Boise State University
ScholarWorks

Curriculum, Instruction, and Foundational Studies Faculty Publications and Presentations

Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Foundational Studies

1-1-2017

Social Justice Through Citizenship Education: A Collective Responsibility

Sara Winstead Fry
Boise State University

Jason O'Brien
University of Alabama in Huntsville

Social Justice Through Citizenship Education:
A Collective Responsibility

Sara Winstead Fry
Boise State University
Boise, Idaho
sarafry@boisestate.edu

Jason L. O'Brien
University of Alabama in Huntsville
Huntsville, AL
Jason.obrien@uah.edu

Abstract

Existing research suggests that preservice elementary teachers tend to believe "good" citizens are people who follow laws and help others rather than people who embrace a more active model of citizenship that includes working to improve society. The authors propose that this trend results from a self-perpetuating cycle of passive citizenship that develops in part due to state curriculum standards and school experiences which focus on transmitting knowledge rather than preparing students to be active agents of change. The article presents the results of action research conducted in a teacher preparation course; the research was designed to investigate the impact of a systematic effort to see if preservice teachers' perspectives could be broadened to include a social justice perspective. As a result of the findings, the authors argue that to counteract the cycle of passive citizenship, education to create a more socially just world must be a collective responsibility shared by teachers at all levels, K-16.

Keywords: citizenship, social justice, teacher preparation, social studies, elementary preservice teachers, action research

Introduction

Faith: We're really blessed to live here [the United States], and [our government's rules and laws] need to be respected... They've been put in place by authority that is supposed to have the best interest in mind. It's a position of trust; they're supposed to have put the rules in place for a reason and we should trust their judgment. (Author & Co-Author, 1)

The excerpt above was articulated by Faith (pseudonym), a preservice elementary teacher who held a strong faith in the authority of the government and elected officials. She was resistant to the ideas of social justice – both theoretically and to the possibility that in her future career as an elementary teacher she should promote the concept of citizens as active community members who endeavor to promote a more socially just world. In an interview, Faith did mention that citizens in a totalitarian government could challenge rules and laws, but in the United States those actions would be unacceptable. In addition to being resistant to social justice, Faith articulated her belief that the important tenets of "good" citizenship were voting, following laws, and helping others.

Faith's beliefs about citizenship are consistent with what Westheimer and Kahne (2004) identified as the personally responsible citizen. Existing research suggests that preservice elementary teachers commonly embrace this type of citizenship (Author & Co-Author, 1; Logan, 2011; Martin, 2008). In contrast to a personal responsibility orientation, Westheimer and Kahne also described citizens who hold a justice orientation regarding citizenship. Such citizens take action to bring about systemic change and examine "the root causes of inequity in our society" (Wade, 2007, p. 164).

Faith's beliefs reflect four problematic, interrelated issues: (a) her extreme faith in authority; (b) she will soon be responsible for teaching elementary children citizenship skills; (c) her unquestioning obedience to authority that seems to overlook contemporary and historic injustices in the United States which have been codified into law – laws that would still remain in place today had citizens not challenged those in power; (d) her resistance to a justice orientation seems widely-accepted by other preservice elementary teachers. We propose that these four issues are interrelated and result from a self-perpetuating cycle of passive citizenship education commonly taught in American schools, which is oftentimes focused primarily on the transmission of knowledge, rather than any systematic attempts to prepare students to be active agents of change within society.

[Insert Figure 1 approximately here]

The cycle does not have to remain intact; however, we posit that without intervention, the cycle remains unbroken. Impactful social justice experiences at stages 1 through 4, either school based or outside of the school day, can provide learners with opportunities to "critically examine oppression on institutional, cultural, and individual levels in search of opportunities for social action in the service of social change" (Hackman, 2005, p. 104). The purpose of this article is to present the results of an action research study which investigated the impact of a systematic effort to counteract the cycle. We focused on stage 4 of the cycle, and the inquiry focused on the question, "How can specific instructional strategies enhance preservice elementary teachers' understanding of citizenship?" As a result of the findings, we argue that to counteract the cycle of passive citizenship, education to create a more socially just world must be a collective responsibility shared by teachers at all levels, K-16.

Background to the Study

Faith was a participant in an earlier study which examined preservice elementary teachers' beliefs about "good" citizens prior to instruction in social studies methods, a course that potentially enhances candidates' understanding of citizenship. Initially we asked 846 participants from twenty different states to respond to the prompt, "What is a good citizen?" (Author & Co-Author, 1). The two most common responses were "helps others/community involvement" (n = 606, 71.6%) and "follows laws" (n = 380, 44.9%). Among the least common responses were comments that reflect the role of the citizen in promoting social justice: "stands up to injustice" (n = 49, 5.8%), "thinks critically about government and issues" (n = 34, 4.0%), and "addresses the cause of social issues" (n = 27, 3.2%).

In an attempt to better understand the dearth of responses that included elements of social justice, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 21 of the participants in two different states (Author & Co-Author, 1). In the sample of 21 participants, only three participants initially articulated some degree of support for social justice and expressed an understanding of how citizens can change society for the better. With prompting through the follow-up question, "Can someone not follow rules or laws and still be a good citizen? If so, how?" five additional participants articulated limited support for social justice. There was a problematic trend among the remaining 13 participants: five indicated minimal support for social justice and eight, including Faith, were resistant to the concept. Faith was one of nine future teachers who indicated an unquestioning faith in laws and those in positions of authority.

These findings have bolstered our resolve that teacher educators should expose candidates to a more comprehensive perspective of citizenship to help them recognize that good citizens should do more than follow laws and help others. Clearly, we (the authors) recognize the importance of citizens following laws and disobedience for its own sake as detrimental to society. However, if preservice teachers have never been exposed to notions of social justice, they will be unable to prepare K-12 students to understand how individuals can work to improve society. Findings from our earlier study provided the impetus for the current action research project about how preservice teachers' understanding of citizenship can be enhanced. We turn to a review of the literature that provided the theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework

The approach to the current inquiry is framed by three perspectives: (a) Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) pioneering work about educating for democracy and "good" citizenship, (b) research that identifies the prevalence of Westheimer and Kahne's description of the personally responsible citizen and state curriculum standards that

emphasize this perspective, and (c) research establishing the complex nature of helping students move past or expand established beliefs (Hayes, Goodhew, Heit, & Gillan, 2003; Lucariello, 2013; Stepans, Dyche & Beiswenger, 1988).

The "Good" Citizen

Political scientists, historians, and philosophers have long debated which conception of citizenship would best serve a pluralistic and democratic society (Kaestle, 2000; Schudson, 1998). In American education, John Dewey's (1916) work *Democracy and Education* is arguably the most influential treatise on the debate over the elements of "good" citizenship as it pertains to responsibilities of people in a democracy. However, rather than offering a comprehensive resolution, Dewey's ideas have led to multiple interpretations and manifestations regarding the ideas surrounding what good citizens believe and what they should do. These multiple interpretations have had a significant impact on the curriculum taught in American schools. Parker (1996) described three distinct conceptions of citizenship education taught in classrooms: "traditional," "progressive," and "advanced." Adherents to traditionalism emphasize understanding how democracy works (e.g., roles and responsibilities of the branches of government) and mastery of important content knowledge found in the academic disciplines. Progressives share the commitment to students learning content knowledge, but they advocate for a greater emphasis on civic participation (Newmann, 1975). Through this civic participation, progressives argue, individuals can elect leaders who can fix societal woes. Advanced citizenship is a model that focuses on the tension between individualism and assimilation. Inherent in this model are questions about what role schools should play in socializing students to a common set of beliefs versus encouraging divergent thinking based on individual perspectives and experiences.

Still others (Shor, 1992; Freire, 1990) emphasized the need for students to engage in social critique and societal change. These theorists examined the extent to which schools work to perpetuate or change the status quo and a teacher's role within this process. It is within this complex effort to both define and clarify the tenets of "good" citizenship that Westheimer and Kahne (2004) conducted a two-year study of ten programs in the United States. All ten programs had the specific goal of advancing the democratic purposes of education. From their work, Westheimer and Kahne described three categories of "good" citizens: personally responsible, participatory, and justice oriented.

Personally responsible citizens are honest, recycle, obey laws, pay taxes, and volunteer or make donations in times of crisis. Participatory citizens "actively participate in the civic affairs and the social life of the community at the local, state, and national level" (p. 241). The justice-oriented citizen critically assesses social, political, and economic structures in an effort to enact societal change and when possible, addresses the root causes of problems. Simply put, the personally responsible citizen donates food for the hungry, the participatory citizen organizes the drive, and the justice-oriented citizen "ask[s] why people are hungry and act[s] on what they discover" (p. 242).

Westheimer and Kahne (2004) clarified the limitations of the personal responsibility orientation towards citizenship; it comes at the expense of looking for and addressing the root causes of social problems. When educators emphasize the personal responsibility orientation, the result is a reliance on character education and volunteerism as forms of civic participation. Programmatic decisions to educate in ways that promote one orientation are not arbitrary; they constitute a political decision. Exclusively educating towards personal responsibility may reinforce "a conservative and individualistic notion of citizenship. Yet … if citizenship also requires collective participation and critical analysis of social structures, then other lenses are needed as well" (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004, p. 264).

Wade (2007) explained the political nature of teaching for social justice. She wrote, "Some equate 'social justice' with left wing politics, which could be problematic in many communities. Social justice efforts do tend to focus on questioning the power structures in our society" (p. 158). However, proponents would argue that there is nothing inherently political in the act of questioning and that all citizens, regardless of political affiliation, should question the status quo. Given the potential discomfort teachers may experience in teaching what some consider controversial, it is unsurprising that citizenship education tends to emphasize facts and content rather than action and critical thinking.

The Personal Responsibility Emphasis

A narrow, often incomplete, conception of "good" citizenship that reflects personal responsibility is common among K-12 students. For example, Conover and Searing (2000) investigated how high school students from urban, rural, and suburban schools perceived the notion of citizenship. More than 90% of the participants believed that following laws and paying taxes were the main obligation of citizens. Other responses of note included voting in elections (83%), showing patriotism (78%), serving in the military during wartime (75%), participating in jury duty (56%), and donating to charity (23%). As a result of their findings, Conover and Searing (2000) concluded that "students' grasp of what it means to act as citizens is rudimentary and dominated by a focus on rights, thus creating a privately-oriented, passive understanding" (p. 108).

Similarly, Chiodo and Martin (2005) examined the citizenship beliefs held by 509 eighth and eleventh grade students from urban, rural, and suburban communities. They found that the majority of participants perceived that good citizens followed rules and laws and helped others. Their participants believed that demonstrating good citizenship required them to help out with community and school projects and to obey laws. When asked about their future endeavors towards good citizenship, participants mentioned voting, being gainfully employed, and helping with community projects. Participants had difficulty conceptualizing their future political engagement beyond voting in local and national elections.

Conover and Searing (2000) and Chiodo and Martin's (2005) findings are unsurprising given the prevalence of preservice teachers' conceptions of citizenship as reliant on the personal responsibility orientation (Author & Co-Author, 1; Logan 2011). Researchers have identified that "a teacher's conception of citizenship education is one factor that shapes teaching and learning in the classroom" (Anderson, Avery, Pederson, Smith, & Sullivan, 1997, p. 356). It follows that when a teacher embraces personal responsibility, their teaching reflects those beliefs about citizenship.

State Standards and Personal Responsibility

In addition to teachers' beliefs, state-level curriculum expectations play a role, albeit to a lesser degree, in reinforcing the personally responsible orientation taught in classrooms. Articulated through academic learning standards for social studies, these expectations provide the framework for teachers in K-12 classrooms. Wade (2007) noted that "state tests and required curricula do not support elementary teachers involving their students in ... examining the root causes of inequity in our society" (p. 164). Such an examination is an essential component of developing Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) justice oriented citizen. Wade's assertion held true in the state in which we conducted the present study.

A review of the state's K-12 standards for social studies (Removed for Blind Review, 2014) found that the words "citizen" and "citizenship" appear eight times. The term is used twice in second grade standards. The standards specify that students should be able to identify traits of good citizens – specifically courage, honesty, and responsibility – and name people who are considered exemplars of those traits. "Citizens" is used once in the fifth grade standards; students are asked to name citizens' rights and freedoms and describe ways in which citizens participate in public life. The word "citizen" is used four times in standards that apply to courses students attend in grades 9-12. Two of those standards focus on the implications of American Indians having dual citizenship to their tribe and the United States. The third standard requires students to know how individuals become citizens and distinguish among their obligations, responsibilities, and rights. The fourth stipulates that students identify ways citizens can participate in political processes. When given the ability to provide examples of specific responsibilities of citizens, the high school standards list "voting, and paying taxes," both of which fall under the personally responsible model of citizenship.

The word "change" is rarely mentioned in the standards. For example, it is only used twice in the standards for American government grades 9-12. In one instance, students are required to explain how leadership is involved in the changing relationship among the branches of government. In the second instance, students are asked to analyze important events responsible for bringing about political changes in the United States. Neither standard stipulates that students need to consider how *individual* citizens can, have, or should take responsible action to promote

socially just change in American society. Instead change is described as something for which leaders or events are responsible; the role of the citizen in creating or participating in those events or for electing those leaders is conspicuously absent.

There certainly are K-12 educators dedicated to teaching for social justice regardless of whether or not they are guided to do so by curricular. Wade (2007) observed such teachers and noted that their commitment "is sustained more by individual teachers' convictions, creativity, and subversion than anything else. Teachers for social justice have a passion for changing the world that carries them beyond their fears and hesitations" (p. 164). But when state standards do not explicitly call for teachers to do so, and pressures for student performance in mathematics and reading abound, the result is diminished time for and a narrowing of social studies curriculum (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Davis & Davis, 2007; Leming, Ellington, & Schug, 2006; Rock, et. al, 2006; Smith, & Kovacs, 2011).

Marshall, Jacot, and Gamble's (2015) inquiry into how elementary teachers envision they *would* teach social studies if the discipline appeared on state-mandated standardized tests suggested that many teachers are so conditioned to focus on literacy and numeracy that they do not imagine richer ways of teaching social studies if they could. When coupled with findings from other researchers (Author 1, Author 2; Martin, 2008) that preservice teachers do not enter the classroom with a justice orientation, we argue that curriculum standards reinforce these rudimentary beliefs regarding citizenship and contribute to phases 1 and 2 of the self-perpetuating cycle presented in Figure 1. The reliance on a personal responsibility model of citizenship in standards strengthens the case that teacher educators should make a concerted effort to expose preservice teachers to a justice orientation. We turn now to the final component of the theoretical framework: the complexity of transforming established beliefs.

Established Beliefs

Existing literature about how to address student misconceptions about scientific concepts offers insights about the complexity of helping students overcome established beliefs. The robust body of literature about misconceptions (Hayes, et al., 2003; Lucariello, 2013; Stepans, et al., 1988) provides insights on developing student thinking about citizenship. Although some preservice elementary teachers' understanding of citizenship is more aptly described as "narrow" rather than "erroneous, illogical or misinformed" (Lucariello, 2013, para. 1) as is typical with misconceptions, narrow understandings pose similar barriers to learning. We suggest that preservice teachers' perceptions of citizenship are similar to misconceptions in science because they are also "very entrenched in student thinking" (Lucariello, 2013, para. 2).

Literature about misconceptions in science indicates the importance of providing students with opportunities to experience conceptual change (e.g., Stepans, et al., 1988). One such opportunity is interactive discussion, including the exchange and debate of ideas. Interactive discussion serves as a metacognitive strategy and can be effective in addressing student misconceptions and debate can serve as an effective instructional approach to help students consider the suitability of new information (Lucariello, 2013). Hayes et al. (2003) indicated that challenging multiple facets of a misconception is more likely to produce conceptual change than multiple efforts to challenge one aspect.

For example, fishbowl (Gilmore, 2006) is an interactive discussion strategy that teachers can use to apply recommendations for addressing misconceptions to citizenship education. In a fishbowl, students take turns being discussants and observers. The format gives students the opportunity to articulate their ideas and beliefs, to serve as active listeners, and to make connections between ideas and text. Students can discuss the benefits and limitations of personal responsibility in a democracy using this instructional strategy. By specifically structuring the interactive discussion around multiple attributes of personal responsibility, teachers can offer students opportunities to address multiple facets of a misconception per Hayes et al.'s (2003) recommendations.

Need for the Current Study

Existing literature indicates that time allocated for teaching social studies is minimal in elementary schools in the United States, while required curriculum and teacher beliefs often support the personal responsibility emphasis of citizenship. Additionally, changing students' misconceptions is difficult, and the potentially political nature of teaching for social justice may deter some educators from embracing this approach. To date, discipline-specific literature about preservice elementary teachers' perceptions of citizenship has focused on beliefs they already

possess. Given the prevalence of the personal responsibility orientation among preservice teachers and other populations, the logical next step in this research area was to investigate the effectiveness of specific efforts to enhance students' understanding of "good" citizenship. Thus, in the present action research study, we sought to determine to what extent instructional strategies can expand preservice elementary teachers' understanding of citizenship to include components of a justice orientation.

Methods

In an effort to enhance preservice teachers' conceptions of citizenship, we intentionally structured a methods course to include experiences that provided opportunities to learn about social justice-oriented approaches to citizenship and confront existing beliefs, with the goal of helping students move towards conceptual change (Hayes et al., 2003; Lucariello, 2013). We sought to answer the research question "How does exposure to instructional strategies that integrate citizenship and social justice influence preservice elementary teachers' understanding of 'good' citizenship?"

Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in two semester-length social studies methods courses designed to introduce preservice elementary teachers to effective curriculum, instruction, and assessment for the discipline. Social studies is the academic discipline dedicated to teaching "students the content knowledge, intellectual skills, and civic values necessary for fulfilling the duties of citizenship in a participatory democracy" (National Council for the Social Studies, 2005, p. 1). Therefore, helping preservice teachers understand the centrality of citizenship to social studies as well as trying to help them understand that effective citizenship requires action were our ultimate goals.

At the university at which the study was conducted, preservice teacher candidates enrolled in their social studies methods course during their senior year. Ideally, by this point in their academic careers preservice teachers should have had a robust set of experiences that have allowed them to develop understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. In addition to K-12 experiences, participants had all taken a multiculturalism and diversity in education course at their university.

The action research spanned two semesters; the first semester students served as the comparison group (n = 32) and second semester as the treatment group (n = 28). All participants were seniors majoring in elementary education or dual-majoring in elementary and either special education or bilingual education. Most participants were women (comparison n= 29; treatment n = 26). During both semesters at least half of the participants were non-traditional in age (comparison n = 20; treatment n = 14), meaning they were 24 years or older (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016). A vast majority of participants were White; however, three participants in the comparison group and two participants in the treatment group were Hispanic. These demographics are typical for elementary education majors at the university, which is a large, public institution in the Pacific Northwest.

Due to for the potential for stereotype threat to undermine students' performance (Lauer, Momsen, Offerdahl, Kryjevskaia, Christensen, & Montplaisir, 2013; Steele & Aronson, 1995), we did not collect demographic information regarding income and first-generation-in-college status from our participants. However, based on university-wide admission data, we know that for the year in which the majority of the participants entered the university, low-income students represented 23.9% of the freshmen class and 36.4% were first-generation-in-college. During the year of this study, 44.2% of teacher education students qualified for student support services based on their status as being low-income, first-generation, or both. This information demonstrates that while participants were not ethnically diverse, they depart from nationwide trends for teacher education candidates. Although the participants were a convenience sample and were not randomly assigned to groups, we believe the two groups are comparable because they were similar on demographic variables that might affect results.

Study Design

Both groups of students were enrolled in a social studies methods course that met weekly for 160 minutes. During both 15 week semesters, we used a similar routine for both sessions: class began with a quiz on an assigned reading, followed by a discussion on the reading. The reading quiz was included because researchers (Carney, Fry, Gabrielle, & Ballard, 2008; Fernald, 2004) have found that quizzes based on readings both increased motivation to complete

readings, and improved student contributions during subsequent discussions. The remainder of the class was devoted to modeling of pedagogic techniques used in K-8 classrooms using age-appropriate social studies content. After modeling the techniques, the students engaged in whole-class discussions about the effectiveness of each technique and how the techniques could be differentiated across various grade levels (e.g., primary vs. intermediate) and for children with diverse learning needs. These discussions were framed around the readings that were discussed at the beginning of each class session.

Based on the findings from our earlier research (Author 1 & Author 2), we hypothesized that one potential way to assist students in moving past reliance on personally responsible citizenship is to include explicit instruction about the limits and possibilities of different forms of citizenship in social studies methods coursework. With regards to teaching citizenship, for the comparison group, the professor taught the class as she had for several years. Different types of citizenship were not defined and were not the central focus of instruction; rather, the focus was on learning ways to make social studies content both relevant and engaging in the classroom. With the treatment group, the professor explicitly led discussions about Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) categories of "good" citizens and underscored the importance of the justice orientation. There was no discussion pertaining to the definition of "good" citizens with the comparison group.

For the treatment group, the professor defined the justice orientation, and then made explicit connections between social justice and citizenship and purposefully selected content and instructional strategies that the authors thought would help the students develop a deeper understanding of these concepts. After modeling instructional techniques to the class, the professor guided studs to consider how each technique could contribute to cultivating the skills and dispositions needed for participatory and justice orientated citizenship. For example, she modeled a discussion strategy called rotating chair in which students share the responsibility for asking questions and the teacher only redirects the discussion if necessary. After modeling the technique, the professor and class debriefed the technique's effectiveness and impact. The preservice teachers identified that rotating chair requires students to be involved in the discussion rather passively relying on the teacher. With support from the professor, participants recognized that the technique required the same sort of collective participation that is also necessary for participatory citizenship (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Preservice teachers also considered grade-appropriate topics for which students could use the technique to analyze the social and political structures that contribute to situations that matter to them, thus laying the groundwork for the skills justice orientated citizens leverage to improve their communities (See Author & Co- Author, 3 for an example of how fourth graders employed such skills to address the problem of tension and strife on the playground at recess).

 When teaching the treatment group, the professor intentionally included pedagogy and content that seemed likely to have an impact on the students' understanding of the relationship between citizenship and social justice. For example, students read Mochizuki's (2000) book *Passage to Freedom: The Sugihara Story*. This powerful children's book describes how Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat in Lithuania in 1940, helped thousands of Jewish refugees escape the Nazis by issuing travel visas. Sugihara directly disobeyed orders from his government in doing so. He explained, "I have to do something. I may have to disobey my government, but if I don't, I will be disobeying God" (p.14). Students also read an article by Bryant (2006) that explained how to use *Passage to Freedom* in the elementary classroom to help children extend their thinking about "good" citizenship.

After discussing Mochizuki's book and Bryant's article, the treatment group was introduced to Circle of Viewpoints (Visible Thinking, 2012), an interactive writing and discussion instructional strategy that allowed students to consider how different characters in *Passage to Freedom* viewed the situation. The characters were Mrs. Yukiko Sugihara (Chiune's wife), Hiroki Sugihara (Chiune's son), a Jewish child whose family hoped to obtain a visa, and Gudje (a Lithuanian employed at the Japanese consulate who helped Sugihara prepare the visas). Circle of Viewpoints provided students with a structure to consider multiple perspectives on ways in which it was important to take action. Through Circle of Viewpoints, students had opportunities for metacognition through reading, writing, and discussion, which assisted them in making sense of their new learning and any contradictions this new information may have posed to their existing beliefs.

Data Sources and Analysis

To determine teachers' perceptions of citizenship, we administered a pre- and post-test to both the treatment and comparison groups. The measure included 10 questions from the civics portion of the naturalization test that applicants for U.S. citizenship take and open-ended questions such as "What are the goals of social studies education?" and "What is a 'good' citizen?" We analyzed the "good citizenship" written responses by reading the data and using codes (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) to identify responses that typify perspectives of citizenship. The codes were based on themes Martin (2008) identified in a study of preservice perceptions of citizenship and Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) characteristics of the justice-oriented citizen.

[Insert Table 1 approximately here]

After coding we created composite scores for each type of citizen: personally responsible, participatory, and justice oriented. We then conducted a 2 (Time: pre-test versus post-test) x 2 (Group: treatment versus comparison) analysis of variance (ANOVA) for each of the three composite scores.

Limitations

There were limitations in the study design in that we used a convenience sample, a quasi-experimental design, and participants all attended the same university. These limitations and relatively small number of participants limits the generalizability of the findings to other populations. However, we offer the findings as a contribution to the growing body of literature about citizenship beliefs and social justice. We discuss practical implications and pedagogical suggestions of the findings that may be useful for other college instructors considering teaching in ways that intentionally promote a justice orientation towards citizenship.

Results

For each of the three types of citizen, we calculated composite score that reflected the number of attributes of each kind of citizen each participant included in their writing: personally responsible, participatory, and justice oriented. Descriptive statistics for each type of citizen are reported by Time (pre-test versus post-test) and by Group (treatment versus comparison) in Table 2. We computed a 2 x 2 ANOVA for each of the three composite scores to examine differences across Time and Group.

[Insert Table 2 approximately here]

Personal Responsibility. As seen in Table 2, scores for both groups decreased from pre-test to post-test, $F(1, 56) = 31.90$, $MSe = .39$, $p < .001$, *partial eta squared* = .36. Scores did not differ by Group, $F(1, 56) = 2.10$, $MSe = .55$, $p = .15$; and the interaction was not significant, $F(1, 56) = 1.81$, $MSe = .39$, $p = .18$.

Participatory. Table 2 shows that scores for both groups increased from pre-test to post-test, $F(1, 56) = 5.54$, $MSe = .19$, $p = .02$, *partial eta squared* = .09. Scores did not differ by Group, $F(1, 56) < 1$, $MSe = .25$, $p = .41$; the interaction was not significant, $F(1, 56) < 1$, $MSe = .19$, $p = .98$.

Justice Oriented. As seen in Table 2, scores for both groups increased from pre-test to post-test, $F(1, 56) = 28.16$, $MSe = .18$, $p < .001$, *partial eta squared* = .34. Although scores were greater for the treatment group than for the comparison group, $F(1, 56) = 3.52$, $MSe = .25$, $p = .07$, *partial eta squared* = .06, the interaction was not significant, $F(1, 56) < 1$, $MSe = .18$, $p = .59$.

Discussion

After a full semester of instruction, there was no statistically significant difference between the comparison and treatment groups. Both groups articulated a more comprehensive conceptualization of "good" citizenship including the traits of justice oriented and participatory citizens, and decreased with regards to including traits of the personally responsible citizen. We can interpret these results in two ways. First, we can conclude that the treatment was ineffective, perhaps because the authors did not select powerful enough social justice learning experiences to alter the beliefs of preservice teachers in the treatment group.

However, a second interpretation offers another possible explanation for the outcome. One course that offers students opportunities to expand their thinking about social justice may not be enough. While the inferential statistics show significant difference in the pre/post test scores for both treatment and control groups for justice orientation, the descriptive statistics reveal how much more needs to be done. In the comparison group (n = 32), two individuals included the justice orientation in their pretest writing about "good" citizens; 13 did so in the posttest. This indicates that 19 future teachers (59%) did not include any aspects of social justice in their responses. In the treatment group (n = 28), five individuals included justice orientation in the pretest; 18 did in the pretest. That leaves 10 future teachers who did not, or 35%. These descriptive statistics suggest that the treatment may have been more impactful.

A compelling question here is to wonder why *only* 2 out of 32 prospective teachers in the treatment group and 5 out of 28 in the control group – who were seniors in college, four months away from full-time student teaching and two semesters away from graduation - included the characteristics of a justice oriented citizen in their writing at the beginning of the semester? These students also completed a required multiculturalism in education course; yet neither the course, nor their K-12 educational experiences seemed to have instilled an awareness of societal and educational inequalities that require socially just action to resolve. We hypothesize that a cycle is perpetuated through K-16 school experiences which does not prepare students to develop a justice orientation.

A Self-Perpetuating Cycle

Existing research about secondary students' beliefs about citizenship (Chiodo & Martin 2005; Conover & Searing, 2000) suggests that the prevalence of personal responsibility beliefs about good citizenship is common. We postulate that these beliefs are the result of a cycle antithetical to social justice (Figure 1). If youth do not have the opportunity to expand on the emphasis on personally responsible model of citizenship that is commonly emphasized in elementary school (stage 1), through other experiences (stage 2 or 3), or through out-of-school activities, individuals who become elementary teachers are likely to perpetuate these narrow beliefs. Our earlier research (Author & Co-Author, 1) suggests that the one or two teacher preparation courses candidates take that emphasize social justice during stage 4 are insufficient to move the majority of students past beliefs they developed in stages 1 through 3.

Breaking this cycle requires a collective effort among teachers. While there are multiple life experiences beyond one's K-16 education that can lead to a commitment (or lack thereof) to social justice, educational experiences play a fundamental role in shaping individuals' beliefs about citizenship – and subsequent action or inaction. Thus we encourage K-12 teachers and university educators in all academic disciplines to consider how their teaching might support social justice. It is essential that instructors provide learning experiences that, as one student wrote in her journal after an impactful service-learning experience, "mold hearts and minds in ways that will forever stay with us." Veldt and Ponder's (2010) research and findings from the present study suggest the need for future studies to examine the benefits of integrated service-learning experiences as part of the journey to social justice.

What Are We Teaching For?

As pressures for high performance on standardized tests increase and time allocated for social studies remains sparse, the results of this study make it clear that educational practices that promote social justice are essential. We are reminded of inspirational words from Peggy Jo Wilhelm, an accomplished teacher who also faces a life-threatening disease. Her health struggles have intensified her attention on what is most important. When coaching teachers about how to design and implement high-quality instruction, Peggy Jo asks: How are you teaching for wisdom and use, for understanding and service, in the context of this unit? She believes all curriculum needs to connect to life and living. If it's not, then what are we teaching for? (Author & Co-Author, 2). For those of us dedicated to effective social studies education, the question is clear: What are we inspiring our preservice teachers to one day teach for? We argue that an important component of preservice teacher education is to inspire socially just citizens with the skills, disposition, and intent to transform our world.

References

Anderson, C., Avery, P., Pederson, P., Smith, E., & Sullivan, J. (1997). Divergent perspectives on citizenship education: A Q-method study and survey of social studies teachers. *American Educational Research Journal, 34*(2), 333-364.

Author & Co-Author 1. Citation information removed for blind review.

Author & Co-Author 2. Citation information removed for blind review.

Author & Co-Author 3. Citation information removed for blind review.

Barton, K., & Levstik, L. (2004). *Teaching history for the common good.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bryant, J. A. (2006). What is good citizenship? The story of Chiune Sugihara. *Social Studies and the Young Learner, 19*(2), 13–15.

Carney, A. G., Fry, S. W., Gabrielle, R. V. & Ballard, M. (2008). "Reeling in the big fish: Changing pedagogy to encourage the completion of reading assignments." *College Teaching* 56(4): 195-200.

Chiodo, J., & Martin, L. (2005). What do students have to say about citizenship? An analysis of the concept of citizenship among secondary education students. *The Journal of Social Studies Research, 29*(1), 23-31.

Conover, P. & Searing, D. (2000). A political socialization perspective. In L. McDonnell, P. Timpane, & R. Benjamin (Eds.), *Rediscovering the democratic purposes of education* (pp. 91-126). Lawrence, KA: University Press of Kansas.

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria. *Qualitative Sociology, 13*(1), 3-21.

Dewey, J. (1916) *Democracy and education.* New York: Free Press.

Fernald, P. S. 2004. The Monte Carlo Quiz. *College Teaching* 51:95-99.

Freire, P. (1990). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* New York: Continuum.

Gilmore, B. (2006). *Speaking volumes: How to get students discussing books--and much more.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Hackman, H. (2005). Five essential components of social justice education. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 38*(2), 103–109.

Hayes, B. K., Goodhew, A., Heit, E., & Gillan, J. (2003). The role of diverse instruction in conceptual change. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 86*, 253-276.

Kaestle, C. F. (2000) Toward a political economy of citizenship: Historical perspectives on the purposes of common schools. In L. McDonnell, P. M. Timpane, & R. Benjamin (Eds.), *Rediscovering the democratic purposes of education.* Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

Lauer, S., Momsen, J., Offerdahl, E., Kryjevskaia, M., Christensen, W., & Montplaisir, L. (2013). Stereotyped: Investigating gender in introductory Science courses. *CBE Life Sciences Education, 12*(1), 30–38. http://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.12-08-0133

Leming, J. S., Ellington, L., & Schug, M. (2006). The state of social studies: A national random survey of elementary and middle school social studies teachers. *Social Education, 70*(5), 322-327.

Logan, H. H. (2011). Perceptions of citizenship in elementary social studies preservice education. *Journal of Peace Education and Social Justice, 5*(2), 15-178.

Marshall, P. L., Jacot, A. L. & Gamble, A. F. (2015). How elementary teachers imagine social studies in an age of teacher assessments. *Social Studies Research and Practice, 10*(2), 1-13. Retrieved from http://www.socstrpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/MS06589-Marshall-et-al.pdf.

Martin, L.A. (2008) Elementary and secondary teacher education students' perspectives on citizenship. *Action in Teacher Education, 30*(3), 54-63.

Mochizuki, K. (2000). *Passage to freedom: the Sugihara story*. Pine Plains, NY: Lee & Low.

Newmann, F. (1975). *Education for citizen action: Challenge for secondary curriculum.* Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.

Parker, W. (1996). "Advanced" ideas about democracy: Toward a pluralistic conception of citizen education. *Teachers College Record, 98*(1), 104-125.

Rock, T., Heafner, T., O'Connor, K, Passe, J., Oldendorf, S., Good, A., & Byrd, S. (2006). One state closer to a national crisis: A report on elementary social studies in North Carolina. *Theory and Research in Social Education, 34*(4), 455-483.

Schudson, M. (1998). *The good citizen: A history of American civic life.* New York: Free Press

Shor, I. (1992). *Empowering education: Critical teaching for social change.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Smith, J., & Kovacs, P. (2011). The Impact of Standards Based Reform on Teachers: The Case of 'No Child Left Behind.' *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 17*(2), 34-42. Standards. Retrieved from www.RemovedforBlindReview.edu.

Steele, C. M. & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 69*(5), 797-811.

Stepans, J., Dyche, S., & Beiswenger, R. (1988). The effect of two instructional models in bringing about a conceptual change in the understanding of science concepts by prospective elementary teachers. *Science Education*, *72*(2), 185-95.

Veldt, M. V. & Ponder, J. (2010). Implementing social action curriculum in an elementary classroom: Reflections from the journey. *Social Studies Research and Practice, 5*(1), 45-57. Retrieved from http://www.socstrpr.org/files/Vol%205/Issue%201%20-%20Spring,%202010/Research/5.1.5.pdf.

Wade, R. (2007). Service-Learning for social justice in the elementary classroom: Can we get there from here? *Equity & Excellence in Education,40*, 156–165.

Westheimer, J., & Kahne, J. (2004). What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy. *American Educational Research Journal, 41*(2), 237-269.

Web-Based References

Davis, S. & Davis, J. (2007). Making the case for social studies—It's our responsibility. Nation Council for the Social Studies: Washington, D.C. Retrieved from http://www.ncss.org/advocacy.

Removed for Blind Review State Department of Education (2014). Social Studies Content Standards. Retrieved from www.RemovedforBlindReview.edu.

Lucariello, J. (2013). How do I get my students over their alternative conceptions (misconceptions) for learning? *American Psychological Association.* Retrieved from http://www.apa.org/education/k12/misconceptions.aspx?item=8.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). *Nontraditional Undergraduates / Definitions and Data.* Retried from https://nces.ed.gov/pubs/web/97578e.asp

National Council for the Social Studies (2005). *Mission Statement.* Retrieved from http://www.socialstudies.org/about/.

Schudson, M.S. (1998). *The good citizen: A history of American civic life.* New York: Free Press.

Visible Thinking (2012). Circle of viewpoints. Retrieved from http://pzweb.harvard.edu/vt/VisibleThinking_html_files/03_ThinkingRoutines/03b_Introduction.html

Table 1.
*Citizenship Codes based on Martin (2008) and
Westheimer and Kahne (2004)*

Code	Citizenship Orientation
Community Involvement	Personally Responsible
Follows Laws/Rules	Personally Responsible
Respects Others	Personally Responsible
Patriotism and Pride in U.S.	Personally Responsible
Pays Taxes	Personally Responsible
Supports Government and/or Government Officials	Personally Responsible
Votes / Participates in Politics	Participatory
Keeps Current about Issues	Participatory
Understands Government and/or History	Participatory
Thinks Critically about Government and Issues	Justice Orientation
Addresses Causes of Social Issues	Justice Orientation
Stands Up to Injustice	Justice Orientation

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics for Types of Citizen by Time and Group

Group	Pre-test	Post-test
Personally Responsible		
Treatment	1.27 (.14)	.77 (.14)
Comparison	1.63 (.12)	.81 (.12)
Participatory		
Treatment	.23 (.09)	.42 (.10)
Comparison	.16 (.08)	.34 (.09)
Justice Oriented		
Treatment	.19 (.06)	.65 (.11)
Comparison	.06 (.06)	.44 (.10)

Note. The number in parentheses is the standard error of the mean.

The diagram shows five black circles arranged in a self-perpetuating cycle:

1. Elementary school instruction and state standards about citizenship may emphasize kindness and following rules.

2. Beliefs about citizenship continue into high school, perhaps being furthered by secondary school experiences.

3. Beliefs continue into post-secondary education.

4. Pursue elementary teacher certification and take 1 or 2 teacher classes that address social justice and/or citizenship.

5. Candidates graduate and begin their careers as elementary teachers. Teachers' beliefs influence the way they teach citizenship.
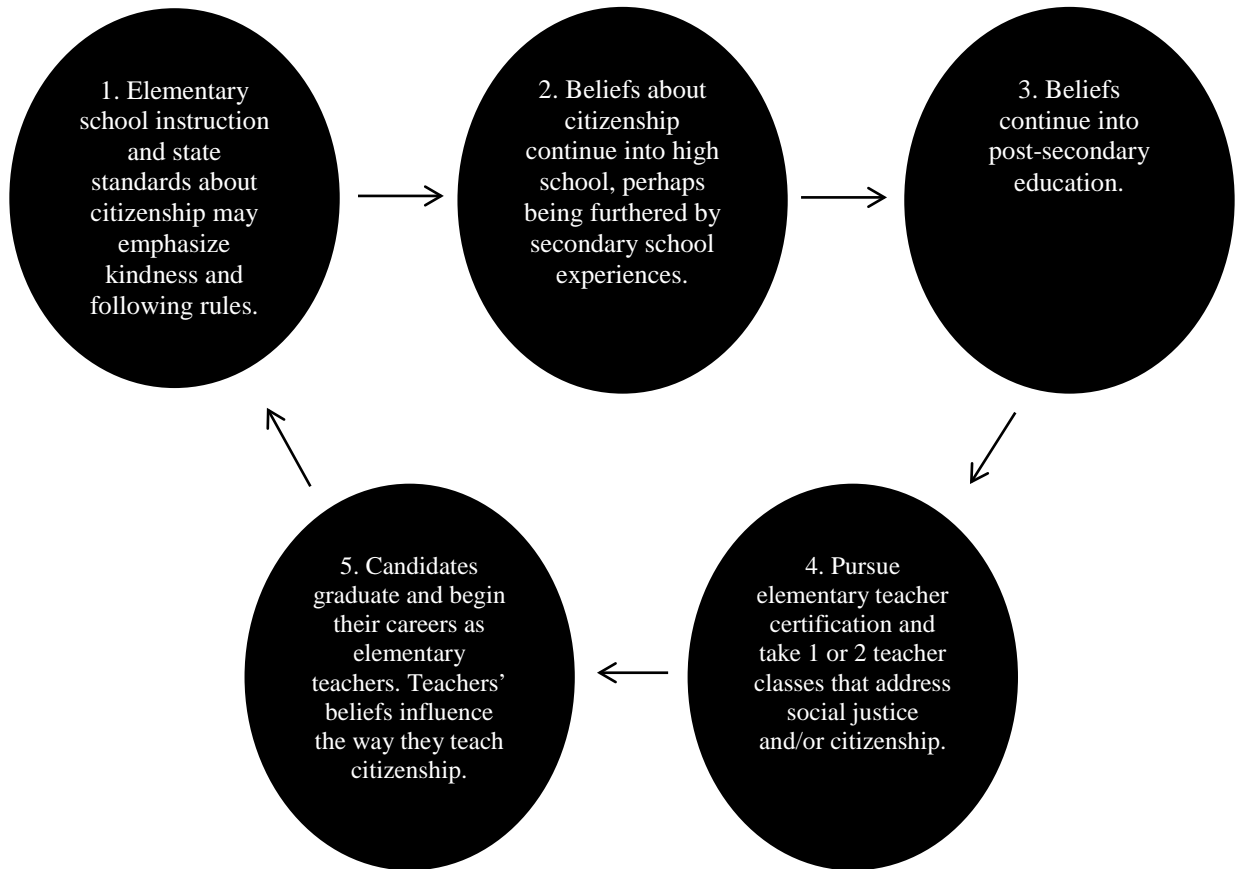
Figure 1. Passive Citizenship: A Self-Perpetuating Cycle

Author Biographies

Sara Winstead Fry is a Professor of education in the department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Foundational Studies at Boise State University in Boise, Idaho. Her scholarly interests include citizenship education and service-learning. She teaches courses in civic and ethical foundations and social studies methods. Email: sarafry@boisestate.edu

Jason O'Brien is an Associate Professor of education in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction at The University of Alabama in Huntsville. His scholarly interests include citizenship education and English Learners in social studies. He teaches social studies methods, as well as foundations, assessment, and classroom management courses. Email: Jason.obrien@uah.edu