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Teaching Twenty-First Century Citizenship: Social Psychological Foundations

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Abstract

Effective American (U.S.) citizenship in the Twenty-first century may require a shift in the value orientation which currently characterizes American life. Two components of the American value system are becoming increasingly dysfunctional. American social science, and accordingly the social studies curriculum, has become narrowly focused on an economic model of human decision-making. Such a one-dimensional model of man, because it invalidates by omission justice-based models of decision-making, leaves American society with a reduced capacity for addressing social dilemmas, particularly commons-type problems. Secondly, American cultural life has been dominated by a heavy and one-sided commitment to primary control. Such an imbalance, which invalidates secondary control as a means of meeting basic control needs, leaves American citizens with no normatively sanctioned motivational dynamic for addressing social dilemmas. Social studies, as the discipline most explicitly charged with promoting citizenship, may become increasingly ineffective in meeting this challenge unless teachers at all levels and in all curriculum domains can correct the values imbalance in American culture.

Introduction

As we approach the 21st century, planet Earth and its inhabitants are undergoing massive transformations. The collapse of communism as a viable economic system, the dissolution of the Russian hegemony over the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and the diminished threat of nuclear conflict between the great powers can be seen as progress toward a more hopeful future for humankind. Similarly the belated recognition of the hopelessness of apartheid as a long term social system in South Africa can be seen as progress toward a more humane and less racist international order. These hopeful indicators, however, are counterbalanced by concerns for the environment, indications of a growing gap between rich nations and poor nations,

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spreading crises in drug use, and other indicators of social disorganization in the developed world.

The problems of the future which are clearly evident at present provide a worthy and valid guide for reflection on citizenship education. Among these problems perhaps the most troublesome, because it is the most all-encompassing, is the worldwide ecological crisis. In the Third World environmental degradation accelerates as nations like Brazil and the Philippines exploit their rainforests for lumber or agricultural expansion. In the developed world energy consumption continues to accelerate as the hard lessons taught by OPEC in the 1970s are forgotten. The threat to the ozone layer continues to be a problem, with Third World nations pushing to develop industries which produce chlorofluorocarbons, as the developed nations ban their use.

The accumulating evidence that these and other trends pose massive threats to the habitability of the planet suggests content for the public school curriculum. Certainly young people need to know how any ecosystem works as a network of interdependent components, and how imbalances affect all elements in the system. Instructional models for teaching such content are currently available (Novak, 1980; Novak & Gowin, 1984), and can be appropriately incorporated into the design of science curricula.

The less obvious curriculum imperative, however, is appropriately part of social education. The ecological crisis is finally a people problem. One person's decision to act in an environmentally irresponsible fashion has a negligible impact on the environment; the individual decisions of three billion people to pollute will, in the aggregate, destroy the environment in short order. The problem for an environmentally sound social studies curriculum is how to design instruction which will impact on the individual decisions of students far into the future. This problem, while easy to verbalize, is resistant to solution because of long held and deeply cherished social and cultural values of Americans. Because of the complexity of the problem, this paper can provide only a broad outline of the problem for pedagogy. This outline is offered in the hope that it will lead to more detailed consideration of the many facets of the problem.

Social Studies and Education for Citizenship

There is a long association of the social studies curriculum with the responsibility for preparing youth for responsible citizenship. Most rationales for teaching history, civics, economics, government, and geography share an explicit claim that the study of these disciplines will provide the knowledge base for the informed decision-making of future citizens. Given that role for the social studies, curricular decisions in social studies must be influenced by the nature of the problems which future citizens will confront. Curricular work must include a concern for defining those problems in terms of the value systems of society.

In the past much of the work in social studies curriculum has taken the approach of identifying basic explicit and implicit value systems of American society, and designing curricula for inculcating youth with those values. Thus the principles embodied in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights have served as explicit cornerstones for the design of curriculum. The traditions of English Common Law and the ideologies of competitive individualism and free enterprise have served as an implicit framework for much social studies curricular work. Building on these cultural foundations and working within these ideological frameworks, social studies educators have tried to select that knowledge from history and the social sciences which will help young people learn to function within American society as adults. Such an approach had considerable legitimacy as long as American society functioned in a physical environment of low complexity.

The challenge of the 21st century, however, is fundamentally different. American ideology has always presumed similarity between the sum of the individual interests of citizens and the collective interest of the society as a whole. Under this presumption free competition between individuals yields the ultimate good of the society as a whole. While that presumption may have had validity in Jefferson's world of small farmers, or in small New England villages, its validity in a complex interdependent world of high technology and mass consumption is clearly questionable. In the complex world of the late 20th century it is already evident that many problems of society can only be addressed through collective cooperative action. Social studies curriculum workers will increasingly need to challenge existing ideological premises of society and balance them with values based on cooperative group behavior.

The "tragedy of the commons" metaphor serves as an effective illustration of the nature of the challenge in the context of environmental crisis. Accordingly the tragedy of the commons will be used to focus discussion on the inadequacy of traditional American ideology.

The Tragedy of the Commons:
An Advance Organizer for the Environmental Crisis

One basic belief of the American political-economic culture is that when each pursues his or her own best interest, the best interest of society as a whole is also secured. As Hardin (1968) demonstrates in his essay, "The Tragedy of the Commons," this assumption is unwarranted. He describes a situation in which a common grazing field is shared by a group of shepherds. Each shepherd is free to use the commons, and is faced with the decision of whether to increase the size of his herd. The situation is such that if one or only a few shepherds increase herd size, the commons is not endangered. However, if all choose to increase herds, the commons will be overgrazed and destroyed. In this situation, no individual shepherd's actions can influence the final outcome. This can only be effected by collective action.

The tragedy of the commons serves as an appropriate metaphor for the environmental problems facing the human race. The atmosphere is the commons shared by everyone. Each individual is free to pollute the atmosphere with auto exhaust, pesticides, and fluorocarbons, in the pursuit of such personal benefits as private transportation, more marketable produce, and air conditioning. Yet if everyone contributes to the pollution of the atmosphere at the rate Americans have been doing, the environment cannot handle the load.

The tragedy of the commons illustrates a class of problems we call social dilemmas. Three elements are shared by all social dilemmas; (1) collective effort will provide some public good; (2) securing the public good is costly in some fashion for the individual, but less costly than the loss of the public good; (3) the individual acting independently cannot either secure or condemn the public good (Lynn & Oldenquist, 1986). While environmental degradation is being used as an illustration for this article, other societal problems are readily identifiable as social dilemmas, e.g., declining levels of informed political participation in a democracy, socially destructive mass media programming, and overpopulation.

Social Dilemmas and Economic Models of Citizenship

Social dilemmas have always been problematic for American culture, because Americans have traditionally accepted an economic model of human behavior and human psychology. The coincidence of the founding of the American Republic with the intellectual models of man and society of Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham may have contributed to the informal institutionalization of the economic model of man in America. More importantly, the conditions of life in America, particularly the mobility of American life, put the qualities of self-reliance and economic independence on a pedestal. As a result, American citizenship values are characterized by an excessive form of egocentrism, which is most clearly delineated by the utilitarian models of Smith and Bentham. Most recently, American social science has adopted these utilitarian models for the study of individual decision making in society. The conceptual structure of society which underlies many current high school social studies texts is grounded in this economic ideology of human nature.

The economic model of citizenship is composed of two elements, a theory of utility and a theory of judgment or choice (Tyler, Rasinski & Griffin, 1986). The elements of the theory of utility are: (1) maximization of personal gain; (2) emphasis on material rewards; and (3) focus on short-term gains and losses. Of these, personal gain is the dominant element. The theory of judgment proposes that individuals make decisions based on a more or less adequate calculation of probabilities that action will lead to subjectively favorable consequences. Such a socially validated view of humankind presents a quandary for a society confronted with social dilemmas, as the very structure for thought about social problems is too narrowly focused on the individual's pursuit of self-interest. A social studies curriculum which attempts to work within this economic framework to prepare young people for their future roles as citizens will necessarily be inadequate.

An Alternative to the Economic Model of Man

In recognition of the inherent limits of the economic model of man as a basis for policy-making regarding social dilemmas, several alternatives have been proposed (Tyler, Rasinski & Griffin, 1986). Those alternatives have been labelled the *distributive justice* and the *procedural justice* models. The distributive justice model focuses on the decision-maker's application of principles of fairness in the allocation of outcomes. The procedural justice model focuses on the decision-maker's application of principles of fairness in the procedures which led to the allocation of outcomes. These models of human decision-making provide a worthy alternative for shaping social studies instruction consistent with the goals of citizenship. Their utility lies in their superior applicability in the solution of social dilemmas. By focusing attention on principles of justice, attention is focused away from a narrow concern with immediate self-interest, the hobgoblin in the tragedy of the commons.

How well do the justice-based models of human decision-making match up with our knowledge of human nature? A number of social psychological studies provide evidence that human beings do respond to issues of justice in making decisions, but conditions surrounding the situations may limit the tendency toward considerations of justice. Tyler et al. (1986) report 14 studies which explored the comparative influence of justice-based judgments and gain-and-loss judgments on political evaluations and behaviors (Rasinski, 1984; Rasinski & Tyler, 1985; Tyler, 1984a; 1984b; 1984c; Tyler & Caine, 1981; Tyler & Folger, 1980; Tyler, Rasinski & McGraw, 1985). They concluded that: (1) fairness judgments are distinct from judgments for personal gain; and (2) fairness exercises an independent influence on political evaluations and behaviors in studies including indices of both gain/loss and of fairness.

Other research throws light on the conditions under which judgments of fairness presumably will operate. Kahle & Beatty (1987), in a study of the effect of the Oregon bottle return bill on cognitive dynamics, reported evidence that subjective norms and attitudes are determinants of behavior in response to social dilemmas. Rapaport (1988), in a study of decisions to contribute to the public good, provided evidence that such decisions are dependent upon the perception of the collective good and altruism. Schwartz & Tessler (1973), in a study of intentions toward organ donation for transplant purposes, provided evidence that personal normative beliefs (beliefs tied to potential loss of self-esteem) are powerful influences on intentions. Elsewhere, Schwartz reports that the conditions necessary to the activation of moral

norms include: (1) the belief that the action will impact on the welfare of others; and (2) the individual must ascribe responsibility for the act to him/herself. An eloquent validation of the truths of these conclusions was witnessed by millions via television in the heroic acts of individual citizens in the wake of the collapse of Interstate 880 in the San Francisco Bay area earthquake of 1989. These studies indicate that the psychodynamics which underlie the effective institutionalization of principles of justice, because of the value element, are far more complex than those which underlie the teaching of knowledge and skills.

The Instructional Problem Posed by the Inadequacy of the Economic Model of Man

While the economic model of man is inadequate for dealing effectively with social dilemmas, it is adequate for many areas of decision-making. It is thus inappropriate to entirely replace the economic model with a justice-based model. Rather, the justice-based model is needed as a supplement, so that young people have a socially validated alternative when confronting citizen decision situations for which the self-interest model is inappropriate. This implies a need for experience in distinguishing between decision frames for which self-interest is the most adequate criterion, and those for which justice-based criteria are more appropriate. This is a relatively minor instructional problem. It is easily addressed by case studies conducted under a social simulation rubric. When students are placed in choice situations where the self-interest model leads to failure, the experience, appropriately mediated conceptually by the teacher, may create an openness to consideration of the argument for justice-based rationales. Experience with these rationales, if structured so as to require resolution of intergroup conflict, could equip young people with a cognitive foundation for identifying appropriate grounds for decision-making.

The really difficult problem for a science of pedagogy, however, concerns the conditions under which individuals extend justice-based consideration to other individuals and groups who are perceived as outsiders. In many social dilemmas facing American society in the 21st century, such as environmental protection, the crisis arises because the citizens of other societies are attempting to do those very things in which we as a society have long engaged. Cutting down forests for lumber or agricultural ground is a case in point. American pioneers in the 19th century did this with abandon, clear-cutting timber for farm land. This activity was not seen as a serious problem as there was always more land over the next hill. In the late 20th century, however, clear-cutting by South Americans is seen by many Americans as an imposition on the shared environment, as cutting of the Amazon rain forest threatens to change climate patterns world wide.

Before justice-based models of decision-making in social dilemmas have a chance for normative acceptance, all parties to the dilemmas must be accorded equal moral consideration. The environmental crisis is one in which every citizen of the planet is a party to the dilemma. The fact that resolution of the environmental crisis involves all humanity working cooperatively may strain the human capacity for conflict resolution. There has seldom been a test of the capacity of human beings to extend moral consideration to every other human being. Most nation-states have difficulty securing cooperation within their own citizenry.

It remains to be seen whether Americans can accept a position of equality with other nations, particularly Third World nations. How readily will Americans recognize that South Americans have no less right to cut their rain forests than American pioneers on the frontier had a right to clear the forest for farms? It is unrealistic to expect people in other nations to forgo their own development in order to preserve the atmosphere's capacity to handle the pollution generated by our high levels of consumption. It is always easier for individuals to blame outsiders for their problems than to acknowledge that they are themselves part of the problem.

If Americans are to secure international cooperation in the resolution of the environmental crisis, it will be necessary for the American public to accept the need for self-restraint. Without evidence of good faith demonstrations of self-restraint on the part of the American public, it is doubtful that Third World peoples will be agreeable to restraining themselves to accommodate our profligate consumption. The political difficulties of the leaders of Colombia in suppressing the growers of coca is a case study illustration of this kind of problem. The Andean peasants see cocaine addiction as an American problem. They see no reason why they should forgo producing their cash crop because North Americans lack the capacity for self-control. The American problem with self-control, however, may very well be deeply rooted in American cultural values.

American Cultural Values and Self-Control

One of the principle forces driving human behavior is the need to feel in control. This need is variously conceptualized by psychologists as efficacy or competence. While there are differences in the meanings of these terms, both refer to the mental state associated with success in achieving one's intentions.

There are many different ways that individuals can meet their needs for feeling in control. One useful distinction has been labelled primary vs. secondary control (Weisz, Rothbaum & Blackburn, 1984). In primary control the individual experiences satisfaction by imposing a change on the physical or social environment. In secondary control the individual experiences satisfaction by choosing to exercise control over the self. In crude terms a culture which places exclusive value in the experience of primary control could be associated with the cult of machismo; in such a culture the individual who achieves the satisfaction of being in control by exercising control over the self (secondary control) may be classified as a wimp.

American cultural values have traditionally emphasized the machismo

outlook, as evidenced by popular mythology. The movies and television have much more often idealized the John Wayne character or Rambo than the David Carradine character in the television series *KungFu*. It is telling that the KungFu character was trained in the Orient. Many East Asian cultures place a premium on the capacity for self-restraint. As reported by Azuma (1984), Japanese culture balances the value placed on primary and secondary control, granting the practice of secondary control respectability and cultural legitimacy. Japanese children learn to distinguish more effectively between situations in terms of the form of expression the control need should take, rather than feeling the normative pressure to pursue primary control motives exclusively. Thus Japanese children learn how to control the destructive effects on the psyche of situations which cannot be controlled. In contrast, American cultural values bias Americans toward primary control, so that normative influences operate to prevent the development of a capacity for self-control.

One negative consequence of this cultural bias that has been cited in the literature is the capacity of a culturally pervasive single-minded pursuit of primary control to provoke "commons dilemmas" (Weisz, Rothbaum & Blackburn, 1984). What is suggested here is that in the United States a cultural value complex, driven by the primary control motive, operates to encourage an impulsive commitment to the pursuit of self-centered gratification of the felt need of the moment. Because the satisfaction of the control need through secondary channels has been closed off by cultural values, individuals have no normatively acceptable basis for justifying any personal efforts to control their behavior. In a cultural climate in which everyone else is perceived as rapidly pursuing self-interest, the individual who does not do so experiences self-doubt, and loss of self-esteem.

Several social problems of epidemic proportions among adolescents document the operation and consequences of such a cultural value system. Currently, the major problems facing public schools include drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, adolescent lack of self-discipline for assuming responsibility for one's actions, and physical violence. All of these can be explained in terms of an incapacity of young people to exercise effective self-control. It can be argued that they are operating in consistency with the implicit American cultural value of pursuing self-interest. Of course, it is short-term self-interest, and long-term disaster. Yet our society, while decrying these social ills, continues to promote the virtues of primary control.

If Americans are to reach the point where they can realistically apply principles of justice to addressing the commons problem of the global environment, we must first address our pervasive cultural value problem with the control motive. It is not sufficient to attempt to legitimize justice-based decision-making; as a culture we must also provide motivational support for that kind of approach to social dilemmas. The public schools may be particularly well situated for advancing this agenda.

Curriculum Support System for Citizenship Goals

Implementing changes of the magnitude indicated above requires broad-based transformation of the curriculum. An explication of those transformations can be organized under four headings: (1) changes in the disciplinary content of the curriculum; (2) changes in curricular focus; (3) changes in the instructional strategies employed; and (4) changes in the psycho-social context of instruction.

The curricular content of the social studies is currently imbalanced toward the economic decision-making model of humankind. Over the past two decades, academic and consumer economics has become commonplace as a course offering. An economics curriculum necessarily assumes an economic model of humankind, and is accordingly limited. There is a need to balance this focus with a jurisprudentially oriented curriculum, constructed on a justice-based model of humankind. Ideally, a civics course would provide this balance. The existing civics curriculum, however, has been unequal to this task. It should therefore be reworked to focus on moral issues in relation to problems current in society.

The curricular focus of a moral issues curricula should be on problems current in society. As moral issues are valuational, their consideration is authentic experience for students only to the extent that the issues have consequential implications for them. Problems that are current in society can be more readily related to consequences for students and can thereby become more authentic learning. By focusing the discussion of moral issues on current problems of society, there is the additional benefit that the moral curriculum can be embedded in the context of the larger culture, and extracted from the culture of the school. By drawing the issues for a moral curricula from the popular media, students will more readily associate issues in the media with a moral dimension. The potential for transferring learning out of the classroom is enhanced when learning occurs in authentic context. Of even more significance for effective citizenship is the potential for helping students learn to distinguish between decision frames in which self-interest should be the guide, and frames where the public interest is the more appropriate guide to behavior. This is a metacognitive capability, and will not develop from learning experiences which have been decontextualized.

As a further consideration, it is important to recognize that a civics course cannot stand alone. Ideally, it should be a culmination of a multiplicity of curricular threads which have been woven through prior social studies, science, and literature curricula. A moral issues curriculum must be implemented in developmental context. Moral dilemma discussions can and should be a part of social studies, science, and literature curricula beginning as early as the fourth or fifth grade. Adolescents with several years' experience discussing moral issues in curricular context should be more adequately prepared to benefit from a moral issue focused civics course.

An effective moral issues curriculum also implies particular types of in-

struction. Research on moral reasoning development supports the efficacy of structured moral dilemma discussion as instructional strategy. Accordingly, a move from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction is warranted. The concern for changes in instructional strategy, however, is broader than this. Instruction in American schools is still largely dominated by an individualistic, competitive orientation. There is a need to balance this element of school culture with cooperative interdependent learning experiences. Recent interest in cooperative learning suggests the viability of these instructional formats as a balance to existing competitive patterns. What is needed now is research to determine what approaches to cooperative learning will most effectively counterbalance the effects of a pervasive competitive curriculum. Possibly some forms of cooperative learning will foster and legitimize secondary control as a counter-balance to primary control oriented behavior. At the very least, cooperative learning will promote the values of team work, and the benefits of subsuming one's immediate personal interest to the larger group interest.

Finally, there is a need to address classroom climate as a curricular issue. There is a long-standing debate in American education over the issue of permissiveness in the schools. When schools are perceived as failing to meet societal expectations, one of the first responses of the public is to accuse the schools of permissiveness. Unfortunately such accusations fly wide of the mark. Permissiveness is not the core of the problem, although permissiveness is more problematic when primary control is the dominant cultural value. Permissiveness implies that constraints have not been placed on the behavior of youth. Countering this problem by cracking down on young people, and projecting a hard line, in effect imposes controls from the outside, when internal control, self-control, is needed.

Since the primary control imbalance is a culturally pervasive phenomena, then efforts to correct the imbalance must be broadly based in the curriculum. Such efforts must be long-term, beginning in elementary school, and cross-curricular, incorporated into the hidden curriculum of all subjects. In short, the efforts must be school-wide and elemental to the curriculum. It is imperative that teachers recognize the centrality of secondary control to the ultimate resolution of environmental, and other, social crises. If teachers can learn to value secondary control as an important personal quality in its own right, then it will become an implicit part of the motivational dynamic they project in the classroom. As elementary school students sense that teachers place great value on the students' capacity to control themselves, the legitimacy of secondary control as a cultural value can be restored.

Conclusion

The 21st century is less than a decade away. The kind of curriculum change envisioned here, however, is a long-range strategy, and would require decades to produce results in changed citizen behavior. Even under the best of cir-

cumstances it would be unrealistic to expect this curriculum change to impact on American values before the second decade of the 21st century. Yet if this analysis of American culture is sound, there is little reason to expect resolution of our current environmental problems without a sea change in American values and culture. It is imperative to begin rethinking the fit between traditional American culture and values, and the emerging realities of the 21st century.

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Studying Peace in Elementary Schools: Laying a Foundation for the "Peaceable Kingdom"

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Peace education in the United States is a patchwork of activities and inactivities, or routine and invention—like so much else in American education.

Much of the emphasis in peace education is on avoiding nuclear war. This is particularly the case with secondary and junior high school students. It is understandable that nuclear destruction hangs oppressively over all of us. The United States is one of the world's great nuclear powers and the decision to use, to control, or to eliminate nuclear weapons will be decisions in which the U.S. must be a principal participant. Disarmament and the avoidance of nuclear war are only a part of the solution to the problem of creating a peaceful world. A world at peace is not, and can not be, a world without disagreement and conflict. Resolving, in a peaceful way, conflicts that occur between nations, between interest groups, and between individuals, is a key part of living in the "peaceable kingdom." It is also possibly the most important part of peace education aimed at elementary age children.

DeKeyser and VanHoof (1983) propose to rationalize curriculum about peace by representing the curriculum as a cube. Along one dimension are knowledge, attitude, and action. Along another dimension are social contexts, a micro-context involving personal and interpersonal relations, a meso-context, involving interactions within broader boundaries (for younger children these might be within schools, but could also be within a city or a country), and a macro-context, which involves interactions on the international scene. The third dimension identifies two views of peace, "negative peace," that is, an absence of war, and "positive peace," that is, cooperative attitudes and interactions and non-violent solutions to conflict (Galtung, 1984).[1] One of the useful purposes of this kind of model is to help us keep track of the emphases which we give in our teaching, for example, to see whether all our activities and analyses in peace education tend to be at a micro-level or conversely, deal only with questions of international conflicts and overlook the need to live and work in a positive way with the people who