

# CHAPTER 1

## Global Citizenship Education and the Role of the Academy: A Critical Introduction

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The debate over the role of institutions of higher education (hereafter HEIs) in the evolution of societies is always interesting and at times intense. From those who see HEIs' agenda as being hijacked by poorly informed government bureaucrats, special interest groups and profit-driven corporate programs (Bruneau & Savage, 2002; Turk, 2008), to others who may question the rigor of university education as being diluted by the introduction of some radical philosophies and "traditionally" extraneous ideas that do not sustain a high quality of learning (e.g., Bloom, 1993), the debates continue. It is also the case that in many instances, those who are sponsoring the different debates are themselves driven by personal or institutional interests that could eventually disfavor their opponents and help them realize their own understanding of what universities and colleges should do in given societal intersections of time and space. Hence, the heavy presence of the ideological lines where the fundamental functions of HEIs are by-and-large disagreeable and would probably remain disagreeable for the foreseeable future.

Moreover, whether some of us agree or disagree on what universities should do for their societies, the social reality now is they do play an important, indeed, seminal formative role in the creation of citizens in almost all countries of the world. Thus, the importance of not only ascertaining the different arguments that are in place, but as well, the potential benefits of the continuity of these debates which should add something to the refinement of the institutions' functions and their relationships with different stakeholders. It is on the basis of these realities that the question: what kinds of citizens should higher education develop, becomes important. Indeed, what triggered the work of this book and the conference that initiated its contents was at least one attempt of debating, again and in open scholarly contexts, some elements of the University of Alberta's *Dare to Discover* initiative which was sponsored by the University's President, Dr. Indira Samarasekera, which among other things, contained the need to develop students who feel and can function as global citizens. Here, the intentions can be simple, but analyzing and achieving global citizenship in the lives of young students from Canada has to be complex. As such the book is not a manual on how to achieve a global citizenship, for there cannot actually be such a manual, and such assumption would actually diminish the richness as well as the extensive exchanges and understanding that must color the terrain of aiming for and becoming a global citizen (Abdi, 2009). So in preparing this work, the intention is to elevate some of the descriptive, analytical, and critical perspectives, and with diverse scholars in academically detached units and disciplines, the per-

spectival unity of the book should be implicated is its overall desire to push the boundaries and the very real, practical fragmentations of the way we define, interact with, and practice global citizenship. Global citizenship may be one thing for some, but it is also expanding into more and more spaces which socially, educationally, culturally, politically, and economically locate the citizen and his/her community.

As such, one could, for example, produce multiple volumes on educational citizenship (i.e., the rights of citizens to education and how they should use that education); or on cultural citizenship (i.e., how cultural realities create the meanings of citizenship and the rights of citizens); or on the one many mistakenly associate with all citizenship, political citizenship (i.e., the rights of citizens vis-à-vis government offices, public institutions and their role in influencing the structure as well as the functions of those institutions); or on economic citizenship (see Abdi, 2008), which focuses on the rights of citizens to avail themselves of monetary and commodity based transactions that directly affect their daily livelihoods. All of this could be about what is happening, citizenship-wise, in one location, one city, or let us generously say, one country. Such is the complexity of citizenship stories and practices that one could imagine the grand ambitions (but still selectively pragmatic and socially noble intentions) of understanding and critically harnessing the good that could come from global citizenship practices for learners here at the University of Alberta and other HEIs in Canada and around the world. Indeed, in all of the 200 or so countries in the world, social, educational, cultural, political, economic, and so on, technological citizenship needs and possibilities would be as diverse as one could imagine. One simple, but not so simplistic, example is the technological needs of citizens in Canada and Uganda. In the former, the needs and the demands in the year 2010 may be mainly qualitative (Do I have the right hardware, software, access, and speed?); in the latter, these would probably mainly be quantitative (Do I have access to anything?), and from there the rest is even more complicated with historical and cultural attachments that refuse to be amalgamated into Francis Fukuyama's triumphalist post-historical world, even if that totalist thesis has been seemingly lately tamed (Fukuyama, 1993; Pinar, 2008).

It is, indeed, all of these geographical, numerical, historical, cultural, social, and politico-economic realities that any statement or program that aims for global citizenship must ascertain. It is not enough, as has been the case lately, to freely ride the new bandwagons of global citizenship (more so, global citizenship education). The results of these new trends have been, as implicated above, an a priori perfection of Western notions of citizenship and the need to create new citizenships that should perfect the bad citizenship luck of the developing world. In fact, while not so expressed, we wonder if there was any Canadian global citizenship project, for example, that wanted to study, analyze and suggest improvements for American citizenship, Swedish citizenship, or British citizenship which we submit, have many imperfections that need to be modified. Needless to add that current global citizenship studies and projects that

focus on developing world situations (e.g., research programs, new course development, exchange programs) would have a lot of important constructive impact, but only if they are co-designed and co-implemented with people in Southern countries who, more than anyone in the North, know their citizenship contexts, needs and expectations. In effect, without that happening, current global citizenship schemes could go the way of international development, and its progenitor of globalization, with both failing the needs of most of their target populations, precisely because they have been mono-epistemically designed and singularly exported from the North/West. As such, for HEIs, the focus on global citizenship, in its different theoretically, analytically, and eventually practical constructions, should be historically and culturally inclusive, policy-wise responsive, educationally enlightening and continually open to ongoing inquiry and collective imaginations. It is with this that students from these institutions can begin to partake (not assume about) in the noble possibilities of global citizenship where ethically bound intentions and practices (see Dower, 2003) would fully color the overall project and its outcomes.

### **A Theory, Policy, and Program Approach**

To achieve the expansive possibilities of global citizenship, particularly as a social justice endeavor, and to avoid being caught in the neoliberal trap of proclaiming globalized equity while creating its opposite, therefore, the authors in this book have contributed to understanding global citizenship in diverse ways, from an ancient commitment of interconnectivity to a hyper capitalist and globalized mobile individualized citizen. Whatever the ideas constituted in theoretical conceptualizations, policy initiative or educational programming, these are never a neutral endeavor. As Stanley Deetz (1992) described, the processes of discursive closures that are embedded in policy and its enactment create particular discourses which legitimate some perspective over others, make some programs more appropriate than others, and politicize particular ideas. The discourses of global citizenship, as an institutionalized way of speaking about citizenship and education, are being engaged in ways to establish particular meaning and practices. As such, the authors in this volume describe, through theoretical conceptualizations, policy processes descriptions, and through educational programming, how global citizenship has moved into the educational agendas of HEIs and the various forms the institutionalizing process has taken. Through the diffusion of ideas that come from global agencies (e.g., international financial institutions like the World Bank that promotes liberalized and privatized education and knowledge production), to global resistance movements (e.g., local farmers and anti-poverty movements, and environmental groups), and through struggles in local contexts to both embrace and/or resist outside influences, the idea of global citizenship has come to life and made its way with speed and intensity into the lives of educators throughout the world, but without much attention to the boundaries and discourses involved. This book adds to the expansion of these discursive boundaries

in order to provide the space for a much wider understanding of the issues and the practices related to educating global citizens—citizens who exist outside elitist desires for limitless access and mobility.

### Transdisciplinarity

A key foundation of this volume is its attempts to move educational thinking and action into the realm of transdisciplinary knowledge. This attempt is particularly important in the context of increased marketization of knowledge and demands to create a knowledge economy. Manfred Max-Neef (2005) argues that increases in the departmentalization and disciplining of knowledge into smaller and smaller parts creates the context for both increased disciplinary autonomy (discipline in isolation) but more importantly, the competition for research funds and the consolidation of academic prestige that is the basis of privilege in today's academy. Max-Neef describes the urgency of shifting away from this commodification of knowledge by finding the ethical and principled platforms where the main social, environmental, political, and economic problems we face might actually be understood and transformed. Horlick-Jones and Jonathan Sime (2004) agree, arguing that the "border-work" of transdisciplinarity helps to contextualize discipline-based inquiry in ways that will help us move beyond reductionisms that serve to increase the problems of poverty, forced migration, environmental destruction, violence and increased militarization, to name a few. Max-Neef, while certainly not advocating eliminating disciplines as absolutely essential places of knowledge creation, is adamant that none of these issues can be addressed from the sphere of specific individual disciplines. This radical shift within the academy mirrors the radical shift needed in society to face these issues. However, we are encouraged by the possibility that through a similar radical (but inclusive) transformation of understanding citizenship, beyond the limits of liberal democratic theories and isolated group and individual claims to a nation state, to an ethical platform of education that asks: What are the multiple and diverse understandings and experiences of citizenship and non-citizenship (or subjectification) that exist in the world? What kinds of citizenship are we (in the widest and most inclusive sense) capable of enacting and supporting? What should we do to ensure a global, fully endowed citizenship exists regardless of class, sex, race, age, ability or geographic/spatial privilege and/or exclusion? How can these questions form the foundation of higher education as a project that might enhance the quality of life for students, teachers, and the multiple communities that surround these, without diminishing the quality of life of other students, teachers, and communities? This book is one step along the journey of answering these and many related questions.

## **Organization of the Book**

This collection represents an attempt to bring together theory, practice, and policy on global citizenship education in post-secondary institutions. More importantly, it offers geographic and disciplinary perspectives that allow us to expand our understandings and possibilities so that global citizenship might do more than serve a hungry knowledge economy looking for those key commodities needed for its survival—bits of information, uncritical students, and obedient education workers. With this in mind, the contributors to this book address critical and selectively contentious issues tied to the ways in which post-secondary institutions approach and could operationalize global citizenship education. Among those issues are concerns about the conceptual and theoretical formations of the case, the impact of neoliberalism, globalization, marketization of higher education, and the declining influence of public institutions on citizenship and social justice.

In chapter two, Lynette Shultz interrogates the meaning of global citizenship and education for global citizenship and maps the multiple discussions that take place around these two concepts. She asks whether there are possibilities that global citizenship education can transform the structures and relationships that frame current hyper-globalist contexts for higher education. Her response is that if it is indeed possible to transform current contexts, it will be those programs and projects that engage the difficult knowledge of globalization and citizenship in their full historical and multi-located manifestations that hold such possibilities. But to do so, Shultz concludes educators need to ask hard questions: Whose knowledge counts? Whose citizenship counts? Who does knowledge serve when educating global citizens?

In chapter three, Ali A. Abdi engages a critical recasting of selected historical formations and deformations of citizenship, and analyzes the problems of monoculturalized citizenships that represent the experiences as well as the actual lives of the West, but are, hegemonically, presented as representing the real contexts of all peoples around the globe. To achieve a clear theoretical trajectory of these and related issues, Abdi relays important notations of how, via five active centuries of colonial experiences and even before that, the rescinding of primordial and socio-culturally located citizenships in traditional societies were rescinded, and replaced with multi-tiered marginalizing schemes of life that almost permanentized the onto-epistemic and praxical superiority of Europeans, and the almost naturalized inferiority of the rest. To contrapuntally disable this problematic but dominant worldview and practice, Abdi recommends that spaces of higher education should not short change the educational as well as the future lives of their students, and must assume a de-monoculturalizing and multicentric understanding of citizenship meanings, citizenship rights and possibilities.

In chapter four, Shibao Guo provides a study of a higher education program of international curriculum and its impact on students. He highlights the complex and

contested nature of global citizenship education and points to epistemological confusion in naming, locating, and understanding the impacts of global citizenship education. Guo argues for the need to develop a transformational approach to global citizenship that focuses on internationalization as a fluid movement between world-views. This position is expanded through the lens of science education, as Margaret Anne Armour (chapter five) looks at global citizenship education and notes that the foundation for global citizenship education should be the concept of the interconnection of a shared planet. Armour provides examples of several planetary and critical world issues that link places and peoples from the impact of damaging agricultural practices to deforestation and desertification. She argues that it is urgent and necessary that science education in post-secondary institutions make those connections in curriculum and planning.

Using the example of the International Baccalaureate program, Paul Tarc, in chapter six, problematizes internationally focused programs. He calls to educators to face and respond to the need for (re)making global citizenship into a relevant pedagogical platform. He questions whether global citizenship education can present a pedagogical intervention attuned to the present day world of students and asks what pedagogy of global citizenship is. Tarc argues that the classroom is not only a place for curriculum implementation and knowledge production, but a radical space for engaging issues in the world. In chapter seven, Ranilce Guimaraes-Iosif draws on Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy to question citizenship education and conceptions of global citizens in higher education institutions. She asks how global citizenship will respond to increasing inequality, poverty, and human rights violations and argues that educators must take up their role as intellectuals and active members of society to fully understand the power as well as limitations of educating for global citizenship.

Chapter eight begins the section on curriculum and education programs. George H. Richardson, Lucy De Fabrizio, and Kwasi Ansu-Kyeremeh present their findings from a study of a global citizenship education program that sends Canadian students to Ghana. They question the impact that such programs have on students and ask: Is there a lasting influence? Is this education transformational? Are existing binaries that separate the "developed" North from "underdeveloped" South reinforced? Drawing on Mezirow's theory of transformational education and psychoanalytic theory, the authors read through the reflections of students as they engage in this program and provide insights into the complexity of learnings and understandings that result from such intense citizenship education experiences.

In chapter nine, Krogman and Foote describe the antidote for the isolation and despair often felt by people today as understanding the profound interconnection of humanity with nature. They point out that, as educators, we need to help our students recognize that we are fundamentally dependent on our environment, and that is not distinguished by social or political boundaries. They make the argument that there is no

excuse for ignoring this interdependency as it is the key to all life. For them, global citizenship is and should be a statement of ecological citizenship that positions humans in relation to the common good and citizenship is a responsibility to self and others as part of broader natural forces and systems. From this perspective, understanding and responding to issues of distribution, access, and inequality, as well as governance, agency and change, rest on the foundation of the greater common good.

In chapter ten, Dalene Swanson examines the urgencies and contradictions not only in conceptualizations of global citizenship and global citizenship education, but in curriculum contexts and program responses. She describes the dangers of locating global citizenship into institutional programs and policies that are planned and implemented “from above.” Such programs tend to fix “the global” and “the local” into static positions and therefore, are unable to engage the transformational potential to disrupt those structures that create and sustain the problems that face humanity at this time. In response to these dangers, Swanson illustrates how a course in global citizenship might have wider institutional impacts.

Vanessa Andreotti presents a post-colonial analysis of global citizenship education through a comparative examination of three global citizenship education programs in chapter eleven. Her focus is on understanding the potential effects of their embedded discourses and interventions. She identifies problems of essentialism and fixing identities and highlights the cultural supremacy that can become embedded in the assumptions that frame global citizenship projects. For Andreotti, this privileging structure emerges most commonly in the assumption that the “global north” was developed, pluralist/multicultural and democratic, leading in knowledge production and able to establish the boundaries for “common humanity,” while the “global south” is typically portrayed as an exotic object of study, still limited in terms of “progress” and certainly in need of help from the knowledgeable “north.”

In chapter twelve, Mehdi Mahdavinia presents a case study of global education in Iran and highlights the problem of distinguishing education based on globalism and globalization, with its economic focus from a more humanized education founded on ancient understandings of multi-located relationships and human connections. He notes that de-contextualized, universalized conceptions of global citizenship threaten to transform an education system viewed as somehow “missing something.” Mahdavinia argues that in the Iranian (and Global South) context, the key is to see learners in their wholeness, including their imagination, intuition, meditations, and dreams—ways of perceiving that are most often lost within academic institutions and programs.

In chapter thirteen, Roberto Da Silva attempts to help us see the importance of language learning in global education programming. He examines an English language class offered to Brazilian students and identifies the key issues of student agency and power relations within the language learning class. He argues that a pedagogy centred on critical literacy can ensure that language classes contribute to the wider citizenship

education goals of education. In chapter fourteen, Shelane Jorgenson uses a post-colonial theoretical framework to study a global citizenship education program that sends students to work in another country. She explores how students negotiate issues of identity, including self and others, in such cross-cultural programs, and reflects on the complexities and ambiguities embedded within the identity of “global citizens.”

As curricula for global citizenship expand on campuses, Richard Rymarz (chapter fifteen) identifies the important role for religious education to both explain and expand students’ understandings of the cultures and people they encounter locally and throughout the world. Rather than religious education that has a dogmatic focus, Rymarz reminds us of the importance of engaging the core meanings of relationships that are shaped by religious symbols and metaphors. Religious education, he argues, can help to create opportunities to talk about religion and society, a conversation that is often closed within education spaces. Rymarz suggests that religious education as part of a wider global citizenship education needs to be focused on the experiential world of the subject and the complexity of religious symbolism, beliefs, and practices, as a way to critically engage wider social issues.

Concluding the section on curriculum, Khalida Syed engages us in chapter sixteen, the different ways of knowing through what she describes as the ancient tradition of hermeneutic inquiry. She presents narratives of coming to understand global relationships and what it might mean to be a global citizen. She examines global citizenship through the lens of the Arabic “*umma*,” generally translated as “community or nation” which emphasizes how the impact of actions go beyond boundaries of families, interest groups, and governments.

Chapter seventeen opens the discussion about policy issues and responses to such policy. Rhonda Friesen provides an analysis based on the University of the Arctic as a way to examine Higher Education consortia as partners in global citizenship education. Here, Friesen sees the importance of looking beyond individual student learning to post-secondary institutions: Can universities be good global citizens? Friesen identifies the problems of inequality that impact such efforts and notes that institutions, like individuals and social groups, occupy positions of power that range from central to peripheral. She argues that global citizenship, with its foundation in equity and equality, might be a key foundation for developing better partnerships between and among higher education institutions. In chapter eighteen, Michael Kariwo looks at the issues of higher education governance in Zimbabwe and questions how global citizenship might be understood in this context as it exists alongside of increased domestic poverty and other significant social issues. Because global citizenship is most often viewed as a project of Euro-North American interests, Kariwo argues that local realities must be the focus on which higher education institutions concentrate even if they do create barriers to education with a global perspective. In his view, what is needed is an African view of global citizenship education which might become a bridge that will

move the possibilities of global citizenship education beyond neo-colonialism to embrace and extend diverse understandings and realities of what it means to be a citizen.

A third policy case study is presented in chapter nineteen, where Nadya Weber provides an in-depth comparison of global citizenship education policy from Ireland, United Kingdom, and Canada. Her study suggests that what is “Northern” about global citizenship is not a unified idea or practice. Weber notes that as a policy concept, global citizenship remains on the periphery, and programming and projects in this area tend to be a result of “globally minded” educators rather than the influence of specific institutional policy.

In the final chapter, Evelyn Hamdon and Shelane Jorgenson argue that there is a critical need for institutions to examine policy and policy processes to ensure they address the larger questions and issues embedded in global citizenship education. They note that policy is never neutral and as such carries both dangers and transformational possibilities. In order to deal with the tangible issues, they stress that there is a need to identify definitions and ethical foundations as policy knowledge that will direct policy on global citizenship in particular directions.

## **Conclusion**

At a time when neo-liberal regimes of accountability in higher education threaten to formalize and neutralize the transformative promise of global citizenship education, and when many worry that neo-liberalized citizenship education will marginalize the learning and knowledge contributions of many in the world, the diverse contributions that make up this book offer insightful and refreshing critiques of the theories, practices and policies related to global citizenship education in post-secondary institutions. These insights and critiques are important as there is a great deal of promise in expanding the constructive notations and practices of global citizenship, but how it is conceptualized and undertaken in institutions of higher education and attached spaces of learning becomes paramount. It is with respect to this critical understanding that the chapters in this collection present not only the necessary criticisms, but also offer alternative conceptions and potential policy reconstructions, programmatic possibilities, and avenues for intercultural dialogue and discussion that should open new spaces for understanding and practicing global citizenship and citizenship education within the academy, and by extension, outside it.

## **References**

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Introduction. Critical Pedagogy, Critical Thinking and Critical Citizenship. A Framework for Critical Citizenship Education.Â The roots of critical pedagogy lie in the critical theories of the Frankfurt School (most notably Adorno, Habermas, Horkheimer and Marcuse) and are most directly associated with the teachings of Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator whose seminal work Pedagogy of the Oppressed captured the imaginations of many educators and academics across the world. Civic education in Nigeria is an important and efficient way that contributes the participation of citizens in democratic and also development processes in our country. This phenomenon helps citizens to express their opinion both individually and within a group. Citizenship participation is based on the defense of individual and collective rights. It also ensures realization of the obligations of each citizen. Picture source: topstudentsng.com. READ ALSO: Fundamental duties of a citizen in Nigeria by the Constitution. It is generally accepted that civil education consists of three elements: a