Civic Education and Global Citizenship: A Deweyan Perspective

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Introduction

The idea of citizenship, according to the "The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology", can be traced back to the classical period of Greece and Rome through the renaissance. In modern times citizenship is the product of revolutions, especially the French Revolution. "Citizenship is a politico-juridical status that confers an identity, and determines the distribution of resources within society".[1] It involves some notion of contribution to the common good of the nation state. Webster's dictionary defines citizenship as "the state of being vested with the rights, privileges, and duties of a citizen".[2] Whereas it refers to a citizen as one who inhabits a city and is entitled to its privileges or franchises. Lacking in these definitions of citizenship is the interesting conceptualization and understanding of citizenship in the global and multicultural context.[3] This lack is also evident in the current understanding of civic education, which is framed around the formation of the democratic ideals and values of a particular nation state in the individual members of the society. Nevertheless, civic education does hold the promise of expanding the narrow goal of traditional citizenship to the global perspective, due to the organized capacity of civic education and schooling in general in communicating the civic ideals.

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[1] *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2006).

[2] *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* (USA: Barnes and Nobles Publishing Inc., 2003).

[3] Martha C. Nussbaum, *Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism*. In Cohen, J., ed. For love of country: Debating the limits of patriotism (Boston: Beacon, 1996); James A. Banks, *Diversity and Citizenship Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004).

The transmission from one generation to another of public knowledge, values, attitudes, and group identification which are perceived as necessary for public life and the stability of society falls within the purview of public education.[4] Public schools were established to preserve the ideals of democracy and civic identity. Thus, Benjamin R. Barber, states: "Public schools are not merely schools for the public, but school of publicness: institutions where we learn what it means to be a public and start down the road toward common national and civic identity. They are the forges of our citizenship and the bedrock of our democracy".[5]

Undoubtedly, through public schools the civic culture and unity can be handed down from generation to generation. But this formation of responsible citizens and promotion of national identity seem to be framed around the narrow and nationalistic understanding of civic education and couched in the traditional definition of citizenship. It is narrow and nationalistic because it makes us feel a sense of connection and responsibility, for instance, to only fellow Americans as opposed to the rest of the world. The rest of the world becomes faceless and less of value to us due to our patriotism and strong attachment to national interest. But with the shrinking of the world into a global village as a consequence of technological advancement and improved transportation, it seems necessary to adjust our understanding of civic education to include the entire human community. The question then is: How can we expand the traditional notion and understanding of civic education which is nationalistic in orientation to the more globalized understanding? This is the central question that this paper will be addressing. Using the framework provided by Dewey in his articulation of the public this article seeks to challenge the understanding of civic education held by the "Civic Mission of Schools", which is framed around the traditional notion of citizenship. It will demonstrate the need to both reconceptualize and restructure this traditional notion of civic education to encompass the global idea of citizenship. This will be done both by drawing on the meaning of education and the phenomenon of globalization. Let us explore the meaning of education in general and civic education in particular.

What is Education?

The etymology of the word 'education' is from two Latin words: '*ex*' and '*ducere*' meaning 'out' and 'lead'. Therefore, the word education means 'leading out' or 'bringing out.' McMannon[6] perceives education as embracing all of those experiences of the individual through which knowledge is gained, the intellect is enlightened, and the will is strengthened. It is the process of adjustment to one's environment and assimilation of one's cultural heritage. Education is not only an intellectual, physical and moral activity, but also a process of transmitting customs, laws, traditions and standards of living. It is a process of cultivation of the mind through which a person learns the best way to live with others in a civil society. For Bourdieu education becomes a process of forming our *habitus* (our predisposition) the lens by

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[4] James A. Banks, *Diversity and Citizenship Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004).

[5] Benjamin R. Barber, "Public Schooling: Education for Democracy," in *The Public Purpose of Education and Schooling*, eds. John I. Goodlad and Timothy J. McMannon (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997).

[6] Timothy J. McMannon, "Introduction: The Changing Purpose of Education," in *The Public Purpose of Education and Schooling.*

which we see the world or reality. The *voir* (the capacity to see) he said is only a function of the *savoir* (concept or knowledge).[7]

Education is considered to be a lifelong experience by ancient cultures. People are taught the best way to live with others by institutions like the community, the family and the church. But according to Dewey this domesticated view of education changed because the needs of the society became more complex and sophisticated. Public schools were established to better fulfill this charge of training every member of the society. He argues that like parents schools should give the very best to the whole students.

> What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys our democracy. All that society has accomplished for itself is put, through the agency of the school, at the disposal of its future members.[8]

This was what Dewey saw as the rationale for establishing schools, to well educate every member of the society for the success of democracy. One of the key functions of education is to form productive citizens who can function well in a democratic society. Throughout history, this concept of education has been strongly supported by different schools of thought. The ancient Greek Philosopher, Plato, emphasized the need for this form of education in society. For Plato, the continuity and strength of any society depends on an education that can help shape future members to its ideal purposes. Later philosophers also acknowledged the importance of education to form an enlightened citizenry that will contribute meaningfully to the growth of the society. In the U.S, this ideal coheres with the vision behind the founding of public schools, held by many scholars and politicians. Horace Mann considered as the "patron saint" of public education also shares this understanding and sees public schools as "balance wheel", the great equalizer between the rich and the poor.

Equally, Horace Mann, Thomas Jefferson, and others emphasized the need for public education for the survival of democracy. Through education, people are taught the best way to live in harmony with other human beings. It breaks one out of his/her micro-world to gain a broader understanding that he/she is simply a *mitsein* (being-with-others). The individuals in the society become able to engage and inquire together for the common good, sharing ideas and influencing each other's thinking in this act of intellectual intercourse. Schools are therefore, places of social settlements where individuals gather to not only share ideas but ideas that are incarnated in human form.[9] The human interaction among students helps to build up future community among them, a society where each will learn to be both responsible for himself/herself and responsive to others. Dewey placed a permanent stress on this formation of community among students and teachers in the process of education or inquiry.

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[7] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984).

[8] John Dewey, *School and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

[9] John Dewey, *The school as a social center* (Elementary School Teacher, 1902).

This harmonious living with others, or rather mutual regard, makes democracy successful. In such a community, people learn to give mutual respect and regard to one another in order to maintain a relationship that is free of domination and subservience. This is the purification of the person and the education of character. According to Martin Buber, "Education worthy of the name is essentially education of character."[10] Little surprise then why every nation has attached great importance to education, for it is an essential means of forming and maintaining responsible citizenship. Civic education plays a critical role in building and supporting responsible citizenship in any nation. However, the formation and maintenance of responsible citizenship is accomplished not only through civic education per se but through the entire educational process. This is because one cannot claim to be educated if he/she does not possess the basic civic ideals of knowing his rights and duties, respect for others as possessing equal human value and dignity. As Barber points out, "Lawyers and doctors are no more likely to make good citizens than dropouts if their training is limited to the narrrow and self-interested world defined by vocational preparation and professional instruction."[11] Education should inform and form the very being of its students, to mold their identity and agency – who they are and how they live. It is not just interested in what the students know and are able to do but also who that knowledge makes them to become.

Unfortunately, much of modern education has fallen prey to the epistemological reductionism that separates "people's knowing from their being and reduces knowledge to just technical rationality, a 'know how' for productivity."[12] This split stretches back to the French rationalist, Rene Descartes. The pervading assumption is that knowledge is objective and value-free, as if it is not supposed to engage persons as persons or influence their ethic. But the ancient philosophers both Plato and Aristotle would argue that to know the good is to become good, and that knowledge shapes ones being in the world. Within the institution of schooling, policymakers, teachers, parents, and students often emphasize the intellectual development of students as the principal (or only) function of education and thus depict learning as an instrumental means to an end, for instance, good grades, educational certificates, full-time employment opportunities, and access to higher incomes.[13]

However, education is not limited to the development of knowledge, academic or otherwise. It will have to engage the entire being of the student and make him/her a well-rounded person who is able to live in society with others. Education for social change requires students and teachers to actively transform social injustice and not just study them, it should be the tool for liberation from oppression.[14] This is why many social justice theorists argue that reducing the

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[10] Martin Buber, "The Education of Character" in *Between Man and Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1965).

[11] ibid., 6

[12] Thomas Groome, "What makes a School Catholic," in *The Contemporary Catholic School: Context, Identity, and Diversity*, eds. McLaughlin, T; O'Keefe, J & O'Keefe, B. (London: The Falmer Press, 1996).

[13] Kathleen Lynch & John Baker, "Equality in Education: The importance of Equality of Condition," *Theory and Research in Education* 3, no. 2 (2005):131-164.

[14] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc. 1970); Colleen Larson & Khaula Murtadha, "Leadership for Social Justice," in *The Educational Leadership Challenge: Redefining Leadership for the 21ˢᵗ Century*, ed. Joseph Murphy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

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curriculum of students from low socioeconomic homes to basic reading and math is highly problematic. Those who are experiencing numerous injustices on a daily basis also need more from education than test preparation or access to "progressive" curricula and teaching techniques if they are to develop the skills, knowledge, and commitment required to tackle those injustices.[15] Therefore, educators are challenged to provide an education that is more holistic and empowering to their students.

Differential Education in the U.S.

The U.S. is used as a focus here because it is the leading nation of the world and whatever happens here in some ways may be reflected in greater or lesser degree in the rest of the world. Additionally, the US seems to be the 'boiling point of the world' due partly to its founding spirit as the land of immigrants where people from all cultures, races, and nationalities are welcome. But to narrow the focus even more in order to capture a clear and distinct picture, I shall look at a state in the U.S. that seems in my estimation the most reflective of this global trend. Let's turn our gaze to California; the golden state, known to host a diverse population. The state of California holds a strategic spot in the global community because of its bourgeoning economy and its growing and diverse population. It is the most populated state in the U.S. and bigger than many countries in the world. But it ranks among the lowest performing and underfunded state per pupil expenses in K-12 education[16] and there are many reasons for this, which include but not limited to opportunity gap among the different racial groups.

There is a steadily widening gap between the rich and the poor in the U.S. today especially in California. According to Manuel Pastor there are multiple Californians, with the state increasingly divided by race, class, and residential location. The demographic divergence has been matched by increasing inequality. While White households share of ethnic composition income, during the period 2002-2004, maintained a steadily rising higher deciles, peaking at 71 percent of households in the top decile; "African Americans have a very high representation in the lowest decile, the Asian American community is bifurcated with significant representation at the lowest and highest deciles, and Latino households peak in the second, third and fourth deciles."[17] The rising margin between the rich and poor has created racialized and concentrated poverty in California. Moreover, it has also widened the geographic segregation of the racial and ethnic groups encouraging localization of spending both for education and social amenities. This chasm is also conspicuous in the schools in poor and working-class neighborhoods. In such schools there are overflowing sense of dilapidation and shortage of quality teachers. The instructional materials and textbooks are severely lacking. This lack of resources and qualified

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[15] Jean Anyon, *Radical Possibilities: Public policy, Urban Eduaction, and a New Social Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2005); Lisa Delpit, *Other People's Children: Cultural conflict in the Classroom* (New York: The New Press, 1995); Gloria Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teacher of African-American Children* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994); Linda McNeil, *Contradictions of School Reform* (New York: Routledge, 2000); *FairTest, K-12 Testing*. Retrieved May 15, 2006, from http://www.fairtest.org/k-12.htm.

[16] School Funding (US Census Bureau, 2011).

[17] Manuel Pastor, "A State United or a State Divided: Can Multiple Pathways Bring Together Multiple Californians? in *Multiple Perspectives on Multiple Pathways* (UCLA IDEA, 2007).

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faculty have been to blame for the underachievement of Black and Latino students who populate those schools.[18] The evidence is clear and shocking that a subgroup of US public school population experience negative and inequitable schooling on daily basis.[19] According to the research by Michelle Fine, et al. under-education and dropout rates of the poor and working class students are growing and far more severe today than in the past. It seems instead of improvement and progress we are regressing and dipping down into the mud of discrimination.[20]

African American and Latino students seem to be overrepresented in least successful groups on standard tests e.g., Measures of Literacy and Numeracy.[21] By these measures it seems that these students do not have the same academic achievement as the White and Asian students. Both the state and national standardized test scores indicate overall low performance, and many of the students do not make it to college or dropout of high school. Approximately 1.23 million of public high school class of 2008 in the U.S. failed to graduate with a diploma.[22] For at least five years now, one in four high school students in the U.S. drop out and more than one in three minority students drop out.[23] These most often are students of color in urban areas. The dropout rate looks even gloomier for minorities in California where approximately 80% and 92% of Whites and Asians respectively graduate as compared to about 59% and 60% of African American and Latino students in 2006-07 school year.[24] Therefore, there seems to be a fairly well described differential patterns of achievement, with African American and Latino students, significantly falling behind the other ethnic groups.[25]

While we hear daily about test scores and achievement gap of this underrepresented population, it seems those scores are not connected to the challenging conditions that these students had to grapple with on daily basis. Environmental and social conditions have been identified as influencing and shaping the academic achievement of African American and Latino students. Myron Orfield describes the problems mostly associated with inner cities and at-risk suburbs as concentrated poverty, racial segregation, crime, and community disinvestment.[26] Susan Easton paints a similar picture of the type of neighborhoods that exist in inner cities. She talks of Jeremy, a Puerto Rican boy who was exceptionally bright but lived in the ghetto of

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[18] Jeannie Oakes, *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

[19] Gloria Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teacher of African-American Children* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994); Jim Scheurich & Julie Laible, "The Buck Stops Here," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 31, no.2 (1999): 313-322; Angela Valenzuela, *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).

[20] Michelle Fine et al., "Civic Lessons: The Color and Class of Betrayal," *Teachers College Record* 106, no.11 (2004): 2193-2223.

[21] California Department of Education 2004. Retrieved Oct. 7, 2010 from http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us.

[22] Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, *School to College: Can State P-16 Councils Ease the Transition?* (Washington, DC: U.S Department of Education, 2008).

[23] Anna Habash, *Counting on Graduation* (Washington, DC: The Educational Trust, 2008).

[24] Russell W. Rumberger & Susan Rotermund, "Ethnic and Gender Differences in California High School Graduation Rates," in *California Dropout Research Project* (UC Santa Barbara, 2009).

[25] National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 2008* (Washington DC: U.S Department of Education, 2008).

[26] Myron Orfield, *American Metropolitics* (Massachusetts: The Brookings Institution, 2002).

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Harford Connecticut: "Jeremy lived with frequent gunshots and street slayings. He could watch daily drug dealing out his window."[27] This type of environmental conditions seems characteristic of many Black and Latino neighborhoods. Peter Dreier names the symptoms of American decaying cities, which include; "growing poverty, homelessness, violent crime, and infant mortality; widening racial and economic segregation; crumbling infrastructure, and deepening fiscal traumas."[28] African American and Latino students daily traverse a geography of danger in order to get to school. There is severe spatial limitation, whereby children are more and more restricted from using some of the neighborhood spaces because they are dangerous zones. According to Massey and Denton, more than half of all blacks in the United States, and 60% of black urban dwellers, live in the thirty metropolitan areas described as dangerous and ghettoized.[29] Brilliant as these students are their environment seems to stymie their academic progress and promise.

The high dropout rate and achievement gap are perpetuated and reinforced by myriads of interrelated and overlapping factors. The three key factors: poverty, segregated neighborhoods, and school quality, are linked and a vicious cycle is created by their confluence.[30] The United States has the incredible distinction of having the highest poverty in the industrialized world despite having one of the highest average incomes.[31] From 2001 – 2003 the number of people in poverty rose from 32.9 million to 35.9 million and 37 million in 2004.[32] With the current global economic crises these figures will be considerably higher. Evidence shows many of those living in poverty are Blacks and Latinos who are working poor.[33] Poverty entails daily significant compromises of the basic necessities of living and developing one's potentials. The lack of a proper diet, shelter, and education compromises individual development, with negative effects on children's cognitive development, verbal ability, early school achievement, and mental health.[34] When this is combined with poor neighborhoods and less stimulating home environment the odds for dropping out and underachievement increase. This is a socially unjust condition that has been created by unjust economic and social structures.

Almost always the poor are those who live in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, and Blacks and Latinos are in the majority. Residential location determines your chances and future.

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[27] Susan Eaton, *The Children in Room E4* (North Carolina: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2006).

[28] Peter Dreier, "America's Urban Crisis: Symptoms, Causes, Solutions," *North Carolina Law Review* 71, (1993): 1351-1401.

[29] Douglas Massey & Nancy Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1993).

[30] Gary Orfield & Nancy McArdle, *The Vicious Cycle: Segregated Housing, Schools and Intergenerational Inequality*. Report prepared by Harvard Civil Rights Project in 2006.

[31] David Berliner, "Our Impoverished View of Educational Research," *Teachers College Record* 108, no.6 (2006): 949-995; Timothy Smeeding, Lee Rainwater & Gary Burtless, "U.S. Poverty in a Cross-national Comparison," in *Understanding Poverty*, eds. Sheldon Danziger & Robert Haveman (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2001).

[32] Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *Economic Recovery Failed to Benefit Much of the Population in 2004* (Washington, DC: Matrix Group International, Inc., 2005).

[33] ibid., 15(i)

[34] Joel F. Handler & Yeheskel Hasenfeld, *Blame Welfare, Ignore Poverty and Inequality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Kim Nauer, Andrew White & Rajeev Yerneni, *Strengthening Schools by Strengthening Families* (New York: The New School, 2008).

If you live in concentrated poverty then things happen in relation to teaching, school funding and opportunities including networking. Research shows that concentrated poverty is strongly associated with both school opportunities and achievement levels.[35] Schools in low-income areas tend to have high turnover of teachers and students, untreated health problems, lower involvement by parents, less experienced teachers, less challenging curriculum, relative availability or absence of AP classes, lower per student expenditures, high dropout rates and lower test scores.[36] There is severe lack of resources in schools in low-income areas. Students attending these schools tend to have weaker networks to college and jobs. On the contrary, suburban schools tend to provide a more college-oriented curriculum, have experienced teachers, and offer competitive curriculum.[37] Highly discriminated neighborhoods produce highly deprived schools and high dropout rates. This lack of resources leads to low academic achievement, which has been consistently associated with high dropout rate.[38] There seems to be an unbreakable social mechanism that has perpetuated and reproduced this system of neglect and corresponding poor performance of students of color. Vincent Roscigno argues that race and class shape school attendance patterns and contribute to highly segregated school contexts. Family background shapes residential options. Where one resides in turn, has large impact on the school one attends and consequently achievement. Social class and race are important in patterning the schools children attend.[39] Gary Orfield and Nancy McArdle agree that the most profound form of inequality is location-based inequality of educational opportunity. Residential location structures and shapes educational opportunity and success.[40]

Added to this structural inequality that students of color live through on daily basis in school are the curriculum instructional practices. The school curriculum is a serious factor in the students' academic achievement. It has been based historically on the European American perspective. As Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant noted, minority cultures have been represented in fragmented ways, such as the celebration of Black History Month or Cinco de Mayo. Textbooks, an important component of the school curriculum, also represent minority cultures

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[35] ibid., 31(i); ibid., 33; ibid., 20.

[36] Jean Anyon, *Ghetto Schooling: A Political Economy of Urban Educational Reform* (New York: Teachers College Record, 1997); Linda Darling-Hammond, "The Flat Earth and Education: How America's Commitment to Equity will Determine our Future," *Education Researcher* 36, no.6 (2007): 318-334; Marvin P. Dawkins & Henry J. Braddock, "The Continuing Significance of Desegregation: School Racial Composition and African American Inclusion in American Society," *Journal of Negro Education* 63, no.3 (1994); Susan Eaton, *The Other Boston Busing Story: What's Won and Lost Across the Boundary Line* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001); Erica Frankenberg, Chungmei Lee, & Gary Orfield, *A Multiracial Society with Segregated Schools: Are we Losing the Dream?* Report prepared by Civil Rights Project, Harvard University, 2003; ibid., 30; ibid., 18; Gary Orfield & Chungmei Lee, *Why Segregation Matters: Poverty and Educational Inequality*. Report prepared by Civil Rights Project, Harvard University, 2005; Gary Orfield, et al., *Losing Our Future: How Minority Youth are being Left Behind by the Graduation Rate Crisis*. Report prepared by Civil Rights Project, Harvard University, 2004; Janet Schofield, "Review of Research on School Desegregation's Impact on Elementary and Secondary School Students," in *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*, eds. James A. Banks & Michael C. Banks (New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1995); Stuart A. Wells & Robert L. Crain, "Perpetuation Theory and the Long-term Effects of School Desegregation," *Review of Educational Research* 64 (1994).

[37] ibid., 30.

[38] Ruth B. Ekstrom, et al., "Who Drops out of High School and Why? Findings from a National Study," *Teachers College Record* 87, no.3 (1986): 356-373.

[39] Vincent J. Roscigno, "Family/School Inequality and African-American/Hispanic Achievement," *Social Problems* 47, no. 2 (2000): 266-290.

[40] ibid., 37.

and people in a limited fashion. These textbooks, they also pointed out, often limit descriptions of diverse people's contributions and perpetuate stereotypes. The limited and fragmented representations of minority cultures may have a negative impact on minority students' opportunities to acquire the skills needed to succeed in mainstream society.[41] Arguably, moving communities towards a situation where all cultures are recognized and respected may be one way of removing barriers to equality and social justice.[42]

The lack of connection of the school curriculum to the cultural background of the minority students has been identified as responsible for the low school performance and high dropout rates of Black Americans and Hispanics.[43] Teachers have the responsibility to critically evaluate and improve the curriculum for all students. This can be achieved by their knowledge of the students' cultural/ethnic backgrounds. Shirley Heath typified this in her landmark ethnographic study of African American working-class students in the Trackton community. She revealed that teachers who understood their students' cultural/ethnic backgrounds were able to engage the students by asking questions that followed the form and function of questions asked in the students' homes and communities. And this, according to the teachers who participated in Heath's research, enhanced their students' academic performance.[44]

This idea of making the curriculum responsive to the needs of all students from different cultural backgrounds was also central to Tiedt and Tiedt.[45] Apart from enhancing students' academic achievement, this will help every student to understand who he/she is, thereby building a self-esteem and identity. From this knowledge base he/she will extend learning to include other cultures, hence remove the fear of others, which is the product of ignorance. Cultural diversity is recognized today as an asset rather than a liability. The various groups contribute to the national culture while maintaining their distinct identity. As a result, individuals can be proud of their cultural identity and heritage instead of being ashamed of their difference. This will challenge the students to acquire a multicultural and global perspective on life. There is need to have highly qualified teachers, who will be both culturally sensitive and proficient, to teach students from various cultural groups.

However, having these highly qualified teachers who are culturally proficient sometimes appears to be a tough sale for schools in poor neighborhoods due to the lack of sufficient funding. There is a general agreement among scholars that access to high quality teachers is one

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[41] Christine Sleeter & Carl Grant, *Empowerment through Multicultural Education* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991).

[42] Alison Taysum & Helen Gunter, "A Critical Approach to Researching Social Justice and School Leadership in England," *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice* 3, no.183 (2008).

[43] Pamela L Tiedt & Iris M. Tiedt, *Multicultural Teaching: A Handbook of Activities, Information and Resources* (Massachusetts: Simon & Schuster, 1990).

[44] Shirley B. Heath, *Ways with Words: Language, Life, and Work in Communities and Classrooms* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[45] ibid., 43.

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of the key factors at the school level that influences student achievement.[46] Research reveals that students of color and students from low socioeconomic status have access to teachers with less experience, less education, less training and without content area certification.[47] In such schools also there are serious shortage of resources including poor quality instructional materials and textbooks. This lack of resources and qualified faculty has been blamed for the underachievement of students of color who populate those schools.[48] It is socially unjust to have these students go through this important level of schooling under such conditions.

But with this differential and disproportionate educational opportunity for our children, what then is the meaning of civic education for students in the underprivileged schools? Do these students feel themselves belonging to the same nation as their white counterparts? Does this unequal social conditions generate love and patriotism for the nation they perceive as having betrayed them or fill them with anger and resentment? These are some of the questions that simmer in my mind as I examine the emphasis that Dewey and other scholars placed on the education of every citizen as a pathway to stable democracy and citizenship.

Examples from the research by Fine, et al., for *Williams v California* case were quite revealing on how the students in the plaintiff schools score their values and worth by the poor and decrepit facilities. The study explored the social, psychological and academic impact of structurally deficient facilities, high rates of teacher turnover, and uncredentialed/unqualified faculty and, inadequate instructional materials. They studied one elementary, one middle and nine high schools in San Francisco, Oakland and Los Angeles areas. The social and psychological influence that the conditions at the school make on the students was phenomenal. One of the students interviewed had this to say regarding the squalid condition at her school.

> It makes me, you know what, in all honesty, I'm going to break something down to you. It make you feel less about yourself, you know, like you sitting here in a class where you have to stand up because there's not enough chairs and you see rats in the buildings, the bathrooms is nasty, you got to pay. And then you, like I said, I visited Mann Academy, and these students, if they want to sit on the floor, that's because they choose to. And that just makes me feel real less about myself because it's like the State don't care about public schools. If I have to sit there and stand in the class, they can't care about me. It's impossible. So in all honesty, it really makes me feel bad about myself.[49]

It seems that the students are analyzing and understanding their perceived value in the social hierarchy. They understand and see the level of discrimination, which intentionally or

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[46] ibid., 36 (ii); 37; 18.

[47] Richard M. Ingersoll, "The Problem of Underqualified Teachers in American Secondary Schools," *Educational Researcher* 28, no.2 (1999): 26-37; Hamilton Lankford, Susanna Loeb, & James Wyckoff, "Teacher Sorting and the Plight of Urban Schools: A Descriptive Analysis," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 24, no.1 (2002): 37-62; Linda Skrla, Kathryn B. McKenzie & James J. Scheurich, *Using Equity Audits to Create Equitable and Excellent Schools* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2009).

[48] ibid., 18; 36 (ii); 20

[49] ibid., 20

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unintentionally, the society puts them through and this makes a very powerful and lasting impression on them. Though, as a society we may not have intended to teach them what they learn from their situation (*hidden curriculum*), and this might even be the only and most important lesson that students learn that they are stratified and disenfranchised in the society. They understand the message implied in what we have failed to provide them, in the differentiated treatment and school conditions that we as a society place them. They know and understand how the society values them.

The students see and feel the pulverizing weight of race, class and ethnic discriminations and they live through these social relations. They learn very quickly and at a very early age their social 'disposability'. In other words they read different political and civic texts, which we as a society have supplied them.[50] Dewey would see this as a mis-education, and all of us as negative educators who supply the 'killer toxin' to our future citizens. "The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative."[51] Hence, in the U.S, the common national and civic identity of liberty, equality, fairness and justice have not always been taught by our public schools. Rather students learn differential civic education due to the privileges or lack of privileges they experience in their educational process. Because of this poor and unequal educational opportunity some students from such neighborhood schools disengage from school, which supposed to be citizenship formation ground, and dropout.

The consequences of this neglect to educate all our children are immense. Those who dropout may end up becoming 'nuisance' to society and are railroaded to the prison industry, which receives more funding than schools. For instance, in New York State the budget for public universities within a 10-year period (1988-1998) fell by 29% while state spending on prisons rose by 76% during the same period.[52] Henry Giroux, talking about the immediate past administration's hype on war and domestic militarization, observes with contempt this prison expansion pointing out the irony of Bush government who made claims of war in order to make the world safe for "our children's future" only to turn around and build more prisons where our children are incarcerated. "What is so troubling about the current historical moment is that youth no longer symbolize the future. And yet, any discourse about the future has to begin with the issue of youth because, more than any other group, youth embody the projected dreams, desires, and commitment of a society's obligations to the future."[53]

If we take seriously what Giroux and others have said, what hope then has a nation that ignores the education of some of its youth? Dewey always maintained that education should not

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[50] ibid., 49.

[51] John Dewey, *Experience & Education* (New York: Touchtsone Books, 1938).

[52] Robert Gangi, Vincent Schiraldi, & Jason Ziedenberg, "New York State of Mind?: Higher Education vs. Prison Funding in the Empire State, 1988-1998," *Justice Policy Institute* (Washington DC, October 1998).

[53] Henry Giroux, "War Talk and the Shredding of the Social Contract: Youth and the Politics of Domestic Militarization," in *Critical Theories, Radical Pedagogies, and Global Conflicts*, eds. Gustavo E. Fischman, Peter McLaren, Heinz Sunker, & Colin Lankshear (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005).

be limited to certain members of the society. Because it is the way of forming new members into the citizenship of any nation, therefore, no one should be excluded from being educated. It pays the nation more than anything else to have its citizens well educated in order to participate responsibly in the affairs of the country and the world. With this in mind, I would like to juxtapose Dewey's concept of civic education with that of the report produced by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) and Carnegie Corporation of New York, in consultation with the Corporation for National and Community Service which was titled: "Civic Mission of Schools." I would like to draw some parallels between the two to better understand how civic education can help in forming both national and global responsible citizens.

Dewey's Civic Education vis-à-vis Civic Mission of Schools

The following quote is from the report by a group of experts from wide variety of disciplines (education, developmental psychology, political science, history and others) who were convened in late 2002 by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) and Carnegie Corporation of New York, in consultation with the Corporation for National and Community Service. The group was convened to examine the problem of civic disengagement by our present youth and how schools could be used as center for dissemination of civic knowledge and skills. The report was titled: Civic Mission of Schools.

> We, the scholars and practitioners who have jointly produced this report, believe that the overall goal of civic education should be to help young people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives….We recognize that being a competent and responsible citizen is not easy. It can take courage, sacrifice, and passion to be civically and politically engaged. Engagement is especially difficult for disadvantaged young people, who lack resources and are often discouraged from participating. Thus, an essential goal of civic education is to provide skills, knowledge, and encouragement for all students, including those who may otherwise be excluded from civic and political life.[54]

According to the above report, civic education should help young people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives. For Dewey, civic education is the primary business of education; it is what education is about, that of forming citizens who are able to engage critically with others in a common inquiry for the common good and survival of democracy. The Civic Mission of Schools has a sprinkling of Dewey's concept of civic education by way of forming competent and responsible citizens who are able to engage critically in the democratic process with others. Yet it seems too broadly stated and does not address the issues of civic life and the power relations in the society. If we are to take seriously the question of how society is

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[54] The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement, "The Civic Mission of Schools," (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 2003). Full report can be accessed through: http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/CivicMissionofSchools.pdf.

structured to enable some and undermine the ability of other members then we have to address some issues of civic life and how students should participate in that life in order to bring change. Equally, Civic Mission of Schools definition of civic education seems to be narrow and nationalistic. It does not address the issues of students being participants in the global politics and economy. How the students will be able to engage in and with the rest of the world to build up the human society. It does not point the students beyond the boundaries of the U.S, every thought and engagement seems to be limited within the American society. Dewey rather invites us to look beyond the frontiers. I shall now discuss at some length Dewey's views on civic education.

Dewey's view on Civic Education

The educated citizen is one who is able both to "read the word and the world."[55] In this way this citizen is able to participate responsibly in the affairs of the nation and the entire globe. Otherwise such an education ended up in rote memorization that does not empower the person to live critically and responsibly outside of the classroom. As Benjamin Barber observed, education without the proper skills to live with others in a civil society will not be education at all.[56] Civic education should train students to be able to read in between the lines and ask pertinent questions, examining critically why things are the way they are today and to seek reform or engage in political action.

Dewey in "Education as Politics" states clearly what the gain of education is: "…the ability it gives to discriminate, to make distinctions that penetrate below the surface."[57] Here he talks of the importance of being educated. It saves one from being manipulated and controlled by others, and helps him/her to be responsible in the choices and actions one takes. Education would serve no good for the one who is unable to discriminate facts from fancy, who is not able to subject what he sees as real under the regime of reason and inquiry. That one is educated who is able to engage critically in social life and not be controlled by the opinion of others. "Control opinion" Dewey asserts, "and you control, for the time being at least, the direction of social action."[58] With the political gerrymandering and the hype on fear and other unguarded human emotions, which we saw in our recent past administration, an educated citizenry can never be more important in our world.

Civic education should do the work of engaging the students on how to navigate the political terrain, empowering them to probe into the power relations, the social and structural inequalities and how these hegemonies are perpetuated. It should train them to be media literate as those in power and corporations increasingly are using the media propaganda to control the public. We live in the society of the spectacle (to use Chomsky) where the media create and

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[55] ibid., 14 (i)

[56] ibid., 11.

[57] John Dewey, "Education as Politics" [Essay, first published in *New Republic* 32 (1922): 139-41. Republished in *Characters and Events*, ed. Joseph Ratner (New York: Henry Hold and Co., 1929), and in *Education Today*, ed. Joseph Ratner (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1940), pp.157-63.]

[58] ibid., 57.

dictate what is real. We suck them in without proper inquiry. Dewey advocates seriously for an educated citizenry who can discriminate the real from the media creation, who are able to read both the word and the world. "Doubtless the regime of propaganda brought on by the war has had much to do with forcing upon us recognition of the dominant role in social control of material put in circulation by the press."[59] This is the hegemonic control of the public by the ruling class through dominant ideologies, which Antonio Gramsci sees as a powerful mechanism of dominance.[60]

Dewey suggests ways of how schools can avoid making students the dupe of others when they come out to take up their roles as responsible citizens in the wider society. "Clearly they will have to cultivate the habit of suspended judgment, of skepticism, of desire for evidence, of appeal to observation rather than sentiment, discussion rather than bias, inquiry rather than conventional idealizations. When this happens schools will be the dangerous outposts of humane civilization."[61] This is well stated, education must have to challenge and empower the students to be critically conscious, be shrewd in a world that is constantly changing and more sophisticated than ever before. It must have to arouse critical consciousness of students, what Freire calls epistemological curiosity.[62] This will enable them to participate in common inquiry for the good of the society and survival of democracy.

Yes, communal inquiry, very important Deweyan concept. Dewey always emphasized and encouraged community search for knowledge as a way to improve both the individual and society at large. By this type of communal search the students will realize their interdependency and their need for one another for no one is a *scit omnia* (knows everything). Dewey recognizes the power of participatory inquiry, by which students develop character, skill and intelligence necessary for democratic society. One of the major purposes of civic education is to enhance cooperation and collaboration among students. Through the schools we build communities and bonds among students who will later become responsible citizens. "Classes for study may be numerous, but all are regarded as modes of bringing people together, of doing away with barriers of caste, or class, or race, or type of experience that keep people from real communion with each other."[63] In this way students learn how to respect and tolerate each other in a participatory democracy. Education should enlighten the students to the basic humanity and equality that we all share.[64]

But the regret of Dewey is that schools have not always been able to achieve this basic human equality among students, just as I demonstrated above in the inferior education offered to

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[59] ibid., 58.

[60] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971).

[61] ibid., 59.

[62] ibid., 55.

[63] John Dewey, "The School as Social Centre" [An address delivered before the National council of Education, Minneapolis, Minn., July, 1902. First published in *Elementary School Teacher* 3 (1902): 73-86, and in *Proceedings and Addresses* of the National Educational Association, 1902, pp. 373-83.]

[64] Martha C. Nussbaum, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," (Essay published in *Boston Review*, October/November 1994).

most of the American youth. Rather schools have become sites of competition that the sense of community is lost. The only measure for success in many schools is a competitive one, in the bad sense of the term – a comparison of results in the recitation or in the examination to see which child has succeeded in getting ahead of others in storing up, in accumulating, the maximum of information. This, for Dewey, has become the prevailing atmosphere in most of our schools. He discountenances the idea of rugged individualism (Horatio) that spirals into capitalism which perniciously stands in the way of democracy. Where an individual continuously acquires and accumulates both knowledge and wealth for oneself and never thinks of others. "Acquiring has replaced inquiring", Dewey laments.[65] The notion of acquiring depicts individualism while that of inquiring connotes community. "Dewey was looking for average citizens who could recognize their common interests and organize themselves into publics capable of "forming and directing" public policies."[66] And this public is not only a nationalized and localized public but the public that will include the global public, the entire human family. How do we then educate our students to look beyond the national frontiers?

Civic Education in the Global Sense

Globalization, according to Martin Albrow, "refers to all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, global society."[67] Hence, as Jan Nederveen Pieterse notes, in social science there are many conceptualizations of globalization as there are disciplines. In economics, globalization refers to economic internationalization and the spread of capitalist market relations. In international relations, the focus is on developing a global politics.[68] In cultural studies as Durham & Kellner noted, the concern is with global communications and worldwide cultural standardization as in McDonaldization, and on postcolonial culture. In many noted conceptualizations, globalization is the corollary of modernity.[69]

Globalization has been one of the most hotly debated phenomena for more than two decades. For defenders of globalization it marks the triumph of capitalism and its market economy, it is the continuation of modernization and a force of progress, increased wealth, freedom, democracy, and happiness. While for critics it is the emergence of a new transnational ruling of the elite, domination and control by the wealthier overdeveloped nations over the poor underdeveloped countries and thus increases the hegemony of the haves over the have-nots. It engenders the undermining of democracy, a cultural homogenization and increased destruction

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[65] John Dewey, *The School and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1897).

[66] Jeannie Oakes & John Rogers, *Learning Power* (New York: Teachers College University Press, 2006).

[67] Martin Albrow, "Introduction," in *Globalization, Knowledge and Society*, eds. Martin Albrow & Elizabeth King (London: Sage, 1990).

[68] Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "Globalization as Hybridization," in *Media and Cultural Studies: Key Works*, eds. Meenakshi G. Durham & Douglas M. Kellner (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006).

[69] Meenakshi G. Durham & Douglas M. Kellner, eds. *Media and Cultural Studies: Key Works* (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006).

of natural environment.[70] There are many forces playing a role in the opposing conceptualization and understanding of globalization. Living through these contradictions is there a way we can use education to empower our children to overcome the negative forces of globalization and build human community and become global citizens? This question is critical because certain things, which I will point out in the following paragraph, have made this need necessary in our global present.

The world as we see it is become a global village where what happens in one part affects the other. "Globalization thus poses new challenges for citizenship, both in established Western democracies and in the emerging nation-states of Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Africa."[71] Citizenship is no longer circumscribed within one's national boundaries as many people today possess flexible citizenship. For instance some children born in the U.S are sent to their parents' native countries to learn their culture and language. Many of them end up becoming citizens of those countries as well and they go back and forth the two or three nations. Some from Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa come over to the U.S to study and they go back and forth the two nations and consider themselves citizens of both. To this phenomenon Paul Ong raises a very interesting question, "When foreign subjects leverage money and brains to take advantage of American education in transnational circuits, when many American citizens still experience exclusionary pressures from attending college, what does that do to our notions of democratic citizenship?"[72] Certainly, it does challenge the traditional idea of citizenship and civic education that is focused on building national identity and patriotism in the citizens. Because these foreign subjects do not consider themselves entirely U.S citizens, building national identity and patriotism may be very weak. Even the children born and raised here who live in those squalid conditions and neglect, mentioned above, not only have negative educational experience but are filled with anger and resentment loosely directed at the government, the nation and themselves. Thus, the schools in poor and working class neighborhoods end up not just reproducing race and class inequality but also civic alienation. This can also result in driving a wedge between two oppressed communities: immigrant students and native born students, which may further result in xenophobia and nativism. These classes of citizens who are disenfranchised by the oppressive conditions may disindentify from the U.S. and seek other ways to describe themselves.

Additional reasons why the traditional civic education should be reconceptualized have been supplied by Martha Nussbaum: The first reason is because of self-knowledge. When we come to know and understand other people we know and understand ourselves even better. Otherwise we feel that our way is the only way, the justified way. Second is that when we understand ourselves better through the other, we become better equipped to solve international

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[70] Peter McLaren & Ramin Farahmandpur, *Teaching Against Global Capitalism and the New Imperialism* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005); ibid., 69; Leslie Sklair, *The Transnational Capitalist Class* (Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001); Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996); Kevin Robins & Frank Webster, *Times of the Technoculture: From the Information Society to the Virtual Life* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

[71] James A. Banks, ed. *Diversity and Citizenship Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004).

[72] Paul Ong, Edna Bonacich, & Lucie Cheng, eds., *The new Asian Immigration in Los Angeles and Global Restructuring* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994)

problems. Third reason is that we come to assume our moral responsibility to the entire humanity by having a cosmopolitan ideal. We enjoy a special privilege of high standard of living here in the U.S and we owe the rest of humanity for this privilege and we cannot discharge this global responsibility without global ideal. The fourth reason is that global identification with humans across the world is more real and morally binding than national identification that compels us to feel closer to fellow Americans.[73] Thus there is need to rethink the meaning of citizenship through civic education.

Education for Dewey was central for the forming and shaping of a democratic nation by forming in the citizen-subject the moral responsibility of living with others and contributing to the upkeep of the nation. He already signaled to the role of education in forming in everyone the idea of global citizenship by inviting us to look beyond the frontier of the nation.[74] Hence in educating the young we are not just to be concerned with the national spirit but the entire human community (global village). "On the other hand, education has a major role in forming social and political identity and giving young people the tools they need to become active citizens."[75]

This tool will help the students to understand and live the new reality today, the reality of globalization and concern for every human being. For such is become a sine qua non in our new world. The tragedy of 9/11 has remained a constant reminder of this need. We live today in a world where the economic decisions and policies of our nation and corporations affect other nations at different spots of the globe. The current global economic crisis which started in Wall Street is spread throughout the world with very wrenching consequences for even poorer nations. Therefore, as James A. Banks puts it:

> Citizenship education should have as major goals helping students to develop understandings of the interdependence among nations in the modern world, clarified attitudes toward other nations and peoples, and reflective identifications with the world community. It should also help students to develop a reflective commitment to justice and equality throughout the world.[76]

Furthermore, the global power of technology has made it easy for people to form transnational communities and be able to connect with their homeland. Nestor Canclini refers to this as teleparticipation. He referenced Roger Rouse who studied the inhabitants of Aguililla, a rural town in southwestern Michoacan in Mexico, apparently only accessible by a dirt road. Its two main activities continue to be agriculture and raising livestock for subsistence, but the emigration that began in the forties was such an incentive that almost all families there now have members who live or have lived abroad. The declining local economy is sustained by the flow of dollars sent from California, especially from Redwood City, that nucleus of microelectronics and

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[73] Martha Nussbaum, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," in *For love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, ed. Joshua Cohen (Boston: Beacon, 1996)

[74] John Dewey, *The Public and its Problems* (New York: Holt & Company, 1927).

[75] ibid., 71.

[76] ibid., 75.

post-industrial North American culture in Silicon Valley, where the Michoacanos work as laborers and in services. There are so many outside of Aguililla, and so frequent are their connections with those who remain there, that one can no longer conceive of the two wholes as separate communities, they are better understood as forming only one community dispersed in a variety of places.[77]

We have advanced from traditional societies made up of peasant communities that are separated from each other with traditional, local, and homogeneous cultures to a largely urban scheme with heterogeneous symbolic offering renewed by the constant interaction of the local with national and transnational networks of communication. Equally, the asymmetry relationship between First and Third world is made complex by the decentralization of corporations, the planetary simultaneity of information, and the adaptation of certain international forms of knowledge and images to the knowledge and habits of each community. It seems then that culture has lost natural geographical and social territories. The multidirectional migrations are the other factor that relativizes the binary and polar paradigm in national relations. The Latin American internationalization was accentuated in the last few decades by migrations which included persons from all social layers. The migrants carry with them the movement of cultures. As the Mexican popular culture interacts with modern and postmodern symbolism, it is incorporated into the North American mainstream culture.

With these cross-cultural intersections engendered by migrations Nestor Canclini notes the collapse of two conventional notions. One is the notion of community. It was assumed that the links between the members of those communities would be more intense inside than outside of their space, and that the members treat the community as the principal medium to which they adjust their actions. This is no longer the case today. This is because members of the same community living outside of the community still maintain strong ties with each other and their community by means of modern technology (e.g., telephone, internet, etc). The second notion is that of concentric distribution of power and wealth, meaning that the closer you are to the center the more power and wealth you have. This too is no longer valid today. People have power and control from far away countries. Most of the buildings in many capitals and centers of commerce of many countries are owed by foreign nationals. They participate in the stock market and other investments that shape and control the life of the people in the particular country. So, even if they are many miles away from the center they still play a decisive role in the economic life of the people. There is the implosion of the third world in the first and that reorders society and social theories.[78]

Consequently, individuals today are capable of having multiple identifications and attachments, including that of their cultural community, nation of origin, naturalized nations, and the worldwide human community.[79] Living this multiple, complex, interactive and contextual

[77] Nestor Garcia Canclini, "Hybrid Cultures, Oblique Powers," in *Media and Cultural Studies: Key Works*, eds. Meenakshi G. Durham & Douglas M. Kellner (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006).

[78] ibid., 77.

[79] Martha C. Nussbaum, "Capabilities and Disabilities," *Philosophical Topics* 30, no. 2 (2002): 133-165.

identities can be very challenging. For instance, those who invest in foreign countries may well encounter moral conflict in terms of their loyalty and attachment to the country of business. Do they base it on their economic interest and gain or feeling of connection to the people of that country? Equally, many of the youth from Asia, South America, Africa etc, who migrate to the U.S find themselves caught in this complex web of identities. While they consider themselves citizens of both countries many feel no longer or entirely accepted in either. There is then the need to teach students this new and multiple ways of being. Thus the goal of citizenship education in such a democratic and multicultural society will be to support them to gain knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to make intelligent decisions and choices that will not only be just and fair for their nation-state but the entire human community.[80] Too much attachment to the cultural community can impede the attachment to the nation, while too much attachment to the latter can also have a damning effect on one's concern and relationship to the entire human community. There should always be a balance and this balance can be very delicate.

Kathleen Abowitz commenting on the need for this evenhandedness with regard to issues concerning other humans observes how our national imagination and compassion for victims of 9/11 has been stirred by the news media, which at the same time neglected to value the sufferings of Afghans. "The outpouring of compassion from around the country for the victims of the tragedy has been compelling and inspirational. However, our imaginations and compassions seem to have national boundaries; there have been far fewer documented cases of students or teachers attempting to imagine the lives, fears, and sufferings of Afghanistan citizens or of Muslims around the globe."[81] In her work, Cosmopolitan and Patriotism, Martha Nussbaum worries that too much nationalistic interest and patriotism can erode the U.S feeling of moral responsibility to the rest of humanity. It can make us have lesser value and respect for people of other countries.[82] But the problem is that this is already the case as is obvious in our news media reporting of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, even here in the U.S, as demonstrated above in the differential education, there is less concern of the rich for the poor and the underrepresented student groups are not given the fair attention and value. The hope then is that civic education or rather education in general should be able to engage students in communal critical inquiry of understanding their civic responsibility to the entire humanity. In many states and schools in our nation it seems this type of education is made possible for students.

Hope for the Future?

While I have these analyses of some of the past failures of our educational system to critically engage our students in civic education that will help them value and appreciate themselves and others, there is still great hope for the future. In the study by Fine, et al., they

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[80] James A. Banks, *Educating Citizens in a Multicultural Society* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2007).

[81] Kathleen Knight Abowitz, "Imagining Citizenship: Cosmopolitanism or Patriotism?, *Teachers College Record,* August 12, 2002.

[82] ibid., 73.

acknowledged the effort made in small public schools in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and New Jersey. These schools have quality faculty and instructional materials, dedicated to rigorous education for students, including poor and working-class youth and youth of color. Students in these schools learn about social stratification by researching history, economics and social movements with the possibilities and movements for social change and their responsibilities to participate in creating change.[83] This is what civic education supposed to be and do for students.

Equally, it is important to acknowledge the effort that is being made by organizations like Teaching to Change LA (TCLA) sponsored by UCLA IDEA office. In one of the workshops that teachers in these urban or working-class neighborhood schools had at UCLA, they shared how they have engaged in communal and critical inquiry that Dewey recommends. The students were engaged in a common critical search for meaning. It was a very empowering moment for the students who were engaged in such an inquiry. This was a way of entrenching the democratic principle of equal participation on the students. "The creation of citizens "in the fullness [sic] of their capacities" in turn demands that "free human beings [associate] with one another on terms of equality." Relating to fellow citizens on the basis of equality does not imply a "mathematical equivalence" in which all must participate in the same way. Rather, it means that hierarchical understandings of individuals as "greater and less, superior and inferior," must give way to a "metaphysical mathematics of the incommensurable in which each speaks for itself and demands consideration on its own behalf."[84]

This is a very heartening practice since these students are the future of society. And by learning how to participate with others in a relationship of equality and common search for meaning, the students are empowered to live as well-informed citizens who are able to engage in a democratic system. This is a very noble project to say the least. How I wish every American student is empowered the same way so that everyone is given the tools to participate in that common inquiry where divisions of race, gender and class do not stratify the society, where everyone is considered equal. For in these divisions lie the bane of democracy as Dewey would agree. There is then the need to liberalize this critical engagement of students in every American school, especially in California where the racial, class and ethnic gap is continuously widening, so that no one is left behind in the democratic process. With these efforts, it seems there is hope for our democracy! This will in turn increase students' awareness and sensitivity of the human community beyond our borders, thereby engendering the global responsibility and responsiveness.

Conclusion

Civic education as this paper has demonstrated is what education is about for no one would claim to be educated without those skills that would enable him/her to collaborate with others in building both the national community and the human world. If this is true the quality of education we give to our children matters. Using Dewey's ideas as framework, I have tried to

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[83] ibid., 50.

[84] ibid., 66.

highlight the importance of education in forming responsible citizens for the survival of democracy and the human family. A great disservice is done both to the individual, the society and indeed humanity at large when certain population of our nation is served with poor quality education. Those students learn a different civic text and may score their values and that of other humans differently. They learn rather to feel powerless, alienated, shameful, angry and betrayed than being empowered. "Their alienation seems to stretch from schooling denied, to governments that betray and democratic promises that remain unfulfilled."[85] Instead of learning to become responsible citizens they learn to disengage in any civic participation. It is therefore important to have an educational system that offers equal opportunity to all of our students.

This equality of opportunity at home can only be the starting point for the global responsibility we have to the entire humanity. Because of globalization, our educational system and civic education should no longer focus on forming the national identity and national citizenship alone but to look beyond our frontiers to the global public. Students should be taught this new way of being in the world and the way to deal with the accompanying complexities. Possessing multiple identities by no means is easy and we owe our children the obligation to empower them to step beyond the boundaries of race, nationality, privilege, first world, third world, black, white and all the other binaries. Education can do this! I would like to close with this quote from Howard Mehlinger:

> The world is different from what it was fifteen or twenty years ago. Global interdependence is a fact of life. . . . What does this have to do with civic education? Civic education has traditionally been concerned with promoting nationalism. While nation-states will not suddenly disappear or lose their influence, nevertheless students must increasingly find identification with the species as a whole and not with American citizens only, be loyal to the planet as well as to the fifty states, and be committed to policies and goals intended to ensure the survival of the species rather than merely increasing American power and prestige at the expense of others.[86]

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[85] ibid., 83.

[86] Howard D Mehlinger, "The Crisis in Civic Education," *Education for Responsible Citizenship: The Report of the National Task Force on Citizenship Education* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1977), 69.

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