

UNWRAPPING CITIZENSHIP: GETTING INSIDE THE NATURE OF CITIZENSHIP
EDUCATION

by

SHANNON LEE BURTON

B.A., The University of British Columbia, 1998

B.Ed, The University of British Columbia, 2000

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

The Faculty of Graduate Studies
(Curriculum Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
(Vancouver)

October 2012

© Shannon Lee Burton 2012

ABSTRACT

Citizenship education has been and continues to be espoused as a primary purpose of schooling. Citizenship education has been challenged by not only shifting notions of what it means to be a citizen, but also by the contested nature of citizenship and democracy. Neoliberal impacts have changed citizenship from a political and social to an economic concept. Citizenship has been professed as a universal concept providing all people in our democracy equal rights and protection. This, however, fails to promote understanding of the realities of inequality that permeate society. Hegemonic structures continue to separate the privileged and the not so privileged. Problems of citizenship inherently mean problems of citizenship education. The purpose of this study was to explore the reality of citizenship education. The research questions were:

- What are the opportunities present (in the curriculum) for students to develop citizenship at the elementary school, and what is the nature of the student experiences and interactions with those opportunities?
- How do school experiences promote development of citizenship attributes of personal responsibility, participation, and social justice?

Data was collected through environmental observation and a series of semi-structured individual and group interviews with grade seven students at Westview Elementary School in Vancouver, British Columbia. The data revealed an emphasis on developing personally responsible citizenship, while participatory citizenship education remained set aside for the students in leadership group, and opportunities for developing authentic social justice citizenship education were minimal. In the interviews, students

communicated the impact of agency and increased awareness. There was a void with regards to critical opportunities to question systems and explore reasons for injustice. Student experiences with citizenship education did not tackle concepts of democracy, universalism of citizenship, nor explore effects of privilege. This lack of critical pedagogy and questioning of current structures disables the capacity of citizenship education to transform society. Tensions presented themselves in the struggle for educators to step out of the neutral zone, unpack limitations, and have time to alter the current curriculum path. Amidst the tensions and the challenges of citizenship education at Westview, however, there are many possibilities and promises for transforming the citizenship rhetoric into a reality.

PREFACE

Ethics approval was obtained from The University of British Columbia, Office of Research Services on February 2nd, 2012. The UBC Behaviour Research Ethics Board number is H11-03242.

The citizenship education framework created by Westheimer and Kahne (2004), was employed in this study and used during both interviews and the process of analysis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
PREFACE	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
DEDICATION	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	8
The Troubling Idea of Citizenship	8
Research Purpose and Rationale	12
Research Question	17
Where Schooling Comes into Play	22
21st Century Citizenship Challenges	27
Notions of Democracy	32
The Non-Neutrality of Citizenship Education	34
Critical Citizenship Paradigms: The Bricks and Mortar of Citizenship Education	37
From Here to There: What Kind of Citizen?	44
Citizenship Education Frameworks: Structure for Change	45
The Nature and Practice of Citizenship Education	51
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	54
Theoretical Perspectives and Epistemology	54
Personal Reflections: Location and Positionality	57
Research Site	59
Research Methods	61
Sampling Process	63
Data Collection: Environmental Observation	64
Data Collection: Interviews	66
Group Interviews	66
Individual Interviews	69
Data Analysis	72
Limitations	74

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS	76
Citizenship Education Theory, Pedagogy and Practice	76
Evolution of the Research Questions	84
What Kind of Citizen?	85
The Personally Responsible Citizen	86
The Participatory Citizen	98
The Social Justice Citizen	113
Digging Deeper: Beyond the Framework	120
Constructs Around Citizenship Education—A ² (Awareness And Agency)	120
A Matter Of Race And Gender	125
Tensions	130
The Void-What Is Missing And What That Signifies	148
Positions of Privilege	152
Promises and Possibilities	155
Conclusion	158
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS.....	160
The Matryoshka Doll Principle.....	160
Contributions to the Theoretical Conversation	164
Implications for Schools and Citizenship Education	166
Offerings for the Future: Making the Rhetoric a Reality.....	170
Future Research	173
Conclusion	175
REFERENCES	178
APPENDICES	189
Appendix A.....	189
Appendix B	192
Appendix C	195

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Comparison of citizenship frameworks (Johnson and Morris, 2010).....	47
Table 2.2	Johnson and Morris (2010) citizenship education framework.....	49
Table 2.3	Westheimer and Kahne (2004) citizenship education framework.....	51
Table 4.1	Initial classification of citizenship opportunities at Westview.....	82
Table 4.2	Final classification of citizenship opportunities at Westview.....	83

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Clark and Case (1999) citizenship education matrix.....24

Figure 4.1 Mapping of citizenship education opportunities at Westview Elementary...81

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank my advisor Wayne Ross for inspiring me from the moment I walked into Curriculum Studies 562. Your support and guidance has been integral on this journey. Thanks to my committee, Sandra Mathison and Penney Clark, for their thoughtful comments and questions along the way. Your insight and expertise was invaluable.

Sincere respect and thanks goes to the scholars who have significantly contributed to the field of citizenship education. A special thanks to Westheimer and Kahne for their model of citizenship education which I used during this study.

I have priceless gratitude to the staff at Westview Elementary, your dedication to teaching and your love for the students astounds me on a daily basis. Thank you to the students who thoughtfull and energetically participated in my study, you know who you are. I thank you all for allowing me to take this critical journey at Westview.

Thanks to my administrator mentors and my OAA for their support and encouragement while I precarioulsy balanced multiple roles. Not to mention keeping me fueled up on caffeine.

I thank my friends for their kindness and support and for remembering to check in on me when I vanished into my research. You know who you are.

To my beautiful friend Jocelyn who left the world mid way through this study, but taught me so much about the importance of being a good listener, and to pay attention to the little details in life.

To my mom, dad and brother, for their unconditional love and support. Thank you for always believing in me.

I give loving thanks to my husband Patrick for his love, his patience, his non-stop humour, and all the dinners he made for me when I was too busy to cook. Without you, I would have not made it to the end of this long road.

DEDICATION

*For all children, world-wide, who deserve to be educated
about the realities of citizenship and critically taught that they can
make a difference.*

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Political philosophers, historians, policy makers and educators spend much time debating the bona fide definition of citizenship that will propel democracy forward in the 21st century. The history of citizenship is laden with unequal experiences based on race, culture and gender. Citizenship has been a facet in creating both equality and inequality. Not surprisingly, the values, rights, and responsibilities associated with democratic citizenship are often questioned and contested. Discussion regarding citizenship has changed over time and depends on citizen according to whom and to what interests. Implications of the 21st century, including increased globalization and increased transnationality, are evidence that citizenship can no longer simply be viewed in relation to the nation state and polity. There are many conceptions of citizenship that illustrate the multidimensional nature of it today. The teaching of citizenship continues to be a part of schooling. The British Columbia Ministry of Education and local school boards currently place citizenship at an elevated level, as seen in learning outcomes, mission statements and school goals. The question remains, however, if the rhetoric of citizenship education is a reality in schools? What is the nature of opportunity with regards to citizenship education in school? How do the ways students experience those opportunities lead to developing various levels of citizenship?

The notion of citizenship, the various forms that it takes, along with the idea of a “good citizen”, is highly contested. Traditionally, citizenship pertained to rights within the nation state; however, most groups did not experience equality in relation to their rights. Practices of citizenship including the right of franchise, owning property, freedom to participate in politics, and freedom of cultural practices, were limited to a privileged few,

while excluding many based on race and/or gender. The history of citizenship is described as “one of successive attempts by those who benefit from its restrictions to limit citizenship to certain groups, such as men, whites and property owners” (Glenn, 2000, p. 47). Universal conditions can mask the reality of the inequalities that have historically existed and may continue to exist, for some to live as full citizens. Although more groups experience equal rights with regards to practices such as the ability to vote, oppression and marginalization continue to exist. The question of membership, what it means to be a citizen in terms of rights and duties and the conditions necessary to practice citizenship are themes that surround the contested nature of citizenship (Glenn, 2000). Citizenship education has been, and continues to be, a way in which the dominant group maintains power for some and limits it for others. Citizenship education often promotes a false sense of universalism in liberal democracies, which fails to promote an understanding of the inequalities in the world (Tupper, 2006 p. 45). An ominous dominant neoliberal political paradigm continues to hover over our society, sometimes reining in the form of corporate interests and sometimes pouring as free markets and capitalist class privileges. In our supermarket of a world, we have seen the transformation of democracy from a political concept to an economic one, greatly impacting conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education.

Historically, since the beginning of public education in the 19th century, conceptions of citizenship have primarily been transmitted through schooling, particularly within social studies education. Various conceptions of citizenship have ties to ideologies about what a “good” society looks like, who the members are, and what rights and responsibilities they practice (Cook & Westheimer, 2006; Brodie, 2002;

Osborne, 2000). Thus, citizenship education is a significant topic of discussion for many interest groups from educators and policy makers to government organizations, minority groups and indigenous peoples. Earlier perspectives on citizenship education disembodied the influence of race, gender, sexuality, socioeconomics, and ethnicity on the status of citizenship (Vinson, 2006; Urrietta & Brown 2010; Payne 2003; Robertson, 2009; Tupper, 2009). What was once a concept based solely around the polity and nationality, is now a multi-dimensional concept relating to civics, politics, socioeconomics, culture, and social justice.

The controversial issues associated with citizenship itself are important to consider in order to effectively strip away the husk and critically examine the crux of citizenship education. Essentially, problems of citizenship mean problems of citizenship education. Schools easily can become sites where knowledge is transmitted without question. Noted scholars Merryfield and Subedi (2007), Parker (1996, 2001, 2003, 2007), Tupper (2006, 2007, 2009) and Vinson (1998, 2006) conceptualize citizenship education paradigms that question systems and structures which perpetuate inequality. Each of their paradigms theorizes how citizenship education can improve the realities for critical and authentic democracy. Various models of citizenship education have been created to witness shaping of our youth into those who can participate meaningfully in a democracy. Veugelers (2007), on the other hand, looks at citizenship education with respect to the adaptive citizen, the individualistic citizen, and the critical democratic citizen. Johnson and Morris (2010) combine many scholarly perceptions about citizenship into a model based on politics, the social, the self, and praxis. Westheimer and Kahne (2004), present a three level model of citizenship education based on personal responsibility, social justice,

and participation in government. For the purpose of this study, the Westheimer and Kahne (2004) framework will be used to look at the nature of citizenship education within the structure of the institution of school.

Coming from a social reconstructionist perspective, I believe that schooling is an important context for responding to some of the issues and ills of society. Education can be used to help reduce apathy among citizenry, to aid in developing people's knowledge regarding patterns and processes of injustice, and to respond to a global crisis of capitalist practices that maintain the status quo. A commitment must be made to creating schools that embrace citizenship education committed to larger social transformation where schools are developing communities of critical learners prepared to challenge current systemic structures that limit the power of some while enhancing the role of others, and creating a more genuine equality for all groups. A social transformation that would see schools no longer moving forward on a path of privatization, marketization, high stakes testing with a focus on the individual; rather, schools would be places where community members are involved, developing citizens that strive for the success of each other. In these schools, one would witness students learning to challenge dominant perspectives and analyze positions of privilege and power. In this vision, the levels of oppression, marginalization and inequality that persist to permeate through the system would be reduced and eventually eliminated.

I employ a social reconstruction ideology, and a critical theory perspective, which complement each other as models due to their likeness. Education, in the social reconstruction perspective, has the power to educate people and transform society's ills (Schiro, 2008, p.134). Whereas critical theory, is "concerned with emancipation through

the questioning of political, economic, social, and psychological conventions that have been previously taken for granted” (Schiro, 2008, p. 156). The likes of Dewey (1937, 1916), Apple (2004), and Counts (1932) have taken on the task of calling attention to the role that schools play in the development of critical and active citizens. “Critical pedagogy is founded on the conviction that schooling for self and social empowerment is ethically proper to a mastery of technical skills which are primarily tied to the logic of the marketplace, although it should be stressed that skill development certainly plays an important role” (McLaren, 1989, p. 162). Examining the ideology of citizenship dictates a necessary unraveling of the link between knowledge and power and of the hegemony woven within our tapestry of society.

Curriculum has represented a battleground of contradictory messages about “who we are and what we should become, both individually and as a society” (Teitlebaum, 2008). In essence, curriculum comprises the stories “we tell about ourselves” (as cited in McLaren, 1989, Inglis,). The citizenship education curriculum is therefore marked by contradictory messages because people’s stories differ so greatly. The composition of the citizenship education curriculum and associated experience have to be examined. If teaching and curriculum are rethought as opportunities to create meaningful understandings of the world, and how individuals and groups can transform the world, then potential for social change is strong. Curriculum is often the vehicle through which knowledge is passed onto students. “The curriculum is what students experience. It is dynamic and inclusive of the interactions among students, teachers, subject matter and the context” (Ross, 2006, p. 13).

Mission statements and learning outcomes are laden with grand ideals of creating a universal citizenry. Evaluation of citizenship education produces much rhetoric with regards to national and provincial government statements about the role of citizenship education. Both the British Columbia Ministry of Education and local school boards emphasize the essential nature of citizenship education. Local boards pledge that they will “enable students to reach their intellectual, social, aesthetic and physical potential in challenging and stimulating settings which reflect the worth of each individual and promote mutual respect, cooperation and social responsibility” (Vancouver School Board, 2011). The British Columbia Social Studies Integrated Resource Package (2006) states that, through their participation in social studies, students will “develop the skills and attitude necessary to become thoughtful, active participants in their communities and as global citizens” (p. 11). These policies, statements and learning objectives clearly enoble citizenship as a key element in the nature of schools. What does the reality of citizenship education tell about the narrative of citizenship in society? As Tupper (2009) advocates, we need a perspective on citizenship education that embodies a level of caring for the self, others and the world that helps expose and improve the circumstances of oppression. Is the nature of citizenship education one of critical perspective challenging hegemonic structures, which promote oppression and marginalization? Education can be a vehicle for creating social change if it isn’t simply serving the needs of some while ignoring the needs of others. The citizenship narrative within schools must be honestly examined. Is a socially just, participatory, and personally responsible citizenry being produced or are schools serving as mere vehicles for social reproduction of the views and perspectives of the dominant majority and a master narrative that maintains a select few in positions of

power and privilege?

The intention of this study is to explore the nature of citizenship education in elementary school through investigating the opportunities present for students with regards to citizenship education and to determine how students make sense of these experiences. Understanding, from the students' perspectives, how citizenship education is experienced will provide a unique and needed dimension to research on citizenship education. The value is not in the judgment of individual students, teachers, or schools, but in the findings on the whole about the nature of citizenship education opportunities and the related student experiences. There is no single best way to educate children to be citizens. It is, however, essential to develop understandings around what is being done with regards to citizenship education and, opposingly, what is not being done.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The Troubling Idea of Citizenship

Much of the contemporary discourse surrounding citizenship tends to privilege liberal democratic understandings that represent citizenship as a universalistic term in which all have equal opportunity and access (Parker, 2003; Sassen, 2005; Tupper, 2009). There is often a discourse in the elementary school setting, usually presented when learning about Canada, around the premise that “we are all equal.” This discourse all but ignores the influence of race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status on the experience of citizenship. Historical narratives reveal that many did not enjoy what the dominant group professed as “citizenship”. History helps shape the present, as the experiences of people form who they are both as individuals and as members of a group. The historical narrative that takes place in creating one’s position can also influence sense of belonging and how one is viewed in society. Understanding the past provides a way to more deeply understand the foundations upon which society was built and indications about what to avert in the future. It is essential to look at the historical conceptions and the changing nature of citizenship in Canadian society in order to seek to understand the nature of citizenship education in 21st century schools.

The definition and meaning of citizenship in North America has changed over time. These definitions have each painted a picture of citizenship that reflects a certain time and place. Impacts of these changing conceptions are felt in the curriculum that plays out, both formal and hidden, within our schools, often as citizenship education. In 1950, T.H. Marshall (1950) defined citizenship as full membership in a community. Similarly, the Canadian Oxford Dictionary (2009) demarcates a citizen as, “a member of

the State or Commonwealth, either native or naturalized” (p. 205). Currently, the Merriam Webster Online Dictionary (2011) positions that a citizen is, “a native or naturalized person who owes allegiance to a government and is entitled to protection from it.” These definitions correlate citizenship with membership in and protection by a particular nation or state; however, the lived experiences suggest that the dominant group in any society dictates who was(is) included or excluded. Without hesitation, it is justifiable to allege that many people did not have “full membership,” in terms of equality and full participation in society, therefore did not experience citizenship equally. These definitions of citizenship are important to reconnoitre because of their bearing on experiences of citizenship. Positionality strongly relates to the terms of citizenship dictated as true (however untrue), by the dominant group. If the dominant group preaches that all citizens have equal membership, often taciturnity and living in the margins can ensue without question. My own positionality within Canada has granted me full and equal membership. I question my own role, as a white, able bodied, English speaking Canadian, in the forming of my own notions of citizen and citizenship. I have passively and unknowingly accepted the privileges as granted me by my whiteness. What impact has being white, able bodied and economically secure had on my livelihood and that of the people around me? As an educator, how has this position impacted the knowledge I impart on students, and the dialogue and discussion that ensues in my classroom? What recognition of privilege have I shared and explored with my students? These questions are essential facets, not only for myself but, for all citizenship educators to ponder in the quest to re-imagine the possibilities for citizenship education.

Original conceptions of citizenship were related to the nation and the relationship people had to their particular nation state (Robertson, 2009; Sassen, 2003). According to Oldenquist (1980), citizenship was a form of group loyalty and commitment to the good of one's family, community, city and species. "The modern notion of citizenship emerged out of the political and intellectual revolutions of the seventeen and eighteenth centuries, which overthrew the old feudal orders" (Glenn, 2000, p. 2). Equality was defined in relation to those who were entitled to claim citizenship against those not defined as citizens living within boundaries of the set community. This sense of "us" vs. "the other" entails drawing a distinction between who is included and who is not included in membership. Universal discourse today surrounding citizenship often revolves around the gendered, racial, classed, and sexed construction of the rational independent citizen. This current discourse can be partially attributed for the separation of society into camp; those who have power and privilege and those who do not. These camps of "us" and "the other" continue to inhibit many who are financially insecure, physically/mentally unable or culturally in the margins, to experience equity with regards to daily existence. This can be linked to ancient Greece and Aristotle's declaration of the polis, as "the sight of rational and reasoned dialogue" (Tupper, 2006, p. 46). Only men, who were perceived as rational by nature, were allowed to engage in political activity of the nation, while women were forbidden to have a civic or public voice (Tupper, 2006). In Ancient Greece, citizens constructed the laws and procedures for the majority who were not eligible for citizenship, mostly women, children, and slaves (Brodie, 2002). This legal reference point was what defined who could make claims for protection. These early days are what wrought the experiences of all groups other than the white, able bodied male for years

ahead. From the end of the Roman Empire to the beginning of the 18th century, citizenship existed as a privilege held by some and not by others (Heater, 2000). In the 18th and early 19th century, independence (which was a requirement for citizenship) meant owning property and then ownership of one's own labour, therefore, limiting the vote to free white men and excluding slaves and women. These past conditions exemplify the inequality that citizenship created, thus, historically creating camps of those who qualified for citizenship and those who did not.

The 19th and 20th centuries, brought the rise of parliamentary constitution, post-colonialism and rise of nationhood, which provided an arena for changes regarding citizenship. In the 20th century, citizenship assumed that individuals would favour their status as a citizen over allegiance to another identity, be it religious, ethnic, or regional (Brodie, 2002). 21st century conditions continue to witness exclusions as did ancient Greece. The majority of people living in a nation may retain certain rights and protection from the state; they however, are left to their own defenses to maintain a desired standard of living, such as ensuring they have a sufficient income, and adequate health care. This continues to create a sense of "us" vs. "the other" with regards to who experiences the full benefits and privileges of citizenship. The story of Canadian citizenship is experienced in differing ways, which aids in it being a contested concept. Dictating one universal idea of a "good citizen" does not take into account these experiences.

The master narrative of Canada is one that has roots in the history and experiences of the people within the nation. Citizenship is inextricably tied to the notion, imagined or real, of the nation (Thobani, 2007). Canadian nationality is something, which has historically been perpetuated with pride as a desirable trait. From the roots of

multicultural policies, Canadian nationality has been equated with a country of people who are open and diverse. A multi-cultural country in which all cultures have their place in this “great” land. Policies, media, and education have perpetuated these conceptions of Canadian identity. This ennobling of being Canadian, all but ignores the struggles, and historical experiences of many of the country’s minorities and indigenous peoples. Have we imagined ourselves, as Thobani (2007) writes, as essentially law abiding “responsible, citizens, compassionate, caring and committed to the values of diversity and multiculturalism” (p. 4)? This exaltation of the nation and of being “Canadian” appears to have correlation with the persistence of unequal citizenship rights. Grouping together those who have exalted characteristics consequentially separates those with desirable characteristics from those without. Circumstances such as income gaps between the rich and the poor, the privatization of schooling, struggles of new immigrants to maintain a high standard of living, and lack of social safety structures to provide equal opportunities for all students, separates people into groups of those who experience privilege and those who do not. The structures and policies, and where the value is placed in society (usually on producing capital) often maintain and perpetuate systems of power in which citizenship is not experienced equally by everyone. This is often left out of the Canadian narrative. This omission itself adds to the inequality and the invisibility of the struggles of people in Canadian society.

Research Purpose and Rationale

We need to critically examine the nature of opportunities related to citizenship education in elementary school, and how students engage with those experiences and opportunities. In 1925, the British Columbia Royal Commission on education stated that,

“the development of a united and intelligent citizenship should be accepted without question as the fundamental aim of our schools” (Osborne, 2000, p. 15). The primary purpose of public education was the development of citizenship. Citizenship however, did, as it still does mean, different things to many people, depending on their positions within society. With dramatic changes in the conception of citizenship since the early 1900’s, it is critical to analyze how schools are developing contributing critical and thoughtful citizens. With factors in society such as apathy, lack of interest in the common good and existing neoliberal ideas, citizenship and therefore citizenship education need to be re-examined (Adsett, 2003; Barnes, 2010; Hahn, 2001). Strengthening democracy through the development of an informed and active citizenry means strengthening counter hegemonic discourses, such as citizenship education. Although there appears to be a plethora of mission statements and learning outcomes in British Columbia placing the development of citizenship at an elevated level, what is the reality of the opportunities students have with citizenship education and what is the nature of those opportunities?

Currently, governing bodies such as the British Columbia Ministry of Education, and local school boards emphasize the importance of citizenship education. The development of citizenship is included in mission statements and learning outcomes, courses revolve around citizenship (such as Social Justice 12), and programs are marketed to educators to help teach students about citizenship. School systems around the world have undergone a variety of changes in an attempt to strengthen the role of citizenship education. Implementation of subjects in high school, such as social justice, and the shift from concern from local issues to learning about global concerns, are specific ways citizenship education has evolved. Although the word “critical” has been

placed upon most citizenship education curricula, the term holds much ambiguity and lack of consistent understanding within pedagogy (Johnson & Morris, 2010). Does this rhetoric about citizenship education translate into lived classroom and school practice that genuinely “challenges, disrupts, and seeks to overthrow oppression, and its multiple and disparate circumstances, causes, effects and actualities” (Vinson, 2006, p. 53)?

One of the greatest hopes for social change lays within our education system. Providing opportunity for students to experience 12 years of schooling during which values of multidimensional citizenship are promoted, where students learn to critically question and perceive experiences in society and where the status quo is challenged, has the potential to change society. Change that would, in time, witness a reduction in apathy and an increase in community involvement and government participation. Change where citizens would stand up to controls of the government and corporate monopolization; that would reshape a more socially just and critical society, less accepting of knowledge transmission without question. Change that would create school funding formulas that recognize differences among schools and seek equity for all schools. Change that would challenge the structures and systems that push accountability measures, and standardization of curriculum and change where educators would feel the support from society because educating future citizens would not be seen as the sole responsibility of teachers. However, in order to make this change diligently and honestly, more information about the current citizenship narrative and how that translates into citizenship education is required. Currently, there is more investment and research inquiring into the state of citizenship education of children in their teenage years (high school); however, the formative years of elementary school are not deeply explored. This study takes a first

step, peeling back the rhetoric veil and looking critically at the nature of citizenship education opportunities and the experiences grade seven students have with those opportunities.

Schools transmit ideas about citizenship through what is taught (curricular content), how things are taught (pedagogy), and through the interaction of the how and the what, which is often referred to as the hidden curriculum (Osborne, 2000). Citizenship is being taught everyday at school, with and without intention. This happens not only through what is directly taught, but by how educators interact with students and each other, how daily problems are dealt, the culture of the school community, and the opportunities students have to engage in their own learning in and outside of the classroom. Citizenship education primarily involves personal responsibility; including teaching students to be kind to each other, respect the environment, and be accepting of different cultures, as well as develop an awareness of global needs and issues. This is commonly labelled as the “good” or “responsible” citizen who takes individual action to contribute to the community. This does not take into account the differing experiences that students and their families have with citizenship, and assumes that all people experience citizenship the same in society. Many elementary schools pride themselves on being inclusive environments that allow all students equal opportunity to participate and learn regardless of gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation. “We are all equal” is a slogan regularly espoused by educators in elementary schools. This profession of equality, although important in many ways, often fails to acknowledge the history of difference and diversity with regards to citizenship. Elementary school is the time to build a foundation for knowledge of civics, critical understanding of government, and a

recognition of different cultural histories. Often what is learned is one perspective, which presumes that democracy is something which is already achieved, not something which should be continually worked towards. Civics, and the government are both taught in most classrooms as learned facts, rather than experiences and histories which have multiple interpretations and understandings. It is rare that one would witness educators challenging democracy and citizenship in elementary school classroom. Systemic structures, such as private interests and government regulation on curriculum, have a strong hold. Textbooks which do not accurately represent history are still widely used because there is little funding for new resources. Even classrooms that employ current events as an avenue to discuss local and global issues, often surrender to subscriptions from The Province or The Vancouver Sun provided to schools at a low to no cost. These sources profess a conservative doctrine centred around business and corporate interests. All of these aspects serve to maintain the status quo through transmission of material which often marginalizes certain genders, races, and religions.

The school system is a place where the promotion of citizenship to encourage democracy for the social good begins. Many activities take place in classrooms and in school communities that have the potential for developing citizenship. Schools, which consciously apply a critical pedagogy, can move towards teaching active critical participation, which enhances democratic values for all groups. Critical pedagogy, in its “aim to empower people to transform the world,” promotes the development of consciousness for personal freedom and collective action, both of which are targeted at triumphing over oppressive conditions with the hopes of creating a more socially just and democratic world (Vinson, Ross & Wilson, 2010). “A critical pedagogical vision

grounded as it is in social, cultural, cognitive, economic, and political contexts understands schooling as part of a larger set of human services and community development” (Kincheleo, 2005, p. 6). In essence, it embraces the idea of social transformation by challenging the dominant and mainstream purposes often reproduced in our schools. It is the question of how citizenship education is manifesting in schools, and how students are experiencing it, which I will explore. In the words of Paulo Freire (1970), “hope does not consist in crossing one’s arms and waiting” (p. 127). By entering into a dialogue, critical thinking about citizenship education can begin. This research hopes to uncover a clearer picture of the nature of citizenship education opportunities, and what students take away from their experience with those opportunities.

Research Question

It is not difficult to say that the experiences children have at school contribute in shaping them into citizens of tomorrow. How we teach, what we teach, and the structure and systems of schools influence the way children develop. There are many perceptions about the meaning of curriculum—a recipe for teaching, a way to communicate essential principles, permanent subjects such as reading, or even the total experiences planned for a school. The context to which I refer to curriculum is, “a proposal, setting out an educational plan, offering students socially valued knowledge, attitudes, skills and abilities, which are made available to students through a variety of educational experiences” (McKernan, 2008, p. 12). This educational plan is delivered through teacher pedagogical approaches, written mandated curriculum, hidden curriculum, unintended curriculum, school mission statements and school action plans. Curriculum, specifically citizenship education, can be used to aid in mending societies’ ills and to help create

critical thinkers who question the dominant group thereby challenging the status quo. Curriculum must be deliberate and in order to assess this, the intentions, the transactions, and the effects of the citizenship education curriculum should be evaluated within the context of the school. The intended overarching questions for investigation in this study are:

- What are the opportunities present (in the curriculum) for students to develop citizenship at the elementary school, and what is the nature of the student experiences and interactions with those opportunities?
- How do school experiences promote development of citizenship attributes of personal responsibility, participation, and social justice?

Citizenship: Ties to Race

Throughout history, citizenship in Canada has been tied to race (Banks, 2004; Joshee, 2004). Exploring the influence of race is pertinent in attempting to understand citizenship and citizenship education. Racialization is a powerful force that has and can influence politics, media, arts, and socio-economics. Racialization has historically benefited people of the dominant white group while marginalizing people of colour and denying full citizenship rights, such as voting, job attainment, and access to living in certain areas. This concept of whiteness and racialized citizenship grew in unison with conquest and colonization of non-western societies (Glenn, 2000). For most of history, much of the population was ineligible for full citizenship. British Columbia evolved as a white supremacist society from the time of colonization (Stanley, 2003). By 1925, as Stanley (2003) explains, “race concepts were fixed and used to justify differential

political and social treatment of Whites, Asians, and First Nations people” (p. 40). Citizenship was delivered as a special privilege based on race, granting access to political institutions and sharing in a sense of community. The dominant group often defined this in order to maintain the status quo (Parker, 2008). This was promoted to serve “white interests” and as a result, many groups were pushed away from seeking to attain citizenship. Legal citizenship, when it was held, did not always bring with it full and equal rights. Rather, the position one held determined one’s place within a democracy. The knowledge of the history of experiences with regards to citizenship helps frame the how people currently experience and view citizenship and consequently, citizenship education. Schooling was a way in which the dominant group transmitted its message and indoctrinated people into race thinking. Separation of Chinese students into special classes contributed to the conception of white as the norm (Brodie, 2002). Exclusion and racism were intertwined in the early history of the nation, both entrenching the idea of “us” vs. “the other” in society.

Assimilation and multiculturalism are both racialized concepts. Assimilation was centered on minority groups adapting, adjusting, and accepting mainstream culture as their own, thus simultaneously forgoing their own cultural traditions, such as language, religion, and rituals. The theories and practices around citizenship and citizenship education of the late 1800’s and early 1900’s, such as (but not limited to) Early Immigration Acts, The Indian Act, and the residential school system, were assimilationist oriented. Institutional racism in the early 1900s was encouraged by these assimilationist policies that excluded people from full participation in society (Banks & Nguyen, 2008; Stanley 2003). An assimilationist conception of citizenship was centered on the idea of

all minorities and groups sharing in one dominant, white, mainstream culture (Banks & Nguyen, 2008). This mainstreaming of Canadian identity eliminates the various narratives and experiences of different groups. It can be argued that assimilation allows those in positions of privilege or authority to gain power from the streamlining Canadian culture. This leveling of Canadian culture and manufacturing of citizenship can lead to its perception as a universal concept, something which is the same for everyone and all people have equal access to. Citizenship was often referred to as a singular unified thing that people would hope to attain to be considered full members of society and part of the Canadian “nationality” (Brodie, 2002; Thobani, 2007; Biesta 2007).

With the movement into the 20th century, multiculturalism emerged and shifted into something more connected to what is present today. Multiculturalism in Canada refers to “the presence and persistence of diverse racial and ethnic minorities who define themselves as different and who wish to remain so” (Dewing & Leman, 2006, p. 4). The Multiculturalism Policy of 1971, which later (1988) was expanded into the current Multiculturalism Act, involved the management of diversity. Initially, barriers to ethnic groups’ full participation in society were viewed as being either linguistic or cultural (Dewing & Leman, 2006). Through the Multiculturalism Act, Canada was the first country to declare a multiculturalism law, which acknowledged multiculturalism as a “fundamental characteristics of Canadian society with an integral role in the decision making process of the federal government” (Dewing & Leman, 2006, p. 5). However, it is vague how the aims of multicultural policies would be met, such as in education with how schools were to manage the increasing diversity of their classrooms.

Multiculturalism, which is still propagated today, has a tendency to create a picture of

many races and cultures all living happily as one together in Canada. The grade four social studies curriculum, with a focus on First Nations culture, emphasizes learning about First Nations traditions, culture and contributions to Canada, emphasizing these peoples as an integral part of Canadian history and country. There is not however, a confrontation of the history of violence, racism, segregation and cultural appropriation experienced by these groups. Similarly, there is absence of critical acknowledgment of continuing struggles First Nations peoples encounter today. This glazing over of reality and emphasis on acceptance of diversity is witnessed in many policies, mission statements and curriculum of elementary schools. This way of managing diversity fails to affirm the struggles and challenges of people, but also causes a sense of white normalcy. In addition, it often groups people together without taking into account the personal narratives that may differ within any given race or culture.

With the emergence of the 21st century, the changing face of the nation state has influenced the conception of citizenship momentarily. Canada is an increasingly diverse nation comprised of many races and ethnic groups. Migration and political aspects of globalization have challenged natural borders as we know them. Twenty percent of all Canadians are foreign born and approximately 200,000 people immigrated to Canada in 2005 (Statistics Canada, 2006). In British Columbia alone, 2006 Census data reveals 27% of the population to be immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2006). Racial diversity and the ethnic composition in Canada and British Columbia reinforce the importance of addressing the changing nature of citizenship in the 21st century. People within local communities have many attachments and identifications as citizens of multiple countries and communities (Joshee, 2004). A student can be attending school in Vancouver, be a

Canadian citizen from parental birthright and also be a citizen of China. Thus, they have ties to the country they were born and also to the country in which they reside. Multiple places of belonging and supranational ties, make cultural, national, and global identifications complex (Cook & Westheimer, 2006). This is partly the reason for increasing the number of images in textbooks that present different cultures and races. Unfortunately, presence in textbooks, as in the case of British Columbia, has historically meant reifying the notion of an exalted Canadian citizen (Thobani, 2007). In effect certain groups are usually excluded or left in the margins. As the make up of society becomes increasingly more complex, there is a necessity for a broadened perspective on citizenship. This is necessary in order to honour and respect the multiplicity of experiences, races, heritages, and cultures present in society today; similarly, to provide equal opportunity and support for groups who lack privilege or power and have been historically left in the margins of society.

Where Schooling Comes into Play

Since the beginning of public education in the 19th century, conceptions of citizenship have been transmitted primarily through schooling, namely within social studies education. Each of these ideological conceptions of citizenship has ties to ideologies about what a “good” society looks like, who the members are, and what rights and responsibilities they practice. Thus, citizenship education is a significant topic of discussion for many interest groups from educators and policy makers to government organizations, minority groups and indigenous peoples. Essentially, problems of citizenship mean problems of citizenship education. Schools easily can become sites where ideas about citizenship are transmitted without question. As Stanley (2003)

discusses, “state-controlled schooling was integral to the construction of supremacist hegemony in BC” (p. 2). Hence, it is easy for schools to become sites where idea transmission prevails without critical thought about content or the impact of the information. It is imperative that the reality of the multiple narratives in Canada be confronted in the plight to develop citizens who are prepared to critically participate in a democracy that challenges neoliberal tendencies and prevents the prolongation of oppression and marginalization of various groups. The current ideology and perceptions about citizenship can be witnessed in various places in society, one of which is in education (specifically curriculum). Multicultural education and citizenship education were developed partly to respond to assimilationist problems such as racism and ethnocentrism, and concerns ethnic, racial and cultural groups had about lacking full citizenship rights (Banks, 2004). Multicultural education, which declares multiculturalism a truth and enacted reality, is not enough if youth are to be educated based on critical awareness that propels people to engage in a deliberative democracy. Citizenship education must go beyond rhetoric which promotes the idea of a “good” citizen as one who accepts all cultures and demonstrates what some claim to be civic duties, such as voting and paying taxes.

Noted scholars Clark and Case (2008) contribute to dialogue and debate a propos citizenship and citizenship education. They reiterate what Ross (2006), Tupper (2006), Vinson (2006) and many other scholars in the field articulate, that citizenship has been an overarching aim in social studies education for which there has been minimal guidance about how to achieve, in large part due to the lack of consensus regarding what constitutes a good citizen. Clark and Case (2008) explain four competing rationales about

citizenship education that have, at different times in the history of social studies, been the principal purpose for the topic. These rationales are social initiation, social reform, personal development and intellectual development. Two continuums are provided for which to view the four historical rationales, social acceptance/social change spectrum and subject centred/student-centered spectrum (Clark & Case, 2008). Figure 2.1, Citizenship Education Matrix taken from Clark and Case (2008), clearly displays the four rationales of citizenship education and corresponding positions on the child centred/subject-centred and social change/social acceptance continuum (p. 21).

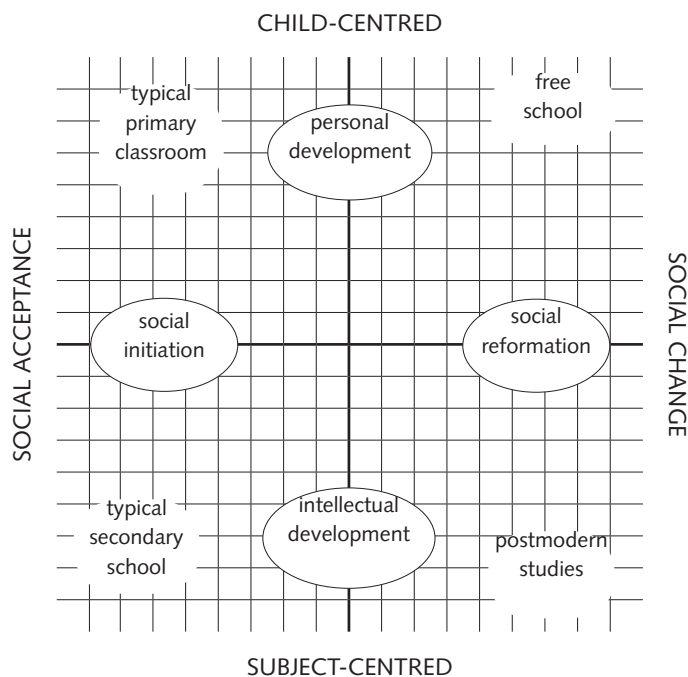


Figure 2.1 Clark and Case (2008) Citizenship Education Matrix (p. 21)

Citizenship as social initiation, as explained by Clark and Case (1999), was predominant in the early days of public education which concentrated on the socializing role of schooling. It was also evident in the 1930s and 1940s when values of patriotism

and loyalty were implanted in students (Clark & Case, 2008). In the 1970s, there was reinvigoration for students to learn core knowledge and values. This aspect reinforces citizenship as social initiation based on the assumption that good citizens follow societal expectations and share the same societal values. Support for social initiation motivation for education persisted in the 1990s. This was evident in Case's (1999) survey of elementary and secondary teachers in British Columbia which reported that 70 percent "supported social initiation as a dominant purpose in social studies" (p. 22). Social initiation is often based on the assumption that there is one right way of doing things, which in turn serves to marginalize those who do not fall into typical social categories (p. 22). Citizenship education as social reform focuses on advancing a better society. The 1970s was social studies closest orientation with this social reform rationale. Over the past 30 years, social reform has shifted to a more radical approach that calls for criticism of knowledge and all forms of hegemony (Clark & Case, 2008). Society is thought to be improved as a result of social action which is a similar thought to many citizenship education programs and service learning initiatives today. Citizenship education as personal development is primarily concerned with nurturing students personally and socially. The focus is on the individual and developing people who are stable and happy. There is a long history of the personal development rationale, which can be seen in the 1916 report of the National Education Association Committee on Social Studies, the progressive traditions in the 1930s focused on the "whole child," and 1960s movement of teaching values (Clark & Case, 2008). Personal development is prominent in many citizenship education models today, and often is called personal responsibility. Citizenship as intellectual development focuses "on the mastery of the norms and

methods used by scholars to gain new knowledge” (Clark & Case, 2008, p. 25). This tradition has been evident in the 1960s and 1970s where curriculum was targeted to help students use a scholarly approach to learning (Clark & Case, 2008). These conscientious forms of inquiry are thought to help prepare students for citizenship. This emphasis on the mandated curriculum has led to a focus on learning outcomes and processes. The four rationales may be utilized in different ways based on the purpose for teaching citizenship education. Clark and Case (2008) provide a succinct and clear overview of the apparent shifting interests in citizenship education, which are shaped by societal contexts of the time. It backs up the importance of analyzing and critiquing current citizenship education approaches of the 21st century and the conditions which impact schooling. Clark and Case (2008) advocate for developing a focused sense of purpose in teaching social studies which requires “thoughtful and professional judgement based on a number of factors including the needs, best interests, and rights of our students, their parents, and of society, more broadly” (Case & Clark, 2008, p. 26).

Citizenship education must take into account the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students. The past and current struggles of various groups in our neoliberal society should be confronted. Confronted, to the extent that histories, admirable or atrocious, need to be faced and understood; to the extent that understanding position of privilege is essential to creating a citizenship framework that challenges past oppression. Citizenship is something which, although perpetuated by the government as a nationwide privilege, is not experienced by many groups in an equal way (Ross, 2006; Tupper, 2009). Kahne and Westheimer (2006) speak of the “privilege of democracy” and the reality that not all people are treated equally in our so-called democratic society. This has

an effect on the way citizenship education has been and continues to be implemented in the schools. Many inner city projects have been abandoned due to underfunding and programs such as hot lunch service have been cut from some of the neediest schools. The income and wealth gaps between the haves and the have nots continues to grow and inequity continues to increase. It is not difficult to see the marketization of public schooling shifting capital gains to private business while schools are still unable to support special needs children effectively due to inadequate resources. Each of these examples is a current reality in 21st century education and illuminates the lack of equality in our “democratic society.” The nature of citizenship as a contested concept demands that we discover the current reality of citizenship education in schools.

21st Century Citizenship Challenges

The movement from nationalism to globalism has challenged the nature of citizenship and citizenship education. Technology, transportation, and communication have rapidly advanced blurring political and economic boundaries between nation states. This has changed ideas about citizenship, practices associated with citizenship, and rights and responsibilities. One can no longer be merely concerned with the characteristics, issues, and complexities of the nation but needs to be aware of the surrounding world.

Transnationalism, although not a new phenomena, has “created a situation in which a significant portion of people retain ties in, and navigate between, multiple communities and nations, complicating the notion of citizenship” (Glenn, 2000, p. 10). This ability to maintain dual or multiple citizenships has individual benefits both socially and economically, however, it is not something that is equally available to all. The nation

state continues to regulate membership, often in terms of what is beneficial for the economic interests of the nation at the time. In Canada, many Asian international families use financial capital to secure a spot in the school district in order to gain cultural capital while the father is doing business in Asia. This can be seen in Canada's immigration laws that encourage and attract capital by granting permanent residence to those investing large amounts of money that will also result in jobs for Canadians. The current global economy has caused proliferation in the number of transnational communities. Government agencies promotes transnational entrepreneurial activity by encouraging dual citizenship and conferring citizenship on children of people born abroad. However, the decline in naturalization, of migrants seeking citizenship, may reflect a decline in significance of citizenship for establishing rights and responsibilities. The number of transnational students provides opportunity for increased diversity and richness in the school setting. Ironically, cultural expectations often create problems for students who are expected to look, dress, and speak one way. This is a very assimilationist attitude which does not move us forward to embracing citizenship as something which goes beyond ones relation to the nation, towards encompassing aspects such as personal responsibility, social justice and political participation.

The impact of neoliberalism can be felt in many places, including individual homes and in the walls of education systems. Neoliberalism, operating as the dominant political model in the world today, is a mix of "values, ideologies, and practices that affect the economic, political, and cultural aspects of society" (Ross & Gibson, 2007, p. 1). This paradigm, embraced by political parties from left to right, is in the interest of large corporations and wealthy investors whose interests end up shaping social and

economic policies (Ross & Gibson, 2007, p. 2). The rules of market, cutting social expenditures, deregulation and privatization, and elimination of the concept of public good or community are all tenets of neoliberalism. The neoliberal forces continue to shift power and wealth to a select few and weaken the collective, the majority of the population. “The top 1% of households in the United States own 40% of the nations’ wealth” (Ross & Gibson, p. 2). While in Canada, the top 1% took almost a third (32%) of all growth in incomes from 1997-2007 (Yalnizyan, 2010). This happens through structures such as privatization, and movement away from social constructs that improve conditions for those less privileged. In an attempt to maintain a level of living, in which system structures are deemed as the responsibility of the individual, people have little time to fathom multiple dimensions of citizenship and how one can critically contribute to society. “We the people, has shifted to we the entrepreneurs, who advance our own personal interests” (Parker, 2008, p. 67). This self-interested nature has presented itself in homes around the world that are concerned for their own livelihood in a troubled economy. McChesney argues that although formal democracy is still present, meaningful participation from citizens is diverted, especially away from challenging pro business policies (as cited in Ross & Gibson, 2007, p. 3). Neoliberal governance has intensified the globalization of culture and economies. In response, this globalization has contributed to the decline in opportunity to meaningfully exercising citizenship rights and responsibilities. It has “disrupted the historically-grounded and over lapping fit among national territory, sovereignty, democracy, citizenship and identity” (Brodie, 2002, p. 64). How will the “we the entrepreneurs” attitude be avoided? Education is a main focal point of neoliberalism due to the large number of people it impacts. Commodification,

privitization, standardized testing, and accountability measures all work in the interests of neoliberalism. Private business profits, while students, school staff and communities suffer. Citizenship education as a vehicle could empower future generations not to simply accept without question what is said to be a democracy, but challenge existing conditions in an effort to continually re-create a critical democracy.

It is hard, if not impossible, for justice to be served by a world full of self-interested citizens. This is only one reason why citizenship education plays a crucial role in helping alter the course society is currently on. Unfortunately, globalization of education has given power to markets and made education a global service industry (Robertson, 2009). One need only look at the Pearsonization of schools in British Columbia or the “Applying” of classrooms where each student is outfitted with an IPAD to see neoliberalism at play. In addition, the commoditization of education has made it something which can be bought or sold, modeling to students that neoliberalism is a foundation principle of society. The Fraser Institute publishes Foundation Skills Assessment marks in the provincial newspapers, pitting schools and teachers against each other, not far from the principles of nation wide standardized testing in the United States. This standardized testing is not used for improving teaching and learning, but to rank schools in British Columbia and create more inequity and increased judgement about who is doing the “best job” of educating students. Without question, the impacts are detrimental to schools in British Columbia. All these examples reaffirm the importance of developing a strong conception of citizenship in society that focuses on social justice, collective good, and individual action. This would necessitate disrupting current neoliberal practices which find their way into the school system. Furthermore, critically

developing citizenship as an overarching focus in curriculum, not simply a course, could initiate a shift away from the simple transferring of facts that reify one notion of Canadian while keeping others in the margins of society. All of this, toiling towards a more critical deliberate and rounded view of citizenship which authentically includes all people.

Social and economic consequences of globalization, the erosion of the nation state, transnationalism, as well as the dominant neoliberal paradigm in society are all reason to situate the matter of citizenship and citizenship education at an elevated level. A re-imagining of the conception of citizenship and a commitment to a wider framework of citizenship education could help educate and develop a more critical, interested and socially just citizenry. Schools as an institution reach the largest number of people on a constant basis. If the role of citizenship in society was emphasized with attention to the historical narratives and the current struggles, and consequentially developed in the curriculum, some of the problems with regards to citizenship could be tackled. It is not to put the entire welfare of society on the shoulders of citizenship education, but to begin to re-imagine possibilities. Education can be used to help reduce apathy among citizenry, to aid in developing people's knowledge regarding patterns and processes of injustice, and to respond to a global crisis of capitalist practices that maintain the status quo. Disruption of neoliberal policies requires a commitment to supporting citizenship education which produces an awareness of current hegemonic structures and encourages action to establish genuine equality for all groups. This transformation would eliminate transmission of information lacking critical engagement; and foster the development of perspectives that look critically at Canada's historical narrative and current hegemonic

structures.

Notions of Democracy

The notion of democracy needs to be addressed within the body of this literature review because the supreme notion of “good citizen” involves someone contributing to democracy; however, along with democracy itself, “good citizen” is also a contested concept. Democracy, a fundamental ideal upon which society is based, has also historically been espoused through various forms of citizenship education. The relationship between democracy and education was highlighted in Dewey’s influential work *Democracy and Education* (Dewey, 1916). Dewey (1916) states,

We are doubtless far from realizing the potential efficacy of education as a constructive agency of improving society, from realizing that it represents not only a development of children and youth but also of the future society in which they will be the constituents. (p. 92)

Education is viewed here as detrimental to the development of society. One of the underpinnings of Dewey’s work is the production of free human beings who coexist together in equality. This equality is achieved through the establishment of democracy, which Dewey sees as not fixed and rigid, but flexible. It is necessary to have a dynamic understanding of citizenship because “democratic communities are always in the making...there are newcomers, always new stories feeding into living history out of which a community emerges and is continually renewed” (Richardson & Blades, 2006, p1).

The term democracy though, however prevalent in society, is also to be

questioned. Democracy for whom and in the interest of what group is a question that arises frequently (Cook & Westheimer, 2006; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; Tupper, 2009; Vinson, 2006). "Democracy is not just a form of social life among other workable forms of social life; it is the precondition for the full participation of intelligence to the solution of social justice" (Englund, 2000, p. 309). Although our society is typically considered by many to be a democratic society, the literature shows this notion is one to be questioned and analyzed critically (Hess, 2008; Ross, 2006; Vinson, 2006). Democracy means different things to different people and the way to achieve democracy is also highly debated. For some, democracy is a mode of government determined by the people in an act of voting. This type of political democracy is often referred to in terms of nations that have multi-party and multi-candidate processes. In 2009, only 60% of the countries in the world maintained electoral democracies (Freedom House, 2010). Apple (2004) writes about democracy as an economic concept where the citizen is simply the consumer driving marketization and commoditization of our world, and thus our schools. Social democracy, such as Dewey conceived the notion, is understood as a way of associated living, characterized by inclusive ways of social and political action, not merely a mode of government (Biesta, 2007). "Multicultural democracy incorporates socio-economic, cultural, and political diversity and goes beyond current conceptions of democracy" (Biesta, 2007, p. 1). The wide-ranging types of democracy lend credit to the argument for broadening conceptions of citizenship education in schooling. These varying ideologies surrounding democracy should not be taught as truth, but must be analyzed and discussed for greater learning about citizenship to occur. In the view of people such as Pateman (1989), democracy does not exist, and never has existed. Vinson (2009) and many other

scholars believe democracy to exist for many of us, however continues to be elusive for many others (Cook & Westheimer, 2004; Englund, 2000). Patriotism, volunteerism, and government agendas do not equal democracy (Westheimer & Kahne, 2003). Democracy, according to Barber, "is not just a natural form of association. It is an extraordinary and rare contrivance of cultivated imagination" (as cited in Cook & Westheimer, 2004, p. 221). The term is used as a way for governments to promote agendas in arenas of patriotism and public service. Often the realities of democracy fail to live up to the ideals (Vinson, 2009). Our simplification of democracy often prevents taking a genuine responsibility, both individually and collectively, to critically assess the conditions of oppression that operate in society (Tupper, 2009; Vinson, 2009). The varied notions of democracy summon the need for continuous discussion, re-evaluation of meaning and debate about what it involves. John Dewey emphasized this when he wrote that the idea of democracy "has to be constantly discovered, and rediscovered, remade and reorganized" (Dewey, 1985[1937], p. 182). The conception of Canada as a highly democratic nation is challenged by some for neoliberalist and capitalist tendencies that limit the role of some, while enhancing the role of others. The role of citizenship education is one in which students are educated to be able to critically contribute to democracy. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the assumptions around the term democracy itself when looking at citizenship and citizenship education.

The Non-Neutrality of Citizenship Education

Liberal democracies often operate on a premise of neutrality of citizenship, which gives indifference to realities such as sex, race, class, origin, and religion (Parker, 1996). Although built on the idea that this is a good invention, it creates a blindness that impedes

the growth of pluralism and protects groups that enjoy positions of power. Neutrality in the state and in education often disguises existing power imbalances maintaining the status quo. One must also be aware of possible impediments of pluralism. Here exemplified are the tensions between unity and difference that continue to make citizenship education a tenuous topic (Kohli, 2000). The concepts taught about citizenship have to be about more than political and national identity; the political aspects of citizenship are not enough. Neoliberal forces that continue to prevail shift societal interests to large corporate markets and policies that advance those already with wealth and power. Neoliberals tend to be critical of existing knowledge that has no connection to perceived economic needs (Apple, 2004). These “economic modernizers...want educational policy to be centered around the economy, around performance objectives based on a closer connection between schooling and paid work” (Apple, 2004, p. 174). Many of these principles are responsible for increased standardized testing and accountability measures for teaching the mandated curriculum. “The free market, private enterprise, entrepreneurial initiative, deleterious effects of government regulation etc., are the tenants of neoliberalism” (Ross, 2006, p. 326). These neoliberal impacts are felt in schools through the form of high stakes testing, increasing standardization, and the ever-increasing presence of private industry in public schools (Apple, 2004; Ross, 2006). Education is a commodity to buy and sell to the highest bidder in which schools are the marketplace. The policies and processes associated with Neoliberalism put the control into a handful of private interests for maximum private profit, thus creating massive inequalities, both social and economic (Ross, 2006). The wealth gap has widened, personal debt has grown, and child poverty rates are still high, all consequences of the

prevailing neoliberal political paradigm. The rights of minorities to vote, for all to have equal access to education and to welfare, and for protection of minimum wages are all tenants diminished by neoliberal motives for capital gain (Hursh, 2001). Notions of democracy in relation to political ideologies greatly impact youth. The pressures in school to focus on test scores and teach for accountability purposes rather than true understanding or desire to learn are prominent. This impacts citizenship education and the spot it takes in schools. In elevating aspects of learning in relation to what creates economic gain for the country, a reduction in the place of what is socially and culturally important, such as the teaching of critical citizenship for democratic action, is most certainly felt.

Even as the terms citizenship and citizenship education are used for the purposes of this paper, they ideologically will continue to battle with one another. These terms are Essentially Contested Concepts (ECCs), because the social construction of meaning will transpire any moment and occur more ferociously in some situations than others (Parker, 1996). "ECCs are unique among the universe of concepts not because they are constructed but because the problem of their proper usage is marked by continual debate" (Parker, 1996, p. 107). Osborne (2000) argues that the meaning of such terms will never be permanently or decisively fixed and will always be subject to debate and disagreement. Multiculturalism, democracy, and citizenship are all essentially contested concepts. This makes it even more important to acknowledge the fluidity and changing nature of ideas such as democracy and citizenship and take on a Dewian hat when debating these. Meanings are fluid and depend on the making in their hierarchies. We can only unravel the mystery by understanding the situations and challenges within which

they were formed. Recognizing the essentially contested nature of citizenship helps to understand how definitions vary based on political and ideological standpoints.

Conservatives view citizenship as loyalty, duty, and responsibility to tradition where social stability outweighs the individual; whereas, liberals define citizenship in terms of civil liberties and individual rights, which nothing can infringe upon; and, socialists reject citizenship as propaganda which those in power hide behind (Osborne, 2000). It is the critical models of citizenship that constitute the building blocks for citizenship education in schooling.

Critical Citizenship Paradigms: The Bricks and Mortar of Citizenship Education

Citizenship has been an important aim in education and schools. “In the world of the nation state, children had to speak the national language, read the national literature, learn the national history and geography and internalize the national values” (Osborne, 2000, p. 9). This territory was the fuel for citizenship education from the beginnings of public schools in Canada. It has typically been a key goal in social studies, and the study of history and civics. The fundamental motivation of this goal has been the creation of a “good-citizen.” This creation of a “good citizen” has often been rewarded as the overarching aim of education (Clark & Case, 2008; Tupper, 2006; Westheimer & Kahne, 2006). This aim, although consistent for centuries, has been espoused on principles of universalism of citizenship and has failed to cultivate a critical understanding of knowledge, power and privilege in society. Although the place of citizenship education has largely been in the arena of social studies, in elementary school it is taught through daily routines, school expectations, and social responsibility. Unfortunately, as Case and Clark (1999), elucidate, “general acceptance of citizenship as the *raison d’être* for social

studies does not provide much guidance or direction since there is little agreement on what constitutes the ideal citizen” (p. 1). Noted scholars, Tupper (2006, 2009), Vision (1998, 2006), Merryfield and Subedi (2007), and Parker (1996, 2008), although differing on various aspects of citizenship and citizenship education, all challenge current liberal democratic understandings of citizenship in schools. They each see the potential for education to embrace citizenship education, not as a taken for granted universal, but as a way to learn about democracy through a critical approach. These critical paradigms advocate for a level of action in citizenship education, which endeavors to ameliorate conditions of oppression, marginalization, and injustice. Visions of citizenship relate directly to practices of citizenship education. It is these noted scholars which lay the groundwork for the citizenship education model proposed by Westheimer and Kahne, which is utilized in this study. Tupper (2006, 2009), Vision (1998, 2006), Merryfield and Subedi (2007), and Parker (1996, 2008) all conceptualize citizenship with an emphasis on the need for systemic change and social critique. Each scholar’s paradigm provides a lens through which to view citizenship and has strong potential to influence the future of citizenship education.

Vinson (1998, 2006), puts forward a critical paradigm that is based on the assumption that circumstances in today’s society, and thus schools, continue to be oppressive. Oppression to Vinson (2006) does not mean the traditional connotation of “the exercise of tyranny by a ruling group,” but its left designation of “the disadvantage and injustice some people suffer...because of the everyday practice of a well intentioned liberal society” (p.176). This is applied to the systemic and structural phenomena which, although not necessarily resulting from tyrannical intentions, are in fact woven into the

fabric of society. This oppression, which impacts different groups, creates implications for contemporary citizenship education. He advocates a constructivist view to education and an integrated approach to curriculum instruction. Vinson's argument conveys the message that in order for citizenship to be anti-oppressive, it must adhere to four criteria. First, it needs to be developed from the anti-oppressive possibilities within current citizenship education programs. Secondly, it must be multi-disciplinary. Thirdly, it should emphasize both citizenship knowledge and citizenship action. Lastly, it must be "divergent and not convergent, open and not closed, emancipatory and not conforming-in-a-word, democratic" (Vinson, 2006, p. 68). Vinson's work gives a framework for the different views and the purposes of citizenship education. In "The Traditions Revisited," Vinson (1998) cites Martorella's five modes for delivering citizenship education: reflective inquiry, social science, citizenship or cultural transmission, informed social criticism and personal development. He determined that teachers used multiple approaches for citizenship education; however, the instructional approach usually demonstrated the normative beliefs of the education system. He pleads that educators must acknowledge the risks of "downplaying the roots, the particulars, and the applications of oppression" and engender a citizenship education in which students and educators work to end current exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, and violence existing in schools today. Citizenship education in this critical paradigm is ultimately improved through reflective inquiry and informed social criticism.

Tupper (2006) writes based on the belief that students leave classrooms without a deep and full understanding of "what it might mean to be and live as a citizen" (p. 46). She warns about ignoring the false sense of universalism that is entrenched in

democracies and impedes people's awareness. "(Im)possible citizenship denies or ignores the false universalism embedded in liberal democracies and as such fails to cultivate a deep understanding of inequities that exist in the world. It creates universal conditions for citizenship while masking the inequities that exist for many individuals attempting to live fully as citizens" (Tupper, 2006, p. 45). There is the belief that schooling is partly responsible for the maintenance of citizenship as a universalized concept. Tupper advocates for care-full citizenship education which encourages students to understand that individual and group actions can have sociopolitical effects. She emphasizes that the possibilities of citizenship demand that we try to understand how people engage as citizens on different levels as dictated by their race or ethnicity. She pleads that we need to be attentive to ourselves, others, and the world in order to reduce the oppression experienced by many. Understandings must go beyond the idea of universality and realize the complexity of citizenship and the challenges around political participation for those in less privileged places in society or who have been marginalized (Tupper, 2006, 2007, 2009). The creation and implementation of a standardized curriculum, outcomes, uniform content, and common exams, all further reinforce false universalisms of citizenship in education.

While teaching is an ongoing process of curricular negotiation, if teachers are not engaging in a critique of the curriculum they are mandated to teach, but simply making choices about how to deliver content, realize objectives, and evaluate students, the reproduction of particular knowledge traditions continues. (Tupper, 2009, p. 81).

Educators are called to critique the curriculum and unpack the deep traditions woven in

content. Teaching for democracy not about it, will aid in disrupting liberal democratic notions of citizenship.

Parker (1996, 2001, 2008), similarly to Tupper and Vinson, asserts that although citizenship is likely the most common mission statement in public schooling, it is positioned on so called democratic ideals that do not address social and cultural diversity. In his perception, much is excluded from current conceptions of citizenship, including social and cultural dimensions, as well as “tensions of modern life” (Parker, 1996, p. 107). Some of the reasons Parker (1996) states for the continuing hegemonic citizenship education are the gap between mission statements and the daily life in schools, the resiliency of school sites continuing to be preparation sites for the labour force, and the obsession of individual rights and self-interest. He also sees citizenship as far from neutral. “Everywhere it seeks to predispose citizens to particular ways of knowing, relating, and being that are deemed appropriate to the political culture at hand” (Parker, 2001, p. 98). The primary goal Parker speaks about is citizenship as *Enlightened Political Engagement* where one has a deeper sense of just and unjust (Parker, 2008). Political engagement is the participatory realm of citizenship, “from voting and contacting public officials to deliberating public problems, campaigning and engaging in civil disobedience, boycotts, strikes, rebellions and other forms of direct action” (Parker, 2001, p. 99). This engagement is shaped by democratic enlightenment, which involves “the moral-cognitive knowledge, norms, and commitments to freedom and justice and so forth” (Parker, 2001, p. 99). This leads ultimately to reflective participation in society that goes beyond voting and involves enlightened action within one's community. It is this knowledge, moral principles, and attitudes that liberally educated citizens bring to

involvement in civic activities. Parker calls to attention the difference between transmission and participation, and caring and justice, in schools curricular and extra curricular activities. He advocates for equal access to education and for kids to stay in school. He urges that educators need to support diversity as a democratic force and a condition necessary for freedom. Similar to the Vinson and Tupper, Parker conceives there is a distinct tension between teaching about democracy and teaching democratically, thus impacting the way citizenship education is experienced in schools. This ultimately effects the experiences of citizenship in society. He proposes four reasons why citizenship education has eluded problems of exclusion and cultural diversity. The first reason he offers is that democracy has been treated as an accomplishment rather than as an aspiration, and an ideal. Second, he explains that the cultural and the political have been conflated, instead of accepting parallel identities of the political citizen and cultural citizen. Third, he claims that the overarching political community is neutral, colour blind, and culture blind, when it is actually from a specific vantage point of ethnocentrism that has prevented citizenship education from developing. Fourth, the relationship between diversity and liberty has been unclear. Diversity has often been looked at as a threat to liberty; however, "liberty cannot be protected without diversity" (Parker, 2001, p. 115). Parker's (2001) critical paradigm, proposes a re-imagining of citizenship education upon new terms. This critical paradigm unmistakably conveys the urgency for educators to step back and re-evaluate the realities of citizenship education in schools.

Merryfield and Subedi (2007), have beliefs similar to the previous scholars, however emphasize the global nature of issues related to citizenship education. They articulate that students' minds must be opened to allow them to critically study local and

global issues from different viewpoints, rather than what is taken for granted as the accepted dominant viewpoint (Merryfield & Subedi, 2007). Since democracy must not be restricted to a national level, a global citizenship is necessary. Merryfield and Subedi (2007) effectively contribute to the idea of a global citizen. This citizen does not only look at events, ideas and issues through the lens of their own countries interests, but through the interest of others. He or she challenges colonial assumptions of superiority (Merryfield & Subedi, 2007). Merryfield and Subedi (2007) convey that,

The global citizen has developed a global perspective from the integration of (1) knowledge of the interconnectedness of the world and the complexity of its peoples, (2) lived experiences with people different from oneself, and (3) perceptual skills in perspective consciousness, open-mindedness and resistance to chauvinism and stereotyping. (p. 284)

Merryfield and Subedi (2007) believe, similarly to Vinson, Parker and Tupper, that power, culture and knowledge interact to influence people, and privilege plays a key role in shaping one's experiences. It is the intersection of these elements where citizenship conceptions grow.

The more student's are privileged by their race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language or other characteristic (an upper class, straight, white, able bodied male being the most privileged) the more they will need help in developing perspective consciousness since such privilege protects them from situations in which they would be forced to examine events and issues through the viewpoints of people different than themselves (Merryfield & Subedi, 2007, p. 286).

They propose teaching multiple histories and perspectives rather than a single universal history. In addition, these scholars emphasize the importance of developing resistance to stereotypes by exploring shared lived experiences, questioning and exploring alternate explanations in history, and being critical of the role of media. It is worthwhile mentioning these two scholars to emphasize the necessity for citizenship issues to be viewed on both local and global levels. Their contributions to the field of citizenship education are reinforced in the Westheimer and Kahne (2004) framework.

From Here to There: What Kind of Citizen?

What assumptions has citizenship education rested upon until now to create such a strong need for change that the scholars discussed thus far are advocating? T.H. Marshall's (1950) work clearly displays the cut and dry rights and responsibilities approach to citizenship that much of education was based on. Marshall (1964), identified three domains of citizenship: civil, political, and socioeconomic. The civil domain involves things such as equality, expression, speech, and freedom of association. It refers to "a way of life wherein citizens define and pursue commonly held goals, that are related to liberal conceptions of society on how common spaces, resources, opportunities are shared and how interdependence is managed" (Herbert & Wilkinson, 2006, p. 34). The political domain "involves the right to vote and to political participation" (Herbert & Wilkinson, 2006, p. 34). The socio-economic domain of citizenship involves social and economic rights, including one's right to economic well-being and social security. Marshall's perspective takes notice of the complex interrelationship between the social, political, economic, and civil. A fourth domain, culture-state relationship, has since been added (Herbert & Wilkinson, 2006, p. 33). There is the assumption, with Marshall's

theory, that rights and freedoms are equally bestowed on all citizens, thus ignoring the differences in relation to one's status as citizens. This causes "democratic education" to operate as a cloak for injustices and inequities that are woven in the curriculum, classrooms, and teachings. Scholars, such as Merryfield and Subedi (2006), Parker (2001), Tupper (2006) and Vinson (2006), critique the notion of universal bestowal of rights which falsely leads many to believe the nation represents a true democracy. Their critical models of citizenship are a foundation from which to erect strong and democratic frameworks for citizenship education. What kind of citizen is simultaneously a philosophical, historical, cultural, sociological, critical and pedagogical question that must be addressed in order to look at our current conceptions and practices of citizenship education. From the answers, may arise the strong foundation on which to build a sound curriculum for citizenship education.

Citizenship Education Frameworks: Structure for Change

Citizenship education is expected to achieve a far more complex set of purposes than it ever has. The spectrum of citizenship education models is as bountiful as the colours in the rainbow and dependent on one's perspective of citizenship and notion of democracy. In 1980, Freeman Butts defined citizenship education as something that "embrace the fundamental values of the political community, a realistic and scholarly knowledge of the working of the political institutions and processes, and the skills of political behaviour required for effective participation in democracy" (as cited in Parker, 1996, p. 110). Citizenship education encompasses the practice, pedagogy, experiences, and intentions upon which a school is based. Evidence of beliefs about education for citizenship can be seen in mission statements, codes of conduct, teacher practices, student

expectations and consequences, and student experiences. Evidence of the reality of citizenship education lays within the impact it has on students and how students transfer their experiences to the outside world. Multiple approaches to citizenship education have achieved diverse results. Johnson and Morris (2010), Veuglers (2007), and Westheimer and Kahne (2004) offer models of citizenship education which incorporate elements of critical analysis of society, and an appeal for action and change. Table 2.1, adapted from Johnson and Morris (2010), illustrates the similarities and differences between these three frameworks.

	DISCIPLINE	SOCIAL AWARENESS	AUTONOMY
Citizen Characteristics	Good manners, obedient, acts responsibly	Participates in society, from an individualist perspective	Cooperative, concerned for social justice, motivated to change society
Veuglers (2007)	Adapting citizen	Individualistic citizen	Critical-democratic citizen
Westheimer and Kahne (2004)	Personally responsible citizen	Participatory citizen	Justice-oriented citizen
Johnson and Morris (2010)	Self/Subjectivity and Praxis/engagement	Social/collective and Politics/ideology	Praxis/Engagement and Politics/ideology

Table 2.1 Comparison of types of citizens (Johnson and Morris, 2010)

Veuglers (2007) provides a framework that has many similar threads to Westheimer and Kahne (2004). Veuglers' model is also based on three types of citizens, the adapting citizen, the individualistic citizen and the critical-democratic citizen. The adapting citizen places great value on discipline and social awareness and relatively little on autonomy, whereas the individualistic citizen places importance on discipline and autonomy and little on social awareness. Lastly, the critical democratic citizen attaches

importance to autonomy and social awareness and little on discipline (Veugelers, 2007). This framework incorporates a wide continuum of possibilities of what it means to be a citizen, however, many of the terms may be uncharacteristic for grade seven students, and would require much explanation and frontloading. In addition, Veugelers (2007) framework incorporates the formation and role of values in education. “Processes of value and norm constructions are important for the individual, for social and cultural groups, and for society” (2007, p. 16). His humanist approach to moral and citizenship education is one, which can certainly create greater understanding of motives and intentions to be a “good citizen.” Values and morals are indeed an integral part of education, however for the scope of this study, values were not an aspect attended to. The complexity of values and the fact that discipline, social awareness, autonomy also have very subjective interpretations depending on experience, left Veugelers’ framework as one which was important to discuss, however not employed with the grade seven students.

Johnson and Morris (2010) provide a framework that allows forms of critical citizenship to be distinguished and may reveal space for critical pedagogy within the school curriculum. Their framework is comprised of four elements politics/ideology, social/collective, self/subjectivity, and praxis/engagement (Johnson & Morris, 2010, p. 87). Table 2.2 provides details regarding the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions that embody this framework (Johnson and Morris, 2010, p. 90). One of the superior attributes of the Johnson and Morris framework is the combination of critical pedagogy and critical citizenship education. In addition, there is a level of critical awareness, systemic critique and social justice across all levels. This would have been an ideal

framework to use with adults, or even grade eleven and twelve students who have understandings of ideology and the more complex nature of the self/subjective. Since each of the levels has elements of social justice and critical citizenship, it would not have been appropriate to use in exploring citizenship education opportunities and experiences that may not have been critical in nature.

	POLITICS/ ideology	SOCIAL/ collective	SELF/ subjective	PRAXIS/ engagement
<i>Knowledge</i>	Knowledge and understanding of histories, societies, systems and oppressions and injustices, power structures and macro structural relationships	Knowledge of interconnections between culture and power and transformation; non-mainstream writings and ideas in addition to dominant discourses	Knowledge of own position, cultures and context; sense of identity	Knowledge of how collectively to effect systematic change; how knowledge itself is power; how behaviour influences society and injustice
<i>Skills</i>	Skills of critical and structural social analysis; capacity to politicise notions of culture, knowledge and power; capacity to investigate deeper causalities	Skills in dialogue, cooperation, and interaction; skills in critical interpretation of others' viewpoints; capacity to think holistically	Capacity to reflect critically on one's status' within communities and society; independent critical thinking; speaking with one's own voice	Skills of critical thinking and active participation; skills in acting collectively to challenge the status quo; ability to imagine a better world
<i>Values</i>	Commitment to values against injustice and oppression	Inclusive dialogical relationship with others' identities and values	Concern for social justice and consideration of self-worth	Informed responsible, and ethical action and reflection
<i>Dispositions</i>	Actively questionings, critical interest in society and public affairs; seeks out and acts against injustice and oppression	Socially aware; cooperative; responsible towards self and others; willing to learn with others	Critical perspective; autonomous; responsible in thought, emotion action; forwardthinking in touch with reality	Commitment and motivation to change society; civic courage; responsibility for decisions and actions.

Table 2.2 Johnson and Morris (2010) framework for citizenship education (p. 90)

Westheimer and Kahne, have devised a model of citizenship education which attempts to improve the areas of concern cited by Merryfield and Subedi, Parker, Tupper and Vinson. For the purpose of working with grade seven students, the Westheimer and Kahne (2004) framework provided a continuum of different elements of citizenship which was straightforward for them to comprehend. Their three dimensional model of citizenship involves personal responsibility, participation, and justice orientation. The three different types of citizenship reflect different sets of theoretical and curriculum goals; which may be similar or different. The personally responsible citizen is one who demonstrates responsibility in his or her community by doing things such as picking up garbage, recycling, obeying laws and giving blood. The participatory citizen “actively participates in civic affairs and the social life of the community at the local, state or national level” (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004, p. 239). The participatory citizen does things such as organize food drives, and run local meetings to discuss political issues. The justice-oriented citizen analyzes and understands how social, economic and political forces interplay to improve society (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). If a participatory citizen organizes clothing drives for homeless people, and a personally responsible citizen donates clothing, justice oriented citizens are asking citizens why people are homeless and then acting on what they find out. Westheimer and Kahne’s (2004) model, as seen in Table 2.3, provides a variety of lenses through which to view the possibilities of citizenship. This model clearly and effectively presents a variety of types of citizenship that educators could be attempting to develop. It provides diverse types of citizenship, from the practical and uncomplicated personally responsible citizenship, to the more complex and critical social justice citizenship. The categories of the personally

responsible citizen, participatory citizen and the socially just citizen highlight three different aspects of citizenship upon which citizenship education can focus. It provides a good reference point through which to investigate the reality of citizenship education. It targets the need to attend to the social by confronting injustice, and also targets the importance of individual responsibility. This framework can help view citizenship education and question where it is in the 21st century school.

	Personally Responsible Citizen	Participatory Citizen	Justice-Oriented Citizen
DESCRIPTION	Acts responsible in his/her community Works and pays taxes Obeys laws Volunteers to lend a hand in times of crisis	Active member of community organizations and/or improvement efforts Organized community efforts to care for those in need, promote economic development, or clean up the environment	Critically assesses social, political, and economic structures to see beyond surface causes Seeks out and addresses areas of injustice Knows about social movements and how to effect systemic change
SAMPLE ACTION	Contributes food to a food drive	Helps to organize a food drive	Explores why people are hungry and acts to solve root causes
CORE ASSUMPTIONS	To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must have good character, they must be honest, responsible, and law abiding members of the community	To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must actively participate and take leadership positions within established systems and community	To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must question and change established systems and structures when they reproduce patterns of injustice over time

Table 2.3 Westheimer and Kahne (2004) Citizenship Education Framework (p.27)

It is important to mention that each of these frameworks has similar limitations. Each one is grounded in western liberal thinking and neither takes into account nor recognizes other cultural traditions. In addition, it emphasizes an ideal “at the expense of a concern for the implemented and hidden curriculum” (Johnson & Morris, 2010, p. 91). Also, the nature of the frameworks does dichotomize a very complex and wide range of conceptions of citizenship. There are many theories of citizenship, which can provide models for citizenship education. There is no one model of citizenship education which will respond to all the needs of society; however, the frameworks presented can aspire to develop a multidimensional conception of the possibilities of citizenship education.

The Nature and Practice of Citizenship Education

As seen thus far in the literature, there are a plethora of theories around what citizenship is and is not and what it, in theory, should look in schools. The research supports the ideas that it is possible to begin to teach children to become informed citizens in the elementary years (Alleman & Rosaen, 1991; Hess & Torney-Purta, 1967). There is much information about what people believe to be ideal citizenship education curriculum; however, far from an abundance about the results of different programs. Often romanticized over as learning to care for one another and show love and respect, citizenship education has many forms within our schools. This “all you need is love” approach shows lack of acknowledgement of past oppressions and prevents equality of citizenship experience (Dunn, 2002). Similarly, the careless study of cultures can also ignore and romanticize history. Current learning about government and democracy begins as early as grade 3, however in the form of facts. Textbooks have representations of various cultures, however omit class and race struggles, along with deep histories of

oppression and marginalization. Giroux's theory of cultural studies says that dominance and legitimacy of hierarchical power must be challenged. Citizenship education thus, needs to be approached methodologically, looking at the varying experiences and realities of citizenship throughout history according to different groups. According to Tupper (2007), if teachers do not critique the curriculum and just deliver knowledge, no change will happen. This follows with Giroux's theory of challenging notions of citizenship in order to create more equality. "Educators need to assume the role of leaders in the struggle for social and economic justice...Educators must connect what they teach and write to the dynamics of public life..and...concern for...democracy (Giroux, 2006, p.9). Service learning is another form of citizenship education that aims to have students embark on hands on experiences to learn about citizenship, such as working at a political campaign office or within community organizations. Service learning, as tested by Kahne and Westheimer (2006), has been shown to show an increase in efficacy and increase political participation in youth. There is also an evident focus on character education in elementary school. This form of citizenship education focuses on the individual student and his/her character development. Although an important part of elementary school, this approach, if not used with caution, can reinforce self-interests, developing students who are not aware of realities of different groups of citizens. Democratic theory of education follows that citizenship education cultivates students who participate deliberatively in democracy.

Most jurisdictions advocate that citizenship education contributes to the development of informed active and productive citizen (Sears, Clarke & Hughes, 1998). School subjects such as history, geography, government and economics help children to

put together their experiences and further their understanding of the social, political and economic systems, which as adults they become a part of. Social studies is often where learning for citizenship takes place in elementary school. Fostering behaviour, thinking and action consistent with democratic values of justice, equality, freedom and dignity are typical goals of social studies (Alleman & Rosaen, 1991). "Citizenship education also needs to be understood as perpetuating citizenship as a false universal through the content and knowledge that students learn, and in many situations through high stakes testing and common exams" (Tupper, 2006, p. 49). Much of the rhetoric that exists in social studies (citizenship education) discourse, allows students and teachers to function in an arena which lacks depth and has no deliberative understanding of citizenship. This leads to the importance of understanding the nature of the opportunities present and how students experience those opportunities, in order to authentically prepare citizenship in adulthood. There is no doubt that a wide array of experiences takes place for students to learn about citizenship. There is much uncertainty however, about the impact these experiences have in developing multi-dimensional attributes of citizenship. The Westheimer and Kahne (2004) model previously discussed will provide a structure for investigating this important question.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Perspectives and Epistemology

It is not only helpful, but also critical, to identify one's philosophical orientation as a researcher. The data collection methods and methodologies I used were informed and guided by my epistemology and philosophical stance. As Crotty (1998) explains, "each epistemological stance is an attempt to explain how we know what we know and to determine the status to be ascribed to the understandings we reach" (p. 18). My research questions were created within a constructivist epistemological framework. I conducted my study from an epistemological belief that human experiences are shaped predominantly by cultural factors and meaning is most often determined relative to one's relationships in and to society (Schiro, 2008). Essentially, I believe that truth and knowledge find meaning in cultural assumptions. This formation of knowledge, and thus meaningful reality, has contingency on human practices. These human practices are assembled from interactions between humans and the world, fundamentally all in the field of a social context (Crotty, 1998). These interactions are part of the underpinning of thought that formed the basis for my study. My understanding of what knowledge is and how knowledge is formed are crucial elements in forming research questions and in determining methods and methodologies.

In my quest to understand more about the nature of citizenship education in schools and the narrative of citizenship that exists in society, it is important to identify the assumption that answers one discovers are completely dependent on the particular time and place in society. In the words of Counts (1934):

The historical record shows that education is always a function of time, place and circumstance. In its basic philosophy, its social objective, and its program of instruction, it inevitably reflects...the experiences, the conditions and the hopes, fears and aspirations of a particular people...at a particular point in history. (p. 1)

It is the deep social structures underlying society that help shape and determine human behaviour. My belief is that the narrative of citizenship in Canadian society and the realities of citizenship education in schools have inextricable ties to conceptions of knowledge, culture, class, and values. This belief has lead me to focus on uncovering experiences of citizenship education that invisibly contour human relationships and behaviour; in essence, the citizenship narrative revealed in society. Thus, part of my rationale for investigating these issues is to clearly identify the current nature of citizenship education opportunities and experiences within the time and space known as the 21st century.

Theory of knowledge is deeply embedded in the theoretical perspective one adopts. My philosophical stance provides a context for the process of my research. I conducted this study from the dual perspective of a social reconstructionist and a critical stance. Assumptions of the social reconstruction ideology include the belief that society is unhealthy and that in order to save society we must and certainly can do something (Schiro, 2008). Along these lines, like social reconstructionists, I believe that education is a vehicle through which society needs to be reconstructed. As Counts (1932) believed:

Schools must face squarely and courageously every social issue, come to grips with life in all of its stark reality, establish an organic relation with the community,

develop a realistic and comprehensive story of welfare, fashion a compelling and challenging vision of human destiny, and become somewhat less frightened than...they are today of the bogeys or imposition and indoctrination. (p. 259)

Using a constructivist epistemology and combining it with a reconstructivist theoretical approach provides the opportunity for meaning making from the social context (people, interactions, etc.) and using this social context for the possibility of responding to problems in society. It is the nature of the interactions students had with citizenship education opportunities that helps illuminate possibilities for advancing conceptions of critical citizenship education and thus critical democracy in our society.

Typical of many reconstructionists who are “genuine forerunners to critical theory” (McKernan, 2008, p. 17), I conducted the study positioned on a critical standpoint and endeavored to understand more about the realities of citizenship education in elementary school. This was pivotal in seeking to understand the institutions that affect students and teachers and the interconnectedness schools have with various forces, such as neoliberalism, and globalization. “Schools often unquestioningly act to distribute knowledge and values through both the overt and covert curriculum that often act to support these same institutions” (Apple, 2004, p. 121). As Apple (2004) explains, it is necessary to be careful when interpreting, not to continue to accord with taken for granted limiting rules; rather the potential of the perspective is to transcend the boundaries of conformist tendencies within pragmatism. It is important to be aware that critical theory often contradicts present reality, scrutinizing the gloom surrounding present institutional situations; nevertheless, illuminating potential for change (Apple, 2004). The study allowed me to explore contradictions and tendencies within citizenship

education while leaving space for suggestions of transformation and future possibilities. Within this study I engaged with the phenomena of citizenship education, calling into question the manner of seeing it in society. This ultimately has left open the possibility for reinterpretation of meaning of the phenomena, of citizenship education (Crotty, 1998). Systems of culture and power were treated with a degree of suspicion, through which I intentionally used the experience to create new meaning. Throughout the study, I also heeded attention to issues of power and oppression that must be critiqued more deeply to understand citizenship education. This was expressed well by Freire, who explained that human beings need to take charge as subjects not as mere objects (as cited in Crotty, 1998). The task in education is to learn what is meaningful and have the people involved, students, teachers and families, feel their own power to create change.

Personal Reflections: Location and Positionality

My role as a vice principal and researcher had an impact on the location and positionality that I assumed during research. There were undoubtedly some limitations along with some benefits of my location. Alcoff (1991) speaks about the relationship of one's location as a researcher to the truth and knowledge one seeks. She explains that location influences meaning and truth, however, does not necessarily determine meaning and truth. "Location and positionality should not be conceived as one dimensional or static, but as multiple and with varying degrees of mobility" (Alcoff, 1991, p. 16). The meaning and evaluation of truth cannot be simply reduced to one's location and this relationship of location to one's position within a group is "immensely complex" (Alcoff, 1991, p. 17). Thus, my role dual role as the vice-principal and researcher had both limitations and advantages. I am in a position of power and authority at the school along

with one of supporting and guiding the students. I had already established a rapport with the students, thus they were both familiar and comfortable with me. This aided in helping reveal information that the students may have felt uncomfortable sharing with an unknown researcher. On the other hand, occupying a position of power in my role as vice principal proposed a concern that the students may feel intimidated to say the “right things.” I felt that during the course of all the interviews, both group and individual, each and every one of the students spoke from their heart, with truth and frankness, regarding their experiences with citizenship education at Westview. Furthermore, I clearly communicated to the students at the beginning of each interview group that they were not being judged or graded on their responses and reactions and the value was in their honest and forthright reactions. Throughout my work with the students, I sought to exert as little influence as possible and questioned my own power and authority throughout the analysis of my data. Although my role as administrator and researcher could have been at variance, I feel that a convergence was created, as both roles affected the questions I worked to answer. I challenged myself to perceive the positions and the locations I occupied as an avenue for a deeper understanding of the phenomena of citizenship and citizenship education.

I had a deep and genuine interest in the students and the setting I used to research the realities of citizenship education. I used those feelings as a source of energy while conducting my study. Simultaneously, I fought to be as neutral as possible in my role as researcher. In the same sense, while I aimed to be neutral, it is necessary to recognize that neutrality often perpetuates maintenance of the status quo and perpetuation of knowledge transmission without confrontation of issues or privilege and/or power, especially in the

social studies classroom. As Kelly and Minnes Brandes (2010), explain, “teaching for social justice involves shifting out of the neutral, both in terms of a teacher’s orientation to social inequalities and of pedagogy” (p. 437). As I realized, since the students participating in the study had not been exposed to some issues in relationship to citizenship and society, then my role as a researcher was to help them to understand and express their experiences and share their personal narrative of citizenship education.

Kelly and Minnes Brandes (2010) eloquently explain,

Since race and sex are not the only advantaging systems at work, we need similarity to examine the daily experience of having age advantage, or ethnic advantage, or physical ability, or advantage in relation to nationality, religion or sexual orientation. (p. 3)

All these aspects can take either an active form, which is obvious to the naked eye, or an embedded form, which we are taught not to see. Hence, although I aimed to be neutral in my approach to the students, neutrality towards the ideas of citizenship was avoided when conducting the research and analyzing the findings.

Research Site

The research site I used for this study was one elementary school located in a large urban school district in British Columbia, approximately 20 minutes away from the city core. For the purposes of this study, the elementary school will be called Westview Elementary. It is one of approximately 109 elementary schools in the Vancouver School Board, which resides on Musquem and Coast Salish traditional territory, and is part of one of the most diverse public systems in Canada. There are approximately 56, 000

students enrolled annually in Kindergarten to grade 12 (VSB, 2011). Of that, 31, 000 are elementary and 25,000 are secondary students. 25% of students in grades K-12 are designated ESL and 60% speak a language at home other than English. 2000 self-identified Aboriginal students representing 600 bands and nations attend Vancouver schools.

The first aspect for school selection was that the school is a kindergarten to grade seven school. In addition, I chose a school that has citizenship as a school goal, of which Westview has for the past three years. Westview Elementary is located in the west side of the city of Vancouver. It is a kindergarten to grade seven school, running an English program. The school draws its population from the surrounding area and on some out of catchment students who attend the school for special programs or due to parent choice. Westview Elementary supports the learning of 530 students in the upper west side of Vancouver. The community is a diverse community that represents one of the upper socioeconomic brackets of the city. The school has 113 ESL students as well as 13 special needs students and 53 students designated as having learning disabilities (Westview School Plan, 2011-2012). All students are fully integrated into the school programs. According to the Westview School Growth Plan for 2011-2012:

The school maintains high expectations for student behaviour and manners based on principles of safety, respect and responsibility. The basic skills of respect and responsibility require empathy, hard work, consistency and common sense. It is our vision that our students feel connected to home, to school, to community, and to the world, and that they take pride in themselves and in their citizenship.

Westview is friendly, welcoming, and inclusive. Everyone is expected to

demonstrate a sense of community and cooperation. (p. 2)

One of the school goals is to increase student awareness, understanding, and demonstration of citizenship. The presence of citizenship as a school goal for the past two years renders assumptions that students and staff have an awareness and understanding about citizenship and its multiple meanings and complexities, at least at a rudimentary level. The reason for this is that, along with school goals, usually comes professional development and data collection. Teachers are required to collect data on the student success in achieving school goals and report that to administration, who in turn report it to the district. The teachers at Westview assessed student “citizenship” using a social responsibility performance scale (Appendix C). This scale was decided by staff to be the most practical and applicable pre-created scale to use to evaluate student awareness, understanding and demonstration of citizenship. This data was not included in the study because the focus was exploring opportunities students had to learn about citizenship and the understandings students took away from those opportunities.

Research Methods

The study engaged with grade seven students, within the context of the school, to attempt to understand the opportunities present for developing citizenship and to explore the nature of the student experiences with those opportunities. I endeavoured to discover the various narratives that were taking place within the framework of citizenship education based on Westheimer and Kahne’s (2004) three level model of personal responsibility, social justice and political participation.

The research methods I used were environmental observation, group interviews, and individual interviews. Initially, to contextualize the phenomenon of citizenship education within the school as a larger structure, I did preliminary gathering of information about the array of opportunities that take place. Through the method of observation and with my own personal knowledge as a person working in the school, I discovered what opportunities exist within the school for students to develop citizenship. I then categorized the opportunities in terms of their potential to develop the various areas of citizenship: personal responsibility, social justice, or political participation. These data were then used to decide three key opportunities that were available to students to develop each of the three aspects of citizenship, social justice orientation, political participation, and personal responsibility. The three experiences were ones which I believed had the greatest potential to develop each of the areas of citizenship indicated in the Westheimer and Kahne (2004) framework. From data gathering, the three events I selected were Halloween for Hunger for personal responsibility, Westview Leadership Group for participatory citizenship, and the Vow of Silence for social justice citizenship. The group interviews were semi-structured with the intent of uncovering the impact these experiences had on students. Following the group interviews, individual interviews helped go deeper by exploring the bearing of the experience on specific students. A final group interview was summative in nature, gathering feedback on themes and findings which I had thus far perceived. The students active and thoughtful engagement in all interviews provided rich plentiful data for this study.

Sampling Process

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with a total of 14 grade seven students. Four of the students were boys and 10 of the students were girls. To obtain this sample all grade seven students, in each of the five classes, were given The Researcher's Letter of Intent-Student Assent (Appendix A) and Parent Consent Forms (Appendix B). The study was explained to each of the classes in the same manner, calling upon the students for their interest to be involved. 16 students returned their Student Assent Form and Parent Consent Forms. Of those 16, only 14 students were able to participate in the study because two students did not show up on the day of the interviews. The students were from a mix of all five grade seven classes at Westview. No concern was given as to whether the students excelled academically or if they were of a specific socioeconomic background, race, culture, or religious affiliation. Given the selected location on the westside, it is not surprising that most of the students were Caucasian. While I did not, as the researcher, ask the students about their overall level of citizenship engagement, it was ascertained that the majority of students who participated were actively involved in school activities and usually volunteer to help around the school in various ways.

While I offer conclusions and theories surrounding citizenship education, it is important to recognize that these findings pertain to this school and group of students only. There are no claims of absolute representativeness made. There is however, the hope that the findings can be useful for those aspiring to learn about citizenship education and the implications it has in schools. Similarly, the data provides an authentic look at student perceptions about citizenship, as well as their awareness and desire to tackle the

re-imagining of citizenship education to work towards a more equitable and just society. It also illuminates current realities of student experiences with citizenship, with the prospect that educators may be engaged in discussions regarding implementation of critical citizenship education frameworks, such as Johnson and Morris (2010), or Westheimer and Kahne (2004). Each step that is taken in critiquing and confronting current realities, systems, and structures is an encouraging step towards re-creating citizenship education as means of authentically preparing students to participate critically in a democracy which is negotiated on just and equitable territory.

Data Collection: Environmental Observation

To initiate the data collection process, I engaged with the school environment to discover the full array of citizenship education opportunities that exist within the space of Westview. The physical space was the first place I investigated for evidence of citizenship education. Typical of social constructivist research, the environment is an important piece of how meaning becomes constructed. "Researchers working within a social constructivist perspective assume that individuals are always interacting with a socially constituted environment and these interactions form the basis of their experience" (Freeman & Mathison, 2009, p. 13). Hallways, walls, learning spaces, and the physical exterior of the school were examined carefully for signs of citizenship, from which students would be able to interact with (consciously or unconsciously). During this process, I discovered numerous signs and posters around the school that encouraged students to be a "good citizen." Bulletin boards in the hallways were marked with signs decreeing, "be a good citizen, please respect our bulletin board." This evidence communicates a specific conception of what a good citizen is, a conception fixed upon the mark of citizen as a

respectful rule abiding person. Near the administrative area at Westview, there were posters about the citizenship virtue of the month, as well as school mission statements. On the main counter in the office, the Westview Code of Conduct could be found in multiple languages for all to read. Along hallways and in common areas, it was commonplace to spot a set of rules or expectations listed; similarly, encouraging words and emphasis on being a kind, and caring student. Phrases such as “you are loving and capable.”

I took a reflective journey on the events that took place at the school throughout the course of the year. Assemblies, speakers, special events and performances were all organized to help students develop and learn about citizenship. Strikingly, some activities were whole school events and some were opportunities for only certain groups, clubs or classes. This revealed itself as an ideal way to organize the opportunities for the mapping process. After separating whole school opportunities from class and individual opportunities, it was obvious there was an element of choice which was present or absent in the data. Choice is a significant characteristic to utilize, as it could show student initiative to be involved in the experience versus simply being required to partake in the experience. I felt it would be interesting to look at what role choice plays in citizenship education opportunities at Westview and ultimately what bearing that has on the impact of the experience. Lastly, it was important to include activities that take place in the actual classrooms which together render the school. The whole school experience is comprised of both in-class and outside of class activities. Although the selected activities for further investigation were outside of class, it was essential to mention opportunities offered in the classroom and include them in the mapping. As a teacher-researcher, I

witnessed these opportunities on a regular basis through my work in the classrooms at Westview. The offerings in the classroom vary from teacher to teacher and may differ for different groups of students with the same teacher. Amalgamated together, these data created the Mapping of Citizenship Opportunities at Westview (Figure 4.1).

Data Collection: Interviews

Group Interviews.

Each group interview focused on opportunities (school events/activities, or opportunities present) at school to develop one aspect of citizenship education, personal responsibility, social justice, or political participation, based on the Kahne and Westheimer (2004) model. Four group interviews took place, the first around a personally responsible citizenship opportunity, Halloween for Hunger, the second around a participatory citizenship opportunity, leadership group and the third around a social justice citizenship opportunity, the Vow of Silence. Students were randomly selected for one of the three group interviews. Following all the group interviews and individual interviews, one last group interview took place to discuss themes and ideas surrounding all the citizenship opportunities. Each of the students who had not been interviewed twice, took part in this last group interview. The interviews were held during lunch hour, where a pizza lunch was provided to the students and lasted approximately 45 minutes in length. Interviews were recorded onto a recording device and then transcribed in order to ensure reliable and accurate analysis. Discussion in the interviews began by asking how many students were involved and moved to determine a deeper understanding of the opportunity, as experienced by the students. Beginning with group interviews laid a foundation of comfort and roused interest in the students.

One more final large group interview was conducted following the initial group and follow up individual interviews. Each of the students that had not been interviewed twice took part in this last group. The intention was to share with the students initial thoughts and themes I had identified and to dig deeper on a variety of issues. I wanted to challenge them to think hard about some of the statements that were made during the group interviews prior. This would encourage them to reflect and then support or consider variance in what had been said. This group allowed topics of interest to be revisited and students to build on each other's comments and thoughts, providing additional rich data. Almost all of the students involved in the group interviews actively participated in the discussions that took place. The intentional use of group interviews for this study was a positive way to help the students interact not only with the research questions, but with each other, regarding the nature of citizenship education opportunities at Westview. There was value in not only the rich information that the students shared about the citizenship education experience, but in the way the students related and responded to each other. Some, but not all, of the questions below were used to facilitate the group interviews. Group interview questions included:

1. Were you involved in *Halloween for Hunger/leadership group/the Vow of Silence*?
2. If you were involved did you participate voluntarily, or was it a requirement?
3. If it was voluntary, what made you want to participate?
4. If it was mandatory, do you know why?
5. Why do you think this was offered/organized at school?

6. Who organized the activity?
7. What do you remember from the experience?
8. What were the feelings you experienced before/during/after the activity?
9. What did you learn from participating?
10. In what context do you usually learn about that at school?
11. Have you been involved in any activities that are similar? If so explain.
12. Did everyone participate equally(boys/girl, ESL students/non-ESL, all cultures? If not, explain. If so, can you give an example.
13. What was the thing most people enjoyed about having the opportunity?
14. What was the thing most people disliked about having the opportunity?
15. What was the role of the teacher with regard to the opportunity?
16. What was the role of critical thinking and looking at reasons why problems exist, in relation to the opportunity?
17. What impact has the activity had on you? Will you do anything differently due to your involvement with the experience? Has it caused you to think differently?
18. Do you think that having the opportunity to participate helped you to learn about being a personally responsible/participatory/socially just citizen? If so, what? If not, why not.

19. Where in the context of this school over the past 7 years have you learned about these things related to citizenship? What other opportunities help you learn about personally responsible citizenship/participatory citizenship/social justice citizenship?
20. What is the link between the citizenship opportunity at school and home?

Individual Interviews.

Following the group interviews, individual interviews were conducted to uncover more information. Students who shared interesting, profound, or confounding information in the focus group were selected for a further interview to go deeper into exploring the nature of their experience with the citizenship education opportunity. To reduce the impact of the study on student learning time, these interviews were also conducted during lunch hour. This way students did not miss direct instruction or curriculum. I recorded these interviews onto a recording device, so they were transcribed efficiently and with more accurate analysis. The nature of the interviews were also semi-structured.

I started the interviews with more direct and impersonal questions allowing comfort and trust to be established before moving into more direct and personal questions. Indirect, personal, concrete, and cathected question were also asked. The questions unraveled a story and helped develop an understanding about the nature of the student's experiences with citizenship education. Asking about the descriptive, social, and structural elements of the experience aided in creating a balanced question repertoire relating to the topic. I used (some but not all of) the following questions to guide the

group and individual interviews. Not every question was asked, nor in this order, as it was essential to use the flow of conversation as an indicator of what information to pursue as a researcher. The interviews flowed from one question to another, sometimes diverting to another topic, yet always flowing back to the focal point of the specific opportunity. Individual interview questions included:

1. In the group interview, you said that you learned *state what they learned related to personal responsibility/social justice/participation*. Can you tell me more about what you took away from the experience?
2. What caused you to want to be involved in the experience?
3. What sort of lessons or teachings happened in the classroom related to the experience?
4. If it was taught in class, were people encouraged to think critically and ask questions, or did most students just listen and accept the information? If it wasn't talked about or taught, why do you think that is?
5. In your opinion, are there many experiences at school to learn about personal responsibility/participatory citizenship/social justice?
6. What do you think is the most effective way to learn about personal responsibility/participation/social justice?
7. What makes people more involved? Can you talk a little about the competition or incentive factor with regards to these opportunities?

8. When students participate in these types of opportunities is everyone, both genders, all cultures, given an equal opportunity?
9. How did We Day impact the success of the event?
10. Can you explain the role and importance that you think things such as character education and personal responsibility have in elementary school? Do you think these help you outside of school? Why or why not?
11. Can you explain the role and importance that you think things such as organizing events/activities to help the community have? Do you think these will help you outside of school? Why or why not?
12. Can you explain the role and importance that you think things such as knowing about injustice and seeking to eliminate those injustices have in elementary school? Do you think this will help you outside of school? Why or why not?
13. Is there any recognition of diversity with regards to race or culture when participating in this activity? How is this dealt with? Are these things that are usually talked about in class? At school?
14. Is there any recognition of diversity with regards to class and privilege when participating in this activity? How is this dealt with? Are these things that are usually talked about in class? At school?
15. Do you feel that this experience values your culture? Other people's culture? Can you explain how so or how not?

16. Have you learned about privilege and power and the effects of those on society?
17. What would you say the focus is on at school? What types of opportunities do you have more of at school-personal responsibility, participatory or social justice?
18. Do you think current citizenship education in elementary school is sufficient to be developing your sense of personal responsibility, social justice, political participation, and global awareness and action so that you will make a contribution to society?
19. What can educators do to make citizenship education opportunities and experiences engaging and effective?

Data Analysis

Data analysis occurred from the initial mapping of the opportunities present at Westview for developing citizenship through each of the interviews; from question to question, all the way to the coding system used to analyze the final data. While interviews were being transcribed, themes and common ideas in the data revealed themselves. From that, coding categories on a broad level were determined. These included “agency,” “awareness,” “pedagogy,” “practice,” “opportunity,” “process,” “effects,” and “privilege.” From these broad categories, more specific codes such as, “teacher role,” “making a difference,” “seeing is believing,” and “ESL” were used.

Since this study is qualitative, codes were not formally quantified, with the exception of indicating ones with high frequency in order to determine emphasis. This helped indicate which ideas were of significant interest to the participants. Conclusions were drawn from the data, based on the themes that arose most often in the interviews, as well as ones that were not addressed at all. This null curriculum is that which is not directly taught in school, however impacts the nature of learning experiences. “One important dimension is the intellectual processes that schools emphasize and then neglect their implementation and another is the subject matter that is absent in formal curriculum” (McKernan, 2008, p. 35). Whereas the hidden curriculum is concealed or clandestine but existing in school culture and experiences. This hidden curriculum is negotiated through implication and underlying values and tones, rather than direct teaching (McKernan, 2008). This study will explore the hidden curriculum by investigating the authenticity of student experiences with citizenship education, that which the students learn but is not formally planned for. In addition, it will make conclusions concerning the null curriculum by determining what is absent from the citizenship education experiences.

In the findings section, the most salient data is reported in relation to the initial purpose of the study. In a few interviews, students made comments that were not relevant to the question being pursued, possibly due to not understanding the question, or possibly due to not having an opinion and feeling pressure to create one on the spot. In these cases, the information was for the most part not taken into account.

Limitations

It is critical to acknowledge possible limitations of this study, as with any study that engages to explore the interaction of humans with experiences. One possible limitation is researcher bias, since I have a dual role as an administrator and researcher at Westview. Throughout the interviews, I worked to identify possible biases and create questions that would challenge those. I have identified the perspective I bring to the study as an insider, and tried to see how this will affect what I report. As Wolcott (2005) writes, “covet your biases, display them openly, and ponder how they help you formulate the purposes of your investigation and show how you can advance your inquiries” (p. 157). I aimed for, what has been referred to as, “disciplined subjectivity.”

A more logistical limitation of this study is the absence of teacher participation on the nature of citizenship education opportunities at Westview. Preliminary intentions were to interview teachers with parallel questions that were asked of the students. This would have facilitated a comparison of perspectives and provided more information about the teacher’s experiences with citizenship education. For the scope of this research, I decided to focus on the students. The intent of the study was to explore an area that has not been the focus of much research, specifically this age group. Children hold much insight with regards to the reality of citizenship education in schools. As Freeman and Mathison (2009) state, “engaging young people as participants or co-researcher is more than a project: It is a way of repositioning the voices of young people and of sharing inquiry and understanding of each other’s worlds” (p. 175). Beginning with the children’s experiences is a powerful way to evaluate, re-imagine, and re-shape education. Citizenship education is inextricably linked to current conceptions of citizenship in

society; hence, sharing further “inquiry and understanding” can help improve the experience and quality of schooling today.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Citizenship Education Theory, Pedagogy and Practice

In British Columbia, the purpose of the school system is “to enable all learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous, sustainable economy (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 9). Interestingly enough, the terms “democratic and pluralistic” in that mandate were added in 2008, illustrating a fairly recent re-interest and orientation towards pluralism and democracy. In theory, the activities, events, pedagogy and practice within schools should all strive to achieve that mandate. In reality, however, there is usually a discrepancy between theory and practice, and between awareness of pedagogy and the application of pedagogy to achieve best practice. My research began with a comprehensive look at all the opportunities existing within the microcosm of the school that provide students with the prospect of develop citizenship. Citizenship opportunities encompassed in-class curriculum, school wide curriculum, group or individual leadership opportunities for students, and whole school activities. Using my existing knowledge and experiences as a member of the school community I created an initial mapping that portrayed the school as providing a plethora of diverse opportunities to facilitate the development of citizenship. Classifying the school experiences into classroom opportunities, whole school opportunities (voluntary), whole school opportunities (mandatory), student leadership opportunities (individual voluntary), in-class curriculum, and school wide curriculum (Figure 4.1) helped to present a more complete representation about the nature of the citizenship education opportunities offered at Westview. This provided a fitting starting

point from which to explore the reality of citizenship education at Westview.

Subsequent to the initial mapping, I categorized each citizenship opportunity into one (or more) of the three categories of citizenship according the Westheimer and Kahne (2004) framework-personal responsibility, participatory or social justice (Table 4.1). To briefly review, according to Westheimer and Kahne (2004), the personally responsible citizen is responsible, has a good character and is a law abiding member of the community; the participatory citizen actively participates and assumes leadership within the community; and the justice oriented citizen questions and changes systems or structures when they reproduce injustice. Thoughtful reflection and contemplation was required about where to situate the various opportunities for developing citizenship. I deliberated about which aspects of citizenship, personal responsibility, political participation, or social justice, were chiefly targeted through student participation with each experience.

The personally responsible citizenship opportunities were prominent and more abundant than either participatory or social justice opportunities. Much of the school wide curriculum, including signs around the school, school goals, mission statements and code of conduct, predominantly teaches students to be responsible for themselves within the school community. Although the school wide curriculum, such as the Westview Code of Conduct and mission statement, clearly articulates that diversity and safety are basic rudiments, there is little to no questioning of established systems or structures, which would qualify it for developing social justice citizenship. Similarly, class routines/expectations, character education and hallway practices each emphasize imparting students with a chance to learn how to follow rules and be a “good” member of

the community. Halloween for Hunger, garbage duty rotation, the Vow of Silence, toonie drive, Sierra Leone bake sale, the food bank drive, and the winter clothing drive, each provided an opportunity for the entire student body to help with a particular cause, thus demonstrating volunteerism during a time in need and evolving as personally responsible citizens. There were several other opportunities that taught worthwhile information about diversity, stereotypes, homophobia, or other social justice topics; however, the format generally was transmission of information through presentations that had minimal student involvement. These were Pink Day speakers, anti-bullying presentations, Chinese New Year activities, Children of the Street talks, and paralympic speakers. The opportunities, although related to social justice topics, focused mainly on the importance of caring for oneself, others and the community, not challenging structures that propagate injustice, such as abandonment of inner city school programs or companies that promote child exploitation. Lastly, individual student leadership opportunities such as equipment monitor, intramural referee, office monitor, and crossing guards were categorized under personally responsible citizenship and participatory citizenship because the students involved in these activities volunteer to participate and lend a hand in the school community, and are concurrently developing personal responsibility.

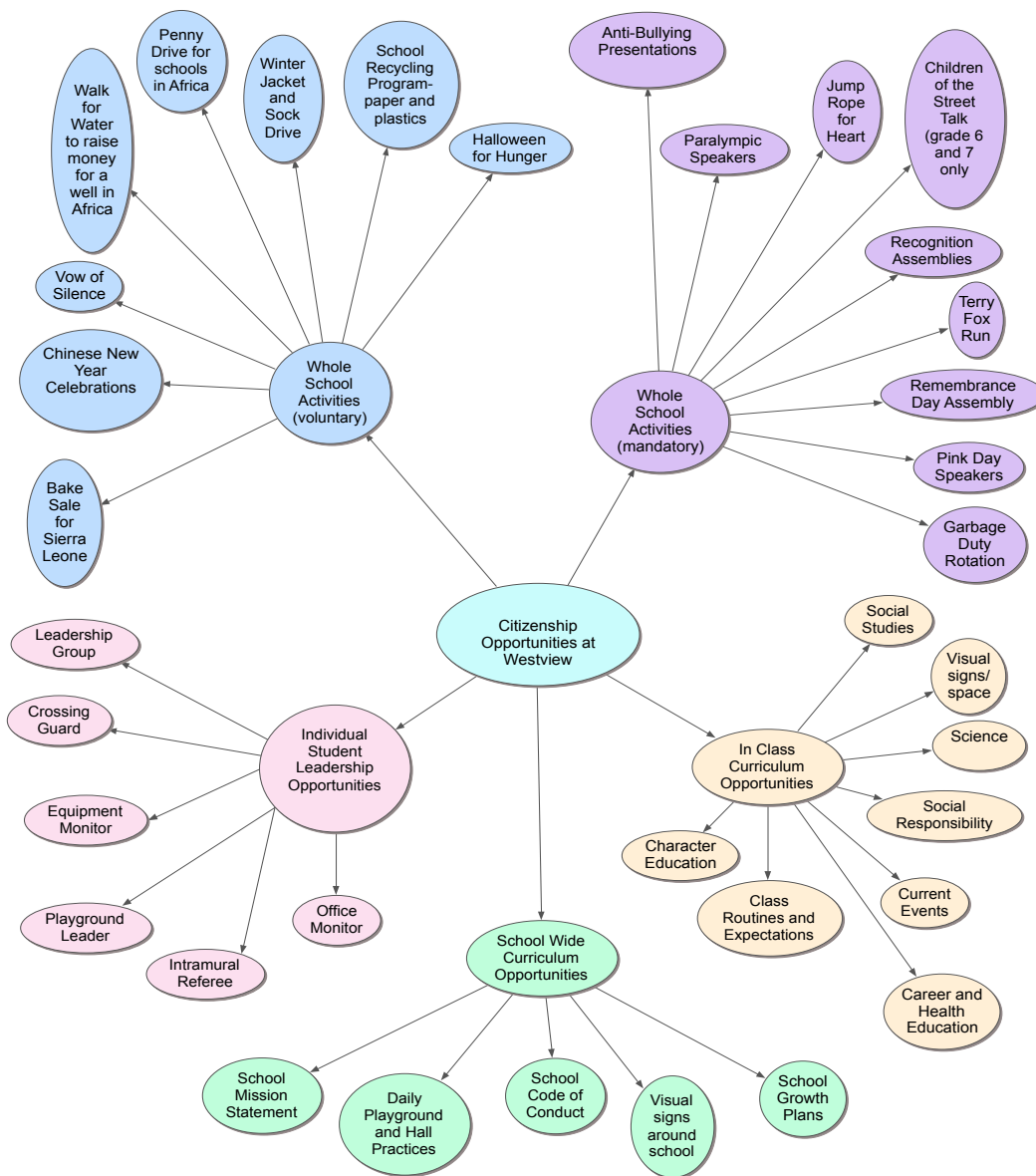
The opportunities I categorized under participatory citizenship were ones in which students assumed an active role in the organization and implementation of the experience. The Vow of Silence, Pink Day, winter clothing drive, bake sale for Sierra Leone, and Halloween for Hunger, were all opportunities organized by students in the Westview Leadership Group. Although only 20-40 students participated in the organization and planning of the events, these opportunities would not have transpired without the

initiative and follow through of students in leadership group. Crossing guards, office monitors, equipment monitors and intramural referees are loosely placed in this category because, although students are active in the community through their involvement in these opportunities, the actual opportunity would not exist without staff and/or administration organization.

In the category of justice oriented citizenship, I positioned all opportunities which I believed to have potential to help students seek out and address injustice. These activities were usually based on a cause related to a current injustice in the world such as homophobia, inequity in developing countries, child rights or bullying. The Vow of Silence, anti-bullying presentations, Pink Day, Chinese New Year, and the Children of the Street presentation each had potential for developing social justice citizenship at Westview. These opportunities addressed topics of injustice and provided space for possible critique of systems and structures that maintain injustice. Classroom curriculum and current events are also positioned here because I assumed, as Westheimer and Kahne (2004) explain in their description of justice orientation, that the curriculum could be used to “critically assess, social, political and economic structures and see beyond surface causes” (p. 244).

From this initial classification it appeared evident that, at any given time in the school, there is an abundance of opportunities supporting the development of personally responsible citizens, as well a respectable amount of opportunities to advance participatory and social justice citizenship. Surprisingly, following my interviews and thorough data analysis, this initial mapping transformed completely. The frank and thought-provoking student comments and fascinating discussion opened my eyes to the

difference in perception between myself as an educator/researcher and the students who live the experiences. Excitement mingled with some frustration about citizenship education was experienced by the students. The reality, which I will discuss more at length further the study, was that within the school community there is an overwhelming presence of opportunities to develop personally responsible citizens; while participatory citizenship remains set aside for a privileged few, and opportunities to develop authentic social justice citizenship have occasional glimmers of occurrence (Table 4.2). The remainder of this paper will present and examine the data surrounding the nature of citizenship education opportunities at Westview with the hopes of inspiring questions and stimulating discussion to enhance the possibilities for citizenship education.



Created using Inspiration® 9 International English Edition by Inspiration Software®, Inc.

Figure 4.1 Mapping of Citizenship Education Opportunities at Westview

Personally Responsible Citizenship	Participatory Citizenship	Social Justice Citizenship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Signs around school -School code of conduct -School mission statement -School goals -Crossing guards -Equipment monitors -Class routines/expectations -Character education -Hallway practices -Garbage duty rotation -Anti-bullying presentations -Paralympic speakers -Halloween for Hunger -Vow of Silence -Pink Day speakers -Children of the Street talk -Toonie drive volleyball game -Toonie drive pajama day -Bake sale for Sierra Leone -Food bank drive talent show -Classroom curriculum -Winter clothing drive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership group -Vow of Silence -Halloween for Hunger -Pink Day celebrations -Bake sale for Sierra Leone -Winter clothing Drive -Office monitor -Equipment monitor -Crossing guard -Intramural referee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Vow of Silence -Current events -Paralympic speaker -Pink Day celebrations -Chinese New Year celebration -Classroom curriculum-socials/science/career and health education -Children of the Street talk

Table 4.1: Initial classification of citizenship opportunities at Westview Elementary

Personally Responsible Citizenship	Participatory Citizenship	Social Justice Citizenship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Signs around school -School code of conduct -School mission statement -School goals -Crossing guards -Equipment monitors -Class routines/expectations -Character education -Hallway practices -Garbage duty rotation -Anti-bullying presentations -Paralympic speakers -Halloween for Hunger -Vow of Silence -Pink Day speakers -Children of the Street talk -Toonie drive volleyball game -Toonie drive pajama day -Bake sale for Sierra Leone -Food bank drive talent Show -Classroom curriculum -Winter clothing drive -Pink Day celebrations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership group -Vow of Silence -Halloween for Hunger -Bake sale for Sierra Leone -Winter clothing Drive -Anti-bullying presentations -Classroom curriculum -Office monitor -Equipment monitor -Crossing guard -Intramural referee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Anti-bullying presentations/activities

Table 4.2: Final classification of citizenship opportunities at Westview Elementary

Evolution of the Research Questions

The original research questions for this research were:

- What are the opportunities present (in the curriculum) for students to develop citizenship at the elementary school and what is the nature of the student experiences and interactions with those opportunities?
- How do school experiences promote development of the citizenship attributes of personal responsibility, participation, and social justice?

As data collection progressed, and analysis and reflection ensued, these questions transformed into much more than how they began. I quickly realized that my inherent desires to explore the curriculum, in terms of the written, formal, hidden, and null, were grandiose for the purpose of this paper and could be a lifetime of research (which I hope to be able to accomplish). Instead, the focus became the thoughtful, interesting and engaging conversations that revealed a great deal about citizenship education at Westview. Through analysis of the data, the presence and absence of various citizenship education opportunities school wide and in the classroom was enlightening. Another question of student perception about the existing circumstances with regards to citizenship education at Westview Elementary School emerged. Contrary to my prior beliefs, the opportunities that did exist were experienced much differently than I had imagined. Partly due to this factor, I did one final group interview with all the students who had not been interviewed twice. The purpose of this interview was to share my analysis of the data thus far, and to bequeath the opportunity for the students to confirm, negate and comment on my conceptions and observations. In addition, due to the focus in

the previous interviews on the lack of opportunities for developing participatory citizenship and authentic social justice citizenship, it was critical to flush out reasons for the void. The reality of the opportunities school wide and how they either promote, negate, or ignore the development of the traits of personally responsible citizenship, participatory citizenship and social justice citizenship was what emerged.

What Kind of Citizen?

Citizenship is unquestionably one of the most widely stated purposes of schooling. It would be hard to find a teacher, administrator, school board trustee, or Minister of Education who does not believe that the development of citizenship plays an important role in K-12 education. As presented in earlier sections, both local and provincial goals and mission statements, all utter citizenship as a fundamental element edified in their institutions. Westview Elementary states its goal, “to increase student awareness, understanding and demonstration of citizenship” on the inside cover of the agenda that every one of the 500 students receives. However, the question arises about what types of citizenship are being developed? How is this being done? What is the nature of these opportunities and what impact do they have on students’ experiences?

The Westheimer and Kahne (2004) framework proved extremely useful during the interviews to help the students understand the types of citizenship under inquiry. This was explained to them as one model and way of looking at citizenship. Interestingly enough, prior to the interviews, the students appeared to have thought very little about the influence of the citizenship education experiences, that they did or did not participate in, either on themselves or as the school as a whole. Each group interview and subsequent

individual interviews, honed in on extracting information surrounding a different opportunity at Westview for developing citizenship, either personal responsibility, participation or social justice. As the researcher, during each interview I provided the students with a characterization of each type of citizenship, along with some sample activities that may be included in each respective group (Table 2.3). The final group interview discussed each type of citizenship and corresponding examples. Students were able to consider the role of the three types of citizenship education, as well as to think broadly about the overall picture of citizenship at Westview. Throughout the entire process, the students themselves went through a reflective journey about the opportunities offered to them on a daily basis, which often they passively partake in. The tangible experiences and stories exposed about each citizenship education opportunity are intricate and complex, each painting a picture of the nature of citizenship education at Westview in relation to personal responsibility, political participation and social justice. The following narratives, based on student responses and my own researcher field observations, provide vivid illustrations of the complexity and dynamic nature of citizenship education at Westview.

The Personally Responsible Citizen

This was no ordinary Halloween, that revolved around dressing up and collecting copious amounts of candy, on which to gorge for weeks. No, this Halloween was going to be different for Nina, Grace, Makayla, Ellie and Jake. They made the decision to collect food, instead of candy this year, for an event called Halloween for Hunger, supporting the Greater Vancouver Food Bank. In leadership group, where students organized Halloween for Hunger at Westview Elementary School,

Ellie and Makayla worked to make a presentation for the younger students explaining what Halloween for Hunger was and how people could get involved. Later that day, standing up in front of the primary classes with excitement and pride, they invited the students to participate by collecting donations for the food bank instead (or simultaneously with) collecting candy. "You show your support for the food bank by bringing in cans of food," explained Ellie, as she enthusiastically distributed bags for the students to take with them Trick or Treating for Halloween for Hunger. Ellie, wanting to provide her neighbours with advance notice of the cause, went around the area prior to the big night and put slips of paper into people's mailboxes notifying them that they would be asked to donate food on Halloween.

That night, following the rituals of make-up application and costume donning, the students all eagerly went out collecting food, and candy with their friends. Although slightly nervous at first, Ellie was ecstatic when the community members were very keen to donate food. The atmosphere of fun but competition was palpable as all the students endeavored to collect more cans than their friends.

The next day, students from Westview deposited the food donations in a classroom and the leadership group counted them as they poured in. "How much did you collect?" asked Jake competitively to his friends, as the cans began to arrive. The students compared their finally tally of cans and Jake gleamed at collecting more than his friends. "There are so many cans of food!" shouted Ellie in delight. You could see happiness gushing from the students as they each dropped of their

collections. Grace noticed that those who chose not to participate were even a little disappointed. "I will participate next year," exclaimed a student walking by as she saw all the hype. "There are so many cans of food here," stated Ellie. "This was even more rewarding than I thought it would be," added Makayla. "Helping others makes you feel better," Nina added to the conversation. "Yeah, when you actually donate food to the food bank, you feel better," confirmed Ellie. "Also, you are already going out to buy things, so it is easy for people to get one extra can of food," Nina commented. "This was a big event and my favourite time of the year. I usually only think about my costume but this time I was thinking about more than that," Grace explained. Grace forgot to bring back her cans on the first two days and quickly felt compelled to bring in more, post questioning by her friends about how many she had. "I will have at least 20 tomorrow," she boasted, knowing she should probably ask her parents for a few more to beef up her contribution. The leadership students smiled and thanked everyone for their donations. They would be announcing the number of boxes collected over the PA later that day. The sponsor teacher, Mrs. Blight would call to have the donations picked up by The Greater Vancouver Food Bank. Nina, Grace, Makayla, Ellie and Jake were in agreement that this Halloween the students at Westview developed an awareness about poverty.

This scene emblemizes what I observed happening at Westview, integrated with direct comments students made during the interviews, during Halloween for Hunger. This experience, Halloween for Hunger, was meant to exemplify an ideal opportunity for students at Westview to learn about being personally responsible citizens. According to

Westheimer and Kahne (2004), the personally responsible citizen acts responsibly in his/her community, volunteers in time of need, obeys laws, recycles, works and pays taxes. The core assumption of this type of citizenship is that “to solve social problems and improve society, citizens must have good character; they must be honest, responsible, and law-abiding members of the community” (Westheimer and Westheimer, 2003, p. 52). Ironically, the sample action given by Westheimer and Kahne is contributing to a food drive, which is the purpose of Halloween for Hunger. Themes I identified encompassing Halloween for Hunger, as well as other opportunities for developing personally responsible citizenship, were student desire and sense of responsibility to help others, the presence of agency, and an overall school focus on developing personally responsible citizens.

If assessed according to the Westheimer and Kahne framework (2004), the majority of the student population at Westview and the community members, demonstrated personal responsibility through participation in the Halloween for Hunger event. Furthermore, a few of the students Ellie and Makayla, who were in leadership group and helped organize the event, also developed participatory citizenship. The students communicated no impression of acquiring social justice citizenship through participation. Halloween for Hunger was a voluntary opportunity for students at Westview. Students in leadership group went around to the different classes and notified the rest of the school about the activity of collecting food to help people who are hungry. They also passed out bags to students for collections, counted cans when they came in throughout the next week, and made announcements regarding the number of cans collected. The only teacher directly involved with Halloween for Hunger was Mrs.

Blight, the leadership group sponsor teacher. Halloween for Hunger took place in October and students thought it was a good activity to get a large amount of the school involved in a relatively easy way. Student responses about what they learned from participating related mainly to helping other, hence personal responsibility. "I learned to help others" (Makayla). Nina's comments confirmed the theme of helping others and demonstrated the importance of an aspect of fun for some of the students. "Yeah I learned sometimes it is fun to help others" (Nina). "I realized that people are happy to help when you ask them" (Grace). Each of the students in the interviews communicated the feeling that participation in the event was a positive experience that caused them to feel they made a difference in someone else's life.

It was super easy and fun. All we had to do was to tell the kids what to do and pass out bags. Then we waited and collected the cans and counted how many boxes we collected. Mrs. Blight had it picked up. (Nina)

Students in this group were proud of the organization and getting the younger students involved. They felt a sense of accomplishment from the event.

The actual organization and successful execution of the Halloween for Hunger event was credited to the leadership group at Westview. "Leadership group definitely at this school was the ones that were making the posters and reminding the teachers about it and making sure everyone knows" (Grace). The students indisputably perceived the opportunity as a result of the hard work of leadership group. The inspiration for the idea for Halloween for Hunger came from We Day, a massive event held at Rogers arena sponsored by Free the Children. The role of the teacher sponsor, Mrs. Blight, was said to

be a meeting facilitator and then to call and get the cans collected. I also witnessed Mrs. Blight reminding the students to make announcements, handing out bags, and ensuring boxes were out for collecting the donations. In addition, Mrs. Blight initiated the conversations to decide on what local and global cause would be the focus for 2011-2012. Through their organization of this opportunity, the leadership group students involved also developed participatory citizenship.

Westview students demonstrated agency through participating in this event, mainly since it was a voluntary activity and not done together in classes, as is the case with many events at Westview. Agency appeared to develop from motivation to be a “good citizen,” the draw of friends or peer pressure, or the ease and convenience of the act. Although the students did not use the term “good citizen,” the information they presented revealed that participating in the act of Halloween for Hunger was what they ought to do as “good students” (citizens), in essence helping others. This trait of being personally responsible was recognized as desirable by the students in the school community. The students in each of the groups emphasized the importance of being personally responsible at Westview.

Definitely, there are a lot of things we learn about being personally responsible. Some in terms of the environment, such as cleaning up after yourself. But most actually are just like talking to people, being nice to everyone and just trying to help out. (Grace)

Throughout all the data, in each of the groups, students recognized that personal responsibility, in the form of showing respect for others and the environment, helping

others, and being a “good citizen,” was a key component at Westview. Students also cited convenience and ease of participation as a reason why students should have participated. “You are already going out so you can get just one extra can of food” (Nina). “It seemed like really easy for people. Like I mean it sounds terrible, like convenience, but it is a lot easier to help out” (Grace). Student awareness that often people do not participate in opportunities that involve more work or people going out of their way, shows the children’s awareness of the self-interested nature in society. “A lot of students may help out but say. I live far away or I am busy” (Ellie). Each of the students agreed with this. Although students communicated an idealistic vision of Halloween for Hunger, they also acknowledged the reality that not all students participated or even cared to participate.

Helping others: a plinith of personal responsibility. At Westview there is an underlying value that helping others is part of being personally responsible, regardless of motivation, understanding, or critique of the actual situation. This sense of helping others was communicated by the students as embedded in most of the activities they take part in at school. The staff and community members were said to expect students to be responsible and help those who are less able, less fortunate or are being put down. There was a sense that it is an expectation to help others, as it is the “right” thing to do. This gives the impression that doing the “right” thing is expected, even if there is not true awareness about those you are helping or why they need help. This relates to the idea that often citizenship is glazed over as a universal term. Personal responsibility appears to be a universal expectation at Westview. Vinson (2006), states that anti-oppressive citizenship education must, at a minimum emphasize both citizenship knowledge and

action. He argues that unreflective practice does not make anyone a “good citizen,” nor does knowledge without purposeful experience (Vinson, 2006).

In speaking with the students at Westview there is a tone of positivity and hopefulness in humanity. These students have a strong sense that they should help others. There is no question that they feel it is their responsibility to help others, to clean up their own garbage and to follow the rules and regulations of the school community. These students, who mostly come from places of privilege, evidently have a desire to help others and do “good.” One example of students helping others, is the inclusive actions of the students towards their special needs peers. In an intermediate class, the students treat one of the ministry designated autistic students as a full member of their class community. They include her in group activities and assist her when she needs help. She is not only accepted as an integral part of that classroom, but the students stand up for her rights as someone entitled to equality. This personally responsible citizenship is not unnoticed by others and helps model inclusion. It is important to mention this, because although the specific awareness of underlying issues may be absent, authentic action can be a positive first step towards enhancing school citizenship.

Classroom connections. Westview Elementary places personal responsibility on a plinth as a building block for student development. Teacher emphasis on personal responsibility was clearly indicated in the interviews. When asked about personal responsibility, Grace said, “It seems like very important to our teachers. Our teachers definitely make sure we know about how what we do effects other people and the environment.” Apparently, many projects are related to personal responsibility. Students explained that some social studies and science projects have an element of personal

responsibility, such as their Environmental Impact Project. “A lot of our projects are related to personal responsibility” (Ellie). Within the context of the whole school, it appears that in order to teach students about personal responsibility there is a focus on rules, for which there are often consequences when broken. “We were allowed to sit outside at the beginning of the year and it was a privilege and we were supposed to make sure we kept it clean. We didn’t keep our promise and now we have to eat inside” (Nina). “The rules and expectations are very important to the teachers” (Grace). Each of the groups emphasized that, even in grade seven, there is still a focus on how you should behave and the rules. This comes along with consequences for not following the rules or being personally responsible, which also could be a reason for agency. “Sometimes if students are not following the rules, they will get garbage duty” (Grace). Most of the school and class activities circled back to development of personal responsibility.

The school messages about personal responsibility, such as signs around the school, mission statements, and announcements, were said to have little impact on developing personal responsibility to the students. “The signs are pretty much useless. If someone is going to litter or vandalize a sign is not going to stop them” (Nolan). The students communicated that in order to take action students have to be more than told, but rather a connection has to be made. “When you are just told something, it is very hard to picture. You have to see it to believe it” (Andrea). “Yeah, you don’t realize how serious something is until you see it. For example it is hard to picture people walking and going to get dirty water but when you see it you understand it is real” (Ellie). This reference was made to the campaign, Walk for Water, to help raise awareness about the lack of access to clean drinking water in Africa. Seeing is believing was a broader theme, spanning

beyond the scope of personal responsibility, which will also be addressed later in the paper.

Other school wide activities reported by students to foster personally responsible citizenship were Jump Rope for Heart, the Terry Fox Run, recycling programs, and Pink Day (anti-bullying day). The students felt that activities such as putting garbage in the garbage can, being kind, including others, and offering to help others were important things related to personal responsibility. Garbage duty, which is a mandatory activity that all classes are supposed to participate in over the year through weekly rotations, was not done or even known about by some of the students. "I think we are supposed to, but that is not happening" (Nolan). "What is garbage duty? I never actually knew what it was. We haven't done it once this year, have we?" (Alex). Janine, Nolan, Ellie, Jonathan simultaneously replied "Nooo." This was interesting due to my perception of garbage duty as one of the key things that classes participate in together to help with environmental awareness and developing personal responsibility. Apparently, my acuity as an administrator with respect to the effect of garbage duty (AKA community beautification) was skewed. Other activities that the whole school participates in, but with their classes, are the paralympic athlete presentations, and environmental awareness performances, as well as various assemblies and whole school presentations. Overall, there was a sense that the emphasis on rules, procedures and developing student's character was heavy in the primary grades. "How you treat people is a key aspect of personal responsibility taught. Like a sense of respect definitely. Just we are kind of taught to care about things that we wouldn't know much about otherwise" (Grace). Some of the teachers were said to base their classroom procedures around virtues, and

behaviour reinforcement systems, especially in the primary grades. Students are taught to develop a connection to being a “good citizen” and develop a desire to follow expectations and school rules. It would appear that the school provides many opportunities where the students are expected to participate with their classes to develop personal responsibility.

A reoccurring idea that arose from the interviews with this group, was the idea of seeing beyond oneself. The idea that Halloween for Hunger was an opportunity to shift past the individual self-gratification focus of Halloween and make it something which will benefit others was highlighted by many students. “You understand that you are not just going out there for yourself and you feel better about yourself. You know that other people will be happy” (Nina). Students explained that because of Halloween for Hunger, they felt better than if they were just going to collect candy. They felt as if they had developed an awareness and were helping others rather than just oneself. “I felt like a better person, than if I was just collecting candy” (Ellie). Some of the students compared their own privileges (which will be addressed later), with the need to help others. “We get candy all the time, and I think that other people, they deserve food” (Nina). The students sense of responsibility to help others pinpoints a sense of moral responsibility within citizenship education opportunities to “help others.” Albeit passionate about their answers and strong feelings that helping others is the right thing to do, there was no clear knowledge about who these “others” are and exactly why they need “our” help. When I asked who the “others” were, students responded that they were poor people, hobos, or people with less than us. This demonstrates the idea that those living in poverty have to fit one universal mold of the stereotypical “homeless person,” when in fact, many people

in Canada live in poverty; however, they may sometimes happen to have a roof over their head and shoes on their feet. In 2007, child poverty in British Columbia was 13% (Collin & Jensen, 2009). The students who participated in this activity definitely saw beyond themselves; however, not as far to have a clear vision of why “others” needed their help.

The depth of learning about personal responsibility. Although participants thought that Westview students learned about poverty from this experience, when I asked them if they discussed causes of poverty or reason why some people in society are in poverty and some are not, they said no. I also questioned whether they had the opportunity to learn about structures and systems, such as gentrification, that keep some groups in the margins. None of the students were aware of these processes and structures. They felt that the event did not “go deep” into issues of poverty. Although the students unquestionably made a difference through their participation in this event, whether true learning about poverty occurred appears doubtful. I questioned students about the depth of their learning in relation to Halloween for Hunger. I asked about whether they were given the opportunity to critically discuss issues of poverty. The intention was to find out what level of understanding and analysis took place about the issues related to Halloween for Hunger, such as poverty, and homelessness. “Yeah some people just cannot afford it but others they just, it is not their first priority to get” (Nina). “We have all taken into account that some people don’t have food so we brought in food. We get that, but we didn’t really talk about or go into greater detail about why. It was more on the backburner” (Grace). The focus was evidently on collecting food and taking action, not on understanding why there are people whose basic needs are not met and the forces in society that make it challenging for improving quality of life. Nor was there exploration

about the differential experiences between people in places of privilege versus those who live in poverty. As a result of student curiosity from my questioning, we had a conversation about processes such as gentrification, that make it difficult for some people to overcome poverty. The students also asked why the government doesn't do anything, which was an interesting question. A brief discussion about social safety nets and who is responsible for taking care of people's needs ensued. Unfortunately, as a result of time the conversation was brief. This is exemplar evidence that these grade seven students are in a position to learn to question systems and structures and expand themselves as socially just citizens. Overall, the activity Halloween for Hunger was positively experienced by all the participants and they felt like they made a difference by helping others, which meets criteria for developing personally responsible citizenship.

The Participatory Citizen

Riiiiinnnggg Riiiiinnnggg. The 12:15 bell goes off, signifying the long awaited 45-minute lunch hour. Students in grades five to seven, trample into room A 205 lunch bags in hand, ready to have their leadership meeting. Mrs. Blight calls for the students attention and outlines what needs to get done today. On the board is a list of jobs-posters, speeches, PowerPoint presentation and corresponding student names listed under each job. Students are excitedly preparing to organize an assembly to share information about some of the needs in Sierra Leone such as clean water and schools for girls, causes they have selected to support this year. One group of students is working on a PowerPoint presentation. Another group of students is planning to show a video from TED Talks, Drew Dudley, on everyday leadership. The students want to hold an assembly to try to raise awareness in the

school about what each student can do to help make a difference. At the beginning of the year, they signed on with Free the Children to support one local and one global cause. This was kicked off by the We Day event. The money raised then gets sent to Free the Children who distribute it to those in need. Eliza, Hilary and Andrea, three students in leadership group explain “the four pillars” as a basis for the events. Hilary lists that, “the four pillars are water, alternative income, health and education.” Eliza expands and adds, “education is one of our four pillars. It is not just like math education, it is how to prevent these problems from happening. You can teach people how to sustain their income and food sources.” As the three girls continue their preparations for the upcoming assembly Andrea comments, “leadership group helps other countries and it draws the school and community together around a same cause.”

Throughout each of the interviews, leadership group came up as an indispensable factor at Westview Elementary School in order for opportunities to develop citizenship to be conceived, implemented and to successfully (or not successfully) transpire. All the students in the interviews placed great value on the work that students in leadership do, even if they were not themselves part of the group. Leadership group at Westview is a voluntary activity which organizes and carries out many citizenship related opportunities. For the 2011-2012 school year, the leadership group organized events such as Pink Day, penny drives, Toonie Tuesday, spirit days, Halloween for Hunger, winter clothing drive, the Vow of Silence, food drive talent show, and bakes sales to raise money for the Sierra Leone project. Leadership group at Westview is an example of participatory citizenship. According to Westheimer and Kahne, the participatory citizen is an active member of

organizations that helps to improve the community. He/she knows strategies for accomplishing collective tasks and organizes community efforts to help others, society, environment and the economy. The core assumption of this type of citizen is “to solve social problems and improve society, citizens must actively participate and take leadership positions within established systems and community structures” (Westheimer & Kahne, 2003 p 52).

The students in leadership group activity engage in leadership positions at Westview in an effort to improve the school community in a variety of ways. When asked to explain the purpose of leadership group, students said:

- “It is the students who are the ones that set an example for the younger ones.” (Andrea)
- “You do things like help around the school and make other people’s lives easier.” (Hilary)
- “It is inspiring how little things you do can make a difference and how passionate people are.” (Eliza)
- “I will be more aware of what I can do and that I should do to be responsible and stuff like that. And set an example for other people.” (Hilary)

There was a sense that without leadership group there would not be the same opportunities offered for developing citizenship at Westview; Namely because such a large majority of the events that facilitate citizenship development are organized through leadership group, but also because the students comments were compellingly supportive. “Without leadership there isn’t really a reason to do stuff. Without it I wouldn’t know what I could do to help” (Eliza). Without the presence of leadership group and the teacher who volunteers to sponsor leadership group, responsibility would lie in the hands of

classroom teachers to organize citizenship education opportunities for the students.

A lot of kids want to make a difference but if they don't have leadership group then they won't have anything to do. They can organize by themselves I guess but if they don't have a group of people and teacher guiding them then it isn't as easy.
(Hilary)

Leadership group was viewed as a safe place where students could share ideas and have support from others. "You have a lot of support for backing up your ideas as well. We actually believe in what we are doing in leadership" (Andrea). The nature of leadership group is to provide students who want to volunteer their own time, usually lunch hours, a venue to help organize events to make a difference. Some of the students attend We Day and attending leadership group is part of their commitment. Other students, attend for various other reasons. "In leadership group you have a lot more opportunities and connections to foundations and shelters and stuff. You can get information from the people and then you plan your activities in a structured way" (Andrea). Many of the students felt that without leadership group there would be many ideas and no way to execute those ideas and make them successful. "If we didn't have leadership group a lot of people who have great ideas would not be able to share them. They would be it would be way harder to take action" (Hilary). Although varied in motives for being part of leadership group, each of the students expressed the value it has had on their experiences at Westview.

The level of involvement in leadership group seemed to vary from person to person; however, each member played a role in helping organize events to develop

citizenship. “Some people in leadership don’t say anything. It is up to people if they actually want to speak” (Hilary). “Yeah, A lot of people who don’t speak up when we are debating, well they do smaller things, like set up for events, make posters and stuff” (Eliza). “The environment is that you can say anything and people will support you and expand on your ideas. It is just a matter of doing it” (Andrea). It would appear that all students have a role in leadership group, some as the voice and the idea generators, and some as the smaller task doers. In addition, the leadership group is only open to students in grade five, six and seven and only grade seven students were selected to attend the We Day event this year.

The data analysis of leadership group revealed many complex and thought-provoking themes. The question of democracy and the presence of it in leadership group, connections leadership group has with the classroom, We Day, and the selection process for leadership opportunities, all appeared as themes from interviews around the participatory citizenship education experience, leadership group.

Democracy? or not? The question of whether participation in an opportunity such as leadership group prepares students to participate actively in organizations that further democratic society is significant. Parker (2001), conceives that democracy is not an achievement but something that must be continually aspired to. Through my interviews and conversations with the students I explored if their experiences with participatory citizenship education would lead them to, as Parker termed “enlightened democratic engagement.” It was interesting to note that students did talk about some democratic processes taking place at the elementary school level, such as leadership group. Processes such as brainstorming about ideas to make a difference and voting on

those ideas are common in leadership group. “We did a lot of brainstorming. We still have to choose our local cause but we did pinpoint the country we are helping. We did a vote on that” (Eliza). “After brainstorming, once we vote on our ideas, then Mrs. Blight will ask who wants to do which job, posters, essays or speeches usually. Then people volunteer and that is how it gets to proceed to almost being finished” (Hilary). It is undecided, however, if the nature of the opportunity to participate in leadership group teaches students about democracy in a way that relates to society and furthers them to contribute critically to democracy. When asked if the students talked about democratic processes in leadership group, the response was that the focus was limited to specific Westview related things.

- “No, we just talk about school things.” (Jonathan)
- “We just talk about what we can do. We don’t talk about what is going on in the world.”(Nolan)
- “Yeah, we just talk about things in our school and community.” (Eliza)
- “Not really, our focus is definitely the action, we don’t have much time to talk about the other stuff.” (Hilary)

On a whole, the time in leadership group was spent planning events for the school and working towards their local and global cause. Students acknowledged that there was not very much time for discussion in leadership group. Time was identified as a barrier by many of the students and given as a possible reason why there was not an opportunity to discuss democracy, both in leadership group and in the classroom. The students did highlight one teacher, not related to leadership group, who “took the time” to talk about

rallying and political movements. This stood out in their mind as a memorable experience, which arose in them a sense of excitement about standing up for what you believe in. Democracy means different things to different people and has those meanings have evolved(or de-volved) over time. This fundamental idea is one avenue which could be explored in order to open the conceptions of democratic citizenship.

Lack of and poor citizenship education has possibly contributed to not only an uninformed, but an apathetic citizenry. In order to reconstruct schooling to be more democratic, the structures and processes for decision making need to change. As Kohli says, "it requires us to teach about democracy in a more truthful, more complete way" (Kohli, 2000, p. 35). Democratic theory and practice in classrooms, as explained by Kohli, is usually represented by liberal traditions, whose orientation is as a system that protects the rights of individuals. However, students need to be encouraged to ask critical questions of how our systems are portrayed and encouraged to ask about the rights and responsibilities of multinational corporations. More than the validation of difference is required in order to engage in critical democratic pedagogy to create change. Educators also need to offer processes for getting over the effects of oppression and marginalization, which are generated by difference. "One of the major stumbling blocks in efforts to create democratic schools and society has been the tendency (even of progressive educators) to fall prey to the ideology of neutrality, that is, the belief that advocacy in teaching is to be avoided" (Ross, 2000, p. 45). The students at Westview should have opportunities to develop participatory citizenship; simultaneously, leadership group could include more education on political structures and systems. The lack of teaching about political citizenship at Westview is, for whatever reasons, a stumbling

block in creating a truly democratic school that fosters participatory citizenship.

Recently, in a meeting at Westview, where teachers were sharing their curriculum plans for term one, a teacher stated, "I don't teach about politics in my classroom. That is just my personal choice" (Mr. Edgemont). Why can't you teach about politics? Should children not be taught about politics and be daring and brave enough to question systems and structures? There will be little hope for a citizenry characterized by "enlightened democratic engagement," if educators stand in the neutral zone and leave out political components of democratic citizenship education.

Classroom connections. The events organized by leadership group appear to be somewhat isolated and not integrated into or enhanced in the classroom. The data shows that students believe that in the classroom it is more, "just talk" and in leadership group, "we actually try to do something rather than just talk" (Alex). "People join leadership group to make a difference in school. In class there isn't much of a focus like that. We are supposed to focus on our studies. Like math, and Language Arts" (Janine). When questioned about the connection between the school activities that develop citizenship and the classroom, students felt strongly that there was little connection. Through all the students' comments it was implied that this was disappointing to them, especially to the students who worked to organize events, such as the Vow of Silence, Halloween for Hunger and presentations in front of the whole school. "For Halloween for Hunger, Mrs. Gibson would write it on the board but not talk about it" (Janine). "My teacher will tell us what we are going to see and then when we come back say it is time for math" (Eliza). "We don't have time to do much and it isn't what the teacher thinks is important. We can share what we are doing with the class but that is about it" (Hilary). The students who

were involved in devoting time and energy to the events sponsored by leadership group said that they felt little support in the classroom for these activities. This lack of connection between the classroom and school citizenship opportunities causes a disjuncture and likely a reduction in the level of citizenship developed from the activity. If the activity is not valued enough to have a role in the classroom, there is less chance that other students will also see much value in it.

We Day.

Going to programs like We Day and being involved in leadership, it changes you a lot because you start thinking more about other people rather than just about your life and what is going on. It is really helpful actually. (Andrea).

Thousands of students yell motivational chants as they enter Rogers Arena on We Day. Soon the lights will go dim and dancers, politicians and activists will take the stage convincing the students that they have the power to make a difference. Schools that attend must sign on to commit to one global and one local cause for the year. In order to receive free tickets for the following year, schools must fill in two reports updating Free The Children on the status of their goals and fundraising initiatives. Backed by large sponsors such as Disney Club Penguin, Telus and Air Canada, We Day is Free the Children's annual "social justice event" (Free the Children, 2011). Drawing the interest of students with media attention and performances by famous artists such as BareNaked ladies, K'naan and Hedley, students all vie to earn a ticket. Other speakers such as Spencer West, Rick Hansen and Al Gore each promote to the students a vision that they can achieve their dreams and make a difference in the world.

In each of the interviews, students mentioned We Day as a source of inspiration

for them. I probed and challenged them, attempting to have my thoughts validated that the draw was a result of the bands, music, and having a day off school. The students pushed back and emphasized that We Day made things real. One of the repeated examples was a male speaker who used to be a child soldier. He used signs to convey his message instead of speaking and the students saw this as very powerful. Being in the presence, even amongst 18 000 other youth, of this child soldier made the cause of why some do not have a voice more clear. In an individual interview with Andrea, she said the following about We Day: "For me it was the way people spoke and they really showed their passion for a lot of topics and I think that it is the thing that changed me as a person and a lot of other students I know." "This year you had a to write a paragraph about why you wanted to go to We Day and what you would do if you got to go" (Eliza). Students who wanted to attend We Day wrote the following (excerpts only shown), which were posted on the leadership bulletin board at Westview:

There is no other way to describe We Day, other than, "life changing." It has embedded upon me that the simplest of actions can make a massive impact in our world. We Day has given me the tools I need to make a difference in the world.
(Hilary)

It is a truly inspiring day at Rogers Arena. It will really make you think about the poor children in Africa. It is not just one day, either. We help all year long locally and globally. Whether adopting a village in Africa or supporting people locally with food drives, we are breaking the cycle of poverty. We Day teaches us that together, we can make a difference. (Craig)

...from the moment our mayor Gregor Robertson, began speaking, I was really inspired. He talked about how one person who was homeless managed to work her way off the street. Gregor said we should work towards ending homelessness and help other people do what that woman did. (Shawn)

It is not hard to see the common theme that was presented at We Day...a theme of personal empowerment and that all problems can be solved if people try. This sense of idealism is not something which is hidden; We Day shirts reading *Shameless Idealist*, are sold in mass at the event. The message is promoting an attitude in children that it is possible to make change. Hope must be communicated in order for children to even think about getting involved in school activities and in society as citizens. Idealism, however, does not come without its evils. Without truly investigating the root and causes of problems, often cycles continue to exist and oppression, poverty, marginalization, and abuse find ways to breed. Children should not necessarily be subject to doom or gloom mentality; however, grade six to twelve students, capable of understanding more complex issues, have the right to question systems and structures and understand the root of problems on a critical level. Often with We Day the students become so focused on carrying out a local and global cause that they don't stop to question why they are supporting that cause.

The Westview Leadership Group of 2011-2012 applied for a "Big Dreamers Award" through the philanthropic organization Free the Children. Big Dreamer awardees were provided a financial award that matched their donation dollar for dollar to the Adopt a Village country and project of their choice, which was Sierra Leone for Westview Elementary. Here is what the Big Dreamer Application that students at Westview

asserted:

We have almost 500 students in our school, but Leadership group consists of 60 or more students eager to make a difference. The Leadership Team tries to involve the entire school as much as possible, raising awareness about local and global issues. Educating all the students at Westview is very important to us, everybody should learn about what is going on and what they can do to help. We are fortunate enough to not have to worry about where our next meals are coming from and if our water is clean enough to drink. We remind all students in our school to not take things for granted, many people are not as lucky as we are. We are motivated, diverse, multi-cultural, willing to learn, helpful and full of energy and enthusiasm. However different we are, we are able to come together united by a common goal, to help make a difference. Everyone participates in events such as beach clean ups, spirit days, food drives, and other activities involving the entire student body. We are big dreamers at Westview and hope that you will share in our dream”

Reading the previous paragraph one is moved by the student’s recognition of diversity and ability to unite on the common goal of making a difference in the lives of others. It is striking that the students use terms such as diverse and multi-cultural in their application. The population at Westview is diverse in terms of having representation from a multiplicity of different cultures; however, there is little diversity in terms of class and privilege. The students acknowledge this privilege in their application, which exposes reflection and awareness, however, there are no concrete examples of the effects of this privilege, nor are there any reasons why beaches need cleaning up and food drives need to be organized. The Westview Leadership group was successfully awarded the Big Dreamer Award. Their fundraising for Sierra Leone, of 1600 dollars, was matched by Free the Children , for a total contribution of 3200 dollars, to the Sierra Leone Adopt a

Village Program. Leadership group has taken an acceptable first step in identifying issues. The next step is to squarely and courageously face the reasons why these issues exist in society.

In order for leadership group, and We Day, to be a long term effective experience, there has to be commitment from the school to go deeper and bravely tackle the topics that are sensitive, and challenging. This possible citizenship, as Tupper (2006) entitles it, demands understanding the factors that both foster and inhibit full social, economic, cultural, and political participation. It implies that students need to understand and critically question the world in order to ameliorate oppression and develop authentic spaces for meaning (Tupper, 2006).

Selection process and opportunity...the lucky and not so lucky. I investigated whether or not all students at Westview have equal opportunity to participate in leadership group and develop participatory citizenship. “There is definitely opportunity for everyone, it is just whether people want to or not” (Eliza). In both Eliza’s and the other students’ perceptions, the situation was fairly cut and dry. The opportunity to participate exists; however, students must be motivated to join and follow through on their own initiative. In addition, it was revealed that in previous years some students were hand picked by teachers to be part of leadership group. When I asked why some kids were picked Janine explained, “the teacher said it was because we were leaders.” I followed this by probing if the students felt there were certain types of students that were not picked to be in leadership group:

- “Students that just don’t care.” (Nolan)
- “Ones that don’t listen and get in trouble.” (Alex)

- “Students that aren’t responsible.” (Janine)
- “Ones that are shy and don’t really talk much.” (Hilary)

Interestingly enough, when I asked the students if they felt those students were given a chance to develop participatory citizenship, the answer was “no actually.” The participants felt that there were not opportunities for students lacking leadership qualities; however, to the leaders this was advantageous. Eliza commented, “But if they(students that are not leaders) are selected, the chance is lost for someone else who actually wants to help and participate.” To which all the students chorally responded, “Yeah!” The reasons for this lack of equality of access to leadership group seems logical, however, perpetuates exclusion of certain students. In turn, this can eliminate opportunities for those who are in need of developing leadership skills. In addition, when students who lack English fluency or are shy, are left out of this group, they are therefore not taking part in the organization of various activities and structures at the school. As Tupper’s (2006) critical citizenship paradigm suggests, it is important for educators to avoid using citizenship education approaches that are not accessible to some students or that inadvertently marginalize others.

Effects of participating in leadership are positive and numerous, each ultimately meeting the definition for participatory citizenship. “I will be more aware of what I can do and what I should be responsible to do. I will set an example for other people” (Andrea). “I think that without leadership group I would not speak up as much and be aware and do as many leadership things as I would now” (Eliza). “I will continue to do things like organizing things to help others, like I do in leadership group” (Hilary). The students interviewed felt that there were not many opportunities at the school to develop

participatory citizenship other than leadership group. They recalled helping by donating food to the food bank in younger grades. “When we were younger it was just awareness that we knew we were getting an idea of what we could do later but we were not given an opportunity to organize it” (Eliza). Leadership group provides student with this arena for organization where they “are not afraid to pitch ideas and speak about what you believe in” (Andrea). Surprisingly, one of the girls interviewed who is an exemplar leader at Westview, said “I didn’t do anything (for leadership) until grade 6” (Andrea). “When we were younger it was left to the older kids. We were not as experienced and couldn’t organize it ourselves.” (Hilary). According to the students, they were not given the opportunity to organize events and develop participatory citizenship because “there was a focus on other things, like learning the school rules, and we were so young. We did not have the knowledge or experience to start something on our own and organize it to make a difference” (Eliza). In order to be truly anti-oppressive, citizenship education must embrace difference and diversity as a central component. The curriculum needs to be critiqued and the deep traditions unpacked. This would allow students to, from an early age, have the possibility of democratic citizenship education.

Learning is synonymous with inquiry into problems faced by real people in their everyday lives. The goal of citizenship education, then, is not to inculcate students into capitalist democracy but rather to help students question, understand, and test the reality of the social world we inhabit. (Ross, 2000, p. 59)

The future of participatory citizenship experiences. Democracy and the skills associated with developing a critical consciousness must be taught. It is not all the what,

but the how, of thinking, processing, and contributing that will cause students to be critical participants in democracy. Participatory citizenship is something which only the group of leadership students, at Westview truly attain. Democratic social education should be an element all students have access to and forms the nature of a plethora of citizenship opportunities. Too often citizenship education is fruitless and simply tells about democracy, rather than teaching to question democracy and how to practice it. At Westview Elementary, direct teaching about democracy is limited and even with an ideal venue such as leadership group the time and resources are lacking to implement successful pedagogical practices. As Sears and Hyslop-Margison (2006) write, “education for democratic citizenship needs to model democracy, and schools must provide students with the dispositional qualities necessary to cultivate a far greater sense of political voice” (p. 21). Each of the critical paradigms discussed in Chapter Two, appeals to educators to engage students in critical questioning of what they think they know and what the curriculum advances as worth knowing. Participatory citizenship must foster understanding that democracy is often used to suggest there is educational equality and justice for all students, when in reality this universalism masks persisting marginalization, oppression, powerlessness and exploitation (Tupper, 2006).

The Social Justice Citizen

On November 30th, 2011, many of the intermediate classrooms at Westview Elementary were quieter and more sedate than usual. Students in the Westview Leadership Group and some in the general student population were taking the Vow of Silence. The intention of this event was to stand up for those children around the world who do not have a voice; children who are denied the

opportunity to attend school, such as child-soldiers, child-laborers and those living in extreme poverty. Leading up to the day, students made signs and wrote a paragraph explaining why they wanted to take part in the Vow of Silence and who they were going to remain silent for. Remaining silent meant everything from not speaking, to also not texting, emailing or writing. Some students struggled not to talk throughout the day, standing in solidarity with their peers around the world for those who have been silenced by not having their rights upheld. Walking around the school, I saw classes continue as normal, yet with the profound difference of some students not speaking. Teachers were teaching as if “it was a normal day,” with the exception of not calling on students who were participating in the Vow Of Silence. Jonathaan explained the purpose of the event, “it was basically where, for a day, we didn’t communicate via email or talking to raise awareness about kids and people in Africa or Ecuador, place like that, who have children who can’t speak their voices out to be heard.” “I go on Facebook, email and call people everyday, so not doing any of that for one day. That is a big deal,” proclaimed Janine. Following the event, students went home and most retreated to using language to communicate in various forms, such Facebook, texting and chatting on the phone called their names.

The Vow of Silence was a citizenship education opportunity which I originally classified under social justice citizenship. Alluded to in this vignette, are some of the complexities and challenges surrounding this opportunity at Westview Elementary. The justice-oriented citizen is one who “critically assesses sexist, political and economic structures to see beyond the surface causes. He/she seeks out and addresses areas of

injustice” (Westheimer and Kahne, 2003, p 52). The core assumptions of this type of citizen is that social problems need to be solved by questioning, debating and changing recognized systems and structures that continue to reproduce injustice. Initially, based on this definition from Westheimer and Kahne (2004), I believed the Vow of Silence to be an opportunity to develop social justice orientation at Westview. However, following data analysis and reflection, the nature of the event revealed as one that develops participatory and personally responsible citizenship, rather than social justice citizenship.

The Vow of Silence event was organized by the leadership group at Westview. Mrs. Blight helped lead discussions about it and assigned and collected the paragraphs students wrote explaining why they wanted to participate. Although a voluntary event, students “just had to bring in a little paragraph saying if you were on leadership and why you wanted to do it and an explanation of what Vow of Silence is. After you did this you could do the silence” (Janine). “It was mandatory if you were going to participate to bring in the paragraph”(Alex). Most of the students thought it was a good idea that students had to write a paragraph to get involved in the event, so as to dissuade students who did not care about the cause, but were just doing it to get out of participating in lessons that day. “I thought that was a really good idea because it meant that only people who actually cared about it did it. So kids who just wanted to not talk for a day couldn’t do it,” (Nolan). Intriguingly enough, the task of having to write a paragraph to participate, although logical in justification, also immediately disallows and marginalizes certain students in the population from participating, including English language learners and special needs students who may not be able to write a paragraph. Students who were interested handed their paragraphs into Mrs. Blight and then she let the corresponding teachers know who

would be participating. A few of the students who handed in the paragraphs were asked to do more research about what the cause stood for, but all students who submitted were given permission.

Some of the feedback from this group was centered on the failure of the event to develop social justice in students. "I think a lot of people wrote the paragraph and did it, but it didn't mean anything to them. We should talk about why we are doing it -not just be silent" (Julian). The Vow of Silence, although an event open to the whole school, was mainly limited to participation from people in leadership group. Throughout the school there were about 40 students who participated in the event, with approximately 90% of those being leadership students. The students agreed that there were limiting factors. "Doing the paragraph kind of restricts the boundary of the Vow of Silence to the leadership group. It really doesn't affect the whole school much" (Jonathan). The event was sponsored by Free the Children and shared with students at We Day. The students said in unison, "We Day came up with the idea" (Sarah, Nolan, Janine).

Classroom connections. This event, which had the potential to develop social justice citizenship at Westview, from the perspective of the students and myself as teacher researcher, failed to achieve that goal. The opportunity was not effectively linked to the classroom and school activities generally continued as normal. Teachers "had to do their work just like any other day" (Nolan). Three of the four grade seven teachers "mentioned it briefly" to remind students. The students reported little discussion around the injustice issues related to the Vow of Silence happening in class. Evidently, beyond a level of awareness, there was no social justice citizenship developed. Among many

issues, the interests of the fragmented curriculums of math, science, and language arts superceded the possibilities of developing social justice citizenship. It is this competitive individualism, often sanctioned through curriculum and teaching, which takes away from developing citizenship education in schools. The priority commonly is, as the students have expressed, for students to learn and do well in school. Doing well has traditionally been associated with getting good grades in preparation for post secondary education, and further, a secure job. Although a generalization, the community that feeds into Westview and surrounding high schools, places a strong emphasis on academic achievement. Parents often link this academic achievement directly to the child's success in life. It is not unusual for a parent at Westview to come into talk to the classroom teacher about a grade five student getting a C+ or B in math. Unfortunately, this community value may be transferring unconsciously onto teacher's decisions about what to spend time on in the classroom. The perception appears to be that taking the time to spend a day engaged in deliberation about injustices, through an activity such as The Vow of Silence, would take away from curriculum and teaching that must get done. Fragmented and segregated curriculum is a far cry from an institution of critical democracy imagined by social reconstructionists. School must be re-imagined as a place beyond delivery of the curriculum outcomes in order to prepare students for higher education and the work force. Parents and community members need to realize the shifting needs of our society in the 21st century. People must acknowledge that a superior math mark does not reveal the ability to critically contribute to a democracy, and that there is great worth in citizenship education. Educators must be able to take the time to engage in critical pedagogy and tackle social justice learning as a component that is woven throughout the

school year- not a lesson, not a day, not just a highlight month. Tupper (2006), warns that justice oriented citizenship may not sufficiently require students to account for their own privilege or even comprehend how privilege is associated with a network of inequities. This was demonstrated at Westview during the Vow of Silence, when students situated social justice outside of themselves rather than interrogating how they themselves (through taken for-granted privileges), are implicated in perpetuating injustice (Tupper, 2006).

The icing of injustice. When I asked students about other opportunities to question systems and structures and confront injustice, they were not able to come up with many concrete examples. The students highlighted current events as an area where there is discussion about what is happening in the world. Current events, in the eyes of the students, had much more potential. I questioned whether current events was an avenue that explored democracy. “Most classes have current events, you share your article and then kids can ask you questions. Some are like totally unrelated to the topic. So no it doesn’t really teach us about democracy” (Jonathan). “Current events does not really go anywhere. It can relate to getting involved politically but it is just something you have to do instead” (Eliza). Interestingly enough, I have experienced being in the staffroom a handful of times and students running in to borrow the paper for current events. A paper whose doctrine is mainly that of corporate interest, and conservatism. Current events, is not only an opportunity to talk about the realities of 21st century conditions in which citizens live, but to critically examine the sources from which people are getting information. Social media and information in the 21st century can largely help or hinder a cause depending on the political stance of the source. Corporate control over

big media contributes to challenges in confronting marginalization, oppression and violence that persist in society. The students also cited debates as a method through which they have learned about problems in society. They however, referred to them as “too manufactured and fake,” and not delving deeply into confronting sensitive topics. The impression was that they learn about the societies problems but do not question the problems on a structural or systemic level.

One area students did feel that they developed true social justice citizenship is anti-bullying education. This ended up being the only citizenship education opportunity that was authentic and effective enough to reside in the social justice category (Figure 4.2). The students reported that they talk about bullying, why people bully and get bullied, and learn and practice techniques to counter bullying behaviour. The students in the interviews felt that for the most part, kids take action against injustices of bullying at Westview Elementary. Especially if the bullying (including exclusive behaviour), is relating to a special needs child, the students felt that the issue is confronted and dealt with. Educators at Westview work through bullying with the students and deploy them with techniques and strategies to bravely handle such injustice. In addition, reasons for why bullying arises are explored and confronted on a regular basis. Although I would not hesitate to say deeper systemic reason for bullying may not be deeply explored. The anti-bullying presentations and in class anti-bullying programs were not one of the elements I put in social justice in my initial mapping. After the interviews, I realized the inherent strength this has in developing social justice citizenship. It is a topic that is critical and challenges the maintenance of the injustice of bullying, therefore I changed the position of it. This was, in the end, what I believed to be the one authentic opportunity for

developing social justice citizenship at Westview Elementary.

For the most part, the opportunities to develop social justice citizenship represent the icing on the cake. The students are exposed to issues and struggles on the top thin layer. In order to truly embrace a critical social justice stance, educators must cut deeply into the issues, exposing the inner layers and underpinnings of society.

Digging Deeper: Beyond the Framework

Burrowed within the nest of opportunities to develop citizenship education on the three levels of personal responsibility, political participation and social justice, I unearthed more complex issues and constructs which helped illuminate the reality of citizenship education at Westview. The implications of issues such as race and gender, tensions surrounding the implementation of citizenship education, the undeniable void, and the effect of privilege each contribute to making this a complex and significant study. The promises and possibilities of citizenship education at Westview leave the reader with a hopeful perspective for the future.

Constructs Around Citizenship Education—A² (Awareness And Agency)

The conception of citizenship education in Westview elementary school, appears to have a deep connection to raising awareness and developing agency. Each of these elements was present throughout all the interviews, for each of the opportunities.

Awareness. Each of the events that took place at Westview achieved the goal of raising awareness about some aspect of helping others in order to make a difference. Halloween for Hunger raised awareness concerning paucity of basic needs for some (food), leadership group raised awareness about issues relating to poverty, while The

Vow of Silence raised awareness that some children do not have a voice because their rights are not being met.

Each of the students agreed that the main point of most activities related to citizenship at elementary school is to raise awareness. “Being aware and not taking action doesn’t help” (Alex). “Yeah, more than half the kids at our school are aware but they don’t do anything” (Janine). “Well, we need to make them feel something. Right now it is not inspiring” (Nolan). The students suggested that people can be totally aware of what they need to do and not do anything. There is a link between awareness and action but awareness does not dictate action. It is, however, more likely that one will take action if they have a sense of awareness. Awareness is a good jumping off point to begin to develop authentic citizenship in students; however, it is not enough. Education for citizenship requires more than talking and awareness about injustice and problems in the world. It requires a committed approach to dissecting the issues and confronting reasons for their existence. Awareness is a positive thing to develop however, as citizenship educators, we must not as Vinson (2006) pleads, downplay the realities or oppression that breed a type of citizenship education where students lack understanding between the ideal and the real.

Agency. Within the framework of citizenship education experiences at Westview, students demonstrated agency from their involvement. Due to the fact that most of the activities were voluntary, there had to be some agency on the part of the students in order to voluntarily take part. This agency came from the power of the group, value placed on making a difference, the element of fun, and an aspect of competition.

The influence of the group on student’s choice to participate in citizenship

activities was significant. Each of the students interviewed made very clear that they were more likely to volunteer and get involved in activities if their friends were doing it. Often, students became interested once they saw a few of their friends involved and realized that they would be the odd person out if they did not join. "One of my friends was kind of left out, so even though she didn't originally want to do leadership group, she joined because she was the only one of us not involved. Then she liked it" (Janine). Other students agreed that the more people are doing it the more other people will get involved. It seems hard to get people interested if at first no one volunteers. "I know a lot of people that won't do anything unless their friends are doing it," (Nolan). "It is really cool actually. It is really cool to see so many people doing, like trying to make a difference. Then you are like, wow, I am part of something!" (Andrea). The influence of the group is a strong factor in children's decisions. Many children are more likely to participate if their friends or other people are involved. Especially when students are in the upper intermediate grades, the effect of peer pressure is paramount to the path many travel. Even if it is something the students want to participate in, they are much more willing if they can do it in a group. As a teacher, I noticed that when students sign up to help it is usually done in pairs or groups. In the case of this study, many of the students appeared much more enthusiastic and animated during the group interviews as opposed to the individual interviews. This group dynamic is a strength that educators are forced to reckon with daily in their classrooms. Sometimes, teachers will suggest opportunities for students which would develop citizenship, however, if silence befalls it is likely no one will volunteer. A prime example of this is the Jump Rope for Heart event. The students at Westview over the past 3 years have raised over 30, 000 dollars. Most classes raise

anywhere between 300-1000 dollars on their own. Last year, the grade seven classes raised less than 100 dollars. They were apathetic and uninterested in raising money for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Because this attitude was held by a number of the students, it spread to the majority of the class; a good example about the influence of the group for intermediate students.

Motivation to participate in citizenship education opportunities also appears to be influenced by the existence of an ingredient of fun. Students develop agency to join citizenship building activities when they are fun. “People want to do things because they are fun and easy for people” (Alex). “A lot of people signed up for We Day and were not expecting to have to do the extra stuff after. There were just expecting to get to go to Rogers Arena and have a good time,” (Nolan). The students all agreed that an initial draw of something being fun provides agency and incentive for participation. “Then people realize that they are actually making a difference and they continue to stay involved,” (Hilary). Children want to have fun. If learning is made fun, the level of engagement rises and student learning will increase. Many students are not engaged in school activities and therefore do not learn at an optimal level. To engage students in the culture of the school, in the classroom experiences, and in citizenship education opportunities is a joint responsibility. Educators and parents must work together to help students develop an interest and love of learning. Students need to be active participants in decision making processes of the school and in their learning. Vinson (2006) advocates that citizenship education should rest on democratic structures and processes so “all those involved, including young people, have the right to participate in the process of decision making” (p. 9). With the technology, media, and pop culture of today, educators are not faced with

an easy task to create curriculum that engages students while simultaneously ensuring that deeper and more critical levels of learning occur.

The greatest factor in relation to agency manifested itself is the feeling of making a difference. Each of the students interviewed, with the exception of one, took part in the citizenship opportunity being discussed. The reason: to make a difference. “It was definitely inspiring to see how you can make a difference. I have taken a lot away from leadership this year at school,” (Eliza). “A lot of kids want to make a difference,” (Hilary). “I have learned you can pull a bunch of people together and you can do things to help make a difference,” (Andrea). This feeling of making a difference was something positively experienced by the members of the interview group, such that they expressed desires to want to be involved in citizenship opportunities in high school. If students had never been involved and thus never felt the associated effects, that element of agency would be annulled. This idea of making a difference was also something reinforced by the school culture as a positive attribute of students and something that “good students” should aim for.

Agency is a key component that educators can reinforce to facilitate the development of citizenship. “Giving students a critical sense of agency may empower them towards conscientisation” (Johnson & Morris, 2010, p. 83). Agency permeated throughout all the voluntary citizenship education opportunities. Agency originates from a variety of sources, making the experiences something worthwhile and positive for the students. There are however, many students (as the data from this study demonstrated) that lack agency, or have yet to find the roots of their agency. This is where the educators bear the responsibility of inspiring agency. One of my early mentors compared his time

in the classroom to that of an actor on a stage, continually aspiring to entertain the audience. Frequently he would fill blocks of time just talking with his students about some “great” opportunity that would be coming up. He warned me to always take time, to talk less, and to let the kids question more. This was wise advice. Without student engagement in citizenship education, schools are simply breeding apathy and creating a future world full of self-interested citizens.

A Matter Of Race And Gender

There was a notable absence of a few rudiments within the students’ responses to the interview questions. The concept of race and gender, which both have had influence on citizenship education discourse, were not highlighted. Students seemed to lack awareness about race history and the differing experiences with regards to citizenship of most races. They also had never conceptualized the impact of gender on citizenship or citizenship education. This is in part that student’s conceptions of citizenship lie on the spectrum of personal responsibility and at this level do not appear to be cognizant of political citizenship, including rights and responsibilities that contribute to democratic society. Research shows that student political attitudes develop from an early age (Alleman & Rosaen, 2001; Hess & Torney-Purta, 1967; Torney-Purta & Amadeo, 2003). At Westview Elementary, the focus in early grades is on the development of manners and understanding roles in relation to others. “The child must see his own behaviour in relation to that of some person or institution. Before one’s behaviour can be regulated by a role, one must learn the expectations of that role—that is, one’s rights and duties in relation to the rights and duties of the system” (Hess & Torney, 1967, p. 18). This is the making of much of the character education and social responsibility curriculum witnessed

at the primary level. Nevertheless, according to Hess and Torney (1967), student political attitudes do begin to develop as early as the upper intermediate years. It is important then to foster a questioning and critical consciousness about the differing experiences of various groups in society. The absence of race and gender from the student responses can also validate the difficulty in seeing outside one's position. Neither race, nor gender have had an impact on these student's experiences, likely as a result of their positions of privilege in society. The experience of citizenship throughout history has been connected to race, gender, and culture. In society, many groups have experienced and continue to experience life differently, and often unequally. Schools are a microcosm within the larger society, and thus often reflect current paradigms and tensions

The ABCs of citizenship education. I attempted to gain a deeper understanding of how students experience the citizenship opportunities at Westview and if all students experience them equally. Students felt there was a distinct separation between non-English speaking students (usually new to Canada) and those who speak and understand English comfortably. The participants reflected that English second language (ESL) students rarely participate in the voluntary activities and then when they are required to participate, they take part but often are not actively engaged. While we were discussing the differing experiences between English and non English speakers, the participants had an epiphany. It was a moment during the interviews where they looked at each other and realized together that not one student in leadership group is an English language learner. There was a long pause in which the students were thinking about their new found realization. I prompted them for reasons as to why that may be the case and the following dialogue ensued:

Janine: “Well, they don’t understand what we are doing.”

Jake: “Often ESL students just sit there and don’t know what is happening.”

Nolan: “They do the activities that everyone else does, but like many of them don’t fully get it, you know. It doesn’t make sense to them”

Alex: “Actually, I don’t think there is anyone that has no English.”

Nolan: “It would be a good idea to, have someone that could speak English and Chinese or Mandarin that would translate and then maybe more ESL students would participate.”

The general feeling that citizenship opportunities are not able to provide ESL students the same experience for developing the three levels of citizenship was something all students agreed upon. In essence, the students who do not have English as a language to communicate in often missed out due to lack of understanding. They were in effect suffering a consequence because they were not cultivated in the English language. These students were unconsciously kept in the margins with regards to participation in school citizenship education opportunities that would require fluency in English.

Another interesting aspect came up with regards to cultural exclusion in citizenship opportunities. One student commented that some kids don’t celebrate Halloween. She, therefore, felt they may feel excluded, which brought up the influence of culture on the activity of Halloween for Hunger. If one’s cultural traditions do not recognize Halloween then it would not be possible to participate in this event. I asked if there were adjustments or accommodations made for those that did not celebrate Halloween, and the students felt there were not.

Most of the events are the same for everyone in the school. Well, actually, the only difference is sometimes they are a little different for primary than for intermediate. Like the Walk for Water, we went all the way down to the beach and some primary classes just carried the water down the hallway back and forth, back and forth. (Grace)

The idea of the universalism of citizenship revealed itself in the fact that the students alleged all the activities were the same for everyone. There was no recognition of how different cultures, races, or genders would experience those opportunities differently. Grace's comment shows the universal model of delivery which citizenship education can easily adopt. Making accommodations so younger students can take part is a worthy strategy to ensure equal access of citizenship education opportunities. Tupper (2006) explains that standardizing school curriculum, uniform content, and outcomes further reinforce a false sense of universalism; likewise, so does standardizing citizenship education opportunities. Just as attitudes about the universalism of citizenship need to be avoided, so does universalism of citizenship education opportunities.

The gender game. The facet of gender arose through discussions initially about Halloween for Hunger. This was an interesting leitmotif that I had not expected. A few students felt that during the personally responsible citizenship event Halloween For Hunger, the girls were more involved because they cared more. The comment was made that since girls get into dressing up more, they will in turn be more interested in going trick or treating and collecting cans. The boys and the girls shared their divergent perspectives on the matter during the interview. Their dialogue was as follows:

- Nolan: "Girls may be more responsible."

- Janine: “There are just more girls,”
- Nolan and Alex: “Leadership group has just as many boys as girls.”
- Nolan: “The boys I went out with for Halloween, we all did Halloween for Hunger AND collected cans,”
- Ellie: “Well, sometimes there is poster stuff and you have to draw and the boys are often not into that.”
- Nolan: “I feel like the posters are being ignored and so there isn’t a lot of point in doing the posters. We should take more actual action.”
- Alex: “Yeah! And the boys just don’t bother with the little things, but they are involved.”

This separation of roles between the boys and the girls was something the students observed, but I feel did not ultimately impact the success of the citizenship experience. It appears that although boys and girls have separate roles, they each are involved in the citizenship opportunities in different but meaningful ways. Unfortunately, they may not see each other’s roles as meaningful, which in the long run could lead to challenges with respecting the opposite sex and possible discrimination.

Providing a variety of ways for students to get involved with which they are comfortable is definitely a way to be inclusive of more types of students. Historically in education, as in society in general, gender roles have been specific and pre-determined without allowing individuals to determine their paths. As members of society become more aware and take ownership of their ability to create their own paths and roles, this gender stereotyping and categorization can be surpassed. Avoiding gender pigeonholing must be a cognizant act. If the boys and girls are not validating the different but important

roles they may play, education is necessary. In addition, schools should endow students with variety of opportunities for both genders to develop citizenship on levels which they are comfortable engaging.

The general absence of comments about different experiences of students from varying races and sexes demonstrates a need to acknowledge difference. Taking differences seriously involves seeing what difference they make and to whom. “We must see difference as cultural constructions that reflect social position and that contain powerful social meanings” (Kohli, 2000, p. 37). This absence of confrontation of difference can mean that social positions and status are unchallenged. Without this confrontation, the status quo is usually perpetuated without change, thereby forcing those in positions of oppression or marginalization to remain there.

Tensions

Many tensions became apparent throughout the data. Teacher tensions, a tension between the local and the global, and pedagogical tensions all play an influential role with citizenship education at Westview.

Teacher tensions. Analyzing and reviewing, it is hard not to notice the teacher tensions woven throughout the data. The role of educators is critical and without a doubt a key influence on student experiences in school. Coming from a critical, yet reconstructionist framework, my perceptions and understandings of the role of the teacher in relation to citizenship education were both misplaced and underestimated. From the authority and position of my current role, I had to constantly shift my hat from researcher to teacher, in order to understand the complexities of the data in relation to the role of teachers with citizenship education. There are two distinctly different role’s that

educators play at Westview with regards to citizenship education - the role of the teacher who sponsors leadership group and the role of the classroom teacher.

The role of the teacher sponsor, although students had some critical and constructive feedback, is unquestionably essential for the existence of leadership group. Thus, since leadership group appeared to organize the majority of events related to citizenship, this teacher sponsor does, in a sense, help determine the fate of school wide opportunities available for students to develop citizenship. The students had varying responses about the role of the sponsor teacher, which ranged from thoughts she was a facilitator to an authoritarian figure. "I think the role of the teacher, it is more authority. That is all. When everybody is talking and stuff she always makes people listen quietly. If it were a student in charge, everyone would probably keep talking" (Andrea). "She is a facilitator but we come up with the ideas. She helps people stay on track" (Hilary). Students initially conveyed the feeling that the teacher sponsor is there to manage the kids; however, they then described her as a facilitator for discussions and ideas. One student felt that the teacher sponsor was not necessary, however, changed his answer when I pushed him to explain his thinking. "As long as you had someone who knows what they are doing, you don't need a teacher" (Nolan). When I challenged the students if a teacher sponsor was necessary, one student said,

It could go either way depending on the personality of the students. There are definitely a lot of people in leadership group that have that kind of leader in them. I think if we had a teacher that has their support if needed, to start it off, then we wouldn't really need Mrs Blight around all the time. (Mila)

Students explained that the teacher sponsor was responsible for, supervising and getting equipment or materials, asking us for ideas, gathering and organizing us, asking permission from the staff to do school wide activities, and helping with a year long plan. She also appears to have the final veto power with regards to making decisions. Janine, Nolan and Alex conversed about their opinions that sometimes the role of the teacher sponsor is limiting:

- Janine: “One time we had a meeting and Ms. Blight asked us to come up with ideas in a group. We said a tennis tournament or carnival or basketball game. She said they were good ideas but we don’t know what ever happened to them.”
- Nolan: “A lot of the time she asks us for ideas and then she says they are great but we don’t do anything,”
- Alex: “A lot happened actually.”
- Nolan: “Well it was the stuff that has been happening every year that continues, Mrs. Blight doesn’t seem to take any new ideas. We don’t have time to actually make our ideas more possible.”

This conversation indicates that the teacher sponsor is important in helping the students make decisions and stay on track; however, some students, whose ideas may not be used, feel as if the same opportunities are chosen and all ideas are not equal. One reason for this may be time. Arranging something such as a carnival, would be large event, which would require more support across the school, as opposed to an event such as a spirit day or talent show, which does not require any other staff involvement. The students seemed

to place a large amount of responsibility on the teacher sponsor if the ideas did not get done, until I challenged them about whose responsibility that was. They pondered and all responded "Both of ours." The tension therefore is apparent between the fact that the students at Westview believe their leadership group is student run and the fact that they continue to place responsibility on the teacher sponsor for running meetings effectively and for the success of events. It appears necessary to build more leadership capacity and participatory citizenship skills. Educating students on strategies for effective leadership, and exposing them to various organizations and systems and structures may assist in reducing the workload of the teacher sponsor. Ideally, he/she should be a facilitator, who helps students uncover and expose various issues that contribute to inequality and injustice in society. In addition, this tension could also be addressed by discussing with students in leadership roles and responsibilities at the beginning of the year, and redefining and altering those as necessary.

The data indicates that the classroom teacher is naturally involved and focused on the development of students as personally responsible citizens. All the students in the study agreed that teaching students to follow rules and to be kind and caring is important to the teachers. The teachers are committed to developing Westview as a caring and kind place to be where students have manners and respect the expectations. These elements are integrated into each educators day as they attempt to encourage personal responsibility in their students. Connecting activities in the school with this trait they are attempting to cultivate, is however variable. This depends dramatically on the value in which each individual educator places on the opportunity and the space and time which they allocate

it in the curriculum. The hidden curriculum is at play here, as the time spent (or not) on citizenship education speaks soundly about its value and importance.

The data shows that the role of the classroom teacher in relation to events intended to develop participatory and social justice citizenship is limited. This appears to be true in relation to each of the voluntary events in which the whole school had the opportunity to participate, but students could choose independently whether or not they wanted to take part. This also appeared true for whole school activities that are mandatory. The organization for the voluntary events, Halloween for Hunger and the Vow of Silence happened during leadership group, outside of classroom instructional time. It was therefore teacher choice as to whether to recognize, discuss, enhance, and make the event part of the classroom learning experience. When I asked the students about the teacher's role in the citizenship opportunity their responses were as follows:

- “She kinda just only mentioned it briefly.” (Malathi)
- “To write it on the chalkboard.” (Nina)
- “To remind us.” (Grace, Nina)
- “Remind us before the day.” (Melissa, Janine)
- “Make it easier for those participating (VOS) by not asking questions.” (Jonathan)
- “The teachers were not doing anything much for the VOS.” (Nolan)

There were a variety of responses which showed students seemed to think that the citizenship activities at the school were not fervently supported in the classroom by in

class discussions or activities. “There were no teachers that were super included. It wouldn’t be like Ms. Archer would go and help Mrs. Blight,” (Janine). Students, such as Sarah, were under the perception that teacher’s were somewhat helpless and confined by their role. “Teachers can’t really participate because they are teaching that day” (Sarah). Many of the students emphasized the lack of follow up in the classroom after a citizenship education opportunity. “Say we see a paralympics speaker. We come back to the classroom and then Ms. Archer says, it’s time for math, or whatever subject we are doing” (Ellie). The students did acknowledge that they were given time to share information (transmit) to the class about events organized by leadership group. “If we go to a leadership meeting, we come back and the teacher will write the information we share with the class on the board but that is it, not talk about it. Like Halloween for Hunger” (Janine). Sarah, Janine and Ellie’s comments show the perception that teachers chose to focus on teaching, of which did not involve the activity related to citizenship development. “On the day, my teacher did not talk about it at all except to say it was ok that we didn’t talk” (Sarah). This absence of critical pedagogy (which is analyzed further later) in relation to citizenship education opportunities at Westview does not further authentic critical learning and thus can weaken the likelihood of further critical action and democratic contribution following the event. Powerlessness is embeded in schools in the little room there is for students to have a say in their education and the little say teachers have about what they teach (Vinson, 1998). Deliberative democracy promotes meaningful reflection and genuine action in order to change the world (Englund, 2000). Therefore, as educators we must challenge the implications of our own instruction in order to envision and educate for critical citizenship. The likes of Freire and Dewey

remind us that “citizenship education is essential to democratic education, and democratic education is essential to a democratic society” (Vinson, 2006, p. 72).

The students did mention a few teachers that stuck out in their minds as making classroom connections to events taking place in the school. I inquired further about what made that experience different:

- Andrea: “Mrs. Chamberlin, she talked about events. We would have an assembly, event, or presentation and come back to class, have a talk, and she would have us write a paragraph.”
- Hilary: “Sometimes that happened in the younger grades too”
- Nolan: “Actually, Mr. Seary, he was open to discuss anything.”
- Jonathan: “Yeah, we would go back to class and have an open discussion about what we just did, like Halloween for Hunger, or paralympic speakers.”
- Nolan/Jonathan: “Yeah, I think he was a really good teacher.”

As is the case with how teachers choose to deliver the curriculum, teacher autonomy provides teachers with the freedom to use citizenship education experiences of the school or not, as part of their practice. Andrea, Hilary, Nolan and Jonathan displayed excitement when sharing stories about teachers who explore challenging topics and delve into what is happening in the school.

Teachers, although responsible to teach the curriculum, also assume an unwritten responsibility to ensure school is preparing students for society. Often this comes with an

acceptance of the curriculum as the be all and end all and a “stick to the facts” approach to teaching. The goal to ensure students are prepared for society is perceived as commendable, however this is often done from a place of neutrality, where bias is guarded against and teaching is viewed as an apolitical activity. Leming argues that “the dominant socially accepted purpose of schools is to transmit knowledge” (p. 57). The data collected in this study appears to support Leming’s conception. The tension here lies in the fact that to achieve authentic citizenship education teaching must move out of the neutral zone and into an area that challenges and questions the status quo. These practices of neutrality and fear of bias ensure that learning continues to be a passive activity, and democracy a spectator sport, in which the status quo wins the game. In the words of the Dutch scholar Veugelers (2007),

Stimulating humanitarism, social and democratic values and autonomy should be given more attention in education: to educate young people to have a critical, enquiring attitude, to have the courage and the creativity to tread new paths, to question all knowledge-including their own knowledge-for the values and underlying power structures it contains and to educate youngsters who balance autonomy and social awareness. (p.117)

Even as I have identified some tensions in the reality of citizenship education at Westview, I do not place the sole responsibility upon the teacher. There is increasing responsibility and demands placed upon classroom teachers today in the 21st century. Not only do teachers have to deal with 30 students, of which often three or more may have special needs and maybe a quarter do not speak English, they have external pressures put upon them to be accountable for the curriculum. Increased standardized testing and

accountability procedures leave little room for teachers to feel comfortable exploring citizenship education at leisure. Citizenship education is not something that is tested by the Fraser Institute and used to rank schools in British Columbia. In addition, with looming deficits and slashed budgets, there is little money to invest in authentic resources to teach critical citizenship. Lastly, but just about most relevant is the absence of time. Many teachers today were educated in a system that did not consider critiquing systems and structures, in a system where bringing politics into the classroom was taboo. Many educators desire re-education so they are confident and comfortable stepping out of the neutral zone and teaching for a critical democracy. Critical pedagogy counteracts the “individualistic and competitive approaches to learning of the neoliberal project and promotes to students a larger moral ecology beyond their own individual concerns” (Johnson & Morris, 2010, p. 82) This requires time. Time to pursue professional development, time to read, time to cultivate deeper understandings. Teachers have little time. Although the topic is too large for this paper, it should be recognized that the current system does not allow time for teachers to be able to get to a place where critical citizenship education is an interwoven part of the classroom tapestry.

The local vs. the global. The struggle between the local and the global with respect to citizenship education opportunities at Westview, presented itself in the data. On the one hand, the students appear to be learning about being personally responsible, with a focus on local (school) expectations and behaviour that effects themselves, others around them in the school and the community. However, on the other hand, most of the causes that the leadership group supports as reported by the students, are global, including Sierra Leone, Africa, and Uganda. Each of the students said, “global is

definitely more the focus at school.” In social studies the focus is also global, “grade 6 was global citizenship” (Grace). One student Nolan distinctly stated that Mr. Seary, “made them more globally aware.” “We haven’t done anything local like in the community, like SPCA help” (Hilary). “We haven’t focused on community yet because we did the global cause of Sierra Leone. We talked about why there are issues and why the country needs our help” (Mila). Although the students realized after I pointed it out, that the Terry Fox Run, the school recycling program, the food bank drive and the clothing drive helped local causes, they thought that generally they were more aware of global issues such as poverty. Correspondingly, there seemed to be a disconnect because although they appeared to feel they didn’t really help any local causes or learn about injustice in their own city, they felt that those were issues which people could relate to more. “I think people can usually relate more when it is in their own city” (Julian). “Yeah, they can see it” (Nolan). The students expressed a desire to learn more about the global yet, they did not seem to have a true awareness of the local issues present in their city. “When you are not looking behind the scenes at people you don’t learn. It definitely helps to raise awareness about the less pretty side of our city” (Grace). North America, as MerryField and Subedi (2007) explain, is still looked at as the nation that is superior and “helps” people of other nations. The students conveyed their impression that they, living where they do in this country and city, should be helping what they referred to as “poorer” nations. The students admitted that they however, had not thought much past the knowledge that they have more and other people have less. I would argue that, although the data reveals the students have a global focus with their action plan, they have not yet developed an authentic “global perspective.” “Reflection upon one’s own perspective ,

the deep layers of values, norms and experiences that are accumulated through family and societal enculturation, is probably the most significant step towards developing a global perspective” (Merryfield & Subedi, 2007, p. 285). It is the privilege from which these students come from, which makes it harder to develop this perspective . Merryfield and Subedi (2007) identify that “the more students are privileged by their race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language or other characteristic (an upper-class, straight, white able bodied male being the most privileged), the more they will need help in developing perspective consciousness since such privilege protects them from situations in which they would be forced to examine events and issues through the viewpoints of people different from themselves” (p. 286). The students have indeed learned about various global aspects of need, such as lack of clean water in Uganda or female exploitation in Sierra Leone; however, the analysis from various viewpoints and challenging the norm perspective has yet to occur. Many of the globally related activities that the students at Westview engage in, continue to stay within the personal responsibility category because the students volunteer to help lend a hand to those in need in other countries.

It is argued that a reduction in effective global citizenship education is due to such drastic understandings of what global citizenship actually entails. Dower (2007), suggests that global citizenship is comprised of three components, “a normative claim about how humans should act, an existential claim about what is the case in the world and an aspirational claim about the future” (Shultz, 2007, p. 7). Many conceptions of global citizenship align with neoliberal ideologies; a global citizen is one that contributes to the world economy, which is driven by capitalism and technology. On the other hand, there is the radical approach which views globalization as “an accelerated mode of Western

imperialism that uses economic power for domination” (Shultz, 2007, p. 249). This global citizen strives to understand and change how this system creates poverty and oppresses much of the world’s population. Similarly, Merryfield and Subedi (2007), explain that an authentic global perspective develop from the “integration of 1) knowing the interconnectedness of the world and complexity of the people 2) lived experiences with people different from oneself and 3) perceptual skills in perspective consciousness, open-mindedness and resistance to chauvinism and stereotyping” (p.283). Educators need to have a clearer understanding of what global citizenship means, and what the goals of global citizenship are depending on the various definitions assumed. If global citizenship is taught as primarily a responsibility by citizens in wealthy nations to compete in the world economy, then systems and structures of inequality will persist for those less wealthy countries.

The Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) made the following statement about global citizenship,

global citizenship nurtures collective action for the good of the planet and promotes equity. As citizens, each person has equal rights. Global citizenship hinges on Canadians recognizing that they are members of a community of people who share a single planet...It goes beyond simply knowing that we are citizen of the global to acknowledgement of our responsibility is both to each other and to the Earth itself...it is about the need to tackle injustice and having the desire and ability to work actively to do so. (Shultz, 2007, p. 256)

Although it is contestable that as citizens each person has equal rights, this statement

made by the CCIC describes a vision of global citizenship as something that can help mend societies ills. In order to work towards global citizenship, it is critical to discontinue teaching children that all people have access to equal rights. Teaching multiple histories and perspectives rather than a single universal history can help students begin to grasp the complexities of the past and present and realize how their decisions affect others, just as others' decisions also can affect their lives (Merryfield & Subedi, 2007, p. 289). With these thoughts in mind, a deeper understanding of the meaning of global citizenship should be cultivated in students, with a balance of the importance of local needs and priorities. Surface learning is not enough in order to develop a global citizenry that will confront injustice and oppression. As Parker (2007), explains, "its scale and vision need to be expanded in such a way that both multicultural education and democratic citizenship education together make the case for a broader world-wide respect" (p. 455).

Pedagogical struggles. Pedagogy shapes practices of instruction. It determines the approach to how citizenship education is taught in schools. In my re-reading and analyzing of the data, the struggles associated with pedagogical approaches to citizenship education were clearly evident. The classroom teachers approached citizenship education through use of projects and with a focus on personal responsibility; however, the school wide opportunities for citizenship were not effectively and consistently used as teaching or learning tools for furthering citizenship education.

One of the most common struggles in the life of a teacher is the restraints of the mandated curriculum. There are numerous subject areas, with hundreds of learning outcomes to achieve in the short span of a year. Although, there are no "curriculum

police” per se, there is a responsibility most educators feel to cover the colossal scope of the British Columbia learning outcomes. This tension is manifest in student responses on how teachers used the citizenship opportunities as learning experiences. Students felt that teachers developed projects in social studies and science to help them see the effect they have on other people and the environment.

- “It seems like very important to our teachers. They make sure we know about how much what we do has an effect on other people and the environment.” (Grace)
- “Yeah a lot of our projects are related to this.” (Jake)
- “I remember in grade three, I made a poster that was about respecting the environment.” (Hilary)
- “I did a project on transportation and now I bike more to avoid pollution from my parents car.” (Ellie)
- “We did a human impact project for science on the environment.” (Grace)

The students were in agreement that they learned in class about environmental responsibility as a predominant focus in science. The common link was also found in social studies, in the form of current events. “In my class, we have a current events block and we sometimes learn about citizenship in social studies and science, if it is related to the environment” (Sarah). “We don’t exactly have a fundraiser every week in class but we do talk about issues. We have current events and talk about that” (Grace). Students in social studies recall having debates about various topics such as “technology vs. teaching,” however, they said they are “pretty sure we don’t look at ways to confront injustice by like looking at the cause of the problem” (Nolan). The focus in the classroom is on academics. Every one of the students felt that the academic subjects were the primary drive of classroom learning. Their dialogue surrounding the topic was interesting:

- Julian: “The focus is academics. There is a lot of stuff like making sure we know how to be a good person, but mostly teachers focus on our projects and homework we have to do.”
- Me: “Do you agree? Where would you say the importance of citizenship is? What is the most important in the classroom?”
- Julian: “Citizenship is off to the side and if you have time that is what you do but the academics are predominant.”
- Janine: “The academics are more important because school is to learn.”
- Alex: “Yeah but it is also important to learn about society not just being a better person.”

This conversation from the interviews clearly presents the pedagogical struggle between curriculum subjects such as science, socials, and math, and the citizenship education curriculum. The struggle for citizenship education to find a place of value at Westview is apparent. Nevertheless, the sense that personal responsibility is woven into daily pedagogy was evident from Nina, Sarah and Makayla’s comments. “In grade 7 they still try to make us personally responsible. We have to do recycling around the school” (Nina). “We are always taught to follow class rules, like respect and listen. You need to listen so others can learn” (Sarah). “Teachers help us set goals to be more personally responsible. As you are doing things you become more responsible for yourself and you are working towards achieving your goals” (Makayla). Personal responsibility was viewed, by the students, as something which was an integrated element of school. The focus on how to be a respectful person was also very commonly referred to by the students. “We are taught how to treat people. Like a sense of respect definitely” (Grace). “The focus in the classroom is on the little things. Like being nice to people, picking up your garbage. It is not really on causes and donating money and learning how to raise funds” (Alex). The

focus on character development, being kind, respectful, and an overall “good citizen” is something which has been written as being important in the early years of schooling. These are the years in which children become socialized as to how to “be” in a community such as a school. Students at Westview are continually taught and re-taught manners, how to walk in the hallway, and to put garbage in the garbage can. Students seem to think that this is no longer necessary in grade 6 and 7 and that after grade 5 they “already know it.” The tension is seen however in the fact that it is taught continually, therefore it would appear that students do not “know it already,” as they stated. The pedagogy and practice of ensuring students are “good citizens” who demonstrate personal responsibility is prominent. Although well intentioned, the reproduction of a standard “good citizen” often reproduces universalistic meanings of citizenship that are not necessarily true. Teaching is an ongoing process of curricular negotiations. As Tupper (2009) states, “if teachers are not engaging in a critique of the curriculum they are mandated to teach, but simply making choices about how to deliver content, realize objectives, and evaluate students, the reproduction of particular knowledge traditions continues” (p. 81). It is the pedagogies that probe students to engage in their own learning, considering multiple perspectives and make thoughtful decisions, that are thought to advance principles of democracy (Tupper, 2009).

Educators know that students who are actively engaged in creating meaning in their learning will surpass their peers who are simply receivers of knowledge passed on through transmission. For each student in this study, seeing is believing. All the students interviewed commented on the mode of how they learn citizenship best. This was identified as either a form of interaction, multi-media approach, or seeing first hand the

issues at stake. Less effective for learning, as expressed by the students, were the methods of being “talked to,” and large group assemblies.

Big assemblies where you are just telling us what to do rather than letting us figure it out are not effective. Having assemblies people just sit there and get bored and restless and talk to their friends so they are not super effective. (Grace)

The main thing in the classroom is to tell people to try and make a difference, but leadership group is a more hands on way of looking at it, which gives you experience. (Eliza)

The students expressed that they have an awareness they are helping people; however, that is often surface as they don’t have first hand experience. “We know we are helping people who need food with the food bank but we don’t necessarily really understand. I have never known anyone who says they didn’t have food on the table at Christmas dinner or have any presents” (Grace). “It is hard to picture that many people needing help getting clean water” (Sarah). Each of these students had trouble visualizing the scope of need related to various citizenship education opportunities. This concept of seeing is believing was captured in the following dialogue:

- Grace: “People really have to see it to believe it. When you actually see things you actually figure out that, there is people who are impacted.”
- Nina: “You need to see it to realize that it is valuable to help other people.”
- Jake: “You don’t realize how serious something is. It is hard to picture that many people going to walk and get dirty water. When you see it, you understand it is real”
- Eliza: “Honestly, for most people, seeing is believing. When you actually see

something happening it is more effective than being told.”

They understood clearly that people needed their help, but had a hard time visualizing being in that place themselves as they had never seen or experienced many of these struggles. There is tension between the need to educate students about issues such as poverty, racism, discrimination and government abuse and the ability to make it a real life experience to which they can associate. “Reconstructing schools to be more democratic requires more than changing the structures and processes for decision making. It also requires us to teach about democracy in a more truthful and complete way” (Kohli, 2000, p. 32). The practices of instruction related to citizenship learning that were mentioned as being the most effective by the students were hands on, real life, inspiring, and age appropriate activities.

The students expressed that the nature of citizenship education is often a talk, which they felt does not engage their attention, nor inspire them to take action. “It can’t just be something like a talk, like talking to us. It is not going to attract our attention so it needs to be something that we will enjoy doing, something relatively fun” (Sarah).

“In class, we talk about current events and stuff like that and we say there are issues. But in leadership group, we talk about how we can solve the issues.

Sometimes in social studies we talk about how we can solve issues in social studies, but in leadership we actually try to do something rather than just talk.”

(Mila)

A good example of something that inspired every student interviewed was having the opportunity to see the presentation from a child-soldier survivor. The survivor did not

speaking during his presentation but held up giant cardboard words communicating his silent but powerful message. “I got more from the child soldier at We Day than from anything we have done at school. He was more effective because he has been through the experience. We could relate better than” (Nolan). “He was actually doing something, holding up signs, not just talking too. He really informed us about what is actually happening” (Eliza). Students reported that the announcements, “don’t tell them anything” (Janine). “When you hear something come out of the wall it is just not effective. We need people to engage us to get our attention” (Alex). Finding the balance between reflective inquiry and action is an important step in reconstructing citizenship education. Praxis, as explained by Johnson and Morris (2010), is an integral element of citizenship education which includes reflection, action, engagement and possibility. True praxis “liberates humanity because it enables us to both *perceive*, from historical, cultural, economic, personal and political perspectives, and to *act* upon the ‘structures of domination’ which oppress the people” (Johnson & Morris, 2010, p. 83). Creating school as a place where activities promote and inspire democratic understandings and authentic participatory and social justice citizenship is not an easy task. It is a path that requires a frank exploration of current pedagogy and practice and the willingness to recognize what is maintaining the status quo and what is working to develop critical anti-oppressive citizenship. This is a process that must be embarked on as a community, a community of students, educators, families and administration, with support from local boards and the government.

The Void-What Is Missing And What That Signifies

Amidst the plethora of opportunities school wide and in the classroom for learning about being a personally responsible citizen, and amidst the excellent

opportunity for developing participatory citizenship within leadership group, there was an absence of two main things, critical thinking in relation to developing socially just citizens (according to the criteria in Westheimer and Kahne's model), and political education. The students felt that neither the classroom nor leadership group provided a place to critically analyze the conditions that exist in society that cause people to be oppressed, left out, or placed in the margins. They felt that the focus was more on helping rather than dissecting the issues they were helping. When I questioned the students about Halloween for Hunger and the issue of poverty, the students said they had not thought about reasons for hunger, other than people don't have money, but not any more deeply than that. "Especially injustices are not talked about on the critical level" (Julian). "We learn about injustice but don't critically question or take action, it is more about awareness" (Nolan).

Even in leadership it is not usually the why we are doing something like collecting cans for poor people, but the how. We don't really discuss the reasons why people don't have food, or are homeless and stuff like that. We just plan to help. (Andrea)

The student perceptions were that thinking deeply about the issues related to citizenship education did not happen until the later intermediate grades. "We really started thinking deep on topics in grade 5. Not so much global issues, but like what is this character feeling and why" (Andrea). "There are not too many activities that confront injustice. There is the VOS but that was more to raise awareness. There are not as many activities to get people engaged" (Julian). Students seemed to feel that critical thinking

started in the intermediate grades, but with a bigger focus in grade 6 and grade 7. All the students interviewed agreed with this. “Last year, in grade 6 in social studies, we had a lot of critical thinking questions” (Hilary). “It starts in intermediate grades but goes the most in depth in grade 7,” (Eliza). The students were very open to wanting to go more in depth and learn how to think critically. “We could go deeper into problems and understand it more. Now it is just information thrown at us and we don’t get to discuss it and see what the actual problem is” (Julian). These comments demonstrates the students’ awareness about the quantity of information they receive in school and the associated lack of depth. The British Columbia curriculum spans such a large number of outcomes that it leaves little room for going in depth on any one topic. “If we don’t have time to do critical thinking in leadership, there is the opportunity for students to independently research and bring info back to the group” (Andrea). “In the classroom, we talk about how people don’t have the same opportunity but we don’t do it as in depth as we do in leadership” (Mila). “We learn that there are things wrong in the world, but we don’t do the analysis and action part” (Alex). The students explained that they are learning about the world and various injustices but not engaging in deep critical questioning to uncover the reasons and underlying structures that maintain such injustices.

The absence of political learning was also evident throughout the interviews. This absence of political citizenship education at Westview actually leaves more room for growth and possibility. There will not be the need to “re-program” students who have been taught that voting is the primary demonstration of good citizenship, along with how a bill becomes law, etc. Political citizenship education needs to be one that allows students to question, “what do we mean by democracy? What kind of democracy do we

want? What are the functions of education and the communications in a democratic society” (Ross, 2000, p. 55). Students said that they did not have much opportunity to learn about political processes, nor to discuss various political ideas, motives or current situations. Even in leadership group where students did engage in participatory citizenship, students did not talk about current political ideas or paradigms. This is of particular interest because democracy can be strengthened through political participation and involvement of its citizenry; Participation, which works to strengthen counter hegemonic forces. Orłowski (2009) explains hegemony as “the ideal representation of the interests of privileged groups as universal interests, which are then accepted by the masses as the natural economic, political and social order” (p. 55). This conception explains how order and various social hierarchies within capitalist societies are maintained. This is significant, as the autonomous educator has a role in offering counterhegemonic discourses to develop. Considering that schools are easily sites where hegemonic forces are exerted in the form of standardized tests, textbooks, mandates and increasing teacher accountability, there is often little room left for educators to implement any curriculum which works to identify and acknowledge hegemony. In addition, there are increasing consequences for teachers who politicize the classroom. A relevant and recent example of this is the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA). Some teachers who discussed the politics behind the FSA with their students have been reprimanded for brainwashing their students with the hopes their parents would make them exempt from writing. In my years teaching grade seven, I had my students work to discover what they could about the various perspectives (political, education etc.) surrounding the FSA and then debate these in the classroom. “Teaching is a political act. The goal is to use various

pedagogical strategies so that students can understand that almost everything in the social realm is a political act” (Orlowski, 2009, p. 60). This is something that must be embraced and accepted system wide. If education is to strengthen democracy it must create a critical consciousness in people that helps them understand their own interests instead of producing a false consciousness.

Positions of Privilege

Each of the students interviewed recognized their position of privilege and that they may experience life differently than other people, in their city, and in the world around them. The students reflected thoughtfully about this and made comments concerning motives for participation. It is privilege, as identified by the students, that partly fuels their desire to be involved in the citizenship education opportunities offered at Westview Grace captured this well by her statement, “maybe some people want to participate, they kind of do it in a way because maybe they feel guilty because they have something that other people don’t have and they want to share it” (Grace). At the beginning of each interview when I asked the students what made them want to participate, many related to the student’s position of being fortunate.

- “Others deserve our help.” (Ellie)
- “Well, we are kinda lucky.” (Jake)
- “It makes us feel better about what we have. We get food all the time and other people, they deserve it too.” (Nina)
- “We feel bad. Everybody else is starving and we are pigging out so why not help.” (Grace)

Each of those statements validates student awareness of “us” vs. “the other.” When asked

further, what they meant by “we and our,” students explained that “we,” was a reference to their families in particular and their community of Westview. “Um me and our families here. We have all this food, shelter...we have everything. There are other people who can’t get what they need and are helpless. Our school is definitely one of the more fortunate ones” (Nina). “I mean the kind of people that live in this area, Westview, that go to this school and are not on welfare” (Grace). A few of the students even clearly identified their families as “middle class” and that they have been protected from many struggles to meet basic needs throughout their lives. “I come from a middle class family home. My parents own a business and I go to this school everyday, but I don’t really have to work very hard by myself to get food on my plate” (Grace). “We have a lot more privilege, clean water, gourmet food, sports. I get basketball shoes and new jerseys every year”(Nolan). When I queried about the meaning of the term “they,” students described a group other than themselves, who lacked the access to both basic needs and life luxuries. “They are people worried about clean water and are not worried about shopping like so many of us” (Jake). “They is just poorer people, in other countries”(Janine). I prompted Janine to think more deeply about her comment, as she appeared to blurt out something which came quickly to the tip of her tongue. I asked if poor people were only in other countries. The response, “No” was in unison and unanimous from all the students, rather than just Janine. Janine reworded her comment, and said, “poor people are in Vancouver, but we just don’t really see them around Westview.” Ellie responded to her by saying, “yeah, people anywhere that can’t afford basic needs.” “Yeah,” each of the students replied.

The students all agreed they are in a position in society that permits them to engage in citizenship education opportunities to help others with basic need requirements. When I challenged the students as to whether this position of privilege was ever discussed or if they asked questions about it, each interviewee explained that they never talked about it, they just knew they had more. The discussion of social class is something which has been assumed in today's society to be a thing of the past (Orlowski, 2008a). There is the "meritocratic notion" that hard work and determination will get you where you need to go; however, this is neither the case in Canada nor many other places. It is remarkable that each of these grade seven students has an acute sense of their position in society, and as a result wants to help others; however, this is not enough to re-position those in the margins. A repositioning of those marginalized, oppressed and without access to basic needs, requires an understanding of this stratification. Too complex and early for elementary school? Likely not, as Margaret Mead's quote inspires, "a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

Ideology and what it means is contested; however, Apple (2004) succinctly explains what there is to agree on, which effectively articulates my definition of ideology when speaking about citizenship education at Westview.

What ideology means is problematic usually. Most people seem to agree that one can talk about ideology as referring to some sort of "system" of ideas, beliefs, fundamental commitments, or values about social reality, but here the agreement ends. (Apple, 2004, p. 18)

Students are not learning about their systems of beliefs and thinking and how it affects the ways they view the world and each other. In elementary school, the focus is on developing thinking skills and processes; however, the naming of ideology and beliefs is somewhat foreign territory. It is often thought that students are not ready to learn this, nor are teachers prepared to tackle such seemingly abstract and debatable subject matter. The thoughtful and critical information the students provided in each of the interviews counters this. Grade sevens, if not other intermediate students, are able, and willing (as they have stated) to go deeper and learn more. This could start with learning how ideology is involved in “all aspects of our social, political, and economic lives to such an extent that it is located everywhere”(Orlowski, 2008, p 31). Ross (2000) defines ideology as “the frame in which people fit their understanding of how the world works” (p.50). The grade seven students in this study were hungry for more understanding of how the world works. They deserve a framework which is broad and offers a range of understandings, including counterhegemonic ones, of viewing the world. The students’ responses throughout all the interviews are key evidence that they do indeed value social class and it is important in their identity constructs. It is part of their current motivation to help make a difference, a reason for their involvement. This is not enough to strengthen our democracy and a critical consciousness, it is however a start. Awareness is the first step on the road to education about the influence of class and power on all relations in society.

Promises and Possibilities

Walking away from the interviews, re-reading the data, and reflecting, there are many optimistic happenings with regards to citizenship education at Westview; however, to match the rhetoric about citizenship in British Columbia curriculum documents, and

local board plans, and to ultimately strength a critical democracy, much work has yet to be done. In the last group interview, students made some statements that are suggestions for change. The feeling that educating for citizenship is important was something the students agreed upon, however, important in a way that moves past personal responsibility as a focus, especially in the intemediate grades. "I think education is the most important. You have to teach people how to solve these problems and give them the resources" (Julian). The participants expressed the need for students to take initiative in their own learning and develop their own thinking. In addition, they also emphasized the role of the teacher with regards to providing authentic opportunities for developing critical citizenship. "I think kids should find out on their own, but it is also up to the teachers" (Janine). "If we had a more effective leadership group, kids would know more, then every week or so they could focus on an issue" (Nolan).

One area for possibility lies within the capacity of citizenship education and how many people are authentically reached. "I think the most important thing is that the leadership group should inform people and people in the group should be leaders. That means involving the whole school, not just kids in leadership group" (Julian). More students need to be given the opportunity to develop participatory citizenship, such as the students in leadership do. This however, requires the support of a greater number of staff to facilitate that type of development in the classroom and through other types of groups and activities. There could be the possibility of linking elementary school up with high school civics and social justice classes to work together to explore critical issues in society.

It appears that the promise of elementary school is to provide a variety of citizenship education opportunities. Students even perceived high school as “too late.” Research has shown that shows that students develop their political and social attributes before high school (Hahn 2001; Hess & Torney-Purta, 1967). The perception is that as teenagers there are other focuses and responsibilities at the forefront. “If you want to learn about this (citizenship), you have to learn about it in elementary school. High school is too late because teenagers are lazy and don’t care as much about things like this” (Janine). Although this is a somewhat stereotypical comment generalizing high school students, it does have truth in that, with age, there are more responsibilities. The possibility of changing the format and delivery of citizenship education was also something that arose. A few students felt that classes should do more towards citizenship together and not be so isolated. “We need to have more classes work together and help each other learn. We need people to engage more to get action” (Alex). “Working with the primaries, like the intermediates and primaries together, is like really great. It teaches us how to make a difference with them and then they can look forward to being in our role” (Ellie). Jake pleads that equality of leadership groups across the district is necessary to improve long term commitment to developing citizenship. “I think there should be a leadership group in every elementary school so when we go to high school kids will be more prepared” (Jake). Alex, Ellis, Jake, and Janine’s comments accentuate the value of citizenship education in elementary school, and the necessity for educators, policy makers and management to elevate it to an appropriate level.

There were several things the students’ felt that staff could do differently to improve citizenship education. “Teachers should make students more interested in things

that are happening out there” (Sarah). “They should find a way to get us interested. I remember Mr. Seary...he always would tell us what was happening in the world and that was motivating” (Nolan). “Teachers...in their classrooms...should teach us these issues” (Sarah). “I think it is good if teachers understand that they can do something” (Julian). Julian, Nolan and Sarah, each expressed a desire for educators to link what is happening in the world to make their learning more engaging and meaningful, and not simply through current events. They felt that the issues in the world could help form a basis for learning, and seeing how they could make a difference as citizens. The students without a doubt look to their teachers as sources of inspiration and knowledge. They value the lessons that teachers give which relate to the world and challenge them to think critically about what is happening. In order for teachers, however, to deliver the promise of a more authentic citizenship education, there has to be a change away from accountability measures, increased standardization of curriculum, and a rigid focus learning outcomes. In order for the possibility of authentic citizenship education to be woven into the daily curriculum, teachers need the promise of fewer curriculum expectations and standards.

Conclusion

The participants in this study were a thoughtful, engaging and interesting group of students. Their comments into the nature of citizenship education at Westview provided insight about not only their own experiences with the citizenship education, but shed light onto the experiences through the lens of the student population and community. The students revealed that the citizenship education experiences at Westview are largely ones that develop personally responsible citizens. In addition, the development of personally responsible citizens plays a dominant role in both classroom and school wide citizenship

education opportunities. Data revealed that a select few students in leadership group have the opportunity to develop participatory citizenship. Social justice citizenship is developed, in an authentic sense, only through anti-bullying programs. Although the students thought critically throughout the study, when questioned about critical thinking opportunities, and opportunities to question systems and structures, the students were at a loss. Awareness is a foremost result of all the citizenship opportunities at Westview. The students in the study felt they and all the students at Westview are aware of challenges in the world. Each of the students involved in the study should be commended for their desire to make a difference. This possibility of making a difference provided agency for student involvement. The students themselves, although humble in their recognition of their positions of privilege, also revealed that they have meritocratic tendencies in thought. There was the belief that all people have equal access to citizenship if they work hard, and anyone can participate in the activities at school. However, the issue of gender and English second language was cited as a barrier to participation in some citizenship education opportunities. One of the most important discoveries was the student desire for authentic experiences, critical thinking, classroom links to the school experiences, and hands on real life learning about social challenges. The nature of the experiences with citizenship education at Westview fall primarily into personal responsibility; however, there is vast potential for developing the spectrum of participatory citizenship and social justice citizenship.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The Matryoshka Doll Principle

Throughout the study, I experienced the Matryoshka doll principle. After each interview and scrupulous analysis, I uncovered recognizable relationships between each layer of the data. Each layer related to an earlier notion, yet was also its own consideration. Each question and answer created more questions from which the research could springboard. The foremost difference between the Matryoshka dolls and this study is that at the end of opening the dolls there is one nice little perfect doll to admire, however, at the end of this study, there is no neat diminutive package, rather an open window of prospect for continued research.

The prime reason for doing this research is to understand more about the nature of citizenship education opportunities and student experiences with regards to those opportunities in the context of elementary school environment. The aim is to more deeply comprehend the impact of citizenship education on students, with the hopes of making some conclusions about the nature of citizenship education. Further, another intention is to speculate on a more general level about student experiences learning to be personally responsible, participatory and socially just citizens, and then determine whether schools are reproducing the views of the dominant majority which maintains a small minority in positions of power and privilege. All of this, with the ultimate goal of providing possibilities for a more hopeful citizenship education framework in elementary school. The motivation was spurred from the changing nature of citizenship in society and the complex meanings and history of citizenship. The answers discovered are anything but black and white. I underestimated both the complexity and the possibilities citizenship

education at Westview would present. There is no one way to educate students to be critical contributing citizens, however, it is essential to have a clear understanding of what is happening with regards to citizenship education and what is not happening, and then tackle the rationale for why and why not. There is a necessity to learn about the reality of citizenship education in order to create change for a better society and a more critical engaged citizenry. A citizenry, that epitomizes personal responsibility, political participation and social justice.

The outcomes of the study were multidimensional. This research project showed how constructs and tensions are woven together forming the reality of experiences at elementary school. The aspects of pedagogy that guide teaching and learning are in struggle with the reality of daily issues and challenges. There is tension between theory and practice and between the various experiences of citizenship education in the school setting. Citizenship education at Westview operates, for the most part, as a vision for students and educators of what it means to be personally responsible, ultimately, what is perceived to be a “good citizen.” The opportunities in the school and the classrooms develop and reinforce students’ growth of character; acquiring traits of honesty, responsibility and knowledge of how to abide by the laws/rules. At Westview, students aspire to contribute in an effort to make a difference in the community. Students are educated through various means to be personally responsible citizens, such as in class and school wide curriculum. Development of this area of citizenship is witnessed in the activities that are both voluntary and mandatory, school wide, and individual. Students at Westview expressed a strong awareness of the need to help others and a frank recognition

of their position of privilege. This invigorated their aspiration to help others and make a difference.

Another theme of the citizenship education opportunities is agency. Agency was acquired from peer involvement in the opportunities, the presence of an element of fun, and student impression that the opportunity was worthwhile. Factors that relate to children must still not be forgotten, even when discussing complex issues. Children want to take part when their friends are involved and when there are more people involved. Also, they want to take part when something is fun. This adds an element to citizenship education that places pressure on the educators to ensure that opportunities are enjoyable. Students are willing to, as was witnessed at Westview, dedicate time and energy to learning about citizenship and making a difference, however, the activity must engage them. The students themselves recognize the importance of citizenship education opportunities and will self select to participate if the activity is well crafted and seems helpful.

Another outcome of the study was the recognition of what was missing in citizenship education opportunities. The absence of opportunities for students to develop participatory and social justice citizenship is incontestable. The reasons for this absence, however, are multifaceted and highly contentious. Participatory citizenship and social justice citizenship, to be reached on the level as prescribed by Westheimer and Kahne, confronts systems, structures and oppression through action to make change. In order to teach this to students, educators themselves, must be cognizant of the oppression, marginalization, and perpetuation of neoliberal principles existing in society. One needs to step outside of the neutral zone and take a risk to teach from a political space.

Teaching is notoriously thought to be apolitical; however, it is far from that. Ideology, and beliefs can either maintain or challenge the status quo. Teacher education programs must begin to embrace critical thinking and instruction of future educators to have a capacity to teach from a political zone, in an appropriate yet confident way. For citizenship education to have meaning we, those who have committed to educating children, must create that meaning. It is a choice as to whether to teach inside the safety zone, transmitting knowledge and believing that teaching personal responsibility alone will make a difference in our world, or to make the decision to step outside the boundaries of neutrality and impart the ability to question systems and structures in society. People need to be brave enough to move past apolitical attitudes, and promote questionings of all levels of society. Educators must work “to understand how differences shape the degree to which we engage as citizens in the world” (Tupper, 2006, p 45).

A good starting point for Westview would be for staff to evaluate current citizenship education pedagogy and opportunities using a comprehensive critical framework, such as the one proposed by Johnson and Morris (2010). This model combines ideas of the scholars, Westheimer and Kahne (2003, 2004), Veugelers (2007), and Parker (1998, 2006, 2007) into a framework for critical citizenship education. Exploring not only the mandated curriculum, but the hidden and null curriculum within the school would be a critical component. Starting with where the students are and exploring the position they hold in society would provide a concrete frame of reference. Uncovering the existing neoliberal hegemonic devices, such as standardization and marketization of schools, and confronting the impact that has on education would prove powerful in grade six and seven classrooms.

Contributions to the Theoretical Conversation

Amidst the myriad of conceptions of citizenship that illustrate its multidimensional nature; the teaching of citizenship at the elementary school level appears to primarily target a confined focal point. While politicians, historians, policy makers can debate the bona fide definition of citizenship; what purpose does that have if children are not educated about the spectrum of definitions and contested notions that accompany citizenship? The students in this study, even surrounded by their eagerness and fervor to thoughtfully participate in discussions where their opinions mattered, had never previously contemplated citizenship as being composed of different elements (in this case, personal responsibility, participatory and social justice). The question of membership, what it means to be a citizen, and the conditions surrounding citizenship are outlying aspects of Westview student's citizenship education experience. The works of Tupper, Vinson, Ross and others in the realm of citizenship education, repeatedly express uncovering hegemonic structures and identification of hidden neoliberal principles as part of disrupting patterns of inequity, oppression and marginalization. These acts, however necessary and detrimental, are not instigated at this elementary level largely due to the tensions that lay within the realm of education. That leaves the spectrum of researchers and theorists alike, with a question of how to alter that course.

It is not to profess that all teaching of basic personal responsibility and principles about actual citizenship and government should be tossed aside. As Oldenquist (1980) states, "teaching citizenship skills without teaching children a sense of belonging to their local and national communities is like teaching moral reasoning without teaching moral principles" (p. 33). He advocates for citizenship teaching to begin with information about

our nation, government and ideals, in order to provide grounds for developing pride and affection. He warns against teaching students right away the problems and injustices in the world for fear of it leading to alienation and learned cynicism (Oldenquist, 1980). At Westview, students feel that their experiences with opportunities to develop citizenship were appropriate in primary grades. The students expressed the need to go further and more critically in their learning about citizenship at the intermediate grades. Rather, if the teaching of personal responsibility, community and nation can be the building blocks for critically engaging with and questioning positions and structures, citizenship education could advance.

The idea of a common good is the chief premise of citizenship education at Westview, where students are regularly taught to be personally responsible for their acts that either harm or benefit the community. Most of the students at Westview, although aware of the importance of helping others, and trying to “make a difference,” are blatantly unaware of the realities that inhibit or encourage social, political and economic participation in society. It is this gap between theory and practice that needs to be bridged. There needs to be an appropriate way to work towards a system of citizenship education that is critical and confronts inequalities, while simultaneously not teaching a doom and gloom way of viewing the world to children. There needs to be a way to validate students as individuals, yet also as common members of a school community; recognizing differences and various histories and experiences with citizenship. As Tupper (2006) espouses, “impossible citizenship denies or ignores the false universalism embedded in liberal democracies and as such fails to cultivate a deep understanding of inequities that exist in the world” (45). It is possible citizenship, which is the goal;

Possible citizenship that avoids teaching the universalism of citizenship, and makes known inequities, however, with the overall goal of taking action to make change.

Implications for Schools and Citizenship Education

Should schools stop focusing on teaching students to be personally responsible? Definitely not! This aspect, and the palpable focus on educating students to be aware of themselves and others, is a building block for more critical citizenship education. A foundation is necessary to provide hope and promise for a good future, before the absolute reality of oppression and marginalization.

In returning to Marshall's (1950) original definition of citizenship, as "full membership in a community," it is important to point out that the absence of political and critical citizenship can be viewed as supporting the universalism of citizenship, which was preached in Marshall's definition. This approach fails to address the complexities of citizenship and the variance in experience by groups depending on position within society. Just as in liberal democracy, differences of class, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation are masked by a discourse of universalism of the "good citizen" and responsible student. "Personally responsibility and participatory citizenship without a self-reflective and critical understanding of power and privilege may do more to sustain current inequalities than to disrupt them" (Tupper, 2006, p 48). At Westview, the focus on personal responsibility appears to develop a level of awareness that involvement is important and helping others is a part of what you should do as a good citizen. This seems not to have done more harm than good, but rather created an overall tone amongst the students that caring for oneself and each other is imperative. Nevertheless, the understanding of power and privilege is such at the peripheral level that no disruption or

action to end injustice is taking place. The standardization of education, surmounted pressures, and increased accountability on teachers is partly responsible for this. A curriculum focused teaching approach to education, which puts pressures on educators to cover vast learning outcomes and prepare students to be economic contributors, triggers a failure in critically educating students.

All the responsibility cannot be placed upon educators. The pressures in the classroom and the school are increasingly complex and diverse, with children speaking various languages, having numerous special needs and little time and resources to provide for all the students. Each educator is responsible for ensuring that their class of students each year are literate and mathematically competent, which is where most of the focus is placed. After adding in science, social studies, physical education and career and health education, there leaves little room for citizenship education. Hence, if something is going to fall by the wayside, it will be an area for which there is no pressure or accountability. If citizenship education is to shift in importance, many things need to happen. First, the education system, which elevates literacy and mathematics to high levels, has to shift a focus to authentic citizenship education as an integral part of each grade, that is woven throughout the subject areas. This would entail a movement away from neoliberal principles where the focus is students as future contributors to the market economy. This would necessitate all stakeholders in education stepping out on more unmapped territory and challenging and transforming the curriculum and the way that it molds views of the world (Vinson & Ross, 2001). Second, there has to be professional development for teachers to help them learn strategies and ways to critically engage student in questioning throughout the curriculum and how to appropriately yet honestly

confront places of privilege and power. This is a complex concept and to transform pedagogy to practice, critical citizenship education must be imbedded in professional development and teacher education.

It is a tension filled topic that citizenship education is often linked to democracy. Citizenship education is informed by an overwhelming acceptance that democracy does indeed exist. “Not surprisingly, there exists a democratic disparity (not to be confused with a democratic deficit), a larger social condition that permits some of us to live within a democratic system and others to be marginal in it” (Tupper, 2006, p. 78). The liberal conception of citizenship that implies all citizens in a democratic state are equally protected and that rights and responsibilities are balanced to give all citizens equal status, is one that permeates into the schools. If education is supposed to critique these structures, then educators must be trained in teaching these issues. They themselves may embrace a vision of our society as equal and democratic. It is hard, however, to expect educators to take on the role of confronting systems and structures without adequate training. If teacher education programs embrace teaching as a simple craft which one can develop techniques for, rather than as a place of examination of curriculum and society, little change will be realized. Teacher candidates and current education professionals could begin by reading the article written by Peggy McIntosh (1988), “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.” This examination of privilege is far from comfortable but encourages questioning of the one’s core beliefs. In an era of higher levels of accountability and a politically unstable climate, it is with a weary heart to ask teachers to take on this dramatically different role. Some of the focus on curriculum and linear expectations is a result of accountability measures and overall distrust in schools.

This climate of distrust and subsequential loss of confidence, created by policy makers, and legislators, has pushed teachers to prove they are competent. “The irony is that the accountability movement pushes educators for results but does little to allow them to take responsibility for the relation of their curricula” (McKernan, 2008, p.204). It is difficult to ask teachers to critically examine systems and structures, and to step out of the neutral zone, when often they are reprimanded for bringing politics into the classroom. There needs to be the understanding that teaching is a political act, and that teaching from a political stance does not mean teaching one’s own political views.

The implementation of civic and political learning, in unison with social justice education is imperative. As shown in research done through the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), which tested 32,000 students across nine countries, “schools can make a difference in fostering civic and political participation in students,” later as adults (Torney-Purta & Amadeo, 2003, p. 273). Aspects such as school culture, active engagement, explicit teaching, and the opportunity to contribute to the community all make a difference.

The pursuit of a more just and equitable society requires more than individual efforts to make a difference. Students need to consider issues of external efficacy to whom and in what contexts do governments and other institutions respond. Attention to politics and to the ways institutions respond to or create social problem is also essential. (Westheimer & Kahne, 2006, p. 295)

The absence of the political and direct teaching about democracy (and questioning of it as well) is something which is not difficult to change. Citizenship education from an early

age can start by students learning about government, politics and society, in a thoughtful and questioning way, as opposed to just facts. Providing students with scenarios and having them learn to identify the issues, perspectives and struggles of various groups will help illustrate more clearly different groups experiences in society as citizens.

Offerings for the Future: Making the Rhetoric a Reality

Education has the power to educate people and to transform society; thus, schools assume an instrumental role through developing critical thinking and deliberative citizens capable of participating critically in a democracy. What is taught in the school is predominantly rooted from the curriculum and has, throughout history, represented a combat zone of opposing messages. It is scarcely debated that the messages of mission statements and learning outcomes, namely in social studies education, profess grandiose statements of greatness and claims to producing a universally “good” citizen. Interestingly, in British Columbia, there is no “citizenship education curriculum.” Social responsibility is as close as one will get to learning outcomes for citizenship education. The Social Responsibility Performance Standards (Appendix C), however, simply serve as benchmarks for where the students should be. Although the social responsibility framework comes with ideas and samples to help students learn the skills, there is no program nor curriculum attached to these standards. With regards to the social studies curriculum, it is usually left up to the discretion of the teacher, or on the other hand the textbook and its neoliberal devices, to integrate citizenship education.

The curriculum however, goes far beyond the written formal curriculum. The curriculum, “is what the students experience,” not what is written in volumes of The British Columbia Integrated Resource Packages or proposed in school plans (Ross, 2006,

p. 11). The curriculum is the authenticity of what takes place between students, teachers and the institution of the school. Each element interacts to impact the learning and success of each student. Schools in British Columbia are on a path, as Tupper (2009) advocates, for a perspective on citizenship education that endorses a sense of caring for the self and the other, while working to expose and improve conditions of oppression. The road is long and, from the results of this study, the journey has just started at Westview. There is no question that Westview Elementary School whole heartedly encourages students to care for themselves and each other, situating personal responsibility as the utmost priority. Exposing conditions of marginalization and oppression has a long way to go. Before tackling that aspect of citizenship education, the universalism of citizenship will have to be challenged and the nature of citizenship education examined more closely for all groups, cultures and genders.

Parker (2003) says that participation without enlightenment may actually be worse than apathy. The students at Westview learned a great deal about how to serve, collecting food for the foodbank, raising money for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, collecting money for schools in Africa and the list goes on, but they did not learn much about how to affect political change. This non-controversial get-things-done approach allows the students to see immediate results but does not challenge institutions in power. Citizenship at Westview is constructed as universal in that students in the whole school are believed equally capable of participating in citizenship activities, and thus of being “good citizens.” The disparities in participation are viewed as individual choice, however from further questioning some participation was exclusive due to language barriers or disability. It is necessary to acknowledge how gender, culture, race, and class effect the

construction of citizenship. The vision of citizenship embedded in the opportunities at school matters. “Whether or not a curriculum emphasized structural issues or questions or social justice significantly influence the kinds of civics and political insights and commitments that students developed” (Westheimer & Kahne, 2006, p. 294).

We must question how the curriculum is propagated. It is challenging to critique the curriculum with students and unpack why traditions of knowledge are woven in the content. Some teachers may choose the path of least resistance and present the curriculum un-problematically and uncritically, thus avoiding potential conflict or anxiety, especially in the tense political climate in British Columbia. Without a true questioning of the reasons for “the way the world is,” there is a passive acceptance of current circumstance and a general consent to accept this as unavoidable. Many of the opportunities present for developing citizenship at Westview have qualities that conceive the student as the knower-citizen, who is only a spectator, and not actively engaged in creating and re-creating democratic understandings.

Teaching methods that are openly political and urge their own critique are pivotal in classroom practices that see to work against the appearance of more modern forms of fascist ideology and practice. Pedagogies that encourage one-dimensional understandings of the world, obscure the objectives and interests served by the dominant forms of knowledge and fail to foster active learning that explore multiple possibilities for understanding are not less ideological and clearly more deceptive. (Ross, 2000, p. 53)

Schools often reprimand teachers for dealing with controversial political issues in the classroom and students who challenge policies or practices are sometimes viewed as

trouble makers. “Education for democratic citizenship needs to model democracy, and schools must provide students with dispositional qualities necessary to cultivate a far greater sense of political voice” (Sears & Hyslop-Margison, 2006, p 21).

Future Research

After a thoughtful final discussion group with the students in the study, more and more questions which were beyond the scope of this research began to unfold. The findings are both hopeful and provide room for improving citizenship education. The central remaining questions explore the role of educators, both teachers and administrators, in the system. Also, there is the need to more clearly understand the barriers to implementing authentic critical citizenship education. An understanding of these barriers is necessary in order to determine steps for making change.

Another key question, is how to shift from acceptance of the concepts of democracy and equality and develop a more critical attitude. We cannot judge the failure of schools to interrogate concepts of citizenship, such as democracy, freedom of speech, and equality, because the modern conceptions of knowledge often promote acceptance of these rather than active inquiry into the problems of everyday life.

Such conceptualizations of citizenship prevent the full realization of democracy as they attempt to mask social and political inequalities marked by individual and group differences. Old versions of citizenship fail to truly understand the conditions of oppression that operate within our society. (Tupper, 2006, p. 52)

Citizenship opportunities do, however, have the potential to engage students in meaningful learning.

Westview, without a doubt, cultivates personal responsibility and qualities that foster appreciation for helping others. It will continue to need to make greater strides forward and dramatically alter the methods of citizenship education instruction with regards to cultivating a political and social justice voice. Anthony Giddens (2000) argues, “education for citizenship has to be education of the critical spirit so that students may engage critically with their own positions in society, privileged or not” (p. 25). The last key direction for further research is a deeper inquiry on how practices and pedagogy affect citizenship learning. Further study must be done on how education in schools shapes students attitudes, knowledge and behaviour related to citizenship-personal responsibility, political participation, and social justice orientation. Furthermore, this could be interrogated on a larger level, across various demographics to compare the influence of position and privilege on citizenship education experiences.

There are current government intentions to shift the format and focus of the British Columbia curriculum. The hope of the future British Columbia curriculum, is to “prescribe the minimum so we maximize the potential for innovation and critical thinking and personalized learning based on who the kids are in the room” (Dockendorf, June 2012). This direction opens up many possibilities for integrating citizenship education, and critical thinking and questioning, on all levels. We know that curriculum is not the transformation of education but can influence how education is transformed. If, and when, these new directions are implemented and mandated, further research on the nature of citizenship education learning will need to be done.

Conclusion

This research has exposed to me the underlying strength and potential of citizenship education opportunities. It has shown the significance and relevance of these experiences on student's duration in elementary school, as well as the accompanying challenges and tensions. As one of the students said, "if there is a group of students in every school, like Westview, who is willing to create something, and make a difference, anything is possible" (Julian). I share this quote to illustrate the positive impact of citizenship education opportunities at Westview and hopefulness felt by the students.

Reflection on the theory, constructs and tension and practice of citizenship education had been beneficial. In my role as administrator-researcher, I am left with thoughts about how to use the research for positive change. I, myself, cannot change the systems and structures that I have cited as needing attention to truly alter the path of citizenship education; however, I can engage with the staff, students and the school community to help educate, inspire and work together to create change. The staff at Westview, aware of my role as administrator-researcher, have expressed interest in learning about the research and working together to apply it to the school. I plan to provide an opportunity for staff to hear my research and then ask questions, share their insights and hopefully work together to create new forms of teaching and learning about citizenship. I plan to also share the results of the study with teacher candidates at Westview. "Critical pedagogy linked with personal action research and cooperative forms of teaching and learning not only support democratic values but includes a structure and form of teaching and learning from which all educators can benefit" (McKernan, 2008, p. 138). Yes, this may be somewhat foreign or scary to confront current practice and

examine pedagogy through a critical lense; however, “the thing about education is that it leads to unanticipated outcomes because it is education, and not training or indoctrination” (McKernan, 2008, p. 152).

The most spectacular finding from this work is the students’ strong desire to make a difference and their level of engagement with citizenship education opportunities. It is that, student interest and agency, which can be used as fervor for development of future citizenship education opportunities. The student’s thoughtful perceptions and desires to go deeper and learn on a more critical level gives educators encouragement for teaching more politically and from a social justice standpoint. Citizenship education in the social reconstruction perspective, through which this study was conducted, aims to improve society and empower students “with the understandings, abilities, and values necessary to critique and ultimately improve their society” (Clark & Case, 2008, p.18). As educators, knowledge, of what is working and what needs to be altered, can be harnessed to move towards visions of citizenship education that will ultimately make a positive impact on democratic society. Embarking on an adventure with curriculum does not follow the common means-ends ideology in schools today, but operates on inquiry, curiosity and the creation of new knowledge, which allows for the improvement of the citizenship narrative in British Columbia. Challenging positionality and interrogating complicity in carrying out “the curriculum” can ultimately lead to increased possibilities for citizenship education; therefore, it can improve future experiences as citizens living in a critical democracy. “For how one lives ultimately depends upon one’s education-what one knows and understands and how one uses that knowledge and understanding to illuminate and change one’s life” (McKernan, 2008, p. 98). A reimagining of the citizenship would see

schools serving less as distributors of knowledge, and more as hubs for inquiry and the formation of knowledge, hence critical citizenship. I leave you with the words of Paulo Freire (1998):

Yes, citizenship—above all in a society like ours, of such authoritarian and racially, sexually, and class-based discriminatory traditions—is really an invention, a political production. In this sense, one who suffers any [or all] of the discriminations ... does not enjoy the full exercise of citizenship as a peaceful and recognized right. On the contrary, it is a right to be reached and whose conquest makes democracy grow substantively. Citizenship implies freedom. ...

Citizenship is not obtained by chance: It is a construction that, never finished, demands we fight for it. It demands commitment, political clarity, coherence, decision. For this reason a democratic education cannot be realized apart from an education of and for citizenship. (p. 90)

REFERENCES

- Adsett, M. (2003). Change in political era and demographic weights as explanations of youth disenfranchisement in federal elections in Canada, 1965-2000. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 6(3), 248-264.
- Alcoff, L. (1991). The problem of speaking for other. In J. Roof & R. Wiegman (Eds.), *Cultural Critique* (pp. 5-23). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Alleman, J. E., & Rosaen, C. L. (1991). The cognitive, social-emotional, and moral development characteristics of students: Basis for elementary and middle school social studies. In J.P. Shaver (Ed.), *Handbook of research on social studies and learning* (pp. 121-133). New York: MacMillan Publishing Company.
- Apple, M. (2004). *Ideology and curriculum*. (3rd ed.). New York & London: Routledge.
- Banks, J. A. (2004). Introduction: Democratic citizenship education in multicultural societies. In J. A. Banks (Ed.), *Diversity and Citizenship Education* (pp. 3-15). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Banks, J. A., & Nguyen, D. (2008). Diversity and citizenship education: historical, theoretical, and philosophical issues. In L. S. Levstik, & C. A. Tyson (Eds.), *Handbook of research in social studies education* (pp. 65-80). New York: Routledge.
- Barnes, A. (2010). Youth voter turnout in Canada: Trends and issues. Legal and Legislative Affairs Division. Library of Parliament. No-2012-19E.
- Biesta, G. (2007). Education and the democratic person: Towards a political conception of democratic education. *Teachers College Record*, 109(3), 740-769.

- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2006). *British Columbia Integrated Resource Package for Social Studies K-7*. Retrieved from <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/ssk7.pdf>
- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2008). *Safe, caring and orderly schools: A guide*. Retrieved from www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sco/
- Brodie, J. (2002). Three stories of Canadian citizenship. In R. Menzies, R. Adamoski, & D. E. Chunn, (Eds.), *Contesting citizenship: Historical readings*. Toronto: Broadview Press.
- Citizen. (2009). *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (11th, Edition). Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Citizen (2012). *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*. Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/citizen>
- Clark, P., & Case, R. (2008). Four purposes of citizenship education. In P. Clark & R. Case (Eds.), *The Canadian anthology of social studies: Issues and strategies for elementary teachers* (pp. 18-29). Vancouver, BC: Pacific Educational Press.
- Collin, C. & Jensen, H. (2009). A statistical profile of poverty in Canada. Canada: Library of Parliament Research Publications. Retrieved from <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/prb0917-e.htm>
- Cook, S., & Westheimer, J. (2006). Introduction: Democracy and education. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 29(2), 347-358.
- Counts, G. S. (1932). *Dare the school build a new social order?* Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press.

- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: Sage.
- Deleon, A. P., & E. W. Ross (Eds.). (2010). One the edge of history: Towards a new vision of social studies education. In *Critical Theories, Radical Pedagogies and Social Education*, (pp. 1-8). Location: Sense Publishers.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York: Macmillian.
- Dewey, J. (1937/1985). *John Dewey: The later works 1925-1953 Vol 7*. J.A. Boydston (Ed.). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Dewing, M., & Leman, M. (2006). Canadian Multiculturalism. Library of Parliament. Parliamentary Information and Research Service.
- Dockendorf, M. (2012). Vancouver School Board Presentation of New Curriculum Documents. Vancouver, BC.
- Dunn, R. (2003). Growing good citizens with a world-centered curriculum. *Educational Leadership*. 60(2), 10-13
- Edwards, B. F. R. (2010). Who do we think we are? Writing on citizenship and identify in the early twenty-first century. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 44(1), 221-228.
- Englund, T. (2000). Rethinking democracy and education: Towards an education of deliberative citizens. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 32(2), 305-313.
- Feldmann, D. (2007). Citizenship education: Current perspectives from teachers in three states. *Education Research Quarterly*, 30(1), 3-15.
- Freedom House. (2010). *Freedom in the World Survey 2010*. retrieved from www.freedomhouse.org

- Freeman, M., & Mathison, S. (2009). *Researching children's experiences*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Free the Children. (2011). We Day. Retrieved from <http://www.weday.com/>
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy and civic courage*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Giddens, A. (2000). *The third way and its critics*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Gidengil, E., Blais, A., Nevitte, N., & Nadeau, R. (2004). *Citizens: The Canadian democratic audit*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Giroux, H. A. (2001). *Theory and resistance in education: Towards a pedagogy for the opposition*. London: Bergin and Garvey.
- Glenn, E. (2000). Citizenship and inequality: Historical and global perspectives. *Social Problems*, 47(1), 1-20.
- Hahn, C. (2001). Democratic understanding: Cross-national perspectives. *Theory Into Practice*, 40(1), 14-22.
- Heater, D. (2002). The history of citizenship education: A comparative outline. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 55(3), 457.
- Hebert, Y., & Wilkinson, L. (2006). Diversity and democratic values: implications for public policy. In G. H. Richardson & D. Blades (Eds.). *Troubling the canon of citizenship education* (pp. 31-42). New York: Peter Lang.
- Hess, R. D. (2008). Controversial issues and democratic discourse. In L. Levstik & C. Tyson (Eds.), *Handbook of Research in Social Studies Education* (pp. 124-136). New York: Routledge.

- Hess, R.D. & Torney-Purta, J.V. (1967). *The development of political attitudes in children*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing.
- Hyslop-Margison, E. J., & Sears, A. (2006). *Neo-liberalism, globalization and human capital learning: Reclaiming education for democratic citizenship*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.
- Hytten, K. (2009). Deweyan democracy in a globalized world. *Educational Theory*, 55(4), 395-408.
- Hursh, D. (2001). Neoliberalism and the control of teachers, students, and learning: The rise of standards, standardization and accountability. *Cultural Logic* 4(1).
Retrieved from <http://clogic.eserver.org/4-1/hursh.html>
- Johnson, L., & Morris, P. (2010). Towards a framework for critical citizenship education. *The Curriculum Journal*, 21(1), p. 77-96.
- Joshee, R. (2004). Citizenship and multicultural education in Canada: From assimilation to social cohesion. In J. A. Banks (Ed.), *Diversity and citizenship education* (pp. 127-156). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Kahne, J., & Westheimer, J. (2006). The limits of political efficacy: Educating citizens for a democratic society. *Political Science and Politics*, 39(2), 289-296.
- Kelly, D. M., & Brandes, G. M. (2010). Social justice needs to be everywhere: Imagining the future of anti-oppression education in teacher preparation. *Alberta Journal of Education*, 56(4), 388-402.
- Kincheloe, J. (2005). *Critical constructivism*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

- Kohli, W. (2000). Teaching in the danger zone: Democracy and difference. In D. W. Hursh & E.W. Ross (Eds.) *Democratic social education: Social studies for social change* (pp. 23-42). New York: Falmer Press.
- Levstik, L. (2008) What happens in social studies classrooms? Research on k-12 socialstudies practice. In L.Levstik & C. Tyson (Eds). *Handbook of Research on Social Studies Education* (pp.50-65). New York: Routledge.
- Marshall, T. H. (1950). *Citizen, social class and other essays*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Marshall, T. H. (1964). *Class, citizenship and social development*. New York: Doubleday and Company.
- Mathison, S., & Ross, E. W. (Eds.). (2008). *Battleground schools* (Vols. 1-2). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- McIntosh, P. (1990). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. Retrieved from <http://www.library.wisc.edu/edvrc/docs/public/pdfs/LIReadings/InvisibleKnapsack.pdf>
- McKernan, J. (2008). *Curriculum and imagination: Process theory, pedagogy and action research*. London: Routledge.
- McLaren, P. (1989). *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education*. Longman: New York.
- Meier, D. (2003). So what does it take to build a school for democracy? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 85(1), 15-21.

- Merryfield, M. M., & Subedi, B. (2007). Decolonizing the mind for world centered global education. In N. Burbules, & C. Torres (Eds.), *Globalization and education: Critical perspectives* (pp. 283-295). New York: Routledge.
- Osborne, K. (2000). Public schooling and citizenship in Canada. Retrieved from <http://schoolandsociety2012.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/49885826/Osborne-Citizenship2000.pdf>
- Oldenquist, A. (1980). On the Nature of Citizenship. *Educational Leadership*, 10, 30-34.
- Orlowski, P. (2008a). Social class: The forgotten identity marker in social studies education. *New Proposals: Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry*, 1(2), 29-47.
- Orlowski, P. (2008b). Youth “participation” & democracy: Reflections on teaching Civic Studies 11 in British Columbia. *Our Schools, Our Selves*, 17(2), 109-122.
- Orlowski, P. (2009). Teaching for and about democracy, including its flaws. *Democracy & Education*, 18(2), 54-61.
- Palys, T., & Atchison, C. (2008). *Research decisions: Quantitative and qualitative perspectives* (4th Ed.). Scarborough, ON: Thomson Nelson.
- Payne, C. (2003). More than a symbol of freedom, education for liberation and democracy. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 85(1), 22-28.
- Pateman, C. (1989). *The disorder of women: Democracy, feminism and political theory*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press
- Parker, W. C. (1996). Advanced Ideas about Democracy: Towards a pluralist conception of citizen education. *Teachers College Record*, 98, 104-125.

- Parker, W. C. (2001). Toward enlightened political engagement. In W. B. Stanley (Ed.), *Critical issues in social studies research for the 21st century* (pp. 97-118). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.
- Parker, W. C. (2003). *Teaching democracy: unity and diversity in public life*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Parker, W. C. (2007). Diversity, globalization, and democratic education. In J. A. Banks (Ed.), *Diversity and Citizenship Education* (pp. 433-456). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Parker, W. C. (2008). Knowing and doing in democratic citizenship education. In L. S. Levstik, & C. A. Tyson (Eds.), *Handbook of research in social studies education* (pp. 65-80). New York: Routledge.
- Richardson, G. H., & Blades, D. (2006). *Troubling the Canon of Citizenship Education*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Richardson, G. & Abbott, L. (2009). Between the national and the global: Exploring tensions in Canadian citizenship education. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 9(3), 377-394.
- Robertson, S. (2009). Globalization, education governance, and citizenship regimes: New democratic deficits and social injustices. In W. Ayers, T. Quinn & D. Stovall (Eds.). *Handbook of Social Justice in Education* (pp. 542-553). New York: Routledge.
- Ross, E. W. (2000). Negotiating the social studies curriculum. In E.W. Ross (Ed.), *The social studies curriculum: Purposes, problems, and possibilities* (3rd Ed.) (pp. 319-332). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Ross, E. W. (2006). The struggle for the social studies curriculum. In E. W. Ross (Ed.). *The Social Studies Curriculum: Problems, Purposes and Possibilities* (3rd ed.). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Ross, E. W., & Gibson, R. (2007). *Neoliberalism and education reform*. Hampton Press: New Jersey.
- Rys, F. (2010). The politics of youthful antipolitics: representing the 'issue' of youth participation in politics. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 13(2), 181–190.
- Sassen, S. (2005). The repositioning of citizenship. *The New Centennial Review*, 3(2), 41-66.
- Sears, A. M., Clarke, G. M., & Hughes, A. S. (1998). Learning democracy in a pluralist society: Building a research base for citizenship education in Canada. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada: University of New Brunswick.
- Schiro, M. S. (2008). *Curriculum theory: conflicting visions and enduring concerns*. Sage Publications: California.
- Shultz, L. (2007). Educating for global citizenship: Conflicting agendas and understandings. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 53(3), 248-258.
- Stanley, T. (2003). White supremacy and the rhetoric of educational indoctrination: A Canadian case study. In J. Barman & M. Gleason (Eds.), *Children, teachers, and schools in the history of British Columbia*. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises.
- Stanley, W. B. (1992). *Curriculum for utopia: Social reconstructionism and critical pedagogy in the post modern era*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Stanley, W. B. (2001). *Critical issues in social studies research for the 21st century*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Statistics Canada. (2006). 2006 Census Data. Retrieved from

http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=933__&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&Data=Count&SearchText=Vancouver&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=&GeoCode=933

Teitelbaum, S. (2008). Charity begins at school. *Educational Leadership*, 65(7), 80-82.

Thobani, S. (2007). *Exalted subjects: studies in making of race and nation in Canada*.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Torney-Purta, J., & Amadeo, J. (2003). A cross-national analysis of political and civic involvement among adolescents. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 36(2), 269-274.

Tupper, J. (2006). Education and the im-possibilities of citizenship. In G. Richardson & D. Blades (Eds). *Troubling the canon of citizenship education* (pp. 45-54). New York: Peter Lang.

Tupper, J. (2007). From care-less to care-full: education for citizenship in schools and beyond. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*. 53(3), 259-272.

Tupper, J. (2009, Winter). Unsafe waters, stolen sisters, and social studies: Troubling democracy and the meta-narrative of universal citizenship. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 77-94.

UNESCO (1998). Citizenship education for the 21st century. Retrieved from

http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/TLSF/theme_b/mod07/mod07task03/appendix.htm#text

Urrieta, L. J., & Brown, A. (2010). Gumbo and Menudo and the scraps of citizenship. In

A. P. DeLeon & E. W. Ross (Eds.) *Critical theories, radical pedagogies and social education* (pp. 65-83). Rotterdam: Sense Publishing

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Unwrapping Citizenship:

Getting inside the nature of citizenship education

Student Assent Letter for Research Participation

January 15, 2012

Dear Student:

We are writing to invite you to participate in a research study being conducted at Queen Mary Elementary School. This letter will provide you with more information about the study and explain what your participation will involve. You are receiving this letter because you are in grade seven, the group from which students will be selected for the study.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to understand the nature of the opportunities present in elementary school for children to learn about citizenship-in terms of developing personal responsibility, social justice and participation. In addition, we seek to understand how these opportunities are experienced by students and the effect the experiences have. Your participation is important, as it would help us understand how to better create authentic and rich opportunities to prepare students for citizenship when they reach adulthood.

Investigators

The Principal Investigator for this study is Dr. E. Wayne Ross from the University of British Columbia (Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy). He is the faculty advisor for Shannon Burton (Co-Investigator) and is supervising this research as part of the completion of a Master of Arts degree at the University of British Columbia (Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy). This research will be used to complete the thesis requirement for this degree. Ms. Burton is currently the Vice-Principal at Queen Mary Elementary School.

Study Procedures

Your participation in this study is voluntary and will not affect your grades or school standing in any way, shape, or form. If you agree to take part in the study, you will be participate in a focus group for approximately 45 minutes, during lunch hour. Individual interviews involving students will also take place and will also be 45 minutes in length. If you decide to participate you can decide to stop at any point with no consequences, even after signing this form. You can choose not to answer any of the questions for any reason. With your permission the interview will be audio recorded to aid in the accurate collection and analysis of data.

Potential Risks

There are no known or anticipated risks to your child as a participant in this study. Questions may deal generally with family, ethnic background or class, but sensitive topics such as sexuality, relationships, and substance abuse are not part of this study. Most of the questions will be related to school experiences.

Confidentiality

Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study, however, with your permission anonymous quotations may be used. Names of schools, communities, and other identifying features will also be changed to ensure anonymity. Only researchers associated with this project will have access to the interview recordings and transcripts. Data stored electronically will be password protected.

If you participate in the focus group with other students, you should know that we encourage all participants to refrain from disclosing the contents of the discussion outside of the focus group; however, we cannot control what other participants do with the information discussed.

Further Information

If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study you may contact Ms. Shannon Burton at shannonlburton@gmail.com. She can also be reached via phone at 604-773-4047 or 604-713-4995.

If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research participant, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail to RSIL@ors.ubc.ca.

This research has been approved by the Vancouver School Board.

Consent

If you wish to participate in this study please fill out the section on page 3, detach it and return it to the office. You should keep the rest of the letter for your own reference.

Sincerely,

E. Wayne Ross, PhD
Principal Investigator
Professor
Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy
604-822-2830
wayne.ross@ubc.ca

Shannon Burton
M.A. Student
Co-Investigator
Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy
604-802-696 or 403-335-4178
shannonlburton@gmail.com

I have read the information presented in the letter about a study being conducted by Dr. E. Wayne Ross and Ms. Shannon Burton of the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy at the University of British Columbia.

I am aware that my participation is totally voluntary and I may withdraw from the study at any time with no consequences.

I am aware that my interview will be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses.

I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in the thesis and/or publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous.

By signing below I am agreeing to participate in the study under these conditions.

Participant Signature

Date

Printed Name of the Participant signing above

Appendix B

Unwrapping Citizenship:

Getting inside the nature of citizenship education

Parent Consent Letter for Research Participation

January 12th, 2012

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We are writing to ask your consent for your child's participation in a research study being conducted at Queen Mary Elementary School. This letter will provide you with information about the study and explain what participation will entail. You are receiving this letter because your child is in grade seven, the group from which students will be selected for the study.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to understand the nature of the opportunities present in elementary school for children to learn about citizenship-in terms of developing personal responsibility, social justice and participation. In addition, we seek to understand how these opportunities are experienced by students and the effect the experiences have. Your child's participation is important, as it would help us understand how to better create authentic and rich opportunities to prepare students for citizenship when they reach adulthood.

Investigators

The Principal Investigator for this study is Dr. E. Wayne Ross from the University of British Columbia (Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy). He is the faculty advisor for Shannon Burton (Co-Investigator) and is supervising this research as part of the completion of a Master of Arts degree at the University of British Columbia (Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy). This research will be used to complete the thesis requirement for this degree. Ms. Burton is the vice-principal at Queen Mary elementary school.

Study Procedures

Participation in this study is voluntary and will not affect your child's grades or school standing in any way, shape, or form. If you grant consent, your child will be interviewed in a focus group for approximately 45 minutes, during lunch hour. An individual interview may also take place and will also be approximately 45 minutes in length. If your child participates they can decide to stop at any point with no consequences, even after signing this form. They can choose not to answer any of the questions for any reason. If you as a parent have any concerns and wish to cease your child's participation you may do so at any time, even if your child wishes to continue. With permission, the interview will be audio recorded to aid in the accurate collection and analysis of data.

Potential Risks

There are no known or anticipated risks to your child as a participant in this study. Questions may deal generally with family, ethnic background or class, but sensitive topics such as sexuality, relationships, and substance abuse are not part of this study. Most of the questions will be related to school experiences.

Confidentiality

Your child's name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study, however, with permission anonymous quotations may be used. Names of schools, communities, and other identifying features will also be changed to ensure anonymity. Only researchers associated with this project will have access to the interview recordings and transcripts. Data stored electronically will be password protected.

If your child participates in the focus groups with other students, you should know that we encourage all participants to refrain from disclosing the contents of the discussion outside of the focus group; however, we cannot control what other participants do with the information discussed.

Further Information

If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study you may contact Ms. Shannon Burton at shannonburton@gmail.com. She can also be reached via phone at 604-773-4047 or 604-713-4995.

If you have any concerns about your child's treatment or rights as a research participant, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail to RSIL@ors.ubc.ca.

This research has been approved by the Vancouver School Board-will put this once approved

Consent

If you consent for your child to participate in this study please fill out the section on page 3, detach it and return it to your child's teacher. You should keep the rest of the letter for your own reference.

Sincerely,

E. Wayne Ross, PhD
Principal Investigator
Professor
Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy
604-822-2830
wayne.ross@ubc.ca

Shannon Burton
M.A. Student
Co-Investigator
Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy
604-802-696 or 403-335-4178
shannonburton@gmail.com

I have read the information presented in the letter about a study being conducted by Dr. E. Wayne Ross and Ms. Shannon Burton of the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy at the University of British Columbia.

I am aware that my child's participation is totally voluntary and they may withdraw from the study at any time with no consequences. As a parent, I may withdraw them from the study at any time.

I am aware that student interviews will be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of information.

I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in the thesis and/or publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous.

Please check one of the boxes below.

- I give consent for my child to participate in the study under these conditions.
- I do not consent for my child to participate in the study.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Printed Name of the Parent/Guardian signing above

Printed Name of the Student participating in the study

Appendix C

Social Responsibility Performance Standards-Quick Scale (grade 6-8)

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/perf_stands/s6to8.pdf

Aspect	Not Yet Within Expectations	Meets Expectations (Minimal Level)	Fully Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
CONTRIBUTING TO THE CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> often appears to be unfriendly and negative does not take responsibility or work cooperatively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually friendly and, if asked, will include others with support, will take responsibility, contribute, and work cooperatively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> routinely kind and friendly, and helps and includes others if asked takes responsibility, contributes, and works cooperatively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> kind, friendly, inclusive, and helpful voluntarily takes on responsibilities and contributes; effective in groups
SOLVING PROBLEMS IN PEACEFUL WAYS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> unwilling or unable to solve interpersonal problems; may be illogical or blame others, or become violent or sarcastic tends to view problems in black and white; has difficulty considering more than one perspective, generating strategies, and predicting consequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> may try to solve interpersonal problems and consider others' feelings, but often needs support; may become frustrated and blame others can clarify familiar, concrete problems and issues, and propose some strategies; may misinterpret consequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tries to solve interpersonal problems calmly; often shows empathy and considers others' perspectives can clarify an increasing range of problems or issues, generate and compare potential strategies, and anticipate some consequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a repertoire of strategies to deal with interpersonal problems; tries to be logical and non-judgmental; considers others' feelings and perspectives can clarify increasingly complex problems and issues, propose and evaluate strategies, and weigh consequences
VALUING DIVERSITY AND DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> often disrespectful and may avoid or be negative towards those perceived as different in some way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually respectful to others and accepting of differences, but may not see the need for action on human rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually treats others fairly and respectfully; tries to be unbiased; shows some support for human rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> usually treats everyone fairly and respectfully; shows an increasing commitment to correcting injustices
EXERCISING DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tends to be egocentric or apathetic; may show a sense of powerlessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows some interest in making the world a better place, but ideas tend to be very general and follow-through tends to be inconsistent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows a sense of community and an interest in making the world a better place; tries to follow through on planned actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows a growing sense of altruism and optimism—a commitment to making the world a better place