Social studies and beyond: attending to informal citizenship education in schools

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Received 28 June 2017
Revised 4 January 2018
Accepted 27 March 2018

Abstract

Purpose – Although social studies teachers are charged with explicitly teaching about citizenship, all teachers in a school implicitly teach about citizenship. That is, in their daily interactions with students, whether specific to subject area content or not, teachers impart lessons to their students about what citizenship is and what it means to be a citizen. The paper aims to discuss these issues.
Design/methodology/approach – Examining the "powerful" stories of three teachers, only one of whom teaches social studies, this paper focuses on "informal citizenship education" across schools.
Findings – It concludes with implications for workers in and beyond the field of social studies education.
Originality/value – Ultimately, it suggests that as notions of citizenship education expand to include informal citizenship education, teachers will better teach students to be effective citizens.

Keywords Citizenship education, Informal citizenship curriculum, Teacher stories

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Citizenship education is a cornerstone of many social studies classrooms. The National Council for the Social Studies (2010) defined social studies as "the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence" (p. 9). The main purpose of social studies, then, "is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world." Thus, NCSS (2010, 2013) tasked social studies teachers to facilitate student learning toward effective citizenship.

This mission for social studies teachers to teach effective citizenship is not new. It has roots in seminal writings from when (NCSS) was created (e.g. Rugg, 1923), and it has persisted through the decades (Evans, 2004). Three decades ago, Longstreet (1985) noted "widespread agreement that the development of good citizenship is the central purpose of social studies instruction in the schools" (p. 21). Despite this consensus, though, Longstreet found the emphasis on citizenship to be the "phantom core" of the social studies curriculum. That is, there was little agreement on what it actually meant for teaching (and learning) that citizenship was at the heart of the subject.

A decade after Longstreet, Grant and VanSledright (1996) revisited the "phantom core" claim and offered a new perspective. The issue was not an emphasis on citizenship in social studies teaching. Rather, it was that citizenship education was relegated solely to the work of social studies teachers. While it is pertinent to the subject of social studies, the authors argued, "citizenship education will be an essential element of our children's experience only when it becomes an explicit, dynamic, and schoolwide mission" (p. 56). More recently, Westheimer (2015) has asserted this school-encompassing claim: "Teaching about citizenship is not solely the purview of social studies or a civics education class. The entire school is party to the enterprise" (p. 3).

I agree that the work of citizenship education needs to be "an explicit, dynamic and schoolwide mission" – and I suspect in most schools it simply is not. This, however, does not mean that citizenship education is absent from the work of teachers across the school. While I would like to see all teachers take up "explicit, dynamic" citizenship teaching, it is my

Social Studies Research and Practice
Vol. 13 No. 2, 2018
pp. 289-300

1933-5415
DOI 10.1108/SSRP-06-2017-0033

contention that all teachers – whether as part of the explicit, implicit and/or null curricula (Eisner, 1985) – already implicitly teach about citizenship. Some teach lessons and units that examine the structures of government, develop student voices and experiences, investigate and debate critical community issues, and so forth. This is explicit citizenship teaching, and social studies teachers often fall into this category. But many teachers, including those in social studies, implicitly teach about citizenship in their daily interactions with students, related or unrelated to the subject matter of their courses. The purpose of this paper is to investigate this implicit citizenship education.

Citizenship curricula in schools

I posit that schools offer two types of citizenship curricula: formal and informal. The formal citizenship curriculum takes up teaching students to be citizens through what Aoki (1993/2005) called curriculum-as-plan. The goals of this curriculum have been laid out explicitly by the teacher, school, district, state and other curriculum planners (like NCSS). The informal citizenship curriculum resides in what Aoki called lived curriculum, "a world of face-to-face living" (p. 203). The lived curriculum is comprised of the learning experiences, designed and impromptu, that unfold in the countless interactions among teachers and students.

As social studies is often directly concerned with the formal citizenship curriculum, recent social studies practitioner and research literature reflects this commitment (e.g. Journell *et al.*, 2015; Kahne and Middaugh, 2008; Levinson, 2014; NCSS, 2013; Rubin, 2012; Serriere, 2015). However, it is my contention that social studies workers – including teachers, researchers and teacher educators – need to consider more thoroughly and directly the ways in which the informal citizenship curriculum – occurring in all places of the school, not just social studies classrooms – complements, challenges and contextualizes what social studies teachers explicitly teach in their classrooms. For example, if a student is repeatedly treated unfairly by an educator at her school because of his/her appearance – be it during class or outside of class time – how might that student's interaction with the formal citizenship curriculum of his/her social studies class be undercut or rendered moot? Conversely, if a student repeatedly encounters many teachers at his/her school caring for his/her and other students as individuals and members of larger communities – related to both schoolwork and everyday life – how might his/her interaction with the formal citizenship curriculum be bolstered or opened up to a wider range of good-citizenship learning?

There is ample research and theory, both in the social studies literature and outside of it, about citizens and conceptions of citizenship (e.g. Knight Abowitz and Harnish, 2006; Levinson, 2012; Orr, 1992, 1994; Parker, 1996; Westheimer, 2015; Westheimer and Kahne, 2004). While the question of "What kind of citizen?" (Westheimer, 2015; Westheimer and Kahne, 2004) is a critical one, structuring much of contemporary inquiry about citizenship, I seek to dwell in a different question: Who teaches citizenship and how, particularly when the teaching of citizenship is not an overt focus?

In the context of this inquiry, I am particularly interested in the ways in which citizenship education involves students learning to be effective (NCSS, 2010) or good (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004, regardless of the type of good citizenship) participants in their many communities, including communities of various scales and types. My orientation to citizenship is one that is foremost structured by one's relations to others, and this is deeply influenced by Noddings' (1992) theorizing about care, including care in the context of schools. I am also influenced by Weil's (1952) writing about a human's need for roots: "A human being has roots by virtue of his [*sic.*] real, active, and natural participation in the life of a community, which preserves in living shape certain particular treasures of the past and certain particular expectations of the future" (p. 43). For me, Weil's (1952) "natural participation" is effective (or good) citizenship, and what is most fundamental reminds me of

what Noddings (1992) called one's "caring relations" (p. 15) with other community members. Without such relations, Weil said a person is "severed from the universe surrounding him [*sic.*]" (p. 46), but a person with them lives and thrives in healthy relation to and in his/her communities. This relational participation is citizenship, and a fundamental aspect of it involves caring for others. With this relation-oriented conception of citizenship in mind, I turn to the stories of three teachers.

Asking for and hearing three "powerful" stories

This paper is a byproduct of a study examining how teachers' lives and work are shaped and contextualized by the many places that they inhabit over the different times of their lives. My intent here is not to report on the methods and entirety of findings of that study, which I have done elsewhere (Kissling, 2012a, b, 2014); rather, I seek to dwell in and learn from three particular stories told by teachers during the study. However, in order to give the reader a basic understanding of the context in which the stories were told and heard by me, I briefly recap the study below before turning to my work in this paper with the three stories.

In the study, interested in what can be learned from the particularities of lived experience, I worked narratively with three teachers – Dan, Rosie and Tommy (all pseudonyms) – following the line of narrative inquiry research developed by Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly (Clandinin, 2007, 2013; Clandinin and Connelly, 1994, 2000; Connelly and Clandinin, 2006). I purposefully sought to work with teachers with whom I already possessed a relationship that suggested we would be able to work intimately (Laura, 2010). I also sought to work with a small-but-diverse group of teachers. Thus, the three participants, as a group, are diverse with respect to country of birth, gender, race, region of the USA, years teaching, subject area of teaching and grade level(s) taught (see Table I).

There were three phases to the research process. In the first phase, participants completed an e-mail questionnaire that provided me with background knowledge about their lives and teaching. Then, I interviewed the participants over the phone or Skype, following up on their questionnaire answers and asking them to tell related stories. In the second phase, I visited each participant for roughly one week. Save nights, I spent nearly the entire time of my visit with the teachers, both in and out of their schools. In addition to observation and informal conversations, I formally interviewed the participants both at school and away from school. In these interviews, amid various interview activities, I asked for stories of their teaching and living. In the last phase, I asked participants to keep a journal of their reflections for two weeks. With Rosie, I followed up on her journal with another Skype call.

Teacher	Dan	Rosie	Tommy
Gender	Male	Female	Male
Age	Mid-40s	Early 30s	Mid-40s
Race	Pacific Islander	Black	White
Country of birth	The Philippines	USA	France
Primary childhood USA region	Midwest	South	Northeast
Resides in:	Lansing, MI	Mobile, AL	Dorchester, MA
Teacher preparation	Large Bachelor's	Small Bachelor's	Alternative Master's
Years teaching	22	9	11
Number of schools in career	2	2	1
Teaches in:	Parker, MI	Mobile, AL	Dorchester, MA
Current school type	Suburban	Suburban/Rural	Urban
Grade tier	Middle	Elementary	High
Subject area	Social Studies	Gifted	English

Table I. Overview of personal and professional characteristics of participating teachers

The participants and I generated field texts from a variety of narrative inquiry research methods, which included my reflective journaling; a questionnaire; interviews (i.e. long-distance and in-person), all of which I audio-recorded and transcribed; textual analysis and discussion; my observation of and participation in the teachers' lives, including in the teachers' classrooms; and poetry writing. The field texts generated from these methods included: detailed journal notes; questionnaire answers; audio and transcribed recordings of interviews; autobiographical chapter lists; various texts annotated by the participants; poems; and maps. I also collected documents that factored into our discussions (e.g. local newspapers during my visits).

The teachers' teaching of citizenship was not the central focus of the study, nor even of the three stories on which I focus in this paper, yet I consider here how the three teachers implicitly teach citizenship. My telling and analysis of the stories below are informed by the deep research from the entirety of my study of the three teachers but I intentionally seek to dwell in this paper in three stories. During interviews with the teachers at their schools, I asked, "When you think back over your years teaching, will you tell me a story of one powerful event or experience?" (Wanting clarity about my conception of "powerful," Tommy asked if the story should be negative or positive, to which I responded, "Anything, whatever resonates with you right now.") In asking for these stories, I was not courting times when the teachers acted as citizens or taught citizenship. However, I find strong implications for citizenship education in these stories, particularly at a time when, in powerful cultural and political discourses, teachers are often maligned and their work reduced merely to transmitting academic content. By closely attending to these "powerful" stories of teaching from each teacher, we see evidence that important citizenship education takes place informally in the work of teachers in and out of social studies.

Dan's story

A Filipino American male in his mid-40s, Dan is a resident of a middle-class neighborhood in Michigan's Capital City, Lansing. He has taught middle school social studies for over two decades in Parker (a pseudonym), an affluent suburb less than ten miles from his home in Lansing. Dan has four children: two teenagers with his first wife, from whom he is divorced, and a toddler and a baby with his second wife. I met Dan through the teacher education program in which we both worked, he as a mentor teacher and I as a methods course instructor.

Alex's return. Before settling into teaching seventh and eighth grade social studies for two decades (and counting), Dan taught at his district's alternative school for students who struggled in the main schools. One of Dan's students from this time was a teenage male named Alex, who was at the alternative school primarily because he struggled with drugs. (All student names are pseudonyms). "The first thing Alex would do when he came into the classroom was come up and say hello," Dan recalled. "He'd want to tell me a joke, or something like that." Although Alex had rough interactions in the past with teachers, he was comfortable with Dan. Alex spoke openly with Dan about his dependence on drugs and his attempts to become drug free. They repeatedly had conversations about the devastating impact drugs had on Alex's life and would continue to have if Alex's drug use persisted.

After one year teaching at the alternative school, Dan accepted his current position at the district's middle school. Although Dan had developed a strong rapport with Alex, his move meant that he no longer taught, nor even saw, Alex. However, seven years later, and without any communication during that stretch, Alex came to Dan's school in order to see him. Dan was eating lunch in the faculty lounge when he received a call from the main office. "Dan, there's a guy here that really wants to see you but we're really worried about this," Dan remembered hearing. The voice on the other end of the phone then whispered,

"I'm worried he wants to hurt you. His name is Alex." Upon hearing his former student's name, Dan, in his typically upbeat manner, replied, "Alex! Oh yeah, send him down!" Alex soon appeared at the door, according to Dan, "all disheveled and really rough looking." Still, though, Dan rose from his seat and gave him a hug. When Dan inquired about how he was doing, Alex softly confessed, "Ah, I just got out of prison."

The two walked to Dan's classroom. After they had talked about what Alex had been through, Dan asked Alex, "Are you ready?", which meant, "Are you ready to live meaningfully, beyond prison?" They then parted with Dan saying, "Don't ever go back," and Alex shrugging, "I know."

An open door. Dan and Alex had not been in touch since Alex was a student in Dan's classroom many years before. However, Alex was taking Dan up on a variation of a deal that Dan makes annually with all of his students. Dan offers, "If you ever get the notion of wanting to drop out of school, call me." He goes on, "I'll buy you lunch or dinner, your choice, but we can't go to a super fancy restaurant because I can't afford that. I'll take you anywhere else; give me two hours to try to talk you out of it." While the pact is made in the present moment of his middle schoolers' lives, Dan's eye is more focused on his students' years beyond his classroom. The greatest service a student can do for herself community, he feels, is to graduate from high school. Two of his former students have taken him up on this pact. Both ultimately decided to drop out, but Dan was able to talk with them about the decision. By the end of these conversations, Dan was not excited about the students' decisions to drop out but he felt comfortable with them knowing that a process of reasoning and reaching out supported them.

In this context, Dan's story about Alex returning to see him upon release from prison is not surprising. Dan makes clear to his students that he cares about them, especially after they leave his classroom. He is adamant that students understand that they have a support network around them, that they are members of a caring community.

Rosie's story

An African-American female in her early 30s, Rosie resides in a relatively new neighborhood in unincorporated Mobile County, Alabama, just beyond the boundary line of Alabama's third largest city, Mobile. For the past six years she has taught gifted education classes at a suburban elementary school less than five miles from her home. She is married, and at the conclusion of this study, she found out that she was pregnant with her first child. I met Rosie through my wife, who was a high school classmate of Rosie's. I came to know Rosie over my repeated visits to Mobile, during Rosie's (and my) first years of teaching.

Gavin's admission. In one corner of her gifted education classroom, Rosie has created a cozy area where she and her students gather to read and share stories. One day a few years ago, she was sitting on the carpet in this corner with her class of fourth graders. They were discussing a book that they had been reading when one of her students, Gavin, told the class that his mom had recently attempted suicide. "I think a hard time was when my mom went crazy and she tried to kill herself," Rosie recalled Gavin saying. "She had to go away and so I went to live with my grandmother." The other students stopped moving and grew silent, except for Shelby, who responded, "Should you have told us that?"

Prior to Gavin's admission, Rosie had known the backstory on the attempted suicide and its impact on the family. However, she did not expect that he would share what had happened with the class. Startled initially, she quickly spoke to the question that Shelby raised: "It's very good that Gavin wanted to share that with us." Rosie was honoring Gavin's need to vocalize what was gripping him. It was certainly personal, but it was at the forefront of his thinking. Instead of repressing the pain, it was shared and acknowledged.

Rosie did not think that the all-class setting was appropriate to dwell on the content of Gavin's admission beyond validating his feelings and his decision to share them. But she saw the moment as an opportunity for the class to discuss possible reactions to a person who shares more than is expected. "We just talked it through," Rosie recalled, "How you support someone who's going through something that's difficult."

"Someone who really cares". Rosie referenced this story multiple times in talking with me, and after the last time, I asked why this story resonates so deeply for her. She responded:

> I want my students to feel safe with me and comfortable with me in that they can be who they are. And sometimes I tell them, "I have to put you back in check. You are who you are and you're wonderful but sometimes I have to correct you." But also that they feel they can tell me anything. And, you know, let me in on their world, and let me know what's bothering them. And really that I'm not just their teacher who's here but someone who really cares about them. And I want our classroom to be a safe zone, where, "if someone does something to you, I'm going to back you up, I'm going to help you. And that you have emotional support here." And so, working so hard to try to help my students feel safe, just really, it's a fist pump. It's like, "wow, that happened! That's awesome! That's really cool."

Rosie's statement that she wants her students to understand that she is "not just their teacher who's here but someone who really cares about them" is central to her work as a teacher. In other stories Rosie talked explicitly about cultivating a family in her classroom, and this instance is an example of that.

At the end of the study, Rosie spoke about several incidents that took place in her school during the school year: the suicide of a father, a parental fight at a youth baseball game attended by a number of students and the death of a teacher's husband. In each of these instances, the school's counselor chose to close off student discussion about what happened. Students were simply not supposed to talk about it, and no action was taken by the school to help the students process what had happened. Rosie expressed frustration with how these events were handled by the school. "[Students] don't know how to cope with loss or major tragedies if we don't teach them how to cope with those things." She then added, "It doesn't help our kids at all for them to just not talk about it." Rosie was advocating for such tough-but-important topics to be part of the school's explicit curriculum-as-plan. Such a pedagogical philosophy takes seriously what is happening in all areas of students' lives, including Gavin's mom's attempted suicide.

Tommy's story

A white male in his mid-40s, Tommy is a resident of Boston, Massachusetts, and specifically a large, multicultural neighborhood called Dorchester. He has taught English for over a decade at a much-maligned public high school a mile from his home that predominantly serves poor students of color. Tommy is married and does not have any children. I met Tommy during my first years of teaching when the two of us co-taught a humanities course in a Summer enrichment program for youth from under-resourced backgrounds.

Jayla's will to overcome. A number of years ago, Tommy was teaching an honors English class for sophomores and one of his students, Jayla, had started acting unusually. Jayla would be kind and open toward him at one moment and then, as if a switch had been flipped, turn nasty – toward him, specifically. In previous years, Jayla had been an "A student," but in Tommy's class she was now earning mediocre grades. The situation, though, seemed larger than a change in grades. At moments when she was calm, Tommy began speaking with her, attempting to understand why she was undergoing such drastic mood changes. "It was me telling her that it's really important to get things that are bothering her out into some arena, [to create] some sense of openness," Tommy recalled. Unable to get beyond "I don't know" responses, Tommy reached out to other staff in the building, asking them to speak with Jayla and help her address her anger.

Tommy soon learned that Jayla's home life was horrific. Her uncle who was living in the same home-space was repeatedly raping her. Additionally, her mother was a drug addict, which meant that she was taking care of her two younger siblings almost exclusively. From the point at which Jayla shared what was happening to her, drastic life changes ensued. She and her siblings were removed from their household. Jayla entered a local program that allowed for her to live on her own in a subsidized apartment while her siblings went into foster care. She continued going to school and found a supportive teacher in Tommy. He nominated her for a Summer program aimed at providing urban and under-resourced participants powerful experiences in natural settings. The program also paired participants with a local adult mentor intended to become a large influence in their lives. Tommy also worked with Jayla to apply for a scholarship that provides full coverage of tuition and expenses for four years of college. Jayla was one of the recipients, and with the scholarship, as Tommy explained, "she went to a good local university, where she struggled mightily, but because of her experience here, using the resources that were available – counseling, the summer program, etc. – she knew how to use those support systems and was able to graduate." Jayla now works in Boston, and every year she comes back to visit Tommy at school.

Balance work. After Tommy told me this story about Jayla, I asked how the various staff members at the school, including him, were able to help Jayla. He said, "There were enough adults that had maybe proven to her that they weren't going to take advantage of her and they weren't going to leave. And they weren't going to take 'I don't know' for her answer to a clear problem." While Tommy was an important character in this story, I was struck by how it was foremost about a community of people, the staff at his school and later local support services, working for and with Jayla to better her life. It is not a story of Tommy saving a life; it is a story of a community of people around Jayla caring for her and striving to make her life better. This is a theme across many of Tommy's stories about teaching. When Tommy tells his students that it is important to get what's bothering them out into "some arena," and when he says "I don't know" is not an acceptable answer, I hear the wisdom of his own life's struggle to achieve what he called "balance" (Kissling, 2012a).

Tommy's actions with Jayla are an example of concerted work on his part to teach his students, particularly those facing mammoth challenges, about making it to a better time and place of life. All of the stories that Tommy told about his teaching center on his involvement in helping students improve their lives. His teaching might be characterized as "Balance work," aimed at working with students so they can find a stability to live meaningful lives.

Reading the informal citizenship curriculum in these stories

When I asked Dan, Rosie and Tommy for "powerful" stories of their teaching, the contexts that surrounded my query and in which the teachers answered were not specific to citizenship. The teachers were talking about their lived experiences of teaching and so these stories speak to many aspects of the work that they do. Yet, I see these stories speaking directly to the workings of informal teaching and learning of citizenship in schools. In this section, I begin by laying out connections among the three stories and then move into how the stories show students learning citizenship lessons and the teachers acting as citizenship educators (and citizens in general).

Connecting these stories

All three of the teachers' stories involve students and difficult topics: drugs, prison, parental struggles and rape. Given these topics, the stories are exceptional. That is, they detail signature experiences that stand out among innumerable other experiences that congeal

into a teaching career. Every story of teaching is certainly not so high-stakes as these. Nonetheless, these stories were offered by the teachers as "powerful" in their teaching careers. They hold significance that reveals, at least in part, what is at the heart of the teachers' teaching experiences.

The three teacher stories center on students, not teachers. For this reason, I titled each story using a student's name. The teachers are actors in the stories, but, importantly, they are not invincible or omniscient. They are, as I argue below, citizens. Rosie's story is about a pedagogical moment whereas the stories of Dan and Tommy arc over a number of years. However, all three stories show teachers committed to students' lives beyond the times and/or places of their shared classrooms. The stories dwell outside of the formal content curriculum. That is, none of these stories are about teachers explicitly teaching the content of their subject areas. Rather, in each case, the content is the lives of students. Further, the stories point to, if not directly show, the betterment of student lives. We do not know what ultimately happens to Alex but we do see him exiting a struggle, returning to a person from whom he has drawn support, and acknowledging the need for a lifestyle shift. We see Gavin naming the difficulty that directs his attention, and we see the other students learning about supporting their peers who are openly struggling. We see Jayla overcoming a tremendously abusive home situation and, with the support of people around her, flourishing through the rest of high school, college and beyond.

Additionally, all three stories show important forms of communication in schools. Dan's story focuses on the rapport between teacher and student. Rosie's story focuses on dialogue among a class, facilitated by the teacher. Tommy's story focuses on the network of school personnel collaborating to aid a student. These stories combined, we are treated to some of the different caring relations that structure life in schools. Such relations, I believe, are the work of informal citizenship education.

Students learning citizenship lessons

Each story shows students informally learning citizenship lessons. Dan had made clear to Alex that it is important to reach out to supportive people, especially in times of need. Even though Dan had not seen Alex in a number of years, at an important transition point – i.e., being released from prison – Alex sought out a person whom he trusted and knew cared about him. This is the action of a person who knows that he is not alone in the world. Embedded in Alex's story is also the lesson that a second chance (or third, etc.) is an opportunity to make positive changes.

Rosie stressed to Gavin that it is important for a person to have comforting outlets in times of distress. Gavin's sharing about his mother's attempted suicide is an example of this. When those outlets include people, the implication of this knowledge is that one is embedded in a community. This is important since a prerequisite to collaborative citizenship is seeing the communities to which one belongs. Another lesson in Rosie's story is that members of a community need to support one another, even when a member has acted in a way that defies a norm or expectation. Rosie did not allow the implicit (and unintended) ostracizing embedded in Shelby's question to go without scrutiny, which ultimately became a lesson about how members of a community care for each other.

Tommy kept repeating to Jayla the saying "it gets better." In doing this, he was urging her to hold on, to persevere, to not give up. As effective citizenship can be contextualized by significant and sometimes prolonged struggle, this is an important lesson to learn. Even if circumstances are dire – and they were for Jayla – one has to see possibility from an existing or planned path of action. Jayla learned to lean on supportive others for assistance and utilize structural opportunities that positively shaped the direction of her life. As with Alex and Gavin, Jayla learned that she is not alone. Feeling a sense of others surrounding oneself is foundational to being a citizen. Citizens have to recognize the communities of which they are a part and then operate with(in) these communities.

Teachers as citizens, teaching citizenship

The three stories show the teachers acting with great care toward their students, which I read as acting as citizens (among other things – e.g. counselor, parental figure, etc.). Dan believes strongly that his students need to graduate from high school in order to best serve themselves, their families and their communities. He tells his students this, but he also tells them that the path to graduation and beyond is not an easy one. "There is nothing wrong with getting lost or falling down," he says, "as long as you get back up, as long as you find yourself again." The words are particularly salient in Alex's case. Alex had been to prison, but after being released there was an opportunity for him to get back up, to find himself again. In visiting Dan, that is the message Alex got. Dan's supportive optimism is an act of citizenship. He makes known to his students that he is a net for them, especially after his time as their classroom teacher. Furthermore, he does not give up on his students; there is always an opportunity to "get back up." As demonstrated in his pact with students about dropping out of school, Dan does his best to hold his students to the standard of not giving up, and this, I see, is an act of citizenship. It is a commitment to the students' best interests, and, as a result, it is a commitment to the community's best interests.

Rosie wants her students to be true to themselves in her classroom, and she recognizes that this opens the door to difficulty as well as authenticity. Her story about Gavin's admission was not a story about her comfort in the classroom. Rather, it was a story about her willingness to "dive into the wreckage" (Ayers, 2012) of her students' lives. Importantly, though, her story is an example of Gavin feeling comfortable enough to share what was weighing on him. When some discomfort is raised in response for Shelby, as evidenced by his question to Gavin, Rosie sees that discomfort as an opportunity for Shelby (and the other students) to learn to address adequately such an uneasy feeling. Building a collaborative community in the classroom – one that does not skirt the messiness of living – is an explicit act of citizenship. In doing this, Rosie validates students' concerns and pains. She also teaches coping skills and support strategies.

Similar to Dan's refusing to let students give up, Tommy refuses to accept "I don't know" as an answer to an unmistakable problem. When he was unable to assist Jayla in naming her grave problem, he reached out to his colleagues who could. This is a salient feature of citizenship: effectively utilizing surrounding resources. Tommy's story is not one of personal triumph. That is, it is not akin to "the citizen goes it alone." Rather, it is leaning on the community to help Jayla. It is not surprising, then, when Jayla learns to do just that as she makes her way to, through and beyond college. Tommy's story – like Dan's – also casts citizenship as ongoing, not a mere isolated act, as he continued to support Jayla well beyond her time in his classroom.

Thus, I contend that Dan, Rosie and Tommy are citizens in their classrooms, and by the very nature of this, they are teaching citizenship – at least informally. Returning to Weil's (1952) theorizing of roots, this citizenship of the teachers is deeply important because "whoever is uprooted himself [sic.] uproots others. Whoever is rooted in himself [sic.] doesn't uproot others" (p. 48). Thus, rootedness and uprootedness are contagious: one's possession or lack of roots impacts the lives of the beings with whom that person interacts. I posit that Weil's argument about roots extends to citizenship and we see it in the stories of the teachers: citizenship is contagious; teachers teach their students to be citizens by acting as citizens in their classrooms. Dan, Rosie and Tommy's "powerful" stories are examples of teacher citizens working to beget student citizens.

Implications for social studies and beyond

I contend that the field of social studies education stands to gain much by attending to the informal citizenship curriculum of schools. (It also stands to gain much by attending to the informal citizenship curriculum of living outside of schools but that is beyond the purview of

this paper). Foremost, social studies teaching about citizenship must recognize and reflect that citizenship is learned by students in many ways through an informal citizenship curriculum, not just the formal citizenship curriculum typically made explicit in social studies classes. While Dan, as a social studies teacher, overtly sets out to teach his students to be effective citizens, Rosie and Tommy, who are not social studies teachers, still teach citizenship. Thus:

- social studies teachers need to recognize that their teaching colleagues are teaching about citizenship and their students are learning about citizenship outside of social studies;
- social studies curriculum makers, researchers and theorists need to challenge subject-area boundaries that so routinely and powerfully structure social studies inquiry; and
- social studies teacher educators need to help pre-service and in-service teachers understand the complexities of citizenship education and how citizenship education is both social studies specific and whole-school general.

One implication from these imperatives is that social studies teachers have good reason to collaborate with their colleagues in other subject areas to understand how they teach (and can teach) about citizenship. Another implication is for social studies teachers to honor their students' knowledge and lived experiences about citizenship coming into and throughout their classes. In this sense, students already are citizens and so social studies learning about citizenship is deeper learning into what already is, not what some day might be. Yet, another implication of this reality of all teachers teaching citizenship is that social studies teachers are given an opportunity to investigate the relationship between their formal citizenship teaching and their informal citizenship teaching. They can ask and examine: Are my different forms of citizenship teaching in alignment?

A conceptual implication of attending to implicit citizenship education involves expanding notions of civic competence by attending to students' lived experiences. I posit that knowing how to support someone who has undergone a traumatic experience (like Rosie's student whose mother attempted suicide) is important civic knowledge and skill. Likewise, knowing that current circumstances do not have to remain the same (like Tommy's student Jayla) is also important civic knowledge. Civic knowledge and skill certainly includes a content base of information that is relevant to carrying out the duties of civic life (e.g. having an understanding of how governmental processes work), but it also includes learning about life as a citizen. Learning to care for the public good is not something that a student can fully internalize from mastering a content curriculum (although the student does need to learn conceptions of the public good); rather, effective citizenship must, to some large degree, be learned through lived experience. Furthermore, merely telling students to be effective citizens is not enough. They must live out experiences of how active citizenship makes a difference in one's life and the lives of others. This is what I see Rosie and Tommy teaching outside of social studies (as well as Dan in social studies).

Thus, the teaching of citizenship in schools is not the sole domain of social studies teachers and classes – and it is imperative that all educators understand this. Citizenship is taught in all classrooms, at all grade levels, outside of any citizenship curriculum-as-plan. That is, a teacher's lesson plan might make no mention of citizenship and yet citizenship could be an implicit goal of the lesson. Perhaps, even, it might be an embedded, yearlong goal of the class. Additionally, citizenship is also taught informally in interactions outside of structured class time. It is taught before and after lessons begin and end as well as in the hallways, on field trips and so forth.

Finally, the teacher stories in this paper show that citizenship does not solely pertain to the political state. None of these stories deal with citizenship with respect to the USA. Rather, they portray citizenship as related to healthy relationships with one's communities (inhabited, social, ecological and so forth). Related to this point, citizenship is cast in the

context of individuals' lives lived in relation to their communities. Thus, learning about citizenship must dwell in the lives of students, going beyond the walls of a classroom. That is, each of these stories is about students' lives in and out of classrooms. This is a seminal aspect of citizenship education: the walls of a classroom do not bound citizenship. Likewise, effective citizenship is not at a distance for students; it applies to all students (and all people). Indeed, everyone is and must be a citizen!

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