

## Editorial Introduction

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This special issue of JCIE engages the topics of conflict, citizenship, and education in ways that help educators more clearly understand the importance of dissensus, deliberation, and disagreements in creating a robust public sphere. The articles collected here don't address violent conflict per se, but are more focused on the everyday conflicts that exist as people live out their lives in a globalized, pluralistic world; a world where the unevenness of globalization has heightened the impacts of poverty and increased inequality. It is here, in the everyday, that we see the roots of the larger conflicts that disrupt lives in so many parts of the world and impede efforts to find just solutions to the global social, environmental, and economic issues that impact us all. As the authors describe, it is difficult to talk about conflict in these times when there are demands for harmonized policy and compliant citizenship responses; where the norms of neoliberalism have become so familiar that it is difficult to speak of any alternative to individualized and privatized relationships; and where identities, particularly those of people from non-western cultures, have become distorted through the continued globalization of such events as the 9-11 attacks in the United States, and the American "war on terror". We encounter more and more citizenship spaces that are closed to any contestation or citizenship engagement. It is with courage that educators seek to engage in the work of disrupting and interrupting the many exclusions and marginalizations that are held in place, at least in part, by the silences and obedience of fellow citizens. If educators are to do this difficult work and engage with the conflict inherent in justice, they need to be fully aware and prepared with both theoretical and practical knowledge. The following chapters strive toward this preparation.

The first article, *Conflict, Dialogue, and Justice: Exploring Global Citizenship Education as a Generative Social Justice Project*, opens a theoretical discussion on the global prospects of justice and the processes that might be engaged to generate a public sphere that is more just in material distribution as well as providing inclusive opportunities to contest and shape the decisions that affect and determine collective and individual well being. Education can be a key to transforming citizens' abilities to engage in a commons that is both just and peaceful but only if there is ample room to address the dissensus that exists in common spaces that are authentically participatory and democratic. A particular kind of deliberation is proposed where political subjectivities are actively engaged in generative processes that break open diminished public spaces that were created to globally embed neoliberalism, and its need for passive, obedient citizens, into the everyday lives of ordinary people.

In her article, *Sites for Discussion, Citizenship Education and Pathbuilding: Challenging Fear of Controversy in the Adult EAL Classroom*, Gibb draws on the dynamics of Canadian English as Additional Language (EAL) classrooms to describe the need to challenge the taken-for-granted assumptions that classrooms should be neutral and harmonious spaces. It is through communicative practices, if facilitated with courage, that the multiple identities and voices will be allowed to surface, both within individual students and among students to help move people beyond their particular vantage point, toward a unique view that includes new perspectives. Gibb suggests the EAL classroom provides an important place to learn these transformational citizenship skills for building political efficacy.

In Viczko and McClean's article on the *Garneau Sisterhood's* response to police warnings for women to take safety precautions to prevent a rapist's repeated actions, the edges of liberal democracy are challenged. This study of a collective citizenship response called for a community response beyond the traditional call for women to individually be "more careful". Drawing on feminist citizenship theories, Viczko and McClean explode many concepts of citizenship that are held fast in liberal democracies – that acts of violence such as rape, are about individuals rather than the society in which they occur. They argue for a reimagined active citizenship that can shape the social and public sphere creating enhanced possibilities for a wider justice.

The fourth article, *Peace Education in Canada: Teacher Perceptions of the Cultivating Peace Education Program*, looks at the importance of curriculum as a tool to deal with issues of marginalization, misrecognition, and exclusions in Post-9-11 Canada. This article provides an in-depth look at a peace education program designed to provide educators with the tools to create more inclusive educational sites particularly for students from minority communities who struggle against the forces of cultural supremacy displayed by members of the dominant Canadian society and enhanced by media and political interests that might be served by such structural and social impediments. The research suggests that educators are eager to find the tools to deal with such issues.

The issue concludes two book reviews that address the core issues of citizenship and citizenship education, and expand our considerations of how conflict and the edges of liberal democracy might be engaged to create more inclusive citizenship platforms. Tolga Karabulut reviews Benhabib's 2004 book, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, and Citizen*, and Vicki Macris reviews Engin Isin's 2008 book, *Recasting the Social in Citizenship*.