

Ian Davies, Gillian Hampden Thompson, Maria Tsouroufli, Vanita Sundaram, Pippa Lord, Jennifer Jeffes, George Bramley

Editorial

In this issue of the *Journal of Social Science Education* we explore the theme of community in relation to citizenship education. We are delighted to present a series of articles and book reviews in which there is discussion of conceptual and empirical studies that further our understanding of a vitally significant and complex field.

'Community' is a significant priority in many countries. David Cameron in the UK has proclaimed the importance of what he refers to as 'the big society'; Barack Obama worked as a community organizer and many of the policies he is now developing seem to have connections with that experience; Angela Merkel has raised issues about multicultural communities in Germany. In education 'service learning', 'community involvement' and 'citizenship education' are key terms that reflect the need to respond to perceived changes in the nature of political engagement; debates about the extent to which young people understand and are involved in society; the significance of gender to the possibilities and forms of involvement in society, and, the need to recognise, celebrate and further develop a multicultural society.

When we began work on this issue of *Journal of Social Science Education* we wished to include a variety of perspectives (e.g. service learning, character education, political literacy); a range of countries within and beyond Europe; issues that affect students of different ages. We aimed to focus on education but were keen to welcome theoretical and other material that allows for consideration of issues using insights from a range of academic disciplines (e.g. urban education; community psychology; international development studies etc). We are delighted that our call for papers led to the submission of excellent papers which are summarised below.

The first article provides insights into events and issues in Japan in 2011. *Lynne Parmenter's* article discusses issues arising from the terrible events of March 2011 when a triple earthquake-tsunami-nuclear disaster rocked north-eastern Japan. She focuses on the role of teachers in saving lives and leading communities, and the role of schools as sites and agents of community and citizenship in the disaster situation. The article is structured around four themes, namely, the role of school leaders and teachers, the role of schools as sites of community, changing media representations of children and communities in the wider national context, and the birth of global citizenship as a meaningful concept.

The next 2 articles empirically explore issues in different parts of continental Europe from within and outside the European Union in the form of single country studies and comparative work. *Alistair Ross* explores how young people (aged 12 -18) in the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are constructing their identities, particularly their sense of

attachment to their country and to Europe. Two particular areas were identified: the sense of generational difference and the ways in which different groups created 'other' communities, within and without their country's borders. *Corinne Wyss* and *Alexander Lötscher* provide much needed empirical data about class councils in Switzerland in order to illustrate how action may be taken to promote citizenship in a school community. Using data from video recordings of fourteen class councils in secondary schools as well as interviews and questionnaires they argue that councils are popular but that their power is not always seen to be significant. The authors describe three forms of class councils that favour the development of communicative competences as a part of citizenship education.

We have then included 3 articles that emerge from empirical work in England. *Paul Warwick, Hilary Cremin, Tom Harrison* and *Carolynne Mason's* paper draws from the EngagED research project that used a mixed methods approach to explore the civic action and learning of young people living in both inner city and rural areas of socio-economic disadvantage. It presents an eco-systemic model of the host of factors and agencies that influence young people's civic identity and patterns of community engagement. It outlines two new civic learning spaces that were created in response to these complex ecologies and from these experiments in 'pre-figurative practice' proposes a set of key principles for the effective civic pedagogue. This radical notion of the civic educator moves away from educational strategies that seek to 'transform' young people into good future citizens, towards finding personalised ways of supporting young people 'as' citizens.

Don Rowe, Nicola Horsley, Tony Breslin and *Tony Thorpe* discuss results from a small scale qualitative study of how primary and secondary schools in three English local authorities responded to the introduction and subsequent inspection of a legal duty to promote community cohesion, following a series of 'race' riots in 2001 and the London bombings of 2005. Those in more multi-cultural areas responded with higher degrees of confidence than those in mono-ethnic areas. Most schools saw the policy positively and came to identify the curriculum and the school's ethos as the most important weapons in their armoury.

The final of the 3 articles on England is our own contribution to this issue. *Gillian Hampden Thompson, Ian Davies, Maria Tsouroufli, and Vanita Sundaram, Pippa Lord, Jennifer Jeffes* and *George Bramley* discuss issues and findings that are beginning to emerge from an ongoing study. 'Creating Citizenship Communities' is a 2 year project funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and which aims to identify current thinking and practice in schools; explore young people's perceptions and practice; and, through the development of a focussed impact strategy, encourage partnerships to be established between professionals and others. Using data from a national online survey of schools and fieldwork in 8 schools as well as analysis of secondary data sets we are identifying the high priority accorded by schools to community and to citizenship education but also becoming aware of some gaps between what could be described as legitimisation and implementation.

The final 2 articles in this issue provide analytical overviews of the nature of

citizenship and community. The first of these 2 pieces is written by *Pedro D. Ferreira, Joaquim L. Coimbra* and *Isabel Menezes*. They have analysed citizens' participation in their communities, illustrating significant dimensions of participation: power, dialogue, initiative, formality, pluralism and time. The discussion considers how these dimensions might contribute to making community organizations turn into 'schools of democracy' with specific recognition of the diversity of migrant groups. *Graham Pike* discusses the nature of 'internationalism' and 'internationalisation,' suggesting that tensions exist between these trends. Whereas the former might aim for the altruistic goals of international education proclaimed in institutional mission statements and government policies, the latter may relate more to neo-liberal perspectives that aim to secure additional resources through cross border flows of students and knowledge. An analytical matrix is offered as a tool with which higher education institutions can map their internationalisation activities and assess the extent to which they match their stated policies and missions. While the rhetoric of international education purports to promote the concept of a global community, the article suggests this claim may be illusory.

We are also delighted to include reviews on various aspects of citizenship and community. Patriotism is explored by *Gary Clemitshw*, religious education and community cohesion by *Andrew Peterson* and citizenship and immigration by *Alistair Ross*.

This editorial, the articles and reviews are presented here with the aim of developing our understanding and practice that may enhance our work to provide forms of education that are appropriate and effective in a contemporary pluralistic democracy. We are grateful to all the contributors to this issue.