Citizenship Education in the Era of Globalization
Canadian Perspectives

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This collection of timely articles is the first to explore the dynamics between globalization and education from a specifically Canadian perspective. The articles engage with emergent debates and new discourses around global orientations to citizenship education currently defining scholarly work and teaching practices in Canada. This book will, therefore, be of great interest to Canadian teacher educators who are seeking to infuse a global perspective into their pre-service programs as well as to globally-oriented undergraduate and graduate course instructors from a range of scholarly disciplines both in Canada and elsewhere. The Canadian perspective proves to be, not surprisingly, global in essence.

The articles contained in Citizenship Education in the Era of Globalization: Canadian Perspectives map the history of citizenship, citizenship education and global studies and probe the notion of global citizenship for its possibilities and impossibilities. Recognizing the importance of engaging with the lives of students and teachers, the contributions also include articles reporting on research and theory about such topics as the complexities of second-generation youth identity and the extent to which mainstream teachers can bring global citizenship education into their classrooms. The collection presents an engaging look into the theory and practice of citizenship education in Canada during a time when bringing global issues to the classroom is an imperative of democratic schooling.
CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION
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Canadian Perspectives

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INTRODUCTION

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, this scholarly work must also engage with what happens in our elementary, secondary, and postsecondary 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 engage the “what” and “how” of teaching and learning. This requires taking up how the values that circulate within classrooms reflect the global movements of contemporary history and are shaped by what are seen as pressing global issues. We must, therefore, recognize what Pashby, in her contribution to this collection, 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 elementary and secondary classrooms. The essays in this volume present important questions, concerns, and possibilities that mark both theoretical discourses and classroom practice.

This collection was 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 are emerging. How are these terms defined in Canadian society today? How do they overlap and interrelate? How do new discourses, such as 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 collection, 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 as they move through various theoretical debates, practical responses, and context-specific concerns.

Our collection opens with two essays that query the concept of global citizenship. Pashby considers a global orientation to citizenship by means of 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 an extension of an ideal 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 feel both pressed and inspired to promote a sense of global responsibility and global consciousnesses. 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 a significant consideration as to what constitutes the essential elements of a program of global citizenship education as an educational response to the global imperative.

Wood, too, critiques the concept of citizenship historically, and she extends the critique to the concept of global citizenship. She 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, she notes a dialectic wherein citizenship 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, this space is significant for social action. Accordingly, she concludes that a nonscalar conception of 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
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democratic citizenship than does Pashby; however, both pieces reveal that much is at stake in positioning “citizenship” as central within discourses of globalization.

The next two essays contend with how schooling and curriculum engage with the notion of studying and learning about the rest of the world. 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 that is shared by both approaches and which demarcates it from neoliberal approaches.

Richardson maps out and analyzes the way that a notion of global citizenship has functioned as a value, goal, and ideal throughout the last century of schooling in Canada. In line with the first three contributors, he emphasizes the contested nature of a framework of global citizenship education. He outlines the various ways that conceptualizing global citizenship within Canadian curricula has been intimately tied to how Canadian national identity is positioned within imperial, cold-war, peace-keeping, and neoliberal agendas. In this sense, his review of global citizenship education over the past century demonstrates how curricula defined, and continue to define, what it means to be Canadian by characterizing ‘others’ in terms of how Western they are and by comparing them to an unexamined ideal of Canada. He argues that the very notion of global citizenship is presently caught within particular challenges marked by a conflict between two theoretical impulses evident in the social studies curricula of various Canadian provinces. On the one hand, global citizenship education promotes a critical engagement with knowledge about global issues that can transform the normative views that have historically divided the world so that students see themselves as active civic participants in a globalized world. On the other hand, global citizenship education is a transmission approach to learning about global issues that seeks to promote self-interest and encourage the ability of Canada and of Canadians to compete in a world market.
The former agenda views globalization itself as essentially a negative force and promotes an ecological view that fosters a sense of interconnectedness and diversity so as to develop a notion of connectedness, empathy, and appreciation for diversity and differences. In contrast, the latter approach focuses on individualism and neoliberal economic ideas wherein differences are superficial and individuals share fundamental wants and needs. In this construct, globalization is seen as an essentially positive force. By connecting these wider theoretical tensions to provincial curricular goals and to conceptual frameworks of Canadian identity, Richardson’s contribution heightens the importance of defining the relationship between a national and global identity while encouraging a civic engagement with global issues in the classroom.

Within these wider discussions of national and global citizenship, Hébert, Wilkinson, and Ali focus our attention 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 multifaceted self-identity which simultaneously includes elements of the culture(s) of their parents as mediated through each young person’s individual ways of identifying and engaging with their Canadian surroundings. According to their findings, and 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, they retain a pride in, and a connection to, the language(s) and culture(s) of their parents. In fact, many have the opportunity to visit their parents’ homeland(s) and, thereby, reinforce the influence of 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, in this study, the school is depicted as simply another site where young people congregate (no more significant than 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 school curriculum as a potential contributor to this process, in effect, they suggest that further study is required to discover the extent that formal schooling 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 practices 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 participate in a global citizenship education initiative provided they have the proper professional support and access to the relevant teaching materials. While they distinguish the teachers featured in their 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 rural and suburban 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 integrating global issues 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 into their adult years are being established now and that she must enrich her students’ school experience 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 concluding essay, 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 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. Yet, 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—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, Pike, and Richardson 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 essays represent a significant desire for democratic education in the context of public schooling 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 cornerstone 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, Pike, and Richardson acknowledge this directly; Hébert, Wilkinson, and Ali imply it strongly in their notion of what it means for the second generation youth they studied to see themselves as Canadian through a process of identity formation mediated by their Canadian surroundings; Larsen and Faden employ the term global citizenship education in order to talk about bringing global awareness and a sense of global responsibility to “typical” Canadian classrooms; Vetter does not explicitly mention global citizenship education, but her piece espouses a sense of it being a duty of citizenship to encourage a respect for diversity; and O’Sullivan writes about critical/transformational 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 places classroom practice and the lives and identities of young people and their teachers in Canada as central, this book 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 transformational pedagogies, and mutually responsible and competitive global impulses continue. Teachers are directly or indirectly responding to the global imperative, and they are able and willing to engage with a notion of global citizenship education. While theorists continue to do the timely and important work of grappling with a nuanced
concept of citizenship, their work must engage with classroom realities to conceive of an approach to global issues from the confines of provincial curricula and national institutions and discourses. This collection of essays is significant in reminding us that theoretical debates on the subject will benefit from the reflections of those classroom teachers and students who endeavour 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

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.

INTRODUCTION

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.
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
DEMANDS ON AND OF CITIZENSHIP

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, 2000, 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 straightforward idea of defining citizenship according to geo-political 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, 1999; McCollum, 2002; 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, 1999; 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, 1999; 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 the relationship between democracy and colonialism 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 movements, 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, promoting how

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, 1995, 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
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

Within a discourse of globalization, the very tensions that have defined theories of citizenship that respond to cultural diversity within nations continue to emerge along with new issues. In an editorial piece that looks back on their collaborative tenure as editors of *Citizenship Studies*, Isin and Turner (2007) identify the challenges 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 loyalties—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 at one level may mean being considered disloyal at another” (p. 2; see also Osler & Starkey, 2003).

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: “[T]he difficulties that occur 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 done in a national context. For example, Ong (1999) problematizes the imposition of a notion of global citizenship on immigrants of colour suggesting that in the context of contemporary globalization, privileges of ‘global citizens’ in Western democracies are influenced by transnational capitalism and are 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 and equity desired 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 the what Anderson (2006) would call the imagined nation. 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 has 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, 2003, 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 collection), 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. Openshaw and 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 “especially for those in poverty [for whom] such consumption is simply not attainable” (p. 510). Ghosh and Abdi (2004) articulate the ensuing predicament for social justice education in the current global context:

[S]ince 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, 2004, 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:

[It 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, 2003, 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 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 negotiate 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 a more critical approach to citizenship education: Can a global orientation to citizenship as evoked in 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 essential to citizen agency? Or is GCE 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?

It is evident 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. In arguing that global orientations to citizenship—as in 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 outlined here, 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 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.

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