

'What is geography's contribution to making citizens?'

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We are all geographers, whether we like it or not! From the outset it is important to recognise that you and I, and that person across from you in the classroom are in a world of geography. We live in it. We know it, we survive it (hopefully), and we contribute to it, everyday (and night). The purpose of geography is to help us get a handle on why this world is like it is, what is our role in it, and how can we sustain or change it. Geography exists to give us insights, feelings, and understandings of the world that we live in.

How then should we think about 'geography'? Geography can often seem an abstract term, an abstract discipline even. Useful perhaps for knowing the capital of Iceland for Christmas games of Trivial Pursuit, but not much else. This is a misconception. One way we can challenge this misconception is through beginning with the popular cliché, borrowed from high school science classes, "X [in this case, 'cultural life'] *does not take place in a vacuum*". Things, ideas, practices, and emotions all occur in a context, in a broader world that influences, values, celebrates, regulates, criminalises, sneers or tuts at particular activities and objects. Interest in this context, and how it influences, values, celebrates etc is one thing that geography and geographers do. As Cook (in Clifford & Valentine, 2003:127) identifies, "so much depends on the context". Context can influence what actions we choose to make and how we choose to make them, it can influence how these actions are judged by ourselves and others, and thus how successful and significant they turn out to be. Context therefore is vital to take notice of and understand, yet in everyday life it is something we often ignore – we are so used to it it becomes ordinary, obvious, and even natural. Cresswell (2000:263) describes this through using the South East Asian phrase 'the fish

don't talk about the water'; in normal life we are perhaps like fish in that we don't talk about our geographical context. Geographers, however, are weird fish, we seek to sensitise ourselves to the 'water'. Geographers swim in and investigate context.

So, what are the appropriate contexts for geographical study? Context can be thought about in a variety of ways. Geographical context is often thought about in terms of national or political territories, physical landscapes, or exotic places. But any space, place or area, at any scale, or in any circumstance, could be thought about as a geographical context. For example, on a macro scale, we could think of Planet Earth as a context and how it influences and is influenced by the activities going on within it. Alternatively, we could think of a public square - and how it seems to encourage some uses and users rather than others, a field (ditto, but maybe for animals too?), a home, a wall, a coastline. What about the contexts of a classroom, a street, a pub, or a sports field? What about a theatre, a mine, a museum, a library...? What activities are accepted as normal in these spaces? What behaviours are frowned upon? How are they regulated? Do people conform to these regulations, and what happens if they don't? These are all crucial critical questions that geographers use to analyse the contexts they study.

As we have outlined, we are all part of the social world. All our ideas and actions combine to generate this world. As Maxey (1999:201) tells us, "Everything we do, every thought we have, contributes to the production of the social world. ...We are in a sense all activists, as we are all engaged in producing the world". The nature of our actions in particular contexts therefore says something about us. What sort of things do we want our actions to say? What sort of actions should we take? What sort of world do we want to live in, and why? Geography's contribution to making citizens is crucial as it helps us to understand our common world more effectively. It emphasises that we all take and make places through our everyday ideas and actions. What traces do you want to leave?

Citizenship and geography - the 'geographies of citizenship'

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That big old fuzzy word, eh – “citizenship”. Try to define it ... but it means so many different things to so many different people *in so many different places*. Citizenship is geographical; citizenship is geography. For how is ‘citizenship’ constructed, embodied, experienced, performed and understood other than in certain spaces, at certain scales, or in specific contexts? Is citizenship about helping out your neighbour? Is it about supporting the unknown ‘other’ in your local area? Is it having a connection and shared understanding with people across your nation? Or is it about feeling a sense of humanism and attachment to communities across the globe? Whatever it is, it is unrelentingly geographical.

Only geography as a discipline is uniquely placed to work through what citizenship may mean at a wide diversity of levels – and therefore has a crucial role to play in citizenship education. For geographers explore the ways in which space and place both constitute and are constituted by the political, social, cultural and economic spheres that are caught up in processes of inclusion/exclusion of people as citizens, from the very local ‘sense of belonging in a neighbourhood’ through to who is involved in global decision making – or decision making that impacts us all at a global scale. Geography is inherent within and intrinsic to all the critical issues around citizenship concerning society today:

- Debates surrounding immigration, whether regarding the ‘placing’ (dispersal) and/or ‘integration’ of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK, or the role, rights and responsibilities of economic migrants, involve examining the geographies of people’s movement, settlement and relationships with new (aka ‘host’) societies.

- An increasing focus on crime/fear of crime, the rise of 'asbos' and a new disenchanted/disengaged (predominantly youth) underclass, is caught up with the ways in which citizenship is constructed in and by spaces of deprivation – a geographical perspective is required to analyse how communities/individuals become socially marginalised through economic, political and cultural processes, or to understand how geographical isolation in particular affects senses of citizenship.
- Discussion about recent political devolution and fragmentation (at a range of scales) includes exploring the construction of identity and sense of belonging in different places, and the complex (re)negotiations of citizenship happening across and within different parts of the globe – and especially the UK – today.
- The growing salience of issues around climate change and environmental sustainability draw upon and at the same time question notions of citizenship and our responsibilities to unknown others, crucially across space (from local to global) as well as across time (future generations).
- More informal, everyday conversations regarding access to and provision of health, education, other public services and public spaces are rooted in the relations we have with each other and the places we inhabit together – and the feelings/emotions underpinning how citizenship is felt in place...

We could go on. And on.... But we won't. You get the picture? Teaching and learning about 'citizenship' demands that we take people's relationships with each other IN their contextual space, place and environment seriously – and geography is distinctively and solely positioned to undertake/deliver such education.

All our futures may depend on it.

'Made in... ?' appreciating the everyday geographies of connected lives?

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[Capitalism, globalisation & industrial location have long been school geography staples. But they are often learned in an abstract and distanced way. There are patterns and laws and people affected by them. Students often report learning their textbook's two page spread about, say, the banana trade. But, as best-selling books such as Naomi Klein's No Logo have argued, none of us sit outside these economic relations. Capitalism can be seen as a highly regulated social system governing relations between people. But these relations exist, and change, in and through our actions. So, if we study capitalism this way – starting with everyday commodities that are part of our lives and finding out how and why they have been part of other people's, elsewhere – we are also studying citizenship, and questioning our rights and responsibilities as intimately interrelated and interdependent people. This paper – based on undergraduate coursework based on easily-undertaken internet research - attempts to flesh out what this 'alternative geographical imagination' might look like (Lee 2007).]

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Verrucas, dirt, cold, pain. Whenever I am barefooted, unpleasant things tend to invade my feet, and that's why I like socks. They are barriers to my discomfort; I am secure, safe in their company. Yet, I do seem to like them a little too much. They take up a whole drawer in my room after all. I can't imagine life without them.

But socks are strange beings. In improving my life, offering comfort, warmth and protecting me against disease, they seem to have sacrificed their own identities. They are the only free item of clothing I have; free from tags, labels or any clues to their origin or even what they are made from. I have to delve deeper, literally, into my bin and retrieve the packet before I can make out that they were "Made in Bulgaria". By buying them in my local Marks & Spencer store in London, I became part of an intricate and wide reaching network of people and machines.

In purchasing these socks, I was one of 15 million customers in one of 400 M&S stores in the UK that employ 65,000 people (Anon 2005). The socks that ended up on the checkout conveyor-belt are part of the countless number transported from a factory in Rousse, Bulgaria, packaged by automated production lines and made by over 600 workers (Anon 2002) who knit, sew, seam, bleach, iron, shape and sort my socks assisted by 200-needle single and double cylinder machines (Anon nd). Not to mention the thousands of workers in Bulgaria involved in

manufacturing the polyamide and elastane lycra, the farmers planting, tending to and cultivating the cotton plants, and those getting these and other materials to the factory.

This simple transaction links me with hundreds, thousands, millions(?) of people across the world. If my socks could become more than mere garments – sock puppets! – who could talk, what would they tell me about the conditions, education, wealth, future of the people involved in putting them on my feet (Cook et al 2006)? This transaction links me to more than just individual people.

The factory in Bulgaria is owned by Delta Socks, an Israeli company contributing to hundreds of job losses in the UK (Anon 1999), but fighting its own battles against boycotters who have identified how its Israeli factories benefit from operating on illegally confiscated Palestinian land by employing labourers in dreadful non-unionized conditions (Scheid, 2002). The headquarters of these sock boycotters are located in London, just a couple of Tube stops away from the M&S I bought them in.

Putting my foot into the oh-so fluffy, comforting sock, it seems I'm helping to perpetuate the Arab-Israeli conflict, to disrupt the lives of hundreds of fellow Brits, and to contribute to the lives of thousands in Bulgaria. Who lives, dies, profits or suffers, depends, in a small part, on me. My socks have spoken, and what they have said matters. Oppression doesn't sit well with me. And what I do with my money. I can change what socks I buy. I must change. Sacrificing quality for ethics is a small price to pay. I may be just one person, but what I do makes a difference. To a lot of people. In a lot of different places.

But I'm not the only one that can or should act differently. Surely. This can't all be my responsibility. As a consumer. Others are shaping my options. They have to change too. Including M&S bosses, and the people who decide what socks get onto their shelves. A new range of fairtrade cotton socks has just started to appear there (Anon 2006a, 2006b). Would you believe it? Their marketing pitch was 'Your M&S: Look Behind the Label!' Just what I was doing. Their cotton is grown by farmers in Gujurat, India. It's good for them. But what about those sock workers in the UK, Bulgaria, Israel / Palestine (O'Nions 2006)? What 'good' has this done them? And what should I do with the socks I've already got? The ones lying in my drawer? Put them on, as usual. I suppose. For a run this morning. Then to walk into Uni...

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I really enjoy the walk into Uni. Striding out, breathing in the morning air. Just me, my socks, my shoes and the pavement working in perfect harmony, like a well-oiled machine. We're out on our own in the urban wilderness doing what we do best, what we came together to do. S#*t. Trod in some chewing gum. Can't walk properly, the gum is sticking shoe and pavement together, interrupting the flow of

the system. I hate chewing gum, never chew it. Yet here it is, invading my life. The chewer must have only dropped it a minute ago. Their DNA, now stuck to the bottom of my shoe, could tell me all kinds of intimate details about their life, a life which has intruded upon my own and stuck to me like a parasite.

The story that brought this gum to my shoe is mind-bogglingly complex. A little research – starting with the information printed on a pack of gum - brings stories of factory workers in Plymouth (the only UK Wrigley factory), the fact that E903 (a.k.a. carnauba wax) is also the main ingredient of car polish (see Anon 2004a, 2006c), and allegations of the carcinogenic effects of Acesulfame K (a.k.a. acetoacetamide: see Anon nd, 2004c) ... I could go on. For ever. It seems. Through more surprising connections. Like the one made shortly after the 9/11 attacks between the 'gum arabic' trade and the 'war on terror':

Early this morning I was listening to the news. One of the commentators said that Osama Bin Laden owns a HUGE amount of stock in the company that makes Gum Arabic. Gum Arabic is known to be in some Soft drinks and many other food items. Check your cupboards and refrigerators, if you have products that use Gum Arabic get rid of them and do not buy products with the Gum Arabic additive. If we continue to use these products that contain Gum Arabic we are in essence supporting this man's terrorist attacks against OUR FELLOW AMERICANS! One thing that the US helps Osama Bin Laden is, he owns the COMPANY that makes GUM ARABIC mostly used in pop "MOUNTAIN DEW" IS ONE OF THEM, and other things. GUM ARABIC keeps things from settling in bottles and cans. STOP BUYING ANYTHING WITH GUM ARABIC IN ITS CONTENTS. THE MONEY Goes to Bin Laden company. PLEASE SEND THIS TO EVERYONE. This was on the news today (Mikkelson 2001 np)

So, that anonymous chewer wasn't just littering that street (and my shoe), but was also helping to fund international terrorism. I feel better. I never chew gum. So I'm not responsible for any of this. What a relief!

But wait. Hold on a sec. The whitening agent in chewing gum is the same chemical that makes my acrylic paint white. Gum Arabic is used in all kinds of sweeteners for foods and drinks, not to mention pill capsules and makeup (Anon 2004a). I put many of those things into or onto my body. Every day. I couldn't be myself without many of them. My trainers wouldn't work the way they do without elastomers, the ingredient that gives gum its rubbery texture and cushions my feet. Chewing gum shares properties with car tyres, shock absorbers and glues. So, a stick of gum could be produced from my body and its attachments. I am a walking stick of chewing gum. Its/my ingredients. Related. Blimey.

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I'm in the second row from the back of the computer cluster in the uni library. Sitting at a screen, tapping away like the other 34 people in the room. But, thanks

to my Apple iPod, I have created my own sonic bubble in which to hide. The instrumental Icelandic overtures of Sigur Ros pulsate through my head, the soft beats rippling from ear to ear, down through my spine and through my limbs, the rhythms dictating the tap of my foot, the speed of my fingers, my mood, my whole psyche, what you're reading now. This innocent looking white and chrome contraption has me in its grips. As the Apple slogan goes, 'iPod therefore I am'.

This morning I unplugged my little white friend from his nightly recharge where his internal Sony lithium battery had spent the night sucking the juice from the national grid. I removed him from his cosy plastic dock and inserted the long white headphones deep into my ears and let the powerful vocal harmonising and amplified funk beats of Jurassic Five provide the upbeat soundtrack to inspire my legs to get going for my morning run. As I ran I was transported back in time to the night I saw J5 live. I smiled. Then a pang of guilt hit me. I had copied the J5 CD from a friend so is listening pleasure illegal? Am I eroding the music industry? I then let the shuffle setting randomly select some of the 2459 songs I have installed and let the various rhythms and melodies determine the speed I moved and where my mind wanders. We have been travelling together on powerful musical adventures for 6 months now but I've just realised I have never even asked where he comes from!

My little white friend openly tells me that he was designed by Apple in California and assembled in China but is less forthcoming about the origins of his hidden components, let alone how many other people's lives he has touched. His sleek exterior doesn't give much away. He's now trying to get me off track by transmitting the smooth grooves of Morcheeba. I'm gone. Somewhere calm. I let the sultry vocals of Skye Edwards and the symphonic strings wash over me. But how did I get here?

Morcheeba recorded. Sire label paid. HMV bought. I bought. Inserted into laptop. Installed onto iTunes software. Connected iPod via USB connection. Data transferred through Sharp Electronics Flash memory chip and PortalPlayer controller chip designed by 134 designers in Silicon Valley; through Texas Instruments 1394 FireWire interface onto the Toshiba 1.8 inch hard drive. Connected headphones. Listen. Now I'm somewhere calm.

Yes, Apple sources the 20GB hard drive from Toshiba (Allen 2005). But Toshiba gets them from SAE Magnetics. They have a plant in Dongguan, China. Here, there are reports that the predominantly female, rural assembly workers are forced to work 16 hour days to make the heart of my little white friend. Wages are low and supervisors brutal (Frew McMillan 2002).

Can I still be calm? Turns out that me and my little white friend are not so independent, individual and innocent as I thought. I can't hide in my sonic bubble any more. I can only feel so separate because I'm so connected. So implicated. iPod therefore I am...

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'What is geography's contribution to making citizens?'

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If we take a 'pragmatic' working definition of citizenship to be how society organises the involvement of individuals in decision-making at a collective level, then citizenship has traditionally been conceived as organised through the modern nation state. A standard narrative of the emergence of modern citizenship is one in which the nation-state gradually extends political, economic and social rights to wider sections of the population (see Urry 2000). However, recent work on citizenship has argued that the central role of the nation-state is currently undergoing transformation, and that citizenship is increasingly organised through a variety of non-state as well as state institutions. There are many reasons for this, but of particular interest to me are the links between globalisation and new forms of citizenship.

Globalisation involves a range of political issues that operate at a global scale, which any single nation state would find impossible to deal with singlehandedly. These can be briefly summarised as: environmental issues such as global warming that create and require a global political constituency for their resolution (eg Jelin 2000); communication and information technologies that transfer knowledge in ways which escape nation-states; deregulated capital markets that decrease the ability of the nation-state to control capital; international human rights regimes that reduce national sovereignty as a guarantor of legitimacy (eg Soysal 1995); and international mobility that creates multiple actors who do not automatically identify with the nation state in which they reside (eg example Kong 1999). The term 'global citizenship' is increasingly used to point towards the formation of political processes and institutions operating at the scale of the global in which individuals can participate.

There are two consequences of globalisation for citizenship. Firstly state-organised citizenship becomes denationalised (Sassen 2002), meaning that to be a citizen of a nation-state entails taking part in decision-making about how that state takes part in collective decision-making in a global community of states, over issues such as global warming, economic development or international security. This is, of course, far from completely novel (states have long engaged in diplomacy or imperialism), but the scale and scope of international organisations such as the EU, WTO or World Bank appear to be developing. Secondly, there are a range of corporate and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) that increasingly organise political participation in global issues. The force of global corporations can be assumed, but the parallel growth of global campaigning bodies also needs emphasising: of the 13000 INGOs in existence today, 25% were created between 1990 and 2000, with a third of membership joining in one decade (Anheier et al. 2002: 5).

I am unsure whether the characteristics of an effective global citizen in this kind of contemporary context have yet been fully elaborated, but I would speculate that some of the more obvious features are (amongst others):

1. An awareness of 'action at a distance', that is to say that the consequences of our actions are less delimited by spatial proximity than at any time in history. What we do 'here' may have enormous consequences for collective life at a global scale.
2. An awareness that global citizenship is not simply enacted through the traditional means associated with the nation-state, but that citizenship is also enacted through a wide variety of institutions, included the corporate and voluntary sectors.
3. An awareness that global networks are complex, and that understanding the consequences of our actions requires knowledge-intensive expertise.

Clearly Geography already plays a significant role in educating global citizens. I would imagine that the learning outcomes required to enable an individual to

participate as a global citizen would overlap very strongly with the learning outcomes of a geographical education. We are currently in the process, at least in Higher Education, of attempting to define what those learning outcomes might be (see for example Shiel, 2006).

If I could elaborate briefly on the implications for learning outcomes of the three points above:

1. Geography has a long tradition of recognising global interconnectedness, for example in environmental flows or commodity chains. Continuing to build students knowledge of the functional nature and impact of existing networks is important. But so is building students 'adaptive expertise', that is their ability to recognise important new connections as and when they arise during their lifetime in ways which will undoubtedly be unexpected from today's perspective. For example, who, in the early 1990s, would have envisaged the impact of the ever-expanding network of budget airlines on labour markets and leisure flows in Europe?
2. Geographers will need to be aware of role of a wide variety of institutions in global politics. As employees and consumers they will need to be aware of issues of corporate citizenship and responsibility, exemplified today in the increasing number of corporate institutions that recognise the threats posed by climate change to their operations and profitability. They will need to be aware of non-governmental organisations and their possible role as voices in debates about the shape of globalisation. As national citizens they will need to understand the mechanisms through which their nation impacts upon global issues, the often unsteady institutions of global governance such as the UN or Kyoto Protocol-type agreements.
3. The complexity of global networks will require specialist expertise in understanding the functionality and consequences of interconnections. It is impossible for any one individual to understand global interconnectivity. For example, as food consumers we have some understanding of the provenance of basic commodities such as bananas (see for example the

work of Shelley Sacks (<http://www.exchange-values.org/>), but it is extremely difficult to tell the provenance of complex foodstuff (such as a fruit cake, for example). Consequently, our relationship with the global is necessarily mediated by expert institutions. Geographers are likely to play a key role as employees in such institutions, in the corporate, voluntary and state sectors. Having the research and knowledge processing skills to act as producers of expert knowledge is a key role for Geographers.

Overall I would argue that as far as global citizenship is concerned, Geography is extremely well placed to facilitate the development of active citizens. As a discipline it is crucial that we continue to reflect on what a (global) citizen might look like, and what sort of learning we should be aiming for in attempting to enable individuals to perform those roles.

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What is geography's contribution to making citizens?

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For geographers working in the Anglo-American academy, two “crises” in received understandings of citizenship have become clear over the last decade of scholarship on this topic: 1) the challenge posed by the concept of the *transnational* to the one-to-one correspondence between citizenship and the nation-state and 2) an acknowledgment of the constitutive nature of *exclusion* to contemporary state policies governing citizenship. Both these crises in the concept of citizenship, understood as a set of political, civil, and social rights (and outlined by T.H. Marshall in his classic account, *Citizenship and Social Class*), bring a renewed sense of importance to grounded, geographical study into the practices of states, the experiences of migrants and the theorization of new spatial configurations (“global” cities, border regions, regional supra-state configurations, extra-territorial spaces).

In studies of migration, theorizing the *transnational* requires rethinking the “long-held notion that society and the nation-state are one and the same” (Levitt and Schiller, 2005, p. 103). Static conceptions of integration and of the gradual elimination of ties to a homeland through assimilation are no longer adequate models for understanding how people relate in diverse ways to the contingencies of belonging. Geographic research on transnational migration and flexible identities makes clear how people adapt to conditions of mobility. Yet the effects of mobility are indeterminate: one’s position on the “outside” of citizenship can be both a critical resource (as in much of the early 1990s literature on hybridity), but can also enable certain already privileged actors to benefit financially and socially from the politics of “multiculturalism” (see Bhabha, 1994; Ong, 1999).

Citizenship is not simply a set of normative lessons in the rights and responsibilities of individuals, although these lessons are enriched by a

discussion of the different rights and responsibilities required of those who are citizens and those who are not. Rather, for educators, lessons on citizenship can also open up critical questions. At the most basic level, the elemental injustices enacted on “stateless” peoples globally force us all to reconsider at whom the rights and responsibilities of citizenship are directed. These rights and responsibilities are continually framed within particular bounded spaces: primarily the nation-state but now also the supra-national space of the European Union. These territories implicitly assume an outside. Critical scholarship in geography makes the implications of this spatial configuration explicit. Feminist geographers, for example, continue to emphasize how the policies and practices of citizenship assume an ideal citizen-type, and then ground this theory with careful analysis of how these assumptions operate in the lives of actually existing people.

I make the assumption of a link between the geographies of citizenship and those of migration. Why make this connection? In practical terms, gaining citizenship as a migrant in any particular nation-state can be a labyrinthine and difficult process; awareness of this process can denaturalize the conferral of the status of citizen. Yet this connection also allows students to see how the constitutive nature of exclusion in contemporary notions of citizenship operates. More recent geographical scholarship complicates the concept of exclusion. Exclusion no longer operates solely at the level of definable ethnic, racial, or social groups but increasingly stands in relation to the law. More specifically, exclusion now depends “on what side of the *criminal law* one stands” (Sanchez, 2004, p. 866). Giving students the critical skills to develop more inclusive notions of citizenship requires confronting the emergence of these new forms of exclusion. Who benefits and who does not from the privileges of citizenship? Who is posited as an ideal citizen? Indeed, the inclusions and exclusions of “proper” citizenship may extend even to those aspects of existence deemed beyond the remit of formal politics, as in my own research on the decriminalization and recuperation of the midwife into North American public life.

History lessons in citizenship open up the possibility of rethinking the presumed naturalness of nation-state allegiances in contemporary times, and the persistent traces of colonial and imperial territorial consolidation both at “home” and “abroad” in concepts of nationalism, the nation-state, and citizenship. Teaching the geography of citizenship gives students the opportunity to consider the concept of belonging in relation to different locations. For young people growing up in an expanding European Union, the opportunities to experience and to develop more expansive notions of citizenship have never been more abundant, or more urgent.

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**“What is Geography’s contribution to making citizens?”
Making the Connection: Teaching citizenship through geography**

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Interconnectedness, difference and diversity, international trade, migration, global warming, social responsibility: all of these are issues that could be taught in a citizenship lesson. But how might teaching about them through a *geographic* lens enhance student’s learning and understanding of themselves as citizens?

Firstly, geography allows us to think in connected ways. It allows us to think not only about the politics behind an issue but also to think through the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental context in which the issue is embedded. Secondly, it allows us to think about issues at and across a range of scales (from the personal to the global) and, perhaps, more importantly, to ‘zoom’ between scales (to see the global in the local and so on). Thirdly, geographical concepts such as space, place and scale give us the vocabulary to start thinking about themes of citizenship (from the different spaces of citizenship, to the different scales at which it takes place). Fourthly, geography provides the opportunity to captivate and inspire us to use our geographical imaginations to think about the world. This, importantly, allows us to think creatively and critically about the future, to imagine different or alternative futures and how we can *actively* contribute to making these futures.

I want to use a practical example of how a geography project¹, in which school students were encouraged to think about the impact of their consumption choices, helped young people to understand: how they are inextricably linked to people and places both geographically near and far; their sense of belonging in

¹ To find out more about the project, which was called ‘Making the Connection’ please see <http://www.gees.bham.ac.uk/research/pgwg/Projects/Makingconnection/introduction.htm>

different spaces and places; social justices and equality; and how they, as citizens can actively contribute to local and global issues.

The project took two everyday items that students were familiar with – bananas and mobile phones – and began by asking students to explore very local connections, such as ‘what do you consume?’ and ‘what does your mobile phone mean to you?’ Gradually we began to ‘zoom in and out’ to a variety of scales, with pupils thinking about the global interconnections that linked them as mobile phone users and banana consumers to various people, places and environments throughout the world. This encouraged them to use *their* geographical imaginations and to appreciate their connections with others around the world.

For example we asked students to listen to a CD, which had the voices of 20 banana farmers from the Windward Islands on it¹, when they next went shopping. After listening to the farmers’ voices they were asked to think about the people who might be behind everything else they had on them (their clothes, bags, phones, jewelry). If they were to write a letter to the person who had made their jacket/ watch/ mobile phone, what would they want to tell that person? What questions would they want to ask of the person who had made it? In the ensuing discussion and in their letters they talked about how their phone ‘keeps them safe’ and how having one meant that their parents ‘allowed them to go round to their friends house’ or ‘into town’- opening up spaces where they might otherwise be allowed to visit at certain times of the day. Others discussed how having a phone allowed them to keep in touch with their friends, listen to music and share photos – activities which helped them feel part of their own youth culture. One boy thanked the person in the Ukraine who had made his school blazer because it ‘helped him feel part of the school community’ and if he didn’t have one he would ‘look odd compared to other people’.

¹ These voices are part of Shelly Sack’s social sculpture, *Exchange Values: images of invisible lives*. To download the voices visit www.exchange-values.org

Thinking 'geographically' about these issues allowed them to make connections, raise questions, engage in imaginative discussion and locate themselves in relation to the other people and places involved in making the things they buy. They began to think about themselves as groups of consumers, as groups of people who were related to distant others like banana farmers, and more importantly as groups who can act, and as groups who can be counted alongside and with socially distant others. One student emailed their MP and the WTO about why trade laws were the way they were, another petitioned their school canteen to use more Fair Trade products, the whole class set up a mobile phone recycling scheme, and yet others harassed their parents to shop more ethically.

Young people are not citizens in the waiting- they encounter spaces of citizenship in their everyday lives- from feeling that they 'belong' to the school community, to feeling safe on the streets when walking home at night, to feeling empathy towards geographically and social distant 'others'. It is difficult to see how these issues are not inherently geographic in nature.

'What is geography's contribution to making citizens?'

[Extracts taken from Lambert, D. (2006) What's the point of teaching geography? pp.30-37, in Balderstone, D. (ed.) *Secondary Geography Handbook*, Sheffield: Geographical Association.]

**David Lambert, Chief Executive,
Geographical Association**

This viewpoint provides a discussion of school geography in relation to the creation of an informed citizenry and is based on a book chapter I wrote for the *Secondary Geography Handbook* (see Lambert, 2006). In what follows, the concept of citizenship education is explored and the role that geography can play in promoting an informed citizenship. I do not separate citizenship education from moral education; the former is a subset of the latter and if we want to clarify the role of geography in citizenship education we cannot avoid moral and ethical questions. Arising from such a perspective are questions concerning the *contents* of school geography, its *pedagogy* and the *assessment* of children's learning.

A note about the 'UK space': geography and identities

The UK space may be perceived from the outside to be given a political entity on the world map. Whether for the Eurovision Song Contest or for the Olympic Games, the component countries of the United Kingdom present themselves as one. This is not so in the case of the (association) football World Cup, however. In this case, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland all compete separately and with each other, and of course with the Republic of Ireland, the other fully independent nation within the British Isles. In rugby, England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland compete internationally... but *also* unite to compete as the British and Irish Lions. This is confusing in terms of 'national identities' and is likely to become even more so as a consequence of political devolution for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. These measures are taking place within the context of Britain's membership of the European Union which itself is having complex impacts on national and regional identities and has recently expanded its membership substantially.

Thus, human beings have multiple identities. Some of these are inextricably tied up with territory, which links identity to concepts of citizenry. This is partly because of the tendency to describe citizenship in exclusive terms- that is by defining citizenry partly as a spatial belonging by excluding outsiders or 'others'. Geography lessons, surprisingly, do not explore such questions in as much depth as perhaps they could (but see Morgan and Lambert, 2003). For example. 'Where is the eastern edge of the continent of Europe?' and 'Does it coincide with the border of the enlarged European Union?' are tricky questions and can lead on to others that can challenge our view of the world which is inevitably shaped to some degree by preconceptions and prejudices arising from unexamined assumptions and use of language. Why, for example, is Europe, a peninsula of the Euro-Asian landmass, considered to be a continent while India, another peninsula of the Euro-Asian landmass, is considered to be a *sub-continent*?

Geography plays a distinctive role in citizenship education through performing a type of 'mapping' function that enables young people to locate themselves in relation to other people and other places. This function of geography needs to be understood, for like most educational transactions it needs to be undertaken with a conscious effort, a prerequisite for teaching in a 'morally careful' manner.

School Geography and informed Citizenship

The radical move, in 2002, to establish citizenship in the national curriculum for the very first time was partly in response to (especially young) people's apparent apathy towards or disengagement from the formal political process of voting. It is a concern because low turnouts at election time seriously damage the legitimacy of a 'democratically elected' government. This is how the government's educational quango, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, expressed its intentions in the Final Report that guided the establishment of citizenship in the curriculum:

“The benefits of citizenship education will be: for pupils- an entitlement in schools that will empower them to participate effectively as informed, critical and responsible citizens; ... for society- an active and politically literate citizenry convinced that they can influence government and community affairs at all levels” (QCA, 1998, p.9).

But this still begs the question as to what information, knowledge, understanding and skills the ‘informed, critical and responsible citizen’ requires. The informed citizen is a person who can think about their rights and duties and the power of the State. As with thinking about any abstract idea it helps to have models and structures in which to ‘frame’ the mental effort. So, what of school geography- *what can geography lessons contribute to helping young people ‘frame’ their thoughts about the world and their place in it?*

I cannot respond fully to this question here. But I do want to argue that geography teachers need to take great care in what they claim their lessons are able to accomplish, particularly when measured against the creation of ‘informed citizens’. It is precisely in this way that the idea of ‘moral care’ in teaching gains purchase. Teachers need to be cautious and above all they need to be informed themselves.

The moral duty of the education service is to ensure that students are given sufficient insight (‘knowledge and understanding’) and practice (‘skills’) to become informed citizens – in the sense that they can participate meaningfully in society’s debates and struggles. This means that geography teachers need to be aware of the dangers inherent in operating only in an ‘answer culture’ instead of promoting a vigorous ‘culture of argument’. The latter can be equated with an ‘education for *conversation*’, which signals students and teachers in a dialogic relationship with knowledge, and with each other. Thus, the only ‘good causes’ for geography (or citizenship) education are the goals of a healthy moral

education, in which students are encouraged to ask questions, feel comfortable with scepticism and adopting a cautious approach to complexity, but feel enabled to make judgements of merit. This has been called a condition of 'confident uncertainty', and I think geography education can contribute to this entirely healthy state among students- though it may better describe the mental state of a switched-on geography teacher!

Some final thoughts

In what ways can geography contribute to the creation of an informed citizenry? My response has a number of facets, but in the end advocates a sophisticated view of the subject, one that inevitably makes reference to fundamental educational goals, summed up by the phrase 'education for conversation'. Every single geography teacher, because they are a geography teacher, has a part to play in generating this conversation.

An informed citizen must have an understanding of how the world works. This requires engagement with economic, social and political as well as physical and environmental processes. It also involves practice in the intellectual skills of reflection, reconsideration, communication and other forms of participation in decision making. And it requires teachers to maintain focused energy on the assumptions that frame (and can obscure) critical thinking. Not least, a sophisticated sense of scale can help students understand their role as global citizens who exercise daily (individual) local choices that can have global (universal) effects. Given the stasis recently apparent in the political leadership of the USA in relation to a range of international and global issues, there is arguably no more important subject of conversation in school geography lessons.

**Where are we?
Geography, space and political relations
A short essay for the GA Citizenship Working Group**

**Roger Lee
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Where are we? Or, rather, where do we think or imagine we are?

These questions and the answers given to them are fundamental in understanding our identities. And our identities must inevitably and inescapably include our political identities. Thus, for once, the normally problematic, and often un-thought use of, the all too easily exclusionary first person – who ‘we’? - is entirely unproblematic and appropriate. This is because our understanding of our place in geographical space is fundamental to the identification of what ‘we’ are as well to the shaping of political understanding.

But this is such a fundamental issue that what follows argues that, as a discipline, Geography - which is centrally concerned with the formative significance of space and relations in and across space - is faced with severe political constraints in establishing itself as *a* – if not *the* - central discipline in any education capable of enabling social sustainability.

Thus the problem for Geography is not some kind of intellectual weakness or lack of ‘relevance’ (whatever that may be) – quite the contrary. Its problem is its political strength which makes it a very scary subject for those with a political position to promote and defend. And this strength emanates from the unavoidable and critical insights around space that the logic of Geography not merely enables but forces upon us. Such insights will, if ignored through marginalisation in the curriculum - by, for example, a diminished role for Geography in the curriculum or a diminished curriculum for Geography - will make itself felt in far more unpleasant and violent ways.

So where am I? Take 1

I sit *here at home* in a room overlooking a small garden in a house located in a pretty former market town. The hundreds-years old market was recently finally tidied away by the local council who found it difficult to reconcile it with the developmental demand for commercial office space adjacent to the railway station as well as with the presumed prim and conservative notions of landscape of the increasingly affluent suburban commuters attracted to the town by its range of facilities (including 'good' but some very expensive schools and a range of, again, very expensive housing), by the beauty of the local countryside on the northern edge of a place so full of geography – the Weald of south-east England, and by the good links by rail to London, motorway to the rest of the UK and air to wherever the latest fashionable destination or significant global business may be located.

I am, therefore, firmly within the 'soft' south, in a highly affluent region of one of the most affluent countries on the earth and a locality with all the political attributes that may (actually certainly does!) follow from its particular characteristics.

How does all of this affect my political understanding? It is significant certainly but before going on to say how it might be so, note in passing - and for future reference - the frame of the description of where I am. It is entirely territorial – I am 'in' ... – and it begins with a presumed autonomous 'I'. It is in short a perspective centred on territory as the notion of space and on 'I' as the centre of that space.

Now this territory may say something significant about me – certainly 1000 market researchers and political analysts, especially those equipped with access to and knowledge of how to use the increasingly sophisticated geographical data bases used to segment buying and voting publics, believe so. And, if my reading of 'the level descriptions' attached to geography in the National Curriculum is legitimate, the notion of bounded territory is unproblematically central to all levels – right 'up' to what is referred to as 'exceptional performance' beyond level 8 (see Box 1). For sure, there are references to 'knowledge and understanding of patterns and processes' but these are

very much 'placed' within and between territories – 'places' or 'localities' as the level descriptions have it.

Furthermore, understanding is expected to progress by moving out from the 'local scale' at Level 1

Pupils show their knowledge, skills and understanding in studies at a local scale. (2; 3; 4) They recognise and make observations about physical and human features of localities. (2; 3) They express their views on features of the environment of a locality. (1; 4)

source <http://www.ncaction.org.uk/subjects/geog/levels.htm> accessed 13 01 2007

to 'the full range of scales' (and note, for later, the unproblematic usage of the definite article here) at the level of 'Exceptional performance' in which

Pupils show their knowledge, skills and understanding in studies of a wide range of places and environments at the full range of scales, from local to global, and in different parts of the world. (2; 3; 4) They explain complex interactions within and between physical and human processes. (3; 4) They refer to a wide range of geographical factors to explain and predict change in the characteristics of places over time. (2; 3) They understand alternative approaches to development and the implications of these for the quality of life in different places. (2; 4)

source <http://www.ncaction.org.uk/subjects/geog/levels.htm> accessed 13 01 2007

The indications of how to know analyse and understand places and environments as conveyed in these descriptors is clear:

1 places and environments are the unproblematic object of 'geographical enquiry and skills'

2 places and environments are territorial

3 places and environments are, therefore, where 'pupils' are: centred within these territories which are in turn centred within others... and so on out.

Thus pupils are not expected to think beyond 'places' (and 'environments') as the objects to which 'geographical enquiry and skills are directed. In other words they are not able to think about what I would like to call an alternative geographical imagination.

And yet such an alternative geographical imagination is most certainly there. It reflects the profoundly formative influence of relations - constructed across and within geographical space - on places and environments and on the identities and political identities of pupils (and, indeed, of everyone else).

So where am I? Take 2

This morning I showered in water supplied from the aquifer beneath this locality and supplied by a French-owned water company and dried myself on a towel made in Portugal from a UK department store. I then dressed in clothes all bought in the UK: underwear made in Egypt and supplied by an icon of the British high street recently recovered from severe financial underperformance; tee-shirt supplied by a UK-owned retailer and made in Mauritius with cotton from who knows where; jeans from an Italian clothing firm and made, remarkably enough, in Italy; sweatshirt made in Pakistan and branded by a well-known US sports-wear supplier – recently the target of protests about the appalling labour conditions found along its supply chain. For my breakfast, I ate muesli packaged by a Dorset food processor and containing fruit from a wide range of climatic zones as well as cereals produced in Dorset; locally-made bread supplied by a national supermarket group; olive oil spread – from the same supermarket but made in Italy; home-made marmalade from oranges grown in Spain and sugar, via a UK-based multinational company, in Mauritius; coffee from Java but supplied through a UK retail chain and made on an Italian coffee machine.

In this space, then, I am not merely here in a territorial sense but am an active if insignificant node in the coalescence of an infinite range of highly influential networks¹ which, meeting and interacting in this place - at whatever multiple and interlocking but socially constructed scales² it is relevant to use to identify 'place' - make it what it is.

I and the place I inhabit – like you and the place that you inhabit - are, then, both thoroughly decentred. Both self and place are simply infinitesimally tiny parts of a highly complex and infinite number of networks held together by purposive social action³ and combining in diverse ways to create the variable geographies of places.

But of this insight – this geographical imagination - there is not a jot the National Curriculum.

So where are we and what has this got to do with politics and citizenship?

As is hopefully indicated by the above, 'we' are defined not merely by the territory in which we happen to have been born or to which can lay some other increasingly restrictive legal claim to belong. We are formative nodes of dynamic and non-territorial geographies which stretch across space and literally constitute – but, via the geographies of preceding networks, are also shaped by - particular places. Territories are, therefore, social and environmental⁴ constructions and are always in process of making, destruction, transformation and remaking. They are – like the networks which constitute them - forever temporary.

And yet this dynamic notion of place and its essential temporariness and open-endedness are fundamentally misconstrued by a one-sided emphasis on space as merely territorial. But the territoriality of places is itself a complex process – well worthy

¹ and these ideas are, as the preceding passage suggests not difficult to teach through a range of engaging practical work

² unlike the unproblematic use of the 'scales' in the National Curriculum level descriptions, scales are not simply a given fact of life. They are constructed through the establishment and conduct of social (economic, political, cultural, environmental) relations within and across geographical space

³ increasingly shaped and defined by financial networks and criteria

⁴ although I have said nothing about environmental networks and relations here

of inclusion in a curriculum for Geography. Places are stabilised through a variety of devices (eg the nation state) wielded by the powerful and modified through struggles of various kinds by the less than powerful.

But if space is understood merely as territory, it is hardly surprising that political identities are assumed to spring naturally from such places – especially when they are bedecked in all sorts of symbols of presumed significance – a currency, for example, a flag, a monarch, a football team, a nation, a people a ‘cricket test’..... And neither is it surprising that this politics is narrowly focused on such territories, on the identity of an individual with those territories, and on the identity of territories and people beyond as ‘other’. In a world of ever-increasing network intensity, neither is it surprising that all sorts of disastrous consequences follow from such a static and limited sense of political identity.

And yet, the alternative geographical imagination outlined here enables students to realise that their ‘place in the world’ is *decentred* along a multitude of networks rather than *centred* (or at most only ever partially and temporarily centred) in a set of territories themselves centred in each other. This alternative geographical imagination elucidates a notion of citizenship as relationally and globally formed. It recognises the open-ended nature of relations in geographical space. But this is quite different from the narrow absolutist notion of citizenship based on national state territories practised in political relations and in the National Curriculum for Geography and for Citizenship.

Concluding comments: naturally subversive Geography

Is it any wonder, then, that Geography is so disturbing to those who wish to preserve the symbols of state territory and to define them (axes/arcs of evil etc) *against other* territories? For the logic of Geography points to an inescapable feature of human existence - that ‘self’ and ‘other’, ‘us’ and ‘them’, ‘here’ and ‘there’ are one and the same: contributors to the networks that make ‘here’ and ‘there’ what they are.

In this sense, Geography – unlike History, for example - is fundamentally and inherently subversive. It necessarily redefines the notions of identity essential to the presumption of a territorial politics which is both outdated and has only ever been of partial relevance. Indeed the relevance of such a politics may be understood only in the context of the alternative geographical imagination outlined here.

It can no surprise, then, that geographers are constantly confronted with difficulties in establishing their discipline as vital and ultimately inescapable in any education for social and environmental sustainability. It is precisely because the geographical imagination is so vital and inescapable that resistance to it is so widespread amongst those who have got the most immediately to lose. The tragic paradox, of course, is that we all - ie 'we' defined in the context of the alternative geographical imagination - have everything to lose unless this Geography is made a central focus of our curricula and our politics.

Box 1

Exceptional performance

Pupils show their knowledge, skills and understanding in studies of a wide range of places and environments at the full range of scales, from local to global, and in different parts of the world. (2; 3; 4) They explain complex interactions within and between physical and human processes. (3; 4) They refer to a wide range of geographical factors to explain and predict change in the characteristics of places over time. (2; 3) They understand alternative approaches to development and the implications of these for the quality of life in different places. (2; 4) They assess the relative merits of different ways of tackling environmental issues and justify their views about these different approaches. (1; 4) They understand how considerations of sustainable development can affect their own lives as well as the planning and management of environments and resources. (4) They illustrate this with a full range of examples. (4) They draw selectively on geographical ideas and theories, and use accurately a wide range of appropriate skills and sources of evidence from the key stage 3 programme of study. (1) They carry out geographical investigations independently at different scales. (1) They evaluate critically sources of evidence and present coherent arguments and effective, accurate and well-substantiated conclusions. (1) They evaluate their work by suggesting improvements in approach and further lines of enquiry. (1)

numbers in brackets identify the four aspects of attainment in the attainment target for geography

1. geographical enquiry and skills
2. knowledge and understanding of places
3. knowledge and understanding of patterns and processes
4. knowledge and understanding of environmental change and sustainable development

‘What is Geography’s Contribution to Making Citizens?’

**Julie MacLeavy
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One of the most obvious characteristics of Geography – and in particular contemporary Human Geography – is the diversity of its approach. Across the social, cultural and economic spheres of the discipline, the integration of conceptual and empirical inquiry acts to produce a knowledge that is at once theoretical and material, pure and applied. It holds a combination of methods, concerned with both the universal and the particular, such that its many areas of its research may be seen to have a unique political relevance, above and beyond that of other subjects, in both the arts and sciences. Certainly, the long standing attention to issues of social and spatial difference means that much of the research it produces has a particular moral significance above and beyond the walls of the academic ‘ivory tower’.

This is especially true in relation to the subject of citizenship. Contemporary Human Geography exhibits an explicit concern for the formation of political subjects and the practices of governance that produce and sustain modern citizenship. This is manifested in a variety of ways. First, it provides a spatial lens through which the constitution of citizens can be studied across multiple locales, political units and scales of governance. In doing so, it enables critical insight into ongoing processes of social, political and economic restructuring and their impacts on the relationships between individual, state and society. Human Geography is thus fundamentally concerned with the construction of individuals *qua* citizens at the local, national and global levels. As a result, it can make a key contribution in producing a better understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and helps us make sense of the frequently unequal distribution of opportunities and constraints this creates.

In recent years, the notion of citizenship has become increasingly prominent within and beyond the realm of formal political debate. This is, perhaps, understandable given the ongoing nature of the transformation from a Keynesian welfare state – which was instituted in the UK in the post-war period to guarantee citizens an a minimum level of income, social protection in the event of insecurity and access to a range of public services administered locally – to a new form of institutional regime. As a consequence the provision of welfare, traditionally seen as a key component of the relationship between citizen and state, is undergoing a fundamental change. Indeed, with novel policies seeking to establish a new relationship between citizens and the state through an increased emphasis on political participation and the promotion of public responsibilities, there has been a concurrent rise in critical analysis of government efforts to redefine the structure of citizenship rights and obligations in contemporary Britain.

Within the Academy, questions have been raised about the range of economic and social policies that claim to promote social inclusion for all citizens by building of institutions and systems that – in the words of the current government’s social inclusion policy – ‘allow cooperative relations to flourish’. For instance, welfare-to-work programmes that are intended to ‘enhance the flexibility of local labour markets through the improvement of workers’ employability’ have been the subject of much empirical work. Similarly, urban programmes that further aim to transform citizens into ‘enterprising subjects’ – through the investment in urban residents with regard to skills to counteract poverty-inducing circumstances through community-led regeneration activities – have been analysed and assessed. Much of this work has been done within Geography, particularly the subfields of political, economic and urban geography.

As a subject that studies human systems, Human Geography produces knowledge and understanding that informs people both of how those systems operate and how they might be changed for the betterment of social, economic and environmental conditions. This means that it has the potential to help

improve human welfare by inciting questions about the subjects and limits of public policy debates. Such provocation of public debate through academic reflection is arguably a necessity for improving the conditions of life in different places and affecting different groups. Whilst government policies apply the themes of individualism, responsibility and (economic) contribution as the key characteristics of citizenship to policy subjects, Geography contributes to making citizens by provoking public concern not just about the exclusion from the bonds of common citizenship of those at the bottom of society, but also the ways in which those at the top are able to exclude themselves from such bonds and so perpetuate the exclusion of their fellow citizens. In doing so Geography invites us to us to continuously revisit and rethink what it is that constitutes citizenship today – which is in itself surely a key step both in making active citizens and in creating a truly inclusive notion of citizenship.

Unmitigated England?¹
John Morgan
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'Unmitigated England'
Came swinging down the line
That day the February sun
Did crisp and crystal shine.

'Great Central Railway Sheffield Victoria to Banbury' (John Betjeman)

In this short provocation I want to sketch out the bones of an argument about the relationship between two slippery concepts 'citizenship' and 'nation'². The focus is on one particular nation – Britain³ – and I want to suggest that as geography teachers we need to engage with the debates about landscape, belonging, nationhood and citizenship in all their complexity. Too often, I think, we seek to avoid the difficult relationship between past and present versions of geography teaching, with the result that we get stuck with simplistic and unwieldy ideas about these concepts that fail to connect with the broader cultural flows that bubble up in geography classrooms.

It's worth remembering that in the school system geography gained its place in the context of concerns about the loss of economic and political power to Germany at the end of the 19th century. There were widespread concerns about the physical and mental qualities of the population and calls for a programme of social improvement. In this context there were calls for the establishment of a series of 'English' subjects including English Literature, History and Geography. From the start then, geography in the school curriculum was embroiled in arguments about culture – about the 'state of the nation'. One aspect of geography's contribution (which is widely acknowledged) is that it played a part

¹ This is the first line of John Betjeman's poem 'Great Central Railway Sheffield Victoria to Banbury'. He borrowed it from Henry James, who was describing the traditional English cottages.

² This argument is developed at length in a paper entitled 'The Englishness of Geography Teaching'

³ I'm going to mix up British and Englishness in this piece I'm afraid. A result of the variety of sources used.

in asserting the superiority of the British 'race' – supported by ideas of environmental determinism. There are arguments about how far geography contributed to this 'Imperialist' project. It is quite possible that there was not much overt racism in school geography teaching, and indeed, from the 1920s geography educators were involved in attempts to develop forms of world citizenship. From my perspective, what is more significant is the contribution that school geography made to the establishment of the idea of an 'imagined community' centred around the physical landscape and a unified 'national space'.

It was inevitable that geography would be influenced by broader ideas and debates about landscape and nation, and David Matless's *Landscape and Englishness*¹ explains how the interwar period saw the development of a discourse of 'plannerpreservationism' which sought to protect the valued qualities of the English landscape in the face of urban and suburban encroachment. During the Second World War this discourse gained increasing prominence reflected in the idea that 'when we build again' there was a need for planning and protection of the nation's distinctive landscapes. Of course, this discourse relied upon a particular 'geographical imagination' and this was provided in part by geography education. So, in the post war period there was a dramatic rise in outdoor leisure such as rambling and camping, as well as the establishment of the Field Studies Council and an important role was assigned to geography education. This tradition of valuing places and landscapes has played an important part in geography education and is reflected in all those field trips that are predicated on the idea of taking (usually urban and working class) kids out into the landscape to learn to 'appreciate' the landscape. So one way in which geography education worked was to foster belonging to the valued spaces and environments of the nation (and this was the narrative plot of regional geography textbooks). Another way in which geography education contributed to the production of an imagined national space was through the linking together of apparently different places within the national space. Again, regional geography

¹ David Matless (1998) *Landscape and Englishness*, London: Reaktion Books.

texts played an important role here in suggesting that the disparate regions each added to the collective whole – thus ‘the prospering’ regions needed to support those with ‘declining industries’. Studying A Level geography in 1984 I remember being taken by the thematic maps at the back of the *Ordnance Survey Atlas of Britain*. These maps had the effect of projecting the idea that my own local geography was linked to a broader whole, particularly through the notion of ‘regions’ and the importance of regional policy which stressed the need to support those communities and places that were suffering from the disadvantages of having concentrations of industries that were ‘declining’ (given that this was 1984 I was very aware at the time of how the map of regional policy was being redrawn and certain communities – mining ones- were being singled out for special treatment).

The effect of these ways of imagining national space – the valued landscapes and the interdependent regions – was to offer a particular view of the ‘geography of British modernity’. It was once that allowed a version of citizenship based on relatively stable representations of space or ‘maps of meaning’. It fostered particular ways of ‘doing geography’, based on either detailed ideographic description or generalised maps of spatial science. As a geography student at school between 1977 and 1984, I was subjected to both. It was good as long as it lasted.

...which was until about 1980 (or thereabout)...

This was the time when geography ‘got political’. The old assumptions about the management of space (epitomised by the influential text by John House *The UK Space*¹) were challenged by the breakdown of the political consensus. Suddenly the old models of industrial location theory were replaced by ideas about the ‘spatial division of labour’ and the ‘limits of capital’. The assumption of a unified

¹ John House (1984) John House *The UK Space* 3rd Edition

national space was challenged by feminist geographers and those who spoke of a racially and (to a lesser extent because geographers have tended to steer clear of the subject) class divided society (collections of essays by geographers in this period are full of concerns about health, environmental crisis and crime). In this context it became difficult to teach geography on the assumption that we all belonged to a United Kingdom – the textbooks didn't match the reality. I think it's interesting (and significant?) that around 1990 it became increasingly rare to find geography textbooks specifically devoted to exploring the 'geography of Britain'. What was happening here is that the older maps of meaning – the representations of space that offered some understanding of the world and Britain's place in it – were no longer useful. At this time, of course, there was the introduction of a national curriculum for geography, one that has been criticised for offering an out-dated and anachronistic view of Britain's geography. It was a national curriculum that downplayed the importance of regional and local geographies.

By 1997 a new Labour government was stressing the importance of citizenship education. Geography teachers set out to explain how their subject met the criteria demanded. There are some who argue that citizenship can be 'delivered' by geography, whilst others suggest that geography is able to promote 'global citizenship', whatever that means. However, my concern about these approaches is that they underestimate the deep seated meanings that accompany the changes to landscapes, communities and places that have occurred in recent decades. There is a reason for this: these deeper attachments or complex maps of meaning are linked to processes of social and cultural change. It is common place to note that the process of de-industrialisation, which was accompanied by the decline of working-class communities, alongside those of globalisation and European integration resulted in a different set of spatial and economic relationships. But in his book *Identity of England* the historian Robert Colls¹

¹ Robert Colls (2002) *Identity of England*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. This is in fact an historical geography of ideas about Englishness.

argues that these processes led to a growing uncertainty about what it meant to live in the nation's space:

'When the staple northern industries began to splutter from the 1970s, very deep meanings choked with them. Buildings that for years had given habitude to landscape were brought down without a second glance"(p.341)

Colls argues that for anyone born in England between 1945 and 1955, most identities seemed secured. However, from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s it was gradually realised that the world didn't have to be like this and wasn't going to be for much longer. In the 1980s, myths of longevity and continuity were replaced by what was 'new' and 'improved'. By the 1990s, Colls argues, 'the British knew that they weren't what they were anymore':

"Our deepest structures of identity – to do with the idea of coming from a particular place and being a particular kind of person with roots and aptitudes and characteristics – for so long driven deep into the ground of our being, are decaying now from within. It is only a matter of time before they become unserviceable" (p.5).

I should note that Colls is no political conservative; but he is not yet prepared to give up on the idea of Englishness. He notes that being English is not a natural, or a fixed, or an absolute quality. But at the same time it is not an inconsequential myth liable to fade in post-modern times. Colls points out that certain ways of seeing England are 'on their way out'. The list includes: island races, garden hearts, industrial landscapes, ecclesiological villages, northern grit, southern charm, ordered relationships, rural redemption, rule Britannia. Whilst these ways of seeing England persist, they do so with less conviction. Colls concludes on an optimistic note, arguing that for the modern period, the English have 'put themselves in positions of extraordinary openness to the cultures of other peoples" (p.380).

So what does this mean for the geography teacher preparing to teach 9C on a Monday morning? There are no easy answers. However, I think it means that we have to recognise the ‘real and imagined’ aspects of places, landscapes and environments. When we teach about urban change and regeneration, or about farming and the landscape, or about coastal management, we need to have in mind the social and cultural meanings that attach to these places. Importantly, such a cultural understanding will require a historical perspective, one that recognises how identity and place are linked in complex ways. Above all, I think it’s about developing a ‘sense of place’ – I like Mike Crang’s notion of place as simply ‘time-thickened space’ – that links past and present in ‘usable’ ways. A model for this, I think, is provided in English Heritage’s excellent series on the *English Landscape*¹, written by historical geographers, that seem to find ways to simultaneously attend to the weight of history on the landscape and bring to life the processes that turn space into place. There are all sorts of challenges in developing this type of ‘reconstituted regional geography, but the educational gains to be won are huge.

¹ English Heritage (2006) *English Landscapes*, Collins (8 volumes)

“What is geography’s contribution to making citizens?”

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Since 2002, Schools in England have been required to teach Citizenship Education to pupils aged 11-16. The subject is based on three main strands: political literacy, community involvement and social and moral responsibility. The focus of the curriculum is on becoming informed citizens, and on developing personal skills. These include enquiry, communication, participation and responsible action. Although the subject introduces some novel topics into the national curriculum – including the legal and electoral systems, and employment rights, for example – there is as much emphasis on the distinctive nature of Citizenship Education as an active and participatory educational practice as on the subject areas themselves.

The rationales behind the introduction of this new subject are more wide-ranging than one might expect, and have been variously described by commentators as ‘neoliberal’, ‘communitarian’, ‘lefty’, ‘unwittingly racist’ and ‘psychobabble’. Certainly, we can draw many parallels between Citizenship Education and the political rhetoric of some of New Labour’s key figures: David Blunkett’s Civil Renewal agenda, Tony Blair’s disdain for ‘job culture’ and his promotion of the idea of ‘no rights without responsibilities’, and Gordon Brown’s recent call for the establishment of common British values; what he calls “habits of citizenship around which we can and must unite” (Brown’s speech to the labour party conference, September 2006).

This renders school pupils actively responsible for the future of so-called British society, and subject to a curriculum which explicitly seeks to produce particular kinds of people. Nothing about this is fundamentally different from the history of schooling – which has always been closely related to the delineation of social norms, the governing of people, and the future of the nation and the economy.

What is distinctive about Citizenship Education, though, is the way in which it makes explicit these practices of citizen-formation. Its subject areas, teaching methods and reflexive practices open up the circumstances of pupil's own government to interrogation, analysis and debate in a way which other subjects rarely have the opportunity to explore. Citizenship Education can therefore enable pupils to question the circumstances of their own schooling; bodies of knowledge; practices and 'identities'. Not only are they being asked to indulge in the current 'learning to learn' rhetoric, but they may also be 'learning to think critically about their own education'.

Citizenship Education, at its most basic, is about relations between people, the way in which we are governed and govern others, the values and dispositions which bring 'us' together and stand 'us' apart. Geography too concerns itself with how such relations map out in the world, and therefore allows us to consider our place within the world. Geography helps us to put a materiality and an imaginary to those facets of Citizenship Education which may otherwise lie aloof from considerations of space, place and scale – concepts which help us to understand the world in which we live. It allows us to identify patterns, examine causes, offer explanations, make connections, interrogate meanings, see processes in context, and to analyse and critique. These are dispositions pertinent to understanding the bigger picture of Citizenship Education – and which bring together social, economic, cultural, political, and environmental factors to enrich, complicate and trouble our understandings of the world.

In this way, Geography's contribution to making citizens is to critically reflect on the conditions in which 'we' are made citizens. It enables us to rethink that which we take for granted, to question the way in which the (social, economic, cultural, political, environmental) worlds operate, to unpack concepts and geographical 'facts'. This is undisciplined geographical thinking which promotes the development of radically self-doubting and arguably more democratic citizens. A

good start may be to turn all our maps upside-down, take out all the boundaries, and see how fundamentally it changes our viewpoints.



source: <http://oca.slu.edu/images/worldmapupsidedown.GIF> accessed 20/01/07

What is Geography's Contribution to Making Citizens?

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Can citizens be made? Is citizenship something that we learn or feel? In a time of rapid social, economic, political and cultural change does citizenship actually mean anything, is it tangible, is it material? Do people feel that they are citizens of one place or, to cite a cliché, 'citizens of the world'? If any subject can answer these questions, it is geography. With its focus on space and place it can approach citizenship as both geographical materiality and provide social and cultural interpretation.

Citizenship in its material (including economic) and political sense is extremely important. Holding the 'right' kind of passport is crucial at a time of hyper-mobility linked with hyper-anxiety about who crosses international borders and with what kind of intentions. Different passports and different citizenships hold very different sets of rights, meanings and status. Holders of British passports appear to enjoy greater freedoms to travel and gain visas than someone from Sudan or Mongolia. Citizenship in a particular country can be learned, examined and awarded – immigrants can do courses and be tested on their 'citizenship' knowledge. Hence, being a citizen of one place is not a fixed political identity because with movement and re-settlement it can be changed; some people are allowed to hold dual citizenship.

Citizenship in its social and cultural sense is often much more intangible. For many people it can remain dormant, seldom thought about. It might only seem to matter at times of particular events (whether or not one's nation will go to war) or in particular places when proof of who you are can determine whether or not you can get 'home' (such as people affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 who lost all sources of their identity).

Geography as a spatiality, a mapping of borders, the containment of a nation state, can 'make' citizens. It can create the space of a particular territory which then determines who is a citizen of that nation and who is not. Legislation, set by the state, defined within the nation's boundaries, literally 'makes citizens'. Within the context of empires citizenship can transcend national boundaries, however at times of shift to independent statehood, what constitutes 'citizenship' can be rapidly 'unmade' and people left in a political condition of statelessness. This happened to Ugandan Asians who had retained their British citizenship on Uganda's independence. However when Uganda introduced a system of 'Africanisation' in the 1960s Asian Ugandans were denied a place in the newly emerging state; they were told that they no longer belonged, being born on Ugandan soil no longer determined their right to a home. Fearing a substantial immigration of these 'British Citizens', almost overnight the British Government changed legislation through a British Nationality Act and the Ugandan Asians had their British citizenship removed. This rendered them stateless and in an extremely vulnerable situation. There were campaigns against the British government who were shamed and forced to introduce a quota system for Ugandan Asian migrants – but they did not enter Britain as citizens but as immigrants. While this is an historical incident geographical interpretation can provide important explanation and help students of the subject understand the ways in which citizenship affects people's lives, livelihoods and futures. In this particular incident, political geographies of empire, independence and post-colonialism provide the contextualisation; geographies of immigration supply insight into the movements and motivations of people who traverse national boundaries; social geographies afford explanation of the arrival and settlement of groups of people; cultural geographies present understandings of the meaning of places, home and community for those who moved.

In a more contemporary, but connected, story, geography, through its broad reach of understanding the world, its conceptualisation of scale and its analysis of global change, can examine the meaning of citizenship. It can take 'British

Citizenship' as its starting point and move outwards to investigate where this particular form of citizenship has a meaning, and in which geographies it plays a part. In 2002 a relatively small but not insignificant number of British Citizens were 'made' quite literally by the Overseas Territories Act. Any resident (for more than a particular number of years) of the former British Dependent Territories Overseas became British Citizens. This dramatic constitutional change was in large part triggered by the tiny Caribbean island of Montserrat. When just over 11,000 people were threatened by a newly active volcano in 1985 the statelessness or 'citizenshiplessness' of these residents became apparent and problematic. As many, with Britain's help, evacuated to the UK they were shocked to find that being part of the British empire did not confer citizenship status. They were treated as immigrants and had to apply for temporary leave to remain. They had been taught through their geography lessons that they were part of Britain, that the British Queen was their head of state and represented on their island by the British Governor. What they had not known was that this authority over the territory did not provide them with any citizenship rights – they were stateless. This political incongruity was critiqued by human rights activists, by the European Union and many others. New legislation went through parliamentary process and became law in May 2002. New British citizens were made in large part through the physical geography events on a small island in a distant place. Geography is the subject that can explain and analyse all aspects of this transformation from the physical geography of the volcanic eruption through to the social and cultural meaning of a new political status both at 'home' on the island and in the 'new home' of the UK.

Geography cannot make citizens but it can create the intellectual space for an exploration of the meaning, spatiality and contextualisation of what citizenship is, where it plays a role and what future citizenship rights might or might not entail. It can also help those involved in the subject consider the issue of rights and responsibilities of citizenship, the meanings of 'belonging' and connectedness with places and spaces, it can also show the injustice of citizenship and non-

citizenship. Geographical analysis of citizenship is an excellent way to investigate global justice – for me this is a major contribution of geography as a subject. Citizenship becomes meaningful when it is understood and contextualised, then people can interpret what makes them citizens and what they might choose to do with such an identity.