Learning in Community: Politicizing Democratic Citizenship Education in Civil Society Organizations

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Abstract

This paper examines the literature on civil society organizations as spaces for democratic learning to highlight how they function as civic educators in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. The author presents Westheimer & Kahne's (2004) What Kind of Citizen framework and aligns its categories of good citizenship with the political theories that underpin them. She points out the absence of multi-forms of, and perspectives on, Indigenous citizenship & nationhood, before applying the framework to the fledgling literature on civil society organizations as spaces for democratic learning. Three prominent types of civil society organizations are reviewed, to include volunteer associations, uniformed youth organizations, and locally formed youth groups. This paper contributes to the field of citizenship education by highlighting the politicized conceptions of citizenship woven throughout these civil society organizations, and showcasing how they function in different ways as civic educators.

Key Words: Civil Society, Civic Engagement, Agency, Democracy, Citizenship Education, Political Theory

In this paper, I examine literature on civil society organizations to showcase how they have functioned and continue to function as democratic civic educators in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. While considerable literature exists on democratic citizenship education in the context of schools (Kisby, 2021; Sears, 2014; Youniss 2012) and on the extension into the community through service learning (Resch & Schritteser, 2019), very little literature exists on how civil society organizations offer spaces for democratic citizenship learning. This review focuses on the limited literature on how civil society organizations offer opportunities for civic learning in community contexts from a political and social citizenship stance.

I begin by introducing Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne's (2004) What Kind of Citizen framework and presenting its three prominent categories of good citizenship. I then tie these categories to the political theories they align with to illuminate the ideological strands woven into the civil society organizations outlined in the review. Civil society organizations take on many forms and hold the potential to help young people develop agency, responsibility, and civic engagement. Using the What Kind of Citizen framework as a heuristic, I conduct a review of studies in civil society organizations and develop three categories—volunteer associations, uniformed youth programs, and locally formed youth groups—to examine their contributions to citizenship education. I make the case of why scholars and educators need to pay more attention to civil society organizations, which continue to support learning in community about democratic citizenship.

Theorizing and Politicizing Citizenship Education

Conflicting Ideas About Good Citizenship

Citizenship in a democracy is a fluid, complex, and contested topic (Broom, 2019; Sears & Hughes, 2006). Scholars in citizenship education in particular hold very different notions of what it means to be a good citizen (Knowles, 2018). But despite these differences, there is a consensus that more education for citizenship is warranted (Hughes & Sears, 2006; Treviño et al., 2016). Ideas of what a good citizen entails vary across time, cultures, genders, and political philosophies (Castro & Knowles, 2017; Hébert & Sears, 2001). Andrew Peterson (2011) argued that educators in civic education in schools should ensure that how the subject is approached is "not blind to important philosophical debates about what citizenship is and what it means to be a good citizen" (p. 1). Ryan Knowles' (2018) research on citizenship education emphasized how teachers' ideological views towards citizenship play out in how and what they teach. Program developers' bias towards certain models of citizenship influence how citizenship is taught (Peterson, 2011). In the next section, I will theorize the core terms, agency, responsibility, and civic engagement, to bring clarity to their use across this paper.

Agency, Responsibility, and Civic Engagement

Agency, responsibility, and civic engagement are key notions of citizenship education (Bickmore, 2014; Hughes & Sears, 2006; Sears, 2014). They have been at the center of curriculum mandates across Canada for the past several decades (Hughes & Sears, 2006; Sears & Hughes, 1996; Starkey, 2018) and similar notions exist in educational spaces in curricula in Great Britain and the United States (Payne et al., 2018; Starkey, 2018). Despite the significance of these terms to citizenship education, they are undertheorized in the literature. These three terms are important for examining citizenship strands in the context of civil society organizations.

Agency derives its meaning from the Latin words, *agentem*—effective and powerful— and *agere*—to set in motion or incite to action (Harper, 2022). The concept of agency holds its philosophical roots in Marxism, which centers activism as a struggle for a better future (Stetsenko, 2019). I define agency as a person's sense of their potential to consciously act to make change for the common good (Bai, 2006; Pollock & Brunet, 2018; Ralston, 2006). The term *potential* describes the possibilities held within an individual that may not be realized except under certain conditions. The term *common good* connects agency to acts in public life that are driven by an obligation to consider the broader community (Levine, 2007; Peterson, 2011). In relation to healthy democratic citizenship, actions require consideration of their effect on others in the political community, rather than merely their effect on the self (Peterson, 2011). I draw on Hussain's (2018) definition of common good, which he defines as thinking and acting in ways that embody a mutual concern—this mutual concern encapsulates the common good. From this mutual concern, people are required to act in certain ways to support common interests.

The origins of the word responsibility come from the Latin word *respondere*, which means to respond. In this paper, I define responsibility in relation to civic engagement as participation in the public life of a community in an informed, committed, and constructive manner relating to the common good (Gottlieb & Robinson, 2006; Peterson, 2011) and responding to the needs of others. The word *participation* describes a person's willingness to be involved in matters that relate to the common good. The focus on the common good is important for emphasizing that there is a need to be responsible to others, although its meaning is ambiguous. In citizenship education, how responsibility is envisioned relates to notions of how a good citizen is imagined.

Stimulating *civic engagement* is a central purpose of citizenship education, although there are conflicting views about to what extent young people should be civically engaged (Christou, 2012). *Civic engagement* has received much more attention than the concepts of agency and responsibility discussed above (Adler & Goggin, 2005; Gibson, 2001; Levine, 2007). How it is defined depends on

the interests and political orientations of the definer (Adler & Goggin, 2005). I draw on the definition of civic engagement used in the historically minded civic engagement framework currently being developed for *Thinking Historically for Canada's Future* project (Davis & Startup, 2021). Civic engagement is the participation of citizens in different aspects of democracy (Davis & Startup, 2021). I further break down the term *aspects of democracy* into the four domains of civic engagement proposed by Alan Sears (2014): formal politics, political advocacy, civil society, and grassroots/community action. Stimulating civic engagement across the four domains is a central function of citizenship education for the future of democracy.

Tying Conceptions of Good Citizenship to Political Theories

With an understanding of the core aspects of citizenship education—agency, responsibility, and civic engagement—I next introduce Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) What Kind of Citizen framework that I employ for the literature review. Citizenship is a normative concept with no universally acceptable meaning (Bloemraad, 2018). Nevertheless, programs and curricula in citizenship education built on particular models of citizenship are more likely to meet their objectives, so it is important to distinguish between different notions of good citizenship (Sears, 2011; Westheimer, 2015). While many conceptions of citizenship frameworks exist (e.g., Mitchell, 2008; Parker, 1996; Tupper, 2007; Veuglers, 2007; Wang & Jackson, 2005), Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) What Kind of Citizen framework is most appropriate for this paper for two main reasons. First, the categories extend from prominent political theories that have been at play in democracy over the last century, although Westheimer and Kahne have left out theorizing on the categories' connections to political theory. The categories align closely with the three prevalent theoretical approaches to citizenship in democratic political theory—traditional conservative, traditional liberalism, and critical theory. Connecting citizenship education to underlying political contexts is often left out of discussions on education reform so using this framework over the others helps bring political orientations into the discussion (Battistoni, 2013; Knowles, 2018; Peterson, 2011).

Second, the three categories have implications for civic learning across different educational spaces, including learning in community about democracy. While developed from research on service learning programs rooted in schools, they have applicability to civil society organizations as well. These orientations reveal the underlying assumptions that lie buried beneath the surface of different citizenship education programs (Westheimer, 2015). They use non-political words to describe ideological leanings, which render discussions less polarizing, but still political, when examining citizenship programs. Lastly, the framework is the prominent one employed in the field of citizenship education in Canada and the United States.

In the first category of the What Kind of Citizen framework, a *personally responsible* citizen, there is an emphasis on respect for institutions. The category is most in line with a vision of citizenry whose primary role in politics is to choose from options developed by elite political figures (Zipin & Reid, 2008). This most closely aligns with a representative form of democracy (Mansbridge, 2020). Westheimer and Kahne (2004) present the personally responsible citizen as one who performs across duty-based activities, such as paying taxes, picking up litter, donating blood, and volunteering to help those less fortunate.

The underlying assumptions for the *personally responsible* category are that citizens are encouraged to help others and actively vote to contribute to society (Broom, 2015, 2019). A personally responsible citizen enacts agency and responsibility by giving money or food to a food drive. A program designed to develop this type of citizen aims to teach knowledge about the political system and how it will continue to work into the future to promote civic engagement (Zipin & Reid, 2008). There is an emphasis on strong moral character development and a drive to uphold

traditions that maintain the strong moral fabric of society. The personally responsible conception of citizen and their relationship with the state aligns with a traditional view of conservatism.

Under conservatism, the state as a democratic institution is perceived as one that is fixed, although there is nuance to that fixed state. Changes to the institution under this political theory are possible, but they require thoughtful consideration and are implemented more slowly over time (Johnson, 2015), relative to the other political theories that align with the remaining two categories of citizenship. Emphasis is placed on continuity to uphold traditional institutions, practices, and community values. The role of the citizen under this political theory is to act in ways that propel the state's longstanding traditional existence into the future. This connects to the idea of a transcendental moral order, that views certain values as transcending time and requiring embodiment in institutions (Canavan, 1994). Overall, a good citizen in this category acts in responsible ways that emphasize state continuity (Hamilton, 2019).

Second, a *participatory* citizen denotes a person that plays an active role in their community and organizes activities to improve society. The participatory citizen understands how institutions work and can organize others to enact change, predominately within the system (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). An underlying assumption is that citizens actively participate in community affairs to improve social affairs (Zipin & Reid, 2008). The category aligns with a participatory view of democracy, where citizens engage in democracy as a way of life in the community (Bevir, 2009). Citizens engaging in the spirit of the participatory vision lead activities through pre-established systems to contribute to the community (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). They enact their agency by organizing charity activities, such as food drives for those less fortunate, although they do so without necessarily critiquing the system. They express their civic engagement through participation and efforts to support the common good.

The participatory citizen and their relationship with the state aligns with a traditional view of liberalism (Freeman, 2017). No single liberal theory exists and there are many overlaps with traditional conservatism. Like conservatism, liberalism encompasses a spectrum of perspectives (e.g., classical liberalism, new liberalism, and liberal theories of social justice) (Courtland & Schmidtz, 2022). The state as a democratic institution is conceived as both fixed and flexible. Citizens act in ways they choose to help those who are disadvantaged. The common theme in liberalism is its association with Human Rights and Freedoms. The citizen acts, generally within the pre-established system, to help others in the community.

Lastly, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) present the *justice-oriented* citizen as one who critiques and assesses social, political, and economic structures, looking for deep societal issues before potentially seeking to address the injustice. They hold knowledge about how social movements function to cause systemic change. The underlying assumption is that citizens address social problems by looking at patterns of injustice. They enact agency by critiquing systems and considering what is causing the root of the issue. They analyze the interplay of social, economic, and political forces that are causing an inequity. To draw on the food bank example, a justice-oriented citizen would consider what was causing the food imbalance in the first place and seek to address the core issue.

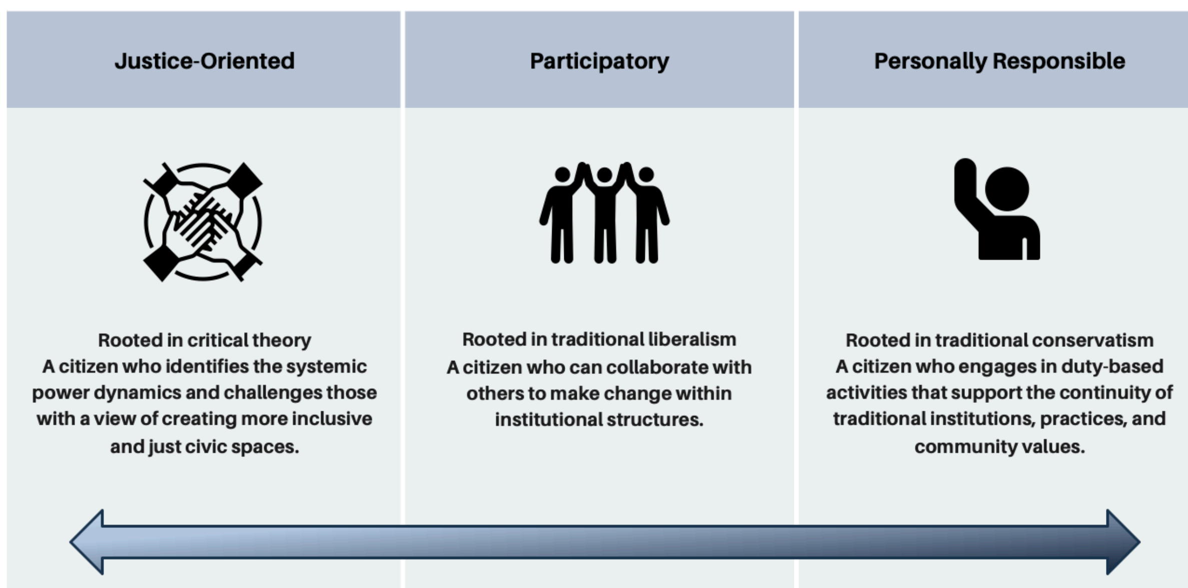
The conception of citizen and their relationship with the state emerges from critical theory (Bohman, 2021).[1] Critical theory in a narrow sense is rooted in Western European Marxist tradition, which seeks emancipation (Horkheimer, 1972). The theory aims to do so across all circumstances or political structures, attempting to disrupt power structures and forms of oppression. In the broader sense, it gains vitality in its undertaking of different justice issues as they relate to struggle of persons

[1] It also connects to continental theory, but I highlight critical theory as it is more widely used in education spaces and connects more closely to the Westheimer and Kahne's citizen categories.

from historically marginalized groups, such as Indigenous peoples, racialized groups, women, or people with disabilities (Bohman, 2021). Overall, the citizen under this category identifies the systemic power dynamics and inequalities underlying society and challenges those with a view of creating more inclusive and just civic spaces.

Figure 1

What Kind of Citizen Framework and Political Theories



Note: This figure demonstrates Westheimer & Kahne's (2004) What Kind of Citizen Categories as they align with dominant political theories, which are frequently left out of discussions on citizenship education (Battistoni, 2013; Peterson, 2011). The double headed arrow running across Westheimer & Kahne's kinds of citizenship indicates that the framework connects to political theories, which are often presented on a linear political spectrum.

Missing Forms of, and Perspectives on, Indigenous Citizenship & Nationhood

In line with Sabzalian's (2019) critique of citizenship education more broadly— that citizenship scholars leave out Indigenous expressions of citizenship—the What Kind of Citizen framework overlooks forms of, and perspectives on, Indigenous citizenship and nationhood (Castro & Knowles, 2017). Indigenous peoples lived, taught, and expressed citizenship on their own terms within their established practices for generations across North America, or what some Nations refer to as Turtle Island. As Indigenous scholar John Borrows (2008) writes from an Anishinabek perspective, for thousands of years First Nations people lived as citizens in community: "We observed laws that encouraged us to be wise, humble, respectful, truthful, brave, loving, and honest in our dealings with others. Other people did not define our citizenship." (p. 1). Scholar David Temin calls for citizenship conceptions situated under Laura Kellogg's "decolonial-democracy," which refers to the dismantling of dominant settler-colonial structures and the transformation of democracy itself (Temin, 2020, p. 1083). The current framework requires revision to acknowledge and center self-determining, Indigenous perspectives and rights regarding citizenship, situated within the cultures, languages, and places of different Nations.

Several Indigenous scholars conceive present day civic engagement as activism in the pursuit of social justice, articulating civic action as a way of life for Indigenous peoples who continue to face oppression by the persistent presence of colonialism (Spinner-Halev, 2012; Sabzalian, 2019). Indigenous peoples have experienced systematic exclusion from Canadian citizenship, historically only being able to obtain Canadian citizenship by giving up their Indigenous identities (Battiste & Semaganis, 2002). For young people, agency, responsibility, and civic engagement are viewed in relation to their identities as citizens of Indigenous nations (Castro & Knowles, 2017). The What Kind of Citizen framework does not acknowledge Indigenous conceptions and enactments of citizenship. I do not propose the revision to the framework, but instead point out that more research is necessary to re-imagine the framework in ways that honour Indigenous conceptions and enactments of good citizenship.[2]

Conceptions of Good Citizenship in Civil Society Organizations

Most research on education for democratic citizenship centers on schools (Woyshner, 2022) and significant research also exists on the service learning movement (e.g., Eaton, 2022; Pitofsky, 2019; Resch & Schrittesser, 2019). Service learning is tied to the school curriculum and extends learning into the community, allowing young people to experience authentic civic engagement (Jeffs, 2005; Mills, 2011; Resch & Schritteser, 2019). There is a widely held consensus that civil society organizations have a role in citizenship education in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain (e.g., Boyte, 2005; Dahlgren, 2006; Levine, 2000; Mills, 2011; Sherrod et al., 2010). These organizations are often "… free of political limits that inevitably constrain public schools" (Levine, 2007, p. 156). Yet they receive limited research attention in how they function as civic educators.

Defining Civil Society Organizations

Civil society organizations exist locally and globally, emerging in societies where people are free to associate with others (Harris et al., 2016; Levine, 2007). I share Levine's (2000) and Ishida's (2016) perspective that civil society organizations encompass all associations and groups that are cooperative and deliberative in nature, both from public and private sectors. Civil society organizations are formed through workplaces, faith-based organizations, cultural associations, local communities, ad hoc gatherings, and public benefit institutions (Ishida, 2016; Sherrod, et al., 2010). They also consist of organizations that can take the form of social movements, labour unions, professional associations, schools of thoughts, or charities (Heery et al., 2012; Walzer, 1992).

Learning and Making Change in Community

Ho and Barton (2020) argue for civic education in schools to better present civil society organizations as places for young people to engage democratically and make societal change. The authors contend that preparation for participation in civil society organizations should hold more weight than it currently does in school curricula. They assert that participating in indirect political forms "can awaken individuals to the importance of such politics and increase their ability to take part in the political sphere" (p. 479). These arguments align with scholars who have similarly

[2] There are also other forms of citizenship that exist, such as Ecological Citizenship, Wellbeing/Flourishing, and Citizenship as 'shared fate' that are not discussed here (Vitikainen, 2021).

emphasized the role of community and grassroots organizations in making political change (Hébert & Sears, 2001; Sears, 2014).

Scholars such as Macedo et al., (2005) and Putnam (1995) have noted that civil society organizations are political, even when they are not directly oriented to politics. By fostering networks, promoting public discussions, and developing democratic values, these groups bring awareness to important issues. Levine (2000) observed that collective reasoning is a major activity that occurs across different associations where much deliberating occurs, where members of a group learn from one another's thinking.[3] These issues and debates become part of public conversations, which are essential for a healthy democracy.

Politicizing Learning in Community

As discussed at the onset of this paper, in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain, only a limited amount of research on civil society organizations and their contributions to citizenship education for young people exists. To distinguish between different civil society organizations, I developed three categories to highlight how these organizations function as civic educators, with differing underlying political ideologies. These categories include volunteer associations, uniformed youth programs, and locally formed youth groups. Literature across these three categories reflects the diversity of political thought that characterizes the field of citizenship scholarship. It also showcases how agency and responsibility in relation to civic engagement are enacted differently, depending on the context.

Volunteer Associations

In the first category, volunteer associations, scholars have set a firm case for their significance as civic educators. Levine (2000) expressed that volunteer associations nourish society more than any other organizations. Christine Woyshner's (2022) historical work provides an example of an association engaged in civic action, as well as civic education. Woyshner examined the educational activities of a Black civic voluntary organization from 1920-1950, outlining how the Black chapter of the Elks, a charitable organization, provided different community supports and served to teach young Black citizens in the southern United States how to read the newspaper so they could pass the voting eligibility exam.

Woyshner positioned this civil society organization as a civic educator that provided programs for Black young people and adults. The group drew on the agency of its members while also enhancing agency in people in the communities it served. The association acted on its sense of responsibility for the common good. It caused change by getting more Black citizens the right to vote, despite the systemic oppression they were experiencing. Woyshner contextualized her research in the period, which illuminated the systemic racial barriers under which the group operated. Her research provided insight into how a volunteer association—the Elks—contributed to political change and provided direct civic education for adults and young people.

Woyshner (2009) similarly conducted research into the Black Parent Teacher Association, examining both racial and gender politics that the group discussed before similar conversations took place in the schools. She highlighted the group's role in lobbying for change in education at the national level, which led to curriculum changes and increased participation of diverse members in education discussions. Woyshner's (2009; 2022) two works serve as examples of research on civil society organizations and how such research can illuminate the role of civic educators that exist in

[3] Levine's (2000) argument does not suggest that public reasoning occurs in all of these associations.

spaces beyond school. Her historical work is significant because it emphasized the political role of these civil society organizations—in this case, volunteer associations—in society, in line with Ho and Barton's (2020) argument of why civil society organizations are critical spaces for democratic learning in community.

Drawing on Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) What Kind of Citizen framework, both groups melded together the participatory citizen and the justice-oriented citizen categories. The Black Elk group actively participated within the system to legally help Black citizens obtain the vote. It also identified the root causes of injustice and advocated for equal Black representation in democratic institutions. The Black Parent Teacher Association, more justice-oriented in nature, still used the Parent Teacher Association structure to advocate for change. These groups went beyond merely critiquing the social injustice and took action to engage, demonstrating how participation and social-justice categories of good citizenship can be intertwined. Woyshner's research also demonstrated civic engagement across three domains: political advocacy, civil society, and grassroots/community action. Volunteer associations do not need to have explicit political aims to do political work (Harris et al., 2016).

Uniformed Youth Associations

Research on uniformed youth associations is also predominately historic. Uniformed citizenship programs have long been offered by various associations, such as the Scouts, Girl Guides, and Cadets in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. These programs have consciously linked young peoples' learning to developing citizens, all holding imperial ties, and colonial roots (Government of Canada, 2020; Girl Guides Canada, 2020; Scouts Canada, 2019). The imperial ties can be seen in how these programs connect their conceptions of citizenship to service for Canada and the community. These groups in Canada and the United States trace their ties to programs in Great Britain, where the uniformed citizenship programs hold their roots (Magyarody, 2016). While membership in uniformed organizations for young people has been in decline over the last thirty years, they continue to serve large populations, in Canada in particular (Girl Guides, 2020; Government of Canada, 2020; Scouts Canada, 2019).[4] Their role in civic education receives some mention by scholars, but actual research on such civil society organizations remains scarce (Allaste et al., 2022; McLean, 2007).

Research on Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in Canada, Great Britain, and the United States has emphasized how the organizations provided spaces for girls to realize their agency and foster a sense of responsibility for the common good (e.g., Alexander, 2009; 2012; 2017; Scharf-Way, 2018).[5] Common across these works was the theme of gender, as young people engaged in activities for citizenship that was gendered in nature. Kristine Alexander (2017) positioned the Girl Guides as a site that offered a "… combination of freedom and control" to young girls (p. 15). *Freedom* came in the form of learning skills that were otherwise not readily accessible to girls (e.g., hiking and carpentry). *Control* came through in how members learned to express their gender through certain roles as good citizens in society (e.g., through learning about nursing and domestic duties).

Scouts and Cadets across Canada, Great Britain, and the United States have received similarly rare attention by scholars. Research that does exist showcases how the organizations

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[4] In 2020, approximately 9,660 girls ages 12 to 17 participated in Girl Guides Canada. The total participation ranged from ages 5 to 17 and held a total of 75,000 girls. In Scouts Canada, open to all genders, there were 18,544 participants ages 11 to 26 in 2019. The total membership for ages 5 to 26 was 56,800. In 2020, Cadets had approximately 52,000 youth members between the ages of 12 and 18.

[5] In the context of Girl Guides, the term "girls' refers to people who were assigned the female gender at birth.

provided varied activities for boys, such as camping, navigation, and community service, to help prepare them for their roles as citizens. Scholars have demonstrated how these educational programs engaged young people through active community work, while also critiquing the programs. Sara Mills (2011) calls the Scouts organization a site for citizenship training and argued that it used different activities to develop "citizen-scouts" that were "duty-bound" and self-regulated (p. 120).

Research on Cadets has emphasized very similar themes. Most recently, one study focused on the program's efforts to mould boys to British masculine norms from 1939 to the 1960s, highlighting the desire to emulate the popular notion of "citizen soldier" (Woodger, 2020, p. 35). This notion embodies a hierarchy of citizens who are responsive to the state. The limited research on Cadets emphasizes the experiential nature of the learning, and the aim to develop leadership by empowering young people to take on responsibilities for others. Through archival work, scholars such as Mills and Woodger examine the different movements' shared knowledge and meanings in relation to citizenship.

The above discussion on uniformed youth organizations revealed that across different time periods, these groups tended towards the responsible citizen and participatory citizen categories of the What Kind of Citizen framework. These organizations sought to cultivate law abiding young people who would serve the state. Their imperial ties are evident in their conceptions of citizenship and their hierarchical structure. They emphasized character development, putting young people through activities that promoted honesty and respect for authority. Similarly, they drew on the participatory category by cultivating leadership skills that would enable young people to lead community service activities in the community. Across both citizenship categories, agency, responsibility, and civic engagement were central components, as young people learned to work within the system towards the common good.

Youth Groups

I now turn to the last category of research on civil society organizations as civic educators—locally formed youth groups. These groups sometimes arise within the context of schools, although they are separate from the formal school structure. In Canada, more literature on these groups is starting to emerge, particularly regarding the two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer 2SLGBTQ2+ community (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2018). Lindsay Herriot's (2014) research on Canadian Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) groups illustrates how young people engage in ways that make change for other members of the community. Regardless of how GSAs choose to engage, their mere existence is what Herriot (2014) calls "a radical subversion of the status quo" (p. 42).

Through GSAs, young people enact their agency in ways that sometimes lead to pivotal reforms across the country, such as the implementation of sexual harassment policies, changing board-level forms to make them more inclusive to same-gender parents, and the development of education packages (Herriot, 2014; Herriot et al., 2018). The nature of these groups relates to the social-justice category of citizenship, as young people identified, or sought to support those who identify as a member of the 2SLGBTQ2 community. Further, many GSAs used their agency to address systemic injustices.

In the United States, there is a slight uptick in research on how locally formed youth groups function as civic educators (Westheimer, 2015). One study that captured civic engagement in multiple youth groups is O'Donoghue and Kirshner's (2008) study on community-based youth groups that they saw as alternative spaces for civic learning. Across five groups in urban locations, they collected qualitative data from fifty-five young people aged fourteen to nineteen. From their research, O'Donoghue and Kirshner (2008) emphasized the need to include young people in decision-making throughout the project. Young people expressed displeasure when the adults

undermined their decision-making. Across all youth groups, young people expressed frustrations with the democratic decision-making process, seeing it as at times time-consuming and unnecessary when all decisions were deliberated on.

O'Donoghue and Kirshner's (2008) study revealed that the forms of civic engagement predominately drew on the justice-oriented category of citizenship. Young people were engaged in addressing injustices in the community; however, the study also held traces of the participatory category of citizenship, as young people contributed to projects that were selected for them to address an injustice in the community. The strength of the research is that it provided insight into the power dynamics between the adults and young people working on civic engagement projects. As Bickmore (2014) emphasized when referring to school settings, how adults support, inform, and set the conditions for young people to be heard matters when it comes to developing agency.

Limitations

This paper points out how the What Kind of Citizen framework lacks a lens to examine diverse perspectives on forms of Indigenous citizenship in citizenship scholarship. I do not go further to propose the revision to the framework. Given my positionality as a non-Indigenous scholar and where I am in my learning, I am unable to propose the revision. Urgent work in this area is necessary for reconciliation. I also focus solely on political and social citizenship, while many other forms of citizenship exist, such as, civic and ecological citizenship (Broom, 2016). Further, the paper focuses on citizenship education for democracy in western democratic spaces in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. A more comprehensive understanding of international work on education for citizenship would highlight how context shapes citizenship education (Malak-Minkiewicz & Torney-Purta, 2021). This work is also necessary going forward, even though it was outside of the scope of this paper.

Valuing Civil Society Organizations and Looking Forward

The existing literature on civil society organizations provides insight into how these community organizations have functioned and continue to function as civic educators in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. How citizenship is conceived connects to different political ideologies. These ideologies are sometimes hard to detect, but they shape how agency, responsibility, and civic engagement are envisioned (Hébert & Sears, 2001; Peterson, 2011). Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) What Kind of Citizen framework, overlaid on three prominent political theories—traditional conservative, traditional liberalism, and critical theory—brought into focus the interplay between responsible, participatory, and justice-oriented categories of citizenship, demonstrating that these different notions are political, social, intertwined, and often contradictory in nature (Westheimer, 2015).

The What Kind of Citizen framework, however, leaves out Indigenous perspectives on citizenship. Addressing this absence in the framework, which is the dominant model used in the field in North America, is essential—not for inclusivity reasons, but for reconciliation and justice (TRC, 2015). Inviting Indigenous perspectives on and enactments of citizenship is critical, given the histories of oppression and continued legacies of harm the settler-colonial states, such as Canada and the United States, and the legacies of the imperial power of Great Britain, perpetuate.

In the citizenship education scholarship reviewed, the silence on Indigenous conceptions of citizenship was also evident. In the literature discussed here, the absence of Indigenous perspectives, in literature from Canada and the United States in particular, continues the erasure of the many ways Indigenous peoples conceive Indigenous citizenship and nationhood (Sabzalian, 2019; Temin, 2020),

both within Indigenous communities and colonial spaces. Indigenous communities hold long rooted understandings of what it means to be a citizen within their communities (Borrows, 2008; Castro & Knowles, 2017) and have continued to adapt and work through notions of Indigenous and Canadian citizenship, which in cases remain unclear (Lee & Horn-Miller, 2018).

This literature review highlighted different ways volunteer associations, uniformed youth programs, and locally formed youth groups function as civic educators in the existing research. But much more research is needed to capture the role of civil society organizations and the ways they facilitate learning in community in support of democratic citizenship. Spaces beyond schools have unique capacity to bring together young people in more experientially grounded ways. Future scholarship can continue to explore the conceptions of good citizenship embedded in these community spaces and consider the opportunities they offer young people to be a member of a community, expand their civic and participatory knowledge and skills, and consider making change in their communities.[6]

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