunt the critical edge of that pedagogy which is being practiced on the periphery by C/T teachers. Dewey’s experience of having his ideas mainstreamed, with negative consequences from a progressive perspective, reflects what is occurring with C/T pedagogies today – including global and global citizenship education. With respect to the practice of mainstreaming, Openshaw and White (2005) describe the resulting “banality” of the treatment in official curriculum documents of complex citizenship issues:

Informed, reasonable, “responsible citizens,” “cultural diversity,” “global interdependence,” are indeed soft phrases that roll easily from the tongue, laundered as laudable, understandable, and achievable objectives for future citizens, uniformly mandated by social studies curricula … this very banality camouflages harsher realities. (p. 6)

The fact that reformers of the stature of Dewey and his contemporaries failed to achieve their progressive objectives, and that Freire feared the same fate (Macedo & Araujo Freire, 1998, p. x), is significant today. This failure cannot be said to have resulted from any shortcomings in the logic and coherence of their arguments in favor of reform or in the justice of
their cause. The failure of these C/T educational reform efforts must be sought elsewhere.

**Ideology and Social Control**

The single most important barrier to critical and transformative school reform at the present time, as it was throughout the previous century, is explained by the concept of ideology – specifically, by the hold that ideologies have on the worldviews of teachers, school administrators, and society as a whole, including students and parents.

An ideology is a system of political and social ideas, or a way of thinking, that is held (usually) unconsciously by large numbers of people in a given society. Ideologies serve to justify social, political, and economic actions and cultural practices in the societies over which these ideas hold sway. Ideologies become the “common sense” of the society in which they are hegemonic; invariably, they serve to explain the ways of the world according to a logic that serves the interests of the politically and economically dominant social class. Today, the dominant ideology is neoliberalism. The central component of neoliberal ideology is the belief that the free market, unfettered by government regulation, is the best mechanism for achieving economic and social well-being, which is defined to a great extent by the degree to which the population can consume. This is accompanied by an abhorrence of state ownership and by unwavering support for private ownership of the means of production (Giddens, 1998).

The concept of ideology, and its hold over entire populations – an idea that was summed up succinctly by Marx and Engels (1976) when they wrote “the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas” (p. 67) – was developed and expanded by Antonio Gramsci (Mouffe, 1979). Gramsci observed that the dominant ideology permeates all of society, including the organizations of the civil society, the churches, and most certainly schools and universities. This ensures that the vast majority of citizens – even those who could hardly be said to benefit from the existing social order – accept its basic logic. Of course, to say that there is a hegemonic ideology in any given society, or even globally, does not preclude the existence of parallel or counter-ideologies that challenge, in whole or in part, the prevailing dominant ideology. There are times when counter-ideologies assert themselves and become a force to be reckoned with. This possibility provides hope to those who have a critique of the dominant socioeconomic order, including advocates of C/T educational reform. The movement of an erstwhile counter-ideology from the social margins to the mainstream occurs when the ideas that form the core of the counter-ideology expand their influence from being the beliefs of a small circle of social critics to being more widely accepted by
You Can’t Criticize
growing sectors of the citizenry. Over time, counter-ideologies can come to challenge the existing order. Freire’s (1970) notion of conscientization is based on breaking the hold of the dominant ideology on subordinate populations as they learn to “name” their oppressors and develop the ability to consider alternative ways of organizing society unencumbered by the oppressor’s mode of thought. This constitutes the key to answering the question of how teachers (and students) can be moved toward the level of critical consciousness that is necessary to engage in C/T practice in the classroom and beyond.

Reaching the point where teachers and students have the ability, in the words of C. Wright Mills (1959/2000) to “achieve the intricate connection between the patterns of their lives and the course of world history [and] cope with the larger worlds with which they are so suddenly confronted” (p. 4) involves breaking the hold that the dominant neoliberal ideology has upon them. Teachers, struggling to make the transition from neoliberalism to criticality, from individualism to a fusion of the personal and the political, will benefit from mentoring by more experienced practitioners who have well-grounded C/T classroom practice and a high degree of critical consciousness, to use Freire’s term.

Critical Consciousness, C/T Pedagogy, and Social Change

What is the relationship between accepting the conviction that political and personal change can occur (and that the two need to occur together) and the ability to teach from the C/T perspective? Put another way, what is the relationship between critical consciousness and C/T pedagogy? To begin to understand this relationship we must briefly visit the Freirian theory of consciousness.

Freire distinguishes between that which is “natural” and that which is “cultural” (his term). That which is natural is understood to be given and cannot (or should not) be interfered with by human intervention, whereas that which is cultural involves those institutions and practices which are “historically, materially, and politically constructed or, at the very least, conditional [and] can, theoretically, be changed or acted upon by [human agency]” (Connolly, n.d., p. 5).

People at the lowest level of social consciousness, what Freire called naive level of consciousness, are unable to conceive of social change. They are characterized by “an unreflecting acceptance of the absolute validity and questionability of the world as is,” and furthermore, they “cannot conceive of a basic perspective different from their own” (Connolly, n.d., p. 5). This unquestioning acceptance of what is impedes their ability to consider what
might be. Arguably, few adult Canadians and (hopefully) no teachers operate at this level of (un)consciousness.

The next level of consciousness is what Freire calls *superstitious* consciousness (but which I have chosen to call *conventional* consciousness). This level of consciousness is “characterized by a recognition of cultural options but a concomitant sense of powerlessness to do anything about those options” (Connolly, n.d., p. 5). People who live at the conventional level of consciousness recognize that many of our institutions, including schools, corporations, government ministries, and the media, are the products of human endeavor, but they also accept the permanence of these socially constructed institutions in their present form even though any institution that has been created by humans can be modified or abolished by humans. Freire labeled this form of consciousness as superstitious consciousness because it attributes near mystical and unchanging powers to such institutions. I would argue that this level of consciousness characterizes the worldview of the vast majority of Canadians, including most teachers, and explains my decision to label it *conventional* consciousness.

The form of consciousness that empowers people to engage in transformative practice is what Freire calls *critical* consciousness. Critical consciousness “recognizes that cultural institutions are created and sustained by human purpose and [that] action and language both shapes and reflects people’s perceptions of cultural institutions” (Finlay & Faith, 1987, cited by Connolly, n.d., p. 6). This is the level of consciousness which recognizes that “culture … can, theoretically, be changed or acted upon” (Connolly, p. 5) by human intervention. Connolly’s use of the term “theoretically” implies that, yes, such change is possible, but only with many preconditions.

Freire’s understanding of critical consciousness is highly political. He understands politics not so much as the understandably discredited parliamentarianism as practiced in Canada and elsewhere, but rather as the efforts of ordinary people to shape their life conditions through collective political action guided by critically informed judgment (similar to Dewey’s deliberative democracy). The educational practice that flows from such a concept is also political, just as “uncritical” educational practice is political, albeit for different ends. Freire (1987) summed up the political nature of educational practice as follows:

Since education is by nature social, historical and political, there is no way we can talk about some universal, unchanging role for the teacher … A teacher must be fully cognizant of the political nature of his/her practice and assume responsibility for this rather than denying it. When the teacher is seen as a political person, then the political nature of education requires
that the teacher either serve whoever is in power, or present options to those in power … Professional competence, command of a subject or discipline, is never understood by the progressive teacher as something neutral. There is no such thing as a category called “professional competence” all by itself. We must always ask ourselves: In favour of whom and of what do we use our technical competence? (pp. 211-12)

Faculties of education and the very structure of schooling emphasize professional and technical competence. At no point does Freire deny the importance of educators being professionally and technically competent; he does, however, ask them to remember on whose behalf they are exercising this competence and to apply their skills as educators in ways that help students develop their own critical consciousness. This, in turn, will help students develop the tools to think, feel, and act critically.

Freire’s categories of consciousness are not watertight, and this allows us to consider the relationship between C/T practice and the practice of those who, while open to infusing criticality into their classroom practice, are not doing so from an explicitly C/T perspective. For example, individuals who for the most part operate at the conventional level of consciousness will not always exhibit a sense of powerlessness in the face of dominant institutions nor will they always shy away from the prospect of engaging in social change. The constrained sense of empowerment experienced by people at the level of conventional consciousness may not fundamentally challenge established beliefs, practices, or institutions (a characteristic of the empowerment arising from critical consciousness), but, at the same time, we should not underestimate the significance of change that can emerge from citizens who are still very much influenced by conventional consciousness. The impact of such partial empowerment is attested to, and helps explain why Canada is not the same socially as it was 20, 40, or 60 years ago. Change, including changes in belief systems, consciousness, and behaviours, can happen in a variety of ways. For example, citizens can and do take action to make change happen, or they can simply accept change that has come from elsewhere. Telford and Lazar (2002) point out that Canadians have, enthusiastically or reluctantly, endorsed important changes over the past 2 or 3 decades. Public opinion polling over recent years indicates that Canadians

- have embraced the political values entrenched in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
- have endorsed the principle of official bilingualism …;
- are comfortable with the advances made by women over the past four decades;
- have accepted the uncloseting of homosexuality;
are broadly sympathetic to Aboriginal peoples …; and
accept the multicultural dynamic of Canada. (Telford & Lazar, p. 4)

On a more contemporary note, a recent poll commissioned by the

Globe and Mail and CTV found that “typical” Canadians feel that

- Canada’s proudest moment was a decision not to go to war in Iraq;
- its foreign policy is too heavily influenced by the US;
- we are fighting in Afghanistan mainly at the behest of Washington; and
- climate change and the rich–poor gap are a bigger threat to world
  security than terrorism or weapons of mass destruction. (Gee, M.,
  2007, p. A.4)

These views reflect a key characteristic of conventional
consciousness (i.e., a recognition of options), but they do not reflect another
characteristic of this same level of consciousness (i.e., a concomitant sense of
powerlessness to do anything about these options). Some of the above-cited
changes came about as the result of years of political struggle (e.g., Aboriginal
rights), while others (e.g., court decisions affecting gay marriage) may well
have been decided on by decision-making elites. In such dynamic
circumstances, it is impossible for us to say that Canadians as a whole feel
powerless. Their sense of empowerment or lack thereof seems to depend on
the issue at hand and on a basket of complex circumstances. Thus, it can be
said that on a range of issues, Canadians seem to be moving – however
cautiously – between two levels of consciousness (conventional and critical)
and that they seem to be open to persuasion. By inference, it is logical to
presume that if their children come home from school talking about classroom
discussions and research projects around such social issues in a grade-
appropriate way, this is unlikely to be highly controversial in most homes.6

Such changing social and political views, along with, for example, the
“permission” granted to teachers in the curriculum to teach global issues (see
Schweifurth, 2006), amount to an invitation to educators wishing to teach from
a C/T perspective to do so in a way that encourages students to grapple with
socially significant issues.

Some Concluding Remarks

I began this article with the observation that the more explicitly
politicized approaches to C/T pedagogy are presumed to be in contradiction
with other pedagogies that, while less explicitly politicized, nonetheless raise
questions of social justice, environmental degradation, and so forth. There is
no question that a divide exists between those self-defined global education
and GCE practitioners who make little or no effort to raise issues critically with
their students (perhaps characterized, following Openshaw & White (2005), as
the ones who indulge in banality) and those who work hard to inject a social justice perspective into their classroom practices. It is very important not to lump the former (neoliberals, in effect) with the latter (aspiring C/T pedagogues). It is these latter teachers — and their counterparts among teacher candidates in faculties of education — who constitute the hope for significantly expanding the numbers of C/T practitioners.

Educational reform initiatives always involve a minority of teachers “buying in” during the early stages (Hargreaves, 2000), and C/T educational reform is no exception. The core of committed C/T practitioners — the ones referred to by Larsen and Faden (this issue) as the “exceptionally motivated and politically active teachers” — have to make the effort to journey from the periphery, as Schweifurth (2006) would have it, and engage with those teachers who are struggling in the mainstream to support their students as they confront the social issues that affect them directly and indirectly.

By way of example, elsewhere I have described in some detail the progressive and exemplary classroom practice of N.C., an elementary school global education practitioner, and her colleagues in a small-town Ontario school (O’Sullivan, in press; O’Sullivan & Vetter, 2007). N.C. and her fellow teachers came to global education in a highly idiosyncratic way. One interdisciplinary unit that is taught by N.C. from a global perspective is her grade 7 study which is based on the novel The Heaven Shop (Ellis, 2004). A superficial understanding of the experience might cause some to question whether this unit constitutes a C/T pedagogy that significantly moves her students toward a new level of sociopolitical understanding and critical consciousness or is best thought of as an enrichment of existing curricular paradigms.

Posing the issue in such stark contrast strikes me as being unhelpful in the extreme. In the face of the stultifying expectations placed on classroom teachers, N.C. and her colleagues have taken advantage of the space they have found in the Ontario curriculum. They have created an opportunity to open their students’ eyes, minds, and emotions to a global reality that, as with the students in Vetter’s small-town class (this issue), seems very far away until the connections are made by insightful classroom practitioners. In practicing (in this case) global education, N.C. and her colleagues are operating within the frame of reference of two levels of consciousness; in this way they are expanding their own intellectual and personal horizons as well as their personal forms of social engagement, and those of their students. With little institutional support, and with only themselves as mentors, these teachers are engaging in a critical and transformative practice that demonstrates an openness to exploring issues far more deeply than is currently happening in most mainstream classrooms.
N.C.’s experiences are a reminder that, regardless of ongoing debates among critical pedagogues, it is the initiative and expertise of classroom teachers that is reshaping the practice of C/T pedagogy. “Mainstream” teachers, like N.C., and those documented by Larsen and Faden, as well as the “exceptionally motivated and politically active teachers” operating on the margins, would all benefit from a supportive relationship with one another. This in-school collaboration, supported by an injection of explicitly political C/T pedagogies into faculties of education, amounts to an important precondition for mainstreaming C/T pedagogies in a way that would allow them to maintain, rather than blunt, their critical and transformative edge.

Endnotes

1 I am thinking of the contributions associated with Pike & Selby (1988), Merryfield (1997), Tye (1999), and Noddings (2002, 2005), to name only a few.

2 I recognize that to characterize anyone’s view of the world as “deficient” is to invite charges of elitism. The issue of judging teachers’ understanding of how political, economic, and social processes work needs broader discussion. We are comfortable judging a teacher’s knowledge of math, science, history, or French, for example, and we expect a minimal level of subject competence to teach these subjects. I argue that CT competence (global literacy, for example), including the associated pedagogies, is as important to learn as traditional subject areas.

3 From my involvements with global and global citizenship educators, I observe that these teachers are motivated first and foremost by a concern about their students as individuals; their social involvements arise from a desire to implicate these students in a social engagement that causes them to grow intellectually and emotionally. This is the topic of my ongoing research.

4 Global Education and GCE are two closely related but distinct pedagogies. Some work has been done on defining the distinctions between the two (e.g., Davies, Evans, & Reid, 2005), however, Pike (this issue), argues for finding commonalities rather than constructing barriers between these two global pedagogies.

5 Deliberative democracy is a concept central to Dewey’s thinking on the relationship between democracy and educational reform. The practice of deliberative democracy, be it in the classroom or in the community, involves shifting and enriching our understanding of democracy from one that effectively reduces public political participation to the act of voting to one that sees democracy as an ongoing process in which an informed and motivated citizenry engages in public debate and political engagement at the local, national, and, increasingly, the global level (Benhabib, 1996; Habermas, 1996; Kadlec, 2007).

6 Of course, “most homes” are not “all homes,” and the move by a teacher or a number of teachers in a particular school towards a C/T stance will not always be welcome. In some jurisdictions, explicit curricular provisions or board policies place teachers on a stronger footing when dealing with “controversial issues” (e.g., critical thinking, gay and lesbian issues, global education), while in other circumstances (e.g., Catholic schools on gay and lesbian issues) teachers will have to tread more carefully (or not at all). Ironically, teachers in the Catholic system can often teach from a highly critical perspective on certain social issues because of the mandate to teach from the perspective of Catholic social values (Vetter, this issue).
References


You Can’t Criticize


BOOK REVIEW

Title: Innovations in Teacher Education: A Social Constructivist Approach
Authors: Clive Beck and Clare Kosnik
Year of publication: 2006
Review by: Alice Schutz (Brock University)
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The intention of this book is “to propose certain goals and standards for pre-service education, and continue a conversation about directions for our field” (Beck & Kosnik, 2006, p. 5). The authors believe that social constructivism can provide an important, practical direction for achieving such meaningful and practical goals and standards. They see social constructivism, not only as a theoretical construct, but passionately advocate its use as a strategy for addressing educational problems such as the gap between university culture and the classroom and between academic knowledge and popular culture. They also believe that the implementation of social constructivism can address the attrition rate of teachers, the drain of resources by universities, and the enhancement of the profession. This is a tall order but the authors have provided theoretical as well as practical ways in which this focus can make a significant contribution to these areas.

The book is well structured, clearly written, and provides ample concrete examples drawn from eight successful programs, in Australia, Canada, and the United States. Theoretically it links early constructivists such as Dewey, Piaget and Vygotsky with more recent theorists such as Barthes, Derrida, and Rorty among others. These connections are sound but not overwhelming for the reader who is interested in practical solutions. The examples from actual programs in a variety of contexts illustrate the main themes of the chapters and provide vignettes that link theory and practice in a constructivist philosophy framework.

Their selection of three key concepts, integration, inquiry, and community, which are “at the heart of constructivism” (Beck & Kosnick, 2006, p. 24) provide the structural organization of the remainder of the book. Thus chapter 2 to 4 deal with “Creating An Integrated Program,” “Fostering Inquiry in the Program,” and “Building Community in the Program” respectively. Chapters 5 and 6 expand the concepts to include “Establishing an Inclusive Approach” and “Having Influence and Gaining Support Beyond the
Program.” These last two chapters illustrate the need to think beyond one’s own program to institutional and global parameters. Chapter 7 completes the book with a focus on “Researching the Program.”

Gaining acceptance for social constructivist programs requires efforts at negotiating, building networks, and presenting research to the educational community. Such tasks are daunting, as indeed is the whole process, but if education is to change for the better, then this advocacy must be an integral part of the endeavor. The very clear emphasis on action research, already present in chapter 2, becomes vital as one research strategy. Beck and Kosnick provide explicit examples of how this might be accomplished based on their own and others’ experience.

What makes this book worth reading is its philosophical stance, its organization, its consistency of method, and its practical dimensions. I found that the book models the constructivist method. The authors present theory, discuss problems, and provide examples and experiences which do not indoctrinate but invite readers to consider their own views. It is organized with clarity, thoroughness, and simplicity which makes it easy to read, logical, and useful. Yet the structure weaves clearly many contradictory ideas into a thoughtful presentation not a forceful argument. This is in line with the constructivist process. Finally, the many varied examples emphasize that there is no single way but a variety of ways in which solutions can be found and problems addressed. Throughout all of this Beck and Kosnick address, though perhaps not as strongly as one would desire, the nature of indoctrination and the constant leveling toward the transmission orientation toward which so many programs have a tendency to gravitate. A reliance on the theory of constructivism and action research, as the authors so rightly point out, can perhaps help to alleviate this tendency. This book is valuable because it comes at a time when many forces are converging on pre-service education and solutions that aim to provide theoretical and practical directions are very much needed.
In *Cuba’s Academic Advantage*, Martin Carnoy analyses the success of the Cuban school system as measured by the results achieved by Cuban students in international math, science, and language tests. The study includes data from Chile and Brazil whose students consistently test less well than Cuban students on these same tests despite the fact that these two countries enjoy better socio-economic indicators than does Cuba and educational reform efforts have been undertaken by their respective governments. He references studies, the results of which are well known by researchers, which demonstrate that academic success among socially disadvantaged students is far less likely than for students from better-off families (p. 45). Why does this co-relation not hold true for Cuba? Carnoy argues that an important component of student success in Cuba, including students from lower socio-economic circumstances, is the result of what he terms *state-generated social capital*.

While Carnoy recognizes that many factors impact on student achievement, his thesis is that the success of Cuban students, including students from lower socio-economic circumstances whose families are not well placed to accumulate social capital on their own, results from the benefit they derive from *state-generated social capital*.

Social capital, which is “embedded in relationships among individuals or among institutions and benefit all individuals or institutions involved in those relationships” (p. 11) is a central concept in many analysis of school success in North America and elsewhere. A cohesive and supportive family with high expectations for all of its members is considered to have social capital and students who are members of such a family are very likely to benefit in their educational endeavours from that capital. James Coleman (1966), one of the first scholars to demonstrate empirically that the home environment of American children impacted academic achievement, more recently argued that families with little social capital can acquire it through...
dint of effort or, for example, as the result of membership in a social network such as a particular religious community (e.g. the so-called “Catholic school advantage”) (Carnoy, pp 11-12).

Carnoy argues that while Coleman overstates the ease with which socio-economically disadvantaged students can acquire social capital, nonetheless he finds the concept *social capital* to be useful. He therefore undertakes to “stand Coleman’s notion [of social capital] on its head” (p. 12) by which he means to transform the concept of social capital as one generated by family connections to one that is *state-generated*. He writes “we suggest that states can generate just as potent a form of social capital in promoting educational achievement as families can, and that state-generated social capital is essential to improving educational achievement for low-income groups-those that have the least cultural capital and the most difficulty in acquiring and accumulating social capital on their own” (p. 12).

Cuba’s higher ratings than those of Chile and Brazil, despite the island’s comparative socio-economic disadvantage, is a result that “departs from what previous studies found. Typically, within a country, the single best correlate of higher test scores is … social-class background” (p. 141). To explain this apparent discrepancy in the Cuban case, Carnoy focuses on the social context of Cuban schooling. In Cuba, as a result of state policies and programs, children have access to better health care than all but the wealthy in Chile and Brazil; children are well-fed; their parents are employed; families are housed; and young children do not have to work to support the family. Other policies or practices particular to Cuba which directly affect classroom level performance include

- The allocation by the Cuban state of labour and housing which means that parents cannot easily change jobs or move. Consequently, students tend to complete each level of their studies in the school where they started those studies.
- In primary schools, teachers stay with the same cohort of students for 4 years, soon to be extended to 6 years. As a result, teachers know each student well.
- Where a problem does crop up involving a particular student that can’t be dealt with in the school, the Cuban state does not hesitate to involve the school and municipal authorities in family matters so as to provide the necessary support to the child, even at the cost of involving themselves in family issues.
- With respect to teacher competence, teachers are considered a high status profession with salaries that varied little from historically more prestigious professions. This attracted bright and dedicated young people to the profession.
Student-teachers attend one of the many state run pedagogical institutes in Cuba whose mandate is to ensure that new teachers are prepared explicitly to teach the national curriculum, with little time given to philosophical issues.

Once they are in the classroom, teachers, especially new teachers, are closely monitored and their instruction techniques are fine-tuned.

Standardized test results can be, if deemed necessary, quickly translated into adjustments in policies and practices at all levels from the Ministry to the pedagogical institutes to the individual classrooms where student achievement is below the expected level.

In his conclusions, Carnoy lists four lessons learned from his study of Cuba, Brazil and Chile. Of the four, all of which are drawn from the Cuban experience, three, he argues, could be practiced in Brazil and Chile (and presumably elsewhere) within the framework of the current political and economic structures of those societies. These three lessons are that

- curriculum matters, but its successful implementation depends on teacher capacity. In sort, it doesn’t matter how good the curriculum is if the teachers are not professionally prepared to teach it;
- teacher education needs to be tightly coordinated with existing curriculum, something which does not occur spontaneously by which he means that autonomous faculties of education that stress theory over classroom practice (a situation he observed in Chile and Brazil) are not contributing as much as they could or should to student success; and
- instructional leadership and teacher supervision at the school level is key to improving instruction. This means that principals must view themselves less as administrators and more as “head teachers” to use the British terminology who supervise and mentor young teachers.

While improvements can always be made, Canadian educators perhaps have less to learn from Cuba in these three areas than Carnoy suggests is the case for Brazil and Chile. Canadian curriculum, whatever changes critically-oriented educators might wish to make, does provide the framework for classroom instruction, teacher education is very much oriented to preparing student-teachers for results-based success in the classroom. Within the constraints imposed by limited resources, principals, vice-principals and teacher-mentors do monitor and support new teachers, although probably not as much as would be desirable.

Nonetheless, Canadian teachers, and especially those that teach in socio-economically disadvantaged communities, are faced with huge challenges in their classrooms – challenges which have their origin outside of the school. With this in mind, Canadian teachers would do well to consider the...
implications for this country of Carnoy’s fourth lesson which is that state-generated social capital matters. He notes that while individual consumption is low in Cuba, social consumption is high: “poverty exists in Cuba, but even the very poor have access to food, shelter, heath care, and education” (p. 144).

In Canada, when community organizations and anti-poverty activists demand decent public housing, access to recreational facilities and after-school programs for young people, enhanced public transit, a minimum wage that reflects the real cost of living, the creation of meaningful jobs for youth that don’t require prior job experience and which provide important training on the job, and so forth, they are demanding state-generated social capital. Children are hardly able to take advantage of what school has to offer regardless of how good the curriculum is or how well prepared the teachers are if they come to school hungry, work to contribute to family income, are left alone in the evenings because their mother or their father have to work additional hours to make ends meet, or see no future for themselves. While some of these children will in fact succeed (there are always a few exceptions) most will not. Those that do succeed will, unfortunately, provide the examples that keep alive the view, held by all too many people, including, unfortunately, some educators who should know better, that the failure of the rest results from their personal lack of effort rather than from the social context that informs their lives and limits their opportunities.

The Cuban education system does not represent a model for Canadians but it does demonstrate that, despite the fact that the country is resource poor and at the lower end of those countries in the middle-income group, state policies can create conditions for student success among traditionally marginalized populations. In a country as resource rich as Canada, where the state has access to income that most governments can only dream about, there is no excuse whatsoever for not developing a multipronged strategy involving the Federal and all the provincial and territorial governments to eliminate child poverty and to address the root causes of the problems facing ‘at risk’ adolescents. Such an approach, combined with a strategy for success at school for these marginalized sectors of the child and youth population, would be politically popular and the results would constitute a proud legacy for any government that participated in making such a program work. If nothing else, Cuba provides inspiration in that regard.

Some readers of this review might quite understandably protest that while Cuba’s accomplishments in math, science and language are impressive indeed, is silent on Cuban achievement (or lack thereof) in the area of ‘horizons expanding’ critical thinking and social problem solving. Certainly, during the heady days of the literacy campaign in the 1960s (documented in
part by Carnoy) observers commented on the emancipatory elements of this heroic stage of Cuban education. In more recent years, an important centre of creative and critical expression is found in the arts – Cuban music, graphic arts, drama, dance, cinematography, and so forth. These artists are, after all, products of Cuba’s educational system including its specialized arts schools and demonstrate in their art a critical capacity and artistic insight that is considered world-class. In recent months, Raul Castro has invited Cubans to speak up about shortcomings in the ability of the state to meet certain basic needs of the population (e.g., the housing shortage, salary levels, scarcity of basic consumer items). Cubans have not been shy about doing so. While it is premature to comment on the significance and eventual results of this particular process, it is clear that Cuba will undergo a socio-economic and political transition over the next few years which could go in any number of directions, some not as desirable as others. The scope of Cubans’ critical thinking and social problem-solving skills will be evidenced and authentically evaluated as they grapple with the challenges that upcoming events will present them as a new generation takes over the governance of the Cuban state and as new opportunities and challenges present themselves.

Endnotes

1 Carnoy notes that his aspect is being undermined by tourism especially in the provinces of Matanzas and Havana. Bright, bilingual young professionals are attracted by the prospect of earning some hard currency in the form of tips and a disproportionate number of teachers have been attracted by this option creating difficulties throughout the system (p. 32).