

What Does it Mean to be a Citizen?: Defining Social Studies in the Age of Marginalization and Globalization

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Current educational rhetoric rings of goals to educate for 21st century skills preparing students for the competitive challenges of a global economy and interdependent society. Concerns about the American educational system falling behind other leading world nations have fueled national legislation to improve current educational practices. In efforts to promote what are considered essential skills and to ensure the teaching of core competencies, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation has emerged as the driving force defining academic curriculum. Emphases are placed on reading, writing, mathematics, science, and technology skills. Unfortunately, these curricula are emerging not only as core content but also the only content in some grade levels.

Curricular worries over student preparedness, academic achievement as a result of standardized testing, and punitive pressures of high-stakes accountability have narrowed the curriculum and created an internal competition for instructional time. As a result, academic subjects such as art, civics, geography, history, music, foreign language, physical education, and the social studies are often marginalized. Yet, these core content areas are just entry level requirements and fall short of ensuring economic success, encouraging cultural awareness and appreciation, and developing socio-economic understanding. While essential skills may help students compete in the global market, a curriculum that develops a broader view and understanding of the complexity of humanity and the global community will help them be successful and ensure an enduring social legacy.

The knowledge, skills, and dispositions of global citizens come directly from the social studies. Citizenship is the cornerstone of social studies education. The social studies make a difference in individuals by educating and nurturing citizenship; advancing cultural awareness and perspective awareness; encouraging compassion and empathy for the powerless; promoting justice, tolerance, and democratic ideals; and developing an understanding of the borderless communities among workers, businesses, citizens, governments, individuals, and society. Therefore, the social studies curriculum should be at the forefront of educational dialogue and policies to ensure that students are prepared for effective citizenship and active participation in the global community.

The current issue of the *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction* presents ideas for using effective practices to prepare citizens in an age of marginalization and globalization. This issue poses questions concerning what it means to be a good citizen, a global citizen, and a worldminded citizen. The articles within this issue evaluate

current practices for teaching citizenship and discuss how schools prepare the 21st century citizen. They contemplate the role of a citizen within American and global societies and offer strategies for promoting worldmindedness, global awareness, civic understanding, critical democracy, and character education. Leaders in the field of social studies share their expertise and understanding of the issues that educators face in addressing the complexity of civics and citizenship education in an evolving society. Readers can expect to glean applicable strategies and resources for classroom use.

The invited article “Worldmindedness: Taking Off the Blinders” by Merry M. Merryfield, Joe Tin-Yau Lo, Sum Cho Po and Masataka Kasai presents globalization in terms of the impact that decision-makers, individuals, governments, businesses, and consumers have in redefining and reshaping the world community. The influences, changes, and outcomes of the global economy and global society have profound effects on communities beyond defined political borders in far-reaching regions across the globe. Nonetheless, citizens of the world community are either unaware or unwilling to acknowledge the ramifications of their decisions and economic demands such as inequalities, human right conflicts, and struggles for power. To combat this lack of civic consciousness in an age of borderless economics, the authors argue that the social studies curriculum should move beyond isolationistic approaches to citizenship toward a curriculum that fosters global and civic responsibility, promotes civic engagement, and cultivates worldmindedness.

In examining curriculum theory and practice of developing worldminded citizens, Merryfield, et al. define worldminded individuals as those who form the habit of thinking about the effects of their decisions on people in other societies, care about how others perceive their nation, and use “us” to mean people from many places, not just their neighborhood or nation. The authors identify key elements that focus on global awareness, interconnectedness, perspective consciousness, openmindedness, and intercultural competence. At the heart of the article, rich instructional examples for scaffolding these five elements of global education from P-12 classrooms in Hong Kong, Japan, and the United States are provided.

Sandra Schmidt provides an account of American student experiences in secondary civics courses and explores student perceptions of democracy and democratic engagement in “Practicing Critical Democracy: A Perspective from Students.” Schmidt’s research challenges current approaches to civics curricula that focus on the recitation of core democratic ideals, key elements of governmental structures and functions, and individual rights and responsibilities. Although teaching *about* democracy is very important in developing content and foundational knowledge, she asserts that civics curricula absent of strategies for deliberation, engagement, empowerment, and social justice fail to prepare students for *how* to participate in a democracy and engenders an ideology that the tools for democratic change are formidable and inaccessible.

Schmidt classifies current theoretical debates about the role of civics education in American schools into two camps defining democracy either as a product or as a

process. She acknowledges that this complex dialogue is missing one critical element—student voices. Consequently, her qualitative study seeks to expand this dialogue by exploring how secondary students conceptualize and practice democracy. Through the use of public space and deliberation, Schmidt concludes that students need a civics curriculum that honors student voices, encourages their participation, and equips them with the skills for civic engagement and action. She presents themes that emerged from her study using examples from high school student interviews. Schmidt's research provides an insightful overview of what students are learning about citizenship and democracy. She questions whether what students should be learning ought to be based upon how students conceptualize their roles within the government and their communities.

In a review of moral and character education literature and practices, Allen Guidry argues that the theoretical approaches of virtues, values clarification, and values analysis fall short of espousing educational practices that foster global and cultural awareness in contemporary American society. In an age of democratic pluralism and globalization, Guidry contends that moral and character education are the bedrock for understanding and addressing moral and ethical dilemmas. To counter the limitations of historical and contemporary approaches to moral and character education, Guidry presents a prescriptive approach, reflective moral inquiry, that "facilitates discourse about morality and character geared toward consensus building situational reconciliation when cultural community and national civic norms conflict" (Guidry, 2008, p. 24).

In "Character Education through a Reflective Moral Inquiry: A Revised Model that Answers Old Questions," Guidry not only presents a detailed explanation of the phases of his process model, but also recommends curricular applications. Guidry's reflective moral inquiry model is a six-step process for approaching moral and ethical dilemmas in which students are (1) presented a problematic moral situation rooted in the social studies; (2) asked to formulate a hypothesis addressing the dilemma; (3) guided through the exploration and evaluation of personal and research-based evidence in support and in opposition to their hypothesis; (4) required to translate and interpret evidence to promote principled decision-making in the formation of an ethical claim; (5) directed to evaluate their hypothesis in terms of reciprocity; and (6) engaged in constructing an ethical principle that is universally applicable. Readers are introduced to this process through guiding questions, pedagogical strategies, and content examples.

As society, the economy, and the sense of global community are being redefined by a variety of current influences including technology, interconnectivity, interdependence, and cultural pluralism, conventional methods for educating students no longer suffice in teaching the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for meaningful and successful participation as citizens. Elizabeth O. Crawford and Misty M. Kirby present a conceptual framework for authentic, interactive, and effective instructional applications of various educational technologies within the social studies curriculum. The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK) Model defines the interaction of three aspects of teachers' knowledge: content, pedagogy, and technology. The authors

describe how the interactions among these facets have potential to shape instructional decision-making, technology integration, and individual student learning related to global education.

In “Fostering Students’ Global Awareness: Technology Applications in Social Studies Teaching and Learning,” Crawford and Kirby provide a variety of web-based resources that can be utilized to teach global understanding and cross-cultural awareness. First, the authors categorize educational online activities by genre. Next, they provide a list of organizations offering learning opportunities representative of all three genres. This list includes web links, descriptions, and the unique features of each organization. Finally, Crawford and Kirby argue that effective global education and technology integration must begin with shifts in teachers’ perspectives, knowledge, and skills.

The final article, “Civic Education in the NCLB Era: The Contested Mission of Elementary and Middle Schools,” sheds light on the existing inconsistencies in educational rhetoric and practices. Elizabeth Hinde investigates the historically situated role of educating for citizenship in schools and ponders if this mission is being usurped by test-driven curricula. She argues that society and policymakers purport that civic education is a critical component of schools; however, civic education is in jeopardy. She attributes the diminished role of citizenship education in elementary and middle schools to the impact of NCLB such as the marginalization of non-tested curricula and the unequal access to a multifarious and challenging curriculum. Hinde acknowledges that citizenship skills and dispositions, often taught under the guise of moral or character education, are ubiquitously integrated and absent of content alignment. These programs promote passivity and accepted behaviors in democratic society but are devoid of the “history or underlying principles and practices of a democracy, or underlying structures of culture and society” (Hinde, 2008, p. 78).

Hinde contends that citizenship must be more than obligatory ballot casting and compliance with current policies or practices; it is an historic and necessary function of schools to educate citizens so that they can question practices, problematize social and economic outcomes, and work toward the common good. She explores how various interpretations of democratic citizenship have evolved into two camps: educating for democracy and educating through democracy. In her article, Hinde describes how philosophies have shaped civic education programs, influenced social studies and civics content standards, and defined current educational practices.

Each article weaves together the complexity of citizenship and what it means to be a global citizen. The authors offer valuable insights about the importance of promoting cross-cultural understanding and encouraging individuals to look beyond themselves in order to address the challenges of a globally interdependent community. All of the authors acknowledge the essential role of the social studies in defining civic, character, and moral education and the power that teachers have in shaping the global citizen. This issue brings together curricular exemplars for fostering global awareness and challenges readers to question existing civics education practices.

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