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Abstract	<p>There has been extensive research into formal approaches to civics and citizenship education which has identified different typologies (e.g., justice-oriented and participatory) and underlying philosophies (“thick” vs. “thin”). However, research remains limited in regards to the pedagogical possibilities that enable such approaches. This chapter explores a range of different examples of justice-oriented and thick approaches to citizenship education. It begins by identifying both formal and informal examples from schooling before broadening the debate to discuss examples from civil society, such as refugee advocacy groups and cycling social movements. In doing so, this chapter explicates a typology that frames different forms of citizenship education from passive to active and participatory and then to justice-oriented.</p>	
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Thick citizenship - Justice-oriented citizenship - Participatory citizenship -  
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# Justice-Oriented, “Thick” Approaches to Civics and Citizenship Education in Australia: Examples of Practice

Keith Heggart and Rick Flowers

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## Abstract

There has been extensive research into formal approaches to civics and citizenship education which has identified different typologies (e.g., justice-oriented and participatory) and underlying philosophies (“thick” vs. “thin”). However, research remains limited in regards to the pedagogical possibilities that enable such approaches. This chapter explores a range of different examples of justice-oriented and thick approaches to citizenship education. It begins by identifying

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### 31 Keywords

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## 35 Introduction

36 It is one thing to critique the state of citizenship education as being too constrained  
37 and narrowly focused only on information-giving and raising awareness but is  
38 another to then argue that there should be bolder approaches to citizenship education  
39 which not only raise awareness but also foster active citizenship. An important and  
40 necessary starting point in detailing these bolder approaches is to focus on defining  
41 and theorizing about their main features. In this chapter, we examine approaches to  
42 citizenship education which foster active citizenship by drawing on existing litera-  
43 ture to theorize two key concepts. The first concept is the notion of “thick” citizen-  
44 ship, and we begin by illustrating what constitutes a “thick” approach by describing  
45 various examples from the formal education sector. The second concept is “justice-  
46 oriented,” and in the second half of the chapter, we describe various examples from  
47 informal education projects to illustrate our angle on what constitutes “justice-  
48 oriented” citizenship education. To make clear what thick and justice-oriented  
49 approaches look like in practice, we illustrate our analysis with examples drawn  
50 from the context in which we work, namely, Australia.

51 Thick and justice-oriented approaches to citizenship education have had to be  
52 resourceful and resilient in the face of politically conservative forces that have  
53 enjoyed an ascendancy in Australia for over 20 years. This conservatism is exem-  
54 plified in criticism of the Australian Civics and Citizenship Curriculum by the then  
55 federal Education Minister, Christopher Pyne, as being biased and leftist (Crowe  
56 2014). The conservative policy environment is illustrated further by recent legisla-  
57 tive proposals to make Australian government funding for community organizations  
58 and charities conditional on them agreeing not to make critical comment on major  
59 policies of the government of the day. Peak bodies have labeled such legislation as  
60 seeking to gag NGOs in their political advocacy (Wade 2007; Hassan 2018). Despite  
61 recent, overly narrow policy agendas (~~see the chapter by Dadvand (2018) in this~~  
62 ~~collection for a more detailed analysis~~), there is, nonetheless, good reason to remain  
63 optimistic about efforts to build and sustain radical approaches to citizenship edu-  
64 cation. When appraising these efforts – and as we seek to do in this chapter –  
65 attention should, however, be paid not only to official and institutionalized curric-  
66 ulum spaces but also to informal and grassroots spaces.

## 67 "Thick" and "Thin" Approaches to Citizenship Education

68 There is extensive scholarship about the prevailing models of minimalist or thin  
69 citizenship education that are dominant in most schools and educational systems in  
70 Australia (Cogan and Morris 2001; Kennedy 2007; Macintyre and Simpson 2009;  
71 Peterson and Tudball 2017). Typically, commentaries and critiques of these mini-  
72 malist or thin approaches to citizenship education seek to advocate for a wider, more  
73 expansive approach. In this section, we examine and theorize "thick" approaches to  
74 citizenship education and describe the ways in which these provide a valuable  
75 conceptual base for citizenship education in Australia.

76 The term "thick" itself has a lengthy etymology in relation to notions of citizen-  
77 ship and citizenship education (Isin and Turner 2002) and has been used by a number  
78 of scholars – including Terence McLaughlin (1992), Joel Westheimer and Joseph  
79 Kahne (2004), and David Zyngier (2011a) – to describe citizenship education that  
80 emphasizes student-led, activist, and participatory approaches. One of the key  
81 differences between thick and thin (or maximal and minimal) approaches to citizen-  
82 ship and citizenship education is the level of civic involvement – which could be  
83 advocacy, activism or/and voluntary community service – expected and required of  
84 individuals within society. McLaughlin describes the difference in this way:

85 On minimal views, there is a degree of suspicion of widespread involvement, and the citizen is  
86 seen primarily as a private individual with the task of voting wisely for representatives. In  
87 contrast, maximal views favour a more fully participatory approach to democracy. (2007, p. 237)

88 This more fully participatory approach is based on the assumption that a strong  
89 democracy relies on a robust public sphere and civil society, which in turn rely on the  
90 experiential, (nodding to John Dewey), conscientized (nodding to Paulo Freire), and  
91 emancipatory (nodding to Frankfurt School Critical Theory) knowledge of grass-  
92 roots citizens. Thin approaches to citizenship, by contrast, emphasize didactic and  
93 teacher-led approaches underpinned by an assumption that strong democracy relies  
94 on citizens having instrumental knowledge about how political structures work. The  
95 tension between both thick and thin approaches to civics and citizenship education  
96 has informed much of the development of civics and citizenship education materials.

97 In Australia, across the political spectrum, a succession of state and federal  
98 government education agencies has placed priority on teaching about the processes  
99 and mechanisms of government and have been criticized for this exclusionary and  
100 narrow approach (O'Loughlin 1997; Heggart et al. 2018). *Discovering Democracy*, a  
101 citizenship education syllabus that was developed in the 1990s and ran until the  
102 mid-2000s, was one such example. While *Discovering Democracy* originally sought  
103 to embrace a more activist notion of citizenship education, it was ultimately too  
104 content-heavy and was often delivered in a way that was teacher-centered and  
105 didactic (Heggart et al. 2018). The more recent *Australian Civics and Citizenship*  
106 *Curriculum* made some improvements, especially in the way that citizenship was  
107 defined for young people, but it is still limited and does not sufficiently recognize the  
108 diversity of citizenship and citizens within Australia and nor does it foreground the

109 ways young people might be active within their communities. Instead, like other  
110 curricula before it, it perpetrates the notion of young people as “citizens-in-waiting”  
111 (Arvanitakis and Marren 2009; Heggart et al. 2018).

112 In seeking alternative examples to thin approaches, we recommend looking  
113 beyond government developed and mandated approaches to citizenship education  
114 to local school, community, and civil society initiated approaches. In these contexts,  
115 it is possible to find citizenship education examples that are more activist in focus,  
116 more local in context, and more student-centered in practice. We have chosen to  
117 characterize these models in two ways – *bottom-up approaches*, which are led by  
118 students and are often focused on a single issue that usually develops organically  
119 from a specific context and *established curriculum frameworks* that are often  
120 deployed in schools, usually with local applications but draw on a predetermined  
121 network of resources and structures.

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## 122 **Thick and Formal Approaches to Citizenship Education: Pop-Up** 123 **and Student-Led Examples**

124 If one’s benchmark for a healthy democracy is framed through the lens of old social  
125 movements – where social action campaigns are run by organizations with a head  
126 office – then one would look for capacity to sustain advocacy over a long period of  
127 time. Through such a lens transitory and, especially, one-off, actions would be  
128 regarded less positively. Framed through the lens of new social movements –  
129 where campaigns are run through decentralized networks – locally initiated actions,  
130 even when one-off, are regarded as potentially powerful (Offe 1985). Indeed, like  
131 pop-up restaurants and stores, there are citizenship education initiatives that are  
132 one-off or transitory. A central argument of this chapter is to view citizenship  
133 education through new social movements lens. Here, therefore, we critically discuss  
134 some examples of citizenship education that are not only student-led but have  
135 popped up organically around specific issues.

136 A key contention within existing literature is that young Australians relate to, and  
137 participate in, pop-up approaches which serve to challenge the traditional notion that  
138 young people are apathetic or ignorant (or both) about politics and civil society.  
139 Anita Harris, Johanna Wyn, and Salem Younes (2010) corroborate this. Their  
140 empirical research suggests that young people are often neither apathetic or activists  
141 but are largely disaffected from a political system that they feel is not responsive to  
142 their needs. Phillipa Collin and Lucas Walsh put a finer point on new ways in which  
143 Australian young people are expressing their interest in politics:

144 Young people are often more interested in direct, everyday, individualised and networked  
145 forms of participation. Their everyday participatory practices (such as boycotts and sharing  
146 political content via social media), interest-based activities (such as contributing to youth  
147 mental health service design or starting their own online petition or campaign), and creative  
148 and media practices (joining a flashmob, producing a mash-up or a Tumblr account) are  
149 often framed as “taking action” on issues they care about. Surveys or electoral rolls rarely

150 pick up these forms of participation. But what they tell us is that taking part in elections is  
151 only one form of participation young people value. (2016, p. 1)

152 One such example of a direct, networked, and individualized response to an issue  
153 is the *Asylum Seeker Resource Centre* (ASRC). We use the term "individualized"  
154 here to describe examples that are developed by individuals or small groups of  
155 people but more often than not are undertaken in a collective and participatory  
156 manner. This project began in 2001 when Kon Karapanagiotidis, a teacher moved by  
157 the plight of homeless asylum seekers in Melbourne, decided to start a resource  
158 center with his students at a technical and further education college. The ASRC  
159 began as a student project. Seventeen years later it boasts that it is

160 supported by a network of more than 1,000 volunteers and 100 staff in assisting around  
161 4,600 people seeking asylum each year. . . [As an] independent, community-led organisation  
162 the ASRC is in a unique position to advocate for the human rights of people seeking asylum,  
163 exempt from the pressures of government or the private sector. For this reason, the ASRC  
164 has been able to take a leading position in the opposition of Australia's asylum seeker policy,  
165 while offering alternatives to issues faced by people seeking asylum and refugees. (ASRC  
166 2018)

167 This approach exemplifies the organic or noninstitutionalized nature of many  
168 social justice movements and activist citizenship education approaches (Gosden  
169 2006). While it began as a local collective, the ASRC now has a national – even  
170 international – reach and continues to work to both support asylum seekers and  
171 educate Australians about these matters. This increased profile has inspired other,  
172 more localized activism – for example, the students at Bethlehem College in Sydney  
173 who protested the Federal Government's asylum seeker policies with a silent sit-in  
174 (McNeilage 2014).

175 Here we also want to draw attention to the epistemological politics of these two  
176 examples. Although quite different, both ASRC and the work of students at Beth-  
177 lehem College are arguably examples of thick citizenship education in that they are  
178 projects that were activist in orientation and were developed and led by students and  
179 participants. Furthermore, rather than seeking to develop government-mandated  
180 curriculum knowledge, they instead begin from the concerns and understandings  
181 of the young people in question. The knowledge that is privileged is that of the  
182 young people themselves. In the second half of this chapter, we go onto explain how  
183 this is a central feature of justice-oriented approaches to citizenship education.

184 Another example of a thick approach to citizenship education is the *Aussie*  
185 *Democracy* project, which began just before the Australian federal election in  
186 2010. It took place as part of a Civics class in a Victorian school and made heavy  
187 use of social media as a means to build engagement among students and involve  
188 them in the real-world election as active participants rather than disinterested  
189 bystanders. This project was the idea of Mike Stuchbery, a teacher who was  
190 conscious that despite the looming 2010 federal election, students were, for the  
191 most part, apathetic about the election and the issues related to parliament and  
192 government. Instead of teaching them in a standard way (a minimalist approach)

193 by using textbooks and the *Discovering Democracy* syllabus and resources,  
194 Stuchbery attempted to teach the students about Federal Parliament by actually  
195 involving them in the election campaign – as political commentators, reporters,  
196 and journalists. He describes the change that this caused in the classroom:

197 As I move around the room, showing them the Twitter account I've set up for them, the blog  
198 and a few other gadgets I've picked up, they get it. They sit down in groups, working on  
199 questions that they want to direct at politicians. They're good questions too. There are ones  
200 on trade alliances, school funding and the pressures of public scrutiny. Truth be told, I'm  
201 kind of gobsmacked. One kid asks me whether he and his mate can call a TV station, that  
202 they reckon they might be able to get Julia or Tony if someone reported on what we're doing.  
203 I nod, smile, and send them off to write a script for the phone call they'll make. There's  
204 electricity in the air. It doesn't feel like school. It feels like something else. The kids are alert,  
205 focused, loving what they're doing. (Stuchbery 2010)

206 By making the lessons about citizenship education much “thicker” (i.e., more  
207 student-led and activist), Stuchbery tapped into the interests of young people. This  
208 presents an example of David Gauntlett's techno-optimistic perspective that Web 2.0  
209 platforms can strengthen democracy because they offer new opportunities for par-  
210 ticipatory action and learning (2015). *Aussie Democracy* served as a powerful  
211 example of thicker and justice-focused citizenship education as it taught young  
212 people that it is essential for members of a democracy to challenge their leaders, to  
213 ask difficult questions and to demand transparency. These are the kinds of attitudes  
214 that are often overlooked in thinner, more minimalist approaches to citizenship  
215 education, but they were firmly foregrounded in *Aussie Democracy*.

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## 216 **Thick and Formal Approaches to Citizenship Education: Examples** 217 **that Established a Place in School Curricula**

218 While thin approaches to citizenship education continue to be dominant, there are,  
219 nonetheless, examples of innovative and thick citizenship education initiatives that  
220 have gained places in school syllabi. The first example we present is from the  
221 *Australian Youth Climate Coalition* (AYCC) which draws together a range of  
222 youth climate action groups and seeks to place young people in positions of  
223 leadership in the climate change debate. It does this by campaigning, educating,  
224 and agitating for changes to governmental policy. They see the education of young  
225 people, by young people, as central.

226 We are ambitious and innovative, and we're not afraid to make mistakes and learn from  
227 them. By giving young people the opportunity to be courageous, we give them the space to  
228 learn. (AYCC 2018)

229 The AYCC have developed “peer-to-peer education, empowerment and training  
230 programs for high school students” (Patridge 2018, p. 8).

231 The second example is *RUMAD?* (Are You Making A Difference?) developed by  
232 David Zyngier. This program is "values-focused, student-led and at its core starts  
233 from student-identified values and visions" (2007, p. 54). Unlike thin citizenship  
234 education programs which focus only on the learning of political knowledge,  
235 *RUMAD?* actively seeks to engage and support young people to build and enact  
236 their knowledge in the community through action research projects. It seeks to break  
237 down the walls that exist between schools and communities, and instead, through  
238 school and community participation, equip young people with self-esteem, confi-  
239 dence, and skills to solve real world problems (Zyngier 2011b, p. 140).

240 One example of a project using the *RUMAD?* framework is Jessie's Creek. At a  
241 small primary school in Victoria, students worked with a selection of government  
242 and nongovernment agencies to clean up the local creek. They conducted a biodi-  
243 versity study of the local area, during which they had to engage with the public,  
244 undertake problem-solving activities, and work collaboratively to achieve desired  
245 outcomes. Zyngier (2007) writes:

246 From the outset they have been at the centre of the campaign to save Jessie's Creek,  
247 mustering community support by producing brochures, conducting surveys and sending  
248 letters to government bodies linked with management of the creek. (p. 53)

249 Another example of an established curriculum framework being applied in a local  
250 context is the *Global Connects* program. This program, developed by Lynette  
251 Schultz et al. (2009), arose out of a recognition of the impact that globalization is  
252 having on young people. While it might be true that young people are having  
253 difficulty processing the rapidly changing nature of the world and their place in it  
254 due to the influence of globalization (Schultz et al. 2009), it is also true that many  
255 young people want to contribute to their society and solve problems of injustice and  
256 inequality, but they are hesitant to do so because they feel they lack the ability to do  
257 so (Eckersley et al. 2007).

258 The *Global Connects* program, developed by *PLAN International*, is an example  
259 of active citizenship-centered, youth-led, global learning. One example involved  
260 middle school children in Melbourne who engaged in conversations over the course  
261 of 6 months with youth groups in Indonesia (Schultz et al. 2009). The two groups  
262 exchanged communication pieces about issues that they felt were of significance to  
263 their lives. These texts included letters and posters, as well as short films. Crucially,  
264 the global elements of technology made this project more feasible than would have  
265 been previously possible and much more relevant and engaging to the young people  
266 involved.

267 Having begun communicating with each other, the next step of the *Global*  
268 *Connects* program was for the two groups to identify common issues and then  
269 establish action plans to address these issues in their local communities. The project  
270 was intended to develop active citizenship skills: "As a result, *PLAN* expects that  
271 children will undergo more of a personal transformative experience than they would  
272 if they were passive recipients of information" (Schultz et al. 2009, p. 1025). This  
273 appears to have occurred:

274 [Students] demonstrated a number of skills and personal changes that have allowed them to  
275 engage as active citizens, within their own communities and in wider national and global  
276 communities, now and in the future. (p. 1027)

277 While the *Global Connects* program had a global focus, other examples of  
278 established curriculum frameworks are available which demonstrate a greater  
279 focus on the local. One example of such a local approach is *Justice Citizens* (Heggart  
280 2015a, b). Based at a school in Australia, this program was established by the authors  
281 and worked within the local community in which the school was based, and sought  
282 to empower students to identify and then challenge sources of injustice in this  
283 community through collaborative film-making. In the next section, we focus on the  
284 structure of *Justice Citizens* project and argue that it constitutes an example of what  
285 thick citizenship education in a formal setting might look like.

286 *Justice Citizens* was a project designed by the authors to explore the concepts  
287 behind justice-oriented citizenship (as defined by Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne  
288 2004) as well as to examine how such notions correlated with young people's own  
289 understandings and practices of active citizenship, both in person and online. We  
290 have, since then, developed the notion of justice-oriented citizenship further (as is  
291 discussed in the second half of the chapter). *Justice Citizens* was implemented at a  
292 Western Sydney Catholic high school in 2012. The aim of the course was for  
293 students to develop the skills, values, and attitudes required of active citizens. In  
294 particular, it sought to develop critical thinking, digital literacy, research skills, and  
295 collaborative learning practices.

296 The course was broken into three main sections. In the first section, students were  
297 challenged to consider their own agency. This was done by presenting students with  
298 a range of situations in the form of true/false statements (e.g., "Young people are  
299 capable of organizing nationwide protests"). Students were then presented with real-  
300 world examples where young people had done organized nationwide protests. This  
301 led to discussion about why young people were capable of doing such things, and  
302 whether the participants in *Justice Citizens* could conceive of themselves undertak-  
303 ing similar actions. In addition, students identified the kinds of skills and knowledge  
304 that were required in order to take this form of action, as well as whether they  
305 possessed these.

306 In the second part of the course, students worked with journalists from local  
307 newspapers to develop an understanding of research and interview techniques.  
308 Students also had the opportunity to speak to a range of community members  
309 about different topics that the community member felt was important. During this  
310 phase in the intervention and study, a number of issues constantly recurred: these  
311 included racism, the treatment of asylum seekers, the dangers of drug and alcohol  
312 abuse, and bullying and harassment.

313 The final part of the course involved students researching, planning, shooting, and  
314 editing their films. Students worked in small groups (chosen by themselves), and the  
315 groups ranged from pairs to one group of seven. Students were responsible for  
316 "pitching" an idea for their film to their teacher, then researching it. They then had to  
317 devise a script collaboratively, as well as a storyboard, before shooting their film. For

318 many students, this was undertaken during school time (either during the lessons  
319 themselves or during other free time), but some groups used their own personal time  
320 to meet up with participants or people they wanted to film. More than 30 films were  
321 produced.

322 These films were then shown to the whole cohort, who voted on which ones they  
323 thought were the best; these films were placed on the school's YouTube channel and  
324 also presented at a local Film Festival. The online space and the actual physical film  
325 festival were important for different reasons. The physical festival allowed students  
326 to invite prominent members of the community to see their films and also engage in  
327 discussion about the topics, while the online space provided a chance for students to  
328 share their films with a much broader audience.

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### 329 **A Threefold Typology of Informal Citizenship Education** 330 **with Adults: Examples from Australian Refugee Advocacy Groups**

331 In this section, we illustrate further the features of "thick" citizenship education,  
332 through focusing on justice-oriented approaches to citizenship education drawn  
333 mostly from informal "educational" initiatives with adults. Following Griff Foley's  
334 (1999) and Tony Jeffs' and Mark Smith's (1999) typologies, we define informal  
335 education to refer to education which is neither credentialed (formal) or classroom-  
336 based (nonformal). Informal education is also to be distinguished from incidental  
337 learning because informal education is planned with clear intent to facilitate learn-  
338 ing. Unlike schooling, the informal education space is not regulated, and this means  
339 that there is little consistency of terminology used to describe it.

340 In order to draw out the distinction between active and justice-oriented learning,  
341 we describe and discuss a threefold typology drawing on Westheimer and Kahne's  
342 (2004) concepts of passive, active, and justice-oriented learning. Three refugee  
343 advocacy organizations that each work in distinct ways are used to illustrate the  
344 typology (see Table 1). The context is a long and rich history of campaigns led by a  
345 myriad of local, national, and international NGOs seeking to mobilize public support  
346 to bring about change to Australian government policies in relation to refugees who  
347 arrive by boat. One example is "A Fair Go for Families: campaign for family  
348 reunion" led by the *Refugee Council for Australia*. In order to support the campaign,  
349 people are asked to inform themselves about refugees and relevant laws, sign a  
350 petition, donate money, and host a picnic as an awareness-raising activity. This can  
351 be seen as enabling informal citizenship education where members of the commu-  
352 nity learn about political context and structures. The "learning" takes place not with  
353 the guidance of a "teacher" or "facilitator" but through study of web- and print-based  
354 information prepared by "experts" and provided by the *Refugee Council for*  
355 *Australia*. Drawing on Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) typology, we would describe  
356 this type of education as serving to promote the personally responsible citizen, given  
357 that it involves mainly didactic "instruction" and passive learning and thus corre-  
358 sponds to the first tier of the typology below.

t.1 **Table 1** Threefold typology of citizenship education for and with refugees

[AU3](#)

t.2	<i>Passive learning</i>	<i>Active and participatory learning</i>	<i>Justice-oriented learning and grassroots knowledge</i>
t.3 <i>Refugee Council for Australia</i>	Citizens (who are not refugees) studying web- and print-based material given to them to inform solidarity-actions		
t.4 <i>Chillout</i>		Citizens (who are not refugees) locating materials for themselves; devising and writing own materials to inform participatory activism	
t.5 <i>RISE</i>			Refugee-citizens research, plan and lead actions for themselves

359 We would argue that an example of active learning is provided by *Chillout*, an  
 360 NGO that campaigns to promote the rights of children seeking asylum. In addition to  
 361 petitions and publication of research reports, *Chillout* has instigated a number of  
 362 actions which require supporters to not only read, donate, and sign but also to  
 363 undertake their own research to inform their own initiatives. These include writing  
 364 letters to asylum seeker children in detention centers and supporting refugees to  
 365 present in school classrooms. Again drawing on Westheimer and Kahne's (2004)  
 366 typology, we would describe this type of informal education as serving to promote  
 367 the participatory citizen. This is the second tier of our typology. Here, citizens do not  
 368 only learn information in a passive manner (because it is made available to them in  
 369 the form of *Chillout* research reports that is why the column in Table 1 connects to  
 370 more than one category) they also learn in an active manner because they are  
 371 supported to undertake research for themselves when preparing letters and present-  
 372 tations. The key "curriculum" feature, however, that we want to draw attention to is  
 373 not just how participatory the learning is, but to what extent the advocacy and social  
 374 action builds on the grassroots knowledge of the frontline citizen-activists.

375 We now want to present the third type that does not exclude the first two  
 376 approaches but extends them, namely, justice-oriented citizenship education. *RISE*  
 377 is, in its own words, the "first refugee and asylum seeker organisation in Australia to  
 378 be run and governed by refugees, asylum seekers and ex-detainees" (*RISE n.d.*).  
 379 *RISE* undertakes petitions, research, and presentations, much like the *Refugee*  
 380 *Council of Australia* and *Chillout*, mentioned above. The important difference is  
 381 that *RISE* campaigns are underpinned by the grassroots knowledge of refugees  
 382 themselves.

383 This difference is important because it points to epistemological distinctions.  
384 Westheimer and Kahne call for an approach that places emphasis on learners'  
385 challenging inequalities to promote the justice-oriented citizen. Here they draw  
386 attention not only to acts of advocacy but also to a structuralist analysis which  
387 seeks to identify root causes and address them. But the argument we are developing  
388 is that it also matters who gets to undertake the analysis, informal education, and  
389 social action. It is one thing when a justice-oriented, structuralist analysis is  
390 researched and presented by "experts" and another when it is undertaken by frontline  
391 citizen-activists themselves.

392 This is why we focus not only on Westheimer and Kahne's justice-oriented  
393 process of structurally analyzing and challenging inequalities but also on the epis-  
394 temological politics of John Dewey (1938), Paulo Freire (1970), as well as Lew  
395 Zipin and Alan Reid (2008). Dewey saw democracy and justice being enacted  
396 through curriculum that walked the talk; in other words built on the experiential  
397 and subjective knowledge of learners. Freire, likewise, has been influential in his  
398 case for championing a notion of justice where curriculum is developed from the  
399 perspective of those who are most poor and least powerful and are oppressed in both  
400 material and epistemological terms. Zipin and Reid argue that approaches to citi-  
401 zenship education focusing on personally responsible and participatory citizenship  
402 are inherently individualistic and instrumentalist because they do not challenge  
403 dominant classed, racialized, and gendered epistemological views of political struc-  
404 tures. They see justice being enacted through educators privileging what they call the  
405 lifeworld knowledge of less powerful socio-cultural groups.

406 When considering frontline citizens and their grassroots knowledge, there is a  
407 difference to be drawn between citizens who are not refugees acting in solidarity for  
408 and with refugees and refugees advocating for themselves. The informal education  
409 that both types of citizen undertake is important, but there are specificities. At the  
410 risk of over-simplifying, we tentatively offer another binary opposition to thin and  
411 thick approaches. We suggest there are "soft" and "hard" approaches to citizenship  
412 education. It is soft and easy to rely on experts devising and delivering citizenship  
413 education. It is hard and challenging to support frontline activists or ordinary citizens  
414 to undertake their own research and plan their own learning. It is even harder when  
415 those citizens are in precarious circumstances, for example, have restricted work and  
416 study rights.

---

417 **Drawing on Practices of Community Cultural Development**  
418 **for Justice-Oriented Citizenship Education**

419 To pursue this type of "hard" epistemological politics to do advocacy and informal  
420 education for refugees requires more than an organization like *RISE* simply having  
421 refugees and asylum seekers as members. It involves deploying strategies that  
422 require sophisticated skill-sets to enable grassroots members to undertake their

423 own research that will inform ideas and initiatives for informal citizenship education.  
424 Enabling grassroots people, especially those with histories of exclusion, to research,  
425 plan, and implement informal education is easier said than done. For anyone, but  
426 more so for people who are not used to having their voice and knowledge regarded as  
427 important, to research and present educational “stories” is a process that requires not  
428 just highly developed technical skills but also an epistemological disposition. Paulo  
429 Freire (1974) described this as a process of moving learners through stages from  
430 magic, then naïve to critical consciousness.

431 It is no coincidence that a good deal of justice-oriented campaigns and citizenship  
432 education initiatives rely on the involvement of arts workers. This is because they  
433 have expertise in researching, producing/making, and presenting “stories” in ways  
434 that are creative. This is a field of practice known as community cultural develop-  
435 ment (Adams and Goldbard 2005). An illustrative example is an Aboriginal reconcil-  
436 iation campaign known as *The Torch*. *The Torch* was a partnership between the  
437 *Brotherhood of St Laurence* and a Melbourne-based theater company and a justice-  
438 oriented and informal education program that sought to facilitate learning with  
439 grassroots “citizens” in rural towns about the history of local interactions between  
440 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents. This was done through a story-making  
441 process. Writers and actors with the theater company prepared a skeleton script. The  
442 plot involved the local country town preparing for a visit by the Queen and torch  
443 bearers shortly before the 1956 Olympics that were staged in Melbourne. A major  
444 part of the preparations included moving Aboriginal people living in shanty make-  
445 shift accommodation away from the main streets. They were regarded as an eyesore.  
446 The theater workers would spend several weeks in the respective town prodding and  
447 provoking both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to undertake research to flesh  
448 out the skeleton script. Local stories were unearthed. There were, as Zipin refers to  
449 them, accounts of “dark” knowledge dimensions (2009). For example, a farmer  
450 undertook research about his grandparent’s accounts of Aboriginal people being shot  
451 by police, and an Aboriginal woman investigated the circumstances surrounding the  
452 taking of children by welfare authorities. But there were also accounts of “lighter”  
453 knowledge dimensions, for example, a local football club welcoming Aboriginal  
454 players and a local pub hosting Aboriginal musicians for more than 30 years. Such  
455 local stories were woven into the script. But the justice-orientation of this approach  
456 to citizenship education for reconciliation went beyond local people including their  
457 research in the script/curriculum. It also included local people being recruited and  
458 supported to assist with stage and costume design and perform on stage, whether it  
459 be singing, acting, or dancing. This process of collaborative storymaking enacts  
460 what can be called a justice-oriented approach to citizenship education. *The Torch*, of  
461 course, is not an isolated example of this type of practice. Indeed the field of  
462 community cultural development or applied community arts includes various  
463 Australian arts organizations; for example, *Chorus of Women*, *BigHart*, *Urban*  
464 *Theatre Projects*, *Somebody Daughter’s Theatre Company*, and the *Artful Dodger’s*  
465 *Studio*.

466 **Citizenship Education for and with Cyclists**

467 We now turn our attention to efforts to promote more bicycle friendly cities. This is  
468 an arena for informal citizenship education which relies heavily on the campaigning  
469 efforts of grassroots cyclists' groups. In order to illustrate a justice-oriented  
470 approach, we will compare three different epistemological perspectives. The first  
471 is an instrumentalist perspective which prioritizes informing current and potential  
472 cyclists about the political structures which make decisions about and fund bicycle  
473 infrastructure. While we acknowledge that in this perspective citizens are learning  
474 passively, this type of informal education practice is, nonetheless, important and  
475 foundational. A second epistemological perspective is interpretive and prioritizes  
476 supporting bicyclists to enact active citizenship. There is, of course, a continuum  
477 from passive to active, then to justice-oriented citizenship. But the act of cycling  
478 itself can be seen as a participatory action and these groups not only encourage more  
479 people to cycle, but also to write petitions and post stories on social media. Through  
480 such advocacy, these citizen-cyclists are educating themselves and others about  
481 creating cities that are less dependent on motorized transport and more reliant on  
482 human-powered vehicle movement.

483 To continue moving along the continuum, *Critical Mass* and *CycleHack* present  
484 examples of even more participatory and justice-oriented citizenship. *Critical Mass*  
485 began in 1992 in San Francisco and is now active in hundreds of cities across the  
486 world, including Australia. There is no formal organization, no office holders, just  
487 monthly political-protest rides. Typically cyclists ride en-masse through major road  
488 intersections. There are variations. Some groups obey the road rules but make a point  
489 of taking up all road space. Other groups make a point of clogging up intersections  
490 for a short period of time and handing out pamphlets and chanting slogans to car  
491 drivers. And some do actions such as die-ins where cyclists lie on the road with their  
492 bicycles to draw attention to bicyclists being killed by cars, or lifting bikes above  
493 their heads as a celebratory gesture.

494 The reason we are focusing on epistemology is to draw attention to whose  
495 knowledge and what sort of knowledge is at play. In the *Critical Mass* actions, it  
496 is the embodied knowledge of diverse grassroots cyclists, as opposed to the author-  
497 itative knowledge of "senior"/expert organizational bike-citizens in information-  
498 based advocacy, which counts. This is participatory, verging on justice-oriented,  
499 citizenship. It is participatory because there is active involvement in collective  
500 decision-making and action. For some participants, it may only be a spectacle  
501 where is neither passive or active learning. But for other participants, it may spur  
502 or require them to research for themselves local issues facing bicycle advocates. And  
503 for some this may embolden them to deepen their learning and sustain their advo-  
504 cacy efforts. In this vein, *Critical Mass* can be seen as sitting on a continuum  
505 between participatory and justice-oriented citizenship as depicted in Table 2.

506 If one was to design a movement that was further along the continuum towards  
507 justice-oriented citizenship, one might develop something like *CycleHack*. *Cycle*  
508 *Hack* sits in column 4 of Table 2 indicating how its approach is an example of  
509 justice-oriented citizenship. This movement started in 2014 in Glasgow as a one-off

t.1 **Table 2** Threefold typology of citizenship education for and with cyclists: instrumental, interpretive, and critical epistemological perspectives

t.2	<i>Passive learning and instrumental knowledge</i>	<i>Active, participatory learning and interpretive knowledge</i>	<i>Justice-oriented learning and grassroots, critical knowledge</i>
t.3 <i>Australian Cycle Alliance</i>	Provide information via meetings, brochures, films and newsletters	But also encourage grassroots cyclists to write petitions and post stories on social media	
t.4 <i>Critical Mass</i>		Cyclists meet once a month and “occupy” a major road intersection as a protest spectacle	Some are emboldened to research and plan further actions
t.5 <i>CycleHack</i>			Grassroots and expert cyclists connect to research for themselves ways to improve experiences and infrastructure

510 event to bring together cycle activists, developers, designers, planners, and engineers  
 511 to brainstorm the barriers that stifle more bike-riding and collaborate on new ideas.  
 512 *CycleHack* has quickly grown into a movement and there are in 2018 collectives in  
 513 over 40 cities across the world. We see this as an example of justice-oriented  
 514 citizenship because it directly harnesses the knowledge of bicycle-citizens to  
 515 develop substantial “curriculum.”

516 As citizens, we are all experts in our own right. We all have countless hours of experience  
 517 travelling through our local streets, interacting with other road users & using the products/  
 518 services that surround us. . . . Our approach to solving the barriers to cycling connects citizens  
 519 and allows them to be part of a positive change where they live. . . . We want to reduce the  
 520 number of barriers that surround everything from; how you learn to ride a bike; where you  
 521 lock your bike up; how you interact with others; to how cycling can fit into your daily  
 522 routines. (CycleHack 2018)

523 These bike-citizens see themselves addressing the injustice of apathy and hostility  
 524 towards measures to make cities less reliant on motorized transport and to feature  
 525 more human-powered vehicles. It is not just about their agency and subjectivity, it is  
 526 that they have developed a structured process – some call human-centered design –  
 527 where they drive the “curriculum.”

---

528 **Conclusion**

529 In this chapter, we have defined and analyzed justice-oriented and thick approaches  
 530 to citizenship education. In doing so, we have sought to extend Westheimer and  
 531 Kahne’s definitions of passive, participatory, and justice-oriented citizenship on

532 various levels. First we have highlighted differences and similarities between thick  
 533 and justice-oriented approaches. Second, we have drawn attention to the centrality of  
 534 epistemological politics. Third, we have highlighted the value of applying a broad  
 535 lens to capturing the scope and multifaceted nature of radical approaches to citizen-  
 536 ship education. Through this lens, one can see formal and informal education  
 537 initiatives, pop-up and institutionalized curricula strategies. The main implication  
 538 of our argument is that a justice-oriented approach to citizenship education requires  
 539 more attention be paid to the question: Does it matter whose knowledge we harness?  
 540 The challenge is not only to design and implement "curriculum" – be that in formal  
 541 or informal education contexts – that enables learners to pursue a structuralist  
 542 analysis and action, but to do this with diverse groups of learners. It is important  
 543 to support learners who are already confident of their capacity to be active and  
 544 justice-oriented citizens, but also important to support those who are not.

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