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RADICALISING CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

Democracy faces two key threats today. The first is evident in the growth of authoritarian, right-wing, populism which is evident in a number of European countries and beyond. The second has been the undermining of democratic life by neoliberalism. Liberal democracy has aided the latter by the separation of economics from politics and the focus on the individual at the expense of the public sector and the common good. At the same time, some of the virtues of liberal democracy – the separation of powers, for example – are threatened by authoritarianism. We argue the importance of a critical engagement with current versions of democracy by drawing on a more participatory and active democratic tradition. This has significant implications for how we view citizenship and citizenship education. The dominant version of citizenship education in Scotland and the UK (possibly in Europe too) embodies a 'minimalist' model of citizenship through a curriculum for taking personal responsibility. This is inadequate for the challenge democracy faces. We argue the need to ground citizenship education in more radical soil, to nurture a critically engaged and active citizenry capable of challenging the democratic threats of right-wing populism and neoliberal subjectivity.

Keywords: *democracy, citizenship education, neoliberalism, populism, radical tradition of adult education, 'really useful knowledge'*

RADIKALIZACIJA DRŽAVLJANSKE VZGOJE – POVZETEK

Demokracija se danes sooča z dvema glavnima grožnjama. Prva je očitna, to je vzpon avtoritarnega desnega populizma, ki ga vidimo v številnih evropskih in drugih državah. Druga grožnja je spodkopavanje demokratičnega življenja prek neoliberalizma. Temu pomaga liberalna demokracija z ločevanjem ekonomije od politike in z osredotočanjem na posameznika na račun javnega sektorja in javnega dobrega. Hkrati so pod udarom avtoritarnosti nekatere kreposti liberalne demokracije – na primer ločitev oblasti na tri veje. V članku zagovarjamo pomen kritičnega angažmaja v sodobnih različicah demokracije, tako da pri tem črpamo iz bolj participativne in aktivne demokratične tradicije. Takšno delovanje ima pomembne posledice za to, kako vidimo državljanstvo in državljansko vzgojo. Dominantna različica državljanske vzgoje na Škotskem in v Veliki Britaniji (morda tudi v Evropi nasploh) pooseblja »minimalistični« model državljanstva, kjer učni načrt poudarja osebno odgovornost. Ta koncept ne zadostuje za izzive, s katerimi se danes sooča demokracija. Trdimo, da moramo državljansko vzgojo presaditi v

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radikalnejši prostor, ki bo odprl pot za kritično angažiranje in aktivne državljane, kakršni se bodo znali spopasti z desnimi grožnjami demokraciji in neoliberalno subjektiviteto.

Ključne besede: *demokracija, državljanska vzgoja, neoliberalizem, populizem, radikalna tradicija izobraževanja odraslih, »res koristno znanje«*

INTRODUCTION

Across Europe citizenship education, particularly in the context of schooling, has grown in prominence for over two decades or more. At the same time, in recent years we have seen a surge in right-wing populism supported by inward-facing nationalist trends and a discourse of prejudice and hatred against migrants. The Brexit result in the UK is one expression of this and, of course, Trump's victory in the US elections is another. In this article, we question how citizenship education is framed by arguing it typically lacks a critical account of democracy or, when the links between citizenship and democracy are articulated, a liberal democratic model is assumed unproblematically. In our view, this is inadequate and is part of the problem that has to be addressed in renovating citizenship education for the future.

Citizenship education without a critical view of democracy and society is more about social control rather than social change whereas the real challenge for citizenship education is to be relevant to the inculcation of an open, participatory democratic culture that contributes to individual and collective agency, whilst making connections between 'personal troubles' and 'pubic issues' (see Mills, 1959). In the UK, this type of social purpose was noticeable in the best of the liberal and radical traditions of adult education (see Fieldhouse, 1998). However, there is not much of this type of adult or citizenship education around particularly as a 'human capital' agenda has dominated lifelong learning (see Biesta, 2006).

We argue the need to reassert the relevance, values and purpose of the kind of education which saw itself as enabling citizens to be critically engaged actors in changing society. If we do not take heed of this, the regressive nationalism evident across parts of Europe, the US, India and Turkey, which poses a threat to liberal democracy, may well end up extinguishing the social and political freedoms we associate with it and, as a consequence, other traditions of democracy too. We need to overcome the limitations of liberal democracy (but not throw out what is useful in it) by resourcing a more radical and participatory democracy which requires a process of collective engagement in public life. We develop this position by exploring the contested conceptions of citizenship education and by reviewing some evidence of the limitations of the dominant conception of citizenship education in the context of schooling. We also draw on field research being conducted by Moir on learning critical citizenship – in and outside schools - to introduce some selective quotes which reflects our position. We do not assume these quotes are representative of the wider population, more that they serve the purpose of vivifying academic arguments rather than empirically substantiating them. It is the nature of the formative experiences

and prefigurative educational work done with young adults that potentially offers us a source of hope for the future.

One further qualification. Whilst our argument has, we believe, a European wide relevance we draw mainly on sources which have a UK reference point and specifically a Scottish one. It is not that we are uninterested in events elsewhere but simply that we are more familiar with our own contexts and we anticipate the ability of readers elsewhere to draw from this account relevant aspects. We look forward, of course, to accounts which extend and enrich our own horizons.

THINKING ABOUT CITIZENSHIP

McLaughlin (1992, p. 236) argues that citizenship can be mapped on a continuum ranging from minimal to maximal conceptions. He makes the valid point that this range of understandings are linked to *'…different political beliefs and interpretations of democracy'*. This can be illustrated by drawing on what he claims are the four key characteristics of citizenship; the nature of the identity conferred on an individual by citizenship, the virtues that are required to be a citizen, the extent of the political involvement individuals are required to show, and lastly the particular social prerequisites necessary for effective citizenship.

In the minimal view, the nature of identity mainly relates to an individual's formal legal status and the civic rights and obligations that are conferred on them, such as being able to vote, hold a passport and having a sense of '*an unreflective nationality'* (ibid., p. 236). A maximal interpretation is seen in much fuller terms. It includes the need for individuals to recognise the rights and responsibilities they have as a member of civic society, yet it is also seen as being much more than this. Individuals should acquire a critical consciousness and contribute to a dynamic, shared, democratic culture. They need a sense of *'the common good and fraternity'* (ibid., p. 236) and the active role they have in creating this. Furthermore, this notion of the common good is *'dynamic rather than static'* as it should continually be debated and refined, particularly in recognition of the way that citizenship relates to notions of equality of access in that participation can be undermined by inequalities of social class, race, gender or disability for example.

In relation to the virtues required by citizens, the minimal approach focuses on *'loyalty and responsibility'* (ibid., p. 236) to be law abiding with a focus on doing good works such as volunteering or being a good neighbour. The virtues required in the maximal interpretation require *'a more extensive focus for their loyalty and responsibility'* (ibid., p. 236), with citizens having a responsibility for engaging in critical questioning about existing social conditions and working towards improved social justice and the empowerment of all citizens.

The political involvement of citizens in the minimal interpretation frames citizens as essentially private and passive with an obligation to vote when required. Alternatively, a citizen in maximal interpretations would be involved in much more than just voting. They would be expected to engage actively in a participative democratic culture and by doing so they

also sustain and develop it. The social prerequisites involved in the minimal approach are simply the awarding of the legal status of citizen. In the maximal interpretation equality is the key social prerequisite. Therefore, society should do all it can to counter circumstances such as social disadvantage, which can undermine the ability of citizens to participate fully.

McLaughlin's framework problematises the underlying assumptions informing a specific conception of citizenship, and the wider purposes to which the related citizenship education (CE) is being harnessed. Particularly, what kind of citizen is CE being deployed to create? McLaughlin (1992, pp. 241–242) introduces two kinds of citizen, the 'autonomous' and the 'autarchic'. The autonomous citizen and their activity would be characterised by critical reasoning and, where required, a challenging of the status quo associated with the maximal conception. The autarchic citizen, however, is framed as being more individualist and self-reliant and their activity would be more limited in scope and in particular would not extend to *'calling into question fundamental maters…such as the prevailing social and political structures'* (ibid., p. 241). The autarchic citizen would be associated more with the minimal conception. Thus McLaughlin's framework presents the purpose of CE as being either minimal, pacifying people to except the status quo or maximal, developing critical awareness to promote change. However, it has been the former that has tended to be deployed – at least in the UK – as the interest in CE has grown. This minimalist emphasis is, however, part of the problem that can lead to authoritarian political reactions as democracy and citizenship education appears to merely shore-up liberal political and wealthy elites rather than result in substantive democratic and egalitarian outcomes. A number of factors have influenced the growth of citizenship education for young people, as we now turn to consider.

THE PROMINENCE OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Osler and Starkey (2006) highlight the renewed interest in CE, both in the UK and internationally. By drawing on a systematic review of the literature between 1995 and 2005, they identify 'six contextual factors' which explain this growth in interest. We briefly summarise these six factors below.

The first factor relates to the notion that education should contribute to helping people understand and challenge global injustice and inequality. This is influenced by the recognition that there is a growing link between inequality and injustice, and the growth in terrorist movements across the world. A key policy driver here is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which contains within it an aim for education focused on developing respect for human rights and freedoms and to equip people to live a responsible life in a free society.

The second factor relates to the educational response to globalization and the resultant migration. As nation states and geographic communities become increasingly multicultural, there is a tension between the need for education to promote national unity and the need to include and accommodate increasing cultural diversity. Therefore, to promote social

cohesion, CE should inculcate a set of democratic values and ideals such as human rights, justice, equality and tolerance of diversity that all citizens can support and embrace.

The third factor relates to the 'paradigm of disengagement': the perceived erosion of the civic and political engagement of young people. This perception views young people as apathetic, ignorant and indifferent to the political process. As Biesta (2011, p. 12) comments, young people are seen as lacking the '…*proper knowledge and skills, the right values and correct dispositions to be the citizens that they should be*'.

The fourth factor focuses on another perceived youth deficit, this time in relation to their lack of appropriate morals and values. For example, there is widespread public concern about the perceived rise of a range of risky and problematic behaviour such as alcohol consumption, drug taking and sexual behaviour amongst some young people. All of which are seen as emphasising a need for CE to help young people develop the appropriate views, values and morals (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 1998, p. 15).

The fifth contextual factor leads on from the end of the Cold War and the subsequent rise and development of liberal democratic states across the world. Education for citizenship is seen here as a key means of helping to develop and sustain these new democracies.

The sixth factor comes from the need to address the rise in anti-democratic and racist movements, particularly in Europe. Anti-racism is therefore seen as an important element of and motivation for CE.

Not all of these factors are as relevant or play an equal role in shaping the interest in CE in particular nations where the interplay of history and contemporary issues interact in particular ways. In the Scottish context, it would seem appropriate to suggest that all but the fifth factor, focused on rebuilding democracy after the Cold War, are relevant. Importantly, however, some of these contextual factors are also contradictory in relation to the perceived purpose of CE. For example, one factor emphasises respecting rights and learning knowledge and skills to participate actively in the democratic process. Yet, on the other hand, there is a concern about anti-social behavior which leads to a focus on moral duties and individual responsibilities. For example, Wood (2009, p. 149) states; '*Citizenship education, in this mould becomes nothing more than a programme of addressing a young person's individual political, social and moral deficits*'.

We now turn to discuss the policy developments for CE in the United Kingdom (UK) with particular reference to Scotland. Whilst some of the policy language resonates with the kind of maximal view of citizenship previously discussed, the reality on the ground, as we shall see is more towards a minimalist version of citizenship.

THE SCOTTISH (AND UK) POLICY CONTEXT

Munn and Arnott (2009) argue that the work of British political theorist Bernard Crick has had a significant role in shaping the theory, practice and goals of CE across the constituent parts of the UK. They identify these three key goals as; '*developing political*

literacy, community involvement and social and moral responsibility in young people'
(Munn and Arnott, 2009, p. 444). These key goals are reflected in the current Scottish
context and CE and the creation of 'responsible citizens' is one of the four key purposes
of the curriculum. The others being 'successful learners, confident individuals, and ef-
fective contributors' (see Education Scotland, no date). In Scotland, CE is embedded as
a cross curricular theme within the context of the national 'Curriculum for Excellence',
rather than for example in England where Citizenship Education is a discrete subject area.

Four of the contextual factors previously outlined by Osler and Starkey (2006) have in-
fluenced developments in CE in Scotland specifically, the challenge of inequality, the
perceptions of youth deficits in political engagement and morals, and the focus on rights
and justice education.

The key policy development in Scotland began in 1999, directly after the re-enactment
of a Scottish Parliament with devolved responsibilities for creating legislation in specific
areas (including education). The then Scottish Executive (after 2007 renamed the Scot-
tish Government) established a working group to report on how Scotland could develop
education for citizenship. This working group produced a report titled 'Education for
Citizenship: A Paper for Discussion and Consultation' (LTS, 2000). A range of further
influential papers and reports were produced which focused on the development and im-
plementation of the ideas in the original LTS paper and included the embedding of CE in
the curriculum for excellence as a core purpose of education in Scotland (see LTS, 2002;
Scottish Executive, 2004).

For Biesta (2013, p. 101) the LTS 2002 paper was the most significant in shaping the way
education for citizenship developed in Scotland, as it not only specified in detail how citi-
zenship should be conceived and how education can contribute to this, but also as it became
the framework for further developments in the field. Given the significance of this paper, it is
important to highlight some of the key ideas which emerge from it. For example, the overall
stated goal of the Scottish Government is to develop young people's capacity for *'thoughtful
and responsible participation in political, economic, social and cultural life'* (LTS, 2002,
p. 5). To support this capacity, schools are directed to promote learning opportunities fo-
cused on four aspects; knowledge and understanding, skills and competencies, values and
dispositions and creativity and enterprise (See Biesta, 2013 or Munn and Arnott, 2009). An
important conceptual principle was also established, which positions young people as *'cit-
izens of today rather than citizens in waiting'* (LTS, 2002, p. 8) with the rights and respon-
sibilities that go along with this status. Furthermore, it was argued that young people learn
most about citizenship when they are actively involved in the process (LTS, 2002, p. 3) and
so schools should function in ways that promote democracy and democratic relationships,
including enabling young people to apply their rights and responsibilities, such as participat-
ing in all the decision making processes that effect their lives in and outside school.

The paper conceived of citizenship and CE as being about acquiring capacity through
developing skills and knowledge, but importantly it also argues that young people should

be motivated to use this capacity to make decisions *'…and where appropriate take action'*, infused with a sense of social and environmental responsibility (LTS, 2002, p. 11). Developing young people's capability for citizenship also included the need for political literacy and the development of political views and values. Yet the paper also recognised that conflicts in values and power relationships exist and so young people would need to develop a critical awareness of these ideas and values. As Munn & Arnott (2009, p. 447) argue, the report saw developing *'critical autonomy'* in young people as a key element in helping them understand and actively apply their citizenship.

This brief overview of some of the core ideas presented in the paper would seem to reflect a 'maximal' conception of CE with ideas such as developing critical awareness, active involvement and taking action, all being prominent. However, a minimal conception is a more accurate description of the Scottish approach in practice.

CRITICISM OF THE SCOTTISH APPROACH

Biesta (2013) makes some important criticisms of the way CE is conceived of and practiced. We draw on two here. He claims there is a strong individualist tendency in the Scottish approach, which undermines collective responsibility. The emphasis is on developing the appropriate capacities and values to participate individually in society, but not to challenge the existing norms. Linked to this criticism, Biesta also argues that despite the rhetoric of taking action and developing critical awareness, this emphasis on individual responsibility limits the potential for developing effective political action for change. Therefore, he argues that CE, as it is conceived and subsequently practiced, is at risk of being individualised and apolitical, by focusing on young people's individual responsibilities and underplaying the need to help them learn about and promote their active political engagement in the issues that affect their lives.

Of course, this critique is not something unique to Scotland. For example, in the English context, Cunningham and Lavalette (2004, p. 258) make a similar criticism about this individualistic and apolitical tendency as they claim young people are *'…seen as problems to be managed, moulded and reformed rather than as active citizens capable of thinking and making decisions about issues that concern them'*. The minimalist version of citizenship dovetails with the premises of liberal democracy which, as we have seen, has been one source of authoritarian populist reaction.

There is also an echo of these criticisms emerging in the views and experiences of a group of young political activists taking part in Moir's ongoing doctoral research[1]. This research

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1   This research takes a qualitative approach and involves interviews with between 14 and 18 young activists. The research question is; How do young political activists learn for democracy & critical citizenship? In particular the study is focused on identifying the significant factors the young people in the sample claim led to their political activity and to what extent did any educational experiences influence their becoming active? Moir is currently conducting a detailed analysis of the interview data working towards writing up his thesis in early 2018.

is exploring how these young activists account for their activism and what role their educational experience played in this. The activists taking part in the study are members of three organisations; The Young Communist League, Scottish Labour Young Socialists and Young activist in the Trade Union Movement.

Speaking on the aims of Citizenship education in Scotland one respondent comments:

> *"I think they're great aims and I can get behind them, but I suppose in my view, if this was in place while I was at school, you know, just from what I know from friends…the aspirations (of CE) didn't match the reality for so many students. And I think, for example it says here about citizens of today, not citizens in waiting, but people aren't taught how to register to vote even. For example in my view something schools fail to do, I think you should be able to register to vote at your school, especially now sixteen and seventeen year olds are eligible to vote. I think there should be support from, citizenship education or even modern studies[2] teachers or whatever to help pupils, you know, register to vote. And again, coming back to this point not citizens in waiting, we're not, schools don't tell pupils how the political system actually works, how you can get involved. Like, it doesn't talk about trade unions, like how you connect, it doesn't even talk about civil society in the sense of how you can get involved in that sense..."*

He went on to express his concern at his experience of CE commenting;

> *"…so I do worry in a sense, like, reflecting back on what my friends have told me that we essentially have a generation of young people in Scotland who aren't being, you know, geared towards citizenship or activism, and I think that's to the detriment of our political process in Scotland."*

Another respondent reflecting on the difference between the policy rhetoric and the aims of CE and his lived experience said;

> *"…I think the school, the discipline of school, the hierarchy within school, this is all through primary school, all through high school, does the opposite I think it reinforces just like being subdued, reinforces that discipline. And this isn't anything conscious by the teachers in any sense, it's just when you're brought up and you're not taught to think critically.*

Another respondent also emphasized the lack of criticality and an inability to challenge ideas in school. She comments;

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2   Modern studies is a subject unique to the Scottish secondary school curriculum. The focus of Modern Studies is to develop learners' knowledge and understanding of contemporary political and social issues in local, Scottish, United Kingdom and international contexts.

> *"…our teacher, she was a really good teacher but I do remember her having very distinct…distinct definitions of what capitalism was and what communism was. And I remember her describing them as two very different things and how capitalism, you know, was described as something that allowed people to start their own businesses and communism was kind of described as this awful ideology that kind of imprisoned people but at, at the time…there was kind of no awareness that we could challenge that view. There was a kind of…this is just it, like we'll just accept this as it is. And there was no appetite for anybody else to challenge the view that was kind of being taught to us, I suppose. And as someone that's now been involved in left wing politics for a while and read more about it… there was no real opportunity to challenge… prevalent ideas or key ideas".*

Another respondent reflected on the content of the curriculum and his experience of it commenting;

> *"…I guess, there is a set curriculum, there is only so much you can teach, it would have been nice to have learned a bit more about trade unionism and the labour movement. And I can understand why it is limited as there is so much to teach a class…I guess…the schools are fearful of radicalizing students. I guess from the top down they don't want to cultivate a sense of workers solidarity and get people interested in politics..."*

What lies behind these critiques and the experiences of these young activists is the notion that citizenship and CE are 'essentially contested' concepts which *'…inevitably involves endless disputes about their proper uses on the part of their users'* (Gallie, 1956, p. 169). Citizenship and CE are not neutral. The particular approach adopted at any one time represents a choice from a spectrum of different, and often diametrically opposed, interpretations of citizenship and, more importantly, the nature of democracy.

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Carr and Hartnett (2002, p. 11) argue that there is a tension *'…between the 'liberal' commitment to individual freedom and the 'democratic' commitment to a more equitable distribution of power'*. The tension, of course, is between how we value liberty or equality and the balance between the two.

Carr and Hartnett compare and contrast what they term as the 'contemporary' conception of democracy and the 'classical' conception based on Athenian participatory and direct democracies. Carr and Hartnett's view of contemporary conceptions of democracy see citizenship in a minimal way. For example, there is a representative democratic culture and merely formal notions of equality. A core principle is the development and maintenance of a social system that allows individuals to pursue their own private self-interest with a minimum of state interference. This positions citizens as little more than politically

passive voters. Alternatively, for Carr and Hartnett, classical conceptions of democracy frame citizens in a maximal way and encourage their active participation in the political and decision-making process. People are seen as active political beings in a participative democratic culture who share in the deliberations that shape and develop their world.

These differing conceptions of democracy, and the citizens required to enact them, have a significant impact on the particular function of CE. According to McLaughlin (2006, see also Carr and Hartnett, 2002), pluralist liberal democracies like the UK are characterised by a diversity of beliefs and values, but especially a diversity in what should constitute the appropriate public virtues, identities, principles and loyalties that shape and sustain the good and just society. Consequently, there is a tension in the operation of a pluralist society between the ability of individual citizens to pursue their private lives and the extent to which this is constrained by the desire to maintain or enforce particular social norms. As there are these countervailing forces at work in a pluralist democracy there is always a difficult balance to be struck between 'cohesiveness and diversity', between our public and private lives and the values which inform them (McLauchlin, 1992, p. 240).

McLauchlin suggests that CE in pluralist societies therefore have two key, but contradictory roles, to enable students to develop an understanding of and commitment to the various shared public virtues and dominant ideas that characterise society, but also to encourage a critical examination of these public virtues and norms and, when required, change them. Education which focuses on the latter is therefore critical today.

The problematic nature of CE therefore follows on from this tension, as it depends where on the minimal/maximal continuum those who are promoting CE choose to draw their particular conception of citizenship from and the purpose this education is thought to serve. Any position taken will be normative, informed by the particular view a person holds on political economy and their view of democracy and citizenship. However, a key test should be to what extent any approach helps to promote and sustain a vibrant democratic culture and challenge inequality and injustice, which is claimed to lie behind the recent interest in CE.

A TYPOLOGY OF CITIZENS: STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS FOR CITIZENSHIP & DEMOCRACY

Westheimer and Kahne (2004) draw on their own empirical research in the United States to develop a typology of citizens and CE (see also Veugelers, 2007 and Johnson and Morris, 2010), which is in many ways consistent with McLaughlin's maximal and minimal conceptions. Westheimer and Kahne suggest three types of citizen: the Personally Responsible Citizen, the Participatory Citizen and the Justice Oriented Citizen.

These conceptions reflect different ontological and epistemological assumptions about what a good citizen is and what learning supports them. All three conceptions promote the development of individual knowledge and skills such as how democracy and government institutions work. However, the Personally Responsible conception differs sharply

from the other versions. Personally Responsible citizenship is focused solely on building individual skills and capacities and promoting traits such as developing good character, behaving responsibly, obeying the law, volunteering and charity giving; a minimal interpretation in McLaughlin's terms. Participatory citizenship emphasises community leadership and action, whereas Justice Orientated citizenship as well as involving these things, would also emphasise the development of critical awareness and structural analysis of social problems. These would be more closely aligned to a maximalist conception.

In relation to the key test of promoting and sustaining a democratic culture, Westheimer and Kahne state that an exclusive emphasis on Personally Responsible citizenship is *'… inadequate for advancing democracy'* (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004, p. 248). They argue that whilst some of the traits associated with the Personally Responsible citizen, such as *'fostering honesty, good neighbourliness and so on'* (ibid., p. 244) are in themselves good things for people living together in communities to have, they are not inherently democratic. Emphasising the problem, they go on to argue that *'…government leaders in a totalitarian regime would be as delighted as leaders in a democracy if their young citizens learned the lessons put forward by many of the proponents of personally responsible citizenship'* (ibid., p. 244).

Westheimer and Kahne argue that the Personally Responsible conception is the dominant conception in the United States. Our experience of educational practice would suggest that this is the case in Scotland as well. Biesta (2013) also argues that although drawing on elements of all three of Westheimer and Kahne conceptions *'the Scottish approach is predominantly that of the personally responsible citizen'* (Biesta, 2013, p. 113). The policy documents relating to Scotland could be seen to promote the idea that CE should be about creating and sustaining a *'healthy and vibrant culture of democratic participation'* (LTS, 2002, p. 11), were by *'taking action'* (ibid., p. 11) *'issues of social injustice'* and *'inequities'* will be addresses (ibid., p. 6). However, in our view and from the findings of Westheimer and Kahne and Biesta, it would seem that serious doubt is cast over the ability of CE, as it is currently conceived in Scotland, to achieve these ends.

THE DOMINANCE OF THE PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE (NEOLIBERAL) CITIZEN

The dominance of a personally responsible interpretation of citizenship presents a fundamental challenge to those interested in CE and its potential for developing a participative democracy and a more socially just world. However, to understand the dominance of this interpretation we need to understand the wider context from which this dominance arises. According to Hollis *'Education is a process of shaping society a generation hence'* (quoted in Carr and Hartnett, 2002, p. 17). The particular shape this takes at any one time is related, dialectically, to the dominant political and economic ideas of the time. The choices we make about education today can lock us into a particular set of social and economic relations for the future.

The dominant political economy of today is globalised neo-liberalism, and education policy and practice are being distinctively shaped by its particular nostrums, values and limitations (Garret, 2009; Olsen and Peters, 2005; Crowther, 2004). According to Harvey (2005, p. 2) neoliberalism is;

> … a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices.

For Harvey (2005, p. 5) neoliberalism, by serving the interest of a small but powerful elite, exacerbates inequalities already inherent in capitalist society in which the opportunities for the majority of people to fully develop and flourish are limited or negated. However, to help understand some of the factors sustaining the dominance of neoliberalism, it is important to look more closely at the particular relationship between the role of education and the economy that neo-liberal ideas foster.

Ball (2012, p. 2) suggests that neo-liberalism has changed how we think about the nature and purpose of education today, including CE. One of the significant effects of this change on education is a tendency towards economic reductionism. For example, Aspin and Chapman (2000) argue that education has a 'triadic nature' which includes an economic purpose for employability and prosperity and a personal element, which relates to an individual's personal development and growth. It also includes a democratic element, which should foster social inclusiveness, democratic understanding and activity which will help develop and sustain a *'more democratic polity and set of social institutions'* (ibid., p. 17). Yet crucially, the key for Aspin and Chapman is that these elements are interrelated and indivisible, with a *'complex interplay between all three'* (ibid, p. 16). However, Biesta (2006) and Crowther (2004) argue that there has been a significant realignment in both the priorities and understandings of this triad over the last three decades.

As a result of the dominance of neoliberalism, the economic dimension is now pre-eminent in education policy, marginalising the other two dimensions of education. As Crowther claims (2014, p. 26), *'In these neoliberal times the justification for almost everything to do with public policy is measured in terms of its economic value'*. The purpose of education therefore has shifted from being focused on 'learning to be', aimed at developing full, rounded humans and a socially just society, to 'learning to be productive and employable', focused on the individual development of human capital, employability and the subservience of education to needs of the economy (Coffield, 1999; Crowther, 2004; Biesta, 2006)

This economic reductionism has important consequences for the purpose of education, and by implication, for CE in particular. Part of neo-liberalism's project is an attempt to remoralise society by nurturing a new sense of 'flexible' individualism which shifts the

responsibility for prosperity and welfare from the state to the individual, so people will 'self capitalise' over their lifetime (Lingard, 2009, quoted in Ball, 2012, p. 3). For Sennett (1999) this has fundamental implications for human beings leading to the very 'corrosion of their character'. Education is a key contributor to this remoralisation. However, as Crowther (2004, p. 127) argues, there is a *'hidden agenda'* in education framed in this way, which involves the *'…creation of malleable, disconnected, transient, disciplined workers and citizens'*. The result of this over emphasis on the economic dimension and on 'learning to be employable', reinforces the status quo as education becomes *'…adaptive rather than transformative…'* (Walker, 2012, p. 386). Rather than creating 'active subjects in politics' (Shaw and Martin, 2000, p. 402), who can think critically about the world and their place in it so they can act to change it, the individuals who are disciplined and shaped by this neoliberal discourse in education are positioned as 'objects of policy', that is passive economic actors, and so they would resemble in McLaughlin's term, autarchic citizens. This is also the outcome of the dominance of a Personally Responsible or minimal conception of citizenship, which emphasises the individual over the collective and tends towards the creation of individualised, apolitical and uncritical citizens.

'MERELY' USEFUL KNOWLEDGE OR "REALLY USEFUL (CITIZENSHIP) KNOWLEDGE"

Carr and Harnett (2002, p. 44) argue that the purpose of CE is directly linked to particular concepts of citizenship, democracy and economic relations. For them a contemporary conception of democracy reflects the *'political requirements of the market economy'*. The purpose of CE therefore is to produce the *'political ignorance and apathy of the masses'*. Pedagogically, relationships would be authoritarian or transmissive and focused on developing attitudes and knowledge which fit people submissively into the status quo and prepares them for their role as workers and consumers in a market economy. On the other hand, a classical conception would seek to develop knowledge and attitudes in people that would facilitate political participation and critical awareness, allowing them to *'reappraise existing social norms and reflect critically on the dominant social, political and economic institutions of contemporary society'* (ibid, p. 44). The pedagogical relationships here would be democratic and participatory, focusing on democratic deliberation and the problematising of lived experience, which could lead to transformation and emancipation, not adaptation to the status quo.

The above perspective on the purpose of education reflects an important 19th century debate in adult education about the development of Mechanics Institutes in the United Kingdom (See Fieldhouse, 1998). These Institutes were a notable innovation in education for working adults. In the context of poor economic growth, education was seen as both the problem and solution. The economy was not growing effectively due to the lack of technically skilled workers. In order to overcome this shortfall in skilled labour industrialists and philanthropists were instrumental in creating many – but not all - 'Mechanics institutes'. However, whilst the education on offer may have benefited people individually,

these institutes were not designed to develop the critical consciousness of workers. As Engels once asserted;

> Mechanics' Institutes…offer classes in the brand of political economy which takes free competition as its God. The teachers of this subject preach the doctrine that it does not lie within the power of the workers to change the existing economic order…they must resign themselves to starving without making a fuss. The students are taught subservience to the existing political and social order. (Engels, quoted in Fieldhouse 1998, p. 27)

As the quotation above highlights, on one side of this historical debate were those who saw education as being primarily about providing workers with the appropriate skills and attitudes to serve the needs of the economy to increase prosperity. On the other were radicals who saw this education as domesticating people into an exploitative socio-economic situation. For radicals, the education of the mechanics institutes provided 'merely' useful knowledge which was instrumental, individualised and adaptive. What the radicals wanted was 'really' useful knowledge, which would help people understand their current situation and raise awareness of how they could change it for the better (Johnson, 1988). This debate about the core educational function of these institutions has deep resonance with today.

The inter-relationship between conceptions of democracy, the economy and education is crucial in understanding the core purpose of the education that emerges from this relationship. They have to be considered as a dynamic inter-related and reciprocal totality, rather than static separate elements. Any change in one will influence and reinforce changes in the others. As a result, there is always a struggle, or 'long revolution', as Raymond Williams (Carr and Harnett, 2002) describes it, between those who control and benefit from power and wealth and want to maintain this privileged situation, and those who are exploited by the current status quo and need to change things. This struggle lies at the heart of the contested nature of citizenship and CE.

We argue that in the context of a dominant, global neoliberal political economy, it is the 'contemporary conception' of democracy that is shaping the nature and purpose of CE and we need to change it too. This creates the conditions for the prominence of a 'minimal' or personally responsible approach to CE thereby facilitating a process were young people are being locked uncritically into a world that prepares them '…*for a new economic reality designed by others.*' rather than preparing people to '… *shape social reality in more progressive and socially just way.*'' (Hyslop-Margison and Thayer, 2009, p. xvii).

CHALLENGING EDUCATION FOR PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP

We need to change what CE means and what kind of democracy it needs to serve; unless we do this, there is no educational challenge to the growth of right-wing populism.

We need to ground CE in more radical soil if it is to be an effective challenge to the limited form of CE that are dominant and, at the same time, present an immanent critique of liberal democracy. The philosophical principles of the kind of radical education we are highlighting are especially drawn from the work and ideas of Karl Marx and those involved with the Frankfurt School such as Max Horkeimer and Theodore Adorno (Johnson and Morris, 2010; Darder, Baltodano and Torres, 2003). The work of Antonio Gramsci and Paulo Freire are also influential. Although radical education is informed by a set of 'heterogeneous ideas' (Darder et al., 2003, p. 10), there are some core perspectives or principles, which can help to characterise its nature and purpose. For example, it is an overtly political and radical educational philosophy and practice (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2002). It seeks to directly challenge the political economy and social relations of capitalist society, which is characterised by significant inequality and injustice for the majority, limiting their ability to develop to their full potential and become *'fully human'* (Freire, 1990, p. 21).

Radical practice challenges the idea of neutrality in education (Freire, 1985; Apple, 1990). The role of dominant traditions in education in capitalist society *'…remains one of reproducing…inequality…and act[ing] to legitimate its rule and to train people to fit into the social-economic hierarchy'* (Youngman, 1986, p. 21). Therefore, an important idea in social transformation is the concept of hegemony (Quintin, 1971). In developing the concept of hegemony Gramsci drew on this key idea from Marx and Engels (2004, pp. 65–66);

> Each new class which puts itself in the place of the one ruling before it, is compelled, merely in order to carry through its aim, to represent its interest as the common interest of all the members of society…it has to give its ideas the form of universality, and represent them as the only rational, valid ones.

Hegemony involves the active consent of people in their own subordination. The role of education in this process is crucial, both in terms of sustaining as well as challenging this hegemony. As Gramsci claims *'Every relationship of hegemony is necessarily an educational relationship'* (Quintin,1971, p. 350). This opens up the opportunity to develop what Gramsci calls a 'counter hegemonic' project; key to this is his distinction between 'common' sense and 'good' sense. For Gramsci, 'common' sense is the uncritical view of the world which most people have and which means they unquestionably accept the key hegemonic claims made about the world and their place in it. The key for Gramsci was to develop in people the critical consciousness of 'good' sense (i.e. renovating and making critical what people already know) so they can become aware of their situation and come together to act to change it. It is the development of good sense that will help build an enlightening counter hegemonic project.

This process of enlightenment is referred to by Freire as conscientization: *'the process in which people, not as recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the sociohistorical reality which shapes their lives and of their capacity to*

transform that reality' (Freire, quoted in Carr and Kemmis, 1986, pp. 157–158). For critics, particularly those who value objectivity and neutrality in pedagogical relationships, such a view of education is overtly motivated by a radical politics which therefore leads to the indoctrination of the people educators work with (Burbules and Berk, 1999; Darder et al., 2003). This criticism is somewhat undermined by the idea that all education is political (Allman and Wallis, 1995). As Freire (1985) argues, claiming to be neutral is in itself political, as this is to side with the powerful and so help maintain their power and privilege and an unequal and unjust world.

More importantly, it is essential to re-emphasise the centrality of dialogue as an epistemological category as well as a pedagogical practice, in Freire's vision of education. Educators who see themselves as 'enlightening the masses' miss the point that knowledge has to be created openly and actively between people who are equals; people bring to the educational relationship different types of experience and expertise, but it is only through dialogue as a pedagogical process that genuine 'acts of knowing' occur. Missionary practices to teach people what is best for them are self-defeating and useless; educators without humility and reflexive awareness are, ultimately, 'part of the problem' rather than 'part of the solution'.

CONCLUSION

If education is to play any role in defending and extending democratic life, in the context of contemporary capitalism, it needs to also challenge the limits of liberal democracy and the kind of minimal citizenship ideal that it fosters. The very fact that liberal democracy obscures the role of economic inequalities in political outcomes is a root problem.

This account has demonstrated that ideas about CE and its relationship to democracy and the economy are complex and contested. As discussed above, ideas of CE range between minimal conceptions that provide 'merely useful knowledge' and which act to pacify people and reinforce an unjust status quo, and maximal conceptions providing 'really useful knowledge' and which aim to raise people's critical awareness of injustice and work towards developing a more equal and just society. We have also suggested that in Scotland, within the context of a dominant neoliberal political economy, there seems to be some disjunction between policy and practice. On the one hand, the aims of policy evoke a maximal conception of CE, and on the other, the interpretation and impact of policy in practice, reflects a more minimal or 'personally responsible' approach. If citizens are going to be equipped, however, to combat the ideological messages and false promises of right-wing populism they will need to be far better prepared than this model of citizenship caters for.

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