Critical School Geography

Education for Global Citizenship

John Huckle
Chapter Nine  Democracy and citizenship

For a theoretically adequate understanding of transformation, it is useful to link political ecology with a critical political economy and social theory, especially critical state and hegemony theory. Ulrich Brand & Markus Wissen (1) pp. 6-7

Today, the distribution of planetary wealth and resources is largely uncontested by any political mechanism. . . . Without political intervention, global capital and technology will rule us without any democratic consultation, as naturally and indubitably as the rising oceans. Rana Dasgupta (2) p. 10

In order to prepare students for active participation in the public realm not only as volunteers and single-issue campaigners but as political adversaries, radical democratic citizenship education must recognize and educate political emotions, and foster an understanding of the role of power in the political, as well as of the fundamental differences in the interpretation and implementation of equality and liberty proposed by the political ‘left’ and ‘right’. Claudia Ruttenberg (3) p. 9

Any illusions that we were ever protected from the rank contempt of our rulers by the logic of democracy – because the government embodies the will of the people who elected it – are now gone. Their only concern was for the will that brought them to power. And now, many more protections that we imagined were still in place – from unemployment, from homelessness, from risks to our health in the workplace – will crumble into dust, as our society splits even more decisively into a small group of winners and a large mass of losers. Nesrine Malik (4) (following the Dominic Cummings affair (5), June 2020)

In this final chapter we return to the themes of left populism and radical democracy introduced in chapter one. Drawing on Mouffe’s theory of radical democracy and Ruttenberg’s notion of radical democratic citizenship education, it links the delivery of the SDGs to radical global democratisation and associated forms of ESDGC. Previous chapters and curriculum units have suggested what this involves but this chapter seeks the ‘big picture’ by suggesting that GCE should explore existing undemocratic forms of international relations and global governance and how they might be democratised. It concludes by linking radical democratic GCE to the existing
literature of GCE and its potential to reform school geography in the ways this book has outlined.

The curriculum unit focuses on global tax reform that involves closing down tax havens and taxing digital services. Designed to explore issues of global governance and citizenship, it draws on campaigning by the Tax Justice Network and articles on the geography of secrecy (6); the geographies of tax (7); and London’s financial services sector (8). Featuring a ‘partnership’ on global governance between the G20, OECD, EU, and the UK. It focuses on SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals and GCE topic one, Local, National and Global Systems.

**Strategies for social-ecological transformation**

Geographers Brand and Wissen (9) begin their review of strategies to deal with the social-ecological crisis by pointing out that flagship reports from international agents of global governance from the Brundtland report of 1987 (10), through Rio+20 and Agenda 21 in 1992, to the advocacy of the SDGs in 2015 fail, like Unesco’s guidance on ESDGC, to recognise undemocratic capitalist social and environmental relations as the main cause of unsustainable development. They review five academic approaches to transformation and conclude that an approach based on political ecology linked to critical theory and political economy subsumes the desirable elements of other approaches. As we saw in chapter six, political ecology claims that sustainable development as the greening of socialism (page 210) requires a radical democratic re-shaping of social and environmental (society-nature) relations so that citizens can take control of production, consumption, and social reproduction, and realise sustainability with social justice. Georgeson and Maslin (11) also realise that implementing the SDGs means challenging the primacy of economic-growth based paradigms (the greening of capitalism) in development discourse.

Harvey (12) suggests what is involved in democratising the global order. Capital circulates through seven inter-related ‘activity spheres’ of social-ecological reality in its search of profit (technologies and organisational forms; social relations; institutional and administrative arrangements; production and labour processes; relations to nature; the reproduction of daily life and of the species; and mental conceptions of the world). These evolve in dynamic interaction with one another, none is dominant, and each is subject to perpetual renewal and transformation (dialectical materialism, page 126). Change starts
Radical democracy

Democracy has two core meanings: the free and equal participation of citizens in power (the conditions of popular control and political equality highlighted in Figure 9.1) and the means by which citizens constantly critique and renew political systems (how democracy has been understood has changed and evolved over time). It has no grounds, justifications or guarantees outside of citizens and so free of external ‘gods’, they are able to use democracy as a means of developing the positive freedom (page 44) that allows liberty, equality and sustainability for all. In contemporary liberal democracies these core meanings, together with democracy’s potential for positive freedom, have largely been forgotten and there is a need to rethink power and agency (14) in the face of corporate and financial power. Radical democracy seeks to revive core meanings so that, as Harvey suggests, they become effective in an increasing number of spheres and scales of social activity, so enabling the concept of global citizenship to take on added meaning.

While the concept of radical democracy (15) has acquired a number of interpretations within critical theory, I draw on the post-Marxist approach of Chantal Mouffe that links it to hegemonic struggle, radical reformism, agonism, and left populism.

Mouffe (16) maintains that radical democracy is to be achieved in a hegemonic way via an immanent critique (17) of existing neoliberal society that compares what democracy exists with what democracy should or might be. While recent neoliberal decades have been characterised by post-democracy (society continues to have all the institutions of democracy but they have become a formal shell (18)), democracy lives on in the popular imagination and its core critical meanings can be reactivated to subvert the existing neoliberal hegemonic order and create a different one. As we have seen in previous chapters, the agents of such renewal are social movements and political parties.
What is Democracy?

“Like fire, or painting or writing, democracy seems to have been invented more than once, and in more than one place”
- Robert A. Dahl - On Democracy

Literally meaning ‘rule by [the] people’, democracy is a form of government involving collective decision-making. Political legitimacy comes from the consent and control of the governed - rather than from wealth, divine-right conferred by a deity, or military might.

Democracy has meant different things, to different people, at different times. The nature of democracy - who ‘the people’ are, and the systems and institutions which make democratic rule realisable - has been contested throughout its 2,500 year history.

When we refer to ‘democracy’, we could be talking about an ideal of how the public ought to govern a state. Or, we could be talking about the particular political system and institutions that are practically needed to bring about the conditions for democracy.

Key principles of democracy

How democracy has been understood has changed and evolved over time. The International Institute for Democratic and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) defines democracy as having two conditions:

1. **Popular Control**
   - Concerns what powers are being distributed (political control over authoritative political decision-making)

2. **Political Equality**
   - Concerns how the powers should be distributed (equally) and implemented (impartially)

According to their State of Democracy framework, the extent to which a system of government is democratic is based on how far it meets the following criteria:

- **Representative government** e.g. free political parties
- **Fundamental rights** e.g. social rights and equality
- **Checks on government** e.g. judicial independence
- **Impartial administration** e.g. absence of corruption
- **Participatory engagement** e.g. direct democracy

Figure 9.1 What is democracy (19)
of many kinds that oppose the power of elites and are united by discourses (ecosocialism, anti-globalisation, global democracy, a green new deal, sustainability) that provide a political vocabulary to explain people’s subordination and how realising liberty and equality via radical democracy can remove it.

A hegemonic formation is a configuration of social practices of different natures: economic, cultural, political and juridical, whose articulation is secured around some key symbolic signifiers which shape the ‘common sense’ and provide the normative framework of a given society. (16) pp. 43-4

Hegemonic struggle involves disarticulating established social practices, transforming them, and introducing new ones. This involves redefining hegemonic signifiers, such as democracy, and their mode of articulation. Whereas neoliberalism articulates democracy with free markets, private property and unfettered individualism, left populism articulates it with equal rights, the social appropriation of the means of production, and popular sovereignty. Similarly the signifier sustainability can be articulated in a reformist or radical mode (page 210). Different articulations give rise to different social practices, forms of development, politics and citizenship.

Mouffe follows Gramsci in recognising the relative autonomy of the state rather than seeing it as an oppressive institution determined by the economy that needs to be abolished (a key feature of her post-Marxism). Radical reformism argues that there is no necessary relationship between capitalism and liberal democracy; that it is possible to use the features of liberal democracy (division of powers, universal suffrage, multi-party system, civil rights, the five criteria listed in Figure 9.1) to advance democratic demands; but that liberal democracy itself needs radicalising to incorporate new demands and new ways of doing politics.

Accepting liberal democracy does not mean accepting capitalism (political liberalism can exist without economic liberalism) and radicalising democracy necessarily includes a postcapitalist dimension as many forms of subordination that need to be challenged are the consequences of capitalist power relations. Mouffe does not give the working class an a priori privileged role in anticapitalist struggle, but echoes intersectionality theory in recognising many overlapping sites of identity formation and subordination from which people struggle on the basis of their concrete situations.
This argument concerning liberal democracy can be extended to the institutions of global governance that should be reformed to produce a global accountable democracy (20). The treaties underlying their formation should be mutually accepted by nation states and they should follow five basic internal rules:

- Democratic selection of representatives at local or state level and indirect appointment of members of the global boards and councils
- Qualified country representation by rules such as turns or weights
- Policy consensus built by expertise and experience
- Explicit imperative mandates on policy
- And Accountability on the basis of performance and conduct (20) p. 14=15

Mouffe’s concept of agonism stems from her conceptions of the political and politics:

- The political refers to the dimension of antagonism that is inherent in human relations (21) p. 15 and is constitutive of society (22) p.9. It requires recognizing the hegemonic nature of every kind of social order and the fact that every society is the product of a series of practices attempting to establish order in a context of contingency (22) p. 17.
- Politics comprises those elements of society affected by this political dimension – the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions which seek to establish a certain order and organise human coexistence in conditions that are always potentially conflictual because they are affected by the dimension of the political (21) p. 15.

Conflict, convictions and emotions are central to radical or agonistic democracy and pluralist politics and are to be channelled into political commitments to social designs. We/they antagonisms are part of the human condition, never disappear, but can be treated in a way that turns antagonism into agonism: the aim of democratic politics is to construct the ‘them’ in such a way that it is no longer perceived as an enemy to be destroyed but as an ‘adversary’, that is somebody whose ideas we combat but whose right to defend those ideas we do not put into question (23) pp. 101-2. While antagonism undermines trust in politics, agonism increases it by recognising the potentially positive aspects of certain but not all forms of political conflict.
Left populism seeks the construction of a collective will, new historical bloc, or people able to establish a new hegemonic formation with a new articulation between the constitutive political principles of liberal democracy and the socio-economic practices in which they are institutionalised. It enables us to envisage a rupture with neoliberalism via the radicalising of democracy that necessitates another kind of liberal democracy at local, national and global levels. In the current contingency, the new hegemony is most closely associated in Britain with eco-socialism and a green new deal (GND) that offers a green recovery from the recession induced by the Covid-19 pandemic. Supported in different forms by the Green (24) and Labour (25) parties and the TUC (26) it offers to revive and stabilize a socially democratic form of capitalism as a stepping stone on the path to a democratic socialist economy enabled by new digital technologies. A GND would use new energy technologies; create jobs; solve the housing crisis; increase biodiversity; and experiment with new forms of universal basic income and services paid for by old and new forms of taxation. The UN proposed a global GND (27) in 2009 and Unesco’s next normal campaign (28), launched in 2020, may revive and refocus this initiative in the context of post-Covid recovery and the delivery of the SDGs.

Citizenship

Mouffe describes citizenship as political activity involving a struggle for hegemony possible at any site from an engagement with the state, in the economy, or in everyday practices of identity formation (29) p. 178. This definition widens the scope and location of citizenship suggesting it can be practiced in all social spheres, embraces citizens’ public and private lives; and is activated in different ways in different places.

The pioneers of such citizenship are the members of social movements and left political parties that challenge neoliberal hegemony. Their protests and campaigns seek to change people’s ‘common sense’ by offering them new identities and forms of citizenship. The environmental movement and the movement for global justice are the most relevant for geography teachers and as we have seen they offer forms of sustainability and global citizenship that extend the temporal and spatial scope of citizenship and give it both public and private dimensions (pages 20, 212 &249). Citizens are to exercise responsibility for people distant in space and time, for other sentient beings, and for people marginalised by colonialism and neo-colonialism. These forms of citizenship give expressive to Earth Charter principles; extend citizenship into the private
domains of consumption and lifestyle; and are alert to the root narratives that inform their conceptualisation and realisation (Fig. 7.3. p. 251). The struggles to establish them are part of a broader struggle for a new hegemony and are historical and geographical in that they occur at particular spaces/places at particular times (the anti-globalisation politics of 1989-2001; the Arab spring of 2011/12; Occupy in 2011; Black Lives Matter protests in 2020). Gilbert provides a summary of what twenty-first century socialist strategy should involve (30).

**GCE and deliberative global democratisation**

The dominant approach to citizenship education informed by critical theory draws on the theory and practice of deliberative democracy. As we saw in chapters two and four when we considered critical education and pedagogy, Dewey, Habermas and others place communicative rationality and public deliberation at the heart of democracy. Decisions that reflect the will of the people should be arrived at through public reasoning and mutually justifiable reasons should legitimate the laws they impose on one another. A deliberative situation is a dialogue in which different voices, perspectives and discourses can be heard and expressed; participants listen and treat each other with respect; and after considering reasons (what is technically possible, culturally acceptable, and morally and politically right) arrive at a mutually agreed decision. Samuelsson and Boyum (31) review the literature on education for deliberative democracy and find a tension between narrow political and wider pedagogical interpretations.

My previous writing on geography and GCE has drawn on education for deliberative democracy. In 2015, I published an article (32) that outlined the contested discourses shaping proposals for global democratisation and argued the advantages of Dryzek’s model of deliberative global democratisation (33) over Held’s cosmopolitan model (34) and the dominant neoconservative (neoliberal) model. Alongside these models, I reviewed discourses of GCE noting two dominant agendas: education to equip students to live and work in global society (a neoliberal agenda) and education to develop commitment to a fairer and more sustainable world (arguably a socially-democratic agenda). The article acknowledged Andreotti’s distinction between hard and soft GCE (page 249) and suggested pedagogy might draw on Englund’s components of deliberative classroom communication (35).
Towards GCE and radical global democratisation

Radical democrats hold that the problem with deliberative democracy is that it seeks to eliminate conflict, passions and emotions together with possibilities for agonistic political conflict. Ruttenberg (3) outlines three ways in which deliberative democracy differs from radical democracy:

1. In its liberal emphasis on the individual’s reasons and justifications, it underestimates the importance of the individual belonging to a collective and identifying with collective political programmes.
2. Its emphasis on individualism and rationality means it ignores the political emotions and passions mobilized by collective identifications with political programmes.
3. Political adversaries are commonly confused with moral enemies. Deliberation too readily slips into moral debate on matters of right and wrong rather than political debate over how best to organise society (right/left).

The result of eliminating conflict, collectives and emotions, and failing to frame conflicts in political terms, is that critical pedagogy fails to feel empowering (36). Conflict and emotions should not to be eliminated but harnessed towards agonistic debate over the interpretation and implementation of the core liberal values of liberty and equality and the hegemonic social relations that best give them expression. This is what we see happening within radical global social movements.

Tryggyason (37) argues that attempts to assimilate agonism with deliberation are not compatible with Mouffe’s theory, while Lo (38) explains how agonism can be incorporated into two democratic classroom activities, structured academic controversy and debate. Todd (39) suggests that agonism provides a theoretical framework for cosmopolitanism in education with reference to debates over the wearing of various forms of Muslim dress in US schools.

GCE and radical global democratisation

A reformulated critical GCE should educate the emotions; foster understanding of the difference between moral and political disputes and how power constitutes global society; and develop political literacy in a way that raises awareness of the political projects of ‘left’ and ‘right’ (3). Students should understand the difference between private and collective emotions; the ways in
which emotions are collaboratively constructed in movements and parties and are associated with views of desirable social relations and hegemonic orders. GCE should explore how movements and parties have developed solidarity across space, time and species and why it is justifiable to feel anger on behalf of those (including other sentient species) who suffer injustice.

To distinguish between moral and political anger students need to understand power and its role in constituting the social order. Moral anger leads to acts of kindness such as charitable giving while political anger leads to attempts to establish a more democratic and just social order. GCE should frame debate not in terms of a competition between moral enemies (with differing interpretations of right and wrong) but as confrontation in the public sphere where political adversaries, with differing views on a desirable global society, engage in agonistic debate (cf soft and hard approaches to GCE, page 249).

Political literacy as defined by Ruttenburg (the ability to read the social order in terms of political disputes over liberty, equality and the hegemonic relations that should shape them (3) p. 8) brings us back to Mouffe’s left populism and her notion of radical reformism. As the Programme for Political Education (40) realised, students need propositional and procedural knowledge about politics in a liberal democracy; relevant intellectual, communication and action skills, and a range of attitudes and procedural values. These allow conserving, critical and participative forms of citizenship that embrace the work of political parties, non-governmental organisations and social movements at all levels from the local to the global, It is such political literacy that the curriculum units in this book, and in What We Consume (41), seek to develop.

Educating the political emotions; fostering an understanding of power and hegemony; and developing political literacy in a global context should involve students learning about the undemocratic nature of international relations and global governance to which we now turn.

**International relations**

After the first world war, Woodrow Wilson (42) called for a comprehensive inter-state democracy (a society of nations governed by the role of law) designed to ensure global co-operation, justice and peace. A second war and the ensuing cold war buried his dream and the world continues to lack a single authority capable of regulating the global economy and providing the resources to deliver the SDGs. Mazower (43) traces the history of the struggle to bring
order to an anarchic and dangerous world while Monbiot (44) offers a manifesto for a new world order that includes a world parliament, an international clearing union to regulate international capital flows, and a fair trade organisation.

Clearly GCE cannot neglect international relations and the need to reform institutions of global governance in ways that render them more democratic. Booth’s introductory text on international relations (45) and an article by Dasgupta (2) would suggest that students need to consider the following key ideas.

1. International Relations Actors at the international level of world politics include states, corporations, institutions of global governance, international NGOs, and others. These actors have varying levels of economic, political and cultural power and the relations between them in the past, present, and into the future largely determine, directly or indirectly, what happens in our lives.

2. Anarchy. International relations are characterised by anarchy as there is no overall political authority in the world and states making up the international system must operate according to the 'self help' principle, looking after their own security and wellbeing. Such anarchy (which does not necessarily imply chaos, disorder and confusion) means that competition and mistrust remain the default settings of nation states preventing progress on many issues of mutual concern.

3. The nation state. There are many possible forms of political identity, association and loyalty and these are historical phenomena that change through time. Today's political organization of global society results from the rise of the modern state and the Westphalian system (46) that legitimates the sovereignty of nation states as demarcated territorial political units. Sovereignty, or the supreme right to exercise exclusive authority (law making and enforcement) over a territory and people, is the ordering principle of the modern international system. The entangled, multifaceted and anarchic relations between sovereign states give international relations their character, significance and fascination.

4. Contemporary challenges to the nation state. The nation state is currently challenged as a unit of security (unable to defend itself against
nuclear attack or pandemics); as a unit of authority (others seek to protect the individual eg. the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Criminal Court); as a unit of collective identity (undermined by migration, devolution, globalization, regional bodies such as the European Union, rise of trans-national identities such as radical Islam, spread of global civil society groups committed to global citizenship); as a unit of economic activity (globalization means states lose power and revenues and become less relevant); as a unit of political independence (there is no alternative to interdependence given the rise of cross-border issues, international institutions and global governance eg. UN, intergovernmental institutions, international NGOs ). ‘The big picture of world politics today consists of growing tension between the traditional ordering principle of the territorial sovereign state (for security, prosperity and cultural identity), increasingly insistent global threats (notably climate change) and powerful transnational dynamics (such as globalization and global governance)’ (45) p. 29

5. A key feature in the demise of nation states is their loss of control over capital flows which results in declining tax revenues and falling levels of welfare. Together with rising inequality (resulting from neoliberalism), cuts to welfare result in growing populism. States withdraw into nationalism (‘take back control’) and take on increasing undemocratic forms: authoritarianism (eg. Russia, Turkey), ethno-religious purification (eg. India, Hungary); the magnification of presidential powers and the abandonment of civil rights and the rule of law (eg. China, Venezuela). In the coming phase of techno-financial capitalism (47), corporations employing big data will take over functions formerly carried out by the state (mapping, surveillance, security, healthcare), act as gatekeepers of social reality (social media); and offer new forms of citizenship that are antagonistic to those based on the nation state.

6. Global futures. International relations in the near and distant future will be shaped by numerous factors that will or may include: the interplay of sovereign and non-sovereign authorities; the Sunni/Shi'a divide; the gap between rich and poor; technological innovation; a new cold war between the US and China (48); radical Islam and global terrorism; future wars in for example East Asia; new forms of economics and politics emerging
Global governance

Global governance (49) is the sum of the processes whereby global society and its institutions determine who has power, who makes decisions, how other players make their voices heard and how account is rendered. It brings together diverse mechanisms and actors (international organisations, markets, regimes, treaties, international law, military force, coercive diplomacy, NGOs, private arrangements, regional bodies and nation states, and public spheres) to coordinate collective action at the level of the planet. Its goals are to provide global public goods (peace, security, justice, sustainability); manage risks and the global commons, and mediate between nations in conflict. While essential, it is fragmented, complex and undemocratic. Open democracy (50) is perhaps the prime site for tracking trends in democracy across the world while agents such as Global Challenges (51) exist to reform global governance and develop alternatives. The formal political bodies constitute a hierarchical network, from the local to the global, within a wider network and this will now be outlined.

The United Nations is the leading institution of global governance with 193 member states making recommendations via the General Assembly that may be vetoed by the Security Council. It works through a range of agencies such as Unesco and the World Health Organisation. Global Challenges (52) suggests the UN Charter should be revised to give it binding legislative, judicial and enforcement functions to address catastrophic risks, such as global heating, while reserving most functions to states. The General Assembly should be complemented by a second chamber representing global citizens; an Executive Council should replace the Security Council; and international courts should have compulsory jurisdiction. Reliable and enhanced funding mechanisms should be established and legitimacy increased through popular participation.
Sharei (53) address the issue of UN Charter reform; the Center for the Development of International Law considers international democracy and UN reform; and Secretary General Gutterres (54) considers multilateralism in an age of growing populism. The UNA-Uk (55) has teaching resources on the United Nations.

Below the UN are the Bretton Woods institutions: the World Bank and International Monetary Fund that regulate the world economy and credit markets. They are the subject of critique from the Bretton Woods Project (56) and from such transnational NGOs as Progressive International (57) and the tax justice network (58) that see them sustaining an unsustainable global system. Also at this level are supranational bodies such as the G7 (59) and the G20 (60), the WTO (61) and the OECD (62) (curriculum units 3 and 9).

Next are the regional bodies such as the EU and ALBA (the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our Americas that features in curriculum unit one) (63) that coordinate the policies of their member states in a specific area. These include security and economic initiatives such as NATO or China’s BRI. Prentoulis (64) explains that while the EU prefigures a supranational democracy that has the potential to promote liberty, equality, and sustainability, it faces two major problems. In the absence of a common fiscal policy, uneven and combined development reinforces pre-existing national differences. Thirty years of neoliberalism have brought massive gains for Germany while Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain have seen rising budget deficits, trade imbalances, and borrowing. Events in 2015 when the Troika (ECB, EC & IMF) imposed austerity on Greece (structural adjustment imposed on a Northern rather than Southern nation) revealed the authoritarian nature of the EU’s neoliberalism, while the continuing refugee crisis reveals the second problem, a lack of political will to find collective solutions to difficult questions. Growing support for right wing populism and nationalism reflects citizens’ growing disenchantment with the EU and the extent to which it has moved away from Delors’ 1985 vision of a social Europe able to balance social justice and economic competitiveness.
Prentoulis further explains that EU institutions are unrepresentative and unaccountable; that a post-democratic logic subordinates politics to technocratic expertise promoting neoliberalism; that austerity is justified in terms of ‘household economics’ (the need to pay one’s debts); and that Europe risks break-up into a fiscally and politically integrated core and a neo-colonial periphery. She sees left populism as a solution for Europe and was encouraged by the rise of Syriza in Greece and Podemos in Spain. In 2016 Yanis Varoufakis founded DiEM25, as a populist left movement in Europe promoting radical democracy and a green new deal (Figure 9.2). Moffit and his co-authors (65) examine how it constructed its 2019 EU election campaign; the discourse it employed (European people the underdogs, super-national elite the enemy, cosmopolitan and pro refugees); its attempt to bridge national and transnational dimensions of European citizenship; and its dismissal (nowhere did affiliated parties receive more than 4% of the votes) as citizens continued to look to nationalist parties to meet their demands, defend their rights, and express their identities.

![Figure 9.2](image.png)

**Figure 9.2** Graphic promoting DiEM 25 (66)

Underwood and Pinder (67) provide an introduction to the EU; Rogers (68) outlines nine lessons in Brexit; and Garton Ash (69) argues that the European project is worth defending. Catterall (70) and Rankin (71) have written on EU
democracy, the Carnegie Europe website has six ideas for democratising Europe (72), and in 2019 Now the Citizens (73) was campaigning for a more democratic Europe. The EU has extensive resources for teachers (74).

At the level of nation states, the Economist Intelligence Unit’s democracy index (75) ranks countries according the weighted average of their scores on 60 indicators measuring election procedures and pluralism; civil liberties; functioning of government and political parties; and political culture. The results are then used to group countries into four regime types (Figure 9.3) full democracies; flawed democracies, hybrid regimes; and authoritarian regimes. In 2019, Norway, Iceland and Sweden occupied the top rankings, the UK came 14th, Venezuela 140th, and China 153rd. Human Rights Watch reports on the state of human rights in the world’s states and introduced its 2019 report (76) with an article explaining that the world’s autocrats face growing resistance. Transparency International (77) produces a corruption perception index and associated global map. Xindex (78) measures media freedom around the world and in 2019 produced an interactive map (79) showing media freedom during the coronavirus crisis. These initiatives provide geography teachers with ways of introducing students to the state of democracy across the world.

![Democracy Index 2019](image)

**Figure 9.3** The democracy index 2019 (80)
As regards the UK, Democracy Audit reports on the state of democracy. Its 2018 report states that assessing liberal democratic trends across the UK has never been so important as the UK government cuts loose from the convergence on a ‘European’ template for liberal democracy; its famously ‘unencoded’ (or messy) constitution faces another period of dramatic upheaval; and new loads will be placed on central government by ‘taking back control’ of trade policy and immigration. It notes that the background international context for liberal democracies has worsened dramatically and that recent experience demonstrates that having a few big ‘building blocks’ of democracy in place, such as majority voting system and a popularly elected legislature, is not enough to prevent democratic decay or backsliding.

Causes for concern in 2018 included the chaotic condition of party politics; the state of internal party democracy across the parties; the cumulative effects of austerity and non-growth policies (2010-2018) on the civil service efficiency, the quality of public services and the hollowing out of local government; and the malfunctioning central government apparatus around the Prime Minister and Cabinet that led to policy disasters in both foreign and domestic affairs (eg. Libya, Brexit, NHS reorganisation, Universal Credit, Grenfell Tower disaster). UK democracy was still limited by an unelected second chamber of the legislature; an extensive ‘dark state apparatus’ subject to no or only partial oversight; an unclear residue of ‘crown prerogative’ powers that allow government to take major executive actions alone without parliamentary scrutiny; and an electoral system that assigns parties seats in no fixed relation to their share of the vote. Laws and regulations failed to control overspending by the Leave campaign in 2016; prevent Russian bots influencing voters in 2016 and 2017; or curb manipulative messaging and targeting of voters using false information. In 2020 the government’s handling of the coronavirus pandemic raised questions (81) that exposed the institutional failings of governance (82) and an associated failure to protect citizens (see Malik at the head of the chapter).

Democratic audit finds grounds for optimism related to the workings of the hung parliament (2015 – 2017) that increased the role of back benchers and select committees in making policy and overseeing its implementation. The membership of Labour and the SNP grew diversifying their finances, while devolution proved increasingly successful. Positive and responsible uses of
social media by most citizens greatly extended the scope and quality of public surveillance over governing elites. Ordinary people, including school students, can now make their views heard on more issues more quickly and effectively – increasing the responsiveness of officials and public services.

The Democracy Commission (83) is an IPPR report that recommends the reform of UK democracy to combat political inequality. It documents sharp inequalities in voice and political influence by age, class and region; reveals differences in how different social groups perceive the fairness and effectiveness of democratic institutions; suggests that these are not fit for a post-industrial digital age; and that there is post-democratic drift in our political culture as politics becomes professionalised, class identities weaken, and parties drift away from their anchors in civil society. Our divided democracy is inevitably a partial democracy and the reforms the authors offer for consideration include reviewing constituency boundaries (84); introducing a system of single transferrable votes (85); automatic registration of voters and compulsory voting; and establishing a democracy commission to facilitate citizen participation. Monbiot (86) argues that Britain’s claims to be a functioning democracy are only skin deep.

Beneath nation states are local states: devolved administrations in the case of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; metropolitan and regional authorities, county councils, boroughs, and local authorities. At all levels in the UK there is a democratic deficit and little real evidence that citizens wish to ‘take back control’. As many as 8 million citizens could be missing from the register; only around 2 of every 3 registered voters vote in general elections; only 2 out of every 5 voted in the referendum on fairer voting in 2011; the turnout in the vote for police commissioners in 2019 was 27%; and ‘all too many never discuss government or politics, or wish to be involved’ (87) p. 42. Collier makes the case for devolving power to communities and regions in an article on capitalism after coronavirus (88), while the new municipalism (89) as developed in Preston (page 267) and Barcelona (90) is an expression of radical democracy.

Global citizenship education

So where does a critical school geography based on the concept of radical democracy that promotes sustainability and global citizenship fit within the
literature of GCE? Lynch (91) argued for a new approach to CE that can develop concerned and active participants in local, national and international life, who can critically appraise and judge the merits of domestic, national and international policies against a clarified and reflective system of values, grounded in human rights and social responsibilities. It aims to show how an essentially emancipatory concept of citizenship education, which can address issues of power and hegemony, human rights and social responsibility at local, national and international levels, can be disseminated and developed through the formal school system. p. 2

Along with the three levels of citizenship, he recognises four domains (social, cultural, environmental and economic) stating that each level and domain is symbiotic with others. His rationale draws on Rawl’s concept of equal justice (92) to suggest GCE should promote a just world society and regards sustainable development as a matter of not just trade-offs between economic development and ecological sustainability, but also of human rights and social responsibilities in the relationship between North and South. p. 3. The rationale leads to learning outcomes for students that can be realised in distinctive ways by critical school geography. For example:

**Understandings** (3 from a total of 5)
- of economic and environmental interdependence at local, national and international levels;
- of major human rights and responsibilities at the three levels in the four domains;
- of the various ways in which pluralist democracies work;

**Values and attitudes** (2 from 7)
- a strong commitment to gender and racial equality and a willingness to fight socially and politically for them;
- a commitment to persuasion and dialogue as the major means to achieve social justice and change;

**Skills and behaviours** (3 from 11)
- autonomous but socially responsible moral judgement and integrity, based on reflective and clarified values;
- ability to evaluate the economic, social, political and environmental decisions of others objectively;
• political literacy including the capacity for creative dissent, problem-solving, advocacy and creative conflict resolution. (91) pp. 42-3.

Hopefully readers will recognise Lynch’s influence on the content and curriculum units in this book. His ideas and guidance can be interpreted in ways that draw on critical theory and pedagogy and foster consideration of radical democracy.

A more recent comprehensive overview of GCE is provided by Gaudelli (93). He draws on Oxley and Morris (94) who recognise eight conceptions of GCE: four cosmopolitan positions based on universal ethics (political, moral, economic and cultural) and four advocacy positions (social, critical, environmental and spiritual) that are more communitarian in organisation while also showing some overlap with cosmopolitan positions. GCE based on radical global democratisation draws mainly on the social, critical and environmental advocacy positions outlined below, with some attention to all four cosmopolitan positions.

• Social global citizenship, which manifests itself mainly through civil society organisations working toward global community and focuses on interconnections and interdependencies;

• Critical global citizenship rooted in critical, post-colonial and post-development theories and promoting deconstruction and critique of social norms, institutions and structures reproducing inequalities and oppression. The proponents of this model advocate action to improve the lives of those who have been marginalised, to make us listen to them and to be responsible toward them – not for them (Andreotti, 2006). (page 249)

• Environmental global citizenship, which focuses on environmental issues, both from ecocentric and, more often, anthropocentric positions with the main concept of sustainable development. It advocates changes in human actions in relation to the environment. (As outlined by Kuleta-Hulborg (95)

Others alert us to the potential of GCE to act as ideology once captured by corporate cosmopolitan capital with Marshall (96) urging us to recognise the political, economical, geographical and historical situatedness of all such
educational initiatives and Mitchell (97) explaining that neoliberalism resulted in a shift of focus from the multi-cultural self to the strategic cosmopolitan. In a critique that is equally relevant to schools, Pais and Costa (98) note that the discourses of critical democracy and neoliberalism exist side by side in universities. GCE can then act as an apologetic narrative used by those who work in them, notwithstanding their continued commodification. In conversation with Bosio, Torres imagines a ‘yet to come’ post-colonial, critical-transformative, and value-creating GCE curriculum beyond a Westernised, market-orientated and apolitical practices toward a more sustainable paradigm based on principles of mutuality and reciprocity . . . . a concept that portrays a way of acting in society that is community-centric, ecologically balanced and culturally sensitive, in the ongoing construction of a more just and peaceful world (99).

Hatley (100) argues that universal values are counterproductive to GCE, suggesting emancipative values, such as choice, voice, equality and autonomy, would better enable it to guide (agonistic?) debate on how social ideas such as sustainability can be interpreted in the light of individual and local contexts. Starkey (101) considers the nationalist agenda of fundamental British values (page 280) an impediment to global perspectives in CE.

Guidance on GCE

Gaudelli reviews guidance from Oxfam (102), the Massstricht Global Education Declaration (103), and Unesco (page 20). While he finds strengths in these (for example their broad and inclusive conception of GCE; their attention to key values and topics such as human rights, diversity, and democracy; and their advocacy of social action) he notes that these various conceptions vacillate around the deeply problematic North-South gap within GCE, particularly resonant as school systems grow more focussed on economic growth at the direction of governments and policy bodies (93) p. 49. This is another way of saying that like Unesco’s advocacy of SDGs, advocacy of GCE fails to acknowledge global political economy, the undemocratic nature of global governance and international relations, and the need for radical global democratisation if the SDGs are to be met and the guidance on GCE realised in a realistic rather than idealistic manner.
School Geography and GCE

Yarwood’s text on citizenship in the key ideas in geography series (104), has a section on citizenship in education policy (pp. 133 -142). He reminds us that school geography has long been associated with the teaching of ‘good’ citizenship but that such aims have periodically met with cynicism and criticism (105). A long series of quotes traces the changing justifications for linking geography and citizenship education that include supporting British imperialism; encouraging internationalism; fostering national identity; seeing off competitors like social studies; and responding to the introduction of citizenship in the national curriculum. He draws on Pykett (106) who suggests that citizenship as outlined in the 2002 NC guidance lacks critical depth (community involvement which fails to question the boundaries of community and the importance of belonging and identity; political literacy which fails to problematise the legitimacy of the nation-state and its political institutions p. 311) and reminds us that citizenship is far from ‘given’ or neutral but in addition to guidance, is shaped by the location of the school, the technologies (pedagogies) of education, the agents, teachers and others, who deliver it, and the influence of students’ peers.

Following the publication of Lambert and Machon’s edited text (107) the GA’s citizenship working group reached conclusions that allow the reader to assess whether the theory and practice of critical school geography, as outlined in this text, accords with its thinking. Extracts from the group’s article in Geography(108), published in 2008, are quoted without the accompanying references.

On the meaning of citizenship. In summary, citizenship is about relations between people, the ways in which we are governed and govern others, and the values and dispositions that bring us together and stand ‘us’ apart. p. 34

On how geographers approach citizenship. However in general geographers approach ‘citizenship’ as constructed, embodied, experienced, performed and understood in certain spaces and contexts, and at certain scales. Geographers study the making of citizens across multiple locales, political units and scales of governance. p. 35
On the need for an alternative geographical imagination that 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 citizenship. p. 39

On the growing significance of global citizenship. State-organised citizenship has become ‘denationalised’ as more decisions about these big issues now have to be made collectively via ‘communities of states’ like the EU, WTO, NATO and the World Bank. Citizenship is also enacted at these scales via the rapidly growing NGO sector . . . . ..that increasingly organises political participation in global issues. p. 36

On an appropriate pedagogy. It requires classrooms to be characterised by a ‘culture of argument’ or ‘education for conversation’ in which students are encouraged to ask questions, feel comfortable with scepticism, adopt a cautious approach to complexity but feel enabled to make judgements of merit. This has been called a ‘confident uncertainty’, and geography can develop pupils’ skills for understanding and dealing with an uncertain world. p. 37-8

On geography’s contribution to making citizens. Geography as a discipline, then, cannot make citizens, but it can create the language and intellectual space for explorations 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. p. 39

There has been surprising little attention to global citizenship in Geography and Teaching Geography since 2008. Standish (109) (110) argued that the embedding issues of sustainable development and global citizenship in school geography corrupts and politicises the subject, devalues core subject knowledge, and privileges extrinsic aims over intrinsic ones. Lambert and Morgan (111)(112) refuted his argument reminding him that no curriculum can be politically neutral and that he needed to be more reflective about curriculum history and politics. Yarwood returned to the theme of political geography and the politics of geography in an editorial in Geography in 2019 (113). Geographical Education for International Understanding (114) offers
perspectives from geographical educators based in many countries including the UK.

**Videos for teachers**

- **Rethinking global governance**, Ian Goldin, 6 minutes
- **What’s going on with UN reform** 6 minutes
- **How democratic is the EU?**, 4 minutes
- **David Held on the challenges of global governance** 8 minutes
- **Chantal Moufffe Radical democracy and left populism** 30 minutes
- **Noam Chomsky Democracy is a threat to any power system** 1 hr 25
- **Thomas Piketty on global wealth tax** 20 minutes
- **Tax justice network on financial secrecy index** 7 minutes

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