Radical citizenship education

Ralph Leighton (iD)
Canterbury Christ Church University, UK

Abstract

All education is political; the radical approach to Citizenship Education promotes social justice and critical active participation. In synthesizing a pedagogy of discomfort and the principles of subversive teaching, this is predicated on the notion that authority should be accountable, that people should be able and enabled to take decision makers to task, that those decision makers are the servants of the people. This article is based on research conducted and published during 16 years as subject leader for Citizenship Education on a pre-service qualifying programme for specialist teachers. It is adapted from the commentary submitted as part of my PhD by publication. The proposed 'Radical Citizenship Education' aims to enable people to question and, if they wish, to change social circumstances rather than to stoically accept the status quo. Couched within a framework which owes as much to Postman and Weingartner as it does to Marxism, studies are summarized largely chronologically to explain and contextualize the data collected. The influence of many other thinkers and writers is acknowledged, from the 19th Century to the 21st, in the continued belief that the purpose of Citizenship Education should not be to protect the civic landscape, but to change it.

Introduction

This paper discusses the potential for radical social change which citizenship education in England presents. It is based on research conducted and published during my 16 years as subject leader for Citizenship Education on a pre-service qualifying programme for specialist teachers. A proportion of that research – articles, chapters and a solo authored book – formed the main body of my PhD by publication; this article more closely relates to the commentary which I provided to accompany the published work. Not only is the structure constrained to some extent by the requirements of that submission – despite the best efforts of reviewers and the editor, as well as my own, to make it read more comfortably and informatively – the whole is also influenced by my professional and political background.

As a senior teacher of sociology and politics in an academically successful school, I was seconded to establish a Citizenship PGCE at a local university in 2002. That course became the largest

Corresponding author:
Ralph Leighton, Canterbury Christ Church University, North Holmes Road, Canterbury CT1 1QU, UK.
Email: ralphleighton@hotmail.com

in England and consciously promoted a social justice critique of citizenship in England, informed not only by the emerging body of research but also my colleagues' and my experience as teachers and as social/political beings. The 'Radical Citizenship Education' which I propose borrows heavily from more general radical education theories to promote a force for change through active engagement with *formal* versions of events placed in the critical context of learners' *real* daily experiences. This in turns require programmes of learning which equip people to engage with power and hold it to account – the antithesis of current proposals for 'character education'. Radical Citizenship aims to enable people to question and, if they wish, to change social circumstances rather than to stoically accept the status quo.

The Advisory Group on Citizenship (1998) [generally known as The Crick Report], which established the parameters for citizenship education and the teaching of democracy in schools in England, emphasized the need to 'extend radically to young people the best in existing traditions of community involvement and public service' (Advisory Group [The Crick Report], 1998, para 1.5; p6), as well as to develop:

> '. . . a change in the political culture [so that people are] active citizens, willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life and with the critical capacities to weigh evidence before speaking and acting'. (Advisory Group [The Crick Report], 1998 para 1.5 pp6/7)

Over 20 years after the Report and subsequent legislation, the evidence for a more engaged citizenry is sporadic at best and there is little to suggest that any radical tendencies are the product of citizenship education.

My own position regarding the need for a more fundamentally radical citizenry has been strongly influenced by the words of John Maclean when on trial for sedition:

> 'I know quite well that in the reconstruction of society, the class interests of those who are on top will resist change, I am out for an absolute reconstruction of society, on a cooperative basis . . . my appeal is to the working class. I appeal exclusively to them because they and they only can bring about the time when the whole world will be in one brotherhood, on a sound economic foundation. That – and that alone – can be the means of bringing about a re-organisation of society. That can only be obtained when the people of the world get the world, and retain the world'. (Maclean, 1918)

Conviction of the essential truth of Maclean's words has shaped me personally and professionally for most of my adult life, and it would be remiss to ignore that influence on my research. To conclude that radical citizenship is therefore a Marxist position is to misinterpret both ways of looking and thinking. One does not have to adhere to a 19th century philosophy to be aware of imbalances of power and economic influence, to disapprove of rampant political corruption and nepotism. Class structures have changed and inequality analyses have gone far beyond the appeal of one which is exclusively class based. While some of the tools of Marxism are useful and the language and concepts well established, radical citizenship education is much more widely informed and need not be pigeonholed within any 'ism'.

It has been argued (Gillborn, 2006; Larkin, 2001; Leighton, 2006, 2013b) that, far from being intended as an enabling and liberating subject, the purpose of the introduction of Citizenship Education in England was to reinforce the status quo, to debilitate and control awareness of social inequality and social injustice. That intention need not remain a barrier to imaginative and empowering teaching and learning; my research (Leighton, 2006, 2010, 2013a) indicates that reality can be – and often is – different; legislation does not usually spell out intentions, and intentions are not synonymous with outcomes. Far from inevitably being another form of social control (Gillborn, 2006; Leighton, 2013b) or being concerned solely with the development of

conformity and 'character' (Arthur, 2008), Citizenship Education can and should be placed in the contexts of learning identified and/or proposed by Gramsci, Freire, Postman and Weingartner and others. Despite the initial and subsequent vacuity of iterations of the National Curriculum for Citizenship Education, the subject presents an opportunity to enable and empower current and future generations to be more questioning and less acquiescent. The Crick Report clearly lays out a radical agenda which goes contrary to the traditionally conservative social reproduction of the English education system.

The nature and purpose of citizenship education in England is highly contested. Osler and Starkey offered a comparison between France and England – geographical near neighbours but with wholly different educational emphases. The French programme is based on Republican values, particularly human rights, and emphasizes the unacceptability of racism and discrimination. The English programme claims to emphasize democracy and active engagement with society and thus presented itself as more pragmatic and less concerned with core principles (Osler and Starkey, 2001, p288/9). Core principles did come to the fore in England following a body of legislation – commonly known as the Prevent Strategy – ostensibly intended to protect individuals and society from radicalization. These core principles include Fundamental British Values [FBVs], to which can be added an ill-defined set of precious freedoms which various Conservative politicians (e.g. Gove, 2005) have vowed to promote and protect.

The notion of FBVs is rejected in Northern Ireland's curriculum (McCully and Clarke, 2016) and is nowhere to be found in Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence (Scottish Government, 2011), so these are clearly not essentially British values being taught in British schools. Particularly pertinent is the insight provided by Sen (1999) and by Nussbaum (2001), that such values/rights/principles have no real meaning if there is differential access to them and their application. Radical citizenship proposes that these 'values' are not currently evident in practice in the United Kingdom and that society would be stronger, healthier and more equal if they were, and better still if the country's true fundamental values were identified by an informed population rather than by a political elite. Just as these values are not exclusively British, neither is their ommission nor the need for them to be established and protected uniquely British phenomena.

De Coster et al. (2012) write about the ever-widening differences in subject philosophy, content and esteem, in teacher attitudes, preparation and expertise, of pupil engagement and outcomes, in 35 educational territories throughout Europe. A smaller collaborative study (Nielsen and Leighton, 2017) indicated significant differences in school students' attitudes to both the subject and the nature of 'the citizen' between Sweden and England. Schulz et al.'s (2018) Europe-wide research shows a number of social factors directly correlate to the likelihood of social participation and of confidence in political decision makers amongst young people. These studies raise questions about some of the generalizations of juvenile behaviour identified in the Advisory Group [The Crick Report] (1998 pp14–15). The concerns identified in the Crick Report – of increases in hate crime, in racist assault, in juvenile murder, in political apathy – were illustrated by anecdote and contemporary headline events. They were not borne out by statistical data but fitted media and popular perceptions; this presented an archetypical folk demonization and the inevitable subsequent moral panic. It is clear that many young Europeans are highly sceptical of institutions and of the people who run them. The reasons for and extent of such scepticism varies according to national contexts, but the single unifying factor is that the more young people are informed about how their country is organized and administered, the less persuaded they are that such organization and administration is for the benefit of the population as a whole as shown by Schulz et al. (2018).

That informed scepticism cannot be claimed to reflect the position of Maclean outlined above, that there should be a radical reconstruction of society in the interests of the working class, but it does indicate a significant level of dissatisfaction with the status quo. This reinforces the perception

that the state – any state – cannot expect to educate its citizens about political circumstances without being brought to account over the inconsistencies between what is meant to be and what really is the case. Larkin and Nielsen (2018) label these contrasting positions as *formal* citizenship and *real* citizenship. While the state and its National Curriculum directs teaching and learning towards the *formal*, it is inevitable that this clashes with the *realities* experienced by students. For example where the rule of law conflicts with data which show that young black males are 10 times as likely to be stopped by the police as are their white peers (gov.uk, 2019).

The idea that state-provided education can and should be used to assess the efficacy and legitimacy of the state – and to enable change where efficacy and legitimacy are seen to be lacking – is a radical one. It means that the state should be held to account for the extent to which it operates openly and honestly, and in the best interests of society as a whole, rather than indulging in or allowing underhand and obscured activities which result in decisions made to the benefit of an elite. Democracy should be able to bear the weight of close scrutiny.

Developing a theoretical context

When the Crick Report attempts to placate those '[p]arents and the public generally [who]may be worried about the possibility of bias and indoctrination in teaching about citizenship' (p5) it ignores the reality that all education is political. Education in any society is part of that society's ideological apparatus and it will promulgate a particular world view. While the content of some curriculum subjects might be portrayed as 'neutral' if one does not delve into that content – the selection of some 'facts' over others, the ways in which schools are organized, the choice of textbooks, the extent and ways in which teachers are educated and given any autonomy – all are politically influenced. That all pedagogy is inherently political is self-evident.

Postman (1970) identified ways in which schools became 'a major force for political conservatism' (p83), which shows no signs of dissipating. The introduction of Citizenship Education into the National Curriculum for England – and the particular forms which its content has taken – has been explicitly and profoundly political. To adopt a different approach and focus than those proposed in that curriculum and/or by other researchers is no more or less political. Anyone who conducts social research has to recognize the possibility of their own imprint on their data; to explicitly do so enhances its overall objectivity (Bird, 2020).

The condition of Citizenship – and, therefore, the role of Citizenship Education – comprises more than understanding how to conform to prevailing values and carry out basic democratic functions. Political empowerment within the prevailing system, dominated as it is by the ideology of ownership and inequality (Marx and Engels, 1973; Navarro, 2007), is inadequate in itself, and the objective should be an emancipation whereby people are freed from the dominant ideology and the apparatus of the state and enabled to decide for themselves how their society should be organized, a break from false consciousness and from a happy consciousness – the first based on a misunderstanding of the social relations of production and the second typified by a desire for distraction. Marx outlined that position in his 10th Thesis on Feuerbach where he wrote that 'the standpoint of the old materialism is "civil" society: the standpoint of the new is human society, or socialized humanity' (Marx and Engels, 1973, p30). Radical citizenship posits that pedagogy in general, and the pedagogy of Citizenship Education in particular, is a political and moral practice which should expand criticality, expand participation, enable self-determination, and imagine a liberating future.

Perceptions of such a future raise the paradox of radical reform in every sphere – the desire to empower the exploited with a concommitant other than awareness that such power might not be deployed in ways which radical thinkers and activists would hope. Whether false or happy consciousness, or hegemonic inevitably, or a product of state coercion – and whether or not radicals

and other progressives like what citizens decide – empowering those citizens remains more democratic and representative than having an elite agenda imposed upon them. This article is not the place to discuss how that paradox might be most effectively addressed.

Marxism

Bowles and Gintis (1976) 'Correspondence Theory' of education as the primary tool of social placement still bears the closest scrutiny, and their central tenet that education exists to operate in the interests of the dominant class still holds true. Marx stated that in order to understand what happens in any society we need to recognize why it happens, what the motives are and what the outcomes will be. It is the case that, although the National Curriculum for Citizenship goes beyond requiring pupils to gain some understanding of the electoral process and of alternative systems, and comprehending the roles and responsibilities of local and national government, etc. this 'is offered within a framework of established order, to encourage more participation in the system rather than to question it'. (Leighton, 2004, p169).

The effects of social class on the possibility of educational success have long been demonstrated by sociologists, particularly in Britain in the 1960s and 1970s, showing that working class pupils who held working class social attitudes were doomed to educational failure. To succeed in education, the argument goes, pupils had to become middle class (Jackson and Marsden, 2012). An alternative interpretation arose, that working class boys' complicity in their educational failure was, in their terms, not failure at all. Their values were not the values of the school, the characteristics they admired were those which teachers abhorred (Corrigan, 1979; Willis, 2017). With regard to educational engagement and level of success, social class remains the strongest predictor of educational achievement (Perry and Francis, 2015, p2), showing a continued lack of understanding of the needs, aspirations, interests and desires of a significant proportion of the population.

The lip-service paid to issues of equality is clearly seen in the Office for Standards in Education [Ofsted] framework for inspections and its requirement for evidence of cultural capital. Cultural Capital is a contested and diversified concept, and the narrow interpretation adopted in the inspection handbook leads this author to agree with Buckingham's (2020) comment that he 'seriously doubt[ed] whether Gove or anybody in Ofsted has actually read Bourdieu'. For Ofsted, cultural capital

> is the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement. [Ofsted, 2019, P43]

While there is nothing in the phrasing of the directive from Ofsted which explicitly requires that everything must be viewed through some Western lens, Buckingham (2020) sensibly cautions against such an emphasis and considering 'culture' to be a synonym for 'good taste' [whatever that might be]. When looking at education in a specific society and at a specific time, 'the best' should reflect that context. We live in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, pluralist democracy within which many disparate strands have their own histories as well as there being a common history. At its best and most dynamic, Cultural Capital will reflect this – as will radical citizenship education.

With some minority ethnic community pupils tending towards the lower reaches of success criteria tables, this lack of understanding or inclusion of pupils and the communities to which they have allegiance continues to compound social problems, while it becomes clear that the intersection of class and ethnicity offers a more nuanced picture than when these factors are considered in isolation (Gillborn, 2005). Educational capital continues to reside largely in middle class values

(Leighton, 2010). The allegedly radical changes to education in England, the Acts of 1870, 1944 and 1988 in particular, were in fact far from radical. These Acts brought about considerable and significant changes to the nature and provision of education, but they 'were no[t] attacks on disempowerment, inequality, injustice, discrimination or social inequality' (Leighton, 2010, p208).

The Marxist writer Raymond Williams is credited with the statement that 'to be truly radical is to make hope possible rather than despair convincing'. This position flies in the face of conservative writers such as Oakeshott, doyen of the oxymoronic 'radical right' in the UK. He proclaimed a preference for 'the tried to the untried . . . the convenient to the perfect, present laughter to utopian bliss' (Oakeshott, 1962 p162), but this:

> '. . . does not appear to consider whose convenience is best served, whose laugher rings out, when processes and objectives remain the tried and established; it is unquestionably in the interests of the older, the white and the more powerful that things do not change' (Leighton, 2012 p132).

Neo-Marxism

Gramsci's proposition of hegemony is fundamental to understanding radical citizenship education. One of the most significant issues identified has been a trope which serves to demonize the young as politically apathetic, which emanates from hearsay, gossip and prejudgement rather than any evidence base, and reflects a dominant discourse in the media explicitly with regard to Citizenship as a school subject. This process has been substantially outlined and critiqued to identify the manipulation of public consciousness whereby an issue is identified and, with it, blame is heaped upon an alleged subversive minority. The initial problem is then linked to other problems so that further escalation appears inevitable, often in the UK with explanations and prophesies invoking parallels with the perceived decline of social cohesion in the USA. This is then followed by a call for strong action – increased policing powers, more severe sentences, curfews; seeking punishment rather than social cohesion and social well-being, penalties rather than solutions.

The state is not somehow entitled to mould people to its will. Functionalist sociology, and some contemporary political discourse, has it that society functions best through integration and uniformity of purpose. The importance of the family unit is often emphasized, a 'unit' designed – according to Engels (2004) – to limit social agitation for change and to control the population by producing wage fodder which fears the economic or coercive retribution which would be theirs if they step out of line. That image of 'family' implies conformity of lifestyle and life choice and ignores many variations in human conduct, desire and endeavour; Althusser's (2006) perception of the overt curriculum within the Ideological State Apparatus, leads us to awareness of the marginalization or exclusion from citizenship rights of a range of groups.

Radical education argues that to enable people to develop clearer insights and more substantial awareness of their potential to achieve social change, programmes of education must have clear strategies, clear content, and clear outcomes. To adopt a position which opposes the status quo simply because it is the status quo is contrarian rather than radical; opposition to any strategy should be based upon the nature and likely or demonstrable impact of that strategy, not merely on its approval by a particular group. Originality, from a radical educational viewpoint, must also be progressive and have benefits for learners and – ultimately – for democratic society.

Radical educators

The perspectives on education provided by radical education theorists from different times and contexts. share a commitment to challenging assumptions about the nature of education and share

a belief in questioning the status quo. Those writers address young people's perceptions of their own experiences, and argue that old must give way to new if we expect young people to be prepared for a new society.

Postman and Weingartner (1976) energize us with their analysis of teaching and schooling which is combined with a constructive and radical approach to change for the better. They go beyond economy-based criticism and calls for either revolution or a state of permanent hand-wringing to provide explanations for what has been happening and ways in which things can be improved. This is achieved with humour, a reminder that there is no need for education or educators to be straight laced and po-faced, whether radical or otherwise.

To be radical has been presented by politicians – particularly in the UK's Prevent legislation – as being simplistic, highly conservative, anti-democratic, reactionary, fundamentalist, orthodox, backward looking and stagnant. This article is not the place to discuss the origins or purpose of such a perception but it is the antithesis of radical education – which is complex, progressive, highly democratic, innovative, exploratory, heterodox, forward looking and fecund. The two versions of this concept could not be more opposed.

Crap detecting

Postman and Weingartner (1976; pp12–13) considered whether anything could be done to improve/save society, a precursor of what Arthur critiques as 'litanies of alarm' (2003, p3). They argued that society needs 'a new education that would set out to cultivate . . . experts in crap detecting' (1976, p16). Teaching is not the art of dissemination of information, and the teaching of radical citizenship in particular involves so much more than that. It demands the cultivation of a range of skills to facilitate communication and informed participation, knowledge and understanding of structures and relationships in society, and ways in which such skills and knowledge can be deployed.

Many young people reject party politics while developing interests and opinions on a wide range of political issues. The accusation that the young are largely politically apathetic is not supported by evidence. From the USA we learn that 'it is incorrect to say that young people take no interest in the broader world' (Bernstein, 2010, p16) while globally Ross and Dooly (2010) report that 'children and young people do implicate themselves in political' (p43). They go on to observe that 'voting participation has gradually declined over the past 30 years, and informal political activism has risen sharply' (p44), offering data which suggest that 'if young people manage to fulfil their own expectations, they will be considerably more active than their parents' generation (Leighton, 2012, p95).

A radical approach to citizenship education demands much more than altering the content or shifting the emphasis teaching and learning, it is essential that 'radical educators should see the resistant actions of youth . . . and engage with them' (Peters and Bulut, 2010, p27). Teaching Citizenship Education is an activity in itself, one which requires learners' involvement and action. As Berg points out, this can be anathema to many teachers as 'authoritarians always flinch and stiffen when children even move out of their desks, and when children move faster they see them as potential rioters' (Berg, 1972, p13). One aim of Citizenship Education is to unlock doors and potential. If successful, it is likely that pupils will expect the same opportunities and involvement of other subjects and other teachers. There is therefore the likelihood that radical citizenship education teaching and learning will cast a deep and critical shadow over any tendency to rely on old teaching notes and lesson plans, subverting other subjects and other learning spaces to the benefit of learners and teachers.

Schooling

Arthur notes that 'few in Britain would consider the school the most important location for character education' (2010, p23) yet schools play a significant part in shaping individuals and the collective. Indeed, modern social thinkers since Durkheim have argued that education is one of the major agents of socialization and Althusser (2006) identified it as one of the components of the Ideological State Apparatus, while numerous studies have demonstrated the depth of influence which schools can exert.

Goodman proposed that the future 'will certainly be more leisurely. If that leisure is not to be completely inane and piggishly affluent, there must be a community and civic culture' (1975, p 44). He is advocating critical awareness and the development of commonly held and demonstrated values. It is in relation to that position that he asks whether 'since schooling undertakes to be compulsory, must it not continually review its claim to be useful?' (1975, p19). The radical theorist must also consider 'useful' to whom, and for what purposes.

Johnson points out that the 18th Century radical educators tended to be 'secular and rationalist' (1988, p17), concerned to emphasize the relationship between knowledge and power, and proposing that 'knowledge was a natural right, an unconditional good' (p18). Essentially, Johnson identifies 'really useful knowledge' as those ideas which relate to our conditions in life, which describes the wrongs done to us, and which tells us how to change our present circumstances. While far from the purpose of England's National Curriculum, such a perception of 'useful' would certainly satisfy Goodman's requirements and those of many other radical education theorists and practitioners.

Other influences

Whatever position is adopted regarding the nature and purpose of Citizenship Education, there can be no doubt that to hold the notion of citizen there must simultaneously be a notion of community or collective – somewhere for someone to be a citizen of. This connection was made by Marshall (1949) and developed by Yuval-Davis (1997, 2011) where she recognizes that people are members of many communities simultaneously. Nielsen and Leighton (2017) explain the significance of the interrelatedness of communities, the connectivity to a person's self-identification as a citizen – concepts of class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, for example, are all contested and all are categories we fit/experience simultaneously. The interrelationship is highly complex and too often we hear about what one particular group does or does not do as if it was homogenous rather than a highly complex and diffuse collectivity.

A crucial insight into this comes from both Nussbaum and Sen and their separate but connected and highly perceptive accounts of human capabilities. When there is discussion about character or rights and responsibilities or playing one's part in society, there is an implicit assumption that everyone has equal access to rights and opportunities within a legal framework in a democratic society. Building on Sen and Nussbaum, Nielsen and Leighton (2017) demonstrates that this is often far from true.

By bringing these concepts together, the terms '*formal*' and '*real*' were developed in Nielsen and Leighton (2017) and Leighton (2018). A thematic analysis of data from interviews with 80 young adults confirms that not only is there a gap between what is legally provided for and what people daily experience, but that many young people are aware of this gap and conduct their lives accordingly – in response to what is really true for them rather than what is officially true. To offer one simple illustration – statute requires that every pupil in Key Stage 3 and 4 in England should experience teaching and learning which follows the National Curriculum for Citizenship Education. According to Ofsted (2014) provision of Citizenship is piecemeal in

English schools, and is often not provided at all. To draw any conclusions about the effect Citizenship Education has had on learners since its introduction is to assume the *formal* to be the case, that the law is upheld and applied, rather than to be aware of the *real* situation as identified by Ofsted. Such a misunderstanding can have a significant effect on research questions, research analysis and conclusions, education policy, and myriad other circumstances

Discussion

Radical citizenship education requires that teachers and students leave their comfort zones. Teachers are not accustomed to inviting challenge and many, particularly non-specialists, find some of the more controversial topics difficult to address. Similarly, students have been conditioned throughout their schooling not to question fundamental issues and therefore they take time to understand how to question as much as what can be questioned. Boler and Zembylas (2003) write of the requirements of what they describe as a 'pedagogy of discomfort', one which:

> 'invites not only members of the dominant culture but also members of marginalized cultures to re-examine the hegemonic values inevitably internalized in the process of being exposed to curriculum and media that serve the interests of the ruling class. No one escapes hegemony'. (p111).

This serves as a reminder that radical citizenship education goes beyond encouraging a critique of the state and of others, and must include self-scrutiny and the development of self-awareness. It is such a notion of discomfort which marries with Postman and Weingartner's subversive teaching to develop the notion of radical citizenship education and I summarise the themes arising from my own work in this area, below.

Emerging comprehension of collectivities

Differences in teacher background and teacher perceptions of the nature of Citizenship Education were amongst the reasons for diversity of structure, interpretation and content of Citizenship Education in schools. Such differences are evidence of the collectivities and intersectional experiences described by Yuval-Davis and which led Leighton (2006, 2013b) to identify eight categories/collectivities of citizenship teachers – commitment, conversion, co-existence, colonization, compliance, conflict, convenience and cynicism.

It is clear that any notion that 'teachers of Citizenship Education' comprise an homogenous group is both misleading and methodologically flawed. Unlike other National Curriculum subjects, Citizenship Education is taught mainly by teachers not qualified to teach it either by degree subject or by PGCE specialism. The subject, where it is presented to pupils at all, remains one which is often led and taught by non-specialists or by specialists from a diverse range of backgrounds and personal histories.

Radical challenge or an acceptance culture?

Ofsted (2010) reported on schools using collapsed timetable days as substitutes for a coherent Citizenship Education programme. Such days have been identified (Leighton, 2004) as an unsatisfactory means of providing Citizenship Education deployed by schools when it was the only strategy used, creating an often shallow and cursory examination of a wide range of skills and topics, but potentially very effective when in combination with other strategies (Hammond and Hayward, 2014; Keating et al., 2010; Kerr et al., 2007).

Paucity of school provision I

The notion of criticality is a consistent leitmotif throughout radical citizenship, that any political society should face sustained questioning and that active citizenship requires an informed citizenry. The Crick Report evokes the impression of Citizenship Education as more than just another subject, and many commentators have discussed the particular teaching and learning strategies which appear to be most engaging and effective (see, in particular, Jerome, 2006, 2014; Keating et al., 2010; Leighton, 2012, 2013a), expressing concern regarding an apparent tendency for citizenship education to be becoming similar to all other subjects due to the straightjackets of previous methods, previous expectations, previous outcomes and a senior school management combination of reluctance and ignorance.

One of the major challenges to be addressed by a radical approach to Citizenship Education is where teachers who are willing and able to facilitate the necessary changes for learners are to be located. Just as children can be taught to be selfish or competitive, Owen argued over a century ago, 'Children, if properly taught, would imbibe life-long instincts of co-operation and charity towards their fellows; but for this they must be given training at an early age'. (quoted in Kołakowski, 2005, p160) What constitutes 'properly' is the major bone of contention here. Cooperation and charity are not essentials for survival in a capitalist or post-capitalist society and, as Marx demanded of Owen, we need to ask 'who is to educate the educators?' (Kołakowski, 2005 p180). There is a clear need for 'radical educators', people with a critical eye whose agenda is driven by empowerment rather than by control and imposition; they need not be citizenship experts, but expert educators.

Placebo V Nocebo

Gillborn (2006) proposed that Citizenship Education is a placebo, which he describes as akin to a medical procedure of no therapeutic value. However, a placebo is a substance or treatment intended as a comparative for a treatment considered likely to be of value; placebos have been used in clinical trials to provide a control group so that the efficacy or otherwise of a proposed treatment can be evaluated. There is no such comparative with citizenship education so a more appropriate term is a 'nocebo' (Barsky, 2002; Hrobjartsson and Gotzsche, 2003), where an intervention has detrimental effects which outweigh any potential benefits. While this is the term Gillborn intends, it remains the case that he is wrong. In the case of Citizenship Education the danger is that a subject ostensibly intended to increase political literacy and participation might, by dint of poor provision and poor teaching, provoke even greater levels of political apathy than those claimed in the Crick Report.

Social class matters

Independent schools educate only 7% of the school population and are not governed by the National Curriculum, but those educated in that sector are over-represented in Parliament, the judiciary, and a number of other significant occupation groups. It is therefore appropriate to investigate the nature of citizenship education such people experienced. Leighton (2013b) is the product of scrutinizing documentation followed by a series of interviews with staff and students at a girls' independent school. This study showed levels of political awareness and social conscience comparable to those identified in Keating et al. (2010) and that, at least in this independent school, there was an ethos of civic engagement and political awareness

Paucity of School Provision II

Leighton (2013a) identifies and addresses the varied backgrounds of teachers of citizenship – academic as well as socio-cultural – and the varieties of provision which have developed since the introduction of 'compulsory' citizenship education in England. A typology of '8 Cs' of citizenship teachers is identified and discussed, similar to but not quite as contrived as Caplow's (1954) description of women's ghettoized work, outlining the range of needs and attitudes among specialist and non-specialist teachers of citizenship education, and some recommendations offered regarding how these can be approached.

Teacher attitude is crucial to the nature of the development of Citizenship Education in that there are categories of teacher where there is little if any commitment to the subject, with the strong implication that it is not therefore planned, resourced and implemented in any rigorous and potentially successful fashion. Democratization of classrooms and schools, with the aim of developing critical awareness and the skills of analysis and participation, present considerable challenges to any educator; a lack of commitment to these principles will inevitably mean that the opportunity to further them is lost when reluctant non-specialists are required to teach the subject.

Resources

Leighton (2014) offers an analysis of the images in five textbooks aimed at young people (14–16 years olds) taking public examination courses in Citizenship Education in England. With reference to Fang (1996) showing the role of images in motivating pupils and scaffolding their learning, as well as Freire's (2006) notion of the thick wrappers of multiple 'whys' which attach to any educational entity, it is argued that images are at least as important as text. While the images presented in the textbooks are analysed to demonstrate the 'English persona' which they imply, that persona is also shown to be emphasized by what is absent from the images. The presence of specific images represents choices made, so that the absence of others can be considered similarly to represent choices; the most significant absence, for me, was of any images which made reference to the significance of social class. Such an absence speaks volumes about the gap between England's state directed self-image and the reality of citizenship in England, the gap between *the formal* and *the real*.

Intersectionality and human capacities

Leighton (2018) focuses on the relationship between the textbook presentation of being a British Citizen and the perceptions held by teachers and students of citizenship education in England; effectively the second stage of research into school students' perceptions of 'the Citizen'. There was a consistent rejection of the image presented as being particular and unrepresentative, although some students did appear to absorb some of it into their own perceptions despite contrary personal experiences. The homogeneity of responses, across class, ethnicity, gender and professional role was notable. Responses in interviews showed that neither the students nor their teachers subscribed to the message behind the images, and that they had their own disparate versions of the reality of 'the Citizen'.

Conclusion

The principle of extending radical traditions to young people in England through citizenship education is embedded in the Crick Report yet is noticeably absent from any iteration of the

National Curriculum. It is abundantly and increasingly clear that class interests continue to compete and that education is one mechanism by which those with power manipulate those without. It follows that a more equitable society will therefore 'only be obtained when the people of the world get the world, and retain the world'. (Maclean, 1918) That is not the intention of the National Curriculum for Citizenship, but that need not be a barrier to imaginative and empowering teaching and learning.

One stated aim of the Crick Report was to change England's political culture through the provision of the teaching of citizenship and democracy in schools. That there is no clear evidence of such change might be attributable to a failure of Citizenship Education although the limited extent and haphazard quality of subject provision in English secondary schools in the past 17 years makes such a conclusion unreliable. Recent events such as school student strikes and the growth of groups such as the Extinction Rebellion movement, Black Lives Matter, anti-vaxxers, might be evidence of such change, but probably not. The furore over the UK's relationship with the EU since the referendum in 2016 could also be regarded as an increased awareness of and concern for democratic processes; whether such awareness is due to Citizenship Education is a moot point.

The provision of Citizenship Education in England is far from universally radical yet there are many examples of constructive, effective, 'subversive' radical citizenship education which at least address the aims and expectations laid down by Crick. By considering the contexts of learning outlined by radical educators and by reflecting upon the gap between the *formal* and the *real*, it becomes clear that recent and current young citizens are becoming more questioning and less acquiescent. Even if the original intentions behind initial cross-party support for the introduction of Citizenship Education were to manage and minimize public discontent, that has clearly not been the outcome. Indeed, as Kisby (2012) points out, it was only a matter of a few months before the Conservative Party leadership criticized compulsory Citizenship Education and that,

> in the period since 2010, in which the UK has seen first, a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition and second, a single party Conservative government, citizenship education has declined in significance to policy-makers and character education has risen in importance on the political agenda. (Kisby, 2017, p7)

One can only surmise why elected politicians decided against enhancing the political literacy and empowerment of the population.

Simply having a different curriculum is not enough. That difference has to be considered, and the pedagogy to accompany it must be appropriate. For Gramsci it would not be enough for those who wish for a more democratic or radical education to develop curricula which simply gainsay what others propose, in this instance to use Citizenship Education as a crude tool for manipulation and propaganda; '[i]t is too easy to be original by doing the opposite of what everyone else is doing; this is just mechanical'. (Gramsci, 1985; p124) That the pedagogy of Citizenship Education is a political and moral practice intended to expand criticality, expand participation, enable self-determination, and imagine a liberating future complies with the aims and aspirations of the Crick Report. To paraphrase several writers cited here, all education is political; the radical approach to Citizenship Education is just more open about this. One either accepts or rejects the notion that politicians should be accountable, that people should be able and enabled to take decision makers to task, that those decision makers are the servants of the people; either citizens should be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the political system and its institutions or they should not. To accept or to reject those propositions is to take a political stance.

Citizenship Education presents an opportunity to enable and empower current and future generations to be more questioning and less acquiescent. If democracy is not robust enough to survive questions and challenge we have a much greater social and political problem than what should be

taught in schools. Despite the continually diluted National Curriculum and the lack of appropriate provision in many schools, radical citizenship education is not only a theoretical possibility but is – in pockets – slowly becoming a reality. In accordance with the quotation from Williams cited above, it is practicable and realistic to aim for citizenship education to be truly radical in that it can and often does make hope possible, now and for the future. The purpose of Citizenship Education should not be to maintain the status quo, but to change it.

ORCID iD

Ralph Leighton https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8647-7624

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