

# JSSE

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## Art Education and Civic Education

edited by  
*Erich Mistrík*

Art/Aesthetic Education in Civic Education  
Erich Mistrík

Art Education with Attitude  
Jere Williams

“Transformative looks”:  
Practicing Citizenship Through Photography  
Sónia Pereira, Concha Maiztegui-Oñate, Diana Mata-Codesal

The Formation of Citizenship Through Community Theatre:  
A Study in Aguascalientes, Mexico  
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Drama and Citizenship – Devised Drama for Education  
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Posture in Plato’s Laws:  
An Introduction to Figuration on Civic Education  
Joshua M. Hall

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## Erich Mistrík

### Art/Aesthetic Education in Civic Education

#### Keywords

Art, civics, education, self-reflection, identity

Awareness of one's own identity belongs to the characteristics of an autonomous, self-confident and responsible citizen. If citizens did not reflect their relationships towards society, it would be more difficult for them to act independently and they might not be aware of their responsibility. Citizens' affiliation to a group, therefore, probably would be perceived only on the basis of their own legal relations to the state or on the basis of unconscious, unconsidered ethical norms that the citizens acquired at an early age.

It is identity, the result of independent self-reflection that reveals people for who they are; what they do and do not value in life; who they do and do not appreciate; what they would and would not like to do in life.

In the modern world, to be conscious of his/her position within society and/or state, each citizen needs to construct and develop his/her personal values by questioning and evaluating orthodoxies. The ability to make choices is based on the ability to judge, to evaluate and to construct a personal structure of values. Each citizen needs to confront civic virtues within diverse traditions of the surrounding world.

The confrontation of civic virtues with societal traditions results in building and developing one's personal identity, as well as civic identity. Both identities are not permanent, built once and for ever, but fluid, just as the positions of citizens within given societies are constantly in flux. In the current multicultural and globalized world, both personal and civic identities play crucial roles in understanding the identities of other people. Being aware of who I am, where I stand, what I value and how I relate to other people is the core for understanding other people – if I understand myself rather well, I can much more easily understand the motives, psychic world as well actions of the others.

A human being is able to be conscious of his/her own perceptions, feelings or more difficult mental processes and to perceive from a distance. This process, called introspection in psychology, was called reflection by J. Locke (An Essay Concerning Human Understanding,

1690). We reflect what is happening to us, what is happening in our brain, and we perceive our activity from a distance.

We interconnect experiences with perceptions because we look for connections and we want to understand them. It would be very difficult to do so, if each perception and each deed were independent, separated. We would need to look for the purpose of each individual deed and perception. If we do feel some connection in between the deeds and perceptions, if we are able to interconnect them in reflection, if we create a story out of them, they become a whole that can be assigned a meaning.

Our experiences and perceptions become one flow which has a characteristic structure and logic. If it is a whole or a structure, we stop perceiving ourselves as separate collections of deeds, perceptions and thoughts, hence, we start perceiving ourselves as compact units. They are no longer separated perceptions but perceptions of an individual being.

The ability for self-reflection makes us perceive ourselves as ourselves. That is how a human being becomes a person with a particular identity. By developing reflection and self-reflection we support the formation of person's identity. By forming a person's identity we support his/her free and responsible activity in community.

An affiliation with a whole is crucial for identity. A person affiliates with a particular whole, but he/she distinguishes this whole and its members from other wholes and from other individuals. Therefore, any form of identity is a social relationship. It is also a relationship of the individual with himself/herself but it still expresses the relationship of the individual with "his/her" society and other societies.

According to Lestinen et al. (2004, p. 3) a person distinguishes his/her identity by three means:

1. „Identification from self-reflection and experience of interaction with surrounding social/cultural group.
2. Categorisation: created [by] using racial, ethnic, religious, occupational and other existing social categories. Specific constructs based on historical experiences: cultural identity arises from the consciousness of a common, shared present and past.
3. Social comparison allows evaluation of our group by comparing it with others. We need otherness to realise ourselves as myself”.

Identity is a complex of images about ourselves. The systems of stories, values, symbols and rituals are created within this complex of images (and often myths). Stories give purpose to our efforts in life. Values show

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that to affiliate with any identity and with tradition has a purpose. Rituals enable us to publicly affiliate with a particular identity, because in rituals we use symbols recognized by society.

Awareness of identity is irreplaceable for the functioning of society. Identity brings a group together, supports its cohesion, makes the communication among its members easier and with the help of rituals and symbols separates the group from the others more clearly - it determines the boundaries of the group. Identity, which uses stories, gives the group stronger foundations because these stories are "oriented towards political interests and the foundation myths of the community" (Bourriaud, 2011, p. 22).

With the help of identity, which is the result of self-reflection, the group gives purpose to its existence.

In the background of these demonstrations, there are emotions, opinions, prejudices and stereotypes related to them. Stereotypes in the perception of oneself, one's own reference group, and other groups, are a strong bond because they support the awareness of affiliation with a community, almost automatically, without thinking.

On the other hand, stereotypes prevent the further development of a group because they conserve the existing state. Therefore, self-reflection does not lead only to formation of a person's identity. If the identity is formed very strongly and the person rejects its further modifications, it becomes a burden and a targeted systematic self-reflection must take place. This prevents the society from persevering in conservative or stereotypical attitudes.

One of the most effective means of developing self-reflection is art and the use of art.

Art education, aesthetic education, use of art in education – all of these various pedagogical methods have long been considered as the path to understanding beauty. Even nowadays many teachers have the ambition of harmonising each pupil's personality by means of art/aesthetic<sup>1</sup> education. They want to present classic, balanced, and recognized-by-tradition works of art, which should evoke higher feelings in children and hence to positively influence them in life.

The idea about this way of using art is no longer in use. Nowadays, cultures from distant regions meet on a daily basis, the content of mass media from one country immediately penetrates to the whole world, and symbols taken out of context from one culture are being used in another. In this kind of world it is no longer possible to lead young people to any kind of beauty and pretend that this is the generally valid ideal. Nowadays, each ideal will quickly fall apart and will be substituted by other norms or other ideals. In the multicultural and globalised world, it is no longer possible to talk about one ideal, only about ideals in plural.

Nowadays, the use of art has lost its original focus on beauty or good-taste education. Citizen of today's world with global economics, politics and even global mass media will no longer adopt an ideal from above, but will often look for his/her own place within global processes.

If citizens are offered art values, they will not adopt them unless they accept them as their own. If citizens accept the art values, after a while, they may find out that in a different situation they no longer suit them, because they have been intruded by someone else.

Therefore, nowadays art/aesthetic education has evolved into something else. It no longer wants to show what is tasteful, what is beautiful, what needs to be mastered. Instead, it stimulates a person into his/her own searching for what is for him/her suitable in a given situation. Art/aesthetic education wants a person to form his/her own norms about beauty and to respect other people's right for their own concepts of beauty.

Therefore, art/aesthetic education helps people to critically reflect what cultural tradition offers them and to be actively present in its formation. Simultaneously, it shows people the limits of their own tradition and variety of traditions in the world. Art facilitates self-reflection, hence, art/aesthetic education can lead people to self-knowledge and to formation of their own identity. That is why civic education acquires a distinct cultural dimension.

For decades civic virtues have been developed through various kinds of civic education in Europe. Civic identity has not been developed by the use of art, except as a by-product of several art education subjects in different schooling systems. Art and citizenship streams in education have been largely separate, causing reproduction of cultural stereotypes and prejudices toward citizens from other cultures.

Art education and citizenship education can and should cooperate in order to educate responsible citizens participating in responsible ways in social life. Civic education pursues a variety of goals: it supports the responsibilities of citizens in the promotion of effective government, it supports respect for human rights, it develops obligations to promote sustainability that all citizens benefit from. Civic education can also develop practices for communication throughout the world, while at the same time civic education supports appropriate understanding of patriotism. The arts pursue understanding of comparable issues, by using diverse communication modes, including symbolic and metaphorical representations of the human condition and empathetic narratives of the universal human condition.

Papers in this journal issue explore the use of the arts as a tool and technique for promoting more effective civic education and for development of civic virtues through self-reflection.

At this point, it is necessary to state that adding the cultural dimension into modern civic education can add a completely different meaning and content to it.

Art (aesthetic) education, use of art within civic education prevents restriction of civic education to the sole development of a casual knowledge of a society political life. Reducing civic education to political education frequently ends either in political indoctrination or in transferring just knowledge structures into students' minds. Both approaches can be considered dead ends from pedagogical point of view.



Harry S. Broudy (*The Uses of Schooling*, 1988) outlines four aspects of inefficient and efficient methods of teaching:

- a) Replicative criterion: the student repeats what he/she has learned in different types of examinations. This is, according to Broudy, totally non-effective action because researchers have clearly shown that much of what is memorized is forgotten.
- b) Applicative criterion: the student applies his/her general theoretical knowledge in real situations. This criterion is also inadequate as it can lead to the neglect of general education and leads to the overestimation of a system of narrow specialization in education.
- c) Associative use of schooling: the student creates associations and analogies with respect to what has been learned. This is very effective action in the process of learning.
- d) Interpretative use of schooling: in the act of interpretation, the student translates his/her knowledge from one concrete sign system to another. This is effective action, according to Broudy, as it allows the student to use many dimensions of thinking and imaginative processes in his/her mind. To a considerable extent, this involves an aesthetic interpretation as it is also realized by means of metaphors and stories, using sensual perception, imagination, body movements, etc.

Harry S. Broudy further elaborates the third and the fourth types of teaching that should incorporate "a complex of images, concepts, memories of all sorts available to provide meaning to words and events." (Broudy, 1988, p. 65) Broudy states that without this dimension, the teaching process is reduced merely to analytic and rational differentiation between different notions as well as words. Broudy promotes a close affiliation or unity of feelings, concepts, and imagination that should play important roles in the process of teaching. Only then, the teaching process would be complex and would be able to include complex self-reflection by a student.

Together with the above-mentioned author, it is possible to claim that the use of art should be added to the basic elements of education (confer Broudy's fourth "r": Reading, wRiting, aRithmetic, aRt). The necessity of a tight link between art education (use of art) and civic education is strengthened by the fact that the use of art can deepen processes of self-reflection and self-identification of a citizen. "Developing aesthetic sensitivity, in other words, is compatible with developing a sense of social responsibility." (Smith, 2006, p. 29)

According to neurophysiologic research, this link can have an even deeper foundation. Research shows that default mode network starts functioning in a human brain when people do not concentrate on achieving external goals, so they are in a state of relative tranquility. These parts of the brain are activated when people are not in full activity, but when they are calmly reflecting upon the world. It is activated by higher order tasks - social cognition, for instance (Mars et al., 2012). The default mode network is fully activated during self-reflection and inner contemplation processes. Simul-

taneously, research shows that the default mode network is activated during the most intense aesthetic experiences (Vessel et al., 2012). Therefore neurophysiologic experiments support the notion that aesthetic activities, the use of art and aesthetic values are interconnected with self-reflection and self-knowledge processes.

If we added this neurophysiologic knowledge acquired by functional magnetic resonance imaging to the dictionary of the social sciences we would be able to state a generally known fact: Art, works of art, citizenship, and civic education (even morals) meet in concepts of values, truth, and identity within the life of society. As J. Williams declares in this issue of our journal, all of these aspects of culture and education come to a mutual conclusion that values, attitudes and activities are essential for effective citizenship. These aspects of culture and education do not exist hermetically on their own, but art as well as citizenship, art/aesthetic education and civic education can be interconnected and opened for other purposeful activities from other aspects of human culture and education.

There are several texts dedicated to dramatic education in this issue of JSE. This is very meaningful because the use of drama belongs to one of the most effective ways of using art. Drama offers a direct way to self-consciousness and self-reflection.

While performing dramatic work in education, students play roles which are very close to real life. They play the roles consciously but they put their own attitudes and emotions into the roles unconsciously. Students are taken into a fantasy world but the world is a reflection of their own real world. Our authors consider various aspects of dramatic education: starting with general principles when play is applied, though not regular but serious playfulness (H. Heikkinen), through a solid example of community theatre (Ch. Moschou, R. R. Anaya), to the reflection of dance, gesture and movement as parts of community life. (J. M. Hall).

J. M. Hall inquires "Why dance specifically, instead of painting, or rock-climbing?" in order to be able to consider the inevitability of dance and other specific movements. It appears that dance (as an aesthetic human body) and dance-related movements can have essential purposes in human life. Therefore, we need to work with them in the education of a citizen.

M. Dewhirst and D. Desai also claim that for effective development of lifelong skills it is inevitable to perceive the reality around ourselves. With a solid example they show how an artistic activity can essentially help. S. Pereira, C. Maizaiztegui-Oñate, and D. Mata-Codesal's project about working with photography shows how a practical artistic-documentary work can change the understanding of the world and impact people's lives in practice.

While thinking about the use of art in civic education we consider also the possibility of combining discursive education with the development of perception and sensibility, of imagination and creative skills. Simultaneously, each citizen's abilities to apply knowledge in real life



situations are taken into consideration. In such education we need practical as well as theoretical skills to be involved.

Our considerations in the use of art in civic education have been directed towards the education of a conscious and responsible citizen. To use classical psychological and pedagogical terminology, we would say that our considerations have been oriented neither towards a taught subject at school nor towards society in general but rather towards the student in particular. The general aim of the use of art in civic education is not transfer of information about society to students, or strengthening the social cohesion – these are just necessary and useful by-products. Rather, the final aim is to develop the skills and abilities of autonomous, conscious and responsible citizen.

It has not been easy to obtain high-quality texts for this issue. The use of art education for the education of a citizen is not a common pedagogical method. The nature of both ways (art as well as civic), their common value-base, their connection in person's self-reflection, and even a similar neurophysiologic base – all of this shows that art can essentially make civic education more effective.

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#### Endnote:

<sup>1</sup> Here we use the notion „aesthetic“ education together with the „art“ education in order to stress use of wide range of arts in civic education, outside the field of visual arts.



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## Jere Williams

### Art Education with Attitude

- Civic literacy should be more than understanding of facts and structures.
- It includes cognitive skills in interpretation and evaluation that result in action dispositions.
- We have developed habits of interpreting symbols wherein the nature of the symbols is poorly understood.

**Purpose:** This paper explores the way in which art education advances the goals of citizenship education. In the first section of this paper the similarities between ethical and aesthetic concepts will be outlined and the visual art symbol system will be carefully examined.

**Findings:** It will be argued that the transference of a value-adaptive attitude developed through the study and practice of art to its application in civic literacy and engagement is valuable and warranted. The second section of this paper will investigate the impact that compositional study in both art practice and experience has on the reinforcement of and the alteration of values.

#### Keywords:

Art education, ethics, civic literacy, compositional analysis, attitudes

### 1 Introduction

Art education cultivates the value-adaptive attitude required for effective democratic citizenship and actual cultural value re-evaluation (the alteration or reinforcement of particular values). The use of “art education” is intended to include studio art practice (primarily visual art), art history and the philosophy of art. Effective democratic citizenship requires civic literacy, and civic literacy should be construed as more than merely an understanding of facts and institutional structures. The following excerpt is from a recent paper by Reimers, Ortega, Cardenas, Estrada, and Garza (2014):

“Current scholarship sees ‘civic literacy’ as the result not just of knowledge of facts which are relevant to understand the functioning of democratic institutions but of skills in applying this knowledge to interpreting situations. For example, the ability to interpret a political message and make inferences about the intents and interests of its source or to be able to determine when specific situations violate basic democratic rights. In addition, civic literacy includes dispositions to act in ways congruent with democratic interactions. (Reimers et al., 2014, p. 42)

What is particularly important according to these authors is process related Literacy in this respect is not a passive understanding but rather a complex movement of human being towards action. It includes the development of cognitive skills in interpretation (relevance determination and inference making) and evaluation that result in action dispositions. An action disposition is a component of an attitude and this paper will show that an attitude of a particular type is of significance: a value-adaptive attitude. It is important to note that what we

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label as civic virtues, civic values, or civic literacy has ethics at its base. The extension of the same rights to all adult citizens in a democratic society is based on judgments concerning justice and equality, the study of which is ethics.

The authors of the previously cited paper on empowering teaching also believe that transference to novel situations is particularly important. The transference of learned processes from one domain to another domain is similarly crucial. The first section of this paper explores associations between ethical and aesthetic concepts, their nature and use. It will be argued that the *transference* of a value-adaptive attitude developed through the study and practice of art to its application in civic literacy and engagement is valuable and warranted. The second section of this paper will investigate the impact that compositional study within art has on the reinforcement of and the alteration of values.

### 2 From Art Practice to Civic Literacy

Ethics and aesthetics are related in significant ways that have a direct impact on the capacity of arts education to play an important role in civic education. In this section I will develop an understanding of the vague, non-quantifiable, and culture-dependent nature of ethical and aesthetic concepts. In the following passage from his book *Philosophical Investigations*, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1999) addresses the state of indeterminateness caused by the inability to draw clear definitional boundaries for ethical and aesthetic concepts.

“Anything—and—nothing is right.—And this is the position you are in if you look for definitions corresponding to our concepts in aesthetics or ethics. In such a difficulty always ask yourself: How did we *learn* the meaning of this word (“good” for instance)? From what sort of examples? In what language-games? (Wittgenstein, p.36)

Concepts are, in these practices, blurry. The concept of art, the definition, changed in response to the many challenges presented by avant-garde artists during the 20th century. What was considered good art also adapted to the changes in its definition. During the 20th century in the United States the civil rights and women's rights movements brought about the extension of the concepts of equality and justice to these groups from a position of relative exclusion prior to these movements. There is more work to be done, but the concept of equality as holding between white men only is no longer the prevailing use of the concept.

Complete sets of necessary and sufficient conditions for the correct use of a concept exist only where a philosopher or scientist has intentionally constructed a system to eliminate ambiguity or vagueness in its application. The important point here is that this indeterminateness Wittgenstein points to does not entail that a concept's *usefulness* is hindered. Difficulty only arises when we cling to the ideal of certainty or in other words an infallible use based on having identified some immutable essence expressed as a set of necessary and sufficient conditions. This point is crucial for the promise of art education because art's capacity to contribute to knowledge has been disenfranchised by the pursuit of real knowledge, verifiable facts, or in other words, propositional knowledge. We must let go of the idealistic attachment to certainty underlying this reductive measure by which to know we are *right* and approach the need for a sense of rightness that is better aligned with a world in consistent transformation. Pragmatism is a good option. A pragmatist perspective will face not towards the essence of a concept in determining the correctness (rightness or truth) of its use but rather in the other direction, towards the consequences of using that concept in one way or another. The consequences determine if the use is correct, true, or good through a combination of both imaginative and actual experience. In this respect, the study and practice of art make fertile ground for learning to assess the consequences of holding and exercising one or another belief.

While aesthetic and ethical concepts have vague and shifting definitional boundaries, their *use* does have grounds for acceptance and can be effectively learned. In the creative processes of making and experiencing artworks, *using* a concept means bringing it to bear as part of an interpretive or evaluative judgment. I am not asserting that the use is propositional and that felt or intuited judgments are excluded. That the sculptor chooses concrete rather than steel, wood, chewing gum, asbestos, etc. as the material for a particular component in an artwork is a judgment that doing so is beneficial. And let's not perpetuate a mind-body dualism. Presence, where all action necessarily occurs, requires both, and the sculptor's judgment is nonetheless a judgment when *feeling right* is all that can be said about it.

Both the study and creation of artworks cultivates what is being referred to as the *value-adaptive attitude*: being capable of holding and using a value (an evaluative belief) while remaining open to and adapting to the

changing circumstances relevant to that value. A value-adaptive attitude makes for effective use, and use justifies the value-adaptive attitude. One will find similar sentiments in Maxine Greene's (2001) use of *wide-awakeness* and Elliot Eisner's (2004) thoughts on means and ends where he uses Dewey's expression "flexible purposing" to capture the "process of shifting aims while doing the work at hand" (Eisner, p.6). My thoughts on this issue are similarly grounded in the work of John Dewey and Nelson Goodman. The objective here is to develop an understanding of an attitude that is no mere synonym for *open-mindedness*: the state wherein we accept the presence of differences and agree to consider new possibilities. A value-adaptive attitude, while having open-mindedness as an aspect, is an attitude that has as its object the *persistence* of beliefs underlying an attitude. It carries an epistemic component that affords change while preserving the possibility of right, true, or in other words, good judgment. This effectively avoids the pitfalls of a thoroughgoing relativism and gives structure to the indeterminism indicated by Wittgenstein. We need to be able to believe in our judgments to effectively use them, and in affording some measure of adaptability to changing circumstances we must justify evaluative judgments without an appeal to immutable definitions.

Art education is extremely valuable in cultivating this attitude, and the transference to and application of this attitude in the realm of ethics, civic literacy and action is not only important but also warranted. This might seem like a futile exercise in convincing those that believe non-propositional knowledge to be no such thing. The argument here is not designed to refute this position directly, but an assumption is being made that non-propositional expression is intelligence bearing and contributes to the holding of beliefs as true. Neither is this an argument that justifies the relevance of art education through its value to another discipline or to a related competency such as critical thinking. I will assert without further argument that art stands on its own as intrinsically valuable. It should also be said that a value-adaptive attitude is neither found nor cultivated solely within art. The objective here is to delve into the particulars of visual art symbol systems to find good cause for being confident in understanding how the processes of making and experiencing art require this attitude.

Consider how in both ethical and aesthetic cases students make demands for a *right* answer. And as a suitable answer many students struggle to accept that merely being better than other available or conceivable options is what it means to be *right*. The debate in philosophy on the issue of being true or right is exceptionally broad and deep, and Pragmatism as a philosophical position has great promise. Richard Rorty (1999) characterizes the pragmatic position on truth as follows: "To say that a belief is, as far as we know, true, is to say that no alternative belief is, as far as we know, a better habit of acting" (Rorty, p.xxv). Being a habit or *rule for action* is how Charles Peirce first characterized "belief" within a pragmatic philosophy. In this respect we hold our values, evaluative beliefs, as true (or right) in

aesthetics and in ethics to the degree that these habits of acting result in better consequences than the alternatives.

In order to better understand a value-adaptive attitude, let's take a closer look at what an attitude is. Milton Snoeyenbos (1975) provides a solid analysis of the concept of an attitude in an unpublished dissertation entitled "Art Theory." An attitude, he says, is a mental state composed of an action disposition towards an object, a preference disposition towards that object, and a set of beliefs (some must be evaluative beliefs) about that object. An attitude is not the same as a preference because we can simply have preferences (such as liking beer) while attitudes carry "an implicit claim to justification" (Snoeyenbos, p. 107). That is, we think attitudes are right whereas preferences are tastes that just are what they are. Other things being equal, the choice of beer over wine is based on a preference that isn't itself considered right or based on truth. Snoeyenbos believes that dispositions are emotional and instinctive and somewhat beyond direct conscious control. However, our preference and action dispositions are influenced by the beliefs that we hold. This means that any measure of control over or any change in an attitude will stem from within the collection of beliefs (some of which are evaluative) about the object of the attitude. What I am referring to as a value-adaptive attitude has as its object the persistence of beliefs, their adaptability, their growth or decline in strength over time.

Being an effective citizen in a democratic republic (such as the United States of America) means that citizens not only pay their fair share of taxes, abide by the law, and vote. They must participate in ensuring the extension of constitutionally granted rights and exhibit an ongoing commitment to observing, interpreting and analyzing political (and cultural) content. For effective citizenship we must be capable of integrating the awareness generated by encounters with new objects, cultures, and contexts into our attitudes about these objects such that our actions will result in better than worse consequences. Understanding that this value-adaptive attitude is present in the creative processes of making and experiencing art prepares students, who also recognize that judgments in ethics and art are of the same type, to allow this attitude space to operate in ethical cases. It's important to understand how the symbol system used in creating and experiencing visual art makes a value-adaptive attitude *necessary*. One might object by pointing out that many people don't come to the experience of art with this attitude and yet they experience, interpret and evaluate artworks. It would seem that there is no necessity here. However, there is, and this line of thought fails for educational reasons; these individuals have yet to understand the nature and use of the visual art symbol system. This cultural construct (the symbol system) makes these acts of communication (visual artworks) possible and therefore determines what is and is not necessary with regard to them.

Simply put, that something is an artwork means that it is an object, act or event that has been used in an act of communication; the point to be made here is narrow so consider this classification of artworks to be incomplete. Communication necessitates symbols (within notational schemes and overall systems) that are publically perceptible; it is important to note that each artwork, as a whole, is a symbol. The notational scheme in the representational system that underlies visual art is such that no two marks can be known to mean the same thing across different artworks; this is an analog scheme as Nelson Goodman (1976) has construed it. Let's say that the *same* mark (or pictorial object) can exist in two separate, distinct artworks. The representational symbol system under which these two works are classified as "art" necessitates that there is no way to determine that the mark or pictorial object doesn't belong to more than one character class; being in a character class makes them the same. Notice that in the notational scheme for the English language different marks (MARK, **mark**, *mark*) can be known to be members of the same character class while belonging to no others. Once that is established the attempt to coordinate a meaning with the character can happen. In the visual art system we can't ascribe a particular meaning to a mark or object and expect (or stipulate) it to be the *same* from artwork to artwork. What this means is that at its foundation, every art making or art experiencing situation is a novel situation where exercising interpretive judgments and evaluative beliefs with unclear boundaries on new material is a necessity. The symbol system itself requires that we exercise this value-adaptive attitude every time we engage the creative process in making or experiencing visual art. We do develop habits of seeing/conceiving and tend to entrench meanings, but the system itself does not cause this entrenchment. With this in mind, our habits of seeing can be employed with a sense of adaptability that strengthens the benefits we actually do get out of using them.

### 3 Art's moral function

It might seem obvious that the experience of art from other cultures can generate emotions, causing empathy and acknowledgment of a shared humanity. John Dewey (2005) has insightful things to say about the effect of art on attitudes and the connection of art practice to morality.

"The moral function of art itself is to remove prejudice, do away with the scales that keep the eye from seeing, tear away the veils due to wont and custom, perfect the power to perceive....We understand it [art from other cultures or art outside our defined norm] to the degree in which we make it a part of our own attitudes...we install ourselves in modes of apprehending nature that at first are strange to us....This insensible melting is far more efficacious than the change effected by reasoning, because it enters directly into attitude. (Dewey, 2005, p. 334)

This passage is particularly interesting with regard to the argument this paper presents. What Dewey claims to be the moral function of art doesn't happen automatically. Should we hold fast to fixed ideals that establish what is "good" or believe in sharp boundary lines defining concepts we employ in interpretation then nothing will enter directly into attitude. As such art couldn't perform its moral function and ultimately it's civic function of managing re-evaluation, the informed alteration of or reinforcement of values. The effective reinforcement of civic values occurs when the exercise of one or another particular cultural value is allowed to be openly tested. This is real reinforcement. Similarly, the alteration of a value is in effect to allow a belief and corresponding action disposition to adapt to circumstances such that a better consequence is experienced.

A value-adaptive attitude makes it possible that art is more powerful than reason in removing prejudice and expanding our awareness. In his book entitled *The Meaning of the Body*, Mark Johnson (2008) comments on Dewey's account of reasoning as it relates to attitudes.

"The crux of Dewey's entire argument [in *Art As Experience*] is that what we call thinking, or reasoning, or logical inference, could not even exist without the felt qualities of situations: "The underlying unity of qualitative-ness regulates pertinence or relevancy and force of every distinction and relation; it guides selection and rejection and the manner of utilization of all explicit terms" (Dewey 1934, 247-8). This is a startling claim: Insofar as logic pertains to real human inquiry, logic can't do anything without feeling....Logic alone cannot define the problem you are trying to solve by inquiry. Logic cannot tell you what you should count as relevant to your argument. Logic can only work because we take for granted the prior working of qualities in experienced situations" (Johnson, 2008, p.78).

The important relationships in the preceding quote should not be underestimated with regard to the similarities of civics and creative practice in the arts. The ability to interpret artworks/designs, to make inferences based on compositional analysis or to recognize violations of democratic rights (as being pivotal to civic literacy) is on this account not solely rooted in an abstract logical analysis that can dispense with the qualities we feel in experienced situations. In actuality, attitudes rest upon the interdependence of logic and emotion. To make art and to experience art is to effectively navigate the construction of interpretations and evaluations wherein the perceptible experience of a felt, emotional, situation is of vital importance. Practicing this process in itself is beneficial as far as transference to ethical inquiry is concerned, but when the content of an artwork concerns morals or civic values then the consequences approach Dewey's expectations for art in culture.

The value-adaptive attitude allows one to be confident in exercising the evaluative beliefs underlying an attitude while remaining open to and adapting to the changing circumstances relevant to those values. It is valuable to the extent that it makes possible the development of better consequences, better habits of action, that are

themselves considered better as judged by lived experience (which includes imaginative experience). The value-adaptive attitude is transferrable from its use in the creative processes of art making and experiencing to the realm of ethics because the concepts (such as "good") used in art are of the same qualitative character as the concepts (such as the word "good") used in ethical cases. Both ethics and art require us to grapple with vagueness, and they afford felt experiences great significance in determining actions. As such, art education has a role to play in civic literacy.

#### 4 Compositional analysis

In creating art in the studio one weighs the possibilities and ultimately takes action. In order to effectively create an artwork, the artist must practice the ability to take action and revise their action. Many artists describe the process as feeling, intuiting their way through the construction of an artwork. Other artists spend more time forecasting possible outcomes to their actions before taking them. More often than not the process is a blend of the two. However, in neither case are the felt qualities of experience absent, as the qualities of an actual situation or as the predicted (imagined) felt qualities of a possible action. Interpreting and evaluating actions, with both emotion and reason, taken in the course of making an artwork, cultivates not only the value-adaptive attitude but is also to practice what Johnson argues is of primary importance to human inquiry in general.

Teaching students to create artwork is made difficult to the degree that they desire to *know* what or how to do something in advance. Teachers uniformly use ostensive training with art students to help guide them towards an emotional and conceptual experience that they (the teachers) believe is of value. However, this does not entail nor do many of them maintain that a right answer exists as to how a composition will best achieve an original intention or why a composition will ultimately be evaluated as good. Yet it is the cultivation of this value-adaptive attitude that both allows one to act with some confidence and to adjust to the actual results in the production of art. This statement also applies to the experience of art, the interpretation and evaluation of artworks as a spectator. The following example affords us the opportunity to examine the art director's compositional decisions in the production of a particular mass-media advertisement. This is essentially a study in composition, the ordering of elements in a design, and in this instance it's a visual design. Compositional study is of primary importance in all art and design disciplines, and it is particularly impactful with regard to the reinforcement or alteration of the ethical beliefs underlying attitudes.

Consider Figure 1, an advertisement for a large international bank. What we are judging is the actual, publically perceptible work and not an intention on the part of the artist or art director that may or may not have been successfully produced. The author is one among all as a creator of an interpretation of the actual work, and the job of the viewer, while being engaged in the



author's act of communication, is nonetheless not simply to discover the right answer in the form of the artist's intention. Certainly failure to communicate a particular intention needs to be possible and aesthetic experience need not be impoverished. In considering Figure 1, interpret what is being sold and to whom through this advertisement. Notice the staging, the use of perspective in the architectural lines, the color choices, the facial expressions, and the juxtaposition of the logos. Consider the text that accompanies the image, its positioning, the emphasis granted to certain ideas through scale, and its overall relationship to the characters.

Figure 1 (2014)



Deutsche Bank [Advertisement]. (n.d.). *The Economist*. Original can be retrieved at <https://www.db.com/cr/en/special/deutsche-bank.htm>

Now consider Figure 2. Does the reintroduction of the woman in this scene change your interpretation? What can be interpreted in this composition with regard to her presence, the color choices in her hair and accessories, her presence in the foreground, and the focus of her attention. Figure 2 is the original advertisement. Building an interpretation of this piece has proven to be complex, and responses from high school age students to these two images have been quite diverse. Many students simply see people in an airport walking to catch a flight. It is certainly a plausible interpretation that she is the CEO of a company, hustling to catch a plane to the next shareholder's meeting with her vice president of investor relations by her side. An equally plausible interpretation is that she is an object of desire, an object that two male characters are competing over. No attempt is being made here to prove that any particular interpretation is in fact *the* designer's or *the* company's intention. That

these interpretations exist among an indefinite number of possible meanings does not render visual art incapable of contributing to knowledge. It does not mean that without a definitive interpretation that art contributes little to our beliefs in how things *ought* to be.

The visual art symbol system, unlike a system such as the English language, does not stipulate what is and what is not the index and the characterizer of an artistic expression. That is, the system itself has no rules that determine what a visual artwork's subject (index) is or what its subject is not (Beardsley, 1981). This also applies to the characterizer (predicate) or in other words what it is that is being expressed about the subject. The viewer assesses what is and is not relevant and makes interpretations and evaluations that settle on some index and some characterizer; it is not the case that an explicit index or characterizer must be identified or that one or another is capable of being expressed in linguistic form. The point is that compositional analysis is the mechanism through which the process of description, interpretation and evaluation occurs, and that to lack an understanding of compositional decision-making has as a consequence poor civic literacy. To interpret an image with the civic literacy objective of judging the interests of the creator is a second step. This exercise in compositional analysis precedes such a judgment. Preparing students for engagement as productive community members necessitates that their experience of artworks, or any form of visual communication, does not pass through to belief and action without compositional analysis.

Figure 2 (2014)



Deutsche Bank [Advertisement]. (n.d.). *The Economist*. Original can be retrieved at [www.db.com/cr/en/special/deutsche-bank.htm](https://www.db.com/cr/en/special/deutsche-bank.htm).

Studio art teaches the weighing and measuring of actions with regard to the use of elements (space, line, color, etc.) in a composition. This weighing and measuring must remain adaptive because the notational scheme itself requires it. The system also imposes the same adaptability on the coordination of cultural references in each individual artwork or design. Cultural references, external references in this respect, become elements with which the designer-artist composes the piece: gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic class, etc. Consider the relationships between the people in Figure 2. A white woman is in the foreground, with blonde hair, red shoes, and a red bag; her shirt color (blue) matches that of the white male and the large logo. She is looking at the black man and he is looking at her. They all appear to be of the same socio-economic class. The heads of all three people in the foreground are aligned on one of the perspective lines created by the light breaks in the windows. The woman is walking directly on another perspective line as reflected in the floor. The horizon line (the camera's and therefore the viewer's eye level) is just below their waistlines. The two men are (relative to the flat picture plane) located on either side of the woman. The men are facing towards but to the left of the camera and have facial expressions that are clearly visible. The woman's facial profile is visible and her expression is partially discernable.

Again, it is not the case that any particular interpretation is *necessarily* the true, right, interpretation. However, this does not mean that one or another interpretation cannot be supported or be argued to result in better consequences based on compositional analysis (the pragmatist position on truth or rightness). We can point to the elements in the piece as support for decisions of relevance, and the inferences made can be shown to result in particular meanings. The point is to consider the consequences of what was actually done, created, independently of any authorial intention, and it can be shown that this advertisement for banking services contains content interpreted as directly involving morals and cultural identities.

The white man is walking with a serious, determined facial expression. He is about to walk across the path traveled by the woman as she walks away with a black man. The white man is closest in proximity to the expression "Passion to Perform." Consider the difference between Figure 1 and Figure 2 with regard to the interpretation of the white man in the foreground. The presence or absence of the woman in the image makes a difference. We can even define the relevance of an element or object in an artwork or image such that the absence of that element or object renders an actual interpretation no longer possible. The absence of the woman is significant. Furthermore, the compositional organization of color, scale and juxtaposition make the woman the most prominent, emphasized object. How does this emphasis occur? Many of her colors are warm and advance while the vast majority of other colors in the scene are cool and recede; this color organization directs attention to her. She is striding next to a man

relative to the ground plane, but relative to the organization of the picture plane she is between the two men. She is looking into the eyes of the man next to her and is visible in profile only. In other words she isn't looking towards the viewer of this image; this empowers the viewer with unconstrained observation. Her body type is tall and fit and her hair complements this physique. Her sexuality is emphasized.

In general, does the passive digestion of images result in better consequences for our culture? Does this seemingly run-of-the-mill advertisement (Figure 2) reinforce action dispositions congruent with the democratic cultural value of the equality of men and women? To be an object in this respect is to be unequal, and the interpretation of Figure 2 as objectifying a woman does not reinforce the cultural values of equality and justice we espouse in western democratic culture. There are competing interpretations for this image and no attempt has been made to argue that the intent of this bank is to objectify women in order to appeal to an audience. Knowing the intentions of the bank is irrelevant insofar as we have learned to interpret and evaluate visual expressions. We act according to our actual interpretive experience of the piece and not what the artist, art director or company claims to be the intended meaning. What is needed is experience with compositional analysis and the open examination of evaluative beliefs that follows from a value-adaptive attitude. It is through the felt experience that emerges in concert with compositional study that the real reinforcement of the value of equality, in this instance, can happen. Passive exposure to images such as this can reinforce an attitude that women are objects or it can contribute to the failure to uncover conflicting beliefs. Art education is a bulwark against passive consumption.

## 5 Conclusion

A perplexing and insightful exercise is to ask students to develop a plan to teach someone how to use the word "beautiful." The difficulty in doing so touches on many of the issues this paper identifies: vague definitional boundaries, application in multiple realms (nature and artifacts), cultural dependency, actual felt situations, and the value-adaptive attitude. A discerning response I have received when assigning this exercise is that "no one sits you down and teaches you to label things 'beautiful'...you just come to use the word." It also might seem that we are not expressly taught how to interpret or use images and that we have mastered this ability independently of guidance. In neither instance is this really the case, and we have developed habits of seeing (interpreting) these symbols wherein the nature of the symbol system is poorly understood. In his book *The Gift*, Lewis Hyde (2007) bolsters the need for art education because of its deep cultural implications. "The work of art is a copula: a bond, a band, a link by which the several are knit into one [people into a community].... These creations are not "merely" symbolic, they do not "stand for" the larger self; they are its necessary embodiment, a language without which it would have no life at all"



(Hyde, p.199). That visual forms of expression in current western democratic cultures are ubiquitous is not contentious, and possessing a deep understanding of the visual art symbol system and compositional analysis can only be beneficial if not absolutely necessary for effective participation in one's own culture and across cultures. Therefore art education has a role to play in helping to achieve the goals of citizenship education.

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## Sónia Pereira, Concha Maiztegui-Oñate, Diana Mata-Codesal

### “Transformative looks”: Practicing Citizenship Through Photography<sup>1</sup>

- This article discusses photography as a tool in critical non-formal citizenship education.
- A collective and collaborative project implemented in Bilbao, Spain, with migrant women is analysed.
- The project enabled participants to appropriate local public spaces in pursuit of recognition.
- Through collective work and photography migrant women without formal citizenship actively engaged in local citizenship from the ground.

**Purpose:** The article discusses the meanings of citizenship and citizenship education when formal citizenship is restricted by exploring the potential of photography education and practice as a tool that promotes the exercise of citizenship in the context of non-formal critical adult education. By doing it, this text aims to enhance our understanding on the ways art education can improve the achievement of the goals of citizenship education.

**Method:** This article analyses the experience of the collective and collaborative project: “Con la cámara auestas: Transformative Looks”, in Bilbao, Spain, with a group of fifteen to twenty migrant women from eight Latin American countries.

**Findings:** Citizenship as a life-long learning process involving individual as well as collective action leading to the promotion of new shared values for more inclusive communities benefits greatly from the use of artistic expressions such as photography. Because of migrant women’s marginalized position as non-*formal*-citizens, citizenship as participation effectively becomes a fundamental route of influence in the public sphere. Conceptualizing citizenship as struggle and as a critical learning process opens up possibilities for generating new shared ‘habitus’, where ‘recognition’ can be achieved leading to more inclusive societies.

#### Keywords:

Photography, participation, citizenship, lifelong learning, visibility, voice

#### 1 Introduction

Being a citizen of a given nation-state is usually the route to being granted full rights (civil, political, social), as well as responsibilities. However, neither is citizenship a fixed concept nor is the way of accessing it a historical given. Citizenship has different meanings, as it will be discussed in the first section of this paper, and has been a process as well as a ‘status’. In this article, we focus on the process: How can citizenship be exercised through claims by,

at one point, ‘non-citizens’? We take the example of migrants, who are citizens of one state which is not their state of residence and are therefore excluded from *formal* citizenship there, at least for some time. As a result, their access to rights (and obligations) where they reside becomes constrained by the immigration regime in place. Notwithstanding, they are important members in their communities, actively engaged in ‘local citizenship’ (Neveu, 1999). We depart from this conceptual framework to develop the argument that citizenship is a life-long learning process which is also a community process. This approach brings forth the potential for social transformation at the same time as new shared meanings are generated in the communities, based on new collective understandings and mutual recognition. One crucial dimension in this process of mutual learning in diverse societies, which will be discussed in this article, is the claim for recognition put forward by migrants. Using the example of an arts education project named “Transformative looks”, we look at a group of migrant women, who, through learning and practicing photography, collectively chose how to present themselves to others in their place of residence, thereby contributing to challenge majority views on ‘migrant women’ and gaining voice through photographs. We argue that they exercised citizenship as social participation and civic engagement by gaining visibility in an urban space through art – photography – while claiming recognition in their communities.

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## 2 Conceptualizing citizenship within migratory contexts

Citizenship is usually defined as a form of membership in a political and geographical community (Bloemraad, Korteweg & Yurdakul, 2008) although it has many different meanings. To begin with, citizenship may be considered both as *formal* and *substantial* (Baubock 1994). The first dimension considers the formal link to the state, i.e. nationality; the second refers to the set of rights and duties ascribed to formal citizenship such as the right to vote and be elected or the respect of laws (Mantovan, 2006). In addition, *substantial* citizenship can also be considered in two different ways: as *static*, corresponding to the possession of rights and duties, or as *dynamic*, corresponding to an effective participation in political life (Mantovan, 2006).

How citizenship is defined is also a matter of contextualizing it within particular political philosophy traditions. The two major traditions of citizenship in western thought are the liberal and the civic republican (Martin, 2000). In the liberal political thinking, citizenship is an individually ascribed political status which is exercised mainly through the ballot-box. The civic republican tradition embodies a collective construction of citizenship as a continuing, creative and open-ended process which is exercised within civil society (Keogh, 2003, p. 8). For some time, as Delanty (2003, p. 597) points out liberal views on citizenship have tended to dominate the debate, versus communitarian approaches that build on the civic republican tradition.

Framed within nation-state boundaries, access to citizenship is based on a set of criteria that allows some people 'in' while keeping others 'out'. The two most important criteria for accessing citizenship in the modern state were being male and being adult; owning property and being white could also be added for some states (Coady, 2014, p. 1). Therefore, citizenship was, historically, deeply rooted in privilege, both in terms of having access to and benefiting from it. These criteria have been challenged over the past 200 years, by women, by indigenous populations, by slaves, and by others who had been excluded from access to *formal* citizenship (Coady 2014:1), eventually leading to more encompassing definitions or as Turner (1990, p. 191) puts it 'the expansion of the franchise'. Indeed, a broad notion of 'struggle' is a critical aspect to understand the historic growth of citizenship (Turner, 1990, p. 194).

Exclusionary criteria, necessarily, persist and define who is entitled to *formal* citizenship in every state. The large number and diverse origins of international migrants increasingly challenge long held notions of citizenship within nation-state borders (Bloemraad et al., 2008, p. 154). Migrants, who are citizens of the country where they were born or of their parents, have limited (if any) access to citizenship in the country where they come to reside after migration. Their presence in that state is regulated through immigration regimes that grant visas, permits of stay and so on, which establish their respective (limited) rights and duties in that state. For some migrants, even permits of stay or visas are difficult to obtain leading them to remain in the country

of residence without a recognized legal status. This effectively conditions migrants' actions as formal political subjects in their countries of residence, namely because they often do not have the right to vote, or be elected, or when they do it is restricted to local elections, and also limits access to social rights (social security benefits for example). Perhaps less affected is access to civil rights such as freedom of speech, rights to a fair trial and equal access to the legal system (Turner, 1990, p. 191).

In addition to this understanding of citizenship drawn from political philosophy, authors like Catherine Neveu propose that there are also more 'sociological' or 'anthropological' ways of understanding and looking at citizenship. This anthropologist proposes the introduction of concepts such as 'local citizenship' or 'citizenship from the ground', which correspond to "the multiple ways through which social actors themselves define, perceive, practice the engagement in public space" (Neveu, 1999, p.9), and which may be independent from the legal status that binds an individual to a particular nation-state. Citizenship can thus be conceived both as an active participatory practice and a set of rights, which are the object of struggle (Lister, 2007, p. 52).

Indeed, in the case of migrants, for example, exclusion from *formal* citizenship in the states where they reside does not prevent them from acting in public space or from engaging in 'local citizenship'. As members of that particular society, they may exercise 'citizenship as participation' (Turner, 1990, p. 189). This would correspond to the idea of "citizen as an active and engaged member of society" (Delanty, 2003, p. 597). Participation in the labour market or business sector, payment of taxes, participation in local schools or neighbourhood associations, raising families or other activities that make people an integral part of their communities and institutions can also be understood as participatory citizenship that allows immigrants to make 'citizenship-like' claims even in the absence of *formal* citizenship or even in the absence of a legal status (Bloemraad et al. 2008, p. 162). At the same time, they may enjoy some rights (for example economic or social protection rights deriving from their status as workers) but be in struggle for others (such as political rights, social rights or recognition).

Conceptually, this paper builds into emerging views of citizenship as embodied rather than abstract, which are also grounded in practice and contextualized in particular spaces of action, where in everyday lives people negotiate 'rights and responsibilities, belonging and participation' (Lister, 2007, p.55). This approach also takes into account the ways in which social and cultural backgrounds as well as material circumstances affect people's lives as citizens (Lister, 2007, p.55).

## 3 Citizenship as a lifelong learning process

Citizenship is a recurrent word on the discourse and practice of lifelong learning with a range of different meanings (Medel Añonuevo & Mitchell, 2003). In Western countries, the topic of citizenship has become increasingly important with many official initiatives for citizenship classes and teaching languages and civic

values to adult migrants. In this context, there is a growing complaint about the use of lifelong learning as a vehicle for assimilating migrants instead of embracing diversity (Guo, 2010).

Brooks and Holford (2009) point out some tensions within citizenship education initiatives. We focus here on the tensions between what is described as “knowledge transmission perspective” versus “learning through engagement perspective” proposed by Lawy and Biesta (2006). Each approach reflects a particular perspective that can be visualised over a vertical or horizontal axes. The first one, a vertical or “top-down” axe, reflects a traditional approach informed by policies that primarily target migrants’ citizenship (Loring, 2015). In fact, for migrants, we find in many countries ‘citizenship classes’ intended to prepare them for ‘citizenship tests’ which can give access to formal citizenship in the state of residence (provided that other requirements are fulfilled) or even just to get access to permits of stay (for a thorough revision of such courses in Europe see Jacobs and Rea, 2007; or the Special Issue on “Education for National Belonging: Imposing Borders and Boundaries on Citizenship” edited by Gordon, Long, & Fellin in 2015, which examines diverse citizenship courses in Canada, USA and the Netherlands). In general, these measures are usually framed as ‘integration courses’ but they also have an important ‘disciplinary function’ (Delanty, 2003, p. 599). The underlying assumption in this approach is that learning citizenship becomes equalized with learning the substantial dimension ascribed to formal citizenship, in the form of established rights and duties emanating from fixed and rigid conceptions of the polity as interpreted by public officials (Delanty, 2003, p.599). However, critical views emphasise that this limited approach reduces learning processes to formal learning, ignoring the importance of diversity (Abu El Haj, 2009) and risking to reinforce discriminatory practices (Banks, 2012).

By contrast, a “bottom-up” approach reflects a notion of “citizenship as practice” as an inclusive and relational concept located in a particular milieu and related to “day to day practices” (Lawy & Biesta, 2006). This interpretation reveals a dynamic notion of citizenship that includes perspectives and practices of individuals who reformulate policies through resistance and transformation (Loring, 2015). Such pedagogical perspective is highly context-bound. People learn relevant skills through actively trying to solve a problem or fulfilling a mission, rather than through organised or institutionalised processes of learning. At the same time, learning citizenship is considered as a process of learning democracy based on a dialectical and participatory education. Martin (2003) argues that this approach implies a particular kind of social purpose: “adult education of engagement”. Crucial to such discussion is the view that citizenship is not only acquired by the learning of cognitive competences but developed through a myriad of performances carried out in daily life activities and contexts. For these reasons, activist projects organised by civil society used to have long tradition in this field (Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006).

The process of learning transformative citizenship can be narrowed down to three key factors: development process, collective learning and engagement. First, it entails a developmental process of learning. Field (2006, p. 1999) asserts that the contemporary use of lifelong learning embraces “learning everywhere and at all times and in every corner of life”. As mentioned earlier, Delanty (2003) affirms that citizenship must be an active learning process tied to discourses of recognition in order to empower people in their own self-understanding. According to this author the advantage of this approach is to put the focus on the creation of meaning and personal narratives by gaining control over the flow of information (2003, p. 602). This practice is based on the experience of everyday life to give voice to personal identities (Lawy & Biesta, 2006). Secondly, regarding collective learning Martin (2003) argues that linking adult learning and citizenship invokes a tradition of social purpose, even a reconstruction of the “agora”, in a sense of critical engagement and open ended adult education articulated not only around the perception of the self but also in the perception of the relationship of self and other. Thirdly, citizenship learning is related to an action dimension. The collective learning and transformative process of citizenship is exercised within civil society, where citizens are viewed as members of both a global and a local world. This dimension entails a full interpretation of citizenship which underlines a critical understanding, reflection and participation (Martin, 2000) to engage proactively in the community.

This paper presents insights from an arts education project, in which, through photography, a group of migrant women engage in practicing citizenship locally. We consider that this approach links with a “more sophisticated understanding of citizenship” (Lawy & Biesta, 2006) and opens the door to transformative learning processes both individual and collectively.

#### 4 Arts and citizenship education

Since 1960 many organizations have used arts or artistic activities to provide forms of self-expression and to foster civic engagement by creating opportunities for interactions among groups (Barragan & Moreno, 2004). The emerging literature in the field of arts and citizenship has predominantly focused on understanding the learning opportunities and outcomes of the arts. In this sense they are considered as a medium for engaging citizens as active participants in democratic societies (Abu El Haj, 2009;; Lawy, Biesta, Mc Donnell, Lawy, & Reeves, 2010; Moon, y otros, 2013 ). We point out that citizenship projects based on arts not only offer the opportunity to experience creativity but they also provide an opportunity for experimentation based on civic and democratic learning. We are working from what Kuttner (2015, p. 70) calls “arts education” that includes a “variety of forms of symbolic creativity” including a range of activities from theater to documentary film courses, photography and community art festivals. Artistic process are related, in this approach, to the dynamics of everyday public life, which also include opportunities to participate in the



production and consumption of artistic practices. Consequently, we consider that arts education constitutes an appropriate field to achieve one important aim of citizenship education: "to imagine their social belonging and exercise their participation as democratic citizens" (Levinson, 2005, p.336).

It is widely agreed that education through arts can be a forum to develop critical analysis of power and an opportunity to explore systems of power. Consequently, many educators use the arts to develop critical analysis and support practices related to education and activism (Ginwright, Noguera and Cammarota, 2006). For some groups who do not enjoy full citizenship to be heard is particularly relevant. Arts projects provide a venue to enhance visibility and to turn the "experience into voice" (Stuiver, Van der Jagt, van Erven, & Hoving, 2012). As DiMaggio and Fernández-Kelly (2015) argue creative expression of the arts can deepen our understanding of why "immigrants resort to aesthetic means (...) to communicate with the wider society".

Crucial to this view of artistic practices and citizenship is the concept of narratives. In our paper, narratives are understood as "subjective representations of a series of events that involve problem definition, worldviews and aspects of social reality" (Stuiver, Van der Jagt, van Erven & Hoving, 2012, p. 298). In addition, narratives "enabled people to find their voices to step into a gargantuan field of possibilities" (Moon, et al, 2013, p.229). From this point of view, narratives are not considered neutral representations as they incorporate worldviews and problem definitions. According to O'Neill (2008) art is capable of making explicit narratives related to life experiences because through art, ideas and hopes become visible to others. The combination of biography/narrative and art becomes a "potential space" for transformative possibilities.

Photography is a powerful resource to tell stories. At the same time, the use of digital photography has become an immediate practice to record daily life. In Social Sciences photography has a longstanding history of illuminating the needs of disenfranchised and displaced groups (Green & Kloos, 2009). This article explores the project "Transformative Looks" based on photography. Inspired by photovoice (Wang & Burris, 1997) photography facilitated personal reflection and group discussion among a group of migrant women while simultaneously giving visibility – and voice – to the questions that affect them. Photovoice is a type of participatory action research in which participants photograph daily life, discuss the images in small groups to reflect on community strengths and weaknesses, and appeal to policymakers in the interest of social change (Kenney, 2009). It is a flexible method that can be adapted to different contexts and populations. Developed in the USA by Wang & Burris (1997), the theoretical framework of photovoice is inspired by Freire's theory. In this approach one essential idea is that disadvantaged people explore and document their own issues by constructing their own narratives. Looking at different projects conducted with migrants we see that distinct narratives are

elicited as a result of diverse life experiences: O'Neill (2008) reports how Bosnian refugees in the UK produced artistic text related to their experience of exile and the process of emplacement while Afghan refugees highlighted the process of agency and resistance. In both cases artists facilitated the production of texts, objects and images. In Uganda photographs taken by youth refugees in a camp combine images of poverty and idleness with other images that reflect working activities (Green & Kloos, 2009). An arts initiative among Liberian in the Diaspora reflects the main challenges that older refugees face in US (Chaudry, 2008). In the next section we analyse our project "Transformative Looks".

### **5 Practising citizenship: "Transformative Looks"**

In 2015 the Human Rights Institute of the University of Deusto in collaboration with the Foundation Ellacuría and the local branch of the NGO Doctors of the World, with technical support from a local association of photography, Zuri-Beltza, conducted in the Spanish city of Bilbao the collective project: "Con la cámara a cuestas: Transformative Looks"<sup>2</sup>. The project built on a smaller but similar project which ran in 2014. "Transformative Looks" ran through ten sessions on Saturday afternoons, from January to June 2015. The project had four major overall aims. The first one was to facilitate access to local cultural spaces and to promote and raise awareness of contemporary art, particularly regarding photography. Secondly, it aimed to explore the ability of photography to narrate personal accounts. Thirdly, the project wanted to encourage personal reflection and group discussion in visits, workshops and to fuel personal creativity around issues relevant for the participants themselves. The final aim was to give voice to those who are often spoken of, as well as to provide them with a space – in the form of a photo exhibition - to show to a wide audience their own way of looking at what is important for them.

The participants were a group of fifteen to twenty adult migrant women born in eight different Latin American countries and currently living in Bilbao metropolitan area. The total number of participants fluctuated as women's work and family commitments made it difficult for them to attend every session. Small group size and non-sustained participation are features shared by most projects of this kind (Catalani & Minkler, 2010). Participants were in a situation of high vulnerability, working as domestic workers in low-paid jobs in the informal care sector in precarious social and legal conditions. None of them held formal Spanish citizenship, and some of them were not even entitled to work legally in Spain. Trust was key for the success of the whole project. It built on existing relationships, which had been previously forged by the women through their participation on the activities and courses provided by the associations.

Transformative Looks started with a guided group visit to a photo exhibition in the public local art gallery *Sala Rekalde*. The selected exhibition was a retrospective by the American-Canadian photographer Lynne Cohen. Cohen's unique look clearly signals the potential of photography to create critical narratives anchored in the

everyday. Following the visit, basic training in photography was provided by a Bilbao-based photography association. The two-session training focused on the technical aspects of taking pictures as well as on the power of photography to create and communicate narratives.

In the previous 2014 project, the involved women photographed aspects of their everyday lives in relation to their jobs - many worked long hours as domestic workers -, their free time, their family life - in many cases how to deal with physical separation - and their social involvement. Unlike the 2014 edition, in the 2015 project the topic selection was determined by the women themselves. They took, shared and showed photographs around a common topic they identified as important in their lives - *superación*. The process through which the women made decisions was participant-driven: the participants defined the topics around which they would take photographs and guided decisions about the organization of the exhibition as well as the presentations. The word *superación* does not translate well into English. It means spirit of achievement, but also personal growth and desire to improve, and fits perfectly in a frame that understands citizenship as an on-going struggle for local participation and recognition. The complexity associated to an abstract topic such as *superación* generated bottlenecks that complicated the flow of the project. At those moments when difficulties arose we went back to discuss the different visions and possibilities to transform the ideas and feelings into images/photographs or texts. The collaborative work among women allowed contrasting ideas and proposing new focus not only to take new pictures but also to analyze the issue. Sharing doubts and difficulties in a collaborative way enabled the participants to find their own voices. Reflecting on personal processes of *superación* triggered strong emotions and unsettling feelings among participants. It is not surprising then that a minority of women found it difficult to make sense of this process and decided to leave the project. In those cases, the NGOs co-facilitators contacted and spoke personally with those women. Again, we would like to emphasize that the quality of the interpersonal relations between the NGO workers and the women was a key factor to the continuity of the project and the deep dialogues raised.

The project also comprised time to take pictures, as well as sessions to share the photographs and discuss their meaning. The process was loosely guided by Jungk and Müller (1997) methodology on desirable futures and its three stages: diagnosis, dream and change regarding participant women's situation of *superación*. Collective narratives emerged from the participants' dialogic engagement in these reflective sessions. The sessions were appropriated by the women, turning them into a nurturing and safe space to share the photos and narratives. While narrating women's experiences of *superación*, their photos became triggers for critical thinking of their past and present social positioning. Due to migration, participants have experienced simultaneous processes of upward economic mobility and downward

social mobility. Non-professional recognition and deskilling was a poignant consequence of their migration to Spain<sup>3</sup>.

The project also comprised sessions to prepare and set up a photo exhibition. Photographs along explanative texts were set up in an exhibition which was shown at different venues, including an academic seminar to explore the academic and methodological implications of photography for social research and the development of intervention actions, and a workshop on participatory photography. The participants were always invited to act as guides for the visitors at all local venues the exhibition was shown. Due to their work requirements most women could not take advantage of this, and the better-off ones informally became representatives for the group experience. The exhibition was entitled *Superación*. The photos in the exhibition were grouped under different senses around the idea of improvement. The three main thematic headings are:

1) Family and personal domain. Photos in this axis present women's views on how to build and transform their *superación* as a dynamic process. Some of the photos under this heading condensed the process of change undergone by these women. In many cases the change was heavily related to their migratory experiences, but the process did not always start or end with their actual physical migration. They also reflect on their pressing needs to manage physically separated family lives, with family members living in different continents and time zones. However, they also show photos on *superación* as a process of enjoyment, and how they try to make the most out of their current hard living conditions and family arrangements. Their powerful message being that improvement also needs to mean enjoying and adapting to external changing situations. It does not have to be all about suffering.

2) Work and training domain. Given their hard current working conditions many of the women had entrepreneurial expectations - whether in Spain in the future or back in their places of origin. Some of their photos and texts express feelings of unfairness due to the professional deskilling suffered by many of them. Their skills - formal or informal ones - remained unrecognized in Europe forcing them to work in jobs they are over-qualified for. Still they foresee training and education as engines of *superación*, quite often through their children.

3) Collective domain. Women were also highly motivated to engage in collective projects, showing a women-wide idea of *superación*. As most participant women were involved with two local organizations, they were self-selected and this activist collective approach is therefore not surprising.

## 6 Discussion

Transformative Looks was simultaneously training and learning process as well as a tool to enhance the exercise of citizenship among a group of women faced with limitations for political participation that derive from the restrictions of their status as foreign residents in Spain. In the line offered by the photovoice rationale (Wang & Burris, 1997), photography allowed personal reflection and group discussion among the participants about questions that affect them as women, domestic workers and foreign citizens in Spain. Most participants endure

situations of high vulnerability, working as domestic workers in precarious social and legal conditions (as mentioned some of them did not even have a work permit in Spain). It also gave them voice by enabling the visibility of the topics which are important for them.

The project took place in a hybrid of scholar/activist process. The two social organizations involved share a vision of placing women's learning and participation within a social and political context. In particular, these organizations put the emphasis on the concept of participation, which denotes democratic notions of access, agency and change. Empowerment is understood as a process through which people become aware of their capabilities to facilitate both self-transformation and the transformation of their contexts (Torres, 2009, p. 92). The emphasis of both organizations on empowerment as a collective participatory process stems from practices of critical adult learning, and calls to substantial and dynamic understandings of citizenship. It also links with the emphasis on dialogical methods to identify issues and produce comments about the experience of improvement which has been crucial in the project.

"Transformative Looks" became a collective learning process with a twofold effect. Inwards, the women appropriated the sessions creating a nurturing safe space where they created relations and shared common concerns. This fed back helping to reinforce previous links and strengthening the struggle capacity of the group. As other authors (eg. Lawy & Biesta, 2006; Lawy et al., 2010; O'Neill, 2008) have pointed out this experience highlights the crucial role of relationship and trust. Outwards, the project enabled participants to appropriate local public spaces in pursuit of recognition as active players in the social fabric of the city. In the case of domestic migrant women, whose work and living conditions remains largely unacknowledged, to overcome mis-representations and invisibility is central in the process to achieve recognition. Recognition was a particularly poignant issue as most women have suffered processes of deskilling because their professional qualifications and experiences prior to migration are not recognized in Spain. This over-qualification is a feature of most Latin American female migrants in Spain (Parella, 2015, p. 82). The possibility of self-representation was therefore a crucial aspect of the project. Through the project women accessed spaces to show to a wide audience their own way of looking at their daily lives and their experiences as working migrant women without formal citizenship but who actively engage in citizenship practices from the ground. The photo exhibition and the events organized around it allowed participants' voices to actively engage in public space often beyond their social reach.

Understanding citizenship as both participation and local civic engagement allows us to move beyond fixed and static notions of citizenship as they are defined in any given time and space (nation-state level). Conceptualizing citizenship as struggle and as a critical learning process opens up possibilities for generating new shared 'habitus', where 'recognition' can be achieved leading to

more inclusive societies. This exercise of citizenship contributes to raise consciousness of one's own position in any given society or state at the same time as it contributes to contest it. In a project similar to *Con la Cámara a Cuestas* that sought to 'give voice' to the poor, the authors clearly write about their purpose: "... to give people the opportunity to define and present themselves on their own terms... Our aim, the same then as it is today, was to counter stereotypes about people living in poverty and social exclusion by presenting honest, personal accounts of daily life and personal aspiration." (Sajovic, 2015, p. 6) In such processes art is a powerful tool to represent and share representations to wider audiences. This way citizenship as a life-long learning process involving individual as well as collective action leading to the promotion of new shared values for more inclusive communities benefits greatly from the use of artistic expressions such as photography.

For the women involved in the project *Con la Cámara a Cuestas*, photography was a familiar means of both accessing the representations of others as well as of representing themselves and share those representations. Additional written accounts of their personal histories and experiences that accompanied the photos was an important way of attributing specific meanings to what the images represented. Thinking on 'what' to represent and 'how' to do it through photo-graphs involved important debates and awareness raising of how they are situated in particular space and time contexts: 'who I am here' – in the current place of residence in Bilbao, as well as 'who I was there' – in the place of origin, with which the participants are still engaged through various contacts, projects and imaginations, as well as 'who I would like to become' here and there, involving important recognition issues in the *formal* dimension, as franchised and subjects of rights as well as obligations, in the work-sphere, as re-cognized workers with particular competences, as well as in the social-affective dimension. All these are constitutive of citizenship as we have conceptualized it. As active agents engaged in the production of discourses and an understanding of what it is like to be a Latin American (from specific local contexts) immigrant woman in Bilbao, Spain, these women become citizens in their communities. By seeking recognition and to change widespread ill-informed majority views that tend to stigmatize 'immigrant women' they challenge existing socio-cultural understandings of the 'other' and contribute to citizenship as learning social processes within those communities. Because of their marginalized position as non-*formal*-citizens – with only limited voting rights at best or without any political rights for those that do not even hold a residence permit – citizenship as participation effectively becomes a fundamental route of influence in the public sphere.

In addition, how to present and represent those ideas to others, to fulfill these purpose, of contesting majority views, assumed also a fundamental role. Learning about photography both in its technical as well as esthetic



dimensions was key to the whole process. Art education became then a crucial element of citizenship education.

### 8 Concluding remarks

By examining the experience of the project “*Con la Cámara a Cuestas: Transformative Looks*”, involving three different institutions (two civil society organisations with different mandates, and a research and higher education institute) and a group of women from Latin American countries residing in Bilbao, we have sought to discuss the exercise of citizenship as local level participation. We have shown how art education – photography, in our case – can be instrumental in processes of adult education that promote citizenship. Citizenship as a contested space, encompassing struggles and claims for recognition by those excluded from formal citizenship and whose rights become constrained by limited (or lack of) legal status. In the perspective put forward in our analysis, understanding citizenship as a life-long learning process is also about understanding its transformative dimension for both the individuals involved as well as for their communities, where new meanings of citizenship may be forged. The narrative potential of photographs, which simultaneously document and represent lives and stories, is a powerful tool to engage others. Photographs evoke immediate emotions and in that resides their strength as well as their weakness (Freund, 1993, p. 185). From the perspective of education, photography opens the path to new dynamic pedagogies. In this respect, as the project analysed here has shown, art education – for example through photography - and citizenship learning can be important allies for the promotion of social transformation and more inclusive communities.

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## Endnotes

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<sup>2</sup> The project relied heavily on informal networks. Keeping the balance between institutional demands and personal relations was not always easy. Due to the diversity of the involved partners, one of the project challenges was to learn how to cope with different interests, timings, needs, and communication codes. Different stages of the project had received minimal financial support from the EU-funded research network INTEGRIM (to print the photos for the exhibition), and from Bilbao city hall (for a workshop on participatory photography).

<sup>3</sup> On top of the emancipator power of open participatory methodologies, they are also important in more traditional research approaches as exploratory techniques to identify relevant research topics of interest for the subjects involved. In this case, deskilling processes derived from migration and the related brain waste featured as a potential research topic of interest both for the women themselves and for the academics involved. Although brain drain has been relatively well researched (Ozden & Schiff, 2006), deskilling and its macro equivalent 'brain waste' has received almost no academic attention.

**Christiana Moschou, Roberto Anaya Rodriguez**

## **The Formation of Citizenship Through Community Theatre. A Study in Aguascalientes, Mexico**

- This article discusses a theatrical method in civic education.
- An intervention of Community Theatre was realized at Aguascalientes City.
- Students started to change their attitude.
- Community Theater creates a space, where democratic behavior is possible
- Community Theatre can be an alternative method in teaching citizenship.

**Purpose:** The aim of the research was to examine if adolescents can develop abilities of democratic interaction through Community Theatre.

**Design/methodology:** Firstly, two instruments were applied, a questionnaire covering socio-moral problems, of the students and a Questionnaire, covering the Educational Ideologies of the professors. Then, a theatrical intervention was realized at middle-school students in Aguascalientes City, based on the objectives of the formation of Citizenship as stated at the National Curriculum.

**Findings:** Students themselves stated a change in their attitude during the intervention, which was also observed and registered at the field diary and at the written evaluations. For this reason, we claim that Community theater could be used as a transdisciplinary method for teaching democratic skills, as it creates a public sphere where the students can develop democratic behavior.

**Research limitations:** Further studies on the subject are required, especially concerning the time and the sample as the research had a two-month duration and was conducted at a limited population.

**Practical implications:** The contribution of this project was the introduction of Community Theatre at the service of the Citizenship Education, promoting the artistic education as a means of the formal education in the search for personal and social democratic development and could be considered in an educational reform.

### **Keywords:**

Democracy, citizenship, education, community theatre, theatre of the oppressed, moral development

### **1 Introduction**

The general question that guides this research is whether democratic abilities can be developed in adolescent students through Community Theatre and more specifically through the Theatre of the Oppressed. To put it under an educative context, 'Can the artistic educational activities be combined with civic and ethic education within a theatrical vehicle in order to favor the formation of democratic citizens?' In this respect, the general objective

is to examine the Theatre of the Oppressed as an alternative method to promote the teaching of democracy and the formation of the democratic skills within the context of these two disciplines.

Democracy, citizenship, public sphere, and the emancipation of the people, all contributed to the Theatre of the Oppressed of Boal (1979), inspired by the pedagogy of the oppressed of Freire (1970). Since its first steps, the Theatre of the Oppressed has stood alongside the poor and has declared the political dimension of art. Boal wanted to create a new style of theatre outside the traditional limitations that enforce the oppression, and create a tool for the emancipation of the poor, i.e. to prove them capable of changing the situation they are pushed into. Its main principles are the unification of actors and audience (as its form), the oppression (as its basic subject) and the change of society (as its objective).

There are similarities between this type of theatre and the public sphere, exactly as Habermas (1991 and 1996) described it, as the scene is utilized to create a minimized version of "reality" and help intervening without threat, since theatre acting is a realistic portrayal, and yet still not an actual reality (Somers, 2008). Recent investigations have established that this particular structure of the theatrical setting serves to teach certain aspects of democracy and citizenship. (Pigkou - Repousi, 2012; Charalambous, 2012).

Therefore, the foundation of this paper allows analyzing aspects of conflict resolution using specific criteria,

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including diversity, sense of justice, participation and also an active attitude towards life, while it is also promoting the artistic education as a means of the formal education in the search for personal and social democratic development.

## 2 Theoretical framework

The main concepts of this research are: democracy, the public sphere, the formation of citizenship, the theatre as a means for personal and social change, among others. These concepts originate from different academic fields, such as political studies, civic education and the art of theatre. In this section we will examine the formation of citizenship in an educational system that has declared its objective for education in democracy; the group dynamics is the theoretical background which helps us explain the phenomena that exist in a group of students and the sociological aspects of social roles; Community Theatre and the Theatre of the Oppressed are conceived as the method introduced by this research.

### 2.1 Citizenship and educational system

Within the realm of the public sphere, participation is the determining agent in all types of democracy, understanding democracy like a social, politic and cultural system, when the public power and authority is shared between the different groups of the society (Touraine, 2002), and the public sphere like the place where those groups can make their interests done (Arendth,1997; Habermas, 1991). In the case of Latin America, democracy has been extremely limited due to authoritarian regimes (Anaya 2012). For that reason, it is important to consider a notion that co-exists with democracy, the citizen.

Marshall and Bottomore's concept (2005) regarding citizenship indicates three different dimensions, the civil, the political and the social. The civil dimension includes individual freedoms. The political dimension is composed of aspects such as participation in the political process, in organizations etc. The social dimension includes social systems like education, as well as social and cultural networks among others. The political dimension is known for the lack of participation on behalf of the citizens, thus it is important to contemplate an educative project regarding the formation of citizens who will construct the conditions necessary to constitute a democratic society.

According to the article 39 of the Mexican Constitution: "The national sovereignty resides essentially in and originates from the people. All of the public power emanates from the people and is constituted for its own benefit. The people has any time the right to alter or modify the form of its government.". Thus the democratic regime and citizenship are two concepts interdependent where democracy without citizens and their participation is meaningless.

An extended research by the Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE, 2014) took place in Mexico with the objective the elaboration of a Mexican citizenship as part of the National Strategy of Civic Education for the Development of Democratic Political Culture in Mexico (Estrategia Nacional de Educación Cívica para el Desarrollo de la

Cultura Política Democrática en México, ENEC) the years 2011-2015. In the results, it can be observed that the Mexicans have no confidence at the democratic institutions. The researchers justify the phenomenon by the following argument:

"It is very possible that one of the reasons for which the political participation is limited in Mexico, has to do with the distrust and the alienation between the citizens and the government, as well as within the citizens themselves. [...] Finally, although the majority of Mexicans prefer a democratic government to other government forms, the idea of the majority on this type of governance highlights the public attitude: *in our democracy many play, but only a few win*" (Federal Electoral Institute, 2014, p.199).

Related to the circumstances formerly described, the formation of citizenship and democracy education remain as an aim of Mexican educational system. The General Law of Education (Diario Oficial de la Federación, 13<sup>th</sup> of July, 1993; last reform published in 11-09-2013) declares democracy as a students' objective: "The education conducted by the State, its decentralized organizations and any individual with official schooling authorization or acknowledgement, will have as an aim, other than the ones established in the second paragraph of the 3<sup>rd</sup> article of the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico, the following: [...] V.- To infuse the knowledge and practice of democracy as the form of administration and coexistence that allows everyone to participate in the decision making, concerning society's improvement; VI.- To promote the values of justice, observance of the Law and equality for everyone under it; to promote the culture of legality, peace and absence of violence under whichever type of its [society's] manifestations, as well as the knowledge of Human Rights and self-respect" (7<sup>th</sup> article).

In the Mexican school education, the course in charge to educate the future citizens is *Formación Cívica y Ética*, meaning Civic and Ethic Formation. In the objectives of the course one can read "The purpose of this course is for students to take ethical positions and commitments linked to their personal and social development, in a framework of human rights and democratic political culture" (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2013). But is this course effective? How do students react in front of a moral dilemma? Is the educational context, regarding the educational ideologies, helping the students to reach this goal?

### 2.2 Students' moral development and teachers' educational ideologies.

This research considers the ethical perspective like a referent of the democratic skills development, which can show some results of the civic education. Also, considers the teachers' educational ideology an important contextual element at the students' skills development.

The theory of Kohlberg (Kohlberg, Power, & Higgins, 1997) allows us to identify the level of moral development of the students, explaining this way their behavior. The theory of moral development proposes a progressive



ethical evolution, based on the cognitive development model of Piaget, by which the adolescent constructs a moral rationalization in order to be able to explain the social interactions.

The theoretical model of moral development of Kohlberg is divided in three levels and six steps:

Level 1. Preconventional morality: Morality is not internalized; it is based on the consequence of an action.

Stage 1. Obedience and punishment: the consequence defines the action.

Stage 2. Individualism and interchange: the individuals have different interest and distinct points of view.

Level 2. Conventional Morality: Morality is internalized and fixed.

Stage 3. Interpersonal relationship: The acceptance of a group defines just.

Stage 4. Maintenance of social order: Morality is defined by rules/laws.

Level 3. Postconventional Morality: Morality is developed in its complexity, under ethics and the common good.

Stage 5. Social contract and individual rights: A fundamental right is more important than a law which constitutes a temporary contract.

Stage 6. Universal principles: Justice is based on abstract principles similar to peace, freedom, etc.

After a review based on empirical data of various investigations, a reconfiguration of the stages into 3 schemes was proposed (Rest, Narvaez, Thoma & Bebeau, 2000, p. 389), respectively:

- a) Personal Interest, derived from stages 2 and 3, which is developed during childhood and is completed at the age of twelve;
- b) Maintaining Norms, derived from stage 4 and [this scheme] represents the discovery of society, the greatest cognitive advance of adolescence, and finally
- c) Postconventional thinking, derived from the stages 5 and 6, where moral obligations must be based on shared ideals, be fully reciprocal and open to scrutiny.

In order to be able to identify the characterization of the context in which the students interact, it is important to acknowledge how the teachers working with the intervention students perceive education. Thus, it is important to know their ideological characterization of the educational context, for which the taxonomy of O'Neil (1981) and his work on the ideologies of education prove useful. He divides ideologies into two general categories: Conservative ones and liberal ones, further divided into three subcategories.

Conservative educational ideologies:

- Educational fundamentalism: The original knowledge is the one that derives from the past and helps to maintain a society.
- Educational intellectualism: Knowledge is self-worth power, based on reason and the development of the intellectual.
- Educational conservatism: Knowledge is based on values and maintains the social order.

Liberal educational ideologies:

- Educational Liberalism: Knowledge searches practical solutions. Technological development is a central factor.
- Educational Liberationism: Knowledge heads for reform and social change, empowering the most vulnerable.
- Educational Anarchism: Knowledge comes from exploration outside the institutionalized traditions, and seeks for freedom as a human virtue.

### 2.3 Community theatre

Apart from the previously mentioned concepts, which provide a theoretical framework, knowledge of social psychology also needs to be included in this study as a framework for action and intervention planning. This research has in its core the social interaction of teenagers and therefore it is important to examine the phenomena of group dynamics and the community. These aspects of social relations are examined through the students' performance on Community Theatre.

As concerning to theatre, since its origins we can identify the concepts of collegiality, ritual, community and catharsis, among others (Bakonikola, 2004). Along this last concept, catharsis, the spectator sets free from negative emotions, as the conflict is resolved on stage. In the ancient tragedies we watch a conflict of ideals, principles and cultures, outside any axiological classification. It is an internal battle that humanity experiences when one chooses his/her path in life; i.e., the formation of character of a person and the motives that drive those actions. In the end, there isn't good or evil, there is only the responsibility that follows the actions and the implicit diversity of virtues in the conflict and catharsis.

In these terms we reach the conclusion that the spectator of ancient dramas, according to the dialectic form of *position-opposition-composition*, reaches superior levels of awareness. For that reason, tragedy was *taught*, since it was offering a lesson to the participants (the audience) who identified themselves with the heroes emotionally and vividly. This was a teaching method different to those of the modern times, in which the roots of theatre are to be found in its rituality and the concept of catharsis (Bakonikola, 2004).

Additionally, the theatre was born the same historic moment of the institution of democracy. The *demoi*, during the theatre festivals of the Great Dionisia, participated in a form of citizenship education and formation, during which they were being introduced to the public sphere of Athenian democracy. The moral development and the citizen participation were achieved, as the public life and the concerns of the people were represented in the dramas.

Pefanis (2012), according to Castoriadis' thinking, describes the relation between the Greek tragedy, philosophy, and democracy as one of the following manner: At first, authentic art relates with the imaginary notions of society. Therefore, during the golden era of ancient Greece, the imaginary constitution of the democratic society created the necessary space for theatre to emerge. Secondly, in the tragedies the citizen negates and confirms himself as such, he/she reflects over his/her



existence and searches for balance between existence and chaos.

Theatre intends to promote social inclusion, diversity, and an active attitude towards life. It leads to the acquisition of skills, knowledge and attitudes which in turn would lead to personal and social development (Moschou, 2015). Furthermore, theatre is an artistic creation and a piece of art. For these reasons, Applied Theatre can be considered as an educative intervention, as well as Community Theatre (created by the community for the community). Defined as Community Theatre, is the type of theatre which puts in the centre of its interest community itself. The goal isn't to create an artistic performance, but to use the theatrical art in order to give voice to the people of the community. It is a political theatre, often radical, which forms part of the - so called-Applied Theatre.

It is part of our argumentation that there is a line connecting the different forms of theatrical expression such as Drama therapy, Psychodrama, Sociodrama, Drama in Education, Theatre in Education, Community Theatre etc. They all have in common the use of theatre techniques as a means of personal and social change; all of these theatre genres can be called Applied Theatre (Blatner, 2007).

In Applied Theatre (Somers, 2001), the theatrical experience and structure of the drama try to use the social phenomena to change the perspective of the participants in a given situation. The principles of Applied Theatre are the following:

1. We utilize theatre to create a miniature version of reality and observe the structure while changing the parameters.
2. Our identity can be seen as a story in which we create ourselves. It changes constantly and is influenced by other stories and experiences.
3. Entering the world of fantasy through theatre enables us to change behavior along with the theatrical act as we comprehend our own personal history.
4. Knowing that theatrical reality is not an actual reality, allows us to act without being threatened.

Community Theatre in Latin America was introduced by the Brazilian director, artist and activist Augusto Boal, who established its techniques in the 60's and named this sub-genre "Theatre of the Oppressed" (Boal, 1979). The Theatre of the Oppressed has always sided itself with the poor and stated the political dimension of art. The principle axis is the unification of the actors and the audience, which reveals the oppression and achieve social change.

Boal (1979) argues that the completed product of the theatre, from the tragedies to the urban drama, increases power and oppression. While the theatrical product that is created by all who participate, the audience along with actors, generates the opposite effect. A new term names the main agent: spect-actor (Boal, 2001). The techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed are: Newspaper Theatre, Forum Theatre, Invisible Theatre, Image Theatre, Analytic Theatre and Playback Theatre.

In his book "Games for actors and non-actors" (Boal, 2002), Boal proposes practical examples and dramatic exercises and describes how to perform Theatre of the Oppressed by all its techniques. As this type of theatre does not accept distinction between the spectator and the actor, there is a ludic manner to motivate the spectator to act and liberate him/herself. He/she is asked to enact, in order not to create art, but to change his/her life. According to Boal the Theatre of the Oppressed indeed has a social objective, as it tries to reveal the oppression mechanics and discover, along with the people, the manner to liberate them from this oppression. In order to achieve this goal, theatrical scene serves as a rehearsal for real life.

Community Theatre has been applied to a personal therapeutic context via the technique of "Rainbow of desire" (Boal, 1995) and an educational one as an intervention to increase awareness, regarding social issues (Zoniou & Govas, 2010; Forcades, 2012).

The basic dynamics of the Theatre of the Oppressed is conflict, which is not considered to have negative qualities. The drama of this kind doesn't try to mitigate the differences to achieve an ephemeral peace inside an oppressive situation. On the contrary, strengthening the abilities of communication and the dialogue, it clarifies the oppression (Zoniou & Govas, 2010). The conflict guides towards the change of the oppressive situation and to liberation. Conflict is utilized to reflect on the mechanisms of oppression, understand reality, and rebel to achieve justice.

In the paper presented, we relate the utility of the Theatre of the Oppressed with the educational context, in the sense that school is a space where the adolescents learn obedience rather than developing their critical thinking and free acting. For example, whenever classmates have a conflict, they are urged to ask forgiveness without inquiring the reason of the conflict, rather than encouraged to comprehend the problem and reflect upon the situation in order to identify which cause generated such problems in their relation (Santos, 2015); meanwhile in the core of the Theatre of the Oppressed, one can find the concepts of desire and necessity for the person to act and change his/her situation.

Concluding the theoretical framework and before passing on to methodology, it would be useful to describe the research. According to the previous descriptions of the virtues of Community Theatre as a tool for social change, this project seeks to determine its usefulness in the development of democratic abilities through a new instrument, as is the Theatre of the Oppressed, in the educational context.

Therefore, the project presented in this paper, analyzes aspects of social inclusion, diversity and active attitude in life, all promoted by this kind of theatre; also it examines its utility when used in formal educational contexts in pursuit of personal and social development, linked to democracy. This was achieved by analyzing the moral development of the students, the educational ideologies of the teachers and the democratic abilities shown by the students as mentioned above.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Type of study

This paper illustrates a research composed in three steps (Hernandez, 2010). The first step consists of the data collection of students' moral development stage as well as professors' educational ideology, by two different questionnaires. The information obtained from this first step is treated quantitatively, which permitted the researchers to elaborate profiles of the categories implied by the subjects of the inquiry, using the mean scores or statistical averages for every one of the subcategories of ideology and moral development. These profiles offer a qualitative description of the considered variables. The second step constitutes the theatrical intervention, which is designed considering the results of the first step. In this phase, the data collected is from participative observation and students' discourse, both registered in a field journal and an observation protocol, as well as the analysis of actions taken. The third step is analysis, referring to the level of moral development of the students, with the additional goal to identify the various diverse types of existing relationships. Regarding the latter, it would be interesting to identify what type of story the students are choosing to perform -implying, how they interact with their peers, family and adults.

#### 3.2 Hypothesis

The research hypotheses are:

- The adolescent students in Mexico have not sufficiently developed abilities of democratic social interaction to resolve conflicts in their daily lives.
- The adolescent students in Mexico can develop abilities of democratic social interaction through Community Theatre.

#### 3.3 Sample

The election of the sample was realized in three steps. At first, it was conceptualized as a sample, defined by the target group, considering the stage of development (adolescence), the education system and the citizenship education, a process whereby the whole group of middle-school third grade adolescents were defined as such (i.e. the research sample). Secondly, the schools were given instructions and volunteered to take part in the study; the criteria for participating in the research were to be a public school, situated in the urban zone of Aguascalientes city. Finally, a sample of availabilities was chosen, functional for the intervention and the data collection. One of the available schools was selected randomly. Between the two classrooms of third-graders, one was also randomly picked and within it, a group of 20 students was formed by drawing a lot. The final sample was the students of the third grade of a public middle school, in Mexico, in the State of Aguascalientes, amongst the urban zone of the capital city.

#### 3.4 Techniques and instruments

The research is a combination of field observations with empirical data, for which these following instruments were implemented:

- Questionnaire covering socio-moral problems, the Defining Issues Test (DIT) introduced by James Rest (1993), which provides scores from stages 2 to 6 in the Kohlberg's theory of moral development, see subchapter 2.2.
- Inventory of Educative Ideologies from William O'Neill (1981) in order to collect information about their professors, which provides scores for the six educational ideologies, as described above, subchapter 2.2.
- Techniques of Community Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed in order to realize the intervention with the students, which are described below, subchapter 4.6.
- Observation protocol elaborated by the authors, which would allow a better interpretation of the actions demonstrated during the intervention and their correspondence to the democratic abilities, as described in subchapter 4.5.1.
- Field journal and evaluations, written by the students who participated at the intervention. The field journal consists in writing about the daily events during the intervention, and the evaluations consist in three open form questions that are described in the partial results, chapter 5.

#### 3.5 Categories of analysis

The categories contained in this research are the moral development, the educative ideologies, and the democratic abilities, namely. The categories of analysis emerge from the concept of citizenship, which involves a set of thinking and interaction skills, by which individuals solve their problems in a democratic manner; the education system offers the best field to develop them. Moral development and educative ideologies have already been described (subchapter 2.2).

##### 3.5.1 Democratic abilities

The formation of citizenship in Mexico's school system occurs from the course Civic and Ethic Formation (Educaación Cívica y Ética) taught at elementary and middle school (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2011a, 2011b and 2013), and it states eight civic and ethic skills:

1. Knowledge and self-protection
2. Self-regulation and responsible exercise of liberty
3. Respect and appreciation of diversity
4. Sense of belonging to the community, nation, and humanity
5. Peaceful conflict resolution
6. Social and political participation
7. Adherence of laws and a sense of justice
8. Comprehension and appreciation for democracy

Among those skills, three democratic abilities were chosen:

- Conflict resolution
- Respect to diversity
- Sense of justice

An additional ability could be

- Active participation

These abilities embody the core of civic skills with an orientation to the social interaction complex, which implies conflict and are related with the democratic resolution of it. They are not examined in theory, but in action; in other words, the research studied how the students apply each one of them in conflict situations.

Apart from the democratic abilities, we observed the practical conception of democracy, i.e. how is a democratic life style applied or realized in everyday conflicts. This category was created to restore the fragmented concept of democracy: The educational programs refer to democratic concepts (e.g. fighting against racism; Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2013) but not to the democratic processes as such (discussion, assembly type organization, dialectic dynamics). The implied sub-categories are the following:

- Style of decision making (Authoritarian or Democratic)
- Type of democratic process for agreements (Representative, Participative, Or Direct)
- Type of leadership (Authoritarian, Laissez faire, or Democratic)
- Attitudes towards the minority (Respect of diversity, synthesis and inclusion).

#### 4.6 The theatrical intervention

The theatre as a tool for intervention, favors the students to use previous knowledge and experience to strengthen comprehension and communication. Also, theatre presents *the other* as someone else who confronts a situation of conflict and through the medium of interaction can resolve it, by analyzing alternatives and taking decisions. Finally, by enacting, the students can explore actions, ideas and emotions.

The theatrical intervention consists in analyzing different problems of the students' everyday life and explores the alternatives on the scene, through theatre. It was conducted within the previously described sample, and was concluded in 10 sessions, each one lasting 120 minutes. The actual intervention was constructed according the following steps:

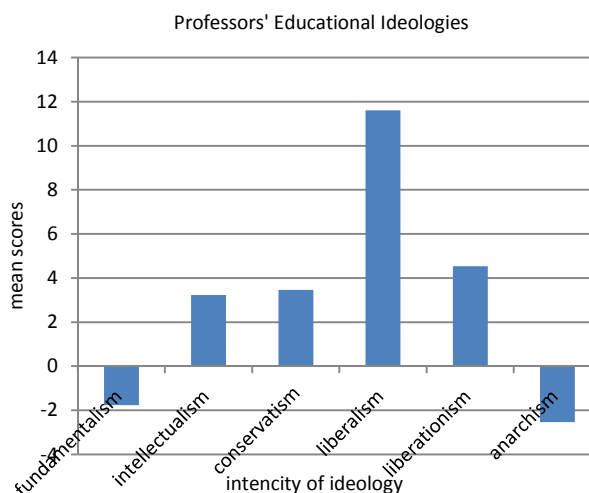
- 1<sup>st</sup> session: Introduction to the group; the art of theatre and the enactment.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> session: Exercises to establish confidence in the group of peers.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> session: Exercises on theatrics and the role.
- 4<sup>th</sup> session: Exercises that facilitate the metamorphosis and the intervention.
- 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> session: Introduction to the techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed, Image Theatre and Forum Theatre
- 8<sup>th</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> session: Development of Forum Theatre along with the stories of the students.
- 10<sup>th</sup> session: Presentation of Forum Theatre at the students of the third grade.

#### 4 Partial results of the preliminary analysis

The school in which the research was conducted is situated in the urban zone of Aguascalientes, in the west side of the city. It has 12 teachers and two groups from each grade. In the third grade, there are 72 students split into two groups, and we worked with one half of one of the groups.

Regarding the inventory of the educational ideologies (Illustration 1), the study contains all professors that teach at the group of the intervention, the director, the sub-director and the psychologist responsible for the school's social work, who was also the assessor of the group. The ideologies with less influence are anarchism and fundamentalism. There is certain influence of intellectualism and conservatism. The dominating ideology by far is that of educational liberalism, which shows the trust in the modern world, based on the progression of technology, the society organized by laws, the individuals who contribute to the progress and a focus on positive knowledge and science. It is worth mentioning that educative liberalism presents a smaller standard deviation, which indicates an agreement on principles within the teachers' group. The extended influence, to the grade of ideological dominance, of liberalism has been also demonstrated in other studies (Anaya, 2009 and 2012).

Illustration1: Educational Ideologies of the professors



The Defining Issues Test (DIT) questionnaire was answered by all students from the third grade. Of the 72 students who responded to the questionnaire, of which 39% corresponded to males and 61% to females, an 82% resulted valid. Regarding the age, 62.7% of the students are 14 years of age, meanwhile 28.8% are 13 years of age, and the rest of the 8.5% are older than 14. The table below (table 1) presents the observed results to the moral development of the students.

Table 1: moral development of the students

Level I. Preconventional		Level II. Conventional	Level III. Postconventional	
Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6
			5A 11,1 0%	5B 1,98 %
13,08%	19,81%	43,12%	13,08%	2,82%
<i>Scheme 1</i>		<i>Scheme 2</i>	<i>Scheme 3</i>	
32,89%		43,12%	15,9%	

It can easily be observed at the analyzed data that the second scheme, which consists in maintaining the norms and corresponds to the fourth stage, is the one that excels, meanwhile the first scheme which corresponds to personal interests was the second most developed, and the third scheme consisted of rationalization of democratic principles is presented as the least developed. Other investigations have declared similar results (Anaya, 2009; Barba, 2004).

The adolescents participating at the research show the lowest percentage at the post-conventional level. Within this result, an important variation at the 5th stage of social contract and individual rights has been observed, divided into two categories:

- 5A Morality of social contract
- 5B Morality of intuitive humanism

The sixth stage, in which what is considered fair is based on abstract principles like peace, justice, etc., takes a relatively low percentage. The performance of the adolescents on the post-conventional level indicates smaller capacity for peaceful conflict resolution with a sense of justice and appreciation of diversity; this inquiry verifies the hypothesis of the investigation.

The predominance of the second scheme, that of the maintenance of the norm, suggests that in conflict situations the students will probably react in conventional forms, which might also be the desirable outcome considering these very forms are welcomed by the institutions. The significant intensity of the first scheme suggests that the students consider the elements that fit and determine the context of the particular group of peers to be conventional, therefore conflict resolution can be approached not only through pacific and institutionalized means. Finally, the third scheme is presented as the one with the minor development at the students' profile, a fact that demonstrates an area of opportunity for our intervention, in the sense of a need for further education on democratic principles.

As an alternative method for data collection, two evaluations were conducted by the participants of the intervention, one in the middle of the intervention, before 5<sup>th</sup> session, and one at the end of research, after

the Forum Theatre presentation. Three open form questions were presented at the students, to provide freely their responses:

- Can you describe the class?
- What comments do you have about the class?
- What have you learned during this class?

In the first evaluation, it can be observed that 95% of the students mentioned that they had learned a way of democratic co-living, and a 63% stated an obtainment of knowledge regarding the Art of Theatre. The three categories mostly referred in the evaluations were: Self-awareness, democratic interaction and communal cooperation. These categories are linked in a direct way with the peaceful conflict resolution. In the following table (table 2) the categories along with the sub-categories contained, as well as the percentages that each one of them obtained in the evaluations of the students are presented.

Table 2: categories of democratic comprehension, emerged from the evaluations

Cate- gories	Comprehension of democracy and conflict resolution			Theatre
	Self- awareness	Democratic interaction	Communal Coopera- tion	
sub- cate- gories	-overcome shyness -Expression of emotions -Self-esteem	-Inclusion &coexistence -Tolerance and respect -Empathy	-Communi- cation -Confi- dence -Collective work	-Improvi- sations -Create a character -Enact
1 <sup>st</sup> Eval- uation	74%	79%	79%	63%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Eval- uation	74%	58%	74%	68%

Regarding the answers to the question “What have you learned?”, the students stated that from the intervention they learned how to coexist; how to live together with their classmates. This type of response can be attributed to the category of democratic interaction, which contains the subcategories of social inclusion, tolerance and respect for all people, including empathy. Democratic coexistence is the dominant concept on this category. At the same time, they acknowledge communal cooperation, which includes learning communication skills and dialogue, building trust among their classmates and work collectively as a team. From the answers given by the students, we can argue that the group considers itself as a community that works together towards the same objective. The category of self-awareness and that of the gain of self-confidence were significant aspects mentioned by the students, together with the expression of emotions. Others answered that it supported their self-esteem, a sub-category also included in the wider category of self-awareness.



In the first evaluation, peaceful conflict resolution was mentioned only by one student of the group, but during the second evaluation, more than half of the students focused on this aspect. The self-awareness category appears to be the highest in percentages, along with the communal cooperation. Likewise, in the second evaluation the category of democratic interaction, which is represented by inclusion and coexistence, obtains lower percentages. This could be explained by the fact that students oriented their answers solely towards the verification of the exercises and not in the process itself; for example, they did not take into account (in their evaluation) the fact that an assembly was established in order to make decisions on interventions during the Forum Theatre session.

In other words, we can say there is a distance between the conceptual learning and the skills development; the students of the sample did mention democratic skills when democracy was considered as the content, but they didn't when it was the form. The fact that the students didn't conceptualize their actions could imply more time to reflect on the actions, specifically about the way they take decisions.

Another element that results as one of great importance is that of the daily life: The students in their evaluations mention that the intervention helped them resolve conflicts in their daily lives, as in a better communication with their friends in real time, and a better interaction with their families.

Concluding the analysis of evaluations, from the perspective of the students as registered in their responses, this group reached learning goals of the course Civic and Ethic Formation, as they are stated in the national curriculum, through a means of hands-on education, transforming possibilities into capabilities.

It is also important to mention that the knowledge on theatre emerging from the intervention appears significantly high in both the first and second evaluation.

As for the stories the students represented in the Forum Theatre, there were four of them, the two involving domestic violence:

- The father shoves his wife, throws her to the ground and hits her. The son runs to call for help from his uncles. The father runs away.
- The daughter washes the dishes. The mother enters, calls her an imbecile and throws the plates to the floor. The other members of the family, the father and the brother, appear apathetic.

Two more were involving outdoors (also out-of-school) violence:

- Two women fight over a man, which makes him feel proud.
- A street fight is described: Two men meet up to fight and solve their issues.

In the observation protocol, the interactions of the students were noted and were summarized by the following points: The students formed an assembly to propose solutions of the presented conflict. Everyone had

the right to speak; they discussed all together the solutions, which led to a consensus. Therefore, their type of decision-making was a democratic one, even acquiring the characteristics of direct democracy. During the assembly, a leadership emerged, by some students whose initiative coordinated the assembly. The leaders met the characteristics of a democratic leadership, since they facilitated the participation of their companions and tried to include and synthesize all the different opinions expressed.

As for the group of students that participated in the intervention, it could be said that the research hypothesis was verified. The students had not developed sufficiently the abilities of social democratic interaction for conflict resolutions in their daily lives, which could be verified not only by the results of the DIT instrument, but also by their stories. The presented results favor the consideration that Community Theatre and the Theatre of the Oppressed used as communication tools, can offer a means for the adolescents to develop abilities of social democratic interaction, specifically on conflict resolution in daily life. The results shown above, as well as the characteristics of the students' own responses as registered in the field journal, both provide evidence to support this thesis. Some examples of what the students declared are the following:

- I learned how to treat people.
- I learned how to resolve a fight.
- I liked it because in real life you can't change what is done.
- We found solutions.
- We avoided conflicts.
- It's emotional (exciting) to get into the role.
- If someone has a problem, you can help him or her to solve it.
- I learned how to interact differently, with less violence.
- I liked the improvisation.
- From something bad, you can learn something good.
- All the scenes we talked about, I have seen them or lived them. There is sexism and other forms of violence but it is not necessary to start brawling.

In the last session, we set up an event for all the students of the third grade where the participants in the intervention instructed the exercises to their classmates. In the Image Theatre session, when the students in groups formed a collective statue representing a conflict, all teams demonstrated conflicts of high levels of physical violence. This indicated that the adolescents lead a life surrounded by violence, to which they answer back with violent reactions.

## 5 Discussion, conclusion

The contribution of this project was the introduction of Community Theatre, and especially the Theatre of the Oppressed in the formation of citizenship. It was our hypothesis that the Theatre of the Oppressed creates a space where democratic abilities can be developed and examined, in the context of public schools in Mexico. A theatrical intervention was combined with the theory of moral development of the adolescent students to



achieve a democratic education on citizenship.

The conflict management is an important ability found in the course of Civic and Ethic Formation for basic education (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2011b), as it is included in the 8 competencies mentioned in the course objective (p. 9). All these skills were addressed through the intervention and were converted into actual abilities instead of being taught theoretically; they were presented by the students through action, i.e. the students applied each one of those during the situations of conflict recreated within the class. As a result, the Community Theatre could be added to the active teaching of democratic skills as a new, alternative tool.

The interactions of the students were analyzed, as was the behavior they chose, when confronting situations in which they had to demonstrate their democratic skills. These interactions are important because the formation of citizenship requires participation and active reflection on the social process by the citizens, who are the only ones to guarantee democracy. The above-mentioned dynamic is the very essence of democracy and, in this sense, the project considers that education should be committed into becoming a factor of social progress.

It can be argued that, according to the results and, above anything, according to the discourse of the students and the attitudes adopted during the class, the evidence are consisted with the stated hypothesis. Nevertheless, more time is necessary in order to change the predominant social and cognitive schemes of the adolescents and establish different social representations regarding conflict resolution. The goal is not a mere change in behavior, but a conjunction of beliefs, images, values and meanings that a participative citizenship requires in general. The conduction of wider studies that could provide stronger evidence is essential for the Mexican society to advance into a society which respects the people, life, and human rights.

Finally, we hope that this research can prove of assistance with the understanding of the educative process in a subject that is crucial to the whole of society, combining different fields of knowledge: humanities, social sciences and the arts. This type of transdisciplinary research is meant to restore fragmented knowledge in the academic fields of humanities and of social sciences (Wallerstein, 1997; Gibbons et al., 1994); to find a common ground within the different fields and to enhance the social and academic dialogue, through creating synthesis of meanings and practices.

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Hannu M. Heikkinen

## Drama and Citizenship – Devised Drama for Education

- This paper shows how to make meaningful drama / theatre with youth.
- The main focus within drama education framework is devised drama.
- The performance is not the core is, even though important - it is more about start asking important questions of us, of the world
- The major challenge is to understand how the teacher's drama pedagogical understanding plays a very important role: whilst drama teachers do need to develop a critical awareness of theatre practice, it must be accompanied by an informing pedagogy of Aesthetic Education.

**Purpose:** In this article I will give an example of a linguistic program I have been doing with sixth form college students from Finland and the Netherland and link this action research to the meaning of drama education, and of the potential of devised drama as a part of civic Education.

**Method:** I will explain the theory of devised drama, then I will highlight the research and finally, I will conclude the research findings. The analytical framework used in this article is well-suited for drama education with youth. I would like to characterize drama education dramaturgy not as Aristotelian nor Brechtian, but as an 'open or joint - making together - dramaturgy'.

**Findings:** The term 'drama' is often used to describe the process of making work that does not necessarily demand an outside audience, and 'theatre' to identify work, that is focused on performing to an outside audience. 'Devised drama' relies both on process and product. Learning how to make devised drama is an important as learning about its processes and start thinking: 'why we came up with these ideas of us and fictional drama world?'

### Keywords:

Drama education, devised drama, civic education, aesthetic learning, serious playfulness, aesthetic doubling

### 1 Introduction

*Acting is the art which is common to all of us (everybody can act – more or less!)... also an art which can help to build human beings into something better and more understanding than they are by nature – to build them into sensitive creatures able to feel the sorrow and joys of others as their own.*

Sybil Thorndike in Foreword for Peter Slade's book "Child Drama" (1954)

Teachers hold beliefs about drama which may facilitate or constrain both its practice and reflection. Drama Education practitioners have long claimed that taking part in drama results in learning. Early theorists claimed that drama engenders general, social qualities in children. Drama, dealing as it does with immediate situations in daily life, enlarges concepts of character and so deepens perceptions of oneself and others. Underlying most current theories is the belief, held also by many practitioners who teach drama, that learning takes place within both form and content. This learning place is also identified as a "place in between education and art" or "a place of possibilities", which refers to drama as a

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"learning area". This of course goes back how theatre has been explained since the time of Aristotle and Plato:" The metaphor of a 'space in between' is of interest where dramatic fiction is concerned. The Greek concept metaxu: μεταξύ is translated into English concerning place as in the midst, betwixt and between and concerning time between whiles, meanwhile, in the intervening events."

Play is a type of activity that takes place in the space between people—what Donald Winnicott (1971/1989) called a "potential space." Here people (children first, adults later) experiment with the idea of 'otherness' in ways that are less threatening than the direct encounter with another may often be. They thus get invaluable practice in empathy and reciprocity. Winnicott often emphasized that play has an important role in shaping democratic citizenship. As we all know, our present society changes rapidly and substantially – much more rapidly than ten or twenty years ago, and beyond. People need to become responsible for change, to understand and evaluate it and when possible to initiate it by anticipating necessity. Edward Bond stressed many times, that we must educate children and youth to become competent members of a critical culture. This cannot be done by discipline, love or information alone – children and youths must be helped to find ways to express their voice.

One way to do this is by engaging in drama and theatre – and Dawson, Cawthon, Baker (2011) have stressed this from the point of drama teaching. The most important function of dramatic arts strategies that carries theories



of cultural studies and criticism is to dismantle mainstream, status quo, modern, cultural constructions that are in crisis. In Heikkinen, Lindfors (2012) we say that drama education should not be just the way to socialise people to traditions and existing culture, but that we should use drama to explore alternative future and alternative ways for co-operation and dealing with issues within society. An artistic learning process can be described as one which a person through a transformative process creates new relationship with meaning. The person gains new perspectives on himself, reality, other people, nature, and on life in general. The use of symbolic representation is at the core of Drama's learning potential. The system of representation is described, for example, by Jerome Bruner as symbolic (relating to linguistic function), iconic (relating to visual or graphic function) and expressive (relating to the active, performing function). As Nelson (2011) writes, in our work as drama and theatre practitioners we have a distinct advantage, if properly harnessed, as through the theatre form we engage people's natural curiosity and need to ask questions, a skill that should be at the core of mainstream education practice.

Playfulness (or *serious* playfulness) is one way to explain the learning potential of 'aesthetic doubling': you have to devote yourself to the construction of the fiction, you make it conditionally (not for real, 'for play' – you bracket the demands of 'reality' for a certain amount of time and then you leave it) and you are not obligated to anything else than to obey the rules of the play. The learning potential of drama is in the aesthetic doubling of role, place, time – and plot. Many drama practitioners (see Heikkinen, 2002) use the term 'serious playfulness' to describe the basic human instinct to 'play' with the relationships between symbols and their orthodox meanings in order to create or express new possibilities of meaning; in this sense 'playfulness' is a form of social interpretation. It helps us to consider the meaning of our lived experience. Playfulness occupies the same space in our lives as religion, magic and ideology - but it is 'playful' rather than 'respectful'. It is 'by choice' rather than an obligatory duty. It is visible and not masked as reality.

There is a Bachtinian polyphony in the different solutions, which develop the students' skill to change perspectives and look at a phenomenon from different angles. This is what Aristotle might have implied when using the concept of *fronesis*. This may lead, at its best, to an artistic work that is also an ethical work. Aesthetic, artistic and ethic will go together into one whole in the production of meaning. My personal interest is to follow questions such as 'how can we help children and youth to make sense of themselves and society in the rapidly changing world?' I do not believe, that factual knowledge will do it. Nor logical thinking alone. We need to harness the emotional capacities as well. The understanding and working on empathy and co-operation is an issue that is stated in many papers and documents as a crucial point of view in civic education, yet, we also have evidence, that if one sees a poor child in a picture, it triggers a potential for empathy and then also action, but if in that

picture, there are multiple protagonists, the empathy will decrease. And this is where drama education can play a part. Braverman (2002, 13) wrote:

"Playfulness motivates people through their innate sociability to participate in collective activity, whilst maintaining a focus on what's at stake. A discussion format frequently posed depersonalized questions, e.g. 'what are the results of poverty?' A playful approach, particularly within a dramatic framework, encourages a more open and experiential response, e.g. 'what would you do if you ... only had a handful of coins left for the rest of the day?'"

Drama education is driven by ideas such as those of Dorothy Heathcote who claimed that we should work in drama from the particular to the universal, which means simply, that while we are dealing with issues that matters to us, we should give a thought to others in similar circumstances in the world around us – to step into another's shoes or to try to see the world through another person's eyes. My drama philosophy falls within the category of 'socially critical drama' which asks questions such as "why are these issues like this?". In short, socially critical drama (see for example Errington, 1992) advocates belief in the need for individuals and society to be transformed. In order to transform circumstances (culture, society) it is necessary to encourage the students to investigate a range of individual, social, cultural, educational and political features which society may be taken for granted.

As the world becomes more complex - socially, technologically and politically - socially critical thinking becomes more important. It is a skill that will serve all of us well in virtually any profession or relationship. From the educational point of view, the general pattern is that many students fail to recognize when crucial information is missing, which information is relevant (and irrelevant) and how to operate on the information given. Thus the school of today has two major challenges: it needs to work in a way that makes a difference to the quality of the student's lives and it should provide 'tools' for the students so that they are able to actively participate in a rapidly changing society. The question for the drama teacher is: what can drama contribute in this context: what specific competencies/skills does drama education enhance in students' learning that could reinforce their actions as responsible and critical citizens with long-term vision?

In this article I will give an example of a linguistic program, called YET (Youth, Europe and Theatre) I have been doing this for some years with sixth form college students from the Netherland and Finland and I link this action research to my theoretical thinking on the meaning of drama education, and more precisely here, of the potential of devised drama as a part of civic education. I will briefly explain the theory of devised drama, then I will highlight the research and finally I will try to conclude the research project's findings within the framework of the article and the journal.

## 2 Theory of devised drama

As researcher I have followed the interpretation of Drama Education by Cecily O'Neill (1995); John O'Toole (1992); Allan Owens & Keith Barber (1997) and John Somers (1994): I see 'Drama Education' as an umbrella term which covers all sectors of drama activity that occur in educational settings i.e. including 'Drama in Education' and theatre made in or for educational settings – it does not therefore include professional theatre. I am aware that there is a variety of definitions of the difference between drama and theatre. The term 'drama' is often used to describe the process of making work that does not necessarily demand an outside audience, whilst 'theatre' implies work, that is focused on performing to an outside audience. "Devised Drama" or "Devised Theatre" – both terms have been used - relies both on process and product.

It is very hard to pin down exact methods for devising as every group of collaborators may have different ways of approaching the creative process. One very common method is to begin by focusing on the theme and the utilize it to make a form that makes sense, and then extract deeper thematic ideas and work with them retrospectively. What method the collaborators will use depends a lot on the style of the performance group. In our work, we used both Finnish and Dutch texts as a starting point from year to year, and then looked at the meanings those text might hold for the students. The linguistic aims of the YET- project are to promote the insight that foreign languages are an inevitable aspect within the European Union and in the world in general. YET also gives the students a chance to use their foreign language skills, especially English, to become more fluent speakers of the language. Moreover, they will learn the basics of two languages, which they have not known before. The cultural aims are to acquaint the students with one another's culture and cultural heritage. Giving them a better understanding of different cultures and a less prejudiced and more open attitude to them. Learning about different nationalities and working together will enhance their interest in cultural matters in general. Social and communicative skills will develop while functioning in a multinational group.

The Dutch and Finnish students work together in groups of mixed nationalities for two weeks in February to prepare and present a play which has been chosen by the host country and divided into two parts. Each team, directed by an art director from one of the countries, will perform a play, based on the same texts. The result will be two very different interpretations of the same play (or chosen text). Cultural differences are very obvious. As an example – in Finland we had permission to use Tove Janson's classic Moomi texts with a strict rule not to use the Moomi characters, so we did a play about an invisible child – based on Janson's novel, but played with human figures. We also did a play based on Finnish author Rosa Liksom's short stories, in which our creative teacher team – director, dramaturg, lightning designer, choreographer, visual designer, and musician – began to focus on creating our approach to Devised Drama, which then

has been shaped every year for better and better both in artistic and pedagogical aspects in co-operation with the students. In the Netherland we played, for example, Tone Tellegen's children's animal stories and again, performed them as humans – in order to highlight the human interest and the societal issues which are hidden in both of the texts – that is about how to be a human in our society and what it takes, and how to survive.

I was both researcher and the dramaturg in these processes. I had 40 students to work with in a range of two years: 20 from Finland and 20 from the Netherlands. They worked in our team or the Dutch team before changing over. The whole process comprised a planning phase, then creative and artistic phase, progressing from learning to reflection. Even though the making of Devised Drama was only two intensive weeks per year, the planning of YET was an ongoing process mainly with the teacher team, but also for the students who knew they would take part in the process. I collected the data from those working in our team. With a director, the creative team and me, the group created a lot of material, from which we finalized the performance. The first part, what we call the '*creative part*' was when we – the teacher team – introduced the text and asked the group to study it's a-nd the issues they found important. The next step was, for us as teachers to compile the ideas and themes and make a storyline, which was my task as a dramaturg. We then we told the group, that here is the play, text, read it and if you are satisfied with it, with it, we will then focus on making a play based on it. After the group agreed, we started the second section, what we called the '*artistic part*', because then teacher team focus was to make as good a performance as we could based on the accepted reading of the text by the group. I would like to emphasize here, that the ownership of the play by the students played an important part of the process.

The type of drama work I espouse may be quite new to those who do theatre in traditional way. Certainly, we are concerned that the next generation of actors, directors, designers and writers are given some introduction into their craft on school. However drama, as we see it, should be more than a vocational course for the small number of students who will actually work in the profession or even pursue their interest in amateur theatre. Moreover, engaging with the process of drama offers young people much more than a rudimentary understanding and appreciation of the dramatic literature of their culture and an insight into the technicalities of performance. A great deal of learning can be gained from making, performing and responding to drama in a more immediate and creative way. Over the past ten years I have become increasingly intrigued by the educational potential of devised drama. We collectively engage through the depicted imaginary world, that we create together, a 'drama world' in which we can meet and confront one another as we examine an issue or phenomenon from a whole range of perspectives, modify views and perhaps expand individual standpoints to incorporate those of others. We switch as dynamically as possible from thinking from within a dilemma about

possible choices, to talking objectively about the dilemma and the range of choices available. This is a far cry from badly constructed and embarrassing role-plays or traditional theatre plays in school that students and staff quite rightly do not like.

The emphasis is on exploring attitudes, values and beliefs through immediate fictional reality in order to consider long-term change. Because discussion moves between the fictional and 'real' world, participants report that they have 'the chance and confidence to say and think what they think, not what others want to hear'. And this is not just an underlying aim of the drama teacher or the project – we say it out loud as we start: it becomes a joint adventure, a cooperative dramatic research project with students and with the teacher team. This is similar process to that described by Dawson, Hill, Barlow and Weitkamp (2009) in their research on knowledge building. Taking part in an effective Drama Education process requires skills from the teacher and students. Based on Susan Bennett's (1990) theory of theatre 'production and reception' the skill all participants need is the ability to "read" dramatic texts i.e. understand them in order to act and develop them further and this is where Reader-response theory is useful- this is also what Hollands (2009) research has shown. For me "text" refers to all elements of dramatic form. My interpretation follows Bennett's work and devised drama in creative and artistic parts, to offer a brief synopsis, we could say that Bennet's theory views the text as the site for production and proliferation of meaning and is skeptical about the objective text of formalist criticism. Wolfgang Iser (1990, 1994) privileges the experience of reading literary texts as a uniquely consciousness-raising activity and stresses the centrality of consciousness in all investigations of meaning. The literary text, as Bennett reminds us, is a fixed and finished product which cannot be directly affected by its audience. By contrast in theatre every reader is involved in the making of the play. So, reading is, by and large, a private exploration – theatre and Drama Education are not, as for example Neelands (2009) and Nelson (2011) have written. The participation and the creation of the 'text' (in its widest possible definition) makes the act of reading more complicated, not less interesting. I find it particularly intriguing in Drama Education because we do urge participants to play along and create (read) the dramatic action (text) as the event proceeds.

### 3 Research method

In my research I have followed Joseph Maxwell's (1996) *Qualitative Research Design, an interactive approach* and O'Toole's (2006) *Doing Drama Research*. They both sets out with a clear purpose to challenge the existing qualitative research designs and by taking an innovative approach to qualitative research design he emphasizes the research design components, how these interact with each other, and how the environment in which the inquiry is situated influences the study. Research - in drama in education or in any field - is inquiry with the aim of producing knowledge. In the research field of

drama and theatre in education number of authors have emphasized the need to develop a qualitative research posture which could recognize the flexible framework in which we work. Some of the basic characteristics of a research process, such as being rigorous and systematic, have been challenged in the context of a qualitative study, but little has been written about how to replace rigorous and systematic approach. That is why Maxwell's interactive approach and O'Toole's stepping into enquiry in drama theatre ad education, are both useful.

Maxwell (1996, 1-8) sets out with a clear purpose to challenge the qualitative research designs and by taking an innovative approach to qualitative research design, he emphasizes the components of a design, how these interact with each other, and how the environment in which the inquiry is situated influences the study. Research is an inquiry to produce knowledge in the context of existing knowledge and a process of challenging existing methods. Qualitative research in general tries to provide a verbal explanation of the studied phenomenon, its essence and nature is contrast to the typical account given in quantitative research: figures and numbers. Qualitative methods are concerned with human understanding and interpretation. In the research books many of the research processes are described either as a linear research or as a cyclical research. Linear research is a term which described a process of having one hypothesis, problem or issue and the whole investigation is planned ahead. The aim is to prove or disprove the hypothesis. In theory you identify your hypothesis, plan your research project, collect data, and do your analysis and interpretation and then your write your reflections and conclusion as a report. By contrast cyclical research involves a continuing process in which designing an investigation, carrying it out, analyzing and reflecting on it takes place on cycles. Maxwell provides another kind of a clear strategy for creating research design. His design has five basic components, which guides the research process not as linear or cyclical, but as an interactive event. These are: *purposes, context, research questions, methods and validity*.

These five components include design issues such as clarifying the purpose of your study; creating a theoretical context for the research; formulating research questions; developing a relationship with the people you are studying; making decisions about sampling, data collection, and analysis; and assessing validity threats and alternative explanations to your study's conclusions. The main issue, as Maxwell emphasizes, is how the components of a design interact with each other and with the environment in which the study is situated. If you change the content of any of the components or if the environment changes, you need to look at how it affects on the other components.

Maxwell also explains how to make the transition from the research *design* to the research *proposal*, providing an explicit model for the structure of a qualitative proposal that is based on the design of the study. The examples of the former are clear and explicit, but for me they restrict the whole process of reporting, as they tend



to be within a specified form. Nevertheless, it is very clear and some of my students have used it and found it helpful. In the field of Drama and Theatre in Education I am minded to combine ideas of reading and writing research. We could write a script as research proposal and report. Particularly in the field of drama and theatre in education and in the drama teacher education the production of the play script as a research thesis could be a step towards honoring the qualitative dimension of the Drama and Theatre in Education practice and research

Maxwell's research design includes clarifying the purpose of the study; creating a theoretical context for the research; formulating research questions; making decisions about sampling, data collection and analysis and assessing validity threats. Within the frame of Maxwell's research design I have analyzed my data based on the 'systematic analyses. To offer a brief synopsis, systematic analysis in a theoretical attempt to construct an entity (a new theory) from a case: based both on empirical and theoretical data. The researcher's interest is focused towards the content of a phenomenon (the purpose and research questions), and its analysis as a part of a system (the context). The analysis has three parts: (i) defining the problem and choosing the data (both empirical and literary); (ii) actual analysis and (iii) the discussion of the findings. In this article I will look at what emerged when I worked with students in Devised Drama Education. I have analysed the cases focusing on questions such as (i) what was your experience of the nature of the drama process? (ii) What were the important moments for you as a participant? (iii) What did you learn?

#### 4 Findings

One of my early findings, from the first YET –programs, was that a major challenge for students whose drama experience range from none to some, was to create a balance between fiction and reality. That is why I think we need better understanding of how to create the "learning area" in between fiction and reality. Whether you start from a given text (or pretext) or you are creating your own text, the problem of creating the "as if" world and entering that world as a character still remains as I have already mentioned. That is one of the things students were learning: how to enter the "as if" world; how to participate, and act. What students have to do, is to base their work (improvisation) on something. And what do they have? They cannot base it solely on the interpretation on the text, because there is no 'pure' text, - they are *making* the text. The answer does not necessarily come from one's own experience either. It comes from something else, from much more abstract reasoning and observation of action, other people, of life, of character. This is how students described the process:

It is such a special experience, because of the way of working and the tight schedule, it's completely different than other exchange programs. You do have a real target in

this project, to make a play, and that brings you closer to each other every day. (16 year-old girl).

I think it was a good method, because we tried to make the play together and include everyone's ideas on what they wanted in the play and what we want to achieve. The making of the play was a lot easier than I thought. The teamwork was effortless and I liked how the directors just made our ideas real, but they were still ours. (17 year-old girl).

Everyone could affect the play with their opinions. The play wasn't handed to us as ready, we did it ourselves. Everyone got along very well, and the scenes were made through different types of rehearsals. (17 year-old girl).

First I thought that we are not going to have a play, because everything was such a mess. But in the end our play was really good. And I liked the way we did it. (16 year-old boy).

One can explain what happened based on three well known theories: such as (1) the theory of mimesis and catharsis based on the writings of Aristotle; or (2) the theory of expression which draws its ideas from Romanticism or (3) the theory of transformation, which is based mainly on John Dewey's (1934) theories of art and education. Dewey's idea was that art experience is developmental and participatory - it is self-evident why Drama-in-Education theorists have favored Dewey's theory. I started with Dewey's theory and then I came across theories of 'reading and viewing' and got interested to see whether I could explain the dramaturgy of Drama Education within the framework of the transformation theory) by using theories of reading and viewing as a tool.

It would be rather obvious to continue by looking at Berthold Brecht's theory. His dramatic theory occupies an important place in drama studies. One can easily link socially critical drama to Brecht's epic theatre. His ideas for a theatre with the power to provoke social change, along with his attempts to reactivate stage-audience exchange, can also be seen within the theory of transformation. But, as Augusto Boal (1979) has argued, Brechtian theatre is only marginally better than Aristotelean theatre: Aristotelean theatre impose a fixed world upon the audience and in Brechtian theatre the audience is brought to consciousness, but the power to act remains with the characters. Nicholson (2009) has argued about this from a research perspective and theatre making process and for me, the whole process can be summarized as a collaborative and creative approach, from apparent mess to shaping the play and having ownership of it. I see the reader as an active participant in a performance through which meaning is created. This is how the students comment on that:

I'm very proud of our end-production. It was my first time in YET and I didn't know, that such a performance was possible in a very short time. (16 year-old girl).

We worked together and everyone knew their own places in the team. I'm pleased with the end result and everyone did a good job. (16 year-old boy).

At first I was kind of desperate and not so excited. Before the first performance it felt such a mess, but in the end, I understood the plot and I think that the play was amazing. (16 year-old boy).

The first performance was okay, but after rehearsing more, it became great! (17 year-old girl).

I learned to work with each other better and listen to each other better in a team. (16 year-old girl).

We all had many ideas and I felt really creative during the rehearsals. (17 year-old boy).

During the process we could make our own scenes. It was great for me, because of that, we could really make the play ourselves. Because we were a close group everyone took responsibility for his role and others. (17 year-old girl).

So, playing a part in the process and in the play made a difference - from individual to collaborative group work. Performing was not the aim, but it gave motivation and feel of success in a group, which is of course one of the aims of doing drama. To understand the process, enjoy it, and to be brave enough to cherish the outcome and be proud of it. The students are not actors, nor there a desire to make them actors. Our aim was to give them a successful and enjoyable experience of linguistic program within a framework of drama education.

Furthermore, Iser asks us, whether we see text as a documentary record of something that exists or has existed before, or is it a reformulation of an already formulated reality, to be broken down and reassembled by the mind of the reader? For Iser there is no faith in the existence of a 'pure' text behind and the participants are free to explore their given stimulus from a variety of different angles, just as they are able to use the text in a montage with other aesthetic elements. 'Gaps' or 'blanks' stimulate the meanings which would not otherwise come into existence. It gives us, as Iser emphasizes, the chance to formulate the unformulated. This is the main issue when we (as teachers) want to let participants make meaning and seek possibilities rather than accept answers that match those which have already calcified into rules! Drama Education depends on the participant/spectators (spect-actors) ability to take an active part. In Iser's terms: it depends on the ability to go into the horizon of incompleteness - and that depends on the act of reading

A socially critical drama would assist students in coming to know how drama and 'life' are capable of transformation and to know that each person influences the other in socially constructing both drama and the world. We use a lot of 'images' in Drama Education and students know how to read these images and furthermore, they can tell their stories through these images. Theatre is not what we primarily study: we use the language of theatre to tell stories, to reflect and to learn. This is how the students reflected on that:

When you want something in a short time you have to work hard for it. And be a team. (17 year-old boy).

I learned that theatre is not that different in other countries and that you can work together with people from different

backgrounds. About me I learned that I can achieve good results, when I really concentrate on it. (17 year-old boy).

I learned more that I can explain, really! My theatre skills are improved and I can easily do English conversation now. And the best thing is - my social skills are improved. I learned to speak my opinion, but I also learned how to share responsibility and make compromises. I was also fun to work in an international team! (16 year-old girl).

I learned a lot about myself and my own boundaries. I think I proved to myself and others that I'm so much more than what I have thought. It has been a beautiful journey, and still is. But I do regret something: I should not try to please other people so much, because no one wins and I'll be the one who carries my memories. (16 year-old girl).

This type of Drama Education can be labelled as a 'research drama', as Somers (1994) and O'Toole (2006) has argued, because it contains the processes of learning how to make theatre and at the same time it gives space to self-reflective action in which we see ourselves from the outside, and start asking questions as to why we produce the things we are producing. My interpretation is that socially critical drama education promotes education which is sensitive to the human condition as presented in culture, education and art. It also stresses the necessity of teaching children to reflect on their own cultural background as well as other people's cultures. This kind of drama investigates the ways by which knowledge is produced and how participants create meanings: why these issues in this way? Meanings acquired are personal, social, cultural, educational and political. As Lacey and Woolland (1992) have written, Drama Education challenges accepted theatrical notions concerning the creation and function of character, narrative and spectator-performer relationship. As a genre, Drama Education has its own dramaturgy and is dependent both on the participant's and the teacher's understanding and action. Learning is much more than making a play - it is about personal achievement in the group: we are more than me as I am part of a group. The understanding of playing a part and making a difference in the process has echoes in other aspects of society - playing an active role in the family, friendship and society and being able to stand firm, when needed are valuable lessons to all youngsters and also to their families. All performances were sent online to home from Finland to the Netherlands and vice versa - the importance of family members to see their sons and daughters act was a crucial factor, that underlies the whole process of educating youth ways that they become proud of their achievements.

## 5 Conclusion

The ethics and the nature of the Devised Drama Education approach is said to give a space to tell stories and to increase participants' ability to construct and to communicate meaning through language and action. Reading sets in motion a whole chain of activities that depends on both the text and on the act of reading - the



text represents a potential effect, which is realized during the reading process. 'Gaps' or 'blanks' stimulate the meanings which would not otherwise come into existence. It gives us, as Iser emphasizes, the chance to formulate the unformulated. This is the main issue when we (as teachers) want to let participants make meaning and seek possibilities rather than accept answers that match those which have already calcified into rules. Drama Education depends on the participant/spectators (spect-actors) ability to take an active part. In Iser's terms: it depends on the ability to go into the horizon of incompleteness - and that depends on the act of reading. Neelands (2009) has written about acting together: ensemble as a democratic process in art and life and it echoes similar features to our YET-project.

It is said, that Devised Drama Education promotes critical thinking and deepen understanding of cultural and social traditions. It is supposed to promote reflection and help to develop a sense of community. These drama-reading acts are initiated by what Iser terms the participant's (reader's) wandering viewpoints. They move through the dramatic text and are guided by the various perspectives it offers'. However, these perspectives do not present concrete text features to the reader, but rather "degrees of open possibilities" within the text and "pretext". Text provides what Iser refers to as 'blanks' or 'empty spaces' in the fabric of the text that the reader must fill on the basis of prior knowledge. This is the core of the interpretation of Iser's theory for Drama Education and Iser's and Bennet's theories can be adapted for any drama and theatre event. The understanding of the "act of reading" in Drama Education can help to 'open up' new ways of making meaning for both the teacher and students - and this is why reader-response theory could help us to explain the effect on the participants: a Drama Education process event is not an object that could exist outside its given context. Gattenhof and Radvan (2009) looked at children as researchers in a theatre production -it is not only the sum of the images in the event, but also what its participants experience and bring in.

What does Drama Education then do for participants? I believe it should give space to learn an 'emotional ability to read people' i.e. to understand people. To reflect on why we act as we do and to increase participants' understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. Drama is supposed to give participants a chance to take part, interpret and recreate, explore and experience drama and the social world. The focus is on action. The motive for reflection has two aspects: one set of actions around the production of the theatrical expressions, and another self-reflective action in which we see ourselves from the outside, and start asking questions as to why we produce the things we are producing. This is what Iser terms 'negations'. They invoke familiar or determine elements only to cancel them out. What is cancelled, however, remains in view, and thus brings modifications in the reader's attitude, who is forced to adopt a new position in relation to the text. In other words: a moment grows to be an important moment and

learning occurs or at least, a change to reflect and learn becomes explicit.

In Devised Drama there is a certain way to look at the 'dramatic frame and text'. The structures, that inform the work, rather than being 'closed' should be considered as intrinsically open to other structures. A drama process might be autonomous, but it is not a game, closed off from the world. Drama Education is not just having fun or expressing ourselves, it is an event about the aesthetic and extra aesthetic values of our time. Framing an experience in drama allows us to view it with a particular, focused frame of mind. The frame has to be somewhat incomplete - otherwise there is no need and no space to complete it. It is a play of presence and absence within the horizon of incompleteness. Thus, Drama Education's "frame" should be guided by incompleteness, driven through tension and mood, which together may help to form an individual and/or group's moment of completeness. Creating meanings in the former context could be very much an active, co-operative and democratic process.

A major aspiration of citizenship education is to develop young people's abilities to discuss and negotiate. By promoting empathy as a required value, we are also encouraging young people to engage empathetically with their peers (Heikkinen 2013). Drama is clearly a strategy that can create the circumstances to make the imaginative leap into the thought and feelings of oneself and other people, and this all happens in a playful framework. For further investigation, the one that interests me most, is the challenge and desire to generate a dramaturgy for Devised Drama Education. I would like to characterize Devised Drama Education dramaturgy not as Aristotelean nor Brechtian, but as an '*open or joint - making together- dramaturgy*'. Whilst drama teachers do need to develop a critical awareness of theatre practice, it must be accompanied by a central informing drama pedagogy. Aitken (2009) has drawn attention to the status and power of the teacher and students in making theatre and the major challenge is yet to understand how the teacher's drama pedagogical understanding plays a very important role. The heart of the '*open or joint - making together- dramaturgy*' could then be the play '*in between space*' where the gaps and links between fiction and reality, content and form, drama and informing pedagogy as separate entities disappear and turn into poetry.

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José Eduardo Silva, Isabel Menezes<sup>1</sup>

## Art Education for Citizenship: Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed as a Method for Democratic Empowerment

- This article discusses advantages and limitations in associating art, education and citizenship.
- For the discussion presents a literature review of concepts and data from several areas of knowledge
- Discusses advantages and limitations of current dominant educational paradigms.
- Presents alternative educational paradigms more viable to human psychological functioning.
- Describes the theatre of the oppressed method as a practice merging art, education and citizenship.

**Purpose:** To contribute for the ongoing discussion about associations between art education and citizenship education, presenting Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, as a theatre method that exercises active democracy by means of promoting epistemological development merging Art, Citizenship and Education.

**Design:** Drawing from a selected set of relevant concepts and data in the fields of psychology, education, arts and performance studies, amongst others, the advantages and limitations of the artistic practice of theatre are analyzed in terms of its impact in epistemological and socio-cognitive development.

**Findings:** A literature review shows several studies that evidence the benefits of artistic practices, namely theatre, in several indicators. Despite these evidences formal educative contexts, rooted in traditional pedagogic paradigms, resist to the entrance of arts, such as the performative, in school curricula, as well as other interactive practices indispensable in the promotion of participative citizenship.

**Research implications:** Present existing methods alternative to formal education, exemplified by the method of the theatre of the oppressed, that aim to develop art, education and citizenship in one same practice.

**Practical implications:** Evidence the need to reconsider formal education curricula with the objective of enhancing epistemological development, empowerment, autonomy and active citizenship.

### Keywords

Performative arts, psychological development, theatre of the oppressed, arts education, active citizenship

### 1 Introduction

Citizenship, education and art are multifaceted terms and concepts of difficult consensus, which demonstrates their complexity as subjects of discussion. Their meanings change according with different contexts and throughout times, assuming sometimes even divergent forms (e.g. Charlot, 2013; Loring, 2015; Lucey, Lycke, Laney & Connelly, 2013; Ferreira, Azevedo & Menezes, 2012; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). In this paper, its intended to demonstrate the possibility of associating contents of these concepts in a complementary logic and present Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* (TO) method (1974) as an example of how these concepts can be merged in one same practice. For this task, an interdisciplinary literature review will be presented, departing from concepts of citizenship associated with values of participatory democracy and psycho-social development (e.g., Kuttner, 2015; Ferreira, Azevedo & Menezes, 2012; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004); of education associated

with epistemological development and increasing complexity of thought (e.g., Dewey, 1916; Piaget, 1941; Sprinthall, 1991; Charlot, 2013); and of art associated with creativity, which implies sufficient conditions and freedom for the aesthetic expression (e.g., Siegesmund, 2013; Silva, 2016; Vigotsky, 1925).

The demand for democratic, participatory citizenship, poses an enormous educational challenge for it will require the enhancement of cognitive complexity of individuals, sense of community and autonomic capacities, namely through the promotion of epistemological, human and psycho-social development. Evidently, formal education could play a very significant role in contributing for the achievement of these objectives. But, unfortunately, when rooted in traditional pedagogic paradigms that, amongst other things, perpetuate oppositions and dichotomies between mind and body (Dewey, 1916), education will be very limited in its potential to develop autonomy and active citizenship. On the other hand, literature shows evidence that the artistic and creative practices, especially those rooted in holistic (embodied) perspectives about human psychological functioning (such as theatre), seem to be particularly adequate for the objective of developing complexity of thought and active citizenship. Given the constraints and resistances that formal education still poses today to modifications in its traditional dominant pedagogic paradigms, the TO method is here presented as an example of a theatre practice that, having been designed for informal and non-formal educational contexts, accomplishes the

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achievement of merging art, education and active citizenship. It is argued that this methodology reunites artistic qualities that largely contribute for the promotion of psycho-social development, engaging and empowering citizens in the construction of a better collective future.

## 2 Citizenship and complexity of thought

In a broad sense, citizenship is related with the democratic principles that construct inclusive societies, where each individual has enough means, space and freedom, to develop his/her own meaningful singular story and inscribe it in a broader collective social narrative. Classical authors such as Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) have called this interactive process of meaning-making between individual and collective, the "social construction of reality". In addition, authors such as Gilbert Simondon (1958) or Bernard Stiegler (2009) have named the process of construction of each individual self as a singularity - only possible in quality collective contexts - as "technical and collective individuation". In this framework, the substance of the concept of citizenship consists in devising conditions for the construction of inclusive societies, allowing the emergence and expression of meaningful singular individual narratives within the frame of a broader collective narrative. This definition may reflect one of democracy's main goals in the sense that each citizen should be allowed the opportunity to become a significant actor in the construction of progressively better social environments, but also poses a problem since individualism, today's dominant form of socialization, progressively destroys the possibility of collective narratives (Levi-Strauss, 1958, 1978) and, simultaneously, the possibility of *individuation* (Stiegler, 2009) and meaning-making (Lacan, 1953 [1980]; Silva, 2016). This means that, in today's world, as individualism further becomes the hegemonic form of socialization, citizenship may be at risk.

For example, Whestheimer and Kahne (2004) conceive three different categories of what is to be considered good kinds of citizenship according with different political perspectives: the *personally responsible citizen*, the *participatory citizen* and the *justice oriented citizen*. In a short illustrative example of the type of actions associated to each one of these categories, it can be said, figuratively, that the *personally responsible citizen* is a law abiding person that, for example, engages in voluntary activities such as contributing with food and clothes for the less fortunate. The *participatory citizen* tries to understand the mechanisms behind the functioning of laws and institutions, engaging in social life activities of the community such as organizing the food drive for the less fortunate. The *justice oriented citizen* acts critically, striving to understand problems in their root and intervene for the construction of fairer and more equitable societies, engaging in activities that question the reasons behind the existence of the less fortunate and demanding social transformation. As the authors highlight, the first category does not have a direct relation with democratic principles and, in fact, in most non-democratic regimes, the *personally responsible citizen*

would classify as a good citizen - in partial opposition with the *participatory citizen* and in frontal opposition with the *justice oriented* one. However, being that the acceptance of diversity and inclusiveness in dissention is a prevailing principle in democracy, it should be noted that these categories are not mutually exclusive. Instead, as in other conceptual schemata (e.g., Damásio, 2003; Perry, 1970; Piaget, 1941), these categories of good citizenship are organized according with a principle of increasing complexity where the latter categories (more complex) integrate the previous (less complex). In other words, the accomplishment of each of these roles of good citizenship requires differentiated levels of complexity of thought, for each proposes a different degree of active intervention in the social plan: the *personally responsible citizen* structures his/her actions by mostly following and agreeing with what dominant others proclaim to be the common good; the *participatory citizen* seeks to understand and master the dominant concept of common good, without however questioning, but rather acting in accordance with it; the *justice oriented citizen* questions the origin and meaning of the dominant idea of common good and acts in order to construe more meaningful alternatives.

The same principle, related with increasing complexity of thought, can be found in psychology, namely, in the constructivist tradition that by conceptually merging ontology and epistemology, proposes a holistic approach to the psychological functioning of human beings (e.g., Arciero & Bondolfi, 2011; Guidano, 1991; Mahoney, 1991; Mahoney & Lyddon, 1988; Maturana, 1988/1997; Piaget, 1941 [1965]). For example, William Perry (1970) conceives a scheme of psychological development that describes, through a sequence of nine stages, how thought changes from simple to complex forms (which involves not only cognition *per se*, but also autonomy, meaning-making and ethical and epistemological development). The nine stages show how simple *dualistic* thinking - where an individual judges correctness when in accordance with the authorities of knowledge (scientific, legal, religious, governmental) -, develops into *relativistic* thinking -where the individual recognizes the co-existence of many authorities of knowledge and being unable to compare them has to face the difficulty of choosing. Finally, in the next stage of development, *commitment in relativism*, the individual understands and accepts that in a democratic world of multiple truths, each one is responsible for comparing alternatives, choosing and *committing* throughout life. In Perry's scheme, the passage from the *relativistic* to the *commitment in relativism* stage is an example of epistemological development, comparable with a process described by Piaget as *reflective abstraction* and is related to the conquest of a certain degree of autonomy, after a *relativistic* stage of conflict (crisis) - *cognitive conflict* (vd. Piaget, 1972 [1977]). In this sense, the individuals' different stages of complexity of thought, evidently interfere with the quality of the democratic environment, being that the problem of mutual exclusion only appears in the lower stages. Although the categories of good

citizenship are evidently not mutually exclusive, it must be underlined that the task of the *justice oriented citizen*, implying higher levels of complexity of thought, is of utmost relevance for the fulfillment of the purposes of democracy and the general improvement of quality of life.

### 3 Creative education and performing arts

Answering the original question posed by Westheimer and Khane (2004) “What kind of citizen?”, for example Kuttner (2015) showed that it is precisely in promoting the critical thinking of the *justice oriented citizen* that art education seems to be more relevant. In convergence, other evidences seem to point out that the purposes of democracy may be better achieved when the sufficient conditions for psychological and epistemological development are created (e.g., Ferreira, Azevedo & Menezes, 2012). Evidently, education plays a prominent role in addressing the democratic demand for epistemological, as well as psychological and social development, and one of the most effective ways of accomplishing these goals is through creativity (Charlot, 2013; Silva, 2016; Valqueresma & Coimbra, 2013). Creativity (from the latin *creare – give existence to*) is what allows the emergence of the new and it would be acceptable to say that creativity (responsible for aesthetic production) is one of the human faculties more closely connected with the construction of alternatives which is the basic premise for democracy’s freedom of choice. In addition, the discovery of new life alternatives, solutions and possibilities of synthesis, both at individual and social level, constantly requires and produces further integration of these new elements in the individual’s epistemological systems, increasing their complexity.

Within the artistic domain, literature shows that the performative arts, mainly focused in addressing and exploring the possibilities of expression through the body, allow access to the most profound *implicit contents* (Freud, 1900 [2006]). By transforming the *implicit* (subjective) into *manifest contents* (objective) through symbolic processes of sublimation (Lacan, 1953 [1980]), for example, the theatre practices, are particularly accurate in promoting connections between body and mind (*embodiment*), allowing a multiplicity of symbolic discourses to be produced by the body (e.g., words, sounds, actions and basically all forms of expression). In the last decades, several studies presented empirical evidences of positive relations between theatre and psychological development in areas ranging from education to psychotherapy or neuro-aesthetics (e.g., Calvo-Merino, Jola, Glaser, & Haggard, 2008; Franklin, Fernandez, Mosby & Fernando, 2004; Respress & Lufti, 2006; Orkibi, 2010). In 2006, a study conducted by Wright, with 23 students, using various measures, showed that drama education highly enhances self-development and promotes personal and social development; and more recently, a study conducted by Silva, Ferreira, Coimbra and Menezes, (in press) with 222 actors and directors, tested a measure adapted from of William Perry’s scheme, that showed significant differences in

complexity of thought according to the level of experience in theatre. It is difficult to enunciate all the qualities that underneath this relation but they are certainly related with certain conditions that, when reunited, promote global (holistic) development, being likely that these conditions are intrinsic to artistic practices.

Relying on previous contributions from classical authors such as Dewey (1916), Mead (1934) or Piaget (1972 [1977]), Sprinthall (1991) has systematized the sufficient conditions under which the cognitive and psychological development occurs: individuals should be constantly involved in *significant role-taking action* experiences, balanced with relevant opportunities for *reflection* in a *relational* and emotionally charged *context* that is both supporting and challenging of his/her world visions. Recently, empirical evidences of the accuracy of this model were found, for example, in the context of civic and political participation (Ferreira, Azevedo & Menezes, 2012). And, in addition, research by Silva (2016), has shown the existence of formidable convergences between these conditions systematized by Sprinthall and the minimum elements for theatre making (e.g., Grotowski, 1965 [1975]; Brook, 1968 [1996]). A convergence that extends, however, to most artistic domains (Goodman, 1978), evidencing that it may not even be a question of intentionality towards psychological development, but rather, an intrinsic quality to the practice of artistic activities (Silva, 2016).

### 4 Art or traditional pedagogy

From an historical point of view, traditional pedagogy (from Plato, to the catholic church, to Descartes, amongst many others) has been developing its processes and methods within a dualistic paradigm that, for centuries, has been systematically opposing the mind and the body. As a consequence, the general aim of the traditional pedagogic efforts has been directed towards strengthening the mental disciplining of the “corruptness” of nature, namely, the bodily emotions and desires. What is today called education has been molded through the centuries, mostly within strategies that address the task of teaching how to resist the body’s desire in order to normalize behavior (Charlot, 2013). Art, on the other hand, departs from a different principle for it has been closely connected to sensitivity, being, therefore, an accomplice of the body, even when controlled by norms (Gil, 1981 [2008]). In this sense, two opposing principles are identified, within which most citizens have been educated throughout times: traditional education aims to strengthen the mind in impeding the manifestations of bodily emotions and desires; art, with a more holistic understanding of the human psychological functioning, aims to transform thoughts, emotions and desires into aesthetic forms, through action, by processes of sublimation.

Although nowadays more permeable to the introduction of changes, the traditional pedagogic paradigms are still very rooted in the education of western contemporary societies (Charlot, 2013), inducing the (sometimes

obsessive) dominance of an idea of constant need to *Control* (e.g., mind over body, self over other). It may well be in this sense that authors such as Giorgio Agamben (1996 [2000]) figuratively affirm that it is the “concentration camp” and not the “Greek Polis” what constitutes the basis of western contemporary societies, adding that art encloses the only possibility for the forthcoming of a political community, capable of constructing more creative, autonomous and free societies.

### 5 Democracy and cultural citizenship

In Europe, many countries have transitioned, from authoritarian to democratic regimes (e.g., Iberian countries, former-soviet republics) over the last decades, and have strongly tried to emphasize the promotion of democratic and European citizenship, namely through formal education. Between 2010 and 2011, Menezes and Feirreira (2012) conducted a study based on data from thirty European countries that aimed to understand contents, principles, intentions and key-concepts of civic education curricula in European countries. Apart from the distinct terminologies (e.g., civic education, education for citizenship) the study meaningfully showed that this subject was included in the curricula of schools in almost all European countries, with the general purpose of educating children, from early childhood, to become clear-thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society. On the other hand, non-governmental organizations (NGO) surveyed in the same study referred that “in spite of an official discourse very centered in the promotion of citizenship and the active participation of citizens, there was little effort in the creation of opportunities for the daily exercise of democratic citizenship. Without this practice, civic education becomes effectively impossible” (Caetano, Rodrigues, Ferreira, Araújo & Menezes, 2012, p. 40). It must be recognized that although formal education plays a significant role in promoting citizenship, the places where we practice and learn how to become citizens go way beyond the scope of school (Biesta, 2011; Delanty, 2003). To construct effective democracies, there must be conditions for the full participation of its citizens and, in this sense, the UNESCO Portuguese Commission (2006) highlighted the importance of providing access to art education from an early age, to increment cultural participation, develop individual capacities, improve the quality of education and promote the expression of cultural diversity. Previous studies have also shown plausible possibilities of association between art education and citizenship education, although the difficulties of enhancing such association within the framing of formal educational contexts are recognized (e.g., Kemperl, 2013; Kuttner, 2015; Lucey, Lycke, Laney & Connelly, 2013; Nicholson, 2005[2015]; Siegesmund, 2013). Nevertheless, promoting access for the citizens to a better understanding of the world of art could play a very significant role in terms of citizenship and human development. In the words of Kemperl (2013:111): “through familiarity with the contents of contemporary art, we can realize the objectives of active citizenship.

Contemporary art is unique in recognizing and critiquing truly current issues that are excluded from media coverage. It identifies the issues as they appear and anticipates their consequences”. By engaging in developing cultural citizenship, democracies may encounter a path that leads citizens to the active construction of better societies on their behalf, related with freedom of expression, choice and inclusiveness towards difference (Kuttner, 2015). As we have seen above, following this path will demand, from the citizens, the ability to create meaning out of diversity and dissent-tion and one of the most plausible and effective ways of creating these conditions is through the promotion of complexity of thought, which means, epistemological development (Ferreira, 2006; Parker, 1984; Perry, 1970).

### 6 Beyond formal education

The association of data and scientific evidences presented, firmly supports the idea that performative arts (namely theatre), focused in the bodily transformations within a collective context, are particularly gifted in contributing to epistemological development – an indispensable condition for the development of quality democratic citizenship. According to Charlot (2013:29), “in the creative process, art assumes a point of view over the world, creates new forms and expresses a sensibility at the same time, singular, social and universal”. If art is a cultural construction resultant from the creative labor of different groups of individuals, creativity is the act of exploring possibilities between the self and the world that, through processes of sublimation, creates a diversity of symbolic discourses where human beings can find personal meaning. On the other hand, theatre, empirically demonstrating the democratic possibility of co-existence of a diversity of ontologies in continuous transformation and development, presents alternative meaningful worlds that can be inhabited and transformed (Goodman, 1978; Valqueresma & Coimbra, 2013). Construing a diversity of new worlds during the process of meaning-making, the creative act produces transformation, not only, in each accepted plan of reality but also in the very notion of ontology. It is within this diversity of possible alternative realities that the exercise of choice emerges, giving form to one of the great intents of human culture: the quest for liberty and free determination. Drawing from contributions of several authors on psychological development, Valqueresma and Coimbra (2013:144) clearly affirm that “Educating in art should be envisaged as a real and viable possibility of conjugating education and creativity, with the purpose of promoting psychological development of individuals to its maximum level”. It should be, however, noted, that formal education, despite recent efforts, is still very rooted in the pedagogic dualistic tradition that perpetuates the opposition between mind and body. From this perspective and considering that normative formal educational contexts are still not completely attuned with the artistic practices, the next section will present Augusto Boal’s *Theater of the Oppressed* as a theatre method designed to promote epistemological deve-



lopment and democratic empowerment. This is a practice designed to overcome the limitations imposed by the constraints of most formal educational programs, taking theatre practice a step further in the intention of structurally merging art, education and citizenship.

### 7 The theatre of the oppressed method

Inspired by Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1970) and mainly rooted in the aesthetics of Bertolt Brecht and Constantin Stanislavski (vd. Boal, 2000 [2014]), Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1974 [1979]) begins as an educative experience, part of the 1973 Peruvian alphabetization project (Alfin). The underlying principle was to offer the disempowered, analphabet, oppressed population of Peru, possibilities of expression, meaning-making and socio-cognitive development through the collective practice of theatre. From an aesthetic point of view, Boal's method proposes a reconfiguration of the traditional Aristotelian poetics, where the spectators delegate in the actors the satisfaction of their need to transform desires into actions. Through the empathic process of *catharsis* (Aristotle, 335 *bc* [1958]), the citizen-spectator should relieve his/her desire and therefore abdicate from the need to act. Intending a profound transformation of this traditional role attribution between actors and spectators, Boal has taken further Brecht's (1957 [1964]) intention of transforming passive "spectators", into "actors" capable of actively change the course of events. As Boal stated (1974) if we consider that, in the Aristotelian poetics, the dramatic action *substitutes* the real action and in the Brechtian poetics the dramatic action *enlightens* the real action, in the poetics of the oppressed, the dramatic action *is* real action. For the spectator is invited to actively intervene and change the course of dramatic events in real time, this proposal evidently carries a metaphor: if the passive spectator can become an actor that changes the course of dramatic events, the passive citizen is also capable of acting in changing the course of events in the world s/he inhabits. This set of premises is deeply connected with the concept of cultural citizenship, a concept that is concerned with the development of diverse cultural practices and identities alongside with full participation in cultural and political life (Kuttner, 2015). Developing cultural citizenship concerns the right and capacity of people to develop and pass on diverse cultural traditions and identities while participating effectively in a shared cultural and political arena (Miller, 2001, 2002; Turner, 2001; Wang, 2013). To achieve these same objectives, Boal conceives a theatre method that aims to: a) democratize the processes and practices of theatre making, allowing self-expression, creativity and development through theatre; b) democratize the means of theatre production allowing autonomy over the plurality of emerging and socially engaged artistic discourses.

The methodology is divided in four different stages of development according with a principle of crescent complexity, similarly to the schemas presented above (e.g., Perry, 1970; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004): "knowing

the body"; "rendering the body expressive"; "theatre as language"; "theatre as discourse". The first stage, "knowing the body", consists in the involvement in a series of exercises, through which, everyone starts to get acquainted with the limitations and possibilities of its own body, acknowledging previous social deformations and considering possible paths of recovery. The second stage, "rendering the body expressive", refers to the involvement in a series of games through which each person becomes able to express him/herself exclusively recurring to the body and abandoning more usual daily forms of expression. The third stage, "theatre as language", starts to refer directly to the specificity and originality of this theatre practice (in relation to other theatre aesthetics) for it involves the participation of the spectator in the construction of the dramatic action, again in crescent complexity stages ("Simultaneous dramaturgy"; "Theatre Image"; "Theatre debate/forum"). The idea that the passive spectator has the possibility to act and positively interfere in the course of the dramatic action becomes clear in this stage. Within the premise that the passive spectator (passive citizen) can act and intervene in the dramatic, societal and political change processes, the fourth stage, "theatre as discourse", affirms the merging of former rigid dualistic notions of the roles of actors and spectators in a newly formed concept "spectator-actor". This stage consists in the systematization of series of simple (and non-onerous) possibilities of presenting the emerging artistic discourses (e.g., "Invisible Theatre"; "Journal Theatre" amongst many others). These possibilities are to be used in accordance with the need to discuss certain themes or rehearse collective actions, allowing autonomy, freedom and independence on behalf of their creators. As we will see, these stages are structured in an epigenetic logic of increasing complexity, where the next stage integrates all the previous stages, very like other developmental schemata and theories (e.g., Damásio, 2003; Perry, 1970; Piaget, 1972).

### 8 Developing complexity of thought: Body and mind; Self and other

Addressing the problem of body-mind discontinuity posed by traditional pedagogy, the first two stages of Boal's methodology are mostly preparatory and approach the body in a re-educational perspective. In operative terms, the purpose is to help each participant to become aware of his/her most basic and structuring source of knowledge about him/herself and the world that is the body. This basic premise is deeply connected with what recent literature describes as *embodiment theory* (e.g., Laakso, 2011; Smith & Sheya, 2010). For a long time, cognitive sciences were unable to explain human development processes and the main reason was that the mainstream trends, in attunement with traditional pedagogy, insisted in conceptualizing and cultivating a dichotomous relation between the conscious mind and the sensory-motor processes of the body (Liimakka, 2011; Smith, 2005; Smith & Gasser, 2005). It is indeed through the senses of the body that each

individual becomes able to perceive and explore the world, building a collection of experiences (emotional, tacit and concrete) that will later be integrated into one's consciousness. Individuals will thus devise patterns (forms, concepts, abstractions) becoming apt to structure, understand and construe the empirical world they inhabit (e.g., Arciero & Bondolfi; 2011; Guidano, 1991). Although the proposal that sensory-motor processes influence and constitute cognitive processes is a return to the principles of Piaget (1972 [1977]), only more recently has this idea been confirmed by research in the cognitive sciences (Iverson, 2010; James, 2010; James & Maouene, 2009; Kelly et al., 2002) and also in neurology (e.g., Draganski et al, 2004; Lindquist, Wager, Kober, Bliss-Moreau & Barret, 2012) and neuroaesthetics (Calvo-Merino, Jola, Glaser, & Haggard, 2008), namely by functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI).

It is today clear that body and mind endlessly interact forming a continuous whole. To promote a good human psychological functioning, we must overcome the dichotomies and embrace the dialogic forms of body-mind interaction, just as it should happen in democracy regarding relations between self-other. Aiming to develop body awareness and understanding, the TO method proposes a collective explorative space where the body has enough freedom for spontaneous expression with its peers. As a consequence of this particular type of collective socialization through processes of acknowledgment and differentiation between self/other start to occur, modifying self-construction (Decety & Sommerville, 2003). The creative exploration of the bodily processes through self-expression (passage from implicit to explicit content *vd.* Freud, 1900 [2006]; Lacan, 1953 [1980]) and the hermeneutic process of interpreting those expressive signs, enables integration of experience into conceptual patterns that will later translate into language (Guidano, 1991). This will allow each individual to explain, communicating with his/her peers, the sensations experienced by the body, bringing the subjective to the social plan of reality, evidencing the epistemological dimension of this process. In addition, the establishment of relations between peers through communication, enables not only the self-recognition of previous embodied implicit epistemological structures (including what Boal calls "social deformations") acquired in social or working contexts (Derrida, 1967 [2006]; Stiegler & Neyrat, 2012), but also provides possibilities of modification, both at psychological and social levels. If it is through the body that we first come to understand and structure our knowledge at a tacit level - which is why we can only explain with propriety things that we have experienced -, modifying the sensorial stimulus that the body receives, will transform the structures that give form to our understanding, enabling a transformation of perspectives, behavior and the very notion of self. In practical terms, the bodily exploration that Boal proposes allows individuals to autonomously recognize their own "social deformations", such as *embodied* notions of self, resultant from *instrumentalist* processes (Stiegler, 2009). The *embodiment* of such notions is typical in post-

industrialized societies, and inevitably entails the destruction of subjective knowledge as well as social and cultural capital. This destructive process was firstly identified by Marx as *proletarianization* (1858 [1969]) and tends to induce individuals to understand themselves through the reduced parameters of the utility and productivity of their working skills. Within the TO method, this self-recognition is accompanied by the exploration of new possibilities of self-construction, in the collaborative and associative context of theatre. An environment where individuals, by exploring other forms of self-expression and relation with other individuals and elements of the world, have enough space and freedom to recognize that they enclosure possibilities of doing, thinking and being, that go way beyond the scope of their productive skills. Jacques Derrida (1967 [2006]) referred these alternative contexts of self-construction, as spaces of freedom where individuals can inscribe their personal *grammars*. Spaces that allow what other authors would call *individuation* processes, that is, technical and collective processes through which humans can reclaim their status of singular and irreplaceable beings (Simondon, 1958 [1989]; Stiegler, 2009).

## 9 Discussion

Getting to know one's own body implies a primary approach to the understanding of our own resources of knowledge, which is a first step towards epistemological autonomy. In this sense, the body should be intentionally implicated in every stage of the process of epistemological development and every educational process should begin by its creative understanding. Unfortunately, only in recent history the body has entered the formal education curricula, and even so, not the creative body at first, but the disciplinary one within the boundaries of physical education (Charlot, 2013). In fact, creative performing arts curricula started to become more frequent as extra-curricular arts education programs started to show good results in several *soft skill* indicators (e.g., Franklin, Fernandez, Mosby & Fernando, 2004; Respress & Lufti, 2006). The first two stages of Boal's methodology provide considerable self-acknowledgement through bodily experimentation and understanding, which is common to all physically based theatrical practices (e.g., Grotowski, 1965 [1971]; Stanislavski, 1936 [2009]). This creates the basic conditions for the success of the next two stages of crescent complexity, where the aim is to gradually participate for a collective change process. It is in the third stage ("theatre as language") that the TO methodology marks a difference regarding most of the aesthetic proposals in theatre, for it consists in allowing the spectator to intervene in the onstage dramatic action. The increased complexity of this task is evident for it starts to convene psychological, social and political dimensions for the construction of collective realities (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). It is a systematization marked by three progressive degrees of audience participation:

a) In the first degree (Simultaneous Dramaturgy), the spectator is invited to share a story to be interpreted by the actors. The group of actors improvises the story onstage and keeps on playing until the point where they stumble into a problem that requires a solution. In that point the audience is invited to present possible solutions to be immediately attempted onstage.

b) The second degree (Image Theatre) is much more intervening. After discovering a consensual discussion theme of a given group, the participants are invited to express their opinion, but instead of using words they are invited to create a silent image, sculpting the bodies of the other participants in the more detailed way possible. Each participant can express his/her opinion, discussing the theme by modifying the image until the point where the whole group agrees in an image that is the physical representation of the theme. After the group construes the "real image" (a consensual representation of the situation as it *is*) the same process is used to construe an "ideal image" (the situation as it *should be*). With these two images in mind, it is possible to invite each participant to develop a "transit image" an image that can transform the "real situation" into the "ideal situation". All this debate is made by the "sculptors" and through the "sculptures", without words.

c) In the third degree (Debate Theater - Forum), the participants are asked to share a story containing a problem (social or political) of difficult solution. The situation is acted out, presenting the problem and proposing a possible solution. When the solution presented does not reunite consensus from the audience, it is announced that the play will be presented again exactly in the same way, but this time, any member of the audience can substitute one of the actors and try to act out an alternative solution. This way the spectators get to experiment the passage of its own theories into actions that are immediately confronted in the collective plan.

Whilst the aesthetics of the third stage, requiring action and critical thinking, is marked by the dynamics of discussion and interpersonal negotiation in real-time, the fourth stage "theatre as discourse" is marked by the need of intervening collectively, discussing certain themes or rehearsing certain transformative actions, to be introduced in larger social contexts - a task that, again, implies an increase in complexity. To address this purpose, Boal suggests several simple forms of presenting theatre plays according with the need to discuss certain themes within the social domain. Some of these simple formats include: "Invisible Theater", "Journal Theater", "Myth Theater" and "Rituals and masks" (amongst others). The fourth stage represents a passage from the intimate to the public sphere. Spectator-actors are those who introduce in the public space relevant themes, involving the community in discussing matters of its own interest. The same principles that allow the emergence of conscious and active spectator-actors are now bound to be expanded to the public sphere, helping to develop participative communities, citizens capable of intervening and transform the future according to their singular and collective needs. This form of theatre widely explores different possibilities of interaction between self and world. An exploration that conducts to an increase of

knowledge about the diversity of versions of reality that human collectives construe among themselves, as well as the different possibilities that this faculty of construing realities enclosures.

Having been devised to be practiced by individuals both with and without previous theater skills, this methodology has nowadays reached a considerable impact. The practice engages a significant number of practitioners in more than seventy countries, and not only in the context of community theatre but also in intervention contexts such as education, psychology, social service or occupational therapy, amongst many others, evidencing positive developmental results in several indicators (e.g., Betiang, 2010; Boehm & Boehm, 2003; Sloman, 2012; Ramos & Sanz, 2012). In a time when art seems to have become markedly psychologized (Jarzombek, 2000) the TO method is a form of recovering the meanings that, through art, emerge from collective contemporary life.

## 10 Conclusions

In this article it has been argued that although there are different discourses about the meanings of citizenship and art education, their concepts and practices share numerous affinities, purposes and complementarities. Augusto Boal's "Theatre of the Oppressed" has been proposed as an example of an artistic methodology that intentionally merges artistic and educational practices for enhancing citizenship by promoting psychological development and sense of community in its diversity.

Addressing questions that democracy poses in terms of dissention, it is our proposal that instead of being envisaged as problems, dissention should be seen as an expected consequence and expression of the fact that every human being is unique and irreplaceable. Although individualism, today's hegemonic process of socialization, is one of the key elements responsible for inducing citizens into interpreting human diversity as a problem, thus endangering democracy and citizenship, literature shows evidence that this difficulty can be easily addressed by effectively promoting the epistemological development of citizens, namely, enhancing critical thinking and complexity of thought.

Evidently, epistemological development is within the realm of education, but, again, literature showed evidences that the domain where cognitive complexity can reach its highest levels is through art education. Augusto Boal's method was found to be one of the best demonstrations of how the purposes of art, education and citizenship can converge in a same practice, evidencing the common goals that the construction of culture has been pursuing throughout human history: individual and collective freedom and self-determination. One of the main political resources to promote citizenship is art education and nevertheless, despite all scientific evidences, it must be recognized that even in its best format, formal education gives little emphasis to modern creative educational approaches. This article intends to highlight that, to promote democracy, citizenship and human development, there is urgency in bridging body and mind, art and science, self and other in



the educative processes. Considering the scientific evidences and history of education until today, the remaining question could be how these elements should be articulated for the engagement of citizens in the active construction of better quality societies, or, as posed by Westheimer and Kahne (2004): what kind of citizen do we want? In our opinion the answer can be found in the suggestion offered by Bernard Charlot (2013:17): “to think of art, not as a resource to educate, but rather of education as a path to become an artist”. It may well be that the time has come to give art a fair chance in the construction of a better collective future.

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Marit Dewhurst, Dipti Desai

## Interviewing as a Pedagogical Tool in Arts for Social Justice: A Case Study of an Afterschool Arts Program

- As a pedagogical tool interviewing can help to develop skills as creative agents for social change.
- Interviewing capabilities are useful in creating art.
- Interviewing can be seen as a foundation for artistic visions of the world.

**Purpose:** The rise of out-of-school youth arts organizations, especially those dedicated to addressing social issues with young people, suggests a growing need for spaces in which we prepare young people to creatively and critically shape their communities. While the popularity of these programs is certainly positive, it does little to tell us what pedagogical lessons we might learn from how youth arts organizations approach social justice teaching in the arts. In order to understand what it takes to do social justice art education, our research team investigated the pedagogical strategies used by Center for Urban Pedagogy, an out-of-school youth arts organization.

**Method:** Through qualitative interviews, observations, and document analyses, this case study examined the specific pedagogical strategies used by educators in the Center for Urban Pedagogy's (CUP) Urban Investigations program to engage young people in creating art for social justice aims.

**Findings:** Our initial findings revealed that the process of interviewing is at the center of CUP's approach to both social engagement and art-making. According to our research, interviewing reveals hidden layers of meaning to learners, offers opportunities to visualize personal connections, and provides a means to critically and collaboratively create artwork.

### Keywords:

Art education, ethics, civic literacy, compositional analysis, attitudes

### 1 Introduction

In an office in Astoria Energy in New York City, five teenagers and two educators from the Center for Urban Pedagogy's Urban Investigations program sit around the desk of the Manager; one holds a microphone, another a notepad, and another a video camera. A bit quietly at first, they ask questions: "Why did the city choose to build a power plant here? Where do you get fuel to run the generators?" As the conversation progresses and the young interviewers seem less inhibited and more probing; the Manager responds in kind with complex responses to their increasingly pointed questions. When the camera is finally turned off, they exit the small office and head off for a walking tour of the electricity plant. They

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take photographs as they walk around the plant and continue to ask questions about the various parts of the plant from transformers to generators as they head back to turn their findings into art.

On paper, social justice art education—the pedagogical process that engages young people in creating art to dismantle systems of inequality—sounds promising. As many educators and artists declare, it can be a tremendous means through which youth can develop the critical and creative thinking skills to actively participate in the remaking of our society (Dewhurst, 2014). However, when it comes to what the actual work entails, this emancipatory approach to art education can appear more daunting. What pedagogical tools do educators in social justice arts use in their teaching? And what impact do these strategies have on the young people with whom they work, the artwork they create, and the change they aspire to create? While many school-based arts educators have found successful ways to integrate social justice art-making into their curricula, those working outside of schools often have more leeway to experiment with how best to engage young people in this work. The rise of out-of-school youth arts organizations, especially those dedicated to addressing social justice issues with youth, suggests a growing need for spaces in which we prepare young people to creatively *and* critically shape their communities (Dewhurst, 2014; Smyth & Stevenson, 2003; Seidel, et. al., 2009). While the popularity of these programs is positive, it does little to tell us what pedagogical lessons we might learn from how youth arts organizations approach social justice teaching in the arts.



In an effort to better understand what it takes to *do* social justice art education, our research team set out to investigate the pedagogical strategies used by one out-of-school youth arts organization. Selected as a site based on their stated commitment to using art to engage participants in civic engagement, Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) has a well-recognized history of working with youth to empower them as agents of change in their own communities. In 2015, CUP's Urban Investigations program was awarded the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, the country's highest achievement for quality programming in the arts. Through observations and interviews with educators and youth working in the Urban Investigations program, we applied case study methodology to examine the specific pedagogical strategies used by educators to engage young people in creating art for social justice aims. Our initial findings revealed a complex set of philosophical stances and actual teaching tools, however, upon closer analysis of the data, it became clear that the process of interviewing is at the center of CUP's approach to both social engagement and art-making. Given this finding, this paper focuses on the act of interviewing as a creative and critical strategy in social justice art education. We begin with an overview of how interviewing is used as a pedagogical tool in education and as a means of both research and creation in contemporary art practices today. Shifting to the case study data, we move this analysis of interviewing from the realm of professional artists to that of the youth involved in a social justice art education program. A thorough examination of the nature of the interviewing process at CUP enabled us to determine how interviewing functions as a pedagogical and aesthetic tool for the kind of critical learning, empowering teaching, and socially engaged art-making required of social justice arts education.

## 2 Interviewing as a pedagogical tool and guiding philosophy

From the everyday examples of interviewing that we encounter daily—journalists interviewing a witness to an event, researchers interviewing participants, and talk show hosts interviewing celebrities—we know that interviewing generally consists of someone with questions (preferably critical ones), and someone with responses (preferably informed ones). But interviewing viewed through an educational lens takes on a slightly different hue; as a pedagogical tool, interviewing can serve as an important process for fostering inquiry, empowerment, and critical analysis. Because of this, interviewing and other forms of fieldwork have been used as teaching tools in several non-arts settings, including social studies classrooms and media literacy programs (Soep, 2006; Cammarota and Fine, 2008). As founder of the Educational Video Center, a youth media program, Steve Goodman (2003) describes, interviewing allows students to interact with primary sources, evaluate different information sources, and develop their own lines of inquiry:

“At its most basic, the students’ inquiry begins with and spirals out of the act of questioning, as all inquiry does. But for questions to eventually lead to answers—and perhaps new questions—inquirers must learn where and how to gather information. They need to learn how to assess the reliability of the information they obtain, and finally how to interpret and integrate the new data into their existing frameworks of knowledge and experience. This is fundamentally a social and intellectual process.... (p. 48)

Recently, a number of researchers (Cahill, 2007; Cahill, & Hart, 2007; Cammarota & Fine, 2008) have also involved youth in conducting formal interviews as part of participatory action research projects, connecting young people with professional practices of data collection and analysis. Likewise, educators in folk arts education and geography have pointed to the multiple purposes for including interviewing and other forms of fieldwork in K-12 schools (Job, et. al, 1999; Bowman & Hamer, 2011). In these cases, interviewing serves as an engaging teaching strategy to empower youth to participate in the living worlds around them. As one of the teaching artists at CUP states, “it’s learning through experience. So they are actually investigating, rather than reading, like the traditional ways of learning.”<sup>1</sup> In addition to building basic listening, questioning, and research skills, our research highlights that interviewing connects closely to some of the key characteristics of effective social justice art education—both in theory and in practice—to facilitate an emancipatory and critical learning experience for all participants.

## 3 Interviewing and Contemporary Art Practices

Our initial findings of the importance of interviewing in CUP's youth arts programming inspired us to examine similar practices in the professional art world. CUP's pedagogical approach to conduct video interviews with stakeholders in the field as an integral component of their artistic process echoes the work of many contemporary artists who go out into the “field” to collect data—in the form of audio and video recordings, photographs, maps, etc.—to gain a better understanding of a situation or topic. Although such fieldwork is a central component of anthropology, journalism, and sociology, increased attention in recent years has focused on the connection between fieldwork in anthropology and contemporary art (Coles, 2000; Desai, 2002; Foster, 1996; Schneider & Wright, 2010) and more recently to the relationship between journalism and contemporary art (Cramerotti, 2009). Since the 1980s, artists such as Martha Rosler, Haans Haccke, Alfredo Jaar, Trevor Paglan, and Ashely Hunt, have drawn on field-based research to convey “artistic information” (Cramerotti, 2009, p. 30). Their artworks do not simply represent the information they have collected, but instead ask us to question information, thereby igniting the power of pedagogy. In comparison to journalists Cramerotti (2009) indicates, “What artists can do better is to construct a self-reflective medium, which ‘coaches’ its viewers to ask relevant questions by themselves, instead of accepting



(or refusing tout court) representations as they are proposed” (p. 30). In the words of artists, Allora and Calzadilla (2003):

“art has much to offer...in its potential to provoke the public into a space of individual questioning about a particular subject, about preconceived notions of truth, about forms of representation, participation, identification, etc. ... At that point it is up to each individual to decide if this self-questioning will play itself out at a political level, at a union level, at an aesthetic level, at a cultural level, or sexual level, and so on (p. 89).

Invoking a more participatory approach to viewing artwork, these works of art serve as avenues for learning and active engagement with information—a far cry from more conventional passive art viewing.

One example of such fieldwork-based artworks is the video, *Under Discussion* (2005) by Allora and Calzadilla, where conducting interviews serve as the material and medium that the artists employ in their art practice. Seeing that the discussion about the future of the island of Vieques (Puerto Rico) was deadlocked due to different interests of various constituencies, Allora and Calzadilla decided to open a space for discussion, dialogue, and debate through their artwork. The one voice that was not even part of the formal discussion regarding the future of Vieques was that of the local people who had been directly affected by decades of U.S. militarization. Literally turning a table over and attaching a motor, thus making it into a functional boat, the artists hired a local boatman to take them along the coast of Vieques to interview both fisherman and local people living on this island about the changes they had experienced since the U.S. took over the island as a military base as well as what they envision for their land and communities. The video is not only a visual representation of their journey along the coast, but by drawing on the metaphor of the discussion table as a place to bring various people to the table to talk, their art project in both form and content offered a pedagogical space for questioning and thinking about who makes decisions for whom.

Rachel Wetzler (2012) suggests that the move by many contemporary artists to engage in “artistic fieldwork” allows them to “investigat[e] aspects of their lives and interests by merging the apparent objectivity of documentary forms and anthropological research with a plainly subjective, flexible approach, drawing on multiple methodologies and discourses” (para # 3). Viewed from a different angle, fieldwork as a practice is a form of art—akin to the kinds of social practices popular today. Requiring face-to-face contact with people, this embodied experience warrants learning how to read body language, therefore allowing for different ways of knowing that are connected to physical and social modes of communication (Taussig, 2008). Moving beyond conventional art materials and techniques, this move in social practice art includes a wider spectrum of ways of making art.

“Aesthetic journalism” provides another lens to analyze and discuss the use of interviews as both artistic medium and artistic process. Aesthetic journalism involves “artistic practices in the form of investigations of social, cultural or political circumstances” (Cramerotti, 2009, p. 21). Cramerotti writes “it is rather the capacity of an art form to put our sensibility in motion, and convert what we feel about nature and the human race into concrete (visual, oral, bodily) experience” (p. 21) that makes it relevant for journalism. Although journalism and art have always had a relationship as journalists use photographs, videos, and graphic images to convey information and as a form of witnessing, images tend to be presented as objective truths and neutral knowledge. Today we know that all information conveyed through the documentary format is always mediated. Artists can then deliberately play with the ways they mediate the information they collect from fieldwork. Contemporary artists using investigative methods in their practice disrupt traditional journalism’s use of mimetic aesthetic traditions as a mark of objectivity and its privileging of the visual as neutral or unbiased information. In doing so, these artists create works that challenge viewers to question the status quo and their role within it.

Interviewing—and other forms of fieldwork—as a medium for making art, aligns with practices in social justice art education which require critical engagement with real life issues. The pursuit and organization of information that interviewing allows for makes it a prime tool for interrogating issues of inequality in ways that reveal the underlying structures of injustice. Combined with creative expression, this use of interviewing can serve as a potent strategy for social justice art. Just as professional artists have drawn on interviews to develop the critical nature of their artwork, our research revealed that young people at CUP used similar tactics to create their art.

### 3 Research overview

Working with a small research team, we—the primary investigators and authors—conducted a qualitative study of the pedagogical strategies used to create works of social justice artwork with small groups of youth involved in out-of-school programs. Comprised of two university professors with expertise in social justice art education, youth development, and contemporary art practices and one research assistant with experience as an art teacher both in and out of school settings, our research team brought a critical insider eye to the analysis of the data on learning in the Urban Investigations. Through a series of interviews and observations, our research sought to identify the specific teaching and learning tools required of social justice art education.

#### 3.1 Participants

Based in Brooklyn, New York, The Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) uses art and design as tools to facilitate civic engagement and impact public policy. Specifically, CUP states that their projects seek to “demystify the urban policy and planning issues that impact our communities, so that more individuals can better participate in



shaping them” ([welcometocup.org/About](http://welcometocup.org/About)). CUP’s *Urban Investigations* programs match small groups of teens with a teaching artist to examine a real life issue about how the city works from multiple perspectives in order to create a work of art for the public. Previous *Urban Investigation* programs have explored issues such as food distribution, high school application processes, waste treatment systems, and internet ownership ([welcome tocup.org/Projects/ UrbanInvestigations](http://welcometocup.org/Projects/UrbanInvestigations)). Each multi-week investigation begins with a key question, for example, “Where does our water come from?” “Where does our garbage go?” Students and teachers together launch their exploration of the key questions first by reading both academic and popular articles that provide a foundational understanding of the issue at hand. Through discussions and art-making activities, youth participants and adult staff generate a list of potential stakeholders to interview for additional information. Equipped with professional recording equipment and basic training in interviewing techniques that covers developing questions, asking follow-up questions, and active listening, youth participants conduct interviews of policy makers, local government officials, community leaders, and engaged citizens. Youth then work closely with the teaching artists to turn the content and experiences of their interviews into works of art for public distribution. These investigations have resulted in short videos, posters, and websites for distribution across the city (and beyond).

Our research project focused on two separate Urban Investigations that took place over three months during the summer of 2011: one investigation focused on learning about the infrastructure of electricity in the city and the second focused on the NYC Fair Share policy. Youth participants for the *Power Trip* project that investigated the infrastructure of electricity in NYC included four high school aged youth, one adult lead teaching artist and one adult assistant teaching artist. As they researched how energy flows through the city, participants in this Urban Investigation met with officials at a local utility company headquarters, an upstate transmission monitoring center, and visited several power plants. Prioritizing primary source data collection over today’s typical turn to the internet enables youth to develop public speaking, inquiry, contextualizing, and professional communication skills. In addition, these experiences put youth in direct conversation with the real life decision makers that are connected to their own urban communities—a move that engages young people directly with those in power. Youth and the adult facilitators then used information gathered during these interactions to create a multi-lingual poster and book that has been distributed by local libraries, at several formal presentations throughout the city, and received special mention from a professional design association (CUP *Power Trip* website, 2015). Following a similar trajectory, participants in the *Share, Where?* project included ten high school aged youth from the Bronx, one adult lead teaching artist, and one adult assistant teaching artist who “teamed up to find out how New York

City decides where to put the burdensome, smelly, and dangerous facilities that make the city run—but nobody wants in their backyards,” (CUP *Share, Where?* website, 2015). Over the course of the *Share, Where?* project participants met with sanitation workers, environmental justice advocates, an anti-waste facility neighborhood group, and policymakers behind the Fair Share legislation. Drawing on their research with these primary sources, the team of youth and teaching artists created a visually-rich book that has been distributed and used by local community groups to educate people about the Fair Share policy. Resulting creative design products from each Urban Investigation continue to be shared through CUP’s ongoing community-building and policy education programs.

### 3.2 Data Collection & Analysis

The qualitative methods of interviews, participant observations, and document analysis enabled us to collect significant data about the pedagogical strategies at play in the two *Urban Investigations*. The collected data included interviews with each educator, assistant educator, and almost all of the youth participants, observations of the working sessions, and document analysis of the training guides, artwork produced, and CUP’s program literature. This rich array of data allowed us to triangulate our findings as we compared the responses of the teaching artists with those of the youth participants and the documents and artwork that emerged from their process. To analyze this data, we drew upon grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to use an iterative coding strategy in which we elicited emic codes from the data and then layered in etic coding to compare the data with dominant literature in social justice art education. The findings that emerged from this qualitative process highlight the important role of interviewing at CUP. The following discussion of these findings points to the many ways in which interviewing can be used as an effective pedagogical and philosophical tool in social justice art education.

### 4 Findings

Throughout our analysis of the nature of social justice art education at CUP, the process of interviewing rose again and again as a core pedagogical strategy. A closer analysis of this tool reveals that it functions as both as a specific teaching and learning tool and as a philosophical guide to shape the very curriculum at CUP. In our research, it became clear that interviewing is a far more complex arts learning activity than first assumed, contributing to the criticality and shifting power dynamics required of effective social justice art education. To better understand the multifaceted role that interviewing plays at CUP and, potentially in social justice art education broadly, we identify the key contributions it fostered among youth and adult participants.

#### 4.1 Revealing what is real (but often hidden) in the world

Including fieldwork as part of the artistic process allows students to contextualize the knowledge they are learning and connect it to the real world (Fuller, 2006). In the case of social justice based art education it helps students to understand how our society is structured and who makes decisions that impact our daily lives, but also to question how and who created these structures. As described above, CUP's *Urban Investigations* prioritize interviewing as a tool for conducting primary source research as much of the experience is based on what one teaching artist described as "doing actually *real* investigation." This real-world connection is a vital component of the process. As one teaching artist explains,

"they are learning how to ask the questions and they are feeling empowered that way. ... It's like ok, this is information that we actually got, it's not in a textbook. You know we've read a few things and we are actually going and asking these questions. I think that's the really exciting thing that the CUP program does.... I read this in a textbook, but now we are actually going, you know to this place that it talked about. We are going to actually experience this and then report back on our views of this experience.

The emphasis on "actually" throughout this reflection highlights how unique and transformative it is to have direct engagement with information for both youth and teaching artists.

As they directly interact with information through their interviews, youth are participating in a form of experiential education, a kind of learning with a constructivist view of knowledge. Experiential learning calls for an understanding of knowledge as a fluid process that requires negotiation, flexibility, learning and unlearning, and is always subjective (Duckworth, 1987; Dewey, 1980). As one of the teaching artists indicates, "most of the things we learn together when we are in interviews talking to people in the field and we learn things that we might not have thought of before and this may lead us to change our ideas." This fluidity echoes the process of making art in which artists reiterate ideas until they are satisfied with a final product. In this way, the interviewing process and the art-making process provide parallel avenues to revisit and re-interpret information as youth deepen their understanding of the topic under study. As this teaching artist continued,

"it's challenging because they are not used to doing things like [CUP] do[es]....So we are thinking differently, we are doing these puppets or we are doing this drawing or these collages and they make sense to whatever we are doing but, you know, it's, you taking information in a different way.

The interviews in the *Urban Investigations*, much like the work of contemporary artists, provide young artists with opportunities for direct engagement with primary source information. Similarly, these interviews open up spaces to navigate the messiness and often-shifting nature of

information about civic and social issues. In doing so, they expose the complex reality of the structures that shape our society—particularly those structures that are hidden or opaque to casual observation. As a tool of making art, interviews serve as an important tactic to give realistic shape to the artwork that young people seek to create.

#### 4.2 Visualizing personal connections

As both education scholarship (Duckworth, 1987) and practical experience tell us, to truly understand a concept, it is useful to experience it firsthand. Such primary experiences enable learners to forge their own connections to the topic at hand, thereby connecting the topic to their own lives. In other words, by experiencing something directly, learners can, as one teaching artist noted, "make it their own." At CUP, the process of interviewing connects youth directly to the civic structures they are exploring. It is an opportunity for youth to experience—in a physical, temporal, spatial, and affective manner—environments and conversations that may have been previously off-limits. For example, it is only because the youth were investigating how we get our electricity that they were allowed to visit the power stations and substations in New York City. This rare access provided an immediate experience that made real the connections between the different stakeholders involved in delivering the city's electricity.

When we make systems of power personally relevant, they become easier to identify and address. Through the interview process, the youth participants learned about the social and economic dimensions of power and power usage across social class lines and connected it to their own lives. One youth participant asked the follow up question, "What you're describing, would my family be able to benefit from an energy program like this?" Another youth made an important observation about where power plants are located in the city in terms of social class: "Well, it's mostly in poor neighborhoods, like Hunt's Point, where there's power plants, sewage treatment and people there are getting sick." A youth videotaping the interview, immediately agreed, "Yeah I live in Hunt's Point, there's 15,000 trucks that frequent the area [for deliveries and shipping]". Writing about the importance of situated learning where education starts "from the students' situation," social justice education scholar, Ira Shor (1992) asserts that this "increases their ability to participate [as active learners], because they can begin critical reflection in their own context and their own words" (p. 45).

Based on what they had learned from the interviews at the power plant students then began to create a visual map of how power reaches our homes from the power plants. They worked collectively on this mapping, each one taking a different section to make legible through images the invisible structure of power in our city. Conceptual mapping, commonly known as brainstorming has been used in education to illustrate complex connections between ideas (Powell, 2010). Visual mapping is a way to locate ourselves not only physically, but psychologically,



culturally, and socially. Contemporary artists have pushed the boundaries of mapping to capture these other dimensions, such as emotions, memory, and the body, in what Powell (2010) calls the “metaphorical powers of maps” that allow for a multisensory experience (p.539). Social justice education, as scholars have emphasized, needs to begin where students are and with what they know (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994; Shor, 1992). To do so, educators need to provide the tools to visualize how these structures of inequity relate to their students (and their own) lives. From this space of personal understanding educators can then move students to think critically about the systemic nature of these inequities and how institutions can play a role in maintaining, managing, and also changing these inequities.

#### 4.3 Thinking critically, creating critically

Interviewing in the field allows students to learn about and appreciate different perspectives on a topic, which in turn allows them to think out their own values. “Fieldwork enables students to develop their understanding of different perspectives on social, political or ecological issues, enabling them to clarify and justify their own values whilst learning to acknowledge and respect other people’s values” (Job, Day, & Smith, 1999). As one of the teaching artists explained, peeling back to uncover injustice is important as many of the people interviewed at the power plant spoke to the connection between low income neighborhoods, poverty, and racism but in different ways, which provided a more complex picture of the issues:

“I’m just saying for example, in this project where the, the idea that when facilities were dumped into poor neighborhoods and minority, like Polish neighborhoods or here in the Bronx or in Brooklyn or Queens, whatever there is racism involved in those decisions but also well, you know the land is cheaper there and there are other things that makes it more complex than just on the surface. So I try to bring those issues to the table too so the students can think about that too. So it’s not like hey, these people are bad, you know what I mean. So it’s not one sided and too flat of an argument. So I try to bring the more complexity to it. Which is the hard thing. But yeah, that is one of the challenges.

One of the reasons CUP uses interviews is to unearth the social structures and processes that are invisible in our daily lives but play a major role in shaping our daily life. (i.e., where does power come from?). By investigating these invisible structures and then reporting back what they have learned through artworks, youth shift to become advocates. They move from learning how to ask questions in order to elicit information about social structures and policies to analyzing the information they have collected from the interviews to create artworks that serve as education tools. The final design products—be they posters, short videos, or visually-rich books—teach the public about complex structures that are typically invisible and how these structures can affect our lives. As one youth participant recalls,

“we went to this power plant and we’ve never been to a power plant and we didn’t really know what it did, we weren’t even exactly sure what we were looking for. But after the first three interviews we were able to kind of understand that our question was actually like, what is this power plant and who are the people involved in making these decisions in terms of this (plant). And I’m not even sure if that is something that we could of like figured out in the beginning, like, how to narrow down the question or how to make it more successful.”

Through conducting and translating interview data into visual forms, youth participants managed to convey complicated information in more easy-to-access formats. Just as the interviews themselves revealed the complexity of city systems, the artwork that resulted from these interviews extended that knowledge to a wider audience.

#### 4.4 Making art collaboratively

Collaborative learning, where the teacher and student learn together is a key element of any form of social justice education (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994). Such non-hierarchical learning creates opportunities for teachers and students to learn from each other, to take turns as the expert, and to change the conventional lines of power that tend to hold the teacher or adult in a position of greater authority and agency. Found often in out-of-school youth arts programs, collaboration requires flexibility and willingness to allow a project to unfold organically. As Goodman (2003) writes, “To effectively teach students across the field of their experiences, educators must sometimes follow, sometimes lead, and sometimes work with them side by side. No lesson plan can fully map this out” (p. 54). As a platform for collaborative learning, interviewing is unique in that it cannot be pre-scripted, reveals new perspectives to all participants in the moment, and requires a back-and-forth dialogue between the interviewer and interviewee; in short, there is an important element of surprise that opens up spaces for new kinds of learning.

Perhaps the most obvious way in which interviewing fosters collaborative learning is that neither the adult educators nor the youth participants know what the interviewee will say. One teaching artist described this element of mystery in this collaborative process:

“I tell them all of the time, ‘Hey, we are doing this together, I don’t know the answers.’ And you know we write the questions, ... we prepare for interviews, so they [the youth participants] come up with a lot of questions, we [all] edit them down and organize them and so forth. So, I say, ‘guys that’s a great question, I don’t know the answer, let’s find out when we talk to this person or that person.’

Because the teaching artists and youth participants are both meeting the interviewees for the first time, they are hearing new information *together* and learning to make sense of it simultaneously. In this way, the process of interviewing results in a learning context in which everyone involved is experiencing a sense of discovery. As one teaching artist stated, “the nice thing is that we are



discovering this together. So I feel like I'm on the same playing field [as the youth participants]."

Echoing this idea of the shared "playing field", in CUP's Urban Investigations, the interview task provides an unusual opportunity for youth and adult teaching artists to work as partners in art-making. Beyond the fact that they both engage in a parallel process of discovery, the process of developing, conducting, analyzing, and translating the interview into a work of art is also collaborative. This collaboration happens on multiple levels, as one teaching artist describes:

"We work together, it's a collaboration. It's a collaboration of different levels. First is with your students, then it's with people up top [CUP directors] and sometimes we bring graphic designers to help us too. So, it's a collaboration of different levels....It's like a diamond sort of thing where you basically have to carve it. So it takes different levels to get there. So it's a collaboration of different levels. You go back and forth with the student a lot, all the time. ... we [teaching artists] send them [youth participants] the proofs so they can actually see it before we even publish it.... So yeah, it's a long process.

Throughout this collaboration, youth and adults each bring their own expertise to the table to work together to prepare for, conduct, analyze, and transform an interview into a work of art; the youth participants generated ideas and questions based on their own experiences and the teaching artists shared their technical skills in interviewing, and art and design. When learning shifts to be collaborative—or, as Youth Radio's Lissa Soep (2006) writes, a kind of "collegial pedagogy"—the experience is likely to empower both the youth and the adults involved. Because both parties can contribute as full partners in the design, coordination, and analysis of the interview, the process engenders a sense of group ownership over the project. As one teaching artist stated, the youth are empowered because they

"own the project that they are creating and it's not like in some ways ok, they're [the youth] here because I'm saying we're doing a project on energy. I'm giving them that prompt and telling them what we are doing but in every other way like they get to make a lot of decisions.

This shared decision-making is a key component of the entire process—from the initial interview through the creation of the final work of art. The same teaching artist continued this sentiment:

"I want them to feel like they are teaching me something too and like they are learning something that I haven't thought of. I think that is important that it feels like a really collaborative experience in terms of, like, I'm the art teacher and I'm teaching you how to shape correctly or draw something that looks like something in the real world. You know, it's more like I'm teaching us both how to get information from the real world and apply that to our lives. Which is a hard kind of organic thing that happens as you do it.

In talking about the work of youth and adult producers at Youth Radio, Soep (2006) describes that "With collegial pedagogy, mentoring adults offer access to equipment, expertise, in-the-moment advice, creative collaboration, and crucially, a network of relationships with outlets for young people's work" (p. 38). Whereas many youth arts organizations have created opportunities for entirely youth-led projects, the shift to a collegial pedagogy, where youth and adults work as partners, allows for an authentic power-sharing in the art-making process. This collaborative process also facilitates opportunities for youth and adults to learn together. "The beauty of this collaboration" one teaching artist noted, is that "it's not like I'm telling them what do it's okay as what can you bring to the table and what can I bring to the table and we start from there." This back-and-forth was evident in our observations as we noted constant discussion between youth and adults as they worked together to make artistic decisions about their final artworks. At times working all on one sheet of paper to draw out a plan, it was clear that the interviews provided a common ground from which each participant—be it a young person or an adult teaching artist—could contribute actively and with authenticity.

While this kind of collaborative learning may sound elegant in theory, it is important to note that shared decision-making and true collegial pedagogy is not without its challenges. To truly share the decision-making process with youth participants, teaching artists must give up some of their own power and control over the curriculum and over the final product. This can result in a sense of what one teaching artist described as "uncertainty" as they worry, "what are we going to make in the end?" Yet, this uncertainty is actually a critical part of the process as it opens up a unique space in which youth and adult teaching artists come to create a work of art collaboratively. One teaching artist captured this tension in describing her reflections about the process:

"We don't go in knowing what we are going to make. ... our whole brainstorming process was the challenging part for me because I am just, like, nervous about wanting to make sure that [the project] gets done. Also, on the flip side... I'm not the one who is creating the project. So, this goes back to it being a collaborative work project. Like, I'm not the one creating it so it's not really fair for me to say, 'oh I have an idea and I want you guys to create this.' That's not what it is. It's the students, they have to come up with what they want to see, what they envision, how they can reflect what they've learned throughout the summer into some sort of print form.

Such ongoing negotiation of the balanced contributions of both youth and adult participants throughout the Urban Investigations highlighted how interviewing can be a useful tool to encourage collaborative art-making.

## 5 Final thoughts

In writing about the role of teaching, Maxine Greene (2003) reminds us that it "is a matter of awakening and empowering today's young people to name, to reflect, to



imagine, and to act with more and more concrete responsibility in an increasingly multifarious world" (p. 72). In our research with the Center for Urban Pedagogy's Urban Investigations youth program, it is clear that the pedagogical tool of interviewing can play a useful role in providing a range of opportunities for young people to develop their skills as creative agents for social change. Through CUP's Urban Investigations, youth participants learned how to compose appropriate and investigative questions, how to ask those questions to stakeholders with real access to power, how to analyze the responses, and how to translate the information they learned into a creative platform for a wider audience. In addition to being useful skills in many professions, these interviewing capabilities are particularly useful in creating art. Aligned with the work of contemporary artists, this research-based art practice includes observational skills, data collection and analysis, visual mapping of ideas, interviewing skills, listening skill, question posing, communicating skills, technical skills of videotaping, drawing, and photography. Interviewing, as an artistic tool allows youth to use their art to ask probing questions that make us think anew, thereby challenging the status quo. Echoing Greene's words, the youth participants used interviewing as a means through which they learned to ask questions about the world around them and then to share what they learned with a wider audience. As such, interviewing serves as an important process of art making, another addition to the post-modern principles of art and design. At CUP, our research highlighted how interviewing can be seen not only as an effective teaching tool, but also as the foundation upon which young artists build their understanding and artistic visions of the world as they see it and the world as they would like it to be.

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## Endnote

<sup>i</sup> In this paper, we draw upon data from our interviews and observations of educators and participants involved in two Urban Investigations at the Center for Urban Pedagogy. Excerpted quotations were recorded and transcribed by our research team. To maintain confidentiality, we will refer to the interviewee's role within CUP as the primary identifier for each data point.



Joshua M. Hall

## Posture in Plato's Laws: An Introduction to Figuration on Civic Education

- "Posture" (an archaic form of "posture") is a central feature of dance, and of the Figuration philosophy of dance.
- Posture is also a central feature of Plato's philosophy of dance.
- For Plato, posture is part of dance education, which (along with the music) is the foundation of civic education.
- Plato's position on posture is supported by Figuration's concrete analyses of literal and figurative dances, including ballet, Appalachian clogging, Graham's modern dance, salsa/mambo (literal), and Tae Kwon Do, the pollen dance of the honey bee, "falling stars," and Neruda's poetry (figurative).

**Purpose:** The aim of the research was to determine the benefits of applying the new Figuration philosophy of dance, based in part on Plato, to civic education.

**Design/methodology:** A close phenomenological reading of Plato's *The Laws*, with a strategic focus on its account of the concept of posture.

**Findings:** Plato considers posture to be central to dance education, which in turn is central to civic education, as suggested by concrete analyses of dance based on posture.

**Research limitations:** Further studies on this subject are required in order to achieve a more nuanced and balanced account of the concepts of posture articulated by other philosophers and theorists.

**Practical implications:** More resources must be allocated to dance and dance education, in the interest of fostering civic education, and the political virtue that results therefrom.

### Keywords:

Dance, posture, Plato, the laws, civic education

### 1 Introduction

"Posture" is an archaic spelling of "posture," valuable in this context for making visible the etymological connections that dialectically link dancing and poetic performance — by linking posture to posing to *poesis* to positing to poetry. Posture is a central focus of many conceptions of dance, including that of Plato in *The Laws*. Posing is the activity of which any given posture constitutes an interruption or end result, and it is often used as the smallest meaningful unit of a dance. It is also a fair translation of one of the uses of *poesis* in Ancient Greek, including Aristotle's word, *poiein*, for what a philosopher such as Thales makes or posits as the ultimate substrate of reality. (In Thales' case, this would be the *stoicheon* or "element" of water). *Poesis* is also, most famously, the word Plato uses in *The Republic* to discuss poetry as the most paradigmatic case of *poesis*. Thus, one can reverse engineer, so to speak, the posing of dance from the positing of poetry as *poesis*. My focus here, though, will be on how posture is of particular importance in Plato's conception of dance. Posture (a) is a condition for the possibility of the Platonic dialogue via the positive "disposition" of the supporting characters in the dialogue, (b) relates to the dance-connected figure of the puppet and (c) should be, as foundational aspect of dance, the primary educational goal of the ideally lawful polis, so much so that Plato equates dance education with education *per se*.

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The structure of this article is as follows. First, I will provide a conceptual analysis of posture as the first Move of the Figuration philosophy of dance, supported by Plato's analysis of that concept. Second, I present a novel description of posture formed by integrating this conceptual analysis with other conceptual and etymological analyses developed in detail elsewhere. The resultant Move, one fourth of the Figuration philosophy of dance, is thus the basis of one of the four pillars of the holistic analyses that Figuration can offer of any dance. Third, I apply this new conception to one (repeatedly employed) example from each of the seven families or clusters of dance. The specific members analyzed from each of the seven families will be, respectively, ballet, clogging, salsa, Tae Kwon Do, the pollen dance, falling stars, and Pablo Neruda's poetry. In this way, the fact that each of the four Moves offers different perspectives on each of the seven members of each of the seven families of dance can be observed. Finally, I will attempt to demonstrate the upshot of the Figuration philosophy of dance for the lives of individuals and communities, which is that dance (and especially certain kinds) is one of the first and most thoroughly restricted activities in loci of both psychological and political oppression—and is thus advantageously positioned to suggest productive standards for civic education.

### 2 Posture in Plato

Toward the beginning of the *Laws*, the Spartan citizen Megillos mentions to the Athenian Stranger that Megillos' home is the site of the consulate [*proxenus*] of Athens, and that he and his kin have a kind of natural "friendly disposition toward the city," and then Kleinias,



a Cretan from the city of Knossos (source of the Labyrinth myth), chimes in that his “family felt well disposed toward your people” (22, 23). “Disposition” is a form of “position,” which is a substantive of “to posit,” and “disposed” is the past participle of “to dispose,” which is a combination of the prefix “dis-” and “pose.” All of this leads the reader back to the two halves of the etymology of posture — posture and positing — here at the beginning of the *Laws*, whose central concern with posture is nevertheless more conceptual than etymological. Furthermore, this means that the two supporting characters in the dialogue, Megillos and Kleinias, are performing the acquisition of the same attribute, posture, that they are about to advocate for the citizens of their ideally lawful polis. In other words, the characters in the dialogue have taken the appropriate posture to conduct the dialogue’s valorization of posture per se.

Just below this passage, the dominant character of the dialogue, the Athenian Stranger, suggests thinking of all living beings as “divine puppets” whose “passions work within us like tendons or cords, drawing us and pulling against one another in opposite directions toward opposing deeds, struggling in the region where virtue and vice lie separated from one another” (25). The figure of the puppet recurs later in the dialogue in the context of an imaginary contest to decide whose art can bring the polis the most pleasure. “[I]t wouldn’t be surprising,” the Stranger observes there, “if someone thought he could best win by presenting puppets,” which is exactly what the Stranger predicts would happen if the judges for the imaginary contest were “very little children” (38). And the figure of the puppet makes a third appearance in the text when the Stranger again compares humans to puppets “for the most part,” and then immediately apologizes for “belittling our human race” under the influence of “the god,” probably referring to Apollo or Dionysius, whom I will consider more extensively below (194).

The puppet is relevant to my concerns because it is the perhaps paradigmatic image of controlled posture, insofar as the puppet is a kind of material potentiality for the puppeteer to actualize some series of specific postures. Plato’s analysis of the puppet also has a further connection to dance given that the figure of the puppet is often invoked as a metaphor for dance; dancers are puppets at the mercy of their puppet master choreographers, instructors, librettists, etc. On a more concrete note, one popular exercise for training dancers in proper posture, in which I myself was trained, and which becomes a critical aspect of the Stranger’s philosophy of education, is to tell dancers to imagine that they are puppets, with a string extending upwards from the center of the top of each of their heads, and that the rest of their bodies hang limp beneath the string. In other words, being a good dancer means being like a puppet under the authority of a superior guiding being (like an artist or a god); and being a good puppet is a good way of achieving the “fine” and “straight” posture imperative in a proper education.

Sticking with the theme of actual dancers, near the beginning of Book II, the Stranger claims that the chorus (for which, as I will show below, dancing was essential) is the gift of Apollo, Dionysius, and their servant-gods the Muses, whom the Stranger describes as “fellow-dancers” who have -

[G]iven us the pleasant perception of rhythm and harmony. Using this they move us, and lead us in choruses, joining us together with songs and dances; and that is why they bestowed the name “choruses”—from the “joy” [*charā*] which is natural to these activities (33).

Inspired by this speech, the three interlocutors of the dialogue all agree that “the first education comes through the Muses,” and accept the Stranger’s definition of “the educated” as “the one sufficiently trained in choral performances,” where the chorus is explicitly defined as “the combination of dance and song taken together as a whole” (33).

One aspect of this aesthetic education, the claim that “it’s necessary for the young in the cities to practice fine postures,” seems especially linked to conventional dance, whether one is thinking of the rigid lines of ballet or the loose flexibility of hip-hop (37). Further, reminiscent of Aristotle aesthetic test of philosophical fitness, the beauty of a posture is considered evidence of its virtuousness. “[L]et’s simply let all the postures...that belong to virtue of the soul or of the body (whether they belong to virtue or to an image of it) be beautiful...” (35) The more beautifully the citizens are disposed, the more beautifully they carry themselves, move through the polis, etc., the more virtuous they are. Put differently, the more beautiful a dance’s postures, the more virtuous the dancer.

If this interpretation seems like an exaggeration, it might help to look at the end of Book II, where the Stranger claims that “the choral art,” which is to say the art of a group of singer/dancers, “is for us the same education as a whole” (55). This seems to suggest, however counter-intuitively, that music/dance education and education per se are in fact coextensive terms. It might seem less counter-intuitive to paraphrase this by saying that the education of a citizen amounts to training them to perceive accurately and respond beautifully to, the rhythms of the community. At any rate, it is difficult to imagine a more intense valorization of dance. To show why this is the case, I will now offer an examination of the following four justifications: (a) dance is the best practical alternative given that complete stillness is impossible, (b) can have therapeutic effects for the psychologically distressed and disturbed, (c) can enhance the polis’ spiritual life, and (d) can minimize dangerous movement in the polis.

Regarding the first of these reasons, the Stranger notes that, since “every young thing, so to speak, is incapable of remaining calm in body or in voice, but always seeks to move and cry: young things leap and jump as if they were dancing with pleasure,” hoping for complete stillness is less practical than attempting to introduce productive order and control to the inevitable movement (33). And according to the beginning of Book VII, it is not only

children that benefit from intentional movement; on the contrary, “all bodies benefit from the invigorating stir produced by all sorts of shaking and motions” (176). For this reason, the Stranger asserts that “motion should be as continuous as possible” for nursing-age children (177).

This logic also leads us to the second reason for the valorization of dance, namely its benefits as a cure for madness.

”[P]resumably when mothers want to lull their restless babies to sleep they don’t provide stillness but just the opposite, motion; they rock them constantly in their arms, and not with silence but with some melody. It’s exactly as if they were charming the children with aulos-playing [a type of flute, often with two pipes], even as is done for the maddened Bacchic revelers, to whom they administer this same cure, which consists of the motion that is dance and music (178).

This therapy works, the Stranger explains, because “the motion brought from without overpowers the fear and the mad motion within, and having overcome it, makes a calm stillness appear in the soul...” (178) Initial motion, at least in the young and the mad, is unavoidable, but the exertion of additional, ordered motion can counterbalance that initial motion into a kind of stillness. In the case of madness, this overpowering “process incites to dancing... it thereby replaces our mad dispositions with prudent habits” (178). Note that posture reappears here in connection to madness by way of “dispositions.”

Now for the third reason for the valorization of dance, its usefulness in buttressing the spiritual life of the polis—dancing activities must be more than just ordered, they must also be sanctioned and sanctified by the polis, and defended against disruptive, creative innovation. The Stranger acknowledges, in line with the contemporary reader’s probable reaction, that this position is “frightening to utter” (185). “At any rate, this is to be the dogma about it: let no one voice anything or make any dance movement contrary to the public and sacred songs...” (189).

The fourth and final reason is the one based on reducing problematic movement in the polis. On the one hand, “every human being presumably moves his body more when the pleasures are greater...” On the other, however, “the human being who is more orderly and who has a better gymnastic training”—including dance—“in courage moves his body less” (207). The Stranger seems to be suggesting that in battle, it is fear which inspires excessive and unhelpful movement, including perhaps retreating unnecessarily, whereas a disciplined body helps a person move only to the degree that movement is necessary. This observation foreshadows my analyses of grace in *Elsewhere in Figuration*, for which aspect of dance an economy of movement is the sine qua non. The very next sentence in the dialogue provides a link to another area of my analysis, in this case of gesture, with the claim that “as the imitation through gesture of what is being said came into being, it gave rise to the whole art of dancing” (207). Thus, Plato is locating

gesture in immediate, and even causal, proximity to dance.

In addition to these analyses, other references to dance and movement in the *Laws* should be noted. In Book I, the Athenian speaks of four lesser and four divine “goods” (10). Of the former four goods, the second is beauty—which is intimately related to dance—and the third is “strength, both in running and in all other motions of the body,” which clearly implies dance (10). Additionally, of the latter four goods, the second is “a moderate disposition of the soul,” thus supporting again the claim of Figuration (via posture) is directly linked to the goods, both “lesser” and “divine,” of human beings.

Synthesizing these etymological analyses of posture in Plato’s *Laws* yields the third and final phrase of the amplified conception of posture for the Figuration philosophy of dance—*posture is politically-situated*. There is always a community, a society, a polis or sovereign state, under the umbrella of which human posturing and positioning takes place, and given that movement is inevitable, it should be recognized that it will always affect the political realm. Having concluded the analyses of posture in Plato’s *Laws*, I will now turn to the construction of posture as a Move of Figuration and its application to the seven members—ballet, clogging, salsa, Tae Kwon Do, the pollen dance, falling stars and Neruda’s poetry—of the seven families—concert, folk, societal, agonistic, animal, astronomical and discursive—of dance.

### 3 Posture in Civic Education

Synthesizing the conceptual analyses of Plato’s *Laws*, I now offer the following full definition of posture as the first of the four Moves of Figuration, my new philosophy of dance: the poetically creative, politically situated, dynamic imitation of stasis. To rehearse the insights elaborated above and elsewhere, posture is poetically creative because of its kinship to poetry via its character of positing reality (Nietzsche), it is politically situated because all movement takes place within a community with which it is reciprocally determining (Plato), and it is a dynamic imitation of stasis because both philosophical accounts of the world and also the world itself are constant activities that only appear to be a static collection of stable things or objects (Aristotle).

To relate posture to other theoretical discourses on dance, it is closely related to (a) Laban’s Movement Analysis’ concept of “Weight,” which involves the muscular tension of the body; (b) Maxine Sheets-Johnstone’s concept of “tensional” movement quality and (c) Suzanne Langer’s concept of that which animates the dancers as “dance-beings.” With regard to (a), in *Laban for Actors and Dancers*, Jean Newlove, a longtime student of Laban, offers a breakdown of his movement system. The chapter on Weight begins by noting that “Our ability to stand upright depends on the tension between the upward force of our bodies and the downward pull of gravity” (64). Thus even standing up, which appears completely still and inactive, is the result of a constant striving of opposing forces. Newlove



observes that this position, as with posture as basis of Figuration, “clears the mind and body for action” (64).

With regard to (b), Johnstone elaborates less on the “tensional” quality than any of the three other movement qualities, but this self-effacement is at the heart of the concept. “For example,” Johnstone writes, “the linear quality of any movement,” by which she means the way abstract visual lines are created by the dancer’s body, “does not exist apart from the tension required to project the line” (51). And although one could measure quantitatively this “amount of effort exerted by the body through muscular contraction,” Johnstone insists that “it is only as quality that tension can function in dance” (51). Put differently, the effort must be phenomenologically available to the viewer; the positing and posturing must be seen as such, as “the manifest dynamic of the projection itself” (52).

And with regard to (c), Langer claims that dance’s domain is virtual gestures expressive of virtual powers. “The spontaneously gestic character of dance motions is illusory,” she explains, “and the vital force they express is illusory; the ‘powers’ (i.e., centers of vital force) in dance are created beings — created by the semblance gesture” (175). Put more simply, dancers imaginatively imitate expressive movement, which creates the illusion that there are forces or beings, as it were, behind the dancers moving them like puppets. These forces are not a stable foundation for the dance, but rather the product of concrete, imaginative, mindful bodies.

To rephrase these insights in a way consonant with all three of these theoretical discourses, posture constitutes the “what” dimension of analysis, the starting place and material situatedness of any practice/discourse and its phenomena. The unusual phrasing, to repeat, is the direct result of reinvesting theoretical discourse with the dancing movement which is its origin, and an origin which it has heretofore hypocritically disavowed and fearfully fled. The presentation of Figuration is thus one-fourth complete, having found its (albeit abyssal) basis, despite dance’s trans-discursive nature, in its connection to the discursive art of poetry. Figuration, like all philosophies and discourses, needs some such basis in order to (a) endure through time, (b) maintain a kind of stable identity, and (c) distinguish itself from other discourses and philosophies. As for why these three objectives are desirable, Figuration needs to persist in being itself in order, if for no other reason, to help remedy the marginalizing of dance in philosophy.

The critical dimension of this aspect of Figuration for philosophy is its claim that anything taken to be completely static and secure is in fact a dynamic process that merely gives the appearance of immobility. I will now show how this critical function plays out in actual analyses of the seven members of the seven families of dance mentioned above. I will begin the analysis of each dance with the conventional or commonsensical usage of the Move then consider the two adjectival aspects and the one substantive core of the amplified, philosophical construct. In the case of posture, the commonsense meaning is posture or position, the first amplified aspect

is poetic creativity, the second amplified aspect is political situatedness, and the substantial core is the dynamic imitation of stasis.

For ballet, my example for what I have termed “concert dance,” the commonsensical account of posture leads to the obvious role of posture and position in ballet, which is the formalized “syntax” of possible ballet poses and positions. Most people are familiar the starting point of ballet, the first five positions, which refer to the proper placement of the feet on the floor. Posture finds ballet’s poetic creativity in the fact the carefully trained movements of the ballet dancer can be utilized to imitate anything (such as other animals, fairies, machines, gods, etc.) express emotions, and/or give the appearance of near-complete freedom from gravity in leaps across the stage. The political situatedness of ballet can be found in the fact that it arose in a highly patriarchal society, and reflects to some degree the various ways in which women have been trained, at great personal sacrifice and suffering, to be the visual objects of heterosexual men, and to efface their own physicality in favor of a reified image of perfect femininity. And dynamic imitation of stasis of ballet lies in the years of grueling training, the extreme brevity of a professional ballet dancer’s career, and the extreme muscular efforts required for any given performance of ballet, with its images of perfect and elegant creatures in perfect and elegant poses. To paraphrase these insights at the level of the family of concert dance in general, *according to Figuration, the posture of concert dance consists in representational/mimetic/expressive performances, which grow out of a tradition of patriarchal voyeurism, and which mask years of grueling training and physical suffering through immediate virtuosity.*

For clogging, my example for what I have termed “folk dance,” the commonsensical posture or position is of a rigid upper body with arms folded behind the back, legs always lifted high with bended knees, and constant effervescent smiles. Posture finds poetic creativity in clogging’s ability to create extremely loud and intricate percussion music conjoined with an apparent utter lightness through two thin pieces of metal barely separated by nails hammered into the shoes. Political situatedness can be found in the fact that clogging is the result of a fusion of dances created in politically disempowered ethnic and racial communities (Scottish, Irish and African-American) whose manual laborers, persecuted for their embodiment, forcefully pounded their bodies into the ground to make a unique music, while rising to lightness and happiness in the experience. And dynamic imitation of stasis in clogging lies in the apparently infinite energy and carefree attitude of the dancers despite the exhausting and extremely difficult nature of the dance. To paraphrase these insights at the level of the family of folk dance in general, *according to Figuration, the posture of folk dance consists in performances at the border between music and dance, which grow out of traditions of politically/economically/racially/ethnically disempowered communities, and which mask exhaustion through overflowing energy.*



For salsa, my example for what I have termed “societal dance,” the commonsensical posture or position is of an apparently simultaneously rigid and comfortable “dance frame” created by the bodies of two partners which are nevertheless relaxed enough to allow for the extensive and sinuous hip movements that accompany the basic steps of the dance. Posture finds poetic creativity in salsa’s ability to sustain in each couple a constant romantic and/or sexual tension that never (a) finds full release or expression, (b) spills over problematically to other couples, (c) fades into boredom and weariness, or (d) abandons the music that is its central inspiration and controlling source. Political situatedness can be found in the fact that contemporary salsa dance in the United States is a fusion of dances from Western Africa, especially-Muslim Spain, the slave cultures of the Caribbean Islands, and the United States (especially New York), and it is one of few aspects of Afro-Latin culture that has received significant respect and enthusiasm from Caucasian America despite concerns over the sensuality of the dance. And dynamic imitation of stasis in salsa lies in the fact that the apparently spontaneous improvisation of moves on the dance floor, often between strangers who have never danced with each other before, is the result of many hours of practice to learn common moves and train the body to guide and/or be guided by unfamiliar physical cues or “leads.” To paraphrase these insights at the level of the family of societal dance in general, *according to Figuration, the posture of societal dance consists in performances of controlled social tensions, which grow out of the fusion of various cultures and subcultures, and which mask extensive training through spontaneous improvisation.*

For Tae Kwon Do (as taught today to children in the United States) my example for what I have termed “agonistic dance,” the commonsensical posture or position is of a constant tensed readiness to perform any of the various attacks and blocks of this martial art form. Posture finds poetic creativity in Tae Kwon Do’s ability to take a series of strategies originally devised for person-to-person combat and turn them into a method for physical well-being, flexibility, strength and self-protection, as well as psychological discipline and confidence. Political situatedness can be found in the fact that Tae Kwon Do was introduced to the United States by soldiers who returned from the Korean War having learned from Korean instructors who intentionally left out of their training the specific environmental elements which make the entire effort effective in personal combat.<sup>1</sup> And dynamic imitation of stasis in Tae Kwon Do lies in the fact that what comes to appear as an elaborate and elegant testament to stamina and self-control is only made possible by techniques extracted from life and death one-on-one combat. To paraphrase these insights at the level of the family of agonistic dance in general, *according to Figuration, the posture of agonistic dance consists in performances of violent aggression, which grow out of deceptive encounters between cultures, and which mask the fight for individual survival through socially beneficial personal discipline.*

For the pollen dance of the honey bee, my example for what I have termed “animal dance,” the commonsensical posture or position is of one worker bee hovering in mid-air, surrounded by a group of other bees awaiting her performance in order to find out where to find nectar (with the unintended consequence of accumulating and redistributing pollen, thus the name of the dance). Posture finds poetic creativity in the pollen dance in its ability to convey from one bee to multiple others the exact spatial location of the desired substance through manipulation of the three-dimensional space in which the performing bee hovers. Political situatedness can be found in the fact that the pollen dance only has meaning and efficacy if there is a group of organisms ready to interpret the performance of the first bee.<sup>2</sup> And dynamic imitation of stasis in the pollen dance lies in the fact that what has traditionally interpreted as a hard-wired instinct of the worker bee to “automatically know” how to make honey is actually the result of an elaborate performance and interpretation without which the nectar needed to make the honey would never be found in the first place. To paraphrase these insights at the level of the family of animal dance in general, *according to Figuration, the posture of animal dance consists in (especially spatially) minimal performances with (especially spatially) maximal results, which grow out of a necessarily social setting, and which mask animals’ intellectual adaption through what has historically appeared to humans as instincts.*

For “falling stars” or “shooting stars,” my example for what I have termed “astronomical dance,” the commonsensical posture or position is actually nothing at the moment of the falling, but is retroactively inferred to have been a position as one of the numerous stars, perceived as pinpricks of light in the night sky. Posture finds poetic creativity in the phenomenon of “falling stars” in the fact that bits of solid debris the size of boulders, caught by the gravitational field of the earth, appear to human observers to be objects which are in reality luminous balls of plasma as large as millions of miles across.<sup>3</sup> Political situatedness can be found in the fact that falling stars can only be experienced, paradoxically enough, by politically conditioned humans in technologically minimal conditions — which is to say, a person is only told about falling stars by others living in some sort of political society, but can only see the falling stars from areas with little to none of the light pollution that accompanies politically-dependant scientific technology. And dynamic imitation of stasis in “falling stars” lies in the fact that it is only because humans cannot see the constant flight of the meteoroid before it is transformed by the earth’s gravity into a flaming meteorite that a brief fall from the heavens appears to have occurred. To paraphrase these insights at the level of the family of astronomical dance in general, *according to Figuration, the posture of astronomical dance consists in performances of mistaken identities, which grow out of a politically facilitated awareness, and which mask human ignorance through visual spectacle.*



And finally, for Neruda's poetry, my example for what I have termed "discursive dance," the commonsensical posture or position is the words on the page and the sounds heard by the human ear. Posture finds poetic creativity in Neruda's surrealistic transformation of language from a transparent vehicle of ordinary experience into a distorted tool that re-carves into the reader/listener marks which are structurally similar to the marks already carved into the reader/listener by the pulsing phenomena of the world. Political situatedness can be found in the fact that it was Neruda's embracing of communism as a political ideology that inspired him to return to the non-commercial values and experiences of the most ordinary aspects of his reality. And dynamic imitation of stasis in Neruda's poetry lies in the fact that it is only through revolutionary personal experiences that the words came to be frozen in just the way that they are now on the lifeless page. To paraphrase these insights at the level of the family of discursive dance in general, *according to Figuration, the posture of discursive dance consists in performances of language as a non-transparent entity, which grow out of subversive political movements, and which mask transcendent experiences in drab black and white pages.*

#### 4 Conclusion: Figuration on Civic Education

I will now elaborate eight civic educational implications — four psychological and four political prerequisites — for any flourishing society, as suggested by the *Figuration* philosophy of dance. In outline, this latter exploration will consist in (a) identifying at least one non-exclusively-philosophical theoretical discourse with which each prerequisite causes *Figuration* to align; (b) naming one theorist in the interdisciplinary field of Dance Studies whose work considers the intersection of this theoretical discourse and dance; and (c) briefly suggesting ways in which *Figuration* might strategically benefit this theoretical discourse in its pursuit of psychological and political virtue.

What I mean by the psychological and political prerequisites for ideal flourishing — understood as necessarily inclusive of dance flourishing — are the minimum conditions under which it seems probable that an individual or a community could fully support dance. And by this I mean the absence of obstacles to, as well as the presence of facilitators of, every community member's ability to engage in dance practices of his or her choosing. One example of such an obstacle, and a common one in this culture, is a parent's decision that his or her son should not be allowed to dance because dance is too effeminate and might incline him to homosexuality. Another example would be the recent decision of a principal in Mississippi to cancel a junior high prom (and thereby prevent the occurrence of dancing) because one of the school's students expressed the intention of bringing her lesbian partner to the dance.

As these examples illustrate, dance, given its irreducibly social and political dimension (since it has to at least be taught by someone else, and usually at a business or

event in the public sphere), requires for its actualization both positive and negative sociopolitical conditions. Consequently, an attempt to construct a philosophy of dance from the scattered treatments of aspects of dance in the history of philosophy must address not only the theoretical or philosophical, but also the practical or political, prerequisites of, and obstacles to, the continued existence of its subject matter. Put differently, a comprehensive philosophy of dance, just like a comprehensive philosophy of architecture or sculpture, needs to address the materials used in its art, and the materials of dance include human beings whose bodies and minds are formed for the possibility, and liberated from the impossibility, of engaging in dance.

I will now briefly re-summarize these conditions for, first, the individual, and second, the community. For individuals, (1a) posture suggests that individuals perpetually move and change, and thus requires a psychological preparedness for change and capacity to adapt flexibly; (2a) gesture suggests that psychological health requires physical health, and thus requires bodily stimulation and discipline; (3a) grace suggests that permeability to the environment is beneficial, and thus requires the promotion of environments with which fusion is desirable; and (4a) resilience suggests that cycles and patterns will always be repeated, and thus requires a tolerance of repetition and compulsion per se, though not of any particular form thereof.

For communities, (1b) posture suggests that stability is a function of tolerating perpetual and shifting tensions, and thus requires societal tolerance at the fundamental level of human embodiment; (2b) gesture suggests that both nonverbal and verbal forms of linguistic expression are crucial release valves for bodily drives, and thus requires that society protect its citizens' freedom of both nonverbal and verbal expression; (3b) grace suggests that aesthetic flourishing requires an open and holistic comportment to one's borders, and thus requires that a society not compartmentalize and/or neglect the aesthetic aspects of life; and (4b) resilience suggests that, given that a resurgence of dangers (including dangers from within) is inevitable, a resurgence of protections against such dangers must be guaranteed for its citizens.

Abstracting from these eight prerequisites, in the interest of economy and mnemonics, and at a level for which the psychological and political are only negligibly distinct, (1) posture valorizes/demands tension, (2) gesture valorizes/demands embodiment, (3) grace valorizes/demands permeability, and (4) resilience valorizes/demands repetitiveness. Perhaps the best way to synthesize the sweeping claims of this final section, and connect them back to the overall goals of this article, would be to offer a sketch of what a society reshaped in the form of *Figuration* might be like. I want to begin with three preliminary observations.

First, given how broadly the concept of dance is used in this project, it should be noted that an ideally dancing society for *Figuration* would be one which danced in every aspect, and in every register, of its being. This means that each of the seven families of dance would

have to be actively involved. Therefore, the descriptions that follow will be organized around the seven families of dance. Second, although argue for the relevance of dance at the very beginning of the larger project, and have dis-cussed the potential benefits of dance at various mo-ments throughout it, I have not yet made a case for the necessity of dance. Why dance specifically, instead of painting, or rock-climbing? Thus, the first half of each of the following descriptions explains why dance is necessary for the aspect of reality named in each family of dance — such as concert performance in general for “concert dance.” And third, many of the differences between this ideal society and the contemporary United States do not involve objective states of affairs, but rather intersubjective perceptions and awareness. In other words, we are already halfway there, objectively, to an ideally dancing society, but until the various dancings that make it up are recognized, acknowledged, supported, and celebrated, the existence of the practices themselves are insufficient. Thus, the descriptions involve both alternative ways of understanding and appreciating existing dance practices as well as pragmatic suggestions for concrete change.

It is necessary that concert performance include concert dance because, firstly, it is always already necessarily there, at least it insofar as any artistic performance requires the disciplined movements of the human body. This is especially the case even where it is especially invisible, namely musical performances. The rigid posture of the woodwind section of the symphony orchestra is nevertheless the tensely-held posture of a performer, and the passionate gesticulations of the conductor are more obviously so. This minimalism of so-called classical music performance also suggest the second point of this necessity, however, which is that the more dancing is explicitly involved, the larger will be the reach of the concert performance. In the comparatively more popular salsa band, for example, at least one of the musicians/singers actually dances salsa on stage during the performance. Though there is much disagreement as to which kind of concerts people should be attending, and which performers should be supported, it seems universally acknowledged that patronizing concerts is a good thing, and finding a greater role for dancing in those concerts would do just that. This emphasis on embodiment would also facilitate greater tolerance toward variously embodied persons along axes such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability, and thereby remove obstructions to democratic practices that could be based more on ideas and arguments than on irrational prejudices.

Although Figuration’s ideally dancing society might feature more concert dance, the kinds of dances performed would be more responsive to, and rewarding for, the interests and tastes of its communities than is currently the case. This is not to say that traditional concert dance, including ballet, would not have a place in such a society, only that such a place would occupy a smaller proportion of the total space allotted to concert dance as a whole (including in terms of community

funding). Ballet, for example, would become (recognized as) a more specialized practice, for a specialized audience, and be funded and supported as such. The primary difference, then, would be an image makeover, whereby the populace would no longer associate dance performances with exclusively so-called “high-brow” entertainment. The new concert dance would be to contemporary concert dance what rock-and-roll concerts are to opera performances, namely, the former phenomenon would remain more prominent as long as it matched the wishes of the community. This would, in turn, increase the egalitarian spirit of the polis by weakening the importance and privilege of class.

It is necessary that folk art include folk dancing primarily because dancing is already central to the folk art of most of the marginalized communities in contemporary U. S. culture, including hip-hop and jazz in African-American communities, step dancing in Irish communities, and disco and pop, among other forms, in gay communities. A greater recognition of the aesthetic value of dance would facilitate a greater appreciation for those marginalized communities given that they have historically engaged in dance, which would thus contribute to greater harmony and social cohesion among mainstream and marginalized communities in our society.

Figuration’s ideally dancing society would also be erupting with new and varied forms of contemporary folk dance, focusing on the new forms that are being created in actual communities today, such as reggaeton and various other hip-hop forms. It would also encourage a revivification of old and forgotten folk dances from all over the world, by recreating them for contemporary contexts and attempting to fuse them with existing dances. Perhaps competitions could be arranged in which neighborhoods and towns would exercise local pride and flex their creative muscles to celebrate the distinctive movement styles of diverse locales. This, in turn, would encourage community involvement and solidarity in the polis.

It is necessary that societal rituals, leisure activities and recreation include societal dance primarily because of the considerable improvement to both physical and mental health that social dancing can provide. This is especially true as opposed to the currently more popular varieties of formal social gatherings, such as hanging out at bars, playing cards, and attending parties and dinner parties without dancing. Most of the worst health problems facing the contemporary United States, including heart disease and diabetes, are exacerbated, and often even created, by obesity, sedentary lifestyles and poor diets; regular dancing naturally leads to weight loss, it is necessarily non-sedentary, and the enjoyment it produces reduces the desire and opportunity for comfort or emotional eating. And exercise regimens and stimulating social interaction are also frequently prescribed to improve psychological functioning and well-being, even among those labeled severely mentally ill. A polis whose citizens are physically healthy would be more productive and better able to flourish through major crises such as



natural disasters and wartime conditions. And one whose citizens are psychologically healthy would bring greater peace and harmony, along with more unimpeded decision-making, which in democratic societies includes decisions at the polis.

Figuration's ideally dancing society would naturally encourage a wide array of societal dances, including dances popular for each living generation as well as dances that went out of style generations ago. This would encourage a greater historical awareness and feeling of inter-generational solidarity (via the revival of previous generations' dances) as well as creativity (in the creation and fusion of new dances). The emphasis would be on a highly pluralized environment of clubs and organizations where people could try out various forms and experience unique ambiances. If all major social organizations, including churches, community centers, and bars, would be willing to incorporate some form of dancing entertainment into their schedules just one night per week, then this would be relatively easy to achieve. And as mentioned above, a polis in which more of the citizenry dances is one which would be healthier, saner and more harmonious, active, and effectively deliberative.

It is necessary that agonistic activities be understood as including agonistic dance for three main reasons. First, for a stereotypical athlete in a mainstream sport, such as a linebacker on a high school football team, understanding his sport as an aesthetic pursuit defined in part by its graceful movements would presumably increase his tolerance for, and appreciation of, other dancers, such as the performers in his school's theater program. Second, a greater emphasis on the aesthetic dimension of sporting activity could help shake up the current canon of sports, wherein team sports involving playing with balls are "real" sports, and anything done by individuals, such as tennis, or not involving balls, such as most gymnastics, is only peripherally a sport. This would also help break down the problematic gender dynamics of sports today, as women on average seem to tend to be more interested in non-orthodox sports (as currently understood). Third, this aesthetic understanding of sports could also be used pedagogically to develop classes in school curricula that teach sports by presenting it as a kind of dance, thus reaching a wider audience for the beneficial effects of sports, the members of which might be intimidated or turned off by misogynistic, homophobic and otherwise discriminatory approaches. This would of course contribute to the tolerance and open-mindedness of the polis.

Given Figuration's definition of agonistic dance, most of the activities that fall under this heading could hardly be more popular in contemporary U. S. society, especially professional and college-level sports. Thus, as already stated, the primary challenge here for Figuration's ideally dancing society would be pedagogical, teaching people to orient themselves to such activities as, *additionally*, forms of dance. This approach would obviously be beneficial at least in terms of improved physical fitness and bodily confidence, especially in regards to children in

the educational system. And, as Dewey famously believed, the education/socialization of children is the most effective locus for energy aimed at meaningful political change.

It is necessary that animal activity be understood as including animal dance for two primary reasons. First, it offers a broader and more secure foundation for connecting human animals to our non-human relatives than most existing strategies. In the case of language, for example, there are far fewer animal species that engage in linguistic communication (mostly just mammals) than there are that engage in dancing behavior (including even invertebrates). And even for animals that we can understand as communicating through language, it seems to me that it is primarily through their movement styles, or dances, that we feel the most resonant kinship with them. Think, for example, of the way a cat lazily crosses a room, while stretching, after a nap; does one not feel more connected to the cat while watching that behavior than when hearing the cat meowing in the next room? Second, this enhanced connection between humans and other animals would intensify our society's feelings of moral outrage at pervasive animal abuse and neglect, and perhaps even facilitating meaningful change.

Similarly to the case of agonistic dance, it is difficult to imagine, and virtually impossible to produce, more dancing activity in the rest of the animal kingdom, therefore Figuration's ideally dancing society would differ from contemporary U. S. society primarily in terms of an orientation towards animal life as dancing-being. The primary benefit here, as stated above, would be to help close the perceived gap between human and non-human being, thereby facilitating a more holistic, sustainable, and environmentally ethical relationship between that human society and the rest of nature. If we are more essentially (or at least originally) dancers than humans, then all of the other dancing animals on earth are members of our family in a much more resounding and meaningful way than we typically think. This would also encourage a more integrated form of human and non-human habitats, as the human dancers would presumably feel a natural longing to be surrounded by more of their dancing kin. Urban planning and architectural design in the polis could conceivably be affected as well.

It is necessary that astronomical activity be understood as including astronomical dance primarily because it offers a more effective way of making us feel connected to celestial objects than just thinking of them as made up of the same kinds of matter, namely by thinking of them as engaged in the same sort of activity. If the other parts of the cosmos, even those that are inanimate and light years away, are circling with their own distinctive patterns, because pulled by similar forces, then we have less reason to feel metaphysically lost and alone. When we dance, we engage our entire being, just as the planets and stars do in their continuous dancing. And a metaphysically-secure polis is one with greater stability, harmony and solidarity.



Even more so than agonistic or animal dance, the prevalence of astronomical dance in the cosmos is, probably fortunately, out of human hands. Figuration's ideally dancing society, though, would recognize more thoroughly this dancing being of the celestial bodies and celebrate it as such. The benefit here, as stated above, is a deeper sense of connectedness to the cosmos, which could do for the metaphysical angst of human beings what I have argued an awareness that animal dance is all around us could do for our sense of environmental isolation and alienation. This perspective would also presumably offer a more intimate and relational motivation for the study of astronomy and the rest of the sciences, since if even barren crags of rock and mind-bogglingly large spheres of plasma are dancers like we are, then studying them is no dry investigation of cold alterity, but instead a self-illuminating exploration of our shared being in the world. And a more scientifically-oriented polis, all other things being equal, is one better prepared to adapt in flexible and creative ways to inevitable change.

It is necessary that speech and writing be understood as including, and include more, discursive dance primarily because the pursuit of a physically-oriented virtue in a mentally-oriented domain facilitates greater mind-body integration and holism, which in turn contributes to a more stable, satisfying and aesthetically pleasing polis. Stable, because when the mind and body are in harmony, there is less disruptive and erratic behavior created by switching between conflicting actions motivated by the body and mind separately. Satisfying, because engaging in an activity dominated by mind would not require neglecting the sensibilities of the body. And aesthetically pleasing, because the more the senses can be involved and stimulated in our daily lives, including even our inner monologues and personal communications, the more pleasure we take in our own lives and create in the lives of others in our communities.

Finally, figuration's ideally dancing society would not only encourage dance as a topic for writing, but also place a much greater emphasis on the aesthetic qualities of writing and speech—not just in poetry, but in fiction, non-fiction and even journalism, political addresses and skillful conversation. It would also offer an additional incentive to the pursuit of abstract studies such as philosophy in the polis, given the knowledge that there is a kind of attainable grace and beautiful prowess to be pursued, not just alongside, but as an enhancement and perfection of, the dedication to truth.

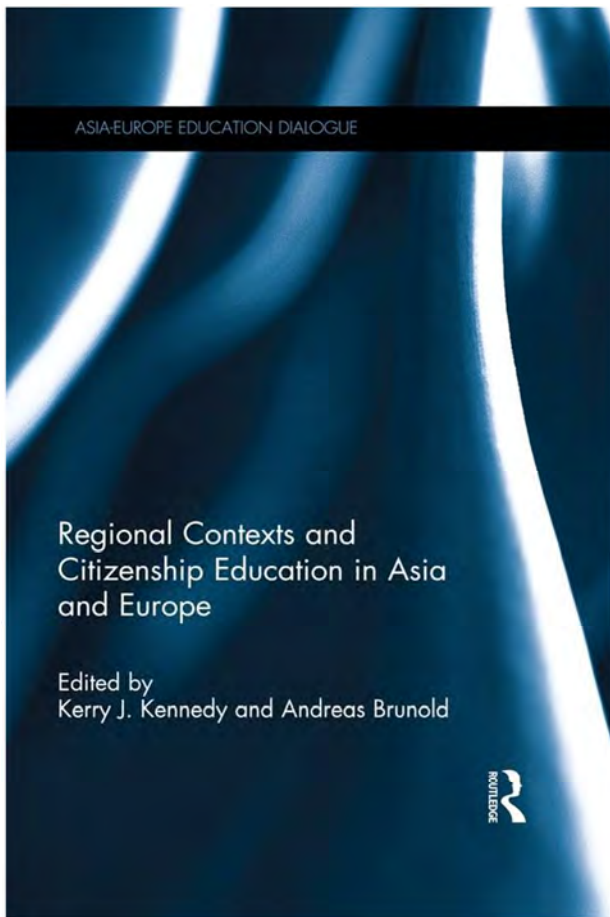
## Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> An example is a block in which the first moves from being extended at waist level by a slightly bent arm to being held a few inches in front of the forehead at the end of a ninety degree bend at the elbow. This was originally an attack move in which the assailant grabs the opponents finger by their side and then snaps it upward to inflict great pain and render the opponent defenseless.

<sup>2</sup> This point presents a good opportunity for me to address the fact that I am using the word/concept "political" in at least two (frequently) distinct senses, that of "membership in a community" and "oriented toward the public good." I would argue that these senses are two sides of the same coin, in that any being belonging to a community is necessarily oriented toward the public good in some way, even if only in a gesture of renunciation (as would be the case with a hermit) or through attempting to subvert and exploit it (as would be the case with a mafia boss). Every member of every community, and therefore also a drone bee in a hive, is the kind of thing that it is only because of its community, insofar as it owes at least existence and socialization to that community, even if it thereafter rejects that community and/or pursues exclusively private goods.

<sup>3</sup> That is, actual stars are as large as millions of miles across, so when a human observer refers to a meteorite as a star, that observer is attributing such potential size to an entirely different object, the actual size of which ranges from the size of a grain of sand to that of a boulder.





## Review of the Book:

**Kerry J. Kennedy and Andreas Brunold (Ed.)**  
**2016. Regional context and citizenship education in Europe and Asia, London: Routledge, ISBN: 1138908150, 184 pp., £100.00**

citizenship', such as civil, political and social rights (p. 14). Following the discussion of the nature of citizenship, Davies analyses citizenship education in the UK that can be seen as a mixture of civic republican and liberal perspectives and also further explains the appearance of citizenship education in the National Curriculum regarding the unseen issue of politics of curriculum policy making. To be specific, the politics of curriculum policy making directly touch on the notion of economic downturn and low level of political engagement among young people. As can be known, these inner and outer factors brought about the advanced discussion concerning which forms of citizenship education is required for the young people and how government evaluate the effectiveness of citizenship curriculum.

Chapter 3 by Nataša Ondrušková deals with the question about how Slovak Republic created a new face of citizenship and the transformation of democratic system in response to the context of European integration. Ondrušková critically points out the theoretical problems of citizenship education that linked the principles of plurality and European civilization to the operation of the educational system. Ondrušková stressed that the purpose of education process is to 'prepare an individual for a life with both moral and professional dimensions in a society' (p.31). To cut the chase, Ondrušková compared the differences between citizenship education and civic education in relation to educational meaning and teaching practice. Generally speaking, the former (including historical, geographical and social knowledge entities) is broader than the latter in understanding 'the past and present social realities from regional, European and global perspectives' (p. 35). However, civic education in Slovak Republic centers more on the reciprocal relations between citizen and society. The primary purpose of civic curriculum and assessment is to educate students to be an 'independent and responsible citizen' who actively participated in multi-dimensional civic life (p. 36). Last but not the least, 'European education' and 'global education' are also carefully considered and extensively discussed in the context of citizenship education due to the fact that students in Slovak Republic are faced with inescapable challenges of new identity construction of 'European citizenship' and the mushrooming development of 'globalized economy' (pp. 37-38).

Chapter 4 by Eugeniusz Switala moves on to discuss how Polish citizenship education catered to national, regional and global citizenship. The purpose of civic education was to build social equality and socialist society during the era of Republic of Poland and,

This book primarily focuses on the development of citizenship education in the EU and ASEAN regions. It is divided into two main parts according to geographical locations. In the EU part, the authors examine in separate chapters the well-developed regionalism in European countries. The ASEAN part, contrarily, points to the ideal of developing a regional dimension in citizenship education through a comparative research in different Asian countries. Overall, this book is a useful tool to understand regional experience in citizenship education in different parts of the globe where there are different histories and values between the two continents. However, limited by the fundamentally different contexts between the EU and ASEAN, structured comparisons between the two continents are not included. That said, this book does very interestingly illuminate some common themes in citizenship education in the EU and ASEAN. These will be discussed below.

In part one, the authors center their discussions on the development of citizenship education in five European countries, including the United Kingdom, Slovak Republic, Poland, Germany and Spain. Chapter 2 by Ian Davies discusses the development of citizenship education in the UK with reference to the ideological debate between the 'civic republican' and the 'liberal'. The notion of citizenship education can be rightly traced back to the debate of citizenship which is largely influenced, as argued by Davies, by 'Marshall's mapping of

subsequently, at the end of twentieth century, the purpose was directed to deal with 'the reality of a modern democratic society and state building (p. 40)'. Civic education in Poland can be implemented in and out of school practice, both of which complemented each other (p. 40). In terms of formal education setting, the civic education as a subject in 1998 was taught in primary school level, lower secondary school level and secondary school level. The aim in the primary level is to stress the importance of 'possibility of influencing the events in the immediate surrounding by active participation in civic life' (p. 41). The lower secondary and secondary levels surround the issue of national (such as Polish political, social, cultural, economic and legal system), regional (such as the integration of Poland into EU) and global citizenship (such as international orders and the problems of the contemporary world). When it comes to non-formal civic education, some programs are designed by non-government organizations to assist children in developing skills, comprising self-reliance, responsibility, decision making and collaborative team work (p. 47). At last, Switala suggests a stratified layer of module for civic education in Poland, which assumes that different levels of school stage shall be taught different citizenship issues (from practical life experience to categorical knowledge), such as regional issues at the primary school stage, national issues at the primary school stage and global issues at the secondary school stage (pp. 49-51).

Chapter 5 by Georg Weisseno introduces how political didactics and political education can be taught in German schools. Weisseno fairly elaborates on the beginning of political didactics and political didactics professionalization. This transformation sparks a legitimate debate between the apolitical social (the early stage) education and political education (professionalisation stage). Finally, the agreement was reached based upon the making of 'Beutelsbach Consensus', including (i) prohibition against overwhelming the pupils, (ii) treating controversial subject as controversial and (iii) giving weight to the personal interest of pupils (p. 57). The political didactics is related to the development of normative idea, and three kinds of issues are further discussed in political education, embracing moral education, democracy and social constructivism. Weisseno also analyses the theoretical as well as empirical approach to political competence in parallel with political education. In short, Weisseno explains the scientific underpinning of Detjen et al's political competence model, including political judgement, capacity for political action, political knowledge and attitude and motivation. The development of political didactics and political education in German shed light on the association between academic debate and teaching practice with 'its theoretical work on wide-ranging competence model and empirical research'(p. 65).

Chapter 6 by Maria Puig and Juan Antonio Morales reviews the development of citizenship education in Spain. It focuses on the topics of European reference framework, the framework of education laws, citizenship education approach and empirical perspectives of

teachers. Puig and Morales argue that 'citizenship education in Europe was playing a key role in the formation of lifelong learning policy' (p.69). The key competences for lifelong learning confirmed by European Parliament can be seen as transferrable knowledge, attitude and skills in personal development and employment of individuals. Puig and Morales map out the landscape of educational framework on the basis of three kinds of law making and, in particular, the 'Organic Law of Education' (Ley Organica de Educacion; LOE) which firstly incorporated citizenship education into different levels of education system, such as the subject title of 'education for citizenship' and human rights in elementary and secondary education and 'ethical and civic education' as well as 'philosophy and citizenship' in baccalaureate (p. 71). Puig and Morales examine the empirical survey of teacher's perspective by educational centers and conclude that the notion of organizational model is suitable for the development of citizenship education in Spain. This model which based on democratic values also explains why schools could be seen as an ideal place to teach citizenship education because there are advantages in the learning process, including 'using dialogue to solve conflicts, connection between theory and reality to understand their roles, working in a group and class participation'(p.80).

In part two, the chapters on ASEAN focus on a project which aimed at evaluating the current state of citizenship education in different countries whereby the authors propose a conceptual framework that could guide the future of citizenship education in ASEAN countries. In chapter 7, Toshifumi Hirata, the representative of the research project, first defines citizens and citizenship education, which include five important issues including cross-cultural understanding, environment, war and peace, human rights and development problems. Results of several surveys are discussed. The first is a questionnaire survey involving students which analyses their study of citizenship in three dimensions, namely knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities and values and attitudes. According to the survey results, Hirata proposes four learning models of citizenship education, for instance, the human rights learning model. The second Delphi survey evaluated the citizenship education at four levels, namely, local, national, global and universal levels, in Japan and Thailand. The third project was to reconstruct the educational framework of the previous two studies to include the regional aspect of citizenship education.

Chapter 8 by Megumi Shibuya expands the discussion of the third project. She suggests that the framework to study citizenship for ASEAN countries in a global age was multi-faceted, multi-layered and multi-dimensional. By being multi-faceted it refers to the three-dimensional framework introduced in the previous chapter to analyze educational policies and curricular of different countries. Multi-layered is defined as the various parallel levels of understanding citizenship in a globalizing world, including individual, local community level, nation state level, regional level and world level. Multi-dimensional



citizenship, finally, 'has four key dimensions, namely, personal, social, spatial, temporal' (p.113).

Chapter 9 by Sunate Kampeeraparb and Koro Suzuki elicits the formation of the concept of 'ASEAN community', which was proposed in 1997, and its basic principles. ASEAN community emphasized the importance of regional cooperation in terms of economics, politics and security, culture, etc. The ASEAN charter in 2008 formalized the concept and provided the legal status and institutional framework for countries to follow. One of the most important institutions related to citizenship education was the ASEAN Socio-cultural community (ASCC). It promoted a sense of community through cultural heritage preservation, cultural creativity and engagement with the community. Thus, Kampeeraparb and Suzuki argue that the term 'ASEANness', which has neither been used in the ASEAN charter nor in the roadmap for the ASEAN community, is on its emergence for ASEAN citizens to develop their own identity and characters. They also recognized the significant role of citizenship education in contributing to the development of this sense of belonging to the ASEAN community.

In chapter 10, Minoru Morishita analyzes the results of the student questionnaire that is introduced in chapter 7. The questionnaire comprised two parts. While part one asked about citizenship according to the conceptual framework mentioned above, part two focused on the knowledge and attitudes towards the ASEAN. In general, students were still more inclined to identify with their respective countries of ASEAN, rather than with a region. In particular, most students still believed the importance of learning national history, tradition and culture. Most students also shared the moral conduct and pride as a nation. On the contrary, they did not share the same level of knowledge and understanding in relation to the ASEAN as an international organization and other ASEAN member states. Although they understood the benefits of ASEAN for their respective countries and for them personally, they did not have the pride as a member state of ASEAN. Thus, in short, compared to the EU, the nation-states in ASEAN retained much more control over their national identity. In other words, the emergence of the region in citizenship education in ASEAN does not erode the identity of each member state.

The last chapter in this section demonstrates a case study of citizenship education in Thailand. Apart from conducting surveys similar to the comparative study discussed in the previous chapters, the authors also introduce the concept of 'ASEAN literacy', which is defined as 'the capacity of a person to utilize his/ her broad understanding in interpreting how he/she and other ASEAN members can influence and relate to each other...and support each other to contribute to a prosperous and peaceful community in the region' (p. 149). The survey results raised questions about the state of ASEAN literacy in Thailand, where students only focused on obtaining general knowledge of ASEAN countries. The authors argue that citizenship education in Thailand should focus on encouraging students' awareness and

understanding of the ASEAN aims and mission and equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to respond with actions.

To be critical and reflexive, this book structure clearly separates the two parts to discuss the development of citizenship education policy and civic curriculum in the context of Asia and Europe respectively where the nature of citizenship is situated and embedded. Each chapter contextualizes and reconceptualizes the evolution and transformation of citizenship education and civic curriculum. It is worth to mention that the common characteristics in each chapter not only illustrate the origins and development of citizenship education, but also justifies well how citizenship education can be carried out based upon either the discourses of political debate or evidence of scientific surveys. However, this book was limited by the absence of the 'cross-country' and 'cross-region' comparisons in the different dimensions of citizenship education. To be specific, it purely sets out the contexts, policies and implementation of citizenship education without actually dipping into comparison through various perspectives. Future comparative exploration could further sharpen the meso (cross-country) and macro (cross-region) levels of perspectives of citizenship education in the regional and global context. Moreover, in terms of analytical approach, both parts of the book shed considerable light on how citizenship education of each state, to some extent, corresponds with the developmental needs of regionalism and globalism rather than on the exploration of how it is possible for national citizenship policy to have the potential capacity to resist against 'the crisis of globalized homogeneity' and 'over-emphasis of pervasive economism'.

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