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Citizenship: The Democratic Imagination in a Global/Local Context

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> *The most obvious difference between the year M and the year MM is the billions of extra people for whom this second millennium will possess some significance.*
> —R. Lacey and D. Danziger, The Year 1000: What Life Was Like at the Turn of the First Millennium. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1999): 195.

As we cross into the next millennium, the planet and the human family are facing an unprecedented set of challenges, issues, and problems. These include:

- The globalization of the economy and growing economic disparities
- A rapid deterioration in the quality of the global environment
- Inequities regarding access to and use of information technologies
- Increased regulation and control by governments over the lives of people
- Increasing levels of consumerism
- Regional and national conflicts based upon race, religion, and ethnicity
- Migrations of massive numbers of peoples due to these conflicts
- The loss of political efficacy
- A decline in moral and political leadership

How can we respond to these challenges both as members of a particular nation-state as well as members of the community of nations in a manner that is thoughtful, active, personal, and yet committed to the common good? This is a key problem facing social studies education in the coming decades, and it requires a new approach to citizenship education in schools.

The problem with our present educational systems is that they have not, by and large, adjusted to the new historical realities. This is not a statement of blame; it is a reflection of an accelerated historical lag created by an unprecedented magnitude of change. Certain changes must take place in the content, the methods, and the social context of education if schools are to become more effective agents of citizen education in a global age.

Major Global Trends

Several trend lines dominate the global scene at the end of this millennium that will need to be addressed by citizens of the new one. These trend lines are interrelated and can be grouped into four broad categories: the global economy; technology and communications; population and environment; and global movement.

The Global Economy. We are living through an economic transformation that will rearrange the politics and economics of the coming century. Increasingly, we will not speak of national products or technologies, national corporations and national industries. Each nation's primary political task will be to cope with the centrifugal forces of the global economy which tear at the ties binding citizens together —bestowing ever greater wealth on the most skilled and insightful, while consigning the less skilled to a

declining standard of living. As borders become more meaningless in economic terms, those citizens best positioned to thrive in the world market will be tempted to slip the bonds of national allegiance, and by so doing disengage themselves from their less favored fellows.1 As the economic convergence continues, we must ask how relevant the nation-state can be as a force toward civil democracy.

Technology and Communications. We are already "online" to the world—although the key unspoken idea here is, "if we have access." Information is power, with the potential to create wealth. Since information is a key economic asset and speed in moving information gives an economic edge, wealth creation increasingly means access to information. The global gap between the "haves" and "have-nots" is increasingly a question of the information access that makes material wealth possible.[2] As Hauchler and Kennedy point out in their book, *Global Trends*.

New technologies promise solutions to global problems such as hunger, environmental destruction, and disease; but they also raise questions about the ethical and social problems associated with an automated world. In addition, they widen the technological gap between industrial and developing countries.[3]

Population and Environment. Of all the forces that will change the world over the next generation, demography is probably the most important. The numbers of mouths to feed, the relative sizes of the populations of the industrial world and the less developed countries, the age distribution in the west—all of these forces will have a profound effect not just on the world economy, but on societies both rich and poor. Population shifts have an inexorable effect on the world's living standards, its politics, its environment, and on how people behave towards each other.[4]

As the planet's population continues to rise, enormous pressures are placed upon the environment. The list of global problems includes desertification, destruction of arable lands, depletion of major aquifers and other sources of fresh water, acid rain, disposal of nuclear and chemical waste, resource depletion, erosion, salinization due to poor irrigation practices, poisoning of the atmosphere, ozone depletion and global warming, a growing list of endangered species and the loss of biodiversity, especially in rainforest regions, and a host of other problems.

High rates of population growth are especially pronounced in the world's poorer countries, and Hauchler and Kennedy contend that only if "extreme poverty is eliminated, health and education improved, and the social status of women enhanced will it be possible to put a brake on the growth in population."[5]

Global Movement: Migration, Diversity, and Refugees. Some have described the late twentieth century as "the age of migration." Vast numbers of people are moving across borders, making virtually every country more multiethnic in composition. Given that most future population growth will occur in the non-industrialized world in the near future, migration pressures will increase significantly as people in the less developed, marginalized regions seek to move to more affluent areas.

Migration movements are becoming one of the biggest world order problems. They endanger peace in and between states, and severely test human rights. The social gap between islands of prosperity and regions of poverty is growing and many developing countries are becoming less and less able to provide their ever younger, fast growing populations with work and food. That builds up migration pressure across frontiers, regions and continents.[6]

Although parochial allegiances are supposed to fade as the world becomes increasingly integrated economically and politically, the reality is that more racial, ethnic, and national groups throughout the world are asserting their identity. One reason is that globalization has made the myth of a culturally homogeneous state even more unrealistic; another is that racial, ethnic and national groups subject to

discrimination may fear that they will be excluded from the benefits of globalization by the groups that dominate them in their present nation states. Thus, the general rules of political life in many countries are being challenged by a new set of specific interests promoting the "politics of cultural difference."[7]

In reality, "globalization" has created more room for minorities to maintain a distinct identity and group life and each state that seeks to be cohesive needs to be more open to pluralism and diversity As a result, the challenge of multiculturalism is here to stay.[8]

Some Critical Questions. Some commentators speak in almost Pollyanish tones about the future benefits of globalization. After consideration of the above four factors, we must be aware of the reasons why critics of globalization question its inherent nature and its impact. Summarizing some of these critical views, Baylis and Smith remind us that:

- Globalization is often equated with a stage of capitalism or western imperialism and as such carries a lot of baggage with it;
- Globalization is uneven in its effects, producing both winners and losers, the latter especially amongst the poor;
- Globalization obscures accountability in that it is difficult to trace and specify responsibility;
- Globalization gives rise to paradoxes and even processes of counter-globalization, e.g., more global homogeneity engenders fierce reactions that strengthen local identities, be they religious, ethnic or national.[9]

These criticisms of globalization are likely to feature prominently in international debates in the twenty-first century, and it is important that our students be aware of the issues that they raise.

The Challenge for Citizenship Education

If most experts agree that global realities will shape the world of the early 21st century, then what kinds of citizens are needed to function in this world?

What kind of knowledge, skills, and behaviors will they need to exhibit? What kind of education and schooling will be needed to develop these citizens?

With strong support from recent research, we suggest that this will be the pivotal problem facing social educators and the young citizens with whom they work in the coming decades of the new century.[10] Indeed, we would argue, no less than a new conceptualization of "citizen" is required to face new challenges.

Descriptions of the attributes of citizenship generally include a sense of identity, the enjoyment of certain rights, the fulfillment of corresponding obligations, a degree of interest and involvement in public affairs, and an acceptance of basic societal values.[11] These elements form a conception of citizenship that is rooted in the nation state, not the global community. Conventional citizenship education often focuses upon one or two of these elements to the exclusion of the others. In the school citizenship curriculum that supports this conception of citizenship—to the little extent that one has been deliberated, developed or implemented—the focus is typically on the documents and procedures of republican government. The curriculum highlights the accomplishments of our country and typically adopts an assimilationist rather than multicultural view of its history.

Parker has proposed a more advanced view of citizenship, in which education is based on a view of democracy as a "path" or "journey" rather than as a historical accomplishment that has already taken place in the United States. Democracy requires direct and full participation rather than the mere spectatorship involved in nominating and then voting for political candidates. He emphasizes the importance of a recognition of pluralism of race, gender and ethnicity within society as opposed to the more conventional assimilationist view.[12]

We suggest a conceptualization of citizenship for the millennium that takes account of all of the above elements in a single model. Our focus is on citizenship as a continuous process of civic learning, deliberation and action. The model, which we term multidimensional citizenship, centers on the development by individual citizens of their personal civic beliefs, their capacity for joint social and public action, their ties to their localities and the world outside, and their awareness of past, present and future. The components of this model include four interrelated dimensions: personal, social, spatial and temporal.

The Personal Dimension

Of the four dimensions, the personal one is perhaps the most elusive because it links internal and private processes with external and public ones. It is in this personal realm that our most fundamental beliefs about the world, the self, others, knowledge, and morality are located. In the domain of citizenship or civic behavior, it is especially important to develop a coherent moral dialogue between ourselves and the world. The personal dimension of citizenship thus emphasizes the development of a personal capacity for and commitment to a civic ethic characterized by individually and socially responsible habits of mind, heart, and action. In the educational context this requires the development of students' capacity to examine their "basic beliefs" and their translation into the public realm. As future citizens, they should learn to take into consideration the public consequences of their individual decisions, and conversely, the impact of public decisions on their individual choices.

The Social Dimension

The social dimension of citizenship recognizes that although the development of personal capacities and commitments is essential, they are not sufficient in themselves. Citizens must be able to work and interact with other people in a variety of settings and contexts. They must be able to engage in public debate and discussion, to participate in public life, and deal with the problems and issues that face them, in ways that equip them to deal respectfully with people whose ideas and values differ from their own.

The classic and narrower view of social involvement focuses only on forms of participation that affect the decisions of governments—for example, voting, joining a political party, or running for office. The social dimension of citizenship envisions the wider variety of activities now often described by the term "civil society."[13] Civil society is a public domain that private individuals create and operate in order to promote civic purposes free from unreasonable interference from government. The basis of civil society is a network of freely formed institutions. Some observers see this network of organizations as providing a kind of social equivalent to capital investment, or "social capital."

Addressing the nature of citizen participation, Parker speaks of the "tension between direct involvement in public life and spectatorship." The goal is to have citizens who regard themselves as having a public life in which they manifest themselves as citizens. To enhance the social dimension of citizenship, educational programs should include opportunities for students to connect with and engage in their communities in processes that include deliberation, community service, and social action.[14]

The Spatial Dimension

In this era of globalization, citizens need to see themselves as members of several overlapping communities—local, regional, national, and multicultural. We refer to this as the spatial dimension of citizenship. The world is becoming increasingly interdependent and the world of the 21st century will be even more so. This is, in part, the result of changes in technology, in communications, in trade patterns, in immigration, and so forth. However, at the same time, people's sense of identity is and will remain rooted in the local and the personal, sometimes consistent with and at other times in conflict with their nation and culture. Our concurrent roles as responsible citizens of local, national, regional and international entities are sometimes in conflict, and difficult choices must be made.

At the very least, the spatial dimension requires the recognition or awareness on the part of the individual that she or he has a view of the world that is not universally shared and that others have views of the world that are profoundly different from one's own. Hanvey has defined this as "perspective consciousness."[15] It is also incumbent upon us to learn to respect the differences in the pluralistic and

diverse societies of today's world. We would want to create citizens who, in Rene Dubos' famous dictum, think globally, while acting locally. Or perhaps we should now paraphrase it to say, think globally and act in context.

The Temporal Dimension

The temporal dimension of citizenship emphasizes that citizens in dealing with contemporary challenges must not be so preoccupied with the present that they lose sight of the past and the future. Anthropologists have made us aware of our tendency to see the world through a limited cultural perspective—an ethnocentric view of the world. This cultural near-sightedness has a lesser known analogue in our tendency to have a limited time perspective—a "tempocentric" view of the world. Just as our ability to deal across cultures can be hindered by ethnocentrism, our ability to deal with time dimensions can be limited by a tendency to limit our vision to present circumstances.16 We should be wary of our students' grasp of notions of time, subject as they are to age and to previous experience.

The temporal dimension also requires that the present and its challenges be located in the context of both past and future, so that purely short-term solutions to problems can be avoided wherever possible. As we move into the twenty-first century, it is important to enhance students' knowledge and understanding of the present with that of the past and of the future. Heritage and tradition are influential in helping citizens understand what citizenship entails. This requires that we pay appropriate attention to the past. Citizens need a rich knowledge of their own and the world's history to give them the sense of connectedness and rootedness, and the depth of understanding that is essential to the practice of multidimensional citizenship.

The Interconnectedness of the Dimensions

In our view, the concept of multidimensional citizenship represents something new and distinctive in that it builds upon and goes beyond the more traditional conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education and speaks directly to what are anticipated to be the challenges of the 21st century in a multinational context. Multidimensional citizenship requires that citizens possess certain competencies including:

- Approaching problems as a member of a global society
- Working cooperatively with others
- Taking responsibility for roles and duties in society
- Thinking in a critical and systemic way
- Resolving conflict in a non-violent manner
- Adopting a way of life that protects the environment
- Respecting and defending human rights
- Participating in public life at all levels of civic discourse
- Making full use of information-based technologies[17]

One of our most vital challenges is to provide the education and schooling that builds these competencies.

Schools as Centers of Citizen Education

The School as a Model Community

We believe that the task of preparing citizens for the future can best be addressed by structuring the school itself in such a way that it becomes a model of multidimensional citizenship. The school structure and organization, its faculty and staff, curriculum, assessment measures, the body of student learners and the general atmosphere within the school, must be focused upon the development of the four dimensions of citizenship. The students must live and learn in a living laboratory of democracy from the earliest years of schooling if multidimensionality is to be acquired. The school must become a democratic institution, and the role of educators must be consistent with the aims of multidimensional citizenship.

Students must see their teachers as living examples of what they are professing, as people who are personally involved in their communities, working on projects of a civic or public nature, knowledgeable about developments in other parts of the world, and able to debate key civic and public issues with other colleagues in the school as well as those in the community at large. They need to be aware of the historical antecedents of these issues so that they have a context for their discourse, and to possess a vision of what might be done to resolve or at least improve the situation.[18]

The School within the Larger Community

The school alone cannot develop citizens. The school and community must. In this context, schools and their communities should assess their educational culture. They might ask to what extent local school policy and practice fosters and/or demonstrates:

- Sound environmental practices?
- Sensitivity to human rights?
- Respect for the opinions and ideas of others?
- Cooperative, collaborative working relationships?
- Open communication and the peaceful resolution of conflict?
- Active participation and involvement in a variety of communities?[19]

The School as an Environmental Model

Given the global trends affecting the environment, we believe that schools must formally adopt and abide by a code of environmentally-minded behavior including the careful use of water, energy, and other resources, as well as appropriate waste disposal and recycling procedures. Teachers and students within schools must also be willing to play active roles in their communities in promoting awareness and action to support sustainable development to ensure the future of the planet.

The preservation of the environment offers multiple opportunities to become actively involved in ongoing projects in the community as well as to establish new ones. It also provides a natural avenue for community activists and experts to be brought into school curricular activities. This will expedite dialogue and debate on key environmental issues and how they might be resolved. It will further the process of deliberation within the formal school curriculum and thus help to develop critical thinking and analytical skills. Schools must be seen as environmental leaders.

A Deliberation-Based Curriculum

Finally, we recommend that a deliberation-based curriculum be implemented within the school. The goal is the development of global and civic-minded citizens. The curriculum would apply to all grade levels and, as appropriate, to all subject areas. Further, we would suggest that this curriculum be organized around six major ethical questions or issues that cut across the breadth of the curriculum.

1. What should be done in order to promote equity and fairness within and among societies?
2. What should be the balance between the right to privacy and free and open access to information?
3. What should be the balance between protecting the environment and meeting human needs?
4. What should be done to cope with issues of population growth, genetic engineering and children in poverty?
5. What should be done to develop shared universal values while at the same time respecting local values?
6. What should be done to empower learners to act upon the above, in both their schools and wider communities?[20]

We believe that these questions are best addressed in multiple learning environments and through interdisciplinary studies both in school and in the wider communities in which students live. The underlying foundation of this learning must be deliberation. Students of all ages must be given the opportunity to examine in depth the great issues of our day, which will most certainly impact their lives fully in the coming years. This is the true essence of the multidimensional citizen. Without this vision, and the will to implement it, those now in school are at best likely to be passive victims of the events of the 21st century rather than shapers of their own future.

Notes

1. R. B. Reich, *The Work of Nations* (New York: Vintage, 1992), 3.

2. H.A. Snyder, *EarthCurrents* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 43

3. L. Hauchler and P. M. Kennedy, *Global Trends: The World Almanac of Development and Peace* (New York: Continuum, 1994), 15.

4. H. McRae, *The World in 2020* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), 97.

5. Hauchler and Kennedy, 12.

6. *Ibid*.

7. See, for example, W. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); G. Ladson-Billings and W. F. Tate, “Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education,” *Teachers College Record* 97 (Fall 1995), 47-68; C. West, “The New Cultural Politics of Difference,” in Cameron McCarthy and Warren Crichlow (eds.), *Race, Identity and Representation in Education* (London: Routledge, 1993), 11-23.

8. Kymlicka, 9.

9. Baylis and S. Smith, *The Globalization of World Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 9–11.

10. J. J. Cogan and R. Derricott, *Citizenship for the 21st Century: An International Perspective on Education* (London: Kogan Page, Ltd., 1998).

11. *Ibid*.

12. W. Parker, "Advanced Ideas about Democracy: Toward a Pluralist Conception of Citizen Education," *Teachers College Record* 98, 1 (1996), 105–125. See also C. A. Torres, "Democracy, Education, and Multiculturalism: Dilemmas of Citizenship in a Global World," *Comparative Education Review* 42, no. 4 (1998), 421-447.

13. See J. Patrick, "Civil Society in Democracy's Third Wave: Implications for Civic Education," *Social Education* 60, 7 (1996), 414–417.

14. Parker, op. cit.

15. R. Hanvey, *An Attainable Global Perspective* (New York: Center for Global Perspectives, 1976).

16. D. Grossman, "Teaching about a Changing China," *Social Education* 50, no. 1 (1986), 100–101.

17. Cogan and Derricott, 116.

18. *Ibid*., 161–162.

19. *Ibid*., 158.

20. W. Parker et al., "Making It Work: Implementing Multidimensional Citizenship," in Cogan and Derricott, 137.

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