

Connecting “The Roots of Society” with Conceptions of Citizenship through Time

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Abstract

This article examines the connections between the development of citizenship education in Saskatchewan and representations of the theme “roots of society” presented in the grade 9 Social Studies curriculum guides used in the province between 1971 and the present. The paper explores this connection by examining the development of the theme “roots of society” and the development of conceptions of citizenship. Conclusions concerning the characterization of citizenship in the curriculum guides were achieved through the implementation of key word frequency analysis. The key word frequency analysis served as the frame to identify and elucidate the representation of citizenship within the 9 Social Studies documents from 1971, 1991, 1999, and 2008. The examination of these curriculum documents revealed that developments in the conception and orientation of the “roots of society” are reflective of changes and developments concerning notions of citizenship. The development of the “roots of society” and conceptions of citizenship education both follow a path from traditional/essentialist representations to critical social justice oriented models.

Introduction

Three renewals of the Saskatchewan 9 Social Studies curriculum have occurred in the years spanning 1970 to the present. The prevailing political, social and educational currents and counter currents of those years have heavily influenced these revisions. Although clearly influenced by the changing context within the curriculum guide, the 9 Social Studies curriculum maintains that the central goal of these developments were to develop historical consciousness that affirms the connection between collective identity and ancient civilizations. This connection between collective identity and ancient civilizations is represented in the curriculum by the organizational framework and focus for the course: the ‘roots of society.’ The ‘roots of society’ explores ancient civilizations with particular attention to the influence of these past civilizations on contemporary western development. As such, this concept of the ‘roots of society’ became a

site that critically examines how the promotion of a collective past encouraged a particular kind of identity formation and historical consciousness.

Selection of the 9 Social Studies curriculum guide as the site of analysis served a concrete and practical purpose for me because of its relation to my own teaching. Examining this particular site of historical curriculum development had obvious practical value to me as a teacher of 9 Social Studies because it provided deep practical historical insight into the development of both content and philosophical orientations promoted by the curriculum and subsequently implemented my classroom. In addition to the practical insight afforded by the study, I was able to note that characterizations of our collective past, represented as the ‘roots of society’, are intimately connected with a central area of focus for citizenship education: the construction of collective identity. Framed within the larger context of citizenship education, I was also able to make note of the developments towards a more radical conception of citizenship education that influences more progressive representations of the ‘roots of society.’

This article thus constitutes a modest attempt at describing and analyzing a specific case of educational discourse and aims – namely the development of the ‘roots of society’ in the 9 Social Studies curriculum. The aim is to underscore the connections between the development of citizenship education over time and the concept of identity formation represented as the ‘roots of society’ in the curricula examined. With this in mind, the paper seeks to add to the limited historical research that examines the development of citizenship education in Saskatchewan curriculum. Although the development of citizenship education in the Canadian context is well-represented, there is little research which seeks to examine its historical development within particular curriculum guides or the province of Saskatchewan. Additionally, this paper considers the implications for future 9 Social Studies curriculum renewal. The coinciding development of

citizenship education and the 'roots of society' as presented in the grade 9 Social Studies curricula offers some promising indications that future renewals will continue to progress towards more critical and diverse conceptions of the historical sites which inform collective identity formation for Saskatchewan students.

In this attempt to historically situate the Saskatchewan 9 Social Studies curriculum and postulate some direction for future renewals, the path begins with considering some particular literature that focuses on the historical development of citizenship education in the Canadian context. Since several pieces discussed in the literature section directly inform and influence the methods employed in the study, a discussion of those methods follows. The bulk of the article is the analysis section, which discusses the curriculum documents with an emphasis on highlighting the connections between the development of 'roots of society' and the varying conceptions of citizenship education. Finally, conclusions are drawn which aim to reiterate the representation of the 'roots of society' as they link with citizenship education and address the significance of the work in looking towards future Social Studies curriculum renewals.

Literature Review

The bulk of citizenship education research and study is primarily concerned with contemporary trends and issues within the field as opposed to historical research that seeks to trace and examine the development of citizenship education within particular contexts (author, 2014). However, there are a small number of studies and research that focus on the historical development of citizenship education within the Canadian context. One of the few studies, conducted by Bruno-Jofre (1998), considered the intersections of official discourse and lived experience in the geographic context of Manitoba. Bruno-Jofre (1998) conducted an

examination of the official discourse of citizenship education as represented in the *Western School Journal* and the Department of Education in Manitoba. Bruno-Jofre (1998) then used this analysis to compare official discourse with actual experience. Conclusions from the study found that the influx of immigrants during the 1920s meant that the primary focus of citizenship education was character formation, service and duties to the community. Furthermore, that this emphasis on Anglo-conformity remained intact despite the historical break of World War II, which brought mainstream questions of racism and ethnocentrism (Bruno-Jofre, 1998).

In addition to focusing on historical characterization of citizenship education in the 20th century, McLean (2007) applied a critical discourse analysis approach to a series of legislative speeches and newspaper articles to determine the influence of national campaigns on the development of citizenship education and identity formation. Conclusions offered by McLean (2007) highlight the interconnectedness of factors (English French dualism, provincial versus national control of education) and how these factors work to influence perspectives on diversity and cultural identities in early 20th century Canada and today. While this study is concerned with the influence of educational context on the development of citizenship education, these two studies presented some insight into the outside influences on the development of citizenship and the complexities in drawing conclusions concerning those influences.

Embracing a more sweeping and comprehensive study of the character of citizenship education in the more recent past, Osborne (1997) laid out an argument for the development of citizenship education through time in Canada according to four themes. Osborne (1997) argues that citizenship education could be characterized according to four tentative themes and four approximate time frames. Studied within the context of Social Studies, Osborne (1997) identified the following four themes: identity, political efficacy, rights and duties, and social

values. Identity refers to the aim to provide students with an understanding of the history of their country and instill a feeling of pride concerning its formation. It is a problematic aim in Canadian context because of the innate plurality of the Canadian landscape. The embrace of multiculturalism following Trudeau's 1971 Multiculturalism Act meant that plurality became a mainstay in the exploration of the Canadian identity. Since then, the question of national identity has become rooted in the debate over regional identities as opposed to any singular definition of what it means to be Canadian (Osborne, 1997). The second theme, political efficacy, concerned the idea that citizenship education carries the notion that students need to be politically active and that this kind of participation needs to be formally taught. The third theme, rights and duties, dealt with the balance between the rights afforded through citizenship and the responsibilities that come along with such a set of rights. Osborne (1997) suggested that with the passing of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms there has been a tendency to favour rights over duties. Social values, the last of Osborne's (1997) themes, highlighted the value-laden nature of citizenship education. Not only is citizenship education concerned with teaching knowledge and skills, but it also seeks to promote particular actions and behaviours which stem from a distinct set of values. Although arguably simplistic, the divisions provide guidance in developing general trends and currents apparent in citizenship education.

Absent from Osborne's (1997) thematic orientations concerning citizenship education is the area of global/social justice oriented approaches. In addressing their views on the general character of citizenship education in the Canadian context, Sears and Hughes (1996) do identify the prevalence of global/social justice oriented approaches. Sears and Hughes (1996) explain that this type of approach to citizenship education highlights the need for students to be active participants in society through meaningful acts that include much more than occasional voting.

Furthermore, this approach includes a push for concepts that promote social justice and progressive notions of belonging like free and equal discourse, diversity, and multiple understandings of national citizenship (Sears & Hughes, 1996). Both Sears and Hughes (1996), as well as, Westheimer and Kahn (2004) are primarily concerned with identifying varying contemporary approaches to citizenship education through research into classroom experience. Through their studies into contemporary approaches to citizenship education in contemporary Canadian classrooms, frameworks developed by Westheimer and Kahn (2004) as well as Sears and Hughes (1996), represent a range of approaches that span from the extremes of elitism to radical activism with variations in between. While Sears and Hughes (1996) synthesize the varying approaches to citizenship education using four conceptions, Westheimer and Kahn (2004) narrowed the varieties to three.

While Osborne (1997), Sears and Hughes (1996) as well as Westheimer and Kahn (2004) were primarily concerned with providing insight into a kind of pan-Canadian context for citizenship education, I seek to provide a much more narrow context which is largely missing from that Canadian context. In addition, there is also a need for increased historical study not only into the classroom experiences of students and teachers, but also into the official discourse which informs those experiences – the curriculum guides. Although Osborne (1996), Sears and Hughes (1996) as well as Westheimer and Kahn (2004) provided significant influence in terms of framing and informing this study, the conclusions offered here diverge in my efforts to provide historical perspective in the narrow context of the Saskatchewan 9 Social Studies curriculum.

Methods

Although the works (Osborne, 1997; Sears and Hughes, 1996; Wertheimer and Kahn, 2004) that heavily influenced this study in terms of the varying characterizations of citizenship were primarily concerned with classroom experience, this study is limited in that it is an examination of the official discourse concerning 9 Social Studies as represented by the curriculum guides, only. To understand the ‘official knowledge’ (Tomkins, 1986) about citizenship endorsed by the province, I examined as primary sources the official curriculum documents for Social Studies spanning the years 1971 to 2008. The central aim was to identify and analyze occurrences of the concept of citizenship where it was embedded within the curriculum documents. Of the four approaches to textual analysis outlined and defined by Frey, Botan, and Kreps (1999), this study favoured a content analysis approach. The content analysis was framed and guided by the themes identified by Osborne (1997) and Sears and Hughes (1996). These themes (identity, political efficacy, rights and duties, social values and global/social justice democracy) guided the identification of keywords which I then used to perform a keyword frequency analysis. Although all five themes informed the key word analysis for the larger study on which this article is based, here I focus on those themes related to identity formation, as identified by Osborne (1997) and Sears and Hughes (1996) because of the key link with the “roots of society -” the focus of the Saskatchewan grade 9 Social Studies curriculum. This quantitative measure of occurrences in particular units of language formed the foundation from which general themes and patterns were determined. General interpretative conclusions were formed using Table 2 which outlines key approaches to citizenship education developed by Sears and Hughes (1996) as well as Wertheimer and Kahn (2004). (Author, year). For the purposes of this article, the focus is on the examination of the appearance and nature of the ‘roots of society’ and varying notions of citizenship education, which is a narrower focus than the

larger study, which considered each guide holistically. As such, it is only the particular elements of the table that relate to the overt or underlying concept of the “roots of society”, as developed by each curriculum guide, that are discussed. In order to clarify focus, only those particular elements that relate to the examination of the “roots of society” are outlined in the table below. The conceptions of citizenship education outlined in the table progress from left to right from traditional/essentialist orientations to social constructivist/critical theory on the right. The most traditional conception is represented by A and is historically situated in developments in the 1970s which pushed for a ‘back to the basics’ model of education that favoured a reductionist model in curriculum design (Tanner and Tanner, 1990). Conceptions B and C move along the spectrum and embrace more progressive notions of education that seek to encourage a much more active role for learners. The appearance of this progressive move in curriculum development came as researchers began to see the impact of the reductionist curriculum – low retention and little development of thinking skills like reasoning and problem solving (Tanner and Tanner, 1990). What conception C lacks in terms of attention to issues and values outside of the individual, begins to take shape in conception C and then further in conception D. Conception B encourages opportunity to shape values but does not include consideration of the diverse landscape within which those values are defined and clarified as does conception C. Conception D reaches further to consider not only an education that is *for* the community (communitarianism) but seeks to break down the structures that prevent those communities from becoming fair and equitable for all members.

Although the conceptions are categorized using hard lines, there is some blurring between the approaches. For instance, although conceptions B, C and D make reference to a number of variant values and theoretical orientations, all three encourage critical thinking. As

such, the resulting conclusions concerning each of the curriculum guides may at times blur between different conceptions.

Table 1 Conceptions of Citizenship and Citizenship Education

	Conception A	Conception B	Conception C	Conception D
Values	Particular set of values which lead to improvement of society	Encouraged to question issues to value Clarify and defend personal value positions	Multicultural perspectives Environmental responsibility Equality Justice Pluralism	Equal participation of all members of society Speaking out and working against oppressive and discriminatory structures
Theoretical/ Philosophical Links	Traditionalism Elitism Essentialism	Progressivism Critical inquiry	Communitarianism Global/peace education Critical inquiry Multicultural education	Social reconstructivism Critical theory Critical inquiry

Adapted from Sears and Hughes 1996 and Westheimer and Kahne 2004.

Analysis

Historical inquiry into the representation of citizenship education within the 9 Social Studies course began with the examination of the 1971 curriculum guide. The points highlighted here, as with the other curriculum documents in question, work to underscore the relationship that existed between the conception of the good citizen and the ‘roots of society’ as represented and explored in the curriculum guides. The key aim for the 1971 course of study was that students understand their Western cultural heritage through a historical examination into their shared roots and understand that these roots had connections to their modern lives. Of utmost importance was that students were provided with the opportunity to “use the methods of inquiry of the social sciences to explore his *[sic]* heritage” (Saskatchewan Education, pp.1, 1971). The focus was the dissemination and transmission of a single cultural heritage stemming from the

historical roots of the ancient Middle East, the Mediterranean, and Western Europe. This dissemination of a uniform cultural heritage meant that students were asked to accept a narrow set of particular values based on Western history as essential knowledge. With little to no room for critical examination of any of the content covered, students were left with a passive and limiting notion of identity and cultural heritage. Issues of equality, social justice and political culture were presented without opportunity for critical examination or questioning. Students studied political organization, but void of any critical examination into the advantages and disadvantages of those systems of organization for individuals or society as a whole (Author, year). Issues of equality were addressed in the same manner and were presented as matter of fact, non-contentious issues for student consumption. For instance, in the examination of Rome, it was noted that “exploitation is generally a feature of imperialism” (Saskatchewan Education, pp.29) without any mention of, or space to explore, the detrimental effects of such a system. As such, the topics of imperialism as well as ethnocentrism were explored (most notably in association with Rome) but without any opportunity to examine the impacts of these concepts. The guide even went so far as to represent conquest as a unifying factor for varying cultures because it breaks down the differences in customs and manners (Saskatchewan Education, 1971) situating it clearly at the other end of the spectrum to social justice and reconstructionist orientations.

The limited scope of the guide was highlighted again through the glaring absence of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage. Of the only two references to Aboriginal content, both appear only within “suggested activities” in the the guide and were not even specifically related to the Canadian context. One suggestion recommended that students explore the Aboriginal groups of Australia or the Eskimos in relation to societal organization and structure while another

suggested students explore differences in rights by investigating the rights of an Indian on a reserve (Saskatchewan Education, 1971).

All of these factors combine to construct a notion of citizenship which aligns most firmly with a traditionalist, essentialist approach to citizenship (conception A). The representations of the 'roots of society' in this guide helped to highlight earlier constructions of citizenship which favoured a more elitist, passive sense of citizenship that encouraged very little critical thinking and where "effective participants of their society" (Saskatchewan Education, pp.1) were those who accepted the dominant, traditional society. Effective participation is passive, and involves a limited understanding of a very limited cultural heritage and history. Although students are encouraged to be participants in society, they are to do so with their uniform identity and values in mind, gathered through their passive understanding of their connection to these ancient societies (Author, year). It was the essential knowledge of Western cultural heritage that should inform students' identity and allow them to make connections between the past and their present lives.

As the extended period of time between this next guide and its predecessor would suggest, the 1991 9 Social Studies guide varied significantly in structure and organization. The 1991 guide began with an additional 20 pages of philosophical discussion concerning the overarching outcomes and aims of Social Studies programs for K -12.

The complete lack of attention to Canada's diverse and rich roots exhibited by the previous guide was mitigated to a small degree in this renewal. A notable addition to the roots of society was found in the 'culture' unit. This unit focused on pre-contact Aboriginal society in the Canadian context and also provided some consideration of more contemporary issues like

Aboriginal rights. Indicating alignment with conception C, attention was also afforded to the importance of varying perspectives through the inclusion of a section describing Indian and Metis perspectives and also some general statements concerning diversity (Saskatchewan Education, 1991). Further reiterating the push for multicultural perspectives an attempt is made to redress the singularity of the roots of Canadian society as the guide takes the stance that “the roots of Canada are many and varied” and encourages students to “develop an awareness that people in Canada and the world have a wide variety of beliefs and value systems” (Saskatchewan Education, pp.27). This point was repeated through the values objectives that encouraged students to appreciate and respect differences in their examination of ancient societies presented as the roots of Canadian society.

This guide also deviated in its emphasis on the ancient societies, also expanded in this guide, of the Middle East, Mediterranean and North America as the main component in identity formation for students. Instead of focusing on identity formation based predominantly in the roots of societies explored through the course, the guide claims that identity should be viewed as a combination of collective heritage and unique individual identity (Saskatchewan Education, 1991). The consideration of individual experience represents a move away from essentialist orientations which tend to view students as detached intellects where individual preferences, experiences and interests are irrelevant (Tanner and Tanner, 1990).

Continuing in its move away from the more traditional/essentialist conception of citizenship where citizens accept a dominant set of values and aligning with the key point of values clarification from conception B, the 1991 guide did provide some space for critical examination where students were left to confirm their own values. Although the 1991 guide did concentrate on some core values for Canadian society, using Canada’s Charter of Rights and

Freedoms as its primary source, there were a number of instances throughout the guide where students were encouraged to think and decide for themselves what is of value (Saskatchewan, 1991). The focus in the document was to encourage students to become participating citizens in society who accept and exhibit a number of values that are core to Canadian society, but also have the skills to develop and clarify their own set of values based on the principle of diversity (Author, year).

These attempts to encourage a more progressive portrayal of citizenship were mitigated by the continued overarching focus on attributing the roots of collective identity to a limited, rigid cultural heritage. Despite these moves towards an appreciation for diversity, a primary aim of the course remained to help students understand the origins of contemporary customs and beliefs through an historical examination into the two major traditions that have impacted the development of a Canadian identity: the ancient Middle East and North America (Saskatchewan, 1991). The entire course content is organized using these two cultural roots as the framework for exploring the cultural heritage of Canada. The immigrant experience in Western Canadian was briefly noted in one thematic unit but only in relation to the changes and adaptations these immigrants had to undergo in order to survive in their new environments.

The concept of cultural interaction and change also received little update from the 1971 document as students understand these concepts in a persistently passive sense. Students were not challenged to critically examine the negative impact of the changes experienced by the ancient societies, as a social justice, reconstructionist or critical approach (conception D) would demand, but only to understand and embrace a representation of change as a progression from denial and rejection to eventual acceptance (Author, year).

Although the guide continued to exhibit some traits that align with traditional/essentialist notions of citizenship that emphasize limited content and perspectives, passive acceptance and a limited understanding of critical issues, the attention afforded to multicultural perspectives and values clarification were indicators that this guide aligned with key tenets of both conceptions B and C. There was some attempt to ensure that Canadian students recognize and respect that Canada has a variety of perspectives. What was missing from this push for diversity was making the connection that this diverse set of perspectives stems from the diverse and complex roots of Canadian society, not the limiting roots of the Middle East and North America. Multiple attempts were made throughout the 1991 guide to spur discussion around appreciating the multiculturalism apparent within the Canadian landscape. As part of recognizing diversity, students were also given opportunities to consider and examine their own values within the context of the core values pulled from central tenets of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In blurring the lines between a core set of accepted values and an individual decision making approach, the 1991 guide represents a combination of the values clarification and character education approaches to values education that were widely adopted during the 1980s and 1990s. Hinting at the transitional period between these two approaches, the 1991 guide features some characteristics of the values clarification approach, widely implemented in curriculum guides during the 1980s, and the reactionary development of character education that began gaining prevalence in curriculum guides by the late 1980s (Tanner and Tanner, 1990; McNeil, 2009).

Resulting from the short lapse between the 1991 and 1999 guides, course structure and content remained chiefly unchanged. Of the shifts that do exist, the 1999 guide continued to pay increasing attention to Aboriginal heritage and contemporary issues. The core objectives of the

“Culture” unit, which specifically addressed Aboriginal content, were not broad, non-context related as they had been in the previous guide. Instead, the objectives were directly linked with the central objective of “understanding and respecting the history of Aboriginal culture and the contemporary needs of Aboriginal people” (Saskatchewan Education, pp.18). While the guide did not drastically alter its organization and structure to provide for a more meaningful approach to diversity and multiculturalism, it did attempt to go a step further past the museum and contributions approaches of the 1971 and 1991 guides (Author, year). An attempt was made to arrive at a more meaningful transformational approach to multicultural education as the guide seeks to not only recognize a variety of perspectives, but also view issues from those various perspectives (Author, year).

A marked absence from this greater emphasis on contemporary Aboriginal issues was the lack of exploration of the historical roots of injustice which are essential to a critical understanding of such issues. Instead, the focus was on exploring these issues as Aboriginal problems that require Aboriginal solutions. As one objectives stated, “know that social and economic problems are rooted in the past and that First Nations people are organizing and negotiating to address these issues” (Saskatchewan Education, pp.235).

In addition to the consistency in the representations of the roots of society (Middle East, Mediterranean and North America), the topics of power and authority also remained essentially unchanged when considered in light of the previous guide. A top down approach continued where power was characterized as a controlling force exerted by a particular group in society (Saskatchewan Education, 1999). This concept of power and authority was then explored through its connection the citizens of the ancient societies. Represented as passive players in their societies, these citizens (of either Middle Eastern, Mediterranean or North American

heritage) are left to occupy their prescribed roles until forces outside of their control institute change. For instance, in an exploration of the disappearance of serfdom during the Middle Ages, students learn that serfdom eventually disappeared as a result of its inability to meet the economic demands that were developing, as opposed to the actions of serfs who organized and rose up in masses against an oppressive force which sought to limit their freedom in significant ways (Author, year).

Apart from some minor shifts towards adopting, as opposed to simply appreciating, multicultural perspectives, and somewhat more meaningful inclusion of Aboriginal content there is little change in the representation of a good citizen in this guide. Mimicking the 1991 guide, students are invited to adopt some basic values of Canadian society while simultaneously clarifying some of their own beliefs and values. Collective identity formation is still rooted in the study of the ancient Middle East, Mediterranean and North America with the primary aim of promoting the importance of the connection between the past and the present. As such, this guide aligns with conceptions B and C.

The increased base for the roots of society from the 1991 guide was expanded again in the most recent 2008 9 Social Studies guide. In addition to the continued presence of the ancient Middle East, Mediterranean and North America, the 2008 guide also requires students to study Eastern and South American culture. Although the 1991 and 1999 guides both mentioned ancient China and Japan as possible extension societies to be studied, teachers were advised to explore these societies only if time allowed and they felt it would benefit their students. In the 2008 guide, those societies have now become mandatory sites of study.

Coupled with this broader base for the ancient roots of society is a marked departure in the treatment of the connection between Canada and these ancient roots. Although the aim remains to provide students with representations of the links between the past and the present, gone is the attempt to overtly represent these ancient roots as the primary source of Canadian society and culture. Links are to be made in the outcomes for the course between the societies studied and contemporary Canada but the restructuring means that those connections are not made with any one society in particular. There is no overt attempt to instill in students the idea that the societies they study will or should provide them with their collective identity.

While generally excluded from the actual course outcomes, diversity, environmental and community sustainability are points of emphasis within the 2008 guide. The front matter of the guide, organized in much the same way as the 1991 and 1999 guides, highlights the importance of environmental and community sustainability and diversity. Although the promise is somewhat mitigated by the absence of these concepts from the actual course outcomes, the additions and orientations of these areas are evidence of a move towards more equitable and sustainable communities.

In addition to the expansion in the “roots of society” the concept of and importance of respect for diversity are well established within several of the core values presented within the context of overarching goals for Social Studies. Each reference within the goals section encompasses a value for diversity and the plurality of the Canadian landscape. The value for diversity is linked both to the development of a richer understanding of self as well as fostering in students the ability to speak out against intolerance and injustice (Saskatchewan Education, 2008). The 2008 guide also embraces diversity as key in developing communities in pluralistic societies because “diversity is a fundamental aspect of human interaction” and developing an

understanding which favours the complexities of cultures, communities, and societies “enables students to interact with others’ sensitivity and open-mindedness...”(Saskatchewan Education, pp.2-3).

Despite the inclusion of a more diverse base for exploring the roots of society, the inclusion of First Nations issues and content loses some of its priority in this guide. Only five of the possible 70 indicators for successful achievement of an outcome reference Aboriginal content. Whereas the earlier guides from 1991 and 1999 both paid attention to the inclusion of historical Aboriginal content as well as opportunity to explore some contemporary issues, this guide pays attention only to the study of an ancient North American society.

Environmental sustainability receives much the same treatment as diversity in the 2008 guide. The front matter of the guide highlights the importance of instilling in students the importance of environmental sustainability for the good of communities both local and global (Saskatchewan Education, 2008), but actual course outcomes associated with the environment continue to focus on the impact that the environment has on the development of a society and not vice versa. Students are to understand the environment as a natural accelerant that fuels progress and increased complexity in human societies, as opposed to critically examining how this view has created the environmental crisis we currently find ourselves in.

The 2008 guide also fails to include any outcomes that speak to the communitarian approach favoured in sections concerning Social Studies K-12 and holistic educational aims. Two out of the three broad areas of learning emphasize the importance of students as members of communities locally, nationally, and globally. Engaged citizenship, one of the broad areas of learning, includes the statement that, “citizenship involves the ability and willingness to

contribute to the collective well-being through personal and collective decisions and actions” (Saskatchewan Education, pp.3). Furthermore, “that students will examine the contributions that individuals can make to the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of communities” (Saskatchewan Education, pp.3). Despite this clear communitarian orientation in the theoretical pieces of the guide, again the curricular outcomes fail to encompass this approach as fully as might be expected. There is one goal which deals with the interdependence of communities, but the focus is not on the role that the individual plays in contributing to society. Instead, the focus is on the impact that various characteristics and organizational structures, the environment or power and authority for instance, have on the roots of society. There is certainly a focus through the outcomes on society and the collective whole, but not the important role that the individual plays in contributing to the collective as outlined in the broader aims for education in Saskatchewan.

Despite these crucial absences in the outcomes, there is some opportunity for critical examination of power and authority within those outcomes. The 2008 guide provides some space to explore the roots of society in light of their less admirable characteristics and qualities. Void of its chronological structure, this guide allows for critical examination of varying forms of political organization and the impact these systems had on all groups of people. One of the four newly added aims for K-12 Social Studies is “to investigate the processes and structures of power and authority, and the implication for individuals, communities, and nations” (Saskatchewan Education, pp.6). In the narrower context of the grade 9 course students are required “to analyze the impact of empire building and territorial expansion on indigenous populations and other groups in society” (Saskatchewan Education, pp.23). Although not

explicitly stated in the guide, there is ample room to critically examine the detrimental historical and continued impacts of imperialism.

The resulting conception of citizenship is one which is beginning to flirt with critical and social reconstructionist orientations which favor critically exploring inequalities in society and the detrimental impact of oppressive systems of organization and principles. The emphasis on both sustainability and communitarianism link this guide closely with the values and theoretical orientations of Conception C, while the space provided for critical examination of power, authority, and imperialism are the beginnings of a lean towards Conception D. Strong links with Conception C are also apparent in the recognition of diversity and the pluralistic nature of Canada. The guide explains that recognition of diversity is the key to creating a citizenry who is able to participate in a pluralistic society (Saskatchewan, 2008). As the base widens and the link becomes more complex, there is more liberty and occasion to explore the roots of society from more inclusive, critical, and plural orientations.

Conclusions

As each one of the guides works towards a conception of citizenship that aligns with contemporary educational and societal concerns for the collective wellbeing of society and greater equality for all members of those societies, the representations of the roots of society have mimicked those progressions to represent those roots as increasingly varied and less rigidly connected with identity formation for students. In much the same way that the conceptions of citizenship and the roots of society progress towards a more complex and critical understanding of the roots of a plural society like Canada, the connections that students make between the past and the present also become more complex and critical.

The most limiting, traditional conception of citizenship is also contained in the guide which favours the most limiting and singular sources for the roots of society. In the 1971 guide the good citizen is a passive participant exposed only to a narrow cultural heritage and understanding of Canada's roots. In learning about historical consciousness in this limited and traditional orientation, students are encouraged to become passive citizens who value a narrow identity, even it is not their own.

The 1991 and 1999 guides share very similar approaches to both the roots of society and citizenship. Here a citizen's realm of participation is expanded to consider their role in not only their local contexts but global ones as well. Mimicking this broadening base for active participation and value placed on diversity, the roots of society expand to include ancient North America and at least the mention of Asian societies. Favouring a more progressive approach, both guides offer increased space for students to become genuinely active in their learning about the roots of society.

The 2008 guide continues to shift along a path leading to alignment with more contemporary and complex conceptions of citizenship and the roots of contemporary society. The guide continues to move towards a critical, social reconstructionist orientation for citizenship education while simultaneously advancing towards an increasingly plural and critical view of the roots of society. Where the previous guide worked to instill the values of respect and appreciation for diversity, this guide continues to widen that diversity while also adding a critical lens in some areas.

The movement towards a more critical and diverse examination of the past is a promising one as it provides optimism that curriculum development will work to further consider and

incorporate theories that advocate for social transformation and change through critical examination. What is currently absent is a truly plural approach to citizenship which accepts coexisting, differing notions of citizenship. This approach could then be implemented through an examination of the richly diverse roots of society focused on critically oriented, plural interpretations of those roots.

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