LEARNED CITIZENSHIP:
CONTEMPORARY GEOGRAPHIES OF EDUCATION
INONTARIO SCHOOLS

by

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Citizenship study of the past several decades has revealed citizenship as a multi-layered, multiply-scaled, and often exclusionary concept. Despite increasing and multi-disciplinary scholarly interest in the multi-faceted nature of citizenship as a political, social, and identity-oriented construct, it remains true that the majority of citizenship theory has developed in relation to adults, rendering children all but invisible to much citizenship discourse. Traditional citizenship theory has tended to position children as future adults and therefore as future citizens of the nation-state who prepare for citizenship through participation in public schools. Recent scholarship has also advocated children’s rights education as a key priority to help empower children as citizens in the present-day.

This project investigates how citizenship in Ontario elementary schools, through curricular learning as well as non-curricular activities. I use multi-method research comprised of discursive analysis of provincial documents, semi-structured interviews with elementary school teachers in three school boards, and interactive activity sessions with elementary school students. These findings consider how provincially-scaled discourses persist through curriculum and policy which situate children as future adults and as responsible, competitive citizens in the present day. Teachers value such responsible citizenship as they negotiate the demands of delivering curriculum and maintaining functional classrooms, but concurrently contribute to local citizenship education through community knowledge and empowering student interaction. Children’s contributions reveal a willingness to associate citizenship with ‘good’ citizenship, law-abiding behaviour, and thus situate the school as a site where citizenship expectations are delineated. While these findings reveal the significant mediating
role of local school teachers in delivering citizenship education as a supplement to standardized curriculum, only limited connections between citizenship and rights, and often between citizenship and the nation-state, are present overall. Children do figure as present-day citizens through their ability to perform responsible actions at any age, but this remains at best only tenuously connected to a citizenship of both rights and responsibilities.
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# Table of Contents

**Chapter 1: Introduction**
- Citizenship and Education 1
- Research Questions and Project Outline 11

**Chapter 2: Citizenship, Children, and the School**
- Citizenship 14
- Concerns in Children’s Qualitative Research 28
- Children’s Geographies 42
- Children and Citizenship Education 47

**Chapter 3: Citizenship Education in Ontario**
- Citizenship Discourse: Research Methods 64
- Public Education in Ontario: Historical Context 66
- Education in Contemporary Ontario: Public Statements 75
- Citizenship in the Ontario Curriculum 90
- Character Education as Citizenship Education: Responsibility at School 99
- Educating for Citizenship 109

**Chapter 4: Teaching Citizenship**
- Learning From Teachers: Methods 113
- Defining Citizenship 124
- Citizenship Education: Ideas and Practice 134
- Inside the School but Outside the Curriculum? Teaching Citizenship 150
- Citizenship at School – Or at Home? 163
- Closing Thoughts: Mediating the Provincial and the Local 176

**Chapter 5: Children’s Perspectives**
- Children at School: Research Methods 182
- Research in Schools 188
- Children’s Citizenship Ideas: Hearing from the Groups 197
- ‘Acting’ as Citizens: Role Play in Children’s Citizenship Research 208
- Citizenship and the School: Children’s Perspectives 215
- Responsible Canadian Citizenship: Laws and Rights 225
- Becoming a Citizen: Children as Newcomers 234
- Citizenship at School: Concluding Thoughts 242

**Chapter 6: Conclusions**
- Review of Findings 248
- Contributions to Citizenship Theory 260
- Methodological Contributions 264
- The Future of Citizenship Education? 266

**List of Sources** 272
## List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Typology of Citizenship</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Brainstorming Sessions – Most Common Overall</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For ‘Citizenship’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>Brainstorming Sessions – Most Common Overall</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For ‘Citizenship and Children’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>Brainstorming Sessions – Most Common Overall</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For ‘Citizenship and School’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5</td>
<td>Role Play Sessions – Most Common Scenarios Overall</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Appendices

Appendix A: Interview script – One-on-one interviews with Elementary School Teachers 289
Appendix B: Principal Letter 290
Appendix C: Informed Consent 292
Appendix D: Interview Site Census Profiles 294
Appendix E: Children’s Activity 295
Appendix F: Teaching Histories of Interview Participants 297
Appendix G: Role Play – Summary of Findings 298
Appendix H: Parent Letter and Child Consent 302
Appendix I: Brainstorming Webs – Site C1-03 305
Appendix J: Brainstorming Webs – Site HW1-01 308
Appendix K: Brainstorming Webs – Site TD1-01 311
Chapter One: Introduction

Citizenship and Education: Connections and Contemporary Issues

In this project, I investigate contemporary relationships between citizenship and public education, examining how citizenship is articulated through curricular learning as well as non-curricular activities in Ontario elementary schools. I accomplish this through multi-method research comprised of discursive analysis of provincial documents, semi-structured interviews with elementary school teachers, and interactive activity sessions with elementary school students. Over the course of the following six chapters, I discuss the results of this analysis and consider how current articulations of citizenship through the public school, as well as children’s own perspectives on citizenship and education, account for children as citizens in ways which have not been included in traditional citizenship theory. This project thus engages with recent scholarly discussion on citizenship theory, which contextualizes how I engage with citizenship concepts as well as links between children’s research and citizenship research.

More than fifty years ago, T.H. Marshall’s writings on citizenship and social class advanced citizenship as a term denoting the status held by all “full members” of a community, rendering all such members “equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed” (1950: 28), and defining these rights in terms of civic, political, and social rights. Although a single and complete definition of citizenship remains elusive, Marshall’s definition redefined citizenship as the experience of rights amongst members of a shared community, rather than as simply an autonomous experience of citizenship rights or responsibilities or as an identity defined through formal political participation in the public sphere. Moreover, citizenship scholars continue to acknowledge the importance of advancing citizenship as a rights-based concept, particularly in the current moment when
“the legitimacy of social rights has been subject to renewed challenge with the renaissance of classical liberalism in the form of the New Right” (Lister, 1997: 29).

Still, citizenship study of the past several decades has revealed citizenship as a multi-layered, multiply-scaled, and often exclusionary concept. Moving between nation-states, immigrants experience the challenges of attaining full membership as new national citizens, and within nation-states, citizens and would-be citizens experience “different forms of exclusions whereby some people occupy the status of non-citizens, whilst others experience themselves as second-class citizens” (Moosa-Mitha, 2005: 370), along lines of social class, formal citizenship status, and multiple identities defined by age, ethnicity, gender, and so on. Although Marshall’s definition posited citizenship as a universalist ideal, contemporary realities continue to reveal the complexities of what it means to be a citizen in the 21st Century.

Marshall defined citizenship in the context of membership in “a community,” which may in turn be viewed as an inclusive space constituted by common ideals or common history, as opposed to concept defined primarily through the governance of a discrete territory. Geographers have argued more recently in favour of considering the nation-state as merely one mediator of liberal-democratic principles, amongst the global ‘free’ market, the family, the community, and others (Mitchell, 2003), or that while the role of the nation-state vis-à-vis citizenship continues to shift, it has in many ways become more strategic as one of these multiple scales of governance, influence, and regulation (Sassen, 2001). Still, citizenship persists as a concept tied to the nation-state, such that Brodie posits that “citizenship has little meaning, conceptually or empirically, outside of the context of the modern nation-state” (2002: 379), and that citizenship scholars must continue to account for relationships between the individual and the nation-state, inasmuch as this connotes a sense of belonging.
as well as the interplay of citizenship rights and responsibilities. Additionally, citizenship as an identity tied to the nation-state is further complicated when we consider increasing flows of immigration and the accompanying transnational identities which may shift or divide individual citizenship allegiances as well as sense of belonging, across state boundaries and within multiple nation-states. While an individual’s identity as a citizen is often considered in the context of their formal membership status as a citizen of one, or more, nation-states and accompanying sense of belonging to that national community and its members, this identity encompasses myriad relationships between individuals and the individual and the state. “The interest in citizenship,” then, “is not just in the narrow formalistic meaning of having the right to carry a passport. It addresses an overall concept encapsulating the relationship between the individual, state, and society” (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 4).

Still, while these developments point to the complex social, political, and cultural issues surrounding the term ‘citizenship’, it remains true that the majority of citizenship theory has developed in relation to adults, excluding children whose legal status of non-adulthood renders them all but invisible to much citizenship discourse. Cohen notes how children “in democratic polities inhabit an uncertain space between alienage and full citizenship,” as they are “simultaneously assumed to be citizens – they hold passports and except in the rarest of cases receive at least one nationality at birth – and judged to be incapable of citizenship in that they cannot make the rational and informed decisions that characterize self-governance” (2005: 221). These comments bring into sharp relief the multiple ways in which citizenship is defined in daily life: through indicators of formal status and membership, for example, represented by state identification such as passports; also through the participatory nature of citizenship as the experience of making ‘rational and
informed decisions’ in life (ibid) and through governance institutions. In this way children inhabit a space of citizenship in which they are both insiders and outsiders.

Most commonly, children have figured “as citizens of the future; indeed in hegemonic political discourse in a number of welfare states they are portrayed as citizen-workers of the future who represent units of investment” (Lister, 2007: 54). As citizenship participation has, through civic-liberal and liberal-republican models been traditionally framed by ‘normative’ activities sanctioned by state governance, particularly in marriage, the military, and the marketplace (Moosa-Mitha, 2005), these wholly exclude children as citizen participants in the present-day, transforming citizenship for them as an identity which they will one day inhabit in the future, and towards which their experiences as children are oriented. Children’s and citizenship scholars thus endeavour to better understand children’s identities as citizens, and theorize ways in which children may act as citizen-participants or be reconsidered as citizens in the present-day, rather than ‘not-yet-citizens’ whose citizen identities are limited.

Indeed, children's worlds have found greater interest with cultural, social, and political geographers in the past two decades, as the social construction of childhood and the nature of children's spaces and identity become a focus for geographical work. These streams of academic inquiry have come to intersect, and engage with broader questions of what it means to be a citizen in a contemporary democracy and increasingly globalizing and multiply-scaled society, in a time when what we refer to as ‘citizenship’ continues to be redefined. At the same time, citizenship has also gained currency within the social sciences, as has the concept of children's citizenship more specifically, particularly since the introduction of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, HCHR 1989). The Convention builds upon the precepts of universal human rights to denote
further responsibilities of signatory nations to uphold children’s rights, and also declaring the need for children to be afforded protection, be prepared to live an ‘individual life in society,’ and specifically identifies children as individuals under the age of 18 (ibid). The Rights of the Child as declared through the Convention, include the right to freely express views in matters affecting them (ibid, Article 12), the right to freedom of expression (Article 13), to freedom of association and peaceful assembly (Article 15), the right not to be subjected to interference with his or her privacy, and the right to health and to facilities for treatment of illness (Article 24), among others.

The Convention depends wholly on the actions of signatory national governments to uphold these Articles, and thus also continues to articulate citizenship as a relationship between the individual and his or her nation-state, albeit in this case augmented by the assumed protective influence of the family. However, as Stasiulis has articulated in particular, a major innovation of this UN Convention was that “for the first time, it articulates the right of children to have a say in matters affecting them, and to have children’s opinions taken into account” (2002: 508). On a global scale, the Convention articulated children’s citizenship as an active identity underpinned by self-empowerment, knowledge and protection of their citizenship rights, which includes children’s right to participate in decisions which affect their lives. This shifts our attention to children’s experience as citizens in the present-day, rather than to their future identities as adult citizens.

In Article 28, the Convention also stipulates that signatory parties must “make primary education compulsory and available free to all,” and to “take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates” (United Nations, 1989). Indeed, citizenship theory has routinely identified children as citizens who benefit from
public education systems, albeit this document identifies this as a right of citizenship and not merely as a responsibility.

The place of public education as a signifier of social citizenship and as both an outcome and support of liberal democracy has been identified throughout the 20th Century from the writings of Marshall and by Kymlicka more recently. Liberal-democratic principles of freedom, equality, and autonomy are here seen as dependent on the state, and in particular on state education, since, as Marshall posited, “free choice takes over as soon as the capacity to choose has been created” (1950). Thus, children’s participation in public school is intended as the site where this ‘capacity to choose’ is actually created. Additionally, Kymlicka has argued for the significance of public education systems for fostering citizenship among children, and that these should be emphasized above structures within the family, the market, or the community, because of the state's authoritative ability to impart to individuals the sense of equality and respect embodied by liberal democratic principles. Here, citizenship education, or citizenship as education, “is not just a matter of learning the basic facts about the institutions and procedures of political life; it also involves acquiring a range of dispositions, virtues, and loyalties that are intimately bound up with the practice of democratic citizenship” (Kymlicka, 2001, 293). The idea here is that people who are educated through common curriculum and interact in schools then understand themselves as citizens who expect participation in and accountability from their political system, and who expect not simply personal autonomy but also mutual respect and civility between all citizens. Other recent scholars have continued to argue that “facilitating the nurturing and learning of children, youth, and adults is what public education - jointly with the family…is supposed to do” (Torres, 1998). It has been argued in this way that public education affords children necessary opportunities to learn respect for their fellow citizens, appreciation of the
political and civic responsibilities associated with citizenship, and a sense of individual autonomy.

These arguments point to the school as the primary institution through which children learn citizenship ideals, and also identifies citizenship education in the context of learning specific kinds of knowledge – creating the ‘capacity to choose’ – as well as learning certain kinds of behaviour and values which are deemed citizenship-like. While such contemporary liberal-democratic citizenship theory does tend to account for children’s presence as members of the nation-state through their participation in state-sponsored public education systems, this also tends to more closely identify children as future adults and therefore future citizens rather than as able actors in and of themselves, since children’s education is often viewed ultimately as preparation for adult life and adult citizenship. Such a future-oriented perspective tends to emphasize “the citizens they will become, the vision of society they will fit into, and the needs of the society that will welcome children as they become full adult members of this society” (Cohen, 2005: 230), without adequately acknowledging children’s individual social and political interests that exist before they reach the age of majority. Moreover, this is a largely passive children’s citizenship, where they learn what citizenship is and how to perform it, with little clear context for the value of their education in their contemporary lives beyond the school, or for the actual possibilities for making decisions in controlling their own learning.

Still, it has been argued that a ‘child-friendly citizenship’ model “might serve to promote all our interests through its recognition of mutual needs and concerns” (Roche, 1999). Citizenship scholars have called for a rights-based understanding of children’s ‘active’ citizenship, which empowers children through their own knowledge of their rights, and increased opportunities for children’s participation and decision-making in venues which
affect their lives (Stasiulis, 1999; Howe and Covell, 2005; also Matthews and Limb, 1999). Children’s citizenship represents a rich field for potential new inquiry, as since the late 20th Century scholars have begun to theorize what kind of citizenship exists or is possible for children in contemporary democracies. Lister commented recently that children’s citizenship remains a “theoretical lacuna that is beginning to be filled” (2007: 54), highlighting the need for further work which engages with how we may better understand children as citizens, and also how children themselves think about citizenship.

Within citizenship work children have often been positioned as future adult citizens who benefit as children from daily learning and interaction within the site of the public school. There is also some preoccupation with citizenship education in the form of curricular learning, as Heater (2005), Frazer (2000), and Crick (1999) have demonstrated, for example. Heater’s perspective in particular places citizenship education within the scope of the civic and political spheres. He asks whether “children can be expected to understand the essentially adult practice of politics?” and “insofar as training in good civic behaviour is desirable, should this be the function of the family or the state? Should the learning be theoretical and indirect, though History or Rhetoric...?” (Heater, 2004, 167). Such questions represent a preoccupation with citizenship as an experience of civic and political life which is dependent upon a specific set of knowledge in order to be successfully engaged. Alternately, as Covell and Howe have demonstrated in recent Canadian children’s research, citizenship education in the form of children’s rights education is also easily accessed in relation to elementary school curriculum requirements, and may be considered a significant “catalyst for attitudes supportive of human rights in general,” and also “likely to improve children’s psychological well-being, teacher and peer relationships” (1999: 182).
There is a theoretical basis, then, for examining children’s citizenship within the context of their experiences in public school, and further, such scholarship also suggests that citizenship education in the context of curricular learning presents a significant opportunity for understanding how children learn about citizenship while at school. However, still more recent citizenship research has revealed the school as a site defined only partially by curricular education. Indeed, Canadian education in the late 20th and early 21st Centuries has been characterized as a system which identifies children less as citizen-members of the nation-state, than as competitive individuals who are, or who should strive to become, globally strategic citizens and consumers (Basu, 2004; Brodie and Trimble, 2003; Hebert, 2002; Mitchell, 2003). This has manifested in response to “a constant rhetoric that the public schools were ‘failing’, which had the desired effect of producing anxiety among parents,” and since the 1990s has resulted in “a constant refrain of ‘excellence’, ‘accountability’ and ‘global competitiveness’” (Mitchell, 2003: 395), and a preoccupation with standardized educational testing and measures of academic performance. While these shifts noted by Mitchell highlight a preoccupation with curricular learning as a measurable standard of excellence, these trends also point to a prevailing willingness to believe that citizens are people who are shaped by public school attendance, and this itself is not solely governed by curricular learning.

Citizenship research therefore points to the school as a viable focus for understanding how citizenship is articulated and how children themselves are situated as citizens, in ways which may be different from adults or in forms of ‘semi-citizenship,’ as Cohen has termed children’s citizenship identities. The school holds great significance as a children’s space, where they spend a considerable portion of their day and which is governed by broad public expectations, provincial administration and curriculum, and local
programming from the school board and teachers in individual schools. There is great potential for us to better understand spaces of education as sites where children can and do learn citizenship practices.

As there has also been little Canadian geographical work done on the contemporary school as a site of learned citizenship - rather than simply formal citizenship curriculum - the broader purpose of this research is to understand how the Canadian public school currently situates children as citizens. Through a combination of methods, this project will examine how children's citizenship is currently articulated within Ontario schools, seek to draw conclusions about how the contemporary space of the school situates children as citizens, and consider how 'official' provincial public discourses of citizenship may be different than the lived and learned experiences within the school itself. In order to pursue this inquiry, this project will rely on textual analysis of public news statements, curriculum documents, and other provincial documents relating to new programming, semi-structured interviews with elementary school teachers, and group activity sessions with elementary-school students between Grades 5 and 8.

Through these findings, I will argue that citizenship in Ontario public schools is only partially related to the relationship between the individual and the Canadian nation-state. Stronger discourses emerge from both the provincial and local scales of education in Ontario, revealing contemporary children's citizenship as a concept defined strongly by ideals of responsibility and good behaviour. The school is thus situated as the space where these ideals are taught and role-modeled by teachers and performed by students. Through these findings it becomes apparent that while children are situated largely as future adult citizens, reminiscent of liberal-democratic citizenship theory which characterizes participation in the form of adult contributions to civic and political life, this is only partially
representative of how citizenship is articulated through public education in Ontario. The discourse of the ‘good citizen’ and of ‘good citizenship’ is prominent across the three school boards in which I conducted my research, revealing teachers’ need to operate within a well-behaved classroom environment and children’s expectations that ‘good citizens’ are people who reap greater achievements and rewards in both the present and the future. These findings thus situate children as both future adult citizens in the liberal nation-state and as contemporary moral citizens in their local communities. Here citizenship is defined more strongly by the performance of responsibilities than by empowerment through rights.

Research Questions and Project Outline

The central purpose of this research project is to better understand the school as a site where citizenship is learned and articulated. While a great deal of research exists which investigates citizenship issues, and citizenship for children does tend to be theorized in the context of the work of the public school, very little Canadian research has thus far examined these issues in depth within individual local schools. In this project I seek to understand how children’s identities of citizenship are constructed within that space. The Canadian public school is influenced by actors at multiple scales, including Provincial curriculum, local school board initiatives, individual teachers within the space of the classroom, as well as the needs and desires of individual families whose children attend local schools. Thus, it is difficult to understand the nature of citizenship within the public school without accounting at least in part for the dynamic nature of this space. While the work of the school might easily be theorized only in the context of the educational curriculum, for example, such an analysis would present only a limited understanding of how these ideas are situated ‘on the ground’, amongst the children and adults who experience the life and work of the school.
In order to understand how children’s citizenship is constructed and learned within school space, this project will then seek to answer more than one distinct set of questions, to respond to the broad research question, ‘How is citizenship articulated within contemporary Ontario public schools?’ More specifically:

a) How do local schools function as sites of learned citizenship practices, both through and outside of the curriculum? How may the public school be considered a dynamic children’s space, influenced by or connected to other scales such as the family, local community, province, nation, etc?

b) To what extent do children identify the school as a site of citizenship? How is children’s understanding of citizenship dependant upon the school or other spaces such as the home or local community?

Guided by this set of questions I will contribute to a more in-depth understanding of how citizenship may be understood through public education in Ontario, through a combination of several research methods. In this project I engage with a children’s geography of citizenship through a triangulation of textual analysis, one-on-one semi-structured interviews, and a combination of interactive methods which allowed me to work directly with children, which includes group discussion and brainstorming, and dramatic role play.

This first set of questions will be largely addressed through discussion in Chapter 3, which will consider a discursive analysis of Ontario Ministry of Education public statements and curriculum documents, in order to understand how citizenship is articulated through the provincial scale, and how children in general are situated as citizens through Ontario public education. This will also be addressed in Chapter 4, which will analyze qualitative data gathered from one-on-one interviews with elementary school teachers in Ontario. These
interviews, conducted with teachers in three different school boards, engage with teachers’ understanding of what citizenship is, how they perceive citizenship within the curriculum and other work of the school, and the unique nature of the school as a children’s space distinct from that of the home or elsewhere in the community. Through this discussion we will also see some evidence of the school as a dynamic site which is defined through curricular and co-curricular or extra-curricular work, and is influenced by multiple actors and by different ideas of what constitutes citizenship.

I will engage the second set of questions most directly through my discussion in Chapter 5. In this chapter I analyze the combination of qualitative data gathered from activity sessions of approximately one hour in duration, in which I worked with children in group discussion and invited them to present role play ‘skits’ to represent citizenship ideas in words and situations of their own experience. Here we begin to see evidence of children’s perspectives which in some ways resemble those of adults in the school or the provincially-scaled discourses of citizenship and education, but which also diverge from these adult perspectives in their own views on citizenship’s definition and significance. Before I address these qualitative research results, in the following pages in Chapter 2 I will undertake a review of scholarly literature relevant to these research questions which builds upon the preliminary themes and issues identified in this introduction.
Chapter Two: Citizenship, Children, and the School

This chapter engages with the field of citizenship studies in general and with some geographic study of citizenship more specifically, identifying dominant theories of citizenship. Citizenship theory continues to be greatly influenced by historic models and by the writings of T.H. Marshall from the mid-20th Century, but continue to be expanded and altered with the recognition that no single or conclusive theory of citizenship has yet been developed. Next, I discuss work in children’s studies in further detail, pertaining to our knowledge of how children’s citizenship is contextualized and how the fields of children’s studies and citizenship are connected. Children’s citizenship theory is almost irreconcilable from publicly-funded institutions, most significantly public education, although emerging work in the field of children’s rights reveal additional pathways for current and future work.

Citizenship

Citizenship has by now become broadly recognized as a subfield within geography and the social sciences at large, as the term has come to be contested and broadened to include the many and diverse social struggles through which groups and individuals claim the need for rights and recognition. In the last two decades in particular, geographers have examined citizenship as a political, social, and cultural concept, through which we may better understand migration, transnationalism, the construction of individual and group identity, rights and responsibilities, and contemporary governance, to name some major themes of study. As we shall see further, children’s citizenship has also begun to form part of this citizenship studies agenda, although citizenship does continue to be assumed more predominantly as part of adults’ social and spatial worlds.
It might well be argued that “a comprehensive definition of citizenship is not a simple task because one of the main aspects of contemporary citizenship change is that accepted definitions of citizenship are being undermined and rethought” (Purcell, 2003: 565). Still, there are some key ideas denoted by the term citizenship which we may briefly explore here in through an examination of geographical research, particularly in the last two decades. Nearly twenty years ago, Smith advocated for an expanded geography of citizenship as part of a ‘new’ social democratic trajectory in human geography as a discipline, and a way of engaging with a world increasingly defined by structural social and economic inequalities. “The idea of citizenship,” she argues, “refers to relationships between individuals and the community (or State) which impinges on their lives because of who they are and where they live” (Smith, 1989: 147). As such, it is not simply the conceptual space of belonging, the nation as an “imagined political community” (Anderson, 1983: 6), with which citizenship is concerned, but the nation-state as a set of institutional structures of governance which are territorially-defined by the same community with which citizens of the nation-state identify.

Citizenship has developed historically as an institutionalized identity associated with discrete political units and territories, from the classical Greek ‘city-state’ and to the modern nation-state governance (Bowden, 2003; Isin, 2002; Painter and Philo, 1995). Conceptions of relationship between individuals and the ‘community’ in which they are members has been heavily influenced by the mid-20th Century writings of T.H. Marshall (1950), who insisted that citizenship rights encompass political, civil and social rights which are guaranteed to individuals by the state and define citizen participation as members of a common society. Marshall thus re-established citizenship as not just a legal and political construct associated with state governance for the ideological purpose of ensuring freedoms, but as the guarantee of “social rights such as access to the means of guaranteeing a decent standard of living”
Although such a ‘community’ might be considered at multiple scales and might be defined more by common experiences of its members than by a discrete territory, citizenship has continued to be theorized most commonly in the context of the nation-state. Marshall thus emphasized the liberal-democratic state as a regulator of social welfare, and citizenship as “full membership of a community” wherein members benefit from civic, political and social rights, linking citizenship to social rights and community identity (Marshall, 1950: 9). In this sense citizenship is promoted as an inclusive construct, and “welfare rights are often identified as a compensation for inequalities, and a means to equal treatment” (Taylor, 1989: 25).

The relationship between citizens and the nation-state continues to be broadly contextualized along the lines of civic-liberal and civic-republican models. Civic-republican models envision “citizens obligations to one another to participate in the social and cultural institutions of the society to which they belong,” and participation as a citizen is “defined in normative terms through particular activities that are considered as citizenry, such as marriage, military and the marketplace” (Moosa-Mitha, 2005: 372). This also assumes a greater ‘good’ towards which all citizens work. Such ideals are not foreign to civic-liberal conceptions of citizenship, but are therein governed by broad assumptions that citizens are “constructed not as ‘members of the community’ but as strangers to each other, although they are sharing a complex set of assumptions about and expectations of each other which, when not fulfilled, can be enforceable by the state,” as Yuval-Davis has argued (1997: 6).

Both these streams of citizenship theory are found in contemporary discourse, converging in a liberal-democratic model, although most significant to current liberal-democratic theory remains the tenet of ‘contractual liberals,’ that “imagines that individual political actors agree to a ‘social contract’ with the state in which they consent to be ruled in
exchange for certain privileges and protections” (Purcell, 2003: 565), and assumes that individual citizens’ primary loyalty and sense of identity is tied to the nation-state which institutionalizes that governance. Canadian and American citizenships continue to be articulated within a liberal-democratic model (Kymlicka, 2001; Schuck, 2002), where citizenship represents the right of individual autonomy, thought, and property, in partnership with the legal regulation of the state. Here the political and social world of the nation-state is ideally neutral, guaranteeing equal freedoms and rights for individual citizens, in exchange for the exercise of formal citizenship responsibilities. By now, particularly in diverse immigrant societies such as Canada, Western liberal citizenship has also been placed increasingly in tension with demands for recognition of group rights rather than simply individual rights, leading scholars such as Kymlicka to re-evaluate liberal democratic citizenship within a pluralistic framework. Here, the Canadian state emerges as a multinational and multicultural state, wherein group-specific rights are not considered incompatible with a liberal democracy, but must still be integrated within particular state institutions and agreed-upon societal norms (Kymlicka, 2001; 2003).

However, in contrast to this liberal ideal, the current moment in Canadian governance has, however, been increasingly defined as ‘neo-liberal, as “during the past two decades, the neo-liberal turn in Canada has effectively disenfranchised the social citizen, delegitimized group-based claims-making on the state in the name of citizen equality, increased and deepened poverty and economic insecurity among identifiable groups, and widened the gap between the rich and poor” (Brodie, 2002: 378). The ideal of the liberal nation-state is therefore challenged by such realities of Western governance, as the promise of a welfare state which supports member-citizens with democratic freedoms and the guarantee of social rights becomes less and less reflective of reality. Geographers have
reported on the rise of a semi-public ‘shadow state’ of voluntary and activist sectors which fills such gaps in state welfare reform (Brown, 1997; Fyfe and Milligan, 2003; Kearns, 1992; Mitchell, 2001). Contemporary “alienation from and indifference to political institutions, concerns over the erosion of citizenship and declining social capital” have led to a re-framing of traditional liberal citizenship theory in which “voluntarism is viewed as having a pivotal role in rekindling a sense of civic responsibility and enhancing social cohesion” (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003: 398). As I will continue to discuss in a later section of this chapter, such trends have also come to be representative of the contemporary public school.

Within an ever-globalizing economy and increasing gaps between those who are or are not able to benefit from full citizenship rights, it has become increasingly difficult for Western nation-states to be feasibly considered as the single mediator of social citizenship. The period of the 1980s and 1990s in particular has thus been characterized as a time of neo-liberal citizenship, defined by individual competition within a global, 'free' market, declining economic and social authority of the state, and the de-regulation and down-scaling of social services onto increasingly local agencies and the voluntary sector. Thus geographers such as Mitchell (2003) have argued that the state can no longer be assumed as the site of learned liberal-democratic principles, but envisioned instead as one set of actors among many, including the global ‘free’ market, the local community, the family, the popular media, and so on. Sassen (2001) has also posited alternately that, while the nation-state's relevance has been altered and become in many ways more strategic, it has not disappeared altogether but forms one of several scales which overlap in the same space.

Additionally, Purcell’s recent framework of citizenship as a rescaled, reterritorialized and reoriented concept (2003) draws further attention to the fact that individual identities do not align only with the nation-state, and that in fact the city may be imagined as a site where
citizen rights are protected and flows of production, investment, trade, and livelihood may be governed. Indeed, Gordon and Stack’s recent comments that “States have never fully made good on their promise to roll out citizenship across national territory…States have struggled for the means to achieve this, and have often found themselves settling for a more intricate polity” (2007: 121) reveal a persistent concern with how to theorize citizenship as a multiply-scaled concept traditionally associated with the scale of the nation-state.

Despite changing articulations of citizenship which re-scale this concept to the level of the family, the city, and the global scale, Brodie has argued that "citizenship has little meaning, conceptually or empirically, outside of the context of the modern nation-state" (2002: 379), and that to speak of citizenship must continue to account for relationships between the individual and the nation-state, inasmuch as this connotes a sense of belonging as well as the interplay of citizenship rights and responsibilities. And particularly in the context of children’s citizenship within contemporary democratic societies, Cohen argues that citizenship must be considered through the context of the national scale, since “without adequate national citizenship, children’s citizenship will remain grounded in abstract guarantees created by well meaning but powerless adults that…can enforce very little in regard to the political circumstances of children for whose physical safety they claim responsibility” (2005: 223). Moreover, some citizenship scholars also continue to argue that citizenship and rights should be understood as interconnected (Howe and Covell, 2005; Isin and Turner, 2007; Shafir and Brysk, 2006) and, additionally, that since citizenship persists as a concept defined in relation to the nation-state, state governance policy and practice should work to guarantee the human rights of citizens (Isin and Turner, 2007).

Marshall’s theory of citizenship, while still considered as a key ‘starting point’ for contemporary citizenship theory, and valuable for the advancement of citizenship as a rights-
based concept, while subject to challenges from conservative and neo-liberal trends in recent decades, has also been further criticized for failing to account for the experiences of those who do not experience the valuable ‘full membership’ in the community to which Marshall refers. The ‘revitalized’ idea of what citizenship is, Marshall’s vision of a balance of political, civic, and social rights guaranteed to all individual and equal – though presumably adult – members of the nation-state is therefore credited as the platform upon which our current understanding of citizenship within democratic political theory is based. For Kofman, persistent and cross-disciplinary interest in citizenship is also representative of broader social and political change, and “a number of questions arise from the general interest in citizenship as a way forward in these changing and uncertain times” (1995: 121). Such questions engage with a globalizing world, where the nature of migration flows, capital flows, multiple scales of governance, and rights and responsibilities all seem to have shifted when considered in the context of contemporary citizenship. Although citizenship has been “generally defined as the rights and obligations that accrue to individuals as full members of a community, normally the nation-state” (Kofman, 1995: 122), such a definition now continues to be questioned.

Marshall refers to citizenship in the context of a ‘community,’ although citizenship has tended to be theorized in relation to a governing state which formalized civic, political, and social relations with the individual. However, in any case there remain questions about “what should happen to those members who cannot or will not become full members,” since “in virtually all contemporary states there are migrants and refugees, ‘old’ and ‘new’ minorities and in settler societies there are also indigenous people who are not part of the hegemonic national community” (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 7). In this light, citizenship is insufficiently theorized only in relation to those who are considered full citizen, but rather is
viewed as an unequal experience along various lines of social class, ethnicity, nationality, immigrant status, gender, race, sexuality, age, and so on. Certainly, we may include children as a largely excluded group in this sense, as citizenship theory has overwhelmingly tended to assume citizens as adult individuals. As Lister has aptly described, “the greater or lesser ability of certain groups to act as citizens and the degree to which they enjoy both formal and substantive rights as citizens depends on where they stand on a continuum of inclusion and exclusion which, at the extremes, represent the two sides of citizenship’s coin” (Lister, 1997: 36).

Kofman and other scholars such as Isin (2002) argue that citizenship has always been an exclusive concept rather than inclusive, where individuals recognized as citizens experience privileges and are afforded rights which minority groups including women, people of colour, or from the lower classes may not experience as easily. Although “citizenship as it is traditionally conceptualized encompasses only the public workings of the political economy and the historically male standards of economic independence, formal political equality and freedom from ‘private’ concerns of the maintenance of everyday life” (Staeheli and Cope, 1994: 444), this traditional vision continues to shift through recent geographical research. Indeed, the exclusionary nature of citizenship has been particularly contextualized as inherently gendered, “reflecting the fact that women’s long-standing expulsion from the theory and practice of citizenship, in both its liberal and republican clothes, is far from accidental and only partially rectified by their formal incorporation in virtually all societies in the twentieth century” (Lister, 1997: 38). Moreover, as we have begun to see in this portion of the chapter, gendered exclusion intersects with “other axes of social division such as class, ‘race’, disability, sexuality and age in ways which can be either multiplicative or contradictory, and which shift over time” (ibid).
Contemporary citizenship studies acknowledge that while citizenship represents equality in theory, in reality this equality has yet to come to fruition, along with a recognition that the “new times, then, expose a redrawing of relationships between civil society and the State – relationships which have changed over time and which vary in space” (Smith, 1989: 148). As I have briefly identified above, much of this discussion has recognized the need for feminist citizenship research. Lister has noted at minimum that, in the context of citizenship as a legal status or as an identity influenced by immigration and transnational movements, “women form a significant proportion of migrants and of asylum-seekers and for them the exclusionary force is compounded by laws which construct them as economic dependants” (1997: 36). Moreover, feminist citizenship theory “provides a framework...which both recognizes the structural constraints which still diminish and undermine that citizenship while not reducing women to passive victims” (ibid: 42). Citizen participation in public venues is historically gendered, and while women’s citizenship identities cannot be defined solely through their gender, the universal citizenship ideal is still far from reality.

Indeed, current citizenship scholars argue in favour of an approach to citizenship grounded in geographies of ‘difference’, in terms of not simply gender but also ethnicity, age, sexuality, and so on. In contrast to historic liberal citizenship theory which focuses on the universal ideal of citizenship equality, difference-centred citizenship theory conceives “experiences of inclusion/exclusion as a result of normative social institutional beliefs and practices, where ‘difference’ is constructed as ‘less-than’” (Moosa-Mitha, 2005: 371), particularly in the current moment of neo-liberal governance. This broadens citizenship to “a concept wider than just a relationship between the individual and the state,” recognizing that “power relations and conflicts of interest apply within ‘groups’ as well as between them”
(Yuval-Davis, 1997: 22) and that struggles towards a more equitable and democratic society exists at multiple scales.

Marshall’s citizenship theory, while advancing the idea of citizenship as an experience of social rights, has also been heavily criticized for neglecting to consider the unevenness or diversity of citizenship experiences along lines of gendered or racial identity, not simply in the Western world but across the globe. Indeed, geographers of gender and race have been particularly attentive to such questions and are shifting our understanding of how citizenship is both constituted and contested. Democratic ideology embraces the concept of equality between all citizens in their right to participate in and benefit from the workings of the state. However, Staehli and Cope identify citizenship scholars’ recognition of “the social relations of inequality and the economic processes of privilege and power that function to exclude segments of the population,” and the tension “between the ideological, legal notion of universal inclusion in citizenship and the fact that in real life citizenship is based on power, which is exercised through the social, economic and political structures” (1994: 444-445) of the same society which may still exclude full citizenship rights to many, most notably women. Citizenship may be used as an analytical frame to understand social and spatial segregation, economic inequality, racial division, and an opportunity to investigate the uneven experience of citizenship rights across the globe.

Fenster, for example, examines citizenship and ethnicity in a case study of Ethiopian immigrant Jews where “the path of integration of each new ethnic group has been far from smooth” (1996: 408), investigating the nature of social identity construction implicated in this migration experience and how interrelated citizenship and ethnicity may come to be understood through different models of social change. Peake and Kobayashi argue in favour of an antiracist research agenda which accounts for both the “culture of racialization” but
also the “culture of whiteness” which pervades social life and in which broad power relations are rooted (2002). Inasmuch as they expose these uneven yet institutionally-embedded power structures between and within individual countries, geographies of racialization are thus relevant to studies of migration, immigration policy, and identities of transnationalism and diaspora, all of which engage with assumptions about the influence of the nation-state as a scale of identity and governance.

Ong’s work (1999) has also analyzed citizenship as a concept of social, cultural, and class identity embedded in transnational flows of people and capital, leading to new terminologies of “flexible citizenship,” representative of the contemporary era characterized by strategic, individualized citizenship. These ‘flexible’ citizenship identities are underwritten by migration flows and diasporic identities, and contest our understanding of citizenship as an identity or loyalty tied to a single national territory. Moreover, “immigration inevitably results in a reimagining of the boundaries and meanings of places, a respacialization of both arriving and receiving groups. Racialization adds a particular dimension to this process, often creating conflict between two or more visions of place and identity (Peake and Kobayashi, 2002: 53). Walton-Roberts’s (2004) recent work forms another example of contemporary geographical research which shifts the scale of how citizenship is constituted through Canadian immigration policies. Her analysis examines the gendered nature of Canadian immigration in the case of south-east Asian women who, dependent upon their male spouses for immigration entry into Canada, are subject to considerable personal and private scrutiny by representatives from the Canadian state who enforce their policies overseas.

As she re-scales the Canadian state to the level of the family household, Walton-Roberts asks “how applicable is the Canadian concern with policies that perpetrate gendered inequities when the policy is exercised beyond the geographical boundaries of the nation,
and on people who do not possess the privilege of the ‘right’ state membership?” (2004: 275) Although immigration officials may intend to address issues of gender inequality, and also to advance immigration policy which would ideally ultimately lead to a strengthened and more diverse Canadian society, this is accomplished through the assertion of state authority and control at even the most private scale.

Contemporary geographers have also cautioned against depicting Marshall's theory of citizenship alongside the mid-20th Century welfare state as a now lost 'golden era' of citizenship. Although the state as the embodiment of social citizenship might has been considered a positive development through the universal support of social need, feminist scholars in particular have identified that this also hinged on social norms of unequal gender and racial relations. Such an analysis reveals the intersecting nature of citizenship with political relations, gender and identity, and migration research, as one of several feminist analyses of contemporary citizenship and immigration (for example, Lister, 1995; Staehli and Cope, 1994; Yuval-Davis, 1991). A new, “empowered” citizenship, then, is defined not simply as an abstract political idea but “as a set of relations between individuals, social groups and structures of relationships of power that create and reinforce inequality and exclusion” (Staehli and Cope, 1994: 447). Equitable access to benefits associated with modern citizenship – the ability to hold employment, move freely, participate in political life, and ensure that basic needs and rights are met – has historically favoured male, white citizens and in many respects continues to do so. Such research thus challenges the inequity of the traditional liberal theory, and favours a transformational citizenship which accounts for group difference beyond the relationship defined by the individual and the nation-state.

I was thus informed by these strands of citizenship theory – as well as by further children’s research, as I will continue to discuss below -- in moving forward with my
research project and seeking to understand the nature of citizenship as it is sited in contemporary Ontario public schools. Table 1 (below) provides a summary of these liberal and neo-liberal visions of citizenship, identifying points of tension and difference between

**Table 1: Typology of Citizenship**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizenship theory</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Neo-liberal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key words</strong></td>
<td>Key role of nation-state, rights and responsibilities, autonomy, group membership, community Legal rights</td>
<td>Competition, responsible citizenship, marketization, voluntarism, strategic nation-state, re-scaling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of School</strong></td>
<td>Civics education, school as site of respectful interaction, school as public site, micro-democracy.</td>
<td>School as site of preparation for adult participation. Education for responsible individual behaviour. Role of private sphere emphasized: families, communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rights</strong></td>
<td>Nation-state as mediator of citizenship rights, citizen members possess equal social, civic, and political rights. Equity redistribution to mediate inequalities.</td>
<td>Individualized rights, entitlement, performance of responsibilities. Equality through same treatment of individuals regardless of social position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Difference</strong></td>
<td>Equitable distribution of rights and responsibilities, some recognition of group difference. Integration of group rights within a multicultural nation-state.</td>
<td>Delegitimization of group-based claims to social justice; social differentiation. Flexible citizenship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Citizenship</strong></td>
<td>Empowerment through knowledge of citizenship rights, goals of democratic and public participation. Children learn decision-making process. Adults and children can be active citizens.</td>
<td>Responsible and altruistic individual behaviour. Private sector engagement through voluntarism. Community involvement. Adults and children can be active citizens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the two. While the ideas represented in this table cannot account for the entire body of work in the field of citizenship theory, the two streams distilled here as ‘liberal’ and ‘neo-liberal’ citizenship provide a useful interpretive starting point for the interpretive portion of my research. As much of my research findings rely on discursive analysis of texts and the interpretation of oral interview statements, this typology of citizenship provides a structured guide for my written analysis. The purpose here is not to impose a rigid binary opposition between these two broad sets of ideas, or to imply that these are the only means by which we may understand how citizenship is defined in the current moment. Rather, I employ this typology as a method of helping me to seek evidence of either of these forms of citizenship within Ontario schools. In fact, as will be evident in subsequent chapters, I believe my findings show evidence that the current Ontario public school may not be wholly understood through either ‘liberal’ or ‘neo-liberal’ theory alone, but rather that there are everyday points of tension between these two ideologies which are represented in educational curriculum and other interactions within the school.

While citizenship continues to be contextualized in historical and contemporary contexts as a concept underpinned by nationally-scaled governance and an interplay of rights and responsibilities mediated by the nation-state, recent research has contested this to explore the myriad ways citizenship may be understood. It is a multiply-scaled concept tied to the construction of individual and social identities, and is relevant to a wide variety of social and spatial experiences. Citizenship studies have tended however, to be extremely ‘adultist’, as children “at best, have figured as citizens of the future” (Lister, 2007: 54), and theories of children’s citizenship specifically continue to receive less attention. Later in this chapter I will continue to examine the ways in which children’s citizenship has been theorized. However, first I will devote further attention to children’s research specifically,
which has likewise undergone a shift in recent decades, and bears relevance to our understanding of children’s geographies as a form of research which recognizes children as capable participants and decision-makers in the world around them.

**Concerns in Children’s Qualitative Research**

Since the late 20th Century in general and since the creation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 in particular, children’s rights and their identities as individual people have gained increasing recognition. The Convention advocates children’s right to family, health, education, and “the importance of enabling children to express their opinions on important matters and decisions affecting them” (Hill, 2005: 61), and thus brings to light the predominantly adult-oriented social structures which govern children’s worlds. The Convention has drawn popular and scholarly attention towards children and how they live their lives. However, children’s scholars in the social sciences situate the interest since the late 20th Century in children’s research as part of broader trends within the social sciences as a whole. Holloway and Valentine observe how “debates about identity and difference have been a dominant focus of interest in the social sciences during the 1980s and 1990s,” and that “a common trend in these rather disparate sets of writings…has been to dispute essentialist assumptions about identity and instead uncover the ways in which our fractured identities are socially constructed” (2000: 2). This rising interest in geographies of identity has resulted in questions regarding the nature of childhood as a socially constructed phenomenon, and how our perceptions of childhood and children’s identities influences children’s relationships with adults and their peers, their use of public and private space, and the dominant influence of adult power which governs children’s lives and decisions which affect them.
Aries’ work on the European history of childhood as a facet of life constructed through the social structure of the family, reveals that childhood has certainly been denoted as a discrete phase of life since the 13th Century, but it is the past four centuries which show the strongest evidence of a ‘discovery of childhood’ (1962: 47). Photograph and artistic representations of family life since the 17th Century in particular revealed the central figure of the child within the family group, and by the 18th Century the education of children through formal schooling was common across Western countries. In combination, he argues “family and school together removed the child from adult society. The school shut up a childhood which had hitherto been free within an increasingly severe disciplinary system” (Aries, 1962: 413). This historical perspective shows how children have become constructed as young people in need of structure and discipline, working towards the aim of adulthood.

Shifting perspectives across the social sciences have given rise to a ‘new’ study of childhood, departing from historic tendencies to identify children within either Dionysian ‘little devils’ in need of disciplined socialization, or Apollonian ‘little angels’ whose innocence and virtue must be cared for and nurtured (Holloway and Valentine, 2000: 3-4; Jenks, 2005: 62-65). Such categories of social identity have the effect of creating ‘the child’ as a uniformly identified individual within a social group demarcated solely by biological difference. Moreover, such perspectives on childhood have the affect of socially constructing ‘the child’ as different from ‘the adult’ and in a way which marginalizes them as an ‘other’ in broader society.

Christensen and Prout document changes amongst sociology scholars of children and childhood who turned increasingly towards ‘socialization’ in the 1950s, seeking to understand how children become social beings, but still, “children were seen as immature, irrational, incompetent, asocial, and acultural,” while adults by contrast were considered
mature and competent, and adulthood the outcome of childhood (2005: 49). Before the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child drew attention to children's lives, the social sciences experienced a shift in the 1970s away from positivist and determinist paradigms, and likewise began to acknowledge how “children, like adults, live in a pluralist society and thus are confronted by a range of competing, complementary and divergent values and perspectives” (ibid: 50).

Childhood, therefore, may in the contemporary context be understood as a socially and culturally constructed phenomenon rather than as a discretely defined stage of life. This emerging perspective contrasts significantly with historical perceptions of childhood which have been dominant throughout North America and Europe, in which childhood is ascribed special meaning as a phase in human life; the child is surrounded with care and concern which endeavour to prepare and protect the child; at the same time these perceptions attribute value to childhood and the child mostly in relation to a future adult life through the status of ‘non-adult’; the child is more valued as being in process...towards a goal through which to take his or her place in society, than in his or her present state (Christensen and Prout, 2005: 45).

To consider children in the context of the ‘new’ study of childhood, then, recognizes more value in considering childhood as a stage of life which is meaningful because of the experiences, ideas, and relationships children have while they are children, and not just because of how these things will influence their adult lives.

More recent children’s research acknowledges the rights and uniqueness of children as social individuals, and challenges the uniformity of the notion of ‘the child’ who is not yet an adult, defined by their need alternately for discipline in order to become socially accepted adults, or for care and protection from adult members of family and society. The ‘new social studies’ of childhood “sees children as making meaning in social life through their interactions with other children as well as with adults,” and “childhood is seen as part of society not prior to it” (Christensen and Prout, 2005: 42). Children are increasingly viewed as
social actors in and of themselves, rather than simply as individuals who are not yet adults. Children are considered as people with meaningful experiences and interactions, neither a uniform group differentiated solely by age, nor simply future adults whose contemporary lives bear less significance. However, it is true that we cannot completely separate children’s lives from those of adults since all adults were once children, and all children eventually become adults.

Thus, children’s scholars have begun to advocate for understanding children as human ‘beings,’ and not as human ‘becomings’ (Qvortrup, 1994: 4; Christensen and Prout, 2005), emphasizing that children are social actors beyond their status as future adults, whose lives are in transition but also characterized by learning, growth, and the need for protection of rights and freedoms. Moreover, children’s very difference in age which distinctly differentiates them from adults bears implications for the researcher attempting to represent his or her findings, and not only for how we perceive the nature of children’s experience in the present-day. “The difference for research with children,” Punch argues, “is that it is difficult for an adult researcher ever to totally understand the world from a child’s point of view” (2002: 325). Although all adults were once children, no adult will be identically influenced by childhood experiences and memories, nor will they be able to fully identify with the children in the present-day whose social and spatial influences will be different from those in past generations. However, it is still possible to conduct children’s research in a way which affords children the opportunity to be active research participants in ways which would not have been the norm in past decades.

As the ‘new studies of childhood’ has transformed perceptions of childhood and children’s identities, so too does have ideas shifted around how children’s research should be carried out. Overall, we may observe that examining children’s lives and what is important to
them in their social and spatial worlds “is no longer a narrow, isolated alleyway, but is becoming part of the main avenue of empirical study” (Hill, 2005: 61). Indeed, children’s research gives voice to individuals who are easily marginalized due to their age. Holloway and Valentine note that although many researchers continue to explore children’s abilities and cognition, a different and growing number of researchers are exploring children’s identities as social actors. This practice attempts to “give children, as a minority group, a voice in an adultist world,” and as a result, “the insistence in this approach that children are competent social actors has led to the development of child-centred methodologies,” which “allow children to construct accounts of their lives in their own terms” (Holloway and Valentine, 2000: 8).

If we acknowledge children as capable social actors with their own experiences, thoughts, and opinions, then it follows that we should approach children’s research in a way which includes children as participants and which allows us to hear their perspectives, rather than treating children simply as passive subjects or as the focus of adult reporting. However, it remains true that children continue to be “marginalized in adult-centred society. They experience unequal power relations with adults and much in their lives is controlled and limited by adults” (Punch, 2002: 323), so children’s research practices are also challenged by contemporary social structures and assumptions which afford children little authority over decisions which affect them. Children’s social lives form a significant area of research in and of themselves, and not merely as a brief enhancement in research on adults. Moreover, by considering children as human beings and not merely human ‘becomings’, we shift more attention towards children’s lives and experiences in the present-day. This also allows us to view adulthood not as an end-point but also as a period of life in which individuals experience change and transition in their social lives.
The challenge for children’s research with children, therefore, is to design research in a way which allows the researcher to hear children’s perspectives, while at the same time working within the rules, behavioural norms, and social structures environments within which children tend to spend a great deal of their time, such as the school and the home. Working with children in particular presents researchers with ethical concerns which have not historically been considered to the same degree in research with adults. The term research ‘with’ children is in itself a recent development, as children’s scholars are increasingly advocating research ‘with’ children as opposed to research merely ‘about’ children as a way of including children more fully as research participants rather than passive subjects. Greene and Hill (2005) identify that the predominant emphasis before the last two to three decades has been to view children as research subjects rather than participants, to value outcomes rather than processes, and to consider children as variables rather than as individual persons with experiences and unique identities. The ‘new studies of childhood’ has likewise brought about trends in how children’s research is designed, however, and research into children’s experience can reflect an interest in the study of children as persons rather than the study of the child that is carried out in order to advance our understanding of human psychology in general. Studying children as persons implies a view of children as sentient beings who can act with intention and as agents in their own lives (Greene and Hill, 2005: 2-3).

To account for children’s identities as beings who can and do ‘act with intention’ and as ‘agents in their own lives,’ thus also means including them as much as possible in the research process as active participants.

Since the late 20th Century, the social sciences in general and children’s research in particular have articulated a need to embed ethical research principles into research both with and about children. “Tellingly,” David et al observe, “children and adults who took part in research before the 1990s were rarely referred to as participants and only a researcher’s own
sensitivity would ensure participants, especially young children, could express a view about a 
research intrusion” (David et al, 2005: 125). Farrell (2005) has noted how these 
developments have resulted at least in part from rising awareness of risk in modern society, 
and the regulation of social life which results from an increasing ‘community of fear’ and is 
characterized by efforts to limit risk. Indeed, Jones observes broader trends in Western 
society over fears that childhood and innocence are being eroded in a time of increasing 
commodification and children’s exposure at young ages to violence and mature knowledge 
(1999: 123). More and, more, children “are being seen to inhabit risky spaces, and research 
with children is being understood as a risky enterprise” (Farrell, 2005: 3), and so the task for 
the children’s researcher is to not only limit the risk involved to the children who participate, 
but also assumes that children are being treated as competent research participants who have 
the right and ability to be informed and to consent. In my own research for this project, 
therefore, I have made efforts to include the child participants in the informed consent 
process and to use active methods which allow them to participate in a manner which is at 
least partially of their choosing. Additionally, since the focus of my research considers how 
children are identified as and act as citizens in the present day, it makes sense to include 
them as research participants rather than limiting this project to only textual sources or adult 
informants.

Arguing in favour of child-centred research, Woodhead and Faulkner note that much 
children’s research tends to interpret questions which reflect the researchers’ interests rather 
than children’s actual experiences and ideas (2000: 11). Based on Piagetian, child-centred 
psychological theory, they advance the importance of involving children as participants in 
the research process, since “children’s true competencies are revealed only in situations 
which make sense to them” (ibid: 24). This perspective acknowledges that children do make
sense of their social worlds – defined in turn by customs and social structure within the family, the school, and so on - albeit possibly in different ways than adults, as such should be considered as social actors. Moreover, this kind of researcher is likely to have success working with child research participants when the researcher develops his or her methods in a way which helps the children to relate to the questions through concepts which make sense to their own lives.

Such an approach to children’s research not only influences the details of the research design and methods, but acknowledges a shift in perspectives on authority in the research process, Christensen and Prout (2002) have, for example, identified the significance of conducting research with ethical symmetry, where "the researcher takes as his or her *starting point* the view that the ethical relationship between researcher and informant is the same whether he or she conducts research with adults or with children" (Christensen and Prout, 2002: 482). This emphasizes the need for researchers to give children a voice in social research, and for researchers to choose research methods appropriate for the research questions *and* for the participants involved, of any age. Indeed, there are ways of protecting children’s rights in research by ensuring their ideas may be shared and respected with privacy, and ensure they give informed consent to allow their ideas to be used in research. This is one way in which multiple methods and creative methods may be used to the advantage of children’s researchers, irrespective of any attempt to be ‘child-friendly’, but rather, “to support and recognize the diverse ways in which children from diverse contexts might feel most able to share their ideas” (MacNaughton and Smith, 2005: 114). In this case the researcher is positioned more as a ‘scribe’ who listens to children as they would any other human being, rather than a distant observer or omniscient critic.
As children’s research has increased in the past two decades, and the notion of childhood as a social construction gains purchase across the social sciences, children’s researchers have also become attentive to the ways in which research with children and adults may or may not be different. Most significantly, however, “the main relevant differences between children and adults are with respect to ability and power….Adults are ascribed authority over children, who often find it difficult to dissent, disagree or say things which they fear may be unacceptable” (Hill, 2005: 63). While adult researchers may tend to assume that other adults will be forthcoming with their thoughts and opinions, or be less likely to be intimidated by an adult researcher, the same may not as easily be said of children. Because adult authority is implicit in social situations with children, it is incumbent upon the researchers to maintain contact with child research participants in a way which increases the children’s comfort level and opportunity to make their own decisions, since it is unlikely that the children themselves will do so. Thus, Hill advocates that “the interpersonal style adopted by researchers and the settings for research should aim to reduce and not reinforce children’s inhibitions and desire to please, which will otherwise limit the amount, value and validity of what they say” (ibid). Although it would be extremely difficult to completely reverse the power and authority relationships involved in the research process with children, certainly, “researchers can seek to minimize the authority image they convey” (ibid).

As Christensen and Prout (2002) suggest above in their argument for ethical symmetry in children’s research, these principles are valuable for all research with human participants and not simply for children’s research alone. Although adults tend to be perceived as authority figures in situations where children are involved, and the researcher should take steps to minimize this and increase the symmetry of the relationship, “adults too can feel incompetent and powerless, because of the language and status of researchers or
because of characteristics of the adult, including learning difficulties” (Hill, 2005: 64). Adults may also be susceptible to the same intimidation or reluctance to participate which we are likely to assume of children. Additionally, because of their young age and more limited vocabulary and abilities, children might be assumed to be less reliable, however, this “apparent deviation…might not mark them out as special cases after all, and indeed could help us question presumptions about the subject and about interview accounts in general” (Alldred and Burman, 2005: 179). The ethics of children’s research therefore draws attention in general to the process of working with human research participants, and not just to children’s issues specifically.

Another way in which children’s research should be treated similarly to research with adults is in recognition that all research participants have the right to privacy and to ownership over their own ideas, irrespective of age. “Children,” therefore, “have as much right to refuse research participation and to refuse permission for their lives and words to be documented as do adults” (MacNaughton and Smith, 2005: 115), although this step in the research process has only become common in more recent years. While it may once have been common for children’s parents to provide consent for their children’s participation, children’s scholars advocate that the children are also given the opportunity to consent. As a result, they are able to enter into their participation with the knowledge that they were able to decide to do so, and also with awareness of what the research is about. In my own project, therefore, I designed the informed consent form to allow both the parents (whose signatures are required by the school boards) and children to sign.

Although the shift towards understanding childhood and perceptions of children’s identities as predominantly socially constructed might be characterized as a broad theoretical shift, this has implications for the entire research process with and about children, from
design to analysis. The researcher’s perception of children will influence their choice of methods, and also whether or not they view children’s research as distinctly different from research on adults. It is true that there are “some inherent differences about children which make them different from adults,” for example children “may have a limited and different use of vocabulary and understanding of words, relatively less experience of the world, and have a shorter attention span” (Punch, 2002: 324, from Boyden and Ennew, 1997) Still, contemporary perspectives on children’s acknowledge that it is not enough to adapt research with children towards methods which are ‘child-friendly’, but in light of Christensen and Prout’s advocacy of ‘ethical symmetry’, the researcher would ideally consider children and adults always as research participants with the right to informed consent, respect, clarity, and who benefit from the use of methods appropriate to the subject material and which relate to their own experiences. To speak of ‘child-friendly’ methods also carries the risk of being patronizing towards child research participants, whereas to engage with ‘person-friendly’ or ‘research-friendly’ methods implies that the researcher develops appropriate research design for research participants of any age. Indeed, although it may be true that children’s researchers choose ‘child-friendly’ methods which are designed to make the research process more feasible for children, it is also arguable that “the need to motivate participation applies to everyone – both children and adults are more likely to participate if they feel respected and interested” (Hill, 2005: 64).

Recognizing children as social actors does not mean treating them identically as adults, but rather, acknowledging that they have interests, experiences, and ideas based on their relationships within their social worlds, and that their contributions are considered equally valuable for the research process. Still, Pole et al (1999) caution that, despite these increasingly ethical intentions of children’s researchers, it is impossible for children to
become true research partners and to be considered research participants is ultimately the best possible scenario for children in social research. They determine that “age operates as a structural factor to limit agency,” and that as a result, “children’s participation as partners in the research process will inevitably remain limited” (Pole et al, 1999: 52). In gaining access to children within school spaces, for example, the researcher inevitably encounters a structural hierarchy and must form a compromise, requiring adult power and approval before children can be approached, and informed consent from ‘gatekeepers’ within that hierarchy before work with children may even commence. The researcher must then negotiate his or her goals of achieving some form of ethical symmetry and also including children as active participants, as well as the limitations of the spaces and relationships within which the research takes place. For reasons similar to these, McDowell (2001) opted to conduct her research with male adolescents within a site which was not part of the school, since hierarchical structures of power and authority are embedded into the operational life of these spaces. For her, this was a way of increasing the comfort level of the young research participants, however she also acknowledged some concerns over the limits of her doing the interpretive work.

Much research with or about children adapts methods which would commonly be used adults, such as interviews, focus groups, or questionnaires, for the different needs and ethical considerations of doing children’s research. However, other creative methods can be used for a more participative research approach, which facilitates “the process of knowledge production, as opposed to knowledge ‘gathering’, as is the case with methods such as individual interviews, surveys, or checklists” (Veale, 2005: 254). Such methods are “those that draw on inventive and imaginative processes, such as storytelling, drama and drawing. They can serve as constructivist tools to assist research participants to describe and analyse
their experiences and give meaning to them” (ibid). Although it was not possible for me to involve my participants in the research for longer than the time I was afforded within a single school day, due largely to the time constraints within a teacher’s school day, it was even more desirable to use creative methods with the child participants since I wished to engage their interest as much as possible in the hour or so that I worked with them, as I will discuss further in Chapter 5.

Thus, although research with children does not necessarily require different research methods from research with adults, using alternative creative methods such as drawing, playing, or group discussion may provide child research participants with better opportunity to be heard, and to participate in a way which increases the children’s comfort level and authority during the research. Creative methods are often used instead of traditional research methods such as interviews and questionnaires, but are also likely to be used in combination with these. Yuen (2005), for example, used drawing as a research method in combination with focus groups. In this case, asking the children to put their ideas into drawings helped to overcome some language difficulties, and also gave them the chance “to reflect upon their own experiences without having to consider the opinions of the other children” (ibid, 469).

More importantly, “the presence of the drawings provided a common ground through which the researcher and participant could interact” (ibid), thus mitigating the imbalance of power in the research relationship. This resonates similarly with Veale’s observations about using dramatic and storytelling methods, which are able to allow children some ownership as well as privacy. Dramatic role play helps the children as ‘actors’ explore what they know and how they interpret systems of meaning, and storytelling games may be protective of children’s privacy in particular, as telling stories about specific aspects of life may allow them to show their knowledge and interpretation without providing specific
details about their own identity which would be distressing to relay in front of others (Veale, 2005: 261). Other creative methods include the use of photographs, as Tunstall et al used in their analysis of children’s perspectives on river landscapes. This method “had the advantage of giving children considerable freedom and control over the research” (Tunstall et al, 2004: 183), and helped the researchers carry out their research questions while empowering the participants at the same time.

A variety of qualitative methods have been employed by children’s geographers in their efforts to better understand children’s social and spatial worlds, particularly within such spaces as these. For one, the use of contemporary documents and media as source material has proved instrumental in understanding broader conceptions of how children are 'placed' in society at large, and the identities that children are encouraged to inhabit (Barnett, 2004; Jones, 1999. Basu (2004) has used just this method to recently examine Ontario educational discourses of the 1990s through an analysis of the Ministry of Education and Training's public news releases and policy statements, to show how broader educational ideologies align with neoliberalism, thus jeopardizing the long term quality of children's education.

More traditional interviews have been employed as a valuable research methodology within work on children’s geographies. Aitken (2000) has shown through interviews with parents and caregivers how the space of the home functions as a contested space of power relations that influence children, and Matthews (1995) has used interviews with young children to understand children's specific local geographies of urban space outside of the home. The commodification of children's space has also been examined through the use of interviews with both parents and children's commercial play retailers (McKendrik et al), and interviews with children themselves (Smith and Barker, 2001).
A variety of traditional qualitative methods can be used to understand the nature of children’s spaces, however working directly with children may involve alternative strategies. Ultimately, “the success of the method hinges on being able to stimulate children to engage with the process” (Veale, 2005: 269), and for these reasons interactive and creative methods can be ideal for working with children. Still, it is not simply the method of data collection which is significant to children’s research. Children’s scholars also agree that researcher reflection is a key stage of the research process, during data collection and interpretation. Admitting “situated analysis by making processes of interpretation as visible as possible” (Alldred and Burman, 2005: 191), and so as children’s researchers engage more sharply with issues around relationships of power and authority and the accompanying research ethics, it is wise for the researcher to reflect on the assumptions they make while engaging with human participants of different ages. Since it is most often the researchers who do the interpretation work in research, it is even more important to consider the ethics of children’s research in a way that accounts for informed consent for all participants, confidentiality, and developing a rapport with research participants.

**Children’s Geographies**

As I have discussed in the pages above, children’s research across the social sciences has undergone an expansion, fuelled by recognition that “the construction of childhood that views children as incomplete adults is coming under attack and there is a new demand for research that focuses on children as actors in their own right (Scott, 2000: 98). Moreover, both citizenship and children’s geographies have gained increasing attention in recent decades, as I discussed earlier in this chapter, and sites of children’s education have been examined both as sites of citizenship and as significant spaces of lived experience and
identity-formation in children's worlds. Geographers, too, have increasingly turned their focus to children's worlds, analysis of the social construction of childhood and the dynamic nature of children's spaces have also become common. Concurrent with cultural geographical trends that view identity as situated, childhood is now broadly considered not as an essential, natural identity but rather as a social construction that is assigned particular qualities based on certain beliefs and values. Acknowledging childhood as a social phenomenon in turn allows us to explore how children's identities, including identities of citizenship, are articulated through various spaces and discourses. Matthew and Limb (1999) in particular have argued how discourses of childhood in turn influence the use, construction, and management of the environments that are most significant to children.

It is difficult to narrow down a single agenda for a geography of children, in particular since “children’s lives are complex and diverse and cannot be described without reference to the type of society in which they live, their position within that society and the cultural values which surround them” (1999: 82). Additionally, they emphasize the need for children to be educated in democratic processes and decision-making capabilities, as well as the need for adults to become more aware of children’s capabilities (ibid). Such a perspective reinforces the shift towards understanding childhood as a social construction and understanding children as capable and active participants in society, and also lends itself to research which empowers children through participatory methods.

Engagement with children's geographies has thus far been a diverse academic project. Recent geographical work reveals children's spaces as dynamic and layered entities, influenced by a variety of relationships. Concepts such as the commodification of children's spaces (McKendrick et al, 2000; Smith and Barker, 2001), the social construction of childhood identity (Aitken, 2001; Holloway and Valentine, 2000; Jans, 2003), the
construction of children's gendered identities more specifically (Gagen, 2000; Jones, 1999; 2000; Valentine, 1997), and children's understanding of place (Matthews, 1995a; 1995b; Tranter and Malone, 2004). Overall, there has been a developing interest in investigating the spatial boundaries or manifestations of spatial control in children's lives, and significance to children's identities.

Research on children's geographies has acknowledged how particularly for children, “time and place are central categories in conceptualizing the transient, ordinary nature of everyday life” (Rasmussen, 2004: 155), and key children's spaces of the home, school, and play spaces (Holloway and Valentine, 2000; Matthews and Limb, 1999; Ruddick, 2003; Tranter and Malone, 2004), are significant for revealing the spatialized nature of childhood, and the ways in which childhood is institutionally demarcated as a different stage of life from adulthood. Still, all of these settings “may be regarded as large 'places for children' made by adults,” and the everyday lives children lead in these settings appear natural even though “the sociology and history of childhood tells us that the everyday life of children and its conditions are a social, historical and cultural construct” (Rasmussen, 2004: 156).

The school is one such space which has garnered attention from geographers, as a historical site associated with British imperial expansion and citizenship within the Empire (Driver and Maddrell, 1996; Maddrell, 1996), and as a site of moral education (Płoszajska, 1994, 1996). Geographers such as Gagen (2000, 2001) Płoszajska (1994), for example, have examined historically how the physical design of educational institutions reveals the spatialization of particular ideologies around gender and class, and thus how the internal design of schools was crucial to behavioural socialization. The space of the public school may be readily associated with the multiple scale manifestations of the state, in particular through the development of curriculum, distribution of teaching resources, and the
institutional infrastructure of school buildings and playgrounds. The state itself is also a multi-faceted entity and the authority of only one scale of government over the space of the school is unlikely to exist, in addition to the interests of local parent associations, families, and community groups who might also seek influence over school space. Still, as public school sites continue to respond to contemporary public pressure to foster globally competitive and employable citizens (Hebert, 2002; Mitchell, 2003), within public institutions which “are regulating citizens, containing risk, and governing space, all in the interest of creating ‘safer’ communities” (Gallagher and Fusco, 2006), the school figures prominently as a site through which citizenship discourse is normalized.

In addition to citizenship research which contextualizes children’s citizenship in relation to the school, recent research on children’s geographies has also identified schools and school curriculum as significant sites of identity construction, and linked with multiple scales of participation and influence. Children’s education through state-supported curriculum, and their identities as citizens, have both been situated as potential locally, nationally, and globally defined constructs. The site of the school as a point within transnational flows of migrants has been recently considered by Waters (2003), and school curriculum continues to receive attention, as well as its relevance to the study of citizenship, particularly in the work of Evans (2006), Mitchell (2001, 2003) and Basu (2004). The role of education may thus be interpreted as encouraging children to increase both their knowledge of, and participation in, the places in which they live, thus situating the school as a multiply-scaled site of children's everyday geographies and constructed identities.

Geographical research relating to children's worlds acknowledges that the construction of childhood identity is not only linked to children’s development within particular spaces, but that these spaces themselves are dynamic and layered. We may not only
recognize childhood as a predominantly adult-defined social construction, but also that “children are often recognize as a means through which larger societal changes are achieved” (Aitken, 2001: 120), and the school represents one such institution. It is thus worth considering how one such children’s space, the school, may be considered a site of learned citizenship, particularly in light of contemporary research that acknowledges the shifting nature of the school as part of a national democracy. As Levin notes, “the skills and dispositions necessary for effective democracy can really only be learned by practicing them. This is the most important challenge facing schools in this area. It is also the most difficult” (2000). Additionally, "it is worth pondering the connections between education and democracy in the contemporary period of increasing cross-border movements, transnational processes, and the accelerated flow of capital, commodities, culture, and people" (Mitchell, 2001: 52). Amidst these multiple flows and transformations, the reproduction of social identity may be witnessed within the educational system.

Children’s research in geography, as Holloway and Valentine’s seminal work identifies (2000), draws attention to children’s everyday spaces, the spatial discourses which govern children’s lives, and how children’s place-specific influences relationships shape their identities and notions of what childhood is. To study children’s geographies is to consider the spatiality of children’s lives, how their identities are constructed through their relationships in local places and everyday spaces. The home (Matthews, 1987), the school (Aitken, 1994; Basu, 2004; Płoszajsk, 1994, 1996), and public and private spaces of play (Gagen, 2000; Matthews, 1995; Matthews, Limb and Taylor, 2000; McKendrick et al, 2000; Rasmussen, 2004; Tunstall et al, 2004) are everyday spaces in which children spent significant portions of their lives and which have likewise formed a significant focus of research for geographers investigating children’s lives and children’s spaces. In this project I
specifically examine the school as a site where children are discursively situated as citizens and as individuals whose lives are mediated by their participation in curricular and extra-curricular activities in their local schools. As I will continue to show in Chapters 4 and 5, just as it is difficult to speak of ‘the child’ as a uniform entity, so too is it challenging to speak of ‘the school’ without also discussing the influence of and variation between different local schools. In the next section of this chapter, I will discuss in further detail how theories of children’s citizenship and citizenship education have developed in recent decades.

Children and Citizenship Education

As a modern term denoting membership within a nation-state, and the protection of rights, responsibilities, and freedoms within that nation-state, the idea of citizenship is now critiqued as a potentially exclusionary concept. Nonetheless, scholars have argued that a ‘child-friendly citizenship’ model “might serve to promote all our interests through its recognition of mutual needs and concerns” (Roche, 1999, 476), thus highlighting the significance of contemporary children’s citizenship as a theoretical lens. Particularly since the adoption in 1989 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, scholars have paid increasing attention to children's lives and their identities as citizens and bearers of rights. This in turn has led to calls for a rights-based understanding of children’s citizenship as ‘active’ citizenship, based on rights-empowerment and participation. There are arguably limits to rights-oriented perspectives on children and childhood rights, including the persistent reality that children’s rights are ultimately dependent upon adult priorities, and adultist citizenship visions of autonomous participation (Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Ruddick, 2007). However, I consider that there is value in including children’s rights within children’s
citizenship, not the least of which is the re-framing of children’s citizenship as experience in the present-day and not only as a future experience only held by adults.

Still, attention to children within liberal-democratic citizenship theory has tended to position children as citizens inasmuch as they are future adults who experience public, state-sponsored education as children. (Janosky and Gran, 2002; Kymlicka, 2001; Marshall, 1950; Torres, 1998). Contemporary citizenship scholars continue to consider children’s citizenship in the context of their participation within public education systems in Western democracies. Mitchell (2001) has recently drawn attention to the inherently nationalistic context of the educational philosophy of John Dewey, whose work in the 1930s would be embraced by Canadians later on in the 20th Century. For Dewey, “democracy expands the nation as the nation expands democracy...the narrative of the nation as the open, tolerant, and egalitarian community is ceaselessly performed and supplemented” (Mitchell, 2001: 53). The ideal of a harmonious, democratic, and morally sound nation-state was then meant to be fostered by public education, where children learn to become the kinds of citizens which embody the good, democratic ideal. Additionally, and “perhaps even more importantly...national education systems were an integral tool in creating political loyalty, operating to develop, manage and sustain the types of myths and narratives of the nation crucial to its initial and ongoing unification” (Mitchell, 2003: 390), and as I will explore further in Chapter 3, this was certainly part of the Canadian education project in Ontario in the 19th and 20th Centuries.

Kymlicka (2001) has also argued that through school attendance children learn autonomy, mutual respect for their peers, and an appreciation for national identity. Here, citizenship education, or citizenship as education, “is not just a matter of learning the basic facts about the institutions and procedures of political life; it also involves acquiring a range
of dispositions, virtues, and loyalties that are intimately bound up with the practice of
democratic citizenship” (Kymlicka, 2001: 293). Other recent scholars have continued to
argue that "facilitating the nurturing and learning of children, youth, and adults is what
public education - jointly with the family…is supposed to do" (Torres, 1998). It has been
argued in this way that public education affords children necessary opportunities to learn
respect for their fellow citizens, appreciation of the political and civic responsibilities
associated with citizenship, and a sense of individual autonomy.

While such liberal-democratic citizenship theory does tend to account for children’s
presence in the nation-state through state-sponsored public education systems, this also
identifies children as future adults and therefore future citizens, since children’s education is
often viewed ultimately as preparation for adult life. Marshall’s vision of citizenship assumed
children as “citizens in potential” and highlighted “the widely held belief that children should
not be trusted until they become ‘complete’” (Cockburn, 1998: 107). Such a future-oriented
perspective tends to emphasize “the citizens they will become, the vision of society they will
fit into, and the needs of the society that will welcome children as they become full adult
members of this society” (Cohen, 2005: 230), without adequately acknowledging children’s
individual social and political interests that exist before they reach the age of majority. When
children are positioned most prominently as ‘future citizens’ rather than individuals with
abilities, needs, concerns, and rights in the present-day, they are also easily considered as
‘human becomings’ instead of ‘human beings’, with rights, needs, and abilities similar to their
adult counterparts.

As Matthews and Limb have suggested, if children are to truly participate actively in
decisions that affect them, this can only be achieved if adults become more aware of
children's capabilities. The reality of most children's lives, they note, is that children do not
interpret or act in spaces in the same way as adults and yet their spaces of participation are
most likely influenced only by the decisions of adults (1999: 66). The space of the public
school is one such space, where children predominantly participate in activities which are not
of their own design, and indeed it is the relational nature of the school as a site delineating
adult-child relationships which continues to define children as less powerful citizens than
adults (Devine, 2002).

In their study of children’s citizenship and active participation in schools, Maitles and
Deuchar (2006) have more recently noted a “renewed interest in the citizenship agenda,”
perhaps emerging from “a more general renewal of interest in values in education and also
the perceived need for a more participative approach to school organization” (250). They
comment on a broadly perceived societal panic over young people's disengagement with
citizenship action such as formal politics and voting, and apparent alienation from
community values. In their research in schools they find that this youthful disillusionment
may stem from politicians’ disinterest in children’s issues just as much as children’s
disinterest in politics, and that, indeed, "evidence has illustrated that pupils are keen to
discuss [social, political, and humanitarian] issues and that a programme on citizenship
education needs to respond to this” (ibid). Thus, citizenship education which accounts for
children’s unique interests and ability to think about and participate in the social worlds
around them, appears as not only a feasible form of public education but a very necessary
one, to successfully engage children in the learning process. Halpern et al have similarly
observed extra-curricular activities structured around group participation such as student
councils have also formed the majority of contemporary citizenship education in British
schools (2002), suggesting that curriculum is by no means the only feasible form of
citizenship education.
While citizenship education is likely to be considered a positive addition to contemporary school systems, the form this education is to take does vary and has varied considerably over time. Maitles and Deuchar have contextualized this through the possibilities of student councils within public schools, citizenship education has in turn been considered the project of general civics education, character education, or other forms of participation in academic and extra-curricular life at school. Indeed, Kymlicka has argued that “education for citizenship is not an isolated subset of the curriculum, but rather is one of the ordering goals or principles which shapes the entire curriculum” (2002: 293), anticipating that citizenship will emerge through curricular education.

Throughout Canadian history, public education has been cast as the state agency with the most potential to positively influence, or even transform, society at large, as we shall observe in further detail below in relation to a brief historical account of education in Ontario. However in recent decades a focus on citizenship education has become more explicit across Canada and other Western democracies. In Canada, as Evans has noted, “contemporary conceptions of citizenship education reflect a certain level of ambiguity” (2006: 413), reflecting diverse conceptions of what citizenship is as well as how it should be taught, from liberal-democratic visions of citizenship to modern multi-cultural and multi-national concepts. In Britain since the Crick Report of 1998, for example, citizenship education became compulsory beginning in 2002 (discussed alternately by Faulks, 2006, and Gilborn, 2006). Indeed, scholars have noted a consistent interest among educators in how to engage children with citizenship education through the curriculum, since “citizenship education has traditionally offered curricular space for the discussion of social and moral issues” (Gillborn, 2006, 88). There continues to be an interest in understanding citizenship
education as a facet of curricular programming for various reasons, as other scholars such as Heater (2005), Frazer (2000), and Crick (1999) have observed.

In many countries citizenship education has taken the form of "civics" education, or educational programming designed to fill a deficit of knowledge in the areas of government, civics, and national history (Kennedy, 1997), rather than promote an understanding of citizenship underpinned by rights and children’s rights as advocated by some (Howe and Covell, 2005; Stasiulis, 2002). Canadian secondary school students in the Ontario Grade 10 program now engage with a ‘Civics’ strand in their Canadian and World Studies curriculum which addresses practices of civic participation and decision-making in a democratic society (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005). However this is arguably the earliest curricular opportunity Ontario students have to directly and deeply engage with citizenship concepts, and one might question why such practices as democratic decision-making and participation might not be taught at a younger age.

Heater has observed this trend of citizenship through curricular education over several centuries of democratic and educational history, and considered whether “children be expected to understand the essentially adult practice of politics? Insofar as a training in good civic behaviour is desirable, should this be the function of the family or the state? Should the learning be theoretical and indirect, though History or Rhetoric, or practical, by visits to the forum and law courts, for instance? And what should be the basic objective of such learning...?” (Heater, 2004: 167). This perspective in particular reveals not only an emphasis on school curriculum as the most significant venue for citizenship education, but also an underlying assumption that citizenship as a political and primarily adult arena. While I would agree that there are relevant questions here regarding the roles of the family and the public state in fostering citizenship, I would argue that such a perspective which questions whether
children may be ‘expected’ to learn ‘essentially adult practices’ severely limits our understanding of what citizenship is, by assuming it to be the realm of adult society. Moreover, this once again limits children’s identities to ones of ‘human becomings’, and also how our understanding of how citizenship education is articulated through the life and work of local schools.

Indeed, while citizenship has long been considered an implicit project of the school, in recent decades this project has gained renewed explicit interest in Western public education systems through both curricular and non-curricular educational programming. For example, in Canada and the United States in particular, citizenship education has undergone a recent resurgence in the form of extra-curricular programming focusing on 'character education.' (Damon, 2002; Lickona, 1993; also see Alberta Education 2005 and OME, 2006a). Although there is no single method or justification for teaching character education, this form of educational programming tends to involve the teaching of sets of values which are framed as values for ‘good citizenship.’

In Ontario, as character education began to roll-out throughout the province in 2007, the Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne justified the programming as a form of education grounded in “treating students as citizens who can make a difference,” and that through character education “we can create a school environment where civic responsibility and academic achievement thrive” (OME, 2007b). On the one hand, statements such as these seem to aim for student empowerment as citizens who can be active in their communities. However, this is further justified as a method of creating a school environment characterized by responsibility and achievement. Such a contrast is arguably emblematic of the current moment in Ontario education, where new spending and programming related to citizenship education is potentially cast as a form of active, rights-empowerment, wherein
children grow according to their unique identities, but is in fact subordinate to the over-arch ing goals of achievement and the maintenance of responsible citizenship. I will engage this trend further in Chapter 3 in my discussion of educational discourses emerging through the Ontario Ministry of Education.

Some scholars have indeed advanced children's citizenship within a framework of children's rights (Howe and Covell, 2005; Stasiulis, 2002), and acknowledged rights as a key aspect of modern citizenship (Isin and Turner, 2007), grounded in the ideals of universal human rights and the assumption that children can and should be allowed to participate in decisions which affect their lives. In particular, Stasiulis has identified the Convention's innovative articulation of "the right of children to have a say in matters affecting them, and to have children's opinions taken into account" (2002: 508). From this perspective, children are not considered merely as future citizens, but as individuals who already possess rights and the ability to make decisions and take action to influence what happens to change their lives. Because this kind of active citizenship is focused on the individual as a bearer of rights, regardless of age – and not just as a notion of ‘active’ citizenship as the practice of responsible, altruistic behaviour in the community - "the language of children's rights presupposes and encourages their agency, the expression of their self-defined needs and interests" (Roche). This also echoes with recent citizenship theory that examines not only the political, social and civil membership afforded by the nation-state, but also considers participation rights as a mechanism to secure placed belonging (Isin, 2000; Abu-Laban, 2000), more explicitly advancing "a view of children as empowered, knowledgeable, compassionate and global citizens" (Stasiulis, 2002: 510).

Certainly, the relationship between human rights and citizenship in the present-day remains a focus of debate, as does the place of children within citizenship theory. Isin and
Turner have recently argued that "citizenship remains important as an active domain of democracy and as the principal expression of being political as belonging. In an age of globalization, it should be regarded as a foundation of human rights and not as a competitor" (Isin and Turner, 2007: 13). I would agree that citizenship and rights remain interrelated concepts, and particularly since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the intersection of children's lives and their identities as citizens and bearers of rights has continued to draw scholarly attention. The Convention promotes an understanding of children's citizenship which is underpinned by acknowledgement of their human rights as individuals who experience significant physical, emotional, and intellectual needs as child citizens in the present-day, and not only as individuals who will be adult citizens in the future. However, the Convention also depends upon its nation-state signatories around the world to uphold and guarantee the Convention principles for their citizens, with little measures to enforce its successful enactment. Moreover, if the nation-state is, indeed, only one of many scales of citizenship identity and governance which affects individuals’ lives, we might question whether it is at all possible for this children's citizenship of rights to be enforced at all.

Still, it has been argued that a ‘child-friendly citizenship’ model “might serve to promote all our interests through its recognition of mutual needs and concerns” (Roche, 1999). Citizenship scholars have called for a rights-based understanding of children’s ‘active’ citizenship, which empowers children through their own knowledge of their rights, and increased opportunities for children's participation and decision-making in venues which affect their lives (Stasiulis, 1999; Howe and Covell, 2005; also Matthews and Limb, 1999). While Canada is one of the signatories on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, criticism has also been raised over how well, if at all, the expectations of the Convention are
being realized, amidst persistent child poverty rates and lack of venues for children’s active participation in the worlds they inhabit (Stasiulis, 1999).

Contemporary citizenship scholars do continue to argue that citizenship and rights should be understood as interconnected (Howe and Covell, 2005; Isin and Turner, 2007; Shafir and Brysk, 2006) and, moreover, that since citizenship persists as a concept defined in relation to the nation-state, state governance policy and practice should work to guarantee the human rights of citizens (Isin and Turner, 2007). I agree that for these reasons, citizenship must continue to be understood as a concept which is linked to the nation-state. This is particularly important in the context of children’s rights since it is ultimately the nation-state which assumes responsibility for affording citizenship rights to its members, and since it is nation-states which have pledged on the UN CRC to ensure child citizens are able to experience their citizenship rights. Cohen has also argued the need to recognize that “full citizenship is made up of both rights…and obligations that together are bound to the status of nationality. The parts of citizenship function together, each bolstering the others” (2005, 222). It is therefore crucial that children’s citizenship be understood both in the context of citizenship rights and as a concept which is tied to the nation-state, if children are to be truly able to participate as citizens in their own worlds, along with adults. However, it is not clear to what extent this is representative of the current moment in Canadian education.

Contemporary processes of globalization have been well-documented by geographers, alongside documentation of the inequitable distribution of resources globally and in Western nations, where persistent poverty and insufficient funding of social services increasingly put children at risk (Basu, 2004; Mitchell, 2001; Ruddick, 2003). Moreover, North American education in general and Canadian education specifically have been characterized in recent decades as a system which frames students less as citizens of the
nation-state, than as competitive individuals who are, or who should strive to become, globally strategic citizens and consumers (Basu, 2004; Brodie and Trimble, 2003; Hebert, 2002; Mitchell, 2003), resulting overall in a contemporary education system which defines success based on measures of fiscal efficiency and broad achievement standards. Sacks pointedly observes the current era of standardized testing and public school accountability has resulted in extreme taxpayer costs, a narrow definition academic success, and generally fostered the belief that “more standards, more standardized tests, and harsher sanctions attached to these tests will fuel lasting gains in academic achievement for all children and lead to a more prosperous and productive citizenry” (2005: 185). Moreover, broad governance and societal trends articulated by Rose (1999) and Cruikshank (1999) reveal discourses of citizenship which converge less on the nature of citizenship as a concept tied to the balanced rights and responsibilities of the nation-state, but as a mode of governance and individual citizen conduct denoted by self-improvement and responsible behaviour. Cruikshank has argued that contemporary technologies of citizenship which include but are not limited to state institutions, “are intended to ‘help people to help themselves.’” They “do not cancel out the autonomy and independence of citizens but are modes of governance that work upon and through the capacities of citizens to act on their own…the actions of citizens are regulated, but only after the capacity to act as a certain kind of citizen with certain aims is instilled” (Cruikshank, 1999: 4). Indeed, as we will continue to observe in relation to the Ontario education system, public discourses of education, and citizenship through education, similarly articulate the responsibilities and achievement potential of individual students as future, productive adult members of society.

In Canada in particular we may consider the nature of the school as a dynamic children's space under multiple scaled influences. While the conceptual and formally political
scale of the nation-state informs much of the public school curriculum, each individual province separately governs and administers their public education systems. Decisions over what material to include in the curriculum, what extra-curricular programming to encourage in schools within a single province, and over dispensations for private or separate schools, may differ between provinces. The activities in which children engage while in the school, and the experiences which shape their sense of identity in relation to the school, are constructed by and depend upon actors at multiple scales in varying degrees, including the curriculum and standards set by the Provincial Ministry of Education, additional programming and administration by the local District School Board, local community interest and support, and most certainly the individual child's family. This dynamic nature of education in Ontario

Still, while local schools and school boards have significant opportunity to articulate the Ontario curriculum in their own fashion and to supplement it with local co-curricular and extra-curricular programming of their own design, it is difficult to know to what degree students are able to learn the material and discover their own educational strengths and interests, when curricular learning is broadly driven by provincial markers of achievement set out by the Educational Quality and Achievement Office (EQAO, 2007). It is this set of EQAO tests, as opposed to local report cards or teacher assessments, which underpins the provincial reports on educational quality in Ontario. “As partners in Ontario's public education system,” the EQAO argues, “we share the mutual challenges of finding effective strategies to support improved student learning. It is in all of our interests that students maximize their potential and become active, productive contributors to society” (Jackson, 2007). It is in recent years that these tests have become known as a means of maintaining
provincial accountability to the public, by conducting tests at the level of Grades 3, 6, and 9, and publishing the results for each individual school.

Beck et al (2002) track the evolution of these tests in the ‘teaching standards movement’ which has progressed in Canada since the 1960s when educational reform shifted away from child-centred modes of teaching and towards content-driven standardized curriculum. These trends carried on into the 1980s and 1990s with different of standardized Ontario curriculum for elementary and secondary school students across the province (ibid, 178). The teaching standards movement, they argue, is broadly concerned with students learning whole concepts, learning skills, and learning collaboratively with other students and teachers to gain a ‘real-world’ education, and Beck et al offer the significant concern that the teaching standards movement “focuses too heavily on academic learning to what might be called life learning” (Beck et al, 2002: 182). In the Ontario context, we may raise similar concerns about the value of an educational curriculum which is driven by teaching knowledge based on broad standards of achievement, when it is uncertain how well this knowledge might be retained or valued by the students in their individual ‘life learning’.

Contrary to calls for participative and rights-based citizenship for children, in the contemporary Ontario elementary-level (through Grade 8) education and, despite the consistent articulation of “citizenship” as a part of the work of the school, there is a lack of clear definition of citizenship as a foundational concept, and a lack of true opportunity for children’s active citizenship and understanding of children as rights-bearing citizens. Instead, children engage with educational curriculum and programming which is broadly framed by discourses of standardization, achievement, morally appropriate behaviour, and by attention to their future selves rather than as child citizens in the present-day.
While considerable children’s citizenship research has been undertaken in the United Kingdom (Holden, 2006; Maitles and Deuchar, 2006; Priestley, 2002, among others) some in the United States (Mitchell, 2003; Torres, 1998), and some in Canada (Evans, 2006; Howe and Covell, 2005), there remains considerable room for further research to investigate the nature of children’s citizenship as it is articulated through the life and work of the school. Schools are multi-faceted, dynamic spaces and as such are embedded in a wide number of relationships between different scales of government and many local community members. Additionally, while it remains common to theorize citizenship through the school in relationship to the content of public school curriculum, given current trends towards non-curricular citizenship-oriented programming within the school, it would be insufficient to assume that citizenship discourses are articulated only through the curricular aspects of school life. As I will continue to argue in Chapter 3, citizenship continues to be reframed through the work of the school in broad governance mandates and through activities which supplement standardized public school curriculum without forming a formal substantive curricular focus. We shall see then how citizenship discourses hold tenuous links at best to the conceptual frame of the nation-state or to an understanding of citizenship as rights. Citizenship emerges discursively through the work of the public school as the practice of individual responsibilities which jeopardizes the potential for children to understand or act upon their identities as rights-bearing empowered citizens.

Although Evans has argued that recent developments in the Ontario educational curriculum at all levels “signaled a renewed emphasis on educating for citizenship” (2006: 415), I would argue that this renewed emphasis is still quite limited at the elementary level (Grades 1-8), and that in fact a great deal of what currently constitutes citizenship education – particularly any participation-oriented programming - in Ontario elementary school
classrooms derives from educational programming that does not emerge directly from the standardized curriculum. While language around children's citizenship is common in contemporary educational curriculum and policy, and in local school initiatives in Ontario such as character education, there is no guarantee that these citizenship ideas are grounded in an understanding of citizenship as the interplay of both rights and responsibilities. As the Ontario Ministry of Education positions the school as a safe, success-oriented public site where children learn to meet standards and become future adult citizens, citizenship is reframed as a set of responsible behaviours, in response to standardized achievement imperatives, global economic competition, and public accountability.

Recognizing that there has been limited geographical work thus far in the context of Canadian children's educational spaces, in the following chapters I will examine the public school as a site of learned citizenship through a combination of textual analysis of provincial documents, interviews with elementary school teachers, and interactive work with elementary school students. I argue that, despite continuing calls for an understanding of citizenship that is grounded in human rights and children's rights more specifically in this case, and despite renewed institutional interest in integrating citizenship into educational programming, the Ontario public education system continues to reframe citizenship as a set of responsibilities and standardized norms of behaviour and achievement.

Although citizenship has become a popular discursive frame for educational programming in the school, within and outside of the curriculum, the Canadian public school has also figured historically as a site where citizenship is taught. Additionally, the contemporary moment in education in Ontario is defined by moral and intellectual education imperatives, and by structures of governance divided between the provincial and local scales, which have developed over decades and even centuries of history. In the next
chapter I will discuss these contemporary trends as discursively constructed through statements and documents from the Ministry of Education. I will also examine a brief history of education in Ontario in greater detail, and examine how the relationship between the development of public education has been consistently linked to the construction of the Canadian nation-state, and even of childhood itself.
Chapter Three: Citizenship Education in Ontario

Public education in Ontario continues to be highly politicized, emerging as a point of debate in election campaigns and a focus of public attention and concern. Moreover, as all local schools in Ontario are governed by curriculum and policy which is developed at the provincial scale, it is significant for us to understand how citizenship discourses are constructed through the Ontario Ministry of Education, as they form the basis of curricular learning and contextualize how new educational spending and programming are justified. In this chapter I will examine how citizenship is articulated at the provincial scale, through a discursive analysis of Ontario public statements between October 2003 and 2007, for the current government led by Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty. I will also similarly examine the Ontario elementary school (Grades 1-8) curriculum documents, to understand how citizenship is defined in particular, and how children’s education is framed in general.

I will begin first with an explanation of discourse analysis of my methodological approach to these documents. Then, I will briefly discuss the historical development of education in the province of Ontario, as an institution of the provincial government which has contributed to the social construction of childhood and of children as future adult citizens. Most importantly, I will then provide an analysis of the Ontario Ministry of Education in its current guise since the final years of the 20th Century. As we shall see in the following pages, although present-day discourses construct children as ideal citizens through imperatives of responsible behaviour, safe action, and future adult citizens who attain gainful employment, such trends have also developed over the course of more than a century.
Citizenship Discourse: Research Methods

Childhood has by now become broadly acknowledged as a social construct (Christensen and Prout, 2005; James and Prout, 1997), and it is through key social institutions like the public school by which childhood is demarcated as an experience defined by age and which in turn defines how citizenship is represented (Devine, 2002; Mitchell, 2003; Sacks, 2005). The public school is thus an ideal site for investigating how children’s citizenship is delineated in the current moment. In this chapter I examine how this is occurring in Ontario through the language of educational discourse at the provincial scale. To accomplish this, I have undertaken a discursive analysis of elementary school curriculum – since the interviews and children’s activity sessions which follow are also in elementary schools – as well as public news statements released from the Ministry between 2003 and 2007, and significant documents governing children’s identities as citizens at school, including the Safe Schools Act (OME, 2000). In each case, I examine how these documents identify and justify the purpose of educational programming, with attention to how the terms ‘citizenship’ and ‘citizens’ are used in Ministry of Education language. Similar to the findings presented in the two subsequent chapters, I was primarily concerned with seeking evidence of trends towards themes of ‘liberal’ or ‘neo-liberal’ citizenship as has been delineated by past and current theory discussed in Chapter 2.

While it has been observed that the “discursive turn is to be welcomed,” contemporary geographers might well still “be hard pressed to find many studies that outline in any great detail how the researcher(s) have gone about their discourse analysis” (Lees, 2004: 101). Discourse emerges from systems of language, and as such also delineates the rationalities of governance which are articulated and performed through language. By discourse, I refer first to Foucault’s premise that discourse denotes “a group of verbal
performances” (1969: 124); representations and statements through which meaning is produced and legitimized, which are governed by general sets of rules often taken for granted as natural or normal.

A discursive analysis thus attempts to uncover a “group of relations” or “unity” upon which such statements are based and gain authority (Foucault, 1969: 52). In the case of public language on education in Ontario, these discursive relations in turn govern the material practices at multiple local sites. When spoken or written under the authority of government institutions, structures ways of thinking about education and how children’s identities are constructed through their participation in public school sites. I critically examined these documents with the purpose of uncovering such ‘unity’ or common themes which articulate what citizenship is, what the purpose of the school is, and what children’s roles are as participants in the school.

Discourse becomes discernable through the domain of language, which "not only makes acts of government describable; it also makes them possible" (Rose, 1999: 28), and “makes possible and legitimizes certain ways of thinking, of making sense of the world, while at the same time foreclosing other ways of thinking” (Gilbert, 2005: 209). Through the language of institutions, ideas become normalized and encroach upon people’s actions and thoughts in everyday life, and further entrenched in the public domain. Regimes of governance, authority, and truth, and the modes of behaviour they encourage, are made possible through language and discursive formations which define and construct that which is being governed. Moreover, as I have discussed in detail in Chapter 2, children’s spaces and the modes of behaviour to which they are expected to adhere are governed by adults. This means that in the space of the Ontario school, language which situates children’s identities as participants in school life and the object of the administrative regime of curriculum, policy,
and public discourse, is created and organized at the provincial scale through the Ministry of Education.

As education in Ontario is significantly governed by the curriculum, policy, and monetary support which emanates from the Ministry of Education, this chapter is therefore concerned with how the Ministry thus discursively constructs citizenship and the role of children as participants within public education, through the language of public documents and statements on education. As becomes clear in this analysis, these educational discourses rely on the justification of the public school as a site of responsible citizenship, which emerges in direct contrast to a rights-based understanding of citizenship which has been articulated and advocated by citizenship scholars. First, however, I will begin in the following section with a brief historical discussion of the development of public education in Ontario. The contemporary nature of the Ontario Ministry of Education as a centralized institution governing education in this province is the result of several centuries of change. As we shall see in these next few pages, it is clear that public education has always been linked with citizenship and the project of socializing children according to citizenship ideals.

**Public Education in Ontario: Historical Context**

Canadian public education has developed for the most part over the last two centuries, and since before Confederation has been under the jurisdiction of the individual Canadian provinces. In Ontario, this and other characteristics such as public financial support through municipal property taxes, and administration through a central public education department or ministry and local boards of trustees, have likewise been in place for over a century. Additionally, while the content of public school curriculum, the methods through which subjects are taught, and the duration of pupils' attendance may have changed
significantly over the past two centuries, educators have continued to recognize the nature of the public school as a pivotal site in the development of individuals and Canadian society.

The earliest systematic efforts at schooling in Upper Canada came in the early 19th Century amidst a variety of challenges, and the motivations behind the promotion of public education for all may be found in a number of perspectives. Even by the 1830s, Upper Canada resembled a heterogeneous collection of settlements, amongst a largely rural and agricultural population. In the early 19th Century still, "education, it was held, should be practical so as to solve everyday problems. A premium was placed on immediate action rather than theory" (Wilson, 1978: 13). In a time when family livelihood was still a driving force in Canadian society, which itself was still quite new, there was a desire for education as a practical and material rather than theoretical pursuit, however many also promoted the potential for public education to eliminate social and moral ills.

Although education in Canada is now administered by Provincial governments, and in combination with local school boards, the earliest stages of education across the country were diversely managed. In Upper Canada the Church of England contended that education should be governed by the state but administered by the established church. However, a number of private schools were also established in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries, and the arrival after 1776 of British Loyalists to the colonies brought additional educational values to Upper Canada, establishing the first English school in Kingston in 1786 (Wilson, 1978: 18). Thus "throughout the colonies, righteous educators competed for the souls and minds of a diverse and growing population, and schooling was a vital element in this campaign" (Axelrod, 1997: 10). Education was considered as important moral training and literacy as a significant gain in social status, and since in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries books were still scarce, the Bible was the only one readily available in a large number of
households (Phillips, 1957: 100). It was thus in the early 19th Century that the Upper Canadian state began to formally establish a system of common education which held as moral and disciplined education as part of its purpose.

As attendance increased following the 1807 District Public School Act which empowered local districts to create schools, eventually legislation of compulsory attendance by those aged 7-13 in 1871. Prentice and Houston (1970) have posited that, in the history of childhood, the 19th Century was clearly the century of schooling. Public education, the responsibility of the state, was increasingly advocated as a necessary means of social improvement. As the 19th Century progressed, and as the provincial government assumed greater authority over children's education, attendance at school did indeed become the norm for children across the province. Additionally, as education became increasingly formalized through public funding and governance, we may observe how the state began to have a greater influence in the lives of individual citizens through education. Gidney and Lawr argue that the government was trying to act as a 'remedy' to what was a poorly established school system (1978: 160), composed of teachers who may not have been well-educated themselves, a lack of standardized texts, and unequal access for all.

Certainly, many pieces of legislation would come into force throughout the 19th Century, increasing public education governance. The Common School Act of 1816 in Upper Canada, which provided grants to support teachers in local schools and also established District Boards of Education, (Wilson, 1978: 23), and the 1807 provincial government decision to pay teacher salaries and appoint local boards of trustees (McCutcheon, 1941) are two such examples. The 1816 and 1824 Common Schools Acts authorized and gave grants to local district school boards to purchase texts, and the School Act of 1841 also gave authority to the new municipal councils the authority to collect
property taxes to pay for local schooling, and certify and hire teachers at the township level (Wilson, 1978: 26; Gidney and Lawr, 1978: 173). Thus, by the time Egerton Ryerson took office in 1844, a significant part of the educational governance and finance structure was already in place, and additional changes whose impact would linger long after the 19th Century in which they came into effect.

Ryerson held the position of Chief Superintendent of Schools in Upper Canada between 1844 and 1876, and his influence has been so broadly acknowledged such that the period of over three decades is often referred to as the 'Ryerson era'. He "increased the autonomy and the powers of central authority, created a chain of command between it, the local superintendents, and the boards of trustees, improved communications with local officials and the public, and introduced a new measure of financial accountability to the system" (Gidney and Lawr, 1978: 176), resulting in a vastly different education experience at the end of the 19th Century than what was common at the beginning. Many of these controls are still in place today, as it is still the provincial legislature that exercises predominant authority over the organization and administration of public education.

During Egerton Ryerson's time as Superintendent in the mid-19th Century, education in Upper Canada was considered a necessary approach to disciplining a rebellious and risky society which had already witnessed two Rebellions. In a time when the government required stability and progress, "economic progress required civil order, and schools had a key role to play in ensuring political stability," thus schools were mean to "cultivate the students' sense of citizenship, loyalty, respect for property, and deference to authority" (Axelrod, 1997: 25). Establishing the school as a site of intellectual education and also moral protection, contributed to the definition of children’s worlds as distinctly different from
adults’. Also instrumental was the belief that children must be disciplined and their time must be structured and free from idleness.

Through the 19th Century public education was advanced not just as the responsibility of the state but as an agent of social change whose task "was not only to direct intellectual behaviour, but also moral and social behaviour. The safety of the state depended on the 'safe' citizen. The ideal state was one in which there was order, stability, and loyalty" (McDonald, 1978: 98), and each member of society must then contribute to that greater good. The social improvement of the working classes was possible by improving all classes through education, and implementing the property tax to ensure its support. In the second half of the 19th Century, alcoholism and religious intolerance were still great (Johnson, 1968: 75), and so it was also amidst these conflicts that public schooling emerged and charged with even greater social responsibility. In the 1930s, still, under competing theories of traditionalism and progressivism, "preparation for responsible adulthood would now come through the school as social agency as well as academic institution, through socialized group behaviour as well as mental discipline" (Stamp, 1982: 169). This preparation began not just at the high school level but in the earliest elementary school years.

Education was also increasingly shaped by centralized authority and the drive towards common standardized principles of both teacher training and curriculum development. During the 20th Century more provincial attention was paid to the professionalization and remuneration of teachers, who still experienced a lack of social status, gendered wage gap, and a variety of levels of skill. For example, in 1920 high school training and faculties of education became centralized under the new Ontario College of Education (Stamp, 1982: 119), signalling both the provincial centralization of training but also increasing attention to the high school level of education rather than elementary only.
Despite forays by 19th Century school promoter into Rousseau-centric views on child-centred learning aimed at child protection and nurturing (Axelrod, 1997: 34), and early 20th Century turns towards American ‘progressivism’ focussed on child decision-making and democracy-in-microcosm (Johnson, 1968: 134), the 20th Century saw a return to the school as an institution which must meet society’s demands of efficiency and productivity. Critics of the 'new' education returned to traditionalist concerns which emphasized reading and writing as the primary focus, re-establishing the school as a childhood site of preparation for productive adulthood. By the late 1950s and 1960s after the launch of Sputnik and the Cold War, trends shifted yet again, away from child-centred learning to subject-centred learning and an emphasis on maths, sciences, and languages.

By the 1960s the Minister of Education and Deputies represented the institutionalized interest in maintaining administrative and financial efficiency within and between the provincial Ministry and local school boards (Johnson, 1968). National economic and urban growth was strong and white-collar work was increasing, and the school was now considered even more significant to children's future economic prospects. Education was by now considered a necessity for all, and in the 1960s, "in the name of providing a better and more extended education for all Ontario's young people, public policy became aggressively interventionist on a wide variety of fronts" (Gidney, 1999: 37). Administratively, the biggest change was the compulsory amalgamation of the thousands of local school boards into larger administrative units. Despite significant complaint from rural boards (Stamp, 1982: 208), this shift to larger school boards, and from 3500 units to 230, was justified for the decrease in administrative units and the financial stability of a wider tax base to support each board (Gidney, 1999: 49). In this way, education in Ontario also became increasingly representative of tensions between the provincial and local scales.
These changes also signalled a heightened era of public accountability in education, when "questions remain about the appropriate role of educators and the public, and the amount of influence they should be able to exert on the government's agenda for change" (2000: 43) became paramount. Education in Ontario developed amidst public pressure to teach for knowledgeable and capable citizens, and productive and employable individuals. Although attendance had been made compulsory until age 16 since 1919, even by the 1960s, high school Grades 9 and 10 saw noticeable drop-out rates, representing a provincial student body that was still highly differentiated by social class (Gidney, 1999: 39). In 1962 the curriculum was reorganized and adjusted under the 'Robarts Plan'. "By 1960 there was already something like universal education to age 16. Yet the Ontario high school remained…rigorously academic and highly selective," and a need was identified to increase vocational programs and offer more than simply the traditional academic streams.

Such mid-20th Century administrative changes proceeded so that students would emerge from the public education system with the ability to find employment and thus productively contribute to the economy. Despite rising costs of public education, "politicians and public leaders accepted the inevitability of spiraling education costs because they were convinced that such an investment would bring an economic return" (Stamp, 1962: 211). Although the first half of the 20th Century saw the curriculum broaden overall, there was a concern with overcoming socially-stratified dropout rates and increasing the length of students' tenure within the high school. Even now, concerns persist over directing high school students towards successful completion of their diploma and their streaming into either skilled trades or academic pursuits. Recent Ontario development of a ‘Specialist High-Skills Major’ including business, artistic, or manufacturing training are reminiscent of these
past trends in Ontario education history which emphasize the value of public education as a practical, employment-oriented pursuit (OME, 2005i).

Additionally, it seemed that by the 1970s the now extremely diverse Canadian population was calling for more explicit 'Canadian' and multicultural curriculum content, alongside changes in federal immigration policy “in an era of economic buoyancy and pro-growth immigration” (Abu-Laban, 1998: 192) which advocated for a non-discriminatory system of Canadian immigration. While many teachers by this point felt schools were being blamed for most every social problem there was, others argued that graduates left the public education system "without the intellectual skills, the knowledge and the attitudes they should have to play an effective role as citizens" (Stamp, 1982: 236). The creation of mandatory Canadian curriculum on literature, history, and geography was meant to provide a solution. It was not until the late 20th Century when, perhaps for the first time, broad educational reforms were introduced which identified the public education system as education for not just citizenship but Canadian citizenship, and this was to be accomplished through Canadian literature and social studies. There is therefore some historical precedent in Ontario for citizenship education framed as curricular education.

By the 1970s significant concerns had arisen over the quality of public education and curriculum, such that “virtually all the critics, and all the studies, had remarked on the deleterious consequences of a system with no external performance standards, something of particular concern to the colleges and universities” (Gidney, 1999: 91). In combination, then, the response to these concerns led to a renewed compulsory ‘core’ curriculum in English, mathematics, science, and Canadian civics in the social studies subjects, as well as ‘benchmark’ testing in language and mathematics skills. Gidney notes rather tellingly that these changes also marked a significant shift in educational pedagogy, turning abruptly away
from child-centred learning and towards standardized curriculum oriented towards public concern and employer interests. For example, in the History curriculum in 1973

the key objectives had been that young people ‘enjoy the learning experience’ and that the needs of the child take precedence over content. The acquisition of basic skills was listed last. In 1977 the new guideline put a good deal more emphasis on basic skills and the first objective had been purged entirely. Similarly with content (Gidney, 1999: 95).

Thus, although it has been particularly clear in the past two decades how deeply Ontario education is governed by the drive towards standardization, achievement, and public accountability, it is also clear that this mode of educational governance took root long before the 1990s. As we shall see in the following section, these ideals continue to influence how children are viewed as individuals who receive public education and as citizens in general.

The development of public education in Ontario in the past two centuries has been the result of an increasingly centralized beauraucratic system, government response to adult views on the social value of education, and prevailing views on the nature of childhood. While the experience of early 19th Century public schools was significantly different than that of contemporary schools, many common themes have persisted through several generations of school promotion and reform. The public school has been consistently framed as a place where children's present behaviour and future identities can and should be shaped, and this has also been broadly identified as the authority of the state through the provincial government and, increasingly, the local school board and community partners.

As we have seen in this section, children's citizenship has developed historically as a process of learning the civic, political, and social expectations of an individual within a liberal democracy, and as a contemporary imperative to become strategic, competitive, and globally situated citizens. In Ontario and indeed, across Canada, we have also witnessed increasingly centralized provincial control over educational administration, and in Ontario as of 1998,
over the financing of public education. These changes “reflect not just a loss of local autonomy and control, but a direct threat to the practical workings of procedural democracy” (Mitchell, 2003: 395), less egalitarian or inclusive than hierarchical and oriented towards progress and global economic imperatives. Canadian education since the 1980s has been characterized as a system which frames students as competitive individual global, ‘safe’ citizens, strategic citizens and consumers, and identifies the limited resources of the state to adequately meet the educational needs of the children being educated (Basu, 2004; Brodie and Hebert, 2002; Gallagher and Fusco, 2006). We shall see in the next section how this is particularly clear in the current period of Ontario education.

**Education in Contemporary Ontario: Public Statements, Spending, and Policy**

The Liberal McGuinty government took office in October 2003, following eight and a half years of leadership by the Progressive Conservative party, in large part under the Premiership of Mike Harris. Government spending cutbacks were prevalent during Harris’ tenure and his ‘Common Sense Revolution’, as well as the centralization of educational spending at the provincial level. Under Harris’ regime, the Tories strove to administer a streamlined, achievement-oriented educational system on stricter budgets, and moreover, did so inequitably. After reducing expenditures across all school boards in Ontario in 1996, “in many cases the boards that were assessment-poor were hit the hardest, while assessment-rich boards escaped unscathed. The November cuts, in other words, actually increased the inequities in an already inequitable situation” (Gidney, 1999: 245). Further, in the following year the same government restructured the educational funding such that educational costs were transferred away from property taxes and to the provincial treasury instead, at the same time ‘downloading’ the responsibility for other social services to the municipalities (ibid).
Renewed emphasis on public accountability led to reduction in ‘wasteful’ spending, representative of the ‘market orientation’ of education (Faulks, 2006; Sacks, 2005).

As a result, these years of Conservative restructuring have been characterized as evidence the neo-liberalization of both governance and education in Ontario. Basu (2004) in particular has documented the success of neo-liberal ideology in Ontario during the late 1990s, through restructuring of Ontario governance, finance, and educational curriculum according to discourses of efficiency, standardization, centralization, and accountability, after the conservative government took office. While “the rationalization of restructuring was legitimized by first establishing an immediate need for schools to raise their standards and adjust their curriculum in order to remain competitive in a global economy,” underlying motivations of “fiscal efficiency and accountability were entrenched in all areas of reform” (Basu, 2004: 631-632). Changes implemented during the Harris Common Sense Revolution also left teachers grappling with “a substantial reduction in support services, a modest overall decline in the number of teachers employed despite increasing enrolments and class sizes, substantive and in some cases unpalatable curriculum change” (Gidney, 1999: 254). Such changes would later form the basis of a Liberal government response of decreased class sizes and increased number of teachers, as we shall see further on in this section.

It was also during the time of the Conservative Ontario government that the Safe Schools Act was introduced (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000), and the Act has remained in place despite concerns raised over the nature of its enforcement and its influence in infringing upon the human rights of students. While the goal of the Safe Schools Act is to create and support safe learning environments for all students and teachers in Ontario, it is significant to note that this document begins with a Code of Conduct for all students, and justifies the standardization of ‘appropriate’ behaviour as “a first step in
ensuring that Ontario has safe schools,” that the Code of Conduct “sets clear and consistent standards of behaviour that apply to all publicly funded schools across the province,” and “the establishing of standards is intended to foster a learning environment that is characterized by respect and civility” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000: ‘Code of Conduct’). This legislation thus explicitly delineated student behaviour as something which can and should be ‘standardized’, prioritized this as the first step in creating safe spaces, and scales citizen-like behaviour to the individual. While it is true that student behaviour can and does contribute to the relative safety of student learning environments, such language as here in the Safe Schools Act which presents student behaviour as the first line of correction also creates student behaviour as the first area of criticism or vilification in addressing school safety. As I will continue to discuss later in this chapter, policies directed at school safety are also one of the few areas where citizenship is directly invoked as part of the work of schools in Ontario, and aligns citizenship with standardization as well as modes of behaviour, rather than as a relationship between citizens and the nation-state, or as a rights-based experience through which children are empowered.

The final decade of the 20th Century also saw the Conservatives move to eliminate the fifth year of secondary school, or the ‘Ontario Academic Credit’ year sometimes still referred to as ‘Grade 13’. This meant that, in 2003, students in both the fourth and fifth year of secondary school would graduate at the same time. The ‘double cohort’ then brought the increasingly competitive nature of educational achievement and university application into sharp relief as application numbers would potentially be doubled within a single year. This sparked such concern over university entrance qualifications that “many students stopped all extra activities and did nothing but study in hopes of boosting their chances” (‘It was OAC ya later for the 13th grade…’; 2003), ironic since such extra-curricular achievements are often
considered positive support for students’ university applications. Although trends in Ontario education in the 20th Century point to an increasing climate of competitiveness and the privileging of high academic achievement as a measure of academic success, students in the double cohort experienced these concerns most acutely. Indeed, university applications increased 46.7% between 2002 and 2003 (Ontario Universities Application Centre, 2003). Teachers reported how high school students worried “about applications and… why the accident of birth [had] made their time in schools one of government experimentation” (Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association, 2002: 2). The actual ‘double cohort’ year coincided with the election of a new Liberal government in late 2003, and this was just one example of how the current government – recently re-elected in October of 2007 - began to articulate its own work in relation to the challenges left by the Conservatives.

During campaigning for and in the early days after McGuinty’s election as Premier in 2003, the new government asserted that “improving the education system is the top item for increased spending” (‘McGuinty targets education’; 2003) and immediately began identifying goals to reduce rate of drop-out, hire additional teachers, and raise ‘student achievement.’ The then Education Minister referenced the Education Quality and Accountability Office’s (EQAO) testing results by noting that "clearly these results show that we are not making as much progress as everyone would like. We are committed to finding ways to improve student performance” (OME, 2003b). The following month, he contextualized this learning opportunity by stating that the McGuinty government was "committed to building a strong public education system that helps our kids succeed in their goals for the future" (OME, 2003c). Public education in Ontario was thus identified early as a foundational piece in the government mandate and as a marker of success for Ontario children inasmuch as education would help their future lives as adults.
The Ministry of Education followed in the next six months to announce new changes to education such as a moratorium on any school closures for nearly a year (OME, 2003e), new spending to aid literacy learning for low-income families (OME, 2003d), and pledged to improve literacy and numeracy ‘excellence’ (OME, 2004d). They also developed an ‘Education Partnership Table’ plan, as a collaborative forum between students, parents, principals, teachers and trustees designed to bring about achievement and positive change by working towards consensus (OME, 2004g), and in general attended to generating ‘progress’ and ‘success’ within the Ontario school system. New programs or forms of spending were frequently and directly politicized as positive changes in contrast to the previous Conservative government. Literacy spending, for example, was identified by Kennedy as “a necessary step in fixing the previous government's flawed funding formula” (OME, 2003d). Calling upon high school students to complete their education, he commented that “the last few years have been particularly tough in our schools. The new curriculum and the effects of the double cohort are just two of the possible reasons” (OME, 2004). Such statements contributed to a discursive frame of the McGuinty government as a sympathetic alternative to the fiscal and social challenges of the previous regime.

These early public statements drew attention to the new Ontario government’s commitment to the education system, and in a manner which continued to bring words such as ‘performance,’ ‘progress’, and ‘achievement’ to the fore. The Education Partnership Table was presented as a “new way of achieving progress in our school system,” (OME, 2004c), for example, and also began to position children’s education most valuably as a future benefit for future adults, “ensuring Ontario succeeds tomorrow” (OME 2004g). It would seem that new expenditures signaled a significant shift in how education is valued and understood. However, on a discursive level there are strong similarities with the previous
‘neo-liberal’ Harris government. Indeed, as Basu (2004) has documented, ideals of achievement and performance measured against standardized expectations were certainly prevalent in the conservative governance of the late 1990s, and such expectations have consistently framed educational spending and new school programs since 2003. We find further evidence of such discourses within recent public statements from the Ministry, which frequently couch announcements and policy about schools and curriculum in language of performance, scores, success, strategy, and achievement. For example:

In today’s knowledge economy, education is the prerequisite for prosperity. If we want our kids to succeed, we have to give them the tools they need (OME, 2005k, on the subject of new textbook resources).

The second year of improved scores for Ontario students in reading, writing, and math means that the Ontario government’s ambitious education goals are on track (OME, 2005f, on the subject of literacy and numeracy).

Recognizing that the education system must work with the unique strengths and interests of every student, the government is transforming and modernizing secondary schools to ensure excellence for all (OME, 2005c, on the subject of the recent $1.8 Billion 'Student Success Strategy').

Students…are already benefiting from better school buildings, which mean more positive learning environments — a key ingredient to improving student achievement (OME, 2006d), on the subject of school repairs).

While framing education within markers of accountability and measurable change and success, these statements also routinely position children's education as a “prerequisite,” something which is valuable for benefits which occur in the future, and continue to frame each new amount of public spending or school programming as something which is relevant to student performance and achievement. The value of student learning appears in the proven success of a standardized measure of achievement, as opposed to the end-result of increased knowledge, skill, student self-esteem, or physical safety. It is interesting, for example, that such discourses are emphasized even in the case of funding new school repairs - such spending could easily be considered most significant as an issue of health and safety.
of the students and teachers who use the schools and who each have a right to learn and work in a safe environment, rather than as a step towards realizing high achievement scores.

Discourses of student performance, achievement, and standardization are commonly articulated through Ontario Ministry of Education public statements. While language around citizenship is nearly absent, citizenship is indeed consistently invoked as part of the underlying project of the school. Citizenship is occasionally identified as part of specific educational needs or programs, however, it is in publicly-oriented statements governing educational programming and educational spending that citizenship is most broadly invoked. For example, as the relatively new McGuinty government announced their strategy to improve literacy skills and measure them against the benchmark of provincial standardized scores, the Premier rationalized these measures by pledging that “if we get public education right, we get the best citizens and the best workers, we strengthen our society and our economy” (OME, 2004d). Here citizenship is invoked as something which is produced through educational ‘advantage,’ even indeed something at which someone can excel and be the ‘best’ at. In an address that same month McGuinty offered similar statements while also adding that ‘character education is a manifestation of this [hope for a better tomorrow],” and thanked educators for their work in helping “to shape better citizens and through them, a still better society” (OME, 2004e). Character education represents a growing trend across schools in Ontario and North America in general, as a form of extra-curricular and co-curricular programming in which children learn about positive character traits such as respect, self-control, courage, responsibility, and so on. Early references to citizenship as a set of positive character traits had already begun to find resonance in some individual Ontario school boards through ‘character education’ programs, would later form the focus
of a provincial task force in 2006, and mandatory province-wide educational programming by September 2007.

As Damon has noted in the context of the United States, character education has been the focus of educational policy and federal political campaigns since the 1990s, signaling ‘a new era in character education, marked by broad public acceptance of the idea and endorsements by top elected officials” (ix, 2002). In Canada, this has been engaged most prominently in Alberta and Ontario, and has been directly engaged by province-wide educational programming since 2005 and 2007, respectively (Alberta Education, 2005; OME, 2006a and 2007b). In Ontario McGuinty has directly identified character education as citizenship education in his statements introducing this change for 2007, explaining that education is “about developing well-rounded citizens who will help build a strong, caring and compassionate society” (OME, 2006e). The Ministry has suggested that province-wide character education will “empower schools to reinforce shared community values such as respect, fairness, honesty and responsibility” (ibid), which is consistent with local school board character education trends, and which I will also discuss in further detail in a later section of this chapter. Education Minister Kathleen Wynne carries on in the same news statement to note that "by treating students as citizens who can make a difference, we can create a school environment where civic responsibility and academic achievement thrive” (ibid). Thus, here children’s citizenship is simultaneously afforded a futuristic role for children to build a strong society, and also as a set of values which are not an end goal in and of themselves, but the means for building student achievement and responsibility.

At the same time as these citizenship discourses converge on ideals of responsibility and orientation towards children as future adults, education in general has been consistently marked as a form of public investment. Even as increased educational spending was
announced in 2004, it was explained that the “$854 million increase for 2004-05 announced today is part of a $2.6 billion additional investment in public education over the government’s mandate. That includes the $2.1 billion over four years mentioned in the Budget, money added this year, and money being invested outside of the grants to school boards” (OME, 2004f). Indeed, as investments are forms of spending which are most valuable for their payoff in the future, we may understand through language such as this that through public education in Ontario, children are constructed as individuals whose value also exists in the future rather than the present-day. As a result, their identities as citizens are more appropriately characterized as future citizens or ‘human becomings’ who “through the process of socialisation [are] to be shaped into fully adult human beings” (Holloway and Valentine, 2000: 5), over and above their identities as human beings with needs and issues in the present-day.

Ontario Ministry of Education (OME) announcements about changes or new programming related to education which are frequently described as “investments”, are also quick to define the monetary value of each new program or spending initiative, and specifically name the current government’s role in these investments. For example:

The McGuinty government invested $90 Million this school year to reduce class sizes in primary grades (OME, 2004f, on the subject of smaller class sizes).

The government is investing over $9 Million this year and next to make schools safer. (OME 2005g, on the subject of the Safe Schools Action plan).

In our elementary schools, the significant new investments focus on teachers and support for higher student achievement in reading, writing, and math…The McGuinty government is also reforming the education funding model to increase support for our schools and to improve the accuracy and transparency of funding. These changes mean that Ontarians will be able to see exactly how the government’s investment directly benefits students (OME 2006f, on the subject of new grants for student needs).
Such funding initiatives - which may range within a given year from new textbooks to hiring additional elementary school teachers - are indeed a positive step in creating environments conducive to children's learning. However, what we can see here is that in the place of potential emphasis on students’ rights to education and learning, or on any intrinsic value of the very acts of learning that are required for students to gain this knowledge, we see a pervasive discourse emerging from the provincial scale which positions children in a future-oriented, economically motivated, and performance-driven learning environment. Moreover, such discourses are subtly employed as potential campaign tools through repeated naming of the politicians involved, inasmuch as they are identified to the public as evidence of the current government's value and success.

In the recent decade in particular, safety-oriented discourses have become prevalent in the governance of children’s spaces and activities, at home (Valentine and Holloway, 2001) in spaces of leisure and recreation, and most certainly within school space, (Aitken, 2001b; Gallagher and Fusco, 2006; Hope, 2006), representative of increasing geographies of fear for and of children. Indeed, “the decision as to which risks form the focus of concern in a community or society is a political one,” made by those “in a position of power” (Hope, 2006: 310). In 2000, under the direction of the Harris government, the OME introduced the Safe Schools Act (OME, 2000), and brought the issue of school safety into sharp relief through a set of policies designed to create schools as safe places for learning. The Act justified these measures through the need “to ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity," and "to promote responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community” (ibid), thus conflating acts of safety with ‘responsible citizenship.’ This language also explicitly prioritizes the respect and safety of adults within
the school above the respect and safety of the students, and goes on to identify a long list of negative behaviour which would result in students' suspension or expulsion from their school, and allows local school boards to additionally enforce their own safety policies and codes of conduct.

This development resulted in a considerable amount of public concern. In 2003 the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) published a report on the Safe Schools Act, in response to public perceptions that the Act, in practice, had a disproportionately negative affect on racial minorities and students with disabilities, despite arguments that such policies target negative behaviour indiscriminate of race, gender, or disability (OHRC, 2003). Their report not only concluded that their interviewees “believe that systemic discrimination is the main factor leading to the disproportionate suspension and expulsion of Black students,” and notes that “Black students are disproportionately streamed into basic level and special needs classes, leave school earlier, and drop out of school in disproportionate numbers”, thus further decreasing their ability to complete their education or find meaningful employment to the same degree as other students.(Ibid, viii). Most significantly, the report concludes that “human rights protections have not been adequately incorporated into the current disciplinary regime,” and that it is indeed “possible to have a disciplinary regime that both maintains safe and violence-free schools and protects the human rights of all students in the school system” (Ibid, 64).

Teachers’ and principals’ authority to discipline students for a range of actions from “swearing at a teacher or another person in a position of authority” to “trafficking in weapons or illegal drugs” (OME, 2000) has resulted in a considerable increase in suspensions and expulsions since the Act was introduced, amidst criticism that these measures have disproportionately targeted racial minorities and disabled students. Between the 2000-01
school year and the 2003-04 school year, suspensions increased from 113,778 to 152,636 and expulsions increased from 106 to a significant 1909 in one year (OME, 2005h). Moreover, both suspensions and expulsions were found to disproportionately influence male students and students of colour. A complaint was filed by the Ontario Human Rights Commission in July 2005 against the Safe Schools Act (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2005), since the Act and its “related discipline policies are having a disproportionate impact on racial minority and disabled students” (OME, 2005h: 13). Thus, while these safety policies claim to advance the rights of students, in fact there is evidence to suggest that they have resulted in the violation of student rights. Additionally, such policies focus attention on the elimination of specific kinds of student behaviour which are perceived as unsafe or disrespectful to authority, rather than on the circumstances that contribute to such behaviour in the first place. Citizenship is scaled to the individual, whose self-mediation and responsible behaviour are ultimately expected to contribute to the benefit of the larger group. We may also note a ‘negative’ orientation here towards citizenship behaviour, as contrasted with the ‘positive’, rights-based programming advocated by Howe and Covell (2005).

We have seen previously how citizenship as a concept underpinned by rights exists in a limited format in curricular and co-curricular school activities, and appears to instead be superseded by an explicit emphasis on citizenship as the practice of responsibilities. Such safety-oriented practices in the school which are justified by citizenship discourses may in fact directly limit the citizenship rights of some students. As Gilborn has argued in relation to British public education, "the education system, like so many public institutions, is formally committed to equality of opportunity and multiculturalism, but in practice continues to act as a major producer of race inequality" (Gilborn, 2006: 84). We may likewise observe similar trends in the Ontario educational system, brought into sharp relief by the
articulation and contestation of the Safe Schools Act. While these policies have been justified on the basis of providing a safe school environment to which each student has a right, in practice they have been shown to produce inequitable learning conditions and may even prevent students from accessing their education altogether.

The current work of the McGuinty government and the OME revolves around a commitment to reviewing the Ontario Safe Schools Act, which was implemented in 2000 by the previous government. While intended to “ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity,” (OME, 2005h), in fact we might argue that the opposite effect has been achieved, in particular for those members of the school who are not in positions of authority - the students themselves. Despite the fact that the Safe Schools Act does not use terms such as ‘zero tolerance,’ the articulation of safe school policies in reaction against violent or perceived risky behaviour is frequently interpreted as such.

Concurrently, since the introduction of the Safe Schools Act the Ministry of Education has also mandated extra-curricular safety-oriented programming, in particular the anti-bullying initiative which was recently introduced province-wide in response to the report of an Action Team commissioned in 2004 (Safe Schools Action Team, 2005). Safety initiatives are often justified as a response to parental and community concerns, perceived risk from violence and vandalism, and the recognition of bullying as a destructive childhood experience, and are also unsurprisingly recognized as a “prerequisite for student achievement” (OME, 2005g), but also because “every student has the right to feel safe and be safe in school and on school grounds” (ibid). A single citizenship right of safety is uniquely invoked here in the work of the school.
In the discussion guide ‘Safer Schools…Safer Communities’ (Safe Schools Action Team, 2005b), school safety initiatives are recognized as part of the “Excellence for All strategy to improve education in Ontario," whose goal is to "develop the intellectual, emotional and physical potential of our children and young adults so that they can become the best contributing citizens they can be” (Safe Schools Action Team, 2005: 5). Here we see not only a continued discourse of children as future adults, framed around language of excellence and improvement, and also the articulation of citizenship as “good citizenship,” discursively sited within the broader mandate of the school to provide a safe learning environment.

Anti-bullying strategies appear similarly as one of few programming initiatives which are discursively justified through citizenship and rights. In the same "Shaping safer schools" document, the Ministry argues that "preventing bullying requires everyone’s cooperation…When we create safe, respectful learning environments, we build and nurture safer communities for all our citizens” (5). The document goes on to discuss how adult members of schools are expected to serve as respectful and safe role models, and recommends anti-bullying training for all administrators as well as a 'Safe Schools' coordinator in each school board. Further, it argues that “creating learning environments that are free of bullying behaviour is much more than simply putting policies into place. It is supporting a community-wide model that celebrates positive behaviours – behaviours carried by our students into their adult lives. When we create safe, respectful learning environments, we build and nurture safe communities for all our citizens” (11). This document is one of very few discursive sites which invokes citizenship as and student empowerment within the school. Within a bullying prevention plan, students are expected to work in addition to administrators, teachers, parents, and “the broader community” in creating an anti-bullying
environment, so that “ideally, bullying prevention strategies will engage students to the point that they examine their own behaviour, and make changes to ensure they are not contributing to the problem” (ibid). This citizenship however is oriented towards children becoming self-regulating, responsible individuals, as a means to achieving safe environments.

After a lengthy period of concern, a settlement was very recently reached between the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the OME (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2007), acknowledging that ‘zero tolerance’ disciplinary policies would be discontinued and that additional anti-discrimination measures be implemented. This event, reaching an agreement between parties concerned with rights violations and the Ministry of Education itself, is intriguing in that one might question whether a broad shift in perception will be initiated, and whether broad education mandates will in fact begin to prioritize children’s rights in practice. Broadly, however, we may observe that the current moment in citizenship and education in Ontario emphasizes responsibilities more heavily than rights, and also develops stronger conceptual links between citizenship and the local scale of the community, than with that of the nation-state or even the province. Once again this holds considerable implications for children to understand themselves as participating members and citizens of the nation-state. Children’s scholars have argued previously how children’s spaces may be considered as dynamic and porous (Holloway and Valentine, 2000). However in such instances as in these examples of the Safe Schools Act, it is the provincial and local scales which appear to hold the most significant authority over how children’s educational spaces are governed, and that this can in fact limit the range of children’s experiences within these sites rather than expanding their freedoms as citizens.
Citizenship in the Ontario Curriculum

Since citizenship and education continue to be considered in the context of curriculum content, and curriculum content does significantly influence how children experience their time within the school, in this section I will examine discourses around children's citizenship advanced through the Ontario elementary school curriculum. It is also worth noting that the elementary curriculum provides students with the earliest explicit curricular opportunities to engage with citizenship concepts during formative years of learning and identity-formation.

In Ontario, students of all Grade levels from 1-8 engage with Social Studies (Grades 1-6) and History and Geography (Grades 7-8). These subjects are traditionally associated with education about civics and national identity, as a foundation of a more ‘liberal’-oriented citizenship-based learning (Heater, 2005; Kennedy, 1997). I am also interested in how children’s identities are broadly situated through the curriculum and the expectations it advances. As we may see from the examination of Ontario Ministry of Education public news statements, children identities have tended to be discursively constructed through interest in their future, adult selves, as adults who will seek to contribute to the Canadian economy and society. These statements have the effect of positioning the school as a site of standardization, achievement, quality, and as a prerequisite to adult participation within a globally competitive work force. Futurist discourses thus broadly contextualize children’s experiences at school. However, we are still left an incomplete understanding of the discursive construction of citizenship from the provincial scale, without an examination of the Ontario curriculum. In this section I will go on to observe how language surrounding citizenship as rights, or of children as bearers of rights within the school – while rare – does
appear in a limited fashion, although this emerges alongside consistent discourses of responsibility and achievement.

It is most notable that citizenship and rights do emerge within the social studies curriculum at the level of Grade 5. In the strand ‘Aspects of Citizenship and Government in Canada’ in the Social Studies curriculum, students are expected to learn about formal aspects of citizenship in the Canadian nation-state, such as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as a part of the students’ learning and understanding their nation’s past and present political context and the civic responsibilities associated with it:

- By the end of Grade 5, students will: describe the structure and components of Canada's federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments;
- Describe the rights of groups and individuals and the responsibilities of citizenship in Canada, including participation in the electoral process…;
- describe the basic rights that are specified in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
- Describe the process by which immigrants become Canadian citizens…;
- explain the significance of civic buildings and symbols…; (OME, 2004a: 44)

At minimum, there is the potential here for students to understand citizenship formally as a political, civic, and symbolic concept supported by the work of multiple scales of government, and also as an experience which is tied to both rights and responsibilities, and I would agree that this is important if children are to learn about citizenship as it relates to their membership and freedoms within their nation-state. However, while the Canadian Charter of Rights is engaged here, the curriculum does not mention children's rights at all, and there is no explicit discussion of citizen "participation" outside of voting and electoral processes, all of which are adult practices. More interestingly, in the glossary for this part of the curriculum, the only definition of citizenship which is provided is "the status of a citizen, with its attendant duties, rights, and responsibilities” (OME, 2004a: 78). Such a brief definition does not afford any specific links to the nation-state or other scales of governance
and belonging, thus providing a vague impression of whose responsibility it is to guarantee that these citizenship rights are afforded, or where and how citizens practice their group or individual responsibilities.

If children are to understand themselves as participating members of their nation-state, it is indeed important for them to understand the political composition of state governance as well as the scales and structures through which it is governed. However, in this format, the students’ earliest formal curricular introduction to the concept of citizenship affords this concept a vague definition at best, with limited opportunity for them to understand themselves as contemporary citizens who bear both rights and responsibilities in many similar ways to their adult counterparts. Arguably, "a viable state is important as a guarantee of rights" (Isin and Turner, 2007: 13), and so it is significant for children to learn about their citizenship rights and how they are able to experience them – or even how these rights may be unevenly experienced – by virtue of their citizenship within their nation-state. Despite the fact that citizenship is generally articulated through the elementary curriculum as a concept relating to the Canadian nation-state, this brief glossary definition along with the broader discourses in the curriculum as a whole also contribute to an understanding of citizenship which is further de-territorialized and dependent on individual responsible behaviour.

In their research in public schools in England, Maitles and Deuchar have argued that "evidence has illustrated that pupils are keen to discuss [social, political, and humanitarian] issues and that a programme on citizenship education needs to respond to this" (Maitles and Deuchar, 2006: 250). While these Ontario Social Studies curriculum guidelines might easily be supplemented to include all of these aspects of citizenship more thoroughly, there exists a much heavier emphasis on the political aspects of citizenship as opposed to the
humanitarian. While the political aspects of citizenship to which children are exposed here are predominantly adult-oriented, humanitarian actions may be understood and responded to by people of any age, and it is lamentable that the most explicit curricular opportunity for children to learn about citizenship participation is the predominantly passive understanding of adult citizenship duties.

While this part of the curriculum does afford some opportunity for us to understand citizenship through the school as a concept underpinned by both rights and responsibilities, I would argue that these situations in fact continue to articulate not a children’s citizenship of both rights and responsibilities, but an adult-oriented citizenship for which individual responsible behaviour and discipline is preparation. While the Ontario curriculum has begun to undergo revision since 2004 (and the election of a new Ontario government), similar language around expectations, achievement, and global competition is still noticeable.

Moreover, curriculum programming is broadly contextualized by the need for students to acquire skills and knowledge related to future career choices. Until just recently in September of 2006, Ontario elementary students engaged with a Language curriculum which had last been revised in 1998. The 1998 Language Curriculum, as one example, was afforded a great deal of significance as the means through which these communication skills are to be learned. Teachers were expected to "pay particular attention to skills that are needed in the workplace, such as the ability to grasp ideas and information conveyed through print materials and the ability to produce clear, error-free written work" (OME, 1998d: 6). Additionally, students were expected to "understand that language skills are employability skills that are important in many careers," and "identify and learn about specific careers that require strong language skills" (OME, 1998d: 7).
While this language around career emphasis has been diminished, the document continues to emphasize that “the language curriculum is based on the belief that literacy is critical to responsible and productive citizenship” (OME, 2006b: 6), a broad goal which leaves citizenship with a limited definition relevant to individual responsibility and productivity. The document does also encourage students to think critically about the world around them and “use language to interact and connect with individuals and communities, for personal growth” (ibid), however these goals are subject to the same overall curriculum goals which outline student, parent, and teacher responsibilities directed towards student performance and achievement success (ibid, 7). Therefore it is difficult to know how effective such directives towards critical thinking and personal growth are. More importantly, given the extremely broad number of curriculum expectations in each individual strand, it is likely that the articulation of these standards are contingent upon the decisions made by teachers, locally, when delivering the curriculum in the classroom. As we shall also see later in chapter four, many teachers struggle to comprehensively engage with all of the curriculum expectations within a single school year.

However, there is certainly potential within the curriculum for citizenship to be understood as an ‘active’ concept – not simply in the manner of individuals taking altruistic responsibility for their communities, but through critical thinking, personal development, and knowledge of rights. The concept of active citizenship also involves children becoming active in decision-making processes that affect them, as well as an understanding of mutual respect and responsibility. While such an explicit framework of active citizenship through decision-making does not appear in the curriculum, the potential certainly does exist, as students are given emphasis on learning decision-making, working individually and as part of a group, and choosing project topics.
It is certain that decision-making skills are significant to children's learning process, and indeed, the concept of active citizenship advanced by Stasiulis (2002) and Howe and Covell (2005) also involves children becoming active participants in decisions which affect them, as well as an understanding of mutual respect and responsibility. While such an explicit framework of active citizenship through decision-making does not appear in the curriculum, the potential certainly does exist, as the curriculum does include attention to learning decision-making skills, working individually and as part of a group, and choosing project topics and deciding the format and presentation of particular activities based on personal interests. For example, similar to programming in the current Science and Technology (OME, 1998b) curriculum, the Mathematics Curriculum advises that students in later Grades are required “to be actively involved in solving and discussing problems,” (OME, 2005b) especially since “students must be capable of using their theoretical and practical knowledge of mathematics to solve problems and make decisions in everyday life…” (OME, 2005b: 72). Further, the Healthy Living strand of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum explicitly situates the school as a site of learned behaviour and decision-making skills. The guidelines state that students

need to understand how their actions and decisions affect their health, fitness, and personal well-being, and how to apply their learning to make positive, healthy decisions in all areas of life and personal development. The school environment can profoundly influence students' attitudes, preferences, and behaviours (OME, 1998b: 2).

Each of these curricular streams emphasize that children are well served by acquiring knowledge and developing attitudes that shape responsible behaviour, related to specific subject matter, and this is a positive step towards children understanding themselves as active, decision-making citizens. However, this contrasts again with an emphasis on developing learning habits and attitudes that are necessary for achievement, rather than the
fulfillment of actual educational needs or student interest. The Social Studies (Grades 1-6) and History and Geography Curriculum (Grades 7-8), for example, advise that students must learn disciplined "habits of mind," for the purposes of "development of responsible citizenship in a complex society characterized by rapid technological, economic, political and social change" (OME, 2004: 7). The Science and Technology documents also note that “students' attitudes towards science, technology, and education can have a significant effect on their achievement of the expectations” (OME, 1998c: 9). Through such statements, the merits of individual learning process and the achievement of provincial standards continue to be conflated. In the case of similar statements in the Science and Technology curriculum, it seems to be the subject matter itself which warrants the need for precise and respectful attitudes, whereas in the case of Social Studies these attitudes are more explicitly framed by the need to develop citizenship attitudes necessary to live in a rapidly developing “global community” (ibid).

Thus, while the potential exists for the Ontario curriculum to foster children's decision-making abilities, there is little to suggest that this occurs in partnership with adults as well as with other children. In each of these programs, there is an emphasis on acquiring knowledge and developing attitudes that shape responsible behaviour, related to specific subject matter, and there is potential for this to be directed towards the development of critical decision-making, which is important for children if they are to understand themselves as empowered citizens who can actively participate and cultivate their identities in the world they live in. Additionally, this learning is still broadly situated as having value for children's future selves, and within a provincial educational climate which defines success and progress based on standardized measures of achievement, it is uncertain how much scope children’s individual identities and interests are fostered. Aside from dispensation for students with
different learning abilities, there is very little curricular attention paid to individual student identities, unless this bears relevance to helping students respond to provincial achievement standards. Thus, we may begin to observe citizenship emerging within the curriculum as well as within Ontario public discourse as a set of behaviours and attitudes, which ultimately support the successful achievement of academic standards, and competitive, futuristic workplace skills.

Overall the curriculum seems to acknowledge the special role of the school and its programs in shaping student attitude and behaviour. However, one area in which the educational authority of the school is almost completely set aside is in the Healthy Living, which includes programs related to adolescent growth and sexual health. At first, this curriculum acknowledges more broadly that certain gender-specific topics may be better addressed within segregated groups, “for example, discussions involving topics of a sensitive nature, especially those in the Healthy Living strand, can be uncomfortable for some students, but these same students might feel quite secure and comfortable discussing these topics in a same-sex setting” (OME, 1998b: 5). This is also accompanied by a note for teachers to encourage respect for individual differences in the classroom setting, in order to help students collaborate with their peers and enhance their own self-esteem and respect for others. Clearly, this part of the curriculum is treated with more sensitivity than others, and also affords teachers and students a structured way of learning in a respectful group setting.

Within the specific guidelines, however, this sensitivity is extended such that the curriculum requires that "because of the sensitive nature of these topics, parents or guardians must be informed about the content of the curriculum and time of delivery," and additionally this program be carried out only “after teachers have developed rapport with their students. Opportunities should be provided for segregated as well as coeducational
instruction” (OME, 1998b: 10). Further, this requirement is prefaced by the unique appearance of the statement that “parents and guardians are the primary educators of their children” (ibid). It is only in the Healthy Living strand of the Health and Physical Education curriculum that it appears. Here the curriculum gives priority to parental permission before material can be taught, whereas in other parts of the curriculum that involve other sensitive or potentially harmful activities (i.e. discussion of alcohol and substance abuse in the Healthy Living strand, specialized equipment and safety issues in Health and Physical Education or in Science and Technology), the same need for parental permission is not invoked.

It would be reasonable, then, to question whether the province attempts to create the school as a values-free site, whose primary responsibility is to educate students and prepare them for future workforce participation, in a way that lacks an explicit articulation of children’s citizenship rights. Here the Province seems to off-load explicitly ‘values’-related education (i.e. sexual health) onto the family or elsewhere. However, this contrasts in particular with trends towards character education, which, as we have begun to see above, are concerned with the education of specific values such as respect or fairness, which are perceived to be relevant to character development and citizenship education. Additionally, we have also begun to observe how the provincial interest in character education continues to promote the school as a site of achievement and student success. So, while it would appear from such statements as the above in the Healthy Living curriculum strand, that the Ontario Ministry of Education wishes to remain values-free, in combination with the earlier news statements from the OME we may observe that the province creates public schools as sites for learned values which support student responsibility and achievement. In this next section I will continue to discuss character education in Ontario, and the accompanying implications for understanding how citizenship is articulated through local public schools.
Character Education as Citizenship Education: Responsibility at School

In Canada and the United States in particular, citizenship education has undergone a recent resurgence in the form of extra-curricular programming focusing on 'character education.' (Damon, 2002; Lickona, 1993; also see Alberta Education 2005 and OME 2006). Although there is no single method or justification for teaching character education, this form of educational programming tends to involve the teaching of sets of values which are framed as values for 'good citizenship.' As Damon has noted in the context of the United States, character education has been a renewed focus of educational policy and political campaigns since the 1990s, signaling 'a new era in character education, marked by broad public acceptance of the idea and endorsements by top elected officials” (ix, 2002). In Canada, this has been engaged most prominently in Alberta and Ontario, by province-wide educational programming since 2005 and 2007, respectively (Alberta Education, 2005; OME, 2006).

Character education engages students in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities in learning specific values and responsibilities - respect, fairness, tolerance, and self-control are some examples. Students are to learn these character traits as part of their daily lives at school and understand how they can become individual citizens who enact such values (See Kawartha District School Board, Simcoe District School Board, and York Region District School Board as examples). Learning activities may be supplemented into existing curricular projects, such as a novel study or group activity, or may engage the entire school through assemblies, newsletters, or other communications which hold the character trait(s) as a theme. Students and teachers may spend time learning about a different character trait

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1 Searches for topics on 'character education' within average internet search engines, for example, reveal a vast number of educational resources, guest speakers, workshops, and products which aim to teach character
during each month of the school year, for example, or be encouraged to demonstrate the
monthly character trait through rewards or achievement certificates. As a result, character
education is intended to reduce student behaviour that is disrespectful, violent, or disruptive
to a safe school and safe community, as well as increase student self-discipline, respect, and
‘responsible citizenship’ in the school, home, and community. Alberta character education
teaching texts, for example, acknowledge several benefits including “a climate of respect for
self and others, the attributes of active citizenship, higher academic achievement”, and
“enhanced employability skills” (Alberta Education, 2005: 3). This kind of ‘active
citizenship’, however, departs from that which is advanced by children’s rights scholars.

Such programs advance a notion of active citizenship which depends not on an
explicit understanding of children’s rights and empowerment through decision-making with
peers and adults, but on a sense of developing individual behaviour which is self-disciplined,
respectful, and conducive to harmonious group dynamics. A different kind of ‘active
citizenship’ is emerging here, similar to what Smith has noted as the frame of the ‘active’
citizen whose rights may be exercised only if the individual is viewed as deserving enough or
if they have fulfilled certain obligations (Smith, 1999). This is an active citizenship
contextualized more heavily by responsibilities than rights.

It is understandable that such responsible attributes would be advocated by
educators since it is easier for students to learn when their classroom environment is
unchallenged by disciplinary issues. However, Howe and Covell (2005) advocate children’s
active citizenship within the school within a framework which educates children about their
citizenship rights, argue that the most successful programs - by way of improving classroom
behaviour, respect, and group dynamics - are those in which children learn about citizenship

education to schools and communities at large. A considerable number of these are advertised for educational
through a framework of children’s rights, and involve students in the decision-making process. They argue that, despite current Western trends towards teaching responsible citizenship values and behaviour in the public school, such programs “cannot provide the motivation needed to form the values and goals that promote democratic behaviours…Children need to know that it is legitimate for them to be concerned about themselves and protect their self-interest, as well as the interests of others” (2005: 109).

After engaging Grade 8 students in Canada and Belgium with a rights-based citizenship curriculum, they reported that “learning about their own rights had made these students more supportive of the rights of all others…That this sense of respect was connected to the possibility of self-interest and a growing sense of socially inclusive identity was reflected in student comments” (Howe and Covell, 2005, 146). They also note that many of the negative behaviours such as bullying and anti-cooperative tendencies had decreased.

This research is particularly significant to observe in light of recent emphasis in Ontario on anti-bullying initiatives and safety-oriented mandates which prescribe what behaviours are considered appropriate, including the recent Ontario Safe Schools Act (OME, 2000). We shall continue to see below that, despite the fact that these policies and other character education programs have the potential to be grounded in children’s rights empowerment, in fact they are more likely to prescribe children’s identities within the school as a set of responsible behaviours, mandated by an authoritative public school administration, and instead can have dire consequences for some students’ rights.

Although ‘citizenship’ is only rarely explicitly invoked throughout the Ontario elementary curriculum, these overall trends towards individual responsible citizenship, accountable educational practices, and a broad emphasis on the value of education in markets in the United States, and are accompanied by various purchase costs and user fees.
contributing to students' ability to contribute to a Canadian and global economy as adult citizens, are reminiscent of contemporary citizenship trends articulated by Rose (1999) and Cruikshank (1999). Citizenship is reframed through these structures of educational governance as a mode of individual conduct and responsible behaviour. As Cruikshank argues, contemporary technologies of citizenship which include but are not limited to state institutions, “are intended to ‘help people to help themselves.’” They “do not cancel out the autonomy and independence of citizens but are modes of governance that work upon and through the capacities of citizens to act on their own…the actions of citizens are regulated, but only after the capacity to act as a certain kind of citizen with certain aims is instilled” (Cruikshank, 1999, 4). We may observe likewise, in the case of Ontario public statements on education, how the Ministry of Education enacts programming designed to help students reach their ‘potential’, and which is also intended to be achieved communally through provincial actors, community members, local schools, and parents. Although the Curriculum Council (OME, 2007) exists to receive curriculum advice and input from Ontario educators and community members, it is the Ministry which ultimately decides the curriculum criteria. Although children within Ontario public schools are afforded some independence, and might likely be afforded some freedom in terms of the ways they respond to the curricular expectations – as is certainly suggested in my interviews with Ontario teachers, in Chapter Four - children are ultimately expected to work towards goals of responsible, self-regulating citizenship and are subject to curricular guidelines which are not of their own choosing.

This analysis of educational discourse and the construction of children’s citizenship within Ontario schools also finds resonance with what Faulks has characterized as a broader trend towards the ‘marketization’ of education. In discussion about the current moment in public education, he argues that the marketization of education, or the orientation of public
more subtle consequences for pupils' perceptions of citizenship. The values
associated with citizenship, such as co-operation, compromise and care are
seriously compromised when they are taught against a background of
dominant market values such as competition, self-interest, and materialism
(Faulks, 2006, 129).

Thus, even while the elementary school curricular and extra-curricular activities may afford
citizenship values, these
children opportunities to learn about democratic and rights-based citizenship values, these
are inherently challenged by a public education system which broadly challenges these values
through attention to achievement standards and individual self-discipline. As we continue to
see evidence of this kind of educational climate in the Ontario education system, there is an
implicit assumption that contemporary educational goals are underwritten by societal
economic imperatives, and competitive values that contrast significantly with the democratic
values of citizenship.

While it is true that elementary school students engage with a Social Studies
curriculum that encourages them to learn about systems of government, Canadian adult
citizenship responsibilities, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, this
curriculum content appears alongside broad discourses positioning the school as a site where
children learn to respond to standards of achievement and quality. Thus it is uncertain to
what degree this curriculum guarantees an understanding of children’s citizenship as a concept
tied to the nation-state, since provincial statements are most likely to identify citizenship as
something which has value for children as future adults and future participants in Canadian
society, and children’s citizenship as something which has value for their achievement and
responsible behaviour while at school. Additionally, as the curriculum affords citizenship a
relatively vague definition according to scale of membership and belonging, it is more
difficult still for children to understand citizenship as something which they themselves can and do participate in. When these citizenship expectations are so predominantly ‘top-down’, framed as part of the broader goals of an achievement- and market-oriented system, there is limited room for children to understand their own identities as citizens in the present-day, with needs, desires, challenges, as well as the ability to learn. Thus, while provincial discourses broadly define citizenship as the exercise of responsibility, there is still considerable room for additional interpretation on what this responsibility entails. There is room for potential variation or addition in how citizenship education is articulated in individual local schools. Indeed, one way in which this apparent gap in the curriculum is being supplemented is through an increasing and parallel interest in positively-oriented (so that desired outcomes are rewarded, rather than punishing undesired behaviour) educational initiatives like ‘character education.’

As identified briefly above, character education has received renewed interest among school boards across North America broadly and in Ontario specifically, as a way of teaching students specific values – such as respect, self-control, and empathy - that are proposed to have direct significance to children as citizens as well as help improve classroom behaviour. As a form of education that is often explicitly framed as a citizenship-building activity, character education has existed in some form in North America for several decades, and American advocates of character education such as Thomas Lickona (1993) have argued in favour of the school as a site of moral education at least partly in response to perceived societal trends in the decline of the family as a moral educator. While character education is originally conceived as a form of moral education rooted in ‘whole child’ learning within a politically democratic society (Damon, 2002), in the contemporary Canadian context we may witness that this has shifted towards a more individualized notion of good and right
behaviour. Character education is intended to reduce student behaviour that is disrespectful, violent, or disruptive to a safe school and safe community, as well as increase student self-discipline, respect, and 'responsible citizenship' in the school, home, and community. It is a ‘positive’ engagement with citizenship as a mode of behaviour, in the sense that behaviour and character traits considered beneficial and constructive are rewarded, rather than punishing negative traits. Alberta character education teaching texts, for example, acknowledge several benefits including “a climate of respect for self and others, the attributes of active citizenship, higher academic achievement”, and “enhanced employability skills” (Alberta Education, 2005: 3).

Character education is viewed as a method of teaching children to become ‘responsible citizens' or 'good citizens', and also as a solution to contemporary behavioural problems in schools and among school-aged children. Programming which addresses character traits and moral value is considered "a deliberate effort to nurture universal attributes that transcend racial, religious, socio-economic and cultural lines. It is a whole school effort to create a community that promotes the highest standards of student discipline and citizenship" (Simcoe County District School Board, 2003, 2). Further, character education initiatives are justified through "our recognition of the need to educate the whole person and that true education emphasizes all aspects of the self" (Simcoe County District School Board, 2003: 4).

Since character education has been undertaken by whole school boards – and now by the entire Province as of the 2007-2008 school year – and since it directly invokes citizenship education as its purpose, it is one of the few educational programming initiatives which directly engages Ontario students of all ages in citizenship-oriented learning. Since each individual school board has engaged character education in slightly different ways, there
is the potential for this programming to work with citizenship as a concept underpinned by both responsibilities as well as universal citizenship rights – such as respect, safety, or freedom of expression. However, while character education “involves the preparation of learners to be responsible, caring and contributing citizens…the development of safe, supportive schools, develops the emotional and social learning and enhances academic achievement” (York Region District School Board: 2003), much of the character education rationale emphasizes that “citizenship confers upon individuals certain rights and privileges and, more importantly, responsibilities and obligations…we are expected to contribute to community and to nation building.” (Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, 2003: 3) Thus, although character education is framed as citizenship education – which itself lacks some elucidation in the elementary curriculum – in fact character education creates a very similar discursive frame for citizenship, as an experience predominantly defined by the practice of individual responsibilities. Citizenship is an expectation and an active contribution to multiple scales of belonging.

While such character traits and values are inarguably valuable for both children and adults, within these programs we may again notice an emphasis on citizenship responsibilities as opposed to citizenship rights. Additionally, while certain school boards may begin their character education programs within the context of teaching concepts around children’s rights (YRDSB), others do not mention children’s rights at all (Simcoe County DSB). On the one hand, there is room within character education for children to become active citizens, in the sense that their behaviour is perceived to have a significant influence on the growth of citizenship values and practices in the school and the community; On the other, it is not clear to what extent children are able to have a say in how these
programs are constructed and implemented, nor how deeply these programs promote citizenship within the context of both rights and responsibilities.

Comparatively, many Ontario schools have taken up co-curricular and extra-curricular programming through the Future Aces program, launched almost two decades ago by the Herbert H. Carnegie Foundation (Herbert H. Carnegie Foundation, 2007). The Future Aces creed forms the basis for this program, written by Carnegie, who played in the Quebec Hockey League in the mid-20th Century and was denied the opportunity to play nationally because he was Black. The ‘ACES’ creed encourages children to integrate a system of values and perseverance into their lives, based on characteristics including action, positive attitude, co-operation, confidence, education, service, and sportsmanship. Several Ontario schools have integrated the Future Aces creed into the life and work of their school (Herbert H. Carnegie Foundation, 2007b). Curiously, while the spirit of this program stems from Carnegie's vision of an inclusive society in which any person can follow their interests and skills, like the character education programming, these values are also framed in the context of students learning to augment their individual behaviour and 'taking responsibility,' and may even be implemented alongside character education activities (Wiltshire Elementary School, 2007). The Future Aces approach does appear to emphasize a ‘positive’ approach to values education, where children’s constructive and self-esteem building actions are rewarded through achievement certificates, scholarships, and similar forms of recognition.

In combination with the provincial curriculum, we can see that there is an emphasis on citizenship within the school in the context of individual responsibility and 'good' behaviour, directed largely towards community altruism and individual self-control. However, the rising interest in character education and similar programming also identifies that, while tensions between the educational authority of the school and the family are
persistent, there is a desire for both behaviour and values to be taught in support of the work of the school, as an integrated part of curricular and extra-curricular programming. This, we may see from Howe and Covell (2005), is the exact sort of opportunity that would allow for citizenship rights to be taught, using the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. There is a desire amongst Ontario educators for children to understand themselves as responsible citizens within the school who learn to make decisions based on a democratically beneficial set of values. It is clear that "a globally agreed upon values base in which to contextualize citizenship education facilitates both learning and teaching…The Convention provides a common principle, the need to promote and protect the rights of all children…When this principle is made explicit, children are provided a general context into which they can link and examine what they are taught.” (Howe and Covell, 2005: 115).

While language around children's citizenship is common in contemporary educational curriculum and policy, and in local school initiatives in Ontario such as 'character education', there is no guarantee that these concepts of citizenship are grounded in a language of both rights and responsibilities. Indeed, citizenship as sited within the school emerges in contemporary Ontario schools as a concept related more to children's moral behaviour and future workplace participation, than to their self-understanding and empowerment as rights-bearing decision-makers. We can understand this not only through the province-wide emphasis on student achievement standards and global competition, but also from the multiply-scaled and sited nature of education within both the school and the home. One might argue that this does indeed constitute a form of children's 'active citizenship,' but one which is in the end quite different from that which is advocated by contemporary children’s rights scholars.
Absent from broad discussions within the curriculum documents of student, parent, teacher, and administrator 'roles' in education is any language about student rights or choice. There is an emphasis on the responsibility of each group involved in the school – parents, administrators, teachers, and eventually students - which largely revolves around the expectations embedded into the curriculum itself, with little explicit attention paid to individual student choice. Moreover, despite continued scholarly emphasis on citizenship education as a product of curricular programming (Heater, 2004) it is clear that we cannot understand citizenship as it is learned within the school merely by considering the content and articulation of public school curriculum. Citizenship continues to be discursively constructed as the broad purpose of the work of the school and is not strictly linked to curricular or co-curricular activities.

**Educating for Citizenship**

Two months before the recent Ontario election in which the McGuinty Liberal government was re-elected to a majority, the Ministry of Education released a statement pledging a further $309 Million ‘investment’ in Ontario schools and school boards (August 14/07 - OME). Outlining his government’s progress over the past four years, McGuinty advocated further funding for teacher hiring, vice-principal support, support for rural schools, and school maintenance, among others, arguing in conclusion that "when we get public education right, we get the best citizens, the best workers, the best jobs and the best society" (ibid). Citizenship, then, is offered as the end result of investments in public education. Moreover, if it is possible to have ‘best’ citizens, such statements as this recent one by the Premier invite definitions of citizenship which are differentiated by categories, or degrees of better or worse. Although this statement on citizenship is only one at the end of
many more detailed statements on education in Ontario, the implications are significant. More often then not, they assume citizenship as a natural consequence of an ideally functioning public school system.

As we have seen in the examples above, citizenship as it is articulated through public education in Ontario is primarily contextualized as a globally-strategic imperative positioning children as future citizens whose most significant identities at school are constructed through their education for future workplace participation. While the Ministry for Education does invoke citizenship directly as part of the work of the school, this appears in a limited capacity at best, and in fact policy and practice related to safety at school has been identified to limit the rights of students at school. Citizenship as it relates to the work of the school in Ontario is at best tenuously related to a citizenship of children’s rights, and instead discursively constructs the ideal child citizen as an individual who is responsible, well-behaved, and who lives up to standards of achievement worthy of investment by the state.

Calls by Howe and Covell (2005) and Stasiulis (1999) for children to be recognized as active-rights bearing citizens thus finds limited potential in the current Ontario public education system, as we may instead observe that educational policy, curriculum, and non-curricular programming situates children predominantly as future adult citizens who learn to participate in their local school and community as responsible, self-disciplined citizens. Isin and Turner have argued that citizenship continues to be relevant as a concept tied to the nation-state as a guarantor of citizenship rights. Similarly, Cohen has argued that full citizenship – and children’s citizenship in particular – must be advanced in terms of national membership and belonging, since “without adequate national citizenship, children’s citizenship will remain grounded in abstract guarantees created by well-meaning but powerless groups of adults” (2005, 223). However, children’s citizenship as it is articulated
through contemporary educational discourses in Ontario reveals a limited context for children to understand themselves as rights-bearing citizens or as child citizen participants in the Canadian nation-state. Canadian citizens, by contrast, appear through the curriculum as adult individuals who possess civic rights and responsibilities which children do not share.

Citizenship education is instead much more likely to be articulated in depth through extra-curricular and co-curricular programming such as ‘character education’, through which citizenship is discursively framed as the practice of responsibilities, and self-disciplined behaviour. Furthermore, these expectations are set against the backdrop of provincial achievement standards and the mandates of policies which privilege ‘good’, successful behaviour and the authority of adults in the school environment. Only within the Social Studies curriculum and within provincial safety mandates, is children’s citizenship identified in the context of both rights and responsibilities – in different, and limited ways, while reinforcing citizenship as a future, adult concept, to which children’s current responsible behaviour is linked.

In Chapters 4 and 5 I will discuss the results of my research with teachers and children in Grades 5 through 8 across three different school boards in Ontario. As we shall see from these teacher interviews and the interactive work with children, teachers and children who work in and experience the local school on a daily basis perceive citizenship and education in some ways very compatibly with the picture drawn by the Ontario Ministry of Education. However, their reports also provide much greater nuance and depth in furthering our knowledge of how education and citizenship are linked within the site of the local public school.
Chapter Four: Teaching Citizenship

The overarching goal for this research is to generate an understanding of how public schools function as contemporary sites of learned citizenship. We may observe from the discussion in Chapter 3 that, in a curricular sense, citizenship is contextualized most explicitly by the Grade 5 Social Studies activities which address government in Canada, immigration, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. However, broader statements from the Ministry of Education underscore the school as a site of competitive, standardized learning and achievement, where children learn to prepare for their participation in a global economy and society as adult citizens. There is only brief explicit attention paid to a definition of what citizenship is, or how children themselves may understand themselves as citizens in the present day.

We may then draw some conclusions about provincial discursive trends, which influence how citizenship is articulated through the public school. However, given the opportunity for local schools and individual teachers to interpret the curriculum in their classrooms in different ways, or to supplement the curriculum with additional co-curricular or extra-curricular programming, it would be difficult to draw conclusions from the provincial scale alone. Public schools function as sites which are subject to institutional governance and also as local places defined by community relationships, interests, and needs.

In this chapter I will first discuss the methods by which I approached the interviews with elementary school teachers for this portion of my research findings, as well as identify some positionality issues which are particularly relevant for this project within school space. I will then continue in the rest of the chapter to discuss my substantive findings which resulted from these interviews, in turn engaging with what definitions of citizenship teachers take as their starting point for understanding citizenship within the school. I then discuss
how teachers perceive citizenship playing out at school through curricular work in large part as a form of supplementary education, in a non-curricular context through school-wide activities, clubs, and fundraising, and how citizenship fostered at school is viewed often in contrast with expectations emerging from the home, or with the provincially-scaled expectations of the Ontario Ministry of Education. Overall, this chapter reveals the significant local role played by teachers as educators which is only in part guided by curricular work.

**Learning from Teachers: Research Methods**

Findings in Chapter 3 reveal how citizenship is articulated broadly through public documents by the Ontario Ministry of Education, which governs educational curriculum and policy across the province and therefore significantly influences children’s educational content and its justification. However, while governing curriculum and policy carry a great deal of influence in the work of the school, we cannot assume that local actors in all schools interpret or work with these in the same way. In order to understand citizenship within the school from the perspective of those working locally, in this phase of my research I conducted one-on-one semi-structured interviews with elementary school teachers of Grades 5-8, in 3 school boards in Ontario. Interviewing different actors in children’s spaces has been often used as a way of illuminating how children's spaces are used, controlled, and discursively constructed: McKendrick et al (2000), for example, interviewed adult and child members of families as part of a multi-method project investigating children’s commercial play spaces; Aitken (2000), has shown through interviews with parents and caregivers how the space of the home functions as a contested space of power relations that influence children, as well as a dynamic space of gender identity formation and bounded space of play.
Matthews (1995a, 1995b) has used interviews with young children to understand children's specific local geographies of urban space outside of the home.

Interviews of different formats have become common across various fields of human geography and the social sciences, as a method of investigating personal experiences as well as group dynamics. Dunn identifies four main strengths of interviews as research methods, including to collect “a diversity of opinion and experiences,” keeping in mind that “interviews provide insights into the differing opinions or debates within a group, but they can also reveal consensus on some issues” (2000: 52), and that insights gained from interviews can be used to fill a gap in knowledge which other observational or quantitative methods cannot provide. I identify strongly with these motivations, and conducted interviews with teachers as a companion method to my textual analysis in Chapter 3 and my work with children as reported in Chapter 5. Winchester has argued that as a research method interviews “encapsulate[e] the emotions, the discourses and begin to hint at the structures, the complexity” of the social worlds in which interview participants are embedded (1999: 65). Likewise, I employ these interviews as a means of accessing knowledge of educational programming which takes place within school spaces, through teachers whose professional role affords them situated experience of this programming.

School space is by and large managed and controlled by adults, both provincially and locally. Interviews with locally-situated teachers thus complements the examination of provincial administration in an overall mixed-method approach.

Since teachers are key figures in engaging with the very curriculum and provincialized standards I discussed in Chapter 3, and work through these expectations with the children in their classroom every day, teachers are ideal interview participants for this portion of my research. These interviews followed a semi-structured format (Dunn, 2000:
61), wherein I was guided by a set of common questions used in each interview, but also allowed for the interview participants to respond into more detail on some questions according to their interest. It was common for participants to respond to one question while in fact providing an answer appropriate for another, at the same time, therefore I was mostly concerned that all topics in the interview script were covered during the conversation, than with delivering the questions according to a regimented schedule and order.

I conducted this portion of the research and the children’s activity sessions in schools in three different school boards, rather than only visiting schools in a single board. My goal was to complete interviews with at least two teachers in 2-4 schools, in at least 3 school boards, or a minimum total of 12-24 interviews. Between February and November 2006, I conducted a total of 23 interviews with elementary school teachers of between Grade 5 and 8, in 8 schools across 3 school boards. I had planned, and was able to, include the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) as one of these school boards, as Toronto is not only the largest metropolitan area in Canada and is composed of an extremely diverse population, but is also the largest school board in Ontario and Canada with over 180,000 elementary students alone (TDSB, 2007). I also conducted interviews within two other sites: Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, which serves the recently amalgamated City of Hamilton and is composed of urban and suburban sites; and a third, predominantly rural school board which I will refer to as Board C, with teachers in one of the few large town centres. I have chosen not to name this third school board, since the number of towns and the number of schools in those towns are small enough that naming the Board would challenge its anonymity in this project.

My interview script was originally designed with the intention of conducting one-hour interviews using eight questions, and a trial run before I began the actual interviews
revealed that one hour provided a more than sufficient amount of time, and in fact teachers would be more likely to fit in an interview of 30-45 minutes than a full hour. A trial run with a non-participating teacher also brought into focus that the interview participant’s perception of what citizenship is may be different from mine or other participants. Therefore, I decided to include a question about the participant’s definition of citizenship (See Appendix A – Interview Script). This was then helpful to focus later question in the interview on what kind of school activities related to that citizenship concept, although it was necessary for me to deliver the question in an way which advised that this question was helpful for the rest of the questions that would follow.

I specifically recruited elementary school teachers of between Grades 5 and 8, since this was the age range of the children I wished to work with in the subsequent phase of my research. All teachers who volunteered their classes for the children’s activity portion of the research also participated in the one-on-one interview, and in fact the teachers whose students participated were in the majority: I conducted 23 teacher interviews and later would work with 18 groups of students. In my recruitment, I first obtained permission from representatives of each of the three school boards, which in all cases involved forwarding a copy of my interview script and a description of my research project. Confirmation to proceed took between less than one month (in the case of the single rural school board) and almost four months (in the case of Toronto District School Board). I then sent letters to school principals in each school board (See Appendix B), outlining the nature of my research and that I was interested in working with both students and teachers, and followed these letters with telephone calls. In the case of Hamilton-Wentworth, the board also offered to support my search for participants with an email message to principals across the board. Interview participants also filled out an informed consent letter (Appendix C).
Despite a variety of efforts to invite research participation, and undergoing the process of school board approval to conduct the research, ultimately the teachers with whom I conducted interviews were the ones who chose to participate. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that this participant sample is representative of a portion of the Ontario teacher population who is already interested in citizenship concepts and willing to consider links between public education and citizenship. It is therefore also reasonable to assume that there are other subsets of the teacher population which, had they been interviewed, would have drawn fewer or different comparisons between education and citizenship. Alternately, it is worth considering (as is also presented in some of the interview findings below) that teachers’ time on school grounds is already filled with a great many responsibilities, and my interviews presented further demands on their time. More interviews might have provided further nuance to these issues, however this was less realistic given constraints of time and access. My research results below are thus ultimately limited to the findings revealed by those who self-selected as interview participants.

Still, as Appendix F shows, the group of teachers who chose to be interviewed represent a diversity of past and present teaching experience, ranging from new teachers in their first year to some who have been teaching for more than thirty years. On average overall, interview participants spoke from experience of twelve and a half years of working as a teacher, with participating teachers in Hamilton-Wentworth likely to be slightly less experienced and those from Toronto and Board C likely to be slightly more experienced. Both male and female teachers were represented in all three boards, as was a variety of curriculum specialization. Although approximately half of the participants (11 of 23) were teachers of Grade 5 Core Curriculum (which includes the Social Sciences strand), all Grades between 5 and 8 were represented as planned.
Additionally, the three participating school boards represent three slightly different social and cultural cross-sections of Ontario. Appendix D shows key population characteristics for the census tracts within which each school site is located. For each of the eight participating school sites, this set of data identifies general population change, residence type, language, immigration and citizenship status, employment rates and education, as compared with Ontario and Canada. Indeed, these figures vary between each census tract, supporting my goal to visit schools in a variety of neighbourhoods. We may observe for example that Board C is characterized by a less diverse population than Hamilton-Wentworth or Toronto (only 6.8% identify as immigrants, 98.6% speak English at home), and also by a slightly lower employment rate (54.6%) and educational attainment (lower rates than Ontario average for High School diploma and for University degree).

The three school sites in Hamilton-Wentworth exhibit a variety of residency characteristics (HW1 is situated in a neighbourhood housed almost equally by houses and apartments, whereas HW2 and HW3 are housed almost entirely in houses), a higher degree of immigrant and language diversity than Board C, and varying degrees of educational attainment across the three census tracts in Hamilton-Wentworth. The four census tracts under consideration in Toronto are, perhaps unsurprisingly, characterized by a much higher degree of diversity than the other two boards and in some cases than the provincial average: Three of the four Toronto census tracts show approximately 10% of the population speaks a non-official language at home, increasing to almost 50% in the fourth; There is a greater trend overall towards residency in apartments than in single houses, and a higher proportion of immigrants reside in the Toronto census tracts than in any of the sites in Hamilton-Wentworth.

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2 Statistics Canada defines Census Tracts as “small, relatively stable geographic areas that usually have a population of 2,500 to 8,000” (Statistics Canada, 2006b), and are usually located in Census Metropolitan
Wentworth or Board C. As will be apparent in the interview findings discussed below, I found that many of the participating teachers had a high awareness of similar trends in their community, commenting anecdotally on the diversity and housing characteristics of the neighbourhoods in which their students reside.

In examining the findings from these interviews, I conducted a discursive analysis of the written transcripts, comparing and contrasting each according to major themes emerging from the discussion, rather than the use of content analysis or explicit coding. I compare this to thematic discursive analysis I employed in Chapter 3, where I was particularly attentive to discussion of how citizenship was defined, through what kind of participation, as well as to how the interview participants viewed the role of the school. I considered key words and themes which were revealed during the interviews, such as relevance to Canada/nation-state, citizenship rights or responsibilities, flexibility, community orientation, and so on. In doing so, I was informed by major themes within citizenship theory (as outlined in Chapter 2), and examined each transcript for key words and phrases suggestive of recognized typologies of citizenship, as represented by Table 1 (re-presented below as in Chapter 2). This typology is not intended as a suggestion that citizenship theory may only be distilled into these two distinct streams, or that there is no overlap between them, but rather as a framework to guide my analysis. I then approached my analysis of the written transcripts with attention to these key words and general themes.

As is clear from the discussion in Chapters 2 and 3, citizenship is a concept which relates to a complex array of ideas, relating to governance, identity, rights, responsibilities, the nation-state, or self-regulation. Scholars have alternately advanced citizenship as liberal-
Table 1: Typology of Citizenship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizenship theory</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Neo-liberal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key words</strong></td>
<td>Key role of nation-state, rights and responsibilities, autonomy, group membership, community Legal rights</td>
<td>Competition, responsible citizenship, marketization, voluntarism, strategic nation-state, re-scaling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of School</strong></td>
<td>Civics education, school as site of respectful interaction, school as public site, micro-democracy.</td>
<td>School as site of preparation for adult participation. Education for responsible individual behaviour. Role of private sphere emphasized: families, communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rights</strong></td>
<td>Nation-state as mediator of citizenship rights, citizen members possess equal social, civic, and political rights. Equity redistribution to mediate inequalities.</td>
<td>Individualized rights, entitlement, performance of responsibilities. Equality through same treatment of individuals regardless of social position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Difference</strong></td>
<td>Equitable distribution of rights and responsibilities, some recognition of group difference. Integration of group rights within a multicultural nation-state.</td>
<td>Delegitimization of group-based claims to social justice; social differentiation. Flexible citizenship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Citizenship</strong></td>
<td>Empowerment through knowledge of citizenship rights, goals of democratic and public participation. Children learn decision-making process. Adults and children can be active citizens.</td>
<td>Responsible and altruistic individual behaviour. Private sector engagement through voluntarism. Community involvement. Adults and children can be active citizens.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

democratic, neo-liberal, active, passive, rights-based, identity-based, as part of the nation-state, as part of a global, seemingly borderless world, and so on. Some of these concepts also overlap, and while we may observe tendencies within broad provincial educational discourse documented through the same census data within Community Profiles (Statistics Canada, 2006).
in Ontario towards a neo-liberal vision of citizenship, at the curricular level there is still at least some tendency to associate citizenship with formal adult membership and participation in the nation-state. I was strongly informed by these two trends when I began my interviews with elementary school teachers in early 2006, and was likewise mindful of scholarly calls for recognition of children’s active citizenship (Howe and Covell, 2005; Stasiulis, 1999).

By now children’s geographers have become highly aware of issues of power relations and positionality inherent in work with children (for example Jones, 2001; Holloway and Valentine, 2000; McDowell, 2001) human geographers and feminist geographers in particular are increasingly aware of issues of representation and positionality which are inherent in research in ‘the field’ (England, 1994; Madge et al 1997; Nast, 1994). England in particular has argued that “the everyday lives of the research are doubly mediated by our presence and their response to our presence” (1994: 85), and it would be difficult to assume otherwise of my presence in school space. On several occasions during my interviews, the participants would express concern that they were providing me with the ‘right’ answer to my questions, and despite my reassurances that there was no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ way to respond, such comments indicated to me their desire to contribute in a way which was helpful. My presence in the classroom almost certainly altered the course of their day in each case, particularly when their interviews were followed by a session with their students in the classroom. One teacher (TD1-01) confided that she looked up a definition of citizenship in a dictionary before I had arrived, revealing her interest in appearing knowledgeable and prepared for the interview questions. Although other interviewees did not reveal this same kind of preparation, I speculate nonetheless that my presence compelled them to consider citizenship much more acutely than they might have on an everyday basis.
As I discussed briefly in Chapter 2, geographers have been particularly instrumental in revealing how the institutional nature of the school contribute to the social construction of childhood through time and spaces (the home, the school, spaces of play and recreation), and how these spaces achieve this status through their operation and development by adults. As Gallagher and Fusco have noted, these qualities have led particularly in the present day to the re-articulation of school spaces through disciplinary technologies, or “strategies of power and control over people and spaces and the rationalization of techniques to serve that end” (2006: 303). While this has been observed in a historical context particularly in Victorian-era British reform schools in which “internal design was also seen as crucial to the influence of individual and collective behaviour” (Ploszajska, 1994), such strategies may take the contemporary form of spatial organization of students’ desks, procedures of supervision during classroom time and recreational time at recess, distribution and return of permission slips, regulation of visitors and use of identification tags, and even the use of visual surveillance equipment and security scanners.

Although the schools I visited tended to employ such strategies as sign-in procedures and visitor identification tags, rather than visual surveillance or security scanners (which might have been present in other Ontario schools which I was not invited to), it is nonetheless true that my presence within the school was still that of an adult body inside school space, and therefore readily perceived as a normal figure of potential authority. This is of particular consequence to working with children in school space, as I will also discuss in Chapter 5, however my outsider status as an adult involved in research certainly defined my terms of participation with anyone in the schools. While I belong to the field of education and this might afford me some common ground with the teacher interviewees, and while the interviewees participated out of personal interest, “even where differences in a field are
small, because we are positioned simultaneously in a number of fields we are always, at some level, somewhere, in a state of betweenness, negotiating various degrees and kinds of difference” (Nast, 1994: 57). As an outsider to the school and potentially evaluative individual, I may assume these teachers’ reports likely present only partial ‘stories’ of what occurs during school time and in school space.

In most cases the participants gave up preparatory time during the day to speak with me, and thus I developed a high appreciation for the teachers’ contributions to my research, since their already limited time was further limited. It has been a challenge for me to remain entirely distanced from these findings, as my respect for their willingness to give up their professional time to contribute also causes me reluctance to approach their contributions with the same skepticism one might approach a large and often faceless government institution. However, I have nonetheless attempted to provide a critical examination of these findings in a way which contributes to existing citizenship theory. While it would be impossible to compare the teachers’ comments here with their actual classroom practice, my intent here is not to expose any flawed self-representation, but rather to consider how the perspectives of these individuals working within the school shape pervasive notions of citizenship. Indeed, Rose in particular has noted that while human geographers have come to defend reflexivity as a desirable as a way of situating knowledge, they in turn acknowledge “the difficulty of actually doing it” (1997: 306). In presenting my findings here I have taken care to include direct quotations from the interview transcripts themselves, rather than simply distilling the transcripts into summary points, as a way of representing the teachers’ voices.

In analyzing these interview findings I was guided by the same body of citizenship theory as in my examination of provincial texts in Chapter 3. Although one-on-one
interviews with teachers allow access to such site-specific knowledge and experiences as those associated with school spaces, the findings which result are by no means all-encompassing, nor are they entirely unproblematic. As I have mentioned above, the teachers who participated in interviews are those who chose to be involved in the research, and it is therefore represent at best a partial representation of the perspectives of Ontario elementary school teachers. It is also worth noting that in although some participants provided comments which were overtly critical of the Ontario Ministry of Education’s current mandate, and speak briefly to the tensions which exist between local teachers and the province, such reflections were not commonplace for every teacher. I gained an impression of these teachers overall as a committed set of actors within the Ontario school system, who value the time they spend at their jobs and desire their students to achieve academic success as well as grow as individuals through expanded knowledge and learning experiences. I view these findings below as a valuable collection of discussion envisioning how citizenship is and could be linked with education in Ontario public schools.

**Defining Citizenship**

In Chapter 2 I discussed citizenship theory of the past half-century, identifying that citizenship has historically been theorized in terms of liberal democratic theory (for example Kymlicka, 2001; Marshall, 1950) tied to the nation-state, and that children’s citizenship literature has likewise called for recognition of children as present-day citizens with both rights and responsibilities which should be recognized and protected by the governance of the nation-state (Cohen, 2005; Howe and Covell, 2005). Still, current trends characterized as neo-liberal citizenship acknowledge the many ways in which citizenship is characterized by an individualized experience of responsible action, de-regulation of state governance, and
increasing reliance on the private or volunteer sectors as opposed to public governance (Basu, 2004; Mitchell, 2001, 2003). Moreover, children’s citizenship scholars continue to address the failings of both these bodies of theory for accounting for children as present-day citizens and not merely human ‘becomings’ or future adults (Cockburn, 1998; Cohen, 2004). Thus, ‘active’ citizenship theory which advocates the empowerment of children’s rights within nation-state governance has advanced children’s rights education as a solution (Covell and Howe, 1999; Stasiulis, 1999), particularly in response to the comparatively futurist orientation of contemporary trends advancing standardization and measurable achievement as markers of responsible citizenship (Faulks, 2006; Sacks, 2005).

Given the diversity of ways in which citizenship may be interpreted in the present-day, in my interviews with elementary school teachers it was significant to first generate an understanding of how the participating teachers defined the context of citizenship. As the most explicit curriculum-based discussion (OME, 2005a) of citizenship aligns with the levels of government within Canada, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, for example, I anticipated that teachers would likewise express connections between citizenship and membership and belonging in the Canadian nation-state. It is indeed true that teachers across all three school boards considered citizenship generally in this more liberal-democratic sense – although not exclusively - as an experience which connotes membership and participation in the nation-state, and that this involves both rights and responsibilities. For example, the following quotations represent citizenship relative to the Canadian nation-state, the interplay of rights and responsibilities, and obeying laws:

I think it’s those things that we maybe, think and believe and do…that make us a part of a country…a country that we want to be a part of… (C1-03)

the interplay of the individual with society…and the acceptance of for every right you have that there is a corresponding responsibility…That’s basically it, rights and responsibilities… (HW1-01)
It’s…living in a country. And it’s a country, it’s where you’ve decided to lay down your roots. And so you have a steady job and you start your family. And this is where you intend to live, for the rest of your life.” … “And, so you have to…of course, obey laws, and ah…you have certain rights and responsibilities (TD4-02).

When first asked about citizenship, many teachers readily offered comments such as these, denoting attachment to, receiving rights within, and having responsibilities in and to the country of one’s birth or belonging. There is an impulse to identify citizenship with the experience of a law-abiding member of a nation-state, who lives with a balance of both rights and responsibilities. There is a great deal of resonance here with Smith’s comments that citizenship refers to “relationships between individuals and the community (or State) which impinges on their lives because of who they are and where they live” (1989: 147), as many teachers explain how citizenship revolves around how individuals lives are governed and mediated by the nation-state, and a willingness to theorize citizenship in a political sense of belonging to a discrete national territory. Several teachers also emphasized pseudo-democratic practices which they used in their classroom, such as small-group work in which the students choose which novel to read, or allowing them to vote on which charity to whom they should donate their classroom fundraising (TD2-01). Although these are admittedly limited actions and are still ultimately governed by the decisions of the adult authority figures in the classroom, they represent efforts to work with the classroom as a democracy in microcosm. One teacher described such activities in her individual classroom:

we had a government and they had a group in charge of making sure that the kids were throwing their garbage in the garbage cans, and then we had a little crew that went to the rooms…the children did that most often. And we had our own Prime Minister… (TD1-02)

Here, the students mirror the governance structures of adult citizenship in the nation-state, while also enacting responsible behaviour which betters the school environment as a whole.
and fosters respect for the local environment. Citizenship is represented here as an identity demonstrated through structured participation. Similarly, student councils were frequently identified during the interviews as an opportunity for active student participation in the life of the school, although teachers also identify that it is also somewhat limited in the scope of activities and decision-making. While not every school holds a student council – elementary schools which include intermediate grades through to Grade 8, for example are more likely – it is considered an opportunity for students to express their voice:

I do student council, I think student council is really important for citizenship within the school…Giving them a voice in what happens…Even though it’s very limited… (HW1-01)

The same teacher described an example of organized extra-curricular activities that likewise encourage the children in the school to interact cooperatively with each other through programming supported by the student council:

Student council is for 4 and up, so it was the 4-and-ups who were voting, and…while the 7 and 8s were away last week and it was Easter, the Grade 4-5-6 members of student council decided they were going to make an easter egg hunt for the littles…And they organized… - I bought the stuff – they organized and helped put it together in one of the rooms that was empty last week, and ah, supported the littles through, so I thought that was a good…I keep trying to teach them, outwards… (HW1-01)

These examples show a willingness to view citizenship at school as inclusive, participatory, and in the interest of the public good. In contrast to more recent citizenship theory contextualizing the exclusionary nature of citizenship (Isin, 2002; Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Yuval-Davis, 1999), many interview participants also emphasized the inclusiveness of citizenship, and the benefits that a citizen is afforded through a potentially empowering democratic society. These include the freedom to have a job and a family, the privilege to vote, the ability to express one’s self and be able to identify a sense of belonging with one’s nation of citizenship. This compares to modern interpretations of liberal citizenship models
which conceive the citizen “as the bearer of civil, political and social rights” who contracts “with the state, for the protection and legal entitlement of these rights in return for allegiance and loyalty to the state” (Moosa-Mitha, 2005), and forms the basis of many of the interviewees’ assumptions about citizenship. Indeed, few interview participants associated citizenship with exclusionary experiences, or with issues of social justice related to identities of gender, race, or age. However, one interviewee in particular in Toronto offered the perspective that while a citizen is ideally an empowered member of a community, citizenship is also a privilege enjoyed by…in inequitable ways, inherently. Whether it be systematic or whatever. So citizenship means recognizing that and working towards the larger values for the society, ahm…in a participatory type of way, and an empowered type of way and a non-violent way. [...] Some people conflate citizenship with democracy. But I would say citizenship falls into the…where, each person regardless of their age or actual citizenship or their gender, class, sexuality…if they live in the country and are part of it, then they have rights. Whether or not they are an actual citizen of that country. (TD3-01)

While emphasizing that systematic inequities exist within a community of citizens, in terms of the distribution of power and privileges, this teacher also argues that citizens should be characterized as individuals who recognize these inequities and work to change them. This perspective grounds citizenship in concepts of social justice and equity, and approaches the model of difference-centred social justice which contends that “citizens occupying multiple subject positions such as class and gender and race come together in solidarity to resist a common oppression” (Moosa-Mitha, 2005: 372). This interviewee thus offers a contrast between “actual” citizenship, and actions which genuinely ensure individuals’ rights, needs, and claims to equity are justified regardless of whether they have been formally recognized as citizens. In this sense, formal citizenship status represents a privileged position, in contrast to that of individuals living inside the nation-state but without official
claims to citizenship, and brings to light many contemporary realities of inequity. While such a social justice based perspective bears a great deal of relevance in Canada as an immigrant society in the 21st Century, few other teachers expressed similar thoughts.

Citizenship is arguably an extremely broad concept that many Canadians may not engage with a great deal of thought over the course of their daily lives. Another Toronto teacher expressed this quite clearly in her interview, while also commenting on her association between citizenship and the law, government, and immigration, similar to the ideas represented in the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum:

I immediately think of immigration. I don't know why, but I do…Ahm, I think of government, I think of levels of government, democracy, stewardship…ahm…a lot of things come to mind. I did actually look it up…a definition on the board…[gestures to board near doorway]
Oh, is that from the dictionary?
That's from our dictionary, yeah…So the right of a person to be a citizen of a certain country. So that's pretty general…In the curriculum, it's aspects of citizenship and government in Canada for Grade 5…So we talk about what it means to be a Canadian and that kind of thing. I know in some classes they actually learn the Oath of Citizenship… (TD1-01)

For this teacher, the meaning of citizenship refers to the formal structures of governance that support citizenship experiences, and she compared this definition to the curriculum material in Grade 5 Social Studies through which students learn about the responsibilities of different scales of government, law, and citizen rights and responsibilities. The school had received visiting speakers in the field of law and had also undertaken field trips to Queen's Park, and classroom activities included a mock courtroom trial. Indeed, as I will discuss later in Chapter 5, one of the most common perspectives on citizenship among children across the three school boards was an understanding that citizenship relates to the experience of the law and public systems of criminal justice. This perspective does present citizenship as something related specifically to Canada and Canadian governance, and associated concepts of democracy and the law.
For many interview participants, the question of how they define citizenship was a difficult one at first. There was a tendency for teachers to clarify citizenship as a liberal-democratic construct associated with formal belonging to and participation in the nation-state, reminiscent of theory characterizing citizens as people who participate in public political processes, promote public good, exercise responsible personal choices, and cooperate with those different from themselves (Kymlicka, 2002: 294). Interviewees provided a general sense that while citizenship is inherently about an individual's membership in the nation-state, and the accordingly guaranteed rights and responsibilities, citizenship also means participating 'actively' in the school and community, as well as in Canadian society. Formal democratic participation associated with citizenship, such as voting and engagement with civic issues were thus commonly identified, however teachers in all three boards understood citizenship as an individual ‘active’ role in society, albeit in different ways:

- Probably that it's…the right to vote, to be environmentally…let's say, proactive. And, sense of...you should vote, you should participate in your community. I think that's...how I see citizenship. (TD1-01)

- I think it's being responsible. It's about...doing your part? And not expecting...It's an active role. You're not expecting that other people will do things for you. And, you make things happen as an individual. (HW1-02)

- Citizenship is, ahm, in my mind is what you can do for others. Ahm...So you're not focused on yourself, you're focused on your community, and helping others...And that's basically how I would sum it up, helping others. (C1-01)

In the first two quotations, citizenship participation relates to activity as pro-activity: doing what needs to be done for the democratic betterment of one's community or broader society, rather than passively waiting and doing as one is told. In the third, citizenship as an active experience relates specifically to altruism helping other people locally, in a way that is beneficial to other individuals and personally unselfish. Similarly, another Hamilton area teacher saw citizenship as
being a positive member of your community, but not only the community, extending...to your family, your school, your local area...your province, your country...being a valuable part of that community, a contributing member of that community. A contributing member. (HW1-03)

The fact that these ideas around being a pro-active, contributing, valuable member of one’s local community as well as the province and country, begins to construct the ideal of the ‘good’, active citizen, who acts for the public good out of concern for their community and country. While we find evidence here of citizenship as ‘active’ citizenship, this does not necessarily conflate with the active citizenship which Stasiulis (1999) and Covell and Howe (2005) advocate as a rights-based form of empowerment and decision-making. Indeed, so far we may observe a heavier emphasis on citizenship responsibility rather than rights, although at this point such citizenship responsibilities are easily viewed as part of Canadian citizenship, supportive of democratic ideals.

However, as became clear in further discussion, it is not necessarily true that ‘good’ citizenship is the same as Canadian citizenship, and indeed much of what constitutes good citizenship in fact relates more to individual altruism and responsible action. Such concepts were particularly applicable to discussion relating to citizenship and the school specifically, as I will identify in more detail over the course of this chapter. It will be also be evident in Chapter 5 that many children within the school share this perspective to a certain extent and use the term ‘good citizen’ to engage generally with citizenship concepts. Briefly, we may observe how citizenship emerges as a simultaneously nationally-constituted and community-oriented focus of values and respectful behaviour. It is this aspect of ‘values’ education which many teachers relate directly to the work of the school. One Toronto teacher found this extremely relevant, since

All the time I think we’re teaching values...and that’s where stewardship comes in, values about being a good citizen, taking care of your neighbour, being friendly with the kids you sit with, and on a school level, being
respectful of kids on the playground. I see all that as good citizenship, too.
(TD1-01)

Another rural teacher characterizes citizenship in this way as ‘good’ citizenship, or the process of students becoming ‘good citizens’ as something associated broadly with the work of the school, considering that students “show good citizenship” (C1-04) as they proceed through their years at school. Such practices as personal responsibility, respect, tolerance and so on are not incompatible with liberal-democratic citizenship theory, since “without citizens who possess these qualities, democracies become difficult to govern” (Kymlicka, 2002: 294).

However, we may in turn ask whether it is possible for a person to be a citizen but not a ‘good’ citizen. The label of ‘good’ citizenship certainly invites a corresponding category of ‘bad’ citizenship; Here we may observe delination of not simply ‘non-citizens’, which is a term familiar to citizenship scholarship (for example Hubbard, 2001, analyzing the moral underpinnings of citizenship and the creation and exclusion of non-citizens along the lines of hetero-normative sexuality; or others such as Wiener, 1997, where ‘non-citizen’ denotes a lack of formal citizenship status within a nation-state), but of ‘good citizens’ who present special behaviour which qualifies them as citizens. In this case if ‘good’ citizens exist, it would follow that ‘bad’ citizens would behave in citizen-like ways but do not do this as well as people denoted as ‘good’ citizens. This in turn begins to situate citizenship as an inequitable or unevenly experienced state of being, as a result of individual shortcomings in skills, values or behaviour, implying that ‘good’ citizens do more than others.

Additionally, as I will also discuss further in this chapter, citizenship – and ‘good citizenship’ - at school relates strongly to the nature of the school as a site locally embedded in community relationships, global interests, as well as provincial curriculum and programming mandates. A recent British study (Halpern et al, 2002) revealed the myriad non-curricular forms of citizenship education which take place outside of the
curriculum, including student governing councils, fundraising, and student clubs, and these interviews with teachers confirm a similar range of activities taking place in Ontario. Participation in fundraising efforts and community or international projects were considered a significant aspect of citizenship in relation to the life and work of the school, in the sense that this participation helps children to learn about the needs of other countries, and develops their sense of social responsibility and ‘good citizenship’ beyond the school itself. For example, one teacher explained how her class sent letters to New Orleans, and a signed Canadian flag to military members stationed in Afghanistan (TD1-01). These are considered not simply citizenship-oriented activities, but ‘good’ citizenship activities, conflating citizenship with a specific kind of valuable behaviour while at the same time positioning children as potential citizens who do participate as citizens at multiple scales of influence, albeit in a limited way.

Citizenship thus holds a dual quality, of the assumed, taken-for-granted nature of citizenship as membership in a community or nation, but also as an extra, active component of social life which is valued over and above membership alone. As the Ontario Grade 5 curriculum addresses largely civic and political aspects of citizenship in Canada (as discussed in Chapter 3), such local efforts as these might well be viewed as filling a gap left in the curriculum. As we will see further in the next section, teachers relate citizenship to the work of the school in multiple ways, many of which are not directly related to children’s membership in the nation-state or to children’s rights, but do position children as citizens in the present-day through their experiences at school.
Citizenship Education: Ideas and Practice

As I have begun to discuss above, many teachers commonly identify citizenship as a set of relationships between the individual and the nation-state, which mediates citizens’ sense of belonging and the rights and responsibilities they perform as a result of that citizenship. Teachers also introduced the concept of ‘good’ citizenship as part of the work of the school. However, the relationship between citizenship and education is more complex than simply educating children about these qualities of citizenship. Indeed, it is certainly true that many scholars have chosen to examine children's citizenship and the work of public education systems in a global society by considering what students learn. Curriculum content and at what age certain material should be introduced are common points of discussion relating to citizenship and public education (Haigh, 2002; Heater, 2004, for example). It is also true that educational curriculum is often viewed as a method of improving young people’s civic knowledge and participation and other aspects of citizenship identity (as Gilborn has noted in relation to compulsory citizenship education as part of combating racism in Britain; as Eagles and Davidson have observed in relation to voting, 2001; as Howe and Covell have noted in relation to several forms of curriculum-oriented citizenship education for environmental awareness or racism education, etc, 2005; and so on).

I have also been interested to observe that at many times when I am asked about the subject of my research - by research participants or non-participants alike - it is common for them to assume that this will relate in some specific way to certain portions of the curriculum. The Hamilton-Wentworth research approval committee suggested, for example, that I could solicit participation from only Grade 5 teachers and students, since this is the portion of the curriculum considered directly related to citizenship. However, as I discovered through my interviews with elementary school teachers, delivery of curriculum expectations
– as well as teaching with citizenship education in mind – depends greatly on teaching resources which are available locally within individual schools or through individual school boards, as well as the skills of the teacher.

As I discussed in Chapter 3, in the Ontario curriculum, citizenship appears most explicitly within the expectations for Grade 5 Social Studies, where students study aspects of Canadian government, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the historical and legal context of Canadian citizenship. Certainly, these expectations reproduce citizenship as a concept tied to nation-state governance and identity. Still, some comments from the teachers here revealed their perceptions of the broader curriculum standards as having a stronger bearing on citizenship in the neo-liberal context of competition and individual responsibilities. Interestingly, one Toronto teacher registered her impression that the Ontario curriculum espouses ‘good citizenship’ concepts in relation to teaching children to take on responsibilities in a competitive global society:

I think that…within the curriculum as a whole it’s talked about, in the whole…reason for the Ontario curriculum, the curriculum, is to teach children how to be…good citizens….I don't like that sense of, how to have a competitive…place in the world. (TD2-01)

Although many of the interview participants registered their sense of citizenship relating to good citizenship at school, there exists at least a minor amount of skepticism over the value of an Ontario curriculum which prioritizes good, competitive citizenship as the purpose of children’s experiences at school, and this challenges a view of ‘good’ citizenship as simply a reflection of individuals working for the public democratic good.

Moreover, the Social Studies material is often perceived by teachers as limiting or even ‘boring,’ and teachers instead find more value in discussing citizenship in the context of the range of additional programming that happens in the school. In part, this is perceived to be the result of differences between how the curriculum is planned and what happens in the
classroom, and that a divide exists between those who plan the curriculum and those who engage with it in the local classroom:

there’s a whole bunch of people out there writing curriculum …who don’t live in the real life.[…] The Grade 5 curriculum is sort of all based on citizenship and government and…[quieter] It’s boring! (HW1-01)

I take the Ontario curriculum with sort of a grain of salt, because I don’t feel…It bothers me sometimes that people are making decisions and they really aren’t close to ground roots? (C1-01)

These comments reveal some skepticism amongst teachers over whether curriculum expectations are genuinely developed with classrooms and students in mind, and also some uncertainty over how successfully the civic and political dimensions of citizenship may be made accessible to the students. As I argued in Chapter 3, this portion of the Grade 5 curriculum alone tends to associate citizenship with political, adult experiences – for example, voting and different scales of government – and therefore limits curricular opportunities for children to understand themselves as citizens with both rights and responsibilities in the present-day. However, if this portion of the curriculum is also hard to engage children’s interest, then this holds considerable implications for how children are to understand themselves as citizens in the sense of membership in the nation-state, with uncertain alternatives for citizenship education otherwise. This reinforces a citizenship for children which is, as, at best, only partial or semi-citizenship (Cohen, 2005: 222).

Still, another Toronto teacher speculated that she was able to engage their class with this unit successfully, because she delivered it in a way that was participatory for the students and compared the government issues with issues that they understand at school, such as whether chewing gum should be allowed at school:

In fact we went down to Queen’s Park and had a tour, and our, ah, MPP met us there, and ah…it was really interesting, and we had a councilor come in, our area councilor […] then Ontario, and then we had videos for Canada. And I think they have a good sense…of what it means […] And I think, also,
that they enjoyed it. Because somebody said to me, it’s very boring, dry, and I didn’t find it that way at all. We had a big session on chewing gum (TD1-02).

Similarly, another Hamilton area teacher discussed how addressing the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum is a challenge to keep the students interested, but this was made easier by involving the students in the process through mock elections and role play (HW3-02).

Another speculated that a great deal depends on how the teacher is able to deliver the material and help them learn it - a quality which extends beyond the scope of the standardized curriculum:

I think a lot of it has to do with the teacher. I think if the teacher does an interesting project...if they do an interesting project that will get them interested and involved, I think they would be more likely to remember it, like when I do the Confederation unit I get them to do a docudrama, to get them interested...Because history can be pretty dry. (HW2-01)

Thus, despite provincial efforts to ensure that students meet the same educational expectations, these responses from teachers identify that ultimately a great deal of responsibility rests within the local classroom itself to account for how these expectations are met. Such inclusive, interactive methods would seem to encourage students’ retain the civic knowledge which forms a large portion of the curricular ‘citizenship education’. This local variation in turn depends on the relationship between the teacher and students, possibly even more significant in helping students learn and maintain interest, than the material itself.

Moreover, teachers emphasized that this dependence on local efforts to deliver the curriculum in an engaged way, directly affects their ability to “teach citizenship,” as the comments below indicate:

I thought social studies would teach more...And you would think the one subject that would teach citizenship would be social studies, but I'm finding that I constantly have to add stuff... (HW1-02)

I think the school does a better job of making kids well-rounded citizens than the curriculum expectations do, because...the school makes sure that we include...all the sort of, well-rounded things...[clubs, sports,
music]…And if we were to just strictly stick our noses in the curriculum, and try to fill in everything there, then everything else would just get left out. (C1-03)

These comments identify the role teachers play in supplementing the curriculum according to their perspectives on citizenship, and also indicate that citizenship at school is not solely related to the curriculum. Additionally, these teachers identify that the act of teaching is also not strictly defined by working with the curriculum, and one in particular commented that they “basically act as guidance counselors, I mean there’s a lot more to teaching than being a teacher” (HW2-01). They identify their role as teachers as something which extends beyond curriculum teaching but rather is integral to the whole school and a “broad base of activities” often considered complementary to citizenship education (Halpern et al, 2002: 227).

Many interview participants commented generally on their experience of working with the curriculum and the challenge of administering every individual curriculum expectation. Some teachers described how they respond to this challenge by soliciting advice and resources from more experienced teachers. Others accept that some curriculum expectations may be taught in combination, or that quite simply, not all curriculum expectations can realistically be taught within the time limits of a single school year. Still, despite these experiences, many teachers find that students cannot learn about citizenship by simply following the standardized material in the curriculum. The following comments acknowledge this challenge of administering the curriculum and balancing this with classroom activities which allow students to genuinely learn and explore new ideas and concepts:

You can either do small parts very well, like really focus on something like Confederation, or you can try to fit everything in and just do a little bit. And…I think it’s often better to just try to do certain things really well. (HW2-01)

And they have a lot of different expectations about learning about the different levels, and learning about the jobs at different levels, learning about the politicians and their roles, and…that can take up to half a year. […] So it's
finding a balance between getting that across, and doing...giving the students a chance to really explore and learn about their own roles, as citizens. (TD2-01)

The teachers quoted above acknowledge differences between the demands of the curriculum and the feasibility of what they do in the actual classroom. They also note that citizenship education, in the form of exploring Canadian history in depth, or exploring their own identity or their own life roles in relation to the curricular material, is something that is not easy to accomplish if the teachers are strictly guided by the standardized curriculum and its many requirements. Teachers observe they have greater freedom in teaching for citizenship when they work more flexibly with the curriculum, in the sense of helping students to explore their own identities and decision-making, and their roles in society. As a result, this can expand the largely political aspects of citizenship covered by the curriculum to include aspects of social citizenship and difference.

Moreover, the research participants registered concerns with the nature of the curriculum, as in early 2006 it was still largely composed of guidelines which were phased in during the tenure of the Progressive Conservative government under the Premierships of Mike Harris. These documents introduced curriculum changes which increased the level of expectation across all subjects such that students were exposed to curricula that were “significantly more rigorous and demanding than previous curricula,” and which included “a broader range of knowledge and skills and introduce[d] many skills in earlier grades” (OME, 1998, 1998b, 1998c, 1998d). Skepticism remains among teachers about whether or not these changes in fact achieved the intended results. One interview participant (an experienced teacher of more than thirty years) commented that

For nine years in the curriculum I taught Grade Six. And what I expected of my students at the end of Grade Six, I’m finding that I’m expecting even less of the Grade 8s now, they just...like in fractions for example...Compared to what you would have expected from them in Grade Six. They might have more geometry, they might have more data management, they might have
more, ahm, integers and algebra... But it's just a little bit of this, a little bit of that... Without the mastery. (C1-01)

While few teachers offered extended criticisms of the Ontario Ministry of Education during my interviews with them – two Toronto teachers (TD3-01 and TD1-02) were critical of the EQAO standardized testing practices, though reluctant to speak about it at length -- such reflections as these above on the efficacy of the ‘new’ curriculum were common, particularly as the participants reflected on the challenge of actually delivering all of the curriculum guidelines in addition to their non-curricular responsibilities. Indeed, despite the governing imperatives of administering standardized province-wide curriculum and the common use of textbooks from provincial resource lists (i.e. the Trillium List – OME: 2007f), teachers consistently reported how much responsibility they carry in executing the curriculum and finding teaching and learning resources to support this:

You know, you have the documents which really just lay out the expectations for you. And then you’re left on your own as far as how you’re going to teach it... And it’s really left up to the individual teacher. So, as a sort of newer teacher, when I first taught I would just go to another teacher and say, ‘what do you have? (TD2-01)

Many teachers, then, find value in administering or supplementing the curriculum by making use of locally-developed teaching resources. This is particularly important for one Toronto teacher, who makes use of the Toronto District School Board's own documents on teaching equity issues in the classroom. And indeed, as Appendix D shows, his and other Toronto neighbourhoods are characterized by higher than average cultural diversity (language and immigration, for example), and so equity issues would likely be significant for his students and the community. For him, equity issues are fundamental to citizenship education into the classroom, and yet equity issues rarely figure into the average elementary school classroom experiences. Moreover, he commented on his impressions that these documents are
not widely used across the school board, and this in combination with a relative lack of equity education in the Ontario curriculum amounts to a significant potential gap in citizenship education in general:

Yeah, for a Toronto district school board staff, most people don’t even know of its existence. So there’s the main curriculum, which is reflected on a report card, which is reflected in the marks and stuff…But then, in terms of the equity curriculum, which is the social justice and the citizenship, and the values curriculum…That is left very much apart and secondary to the experience of the kids. (TD3-01)

Given that in the elementary school curriculum, the most detailed – if limited – opportunity for students to learn about citizenship in an explicit fashion comes through the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum, it is particularly interesting to note teachers’ comments across different school boards about their challenges in finding teaching resources and curriculum support materials to engage with social studies topics and Canadian topics. These are indeed the strands of the curriculum commonly associated with citizenship! For example, one experienced Grade 6/7 teacher who understood citizenship most clearly as a concept related to membership in and belonging to the Canadian nation-state, found that she had difficulty obtaining government citizenship resources unless she specifically solicited them. Another teacher who does deliver the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum, observed that

…as Grade 5 teachers, and actually Junior teachers, [the problem] is that we don’t have Social Studies texts…So it becomes very difficult. Basically with government and citizenship, we’ve had to kind of scrounge to get what we can get, like from the internet and things like that…I mean, resources we have, but not enough for the kids to have?

But there are those specific ones for Math and other things like that..?
Yes, when it comes to Math and Language, we definitely have textbooks galore. But when it comes to Social Studies, we are, whoa! In desperate need. (TD4-02)

As a result this teacher noted she finds herself formulating her own worksheets or making strong use of mentoring relationships with other experienced teachers, or making use of
local resources such as newspapers. Another explained similarly in her interview that “with
government…it's always evolving, so, the pictures of Jean Chretien as Prime Minister, are
not appropriate any more…That's where it's tricky. A lot of us as teachers, we actually use
the newspapers” (TD1-01). While Social Studies does not appear to be the only source of
citizenship education, as we will continue to observe from the interview results, it is certainly
troubling that the portion of the curriculum most directly related to citizenship has
inconsistent resource support.

Moreover, these are issues common to other areas of curriculum. For another
teacher who works with Arts and with French language education, and who characterizes
citizenship not only in terms of the Canadian nation-state but also in terms of celebration of
diversity and culture, accessing teaching resources for these learning areas can be a challenge.
From her perspective as an experienced teacher in the Arts, students can learn to appreciate
Canadian culture through artistic expression as well as cultivate interest in other countries.

However, she is similarly limited by curricular resources, since while

there is a good amount on introducing the students to different styles of art,
and different culture—cultural art, and different artists from another country,
which is really good …But again you have to find the materials for all of that,
it's not readily available in the textbooks to follow … (C1-05)

So, even if we were to assume that local schools articulate citizenship primarily
through curricular education, it is clear that teachers are challenged to find
educational resources to deliver this portion of the curriculum which are both timely
and relevant. Teachers play a significant, locally-scaled interpretive role in articulating
the curriculum through educational resources which they themselves have had to
collect and use to represent curricular ideas.

Despite some variation, it is clear even from this small cross-section of Ontario
teachers that some common impressions clearly emerge of how citizenship is articulated
through the Ontario curriculum, tending at first to associate citizenship with curriculum about Canadian government and the nation-state. However, one Toronto teacher drew a distinction between teaching ‘citizenship’ and teaching about government:

So I guess…I did do my job because they got something out of it…We talked about the rights and responsibilities, but next year I was thinking I might do the…like start making the government stuff sort of the minor thing, and make the citizenship a bit stronger… (TD2-01)

Educating students about citizenship as a balance of rights and responsibilities within the nation-state, was for her distinct from teaching about aspects of Canadian government. Her experience was that the students not only were able to grasp concepts around citizenship as both rights and responsibilities, but that this should be emphasized more heavily within the curriculum, something which contemporary children’s rights education advocates have similarly noted (Howe and Covell, 2005).

Another Grade 5 teacher also commented on links between citizenship and the Social Studies program specifically, and also recognized the limits of this curriculum in terms of teaching children about citizenship. In her experience, citizenship is a separate thing, I think it’s a separate topic…So how I approached it was I did government first, and then at the end I talked about citizenship. So I sort of treated it as a different topic…You know, and then they talk about rights and responsibilities? So I think that’s a very broad concept for them, so what I tried to do is first introduce it to them as, what are your responsibilities as a student?[…] And then as a son or daughter, as a child at home. So I sort of had to make it relevant to their lives, before I could make it a broader kind of thing. And that was something that wasn’t in the curriculum. (TD4-02)

For this teacher, then, government and citizenship are also separate concepts, and required different teaching approaches. Moreover, it is significant to note how this teacher also found the need to supplement the curriculum expectations by teaching citizenship rights and responsibilities in a way that was “relevant to their lives,” in a way which was not explicit in the curriculum. I believe these comments point to the challenging aspects of delivering a
citizenship curriculum which through Social Studies at best recognizes children as “partial citizens” (Cohen, 2004), and also identifies a lack of rights-oriented and identity-oriented aspects of citizenship education in the Ontario curriculum. While in these cases the teachers acknowledged their efforts to supplement the curriculum in this way reveal the potential local role of teachers to ensure more than a ‘partial citizenship’ education approach, this is not a practice which can be assumed of all teachers. This sense of needing to make citizenship concepts relevant to children’s own identities was shared by several other teachers, as I will identify below. I believe this speaks to a gap in the standardized curriculum expectations since, citizenship-oriented portions of the curriculum do not necessarily direct educational practice towards students’ exploration of their own identities.

Another Toronto teacher illustrates another example of this, explaining how she worked with the Social Studies curriculum in a way which emphasized citizenship rights as strongly as the aspects of Canadian government, since for her citizenship includes more of a balanced educational approach that teaches children about rights and responsibilities. Speaking again about the contrast between Social Studies strands regarding Canadian citizenship and aspects of Canadian government, she reflected that

I just think, for a ten-year-old, how much would they get out of it. Of really understanding the different [government] systems and their roles, it's really hard to explain stuff like that to them, it's hard to relate to, and this is so much easier.
You think citizenship is easier?
Yeah.
What makes you think it's easier?
Ahm, because they can talk about it from personal experience. And they can relate it to themselves, and their home, and their family, and even their...you can bring it down to their level, they can relate it to their own little worlds, to their community, their home community...I think that...it's easier to talk about that. (TD2-01)

For her, the experience of rights and responsibilities as citizenship experience is relevant to the individual lives of her students in their homes and communities, and these concepts are
easier for them to grasp based on their lived experiences. Indeed, although she had introduced these activities months in advance - and well before encountering my request for research participants - during the classroom activities with her group of students (TD2-01), the students associated citizenship ideas consistently with both rights and responsibilities.

In this same Toronto school there were also a large number of students whose families were new Canadians (6.7% of the local population immigrated after 2001, and 28.6% speak a non-official language – Appendix D), and was the case in another participating school (TD4; 24.4% immigrated after 2001, and an overwhelming 64.9% speak a non-official language). In this second case, the teacher found that learning about citizenship in Canada, particularly as it relates to the process of becoming a Canadian citizen, were extremely relevant to her students as children of immigrant families. The students had a strong understanding of citizenship as an experience influenced by policies of nation-state governance, since these policies had directly influenced their families’ experiences in Canada. She also noticed that by the end of the school year, her class had retained many of the Social Studies concepts she had taught earlier, such as the nature of Canadian immigration requirements, or aspects of Canadian government and law, and commented that a lot of them are immigrant, or they’re children of immigrants, and I can identify with that, as being the child of immigrant parents… So I think that it’s relevant to their lives. And it’s something that…[indicates two students from her class whose families had recently become Canadians] …and a couple others went through the same experience this year, where they saw their parents studying for the test […] So it’s relevant to their lives, and they understand it. And they’re old enough to understand. And then when it’s taught in school, it becomes even more relevant to them, because now they have this knowledge, right? (TD4-02)

This same teacher commented additionally on the fact that students whose personal life experiences have not included as much time in Canada as some of their peers, also experience the curriculum differently than other students who have been born in Canada.
Teachers in Hamilton expressed similar interests in engaging the curriculum in a way which allows students to explore their identities and access the material in meaningful ways.

One whose school neighbourhood was indeed composed almost one-third of immigrants (HW3 – Appendix D) identified that the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum also includes a section on students presenting a biography of an individual, and for many students this is a valuable opportunity to explore their family history:

we have quite a few kids who have come from different countries, different situations. So that comes across when we talk about war and things like that, you know, ‘my dad had to fight over in the middle east,’ you know, ‘my grandpa came from Russia and he had to get out’, you know…so that comes out when we do things…and we do biographies where they have to interview someone for Grade 5, and they have to present a biography of that person and you hear some just fascinating things. About their families, and how someone made it over to Canada, and things like this… (HW3-02)

Although family biographies were not traditionally identified to me as “citizenship” education in the same sense as aspects of Canadian government or rights and responsibilities had been, this teacher distinctly found that this was a curricular opportunity for the students to explore their own sense of identity at the same time as learning about Canada. Likewise, for students whose family heritage does not extend outside of Canada, or who may not be acquainted with cultural or individual difference in the same way as children whose community and family lives are extremely diverse, this particular school curriculum provides opportunity for children to learn about citizenship in the context of diversity. It is perhaps not as radical a children’s citizenship as a truly ‘transversal politics’ of resistance (Yuval-Davis, 1999) formed out of the knowledge of different subject positions, but nonetheless encourages children to understand their identity as a form of difference “with its own lived reality and not a responsible one along predicated lines of normative expectations of citizenry duties and obligations” (Moosa-Mitha, 2005: 375).
Further along these lines, beyond citizenship of multiculturalism and towards citizenship as social justice, another teacher commented on the divergence between his own understanding of citizenship as an experience based on ideals of equity within a democratic society. For him, the curriculum diverges from this definition of citizenship specifically because there is limited opportunity for students to understand their own diverse lived experiences within the concept of citizenship:

I would say that the Ontario curriculum ah, is very similar to kind of a homogeneous approach…You know, leading up to the standardization of tests, standardized reading assessments, standardized math scores, where, although they recognize that everyone has a right to an education, it starts to become a very finite sort of education. And a very homogenized education where, it’s up to the educator, to pretty much fill the heads of the students much like an empty vessel, with facts, with knowledge, with criteria…with experience, that the students may not have, which may be very different from either the way that they can internalize it, or express it themselves… (TD3-01)

The same teacher carried on to explain how he uses citizenship concepts based in social equity, to help students understand curricular concepts. Similar to other teachers above, he had success by relating the curriculum expectations to people’s lived experiences. Even the science curriculum on sound and light, for example, could be connected to ability issues with the deaf and hearing impairment and sight impairment. So we did things with Braille, and Louis Braille, looking at his life and how it developed…What are some issues, where people are not considered, if they have hearing impairments, sight impairments…what are some things that can overcome that…and you know, the stereotypes that are involved. And I mean, was that in the science curriculum? Outlined by the government of Ontario, most certainly not. But is it meaningful to the kids? Does it help them internalize the characteristics of light and sound which are outlined in the curriculum? Yes. Does it make them compassionate and understand various equity issues, with people who live with those abilities or disabilities? Most certainly. (TD3-01)

Indeed, these comments reveal very real concerns about the limits of the Ontario curriculum and the implications for children as citizens both in the present-day and in the future, and also emphasize the key interpretive role teachers can play as people who deliver the
curriculum. These comments also directly question the standardized, homogenizing nature of the curriculum, suggesting that such an education itself is limited since it does not allow for the very real diversity of ability and lived experience through which children learn and understand themselves in the world. This resonates very strongly with Holden’s recent arguments in favour of citizenship education which acknowledges children’s knowledge and concerns to help them make sense of the world they live in. Certainly, this kind of education “may mean rethinking what we teach and how we teach it as we accept that children are not empty vessels waiting to be filled but citizens who bring their own experience, energy, hopes and fears into the classroom” (Holden, 2006: 246). Thus, local teachers carry a significant role in not only delivering the curriculum but to help students learn in a way that helps them draw connections between their own identities, the curriculum, and the world around them. If children are to understand themselves as citizens with multiply-formed identities, decision-making abilities, and a participatory place in the multiply-scaled communities which they inhabit, it is vital for them to be able to make such connections as they learn.

In the pages above I have highlighted local teachers’ reports of having success in teaching citizenship concepts when the students are able to explore aspects of their own lives and identities, and when their learning experiences are more participatory and more oriented towards inclusive concepts of rights and identity. The above comments from teachers thus far also identify skepticism over how well the curriculum allows students to reflect on their own identities, either in the context of citizenship or in general gaining a sense of self, and understanding their own interests, needs, and challenges. As we have also seen, many teachers find that ‘citizenship’ education for rights and responsibilities, or as a lived experience of values and decision-making, is not explicit in the curriculum.
Although citizenship scholarship continues to acknowledge the nation-state as the defining scale of citizenship governance and of community identity linked to national belonging (Bowden, 2003; Brodie, 2002; Cohen, 2004; Kymlicka, 2001), this also tends to acknowledge citizenship participation in predominantly adult forms such as ‘marriage and the marketplace. As a result, “children’s difference from the adult ‘norm’ assumed of citizens in liberal models of citizenship result in overlooking children’s citizenship rights through a construction of children as ‘not-yet-citizens’” (Moosa-Mitha, 2005: 369). So a curriculum whose most explicit (albeit limited) form of citizenship education comes in the form of civics education also has limited potential for including children as participatory citizens, without local supplementary teaching which includes such activities as rights education or personal exploration of difference and identity. Moreover, as we have seen in Chapter 3, broad Ontario discourses tend now re-situate citizenship in the realm of the community in the participation forms of responsible and safe behaviour, academic achievement oriented towards adult employment, and the expectation of individual ‘good’ behaviour. Such discourses seem to pry apart citizenship from the realm of the nation-state, since ‘good’ citizens are not necessarily required to be citizens of a specific country.

Based on discussion above and in Chapter 3, we may observe that explicit citizenship education which introduces children to citizenship concepts still remains largely a curricular gap waiting to be filled. Implicitly, provincial curriculum and governing discourses frame children in the present-day as competitive, responsible citizens. While discourses around citizenship responsibility are also prevalent within local schools, it is clear that the role of teachers at the local scale can be significant in articulating citizenship along the lines of children’s identities, rights, and even issues of social justice.
So, while curriculum standards are the same across the province of Ontario, there is some evidence of variation in how these standards are accomplished within different schools or classrooms. Teachers are also able to work with this diversity of learning style and interests and afford students the flexibility of choice of activity or due date (as interview participant HW1-01 noted, among others), if their classroom relationship supports this. While the interviewees above reported slightly different visions of what citizenship is, they consistently reported that it was necessary to ‘add’ citizenship education into their classroom work. They also report that this is often supplementary work that is not explicit in the curriculum expectations, nor in the standard textbook resources. These reflections represent the local scale of the Ontario public school as a key potentially interpretive site where citizenship education is supplemented into the curriculum over and above the discourses of responsible, competitive citizenship which exist at the provincial scale. However, if we are to understand how citizenship is learned within the site of the local public school in Ontario, it would be limiting to only consider how this occurs through the curriculum. I will examine this further in the following section.

Inside the School but Outside the Curriculum? Teaching Citizenship

In the results above across three school boards, we may observe key trends characterizing citizenship alternately as a concept relating to the nation-state and its governance, cultural identity, and population, or alternately of exploring personal identity and difference, potentially also grounded in rights education in some cases. Although visions of citizenship based in concepts of social equity or human rights exist in these cases, these were not broadly reported across the interview sites. As I will examine in this section, the interview participants also revealed that citizenship as it is learned and sited within the local
public school is a much more dynamic concept than that which can be understood through the Ontario curriculum alone.

Chapter 3 revealed the norms of responsible and safe behaviour privileged by the Ontario Ministry of Education, which are re-framing citizenship less as an explicit experience of membership in the nation-state, and situating children as responsible present-day achievers who become responsible, employable adults. As Mitchell has argued, educational institutions are governed by “modern forms of disciplinary power by the state and other institutions that produce rules, norms and understandings based on their knowledge and power about different populations” (2003: 389), and this has tended to be framed as crucial in the formation of democratic communities “through the creation of subjects interpellated through the liberal values and norms of the modern nation” (ibid). As such values as responsibility, safety, achievement, and investment are implicitly clear in provincially-scaled discourses, these may be interpreted as behavioural norms privileged and normalized through the institutions of the nation-state, however, in the form of non-curricular activities sited in the school, such values are not necessarily explicitly scaled as a part of national citizenship.

When I inquired about what kind of activities at school relate to learning about citizenship, many teachers identified a variety of non-curricular or co-curricular (activities unrelated to the curriculum which may be conducted alongside curricular programming) activities. These include things like sports teams, election of and participation in student government councils, clubs and teams, fund-raising and awareness-raising for various charitable or social causes, volunteer activities within the school, or volunteering in the community which is co-ordinated through the school. In turn, such activities were often justified as citizenship-related since such participation students are able to interact with their
peers, engage in activities which are of personal interest, develop their extra-curricular education, as well as developing positive behaviour. In many cases these take the form of quasi-democratic activities revolving around student government and organization, as I briefly discussed above in the first section of the results discussion.

Extra-curricular activities like intramural sports are then identified as citizenship-related activities in the sense that they encourage teamwork and positive group dynamics between all age groups in the school, reminiscent of liberal-democratic ideals (Kymlicka, 2001). In one Hamilton school, these sports teams were also organized without try-outs, so that any interested student could simply show up and participate. Such structured forms of student participation as student councils are thus perceived as a venue for children to interact supportively and co-operatively while at school. It is also a venue for potential leadership opportunities, similar to sports teams which several teachers also indicated:

some of the teachers run the sports program, in intramurals, so there’s…in the intramural the kids have certain leadership roles, and they have to encourage others to take part in the team, so there’s that team sports…And there’s the student council, so I think there’s that extra-curricular, co-curricular, whatever you want to call it, opportunity for them to help others, and encourage others, I think that’s all part of what citizenship is. (C1-01)

While these activities are still supervised and largely under-written by adult organization and support, this teacher above indicates his sense that sports teams are an opportunity for children to learn leadership and co-operation. On the subject of extra-curricular activities at school, outside of curricular achievement, one Toronto teacher commented likewise that extra-curricular activities like open intramural sports are supportive venues for young people to explore their own personal interests as well as ‘healthy competitiveness’. He ensures that these activities are open to all who wish to participate, and to achieve ‘personal bests’ even if they do not receive awards for their participation:
I make sure that both boys and girls are involved. I make it wide open for anyone who has an interest in trying a sport for the first time. I believe in providing safe spaces for kids to experiment things...I organize the track and field day for all primary/junior students. Even though only a small fraction are going on to the regionals...Or, a relatively small fraction, I wanted everyone to have a chance to do their personal best. And to broaden their school experience. (TD3-01)

These comments draw attention to the school as a site where citizenship is learned through extra-curricular activities which are locally mediated, as opposed to curriculum-specific learning which is standardized across the province. This teacher above draws connections between activities like intramural sports and students being able to explore their personal interests. Moreover, because such activities exist through the organizational support of local teachers, the school site itself is framed here as a citizenship site of children’s identity exploration inasmuch as it is influenced by locally-scaled efforts.

However, over and above extra-curricular activities like sports, student government, or certificate programs, voluntarism is broadly encouraged as part of the life and work of the school, whether in a structured or unstructured fashion. One school I visited used a certificate program to encourage volunteer hours in a similar manner as the high school students, both to encourage voluntarism in their own school and to prepare the students for similar expectations once they advance to high school³. Volunteer duties do indeed vary, as one Hamilton teacher described, which include duties such as helping with the library reading program, supporting the secretaries in the school office, or putting chairs away after class. He views it as successful because

they really like doing it because they feel like they are...of the grown-up...world, in that situation, so, I think that's part of citizenship, too, just learning that...to be able to be trusted like that? Is a big thing. (HW1-04)

³ Since 1999 secondary school students complete a compulsory 40 hours of community service as a requirement for their diploma, intended to “encourage students to develop awareness and understanding of civic responsibility” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1999: p 10)
This example illustrates opportunities for students to be entrusted with volunteer responsibilities within the school, through which students may gain confidence and trust. In theory this demonstrates a great deal more trust and confidence in the students on the part of the adults than do the restrictive and negatively-oriented principles of the Safe Schools Act (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000), which seems to privilege trust in adults far over and above that of children. However, the same teacher also emphasizes that success in voluntarism has also come as a result a formal volunteer program in the school in which students receive certificates to track their hours of participation and allows them to be recognized at the end of the year. This then further represents citizenship as a way of being a responsible person, who is pro-active in doing things that need to be done:

I think it's also too about being responsible, and saying, 'I'm going to be there,' and then showing up. And that's part of being a good citizen, too, or being….that's part of the classroom that we want them to be a part of. (HW1-04)

Significantly, citizenship is characterized here as ‘good citizenship’, a mode of behaviour which is simultaneously focused on the regulation of individual actions – responsibility, altruism, pride – but directed towards the group dynamic of all members of the local school.

Voluntarism is not the only means of fostering ‘good citizenship’, however, which is evident since raising funds and awareness for community projects or ‘world citizenship’ issues are also particularly prevalent in Ontario elementary schools. These are also ways in which local schools foster these citizenship characteristics with some autonomy over what kind of projects to conduct. Specific fundraising activities may benefit a specific charity in the same neighbourhood as one school, for example, or another might be a viable project due to personal connections from a single teacher in the school. One Grade 5/6 Hamilton teacher explained how her school often raises funds for school activities, but at the same
time directs fundraising projects towards charitable causes such as building wells in developing countries. She identified the need to help the students learn to ‘look outwards’:

We, last year we thought we would raise enough money for one and we ended up with enough money to build two. [...] We need them to look outwards. We need them to be thinking not just to the next school dance… (HW1-01)

Another Hamilton teacher discussed these kinds of activities in the context of teaching her students about ‘world citizenship’, and gave the example of work they did shortly after the events of September 11th, 2001, as well as classroom work that encourages them to think about the issues of developing countries:

they did a fundraiser and we stood in a big heart on the playground, and held a sign that said “[school name] cares”, and a helicopter came and took a picture. And we sent donations to a school in New York. So, there have been things that get them involved more as world citizens? And I try especially with the Grade 8s in geography, with the developing countries and that, I try to explain to them the reasons why you have famine in places, like, lack of education, lack of medical supplies, lack of funds… (HW2-01)

She emphasized in particular that she encourages her students to consider international development issues with a critical perspective that is often hard for them to grasp. Such fundraising projects are an opportunity to do this, alongside curricular subjects like geography or economics. Here, such voluntarism and fundraising forms a kind of globally-oriented charitable citizenship, re-scaled from the nation-state outwards, whereby curricular learning is once again supplemented with other school activities and also handled in a nuanced way by the individual teacher, to try to bridge gaps in knowledge or perspective among the class. These kinds of fundraising and awareness activities can also be opportunities for students to learn about political and social inequities.

The extra-curricular opportunities so often associated with citizenship at school are likewise considered one of the uniquely valuable characteristics of school life, because of the way students are able to interact with their peers while learning about their own interests. A
Grade 8 Hamilton area teacher spoke in this vein about the kinds of extra-curricular opportunities students have at school that are not part of the mandatory curriculum, which not only give the students more chances to interact with their peers but also to be recognized for their talents and efforts in ways they might not have at home:

I think there's more opportunities to do different things here. Than there is at home. I think at home it's ah…a lot of it is expected and not really recognized, whereas here it's recognized and not expected? So that might be different like, at home they might have chores to do, but it's just expected that they'll do them before they can do anything? Here, they have an opportunity to do something, and it's not expected but they are rewarded for it. (HW1-04)

So, in the school environment which encourages participation – for, while extra-curricular activities and school voluntarism are encouraged, they are not required - there is also a system of reward and recognition which accompanies this participation which children would not receive at home. A Grade 5 Toronto teacher likewise commented that there are many such opportunities at school, but also that this is a result of the local team of teachers at her school specifically:

it's an awesome place, I mean the teachers are motivated, and…you can tell they have the children’s interests at heart, everything is done for the kids. And these kids have so many opportunities for extra-curricular. I think…our school we're trying to say…Academics is important. But there’s other things too, that are important. That multiple intelligence, kind of thing. (TD4-02)

These comments also reveal how many teachers – certainly those in this Toronto teacher’s school - are motivated to help their students learn and grow as individuals, beyond their work for the curricular education. Moreover, this teacher and another in the same school (TD4-01) identified that students in their particular community often have more spatial freedom at school compared to at home. She indicated that many students live in apartment buildings (over 80% of the census tract in which the school is located, as Appendix D identifies), and so
they don’t get out very much. And so they get exposed to a lot of positive things here at the school. And they have a lot of opportunity to express themselves and participate in different ways. I think it’s a great school. (TD4-02)

This teacher greatly contrasts children’s situations at home, their activities at school expand their spatial freedom as well as their opportunities for personal expression. These comments and those of the Hamilton teachers above reveal variations in the significance of the school between local communities – in both cases the school is a site of opportunity and learned citizenship, but in different ways. In one situation in Toronto the teachers perceive that children’s lives at home are more spatially limited, and the teaching team at school by contrast presents a diverse range of extra-curricular activities which expand the students’ personal interests. In the other, teachers perceive fewer restrictions in the students’ lives at home than at school. Still, their activities at school were valued for presenting children with increased opportunity for achievement, role modeling, and exploration of personal interests. These comments also suggest the significance of the school as a site which mediates between both the provincial scale and that of individual homes.

It is clear that such behavioural norms are reinforced not simply through provincial discourse but through individual actions. For example, many teachers emphasized how their own behaviour in the school is an important representation of citizenship for students to learn from. This suggests once again how much responsibility lies with not simply what they teach but how they teach. This was a common sentiment among the interview participants, that teachers act as role models for the students, whether through the activities they administer or the way they themselves behave while in the school:

I think, we just try to promote good role modeling to them, and how to be good general people in the school, and to take responsibility for what we expect of you…we have the culture of responsibility, which explains to them what we expect of them… (HW1-04)
In this example above, a Hamilton area teacher speaks alternately to how teachers’ responsible behaviour helps students learn to take on the same kind of traits within the school and their lives. She mentions a 'culture of responsibility' which operates within the school as a model of responsible behaviour which is expected of students. Another Toronto teacher referred similarly to their school code of conduct as a method of encouraging 'good citizenship', since "we have a code of conduct at the school, and the children are encouraged to follow the code of conduct, and there are consequences if they don't" (TD1-01).

Outside of this curriculum-based discussion of citizenship at school I heard from many teachers about the nature of the school as a site where responsible behaviour is fostered. In many cases responsibility was characterized as a stronger representation of citizenship at school than the rights. Although it was possible for individual teachers to supplement curricular learning with rights-oriented or identity-oriented programming, the broader expectations of the whole school in general indicate an over-arching concern with responsible citizenship. There are also strong indicators that teachers connect citizenship at school to student behaviour, however teachers also use structured participatory activities to encourage varying forms of individual responsibility and potential world knowledge.

In addition to the activities discussed above, teachers in all three school boards commonly referred to school programming which involves structured systems of rewards for achievement, participation, and good behaviour, and which often work alongside other school activities such as those listed above. These might be locally-developed programs including 'character education' activities, or other achievement-based programs such as 'Future Aces' (identified previously in Chapter 3). Such programs which encourage students to model character traits such as respect, honesty, and fairness, for example, are often considered positive ways for students to learn responsibility and to participate constructively
in the school and community: One Hamilton teacher in particular identified the inclusive motivations of such programming:

So we’ll have programs that will have monthly assemblies, and recognize students for certain things...so really trying to make it a more positive experience. Because...I mean there’s always students who are getting into trouble and getting detentions...But the kids who aren’t doing anything wrong, they’re often...not rewarded for it. So we’re trying to kind of go that way? (HW2-01)

The ‘question mark’ here suggests some uncertainty over the effectiveness of this programming, but ideally, this would allow a more inclusive system for student participation and recognition within the school under a broad range of categories, so that even students who are not strong academic achievers will receive some form of recognition. In this way, active participation in the life and work of the school is envisioned more broadly than formal venues such as sports teams or student clubs, and includes opportunity for any student to be rewarded. This same teacher related this directly to citizenship as a kind of behaviour, in this case following school rules such as completing homework:

We have what are called ‘Win It’s, so every term the teachers kind of give them an ‘x’ or a check. For things like homework or attendance...and basically, you know, if they’re getting in trouble or not, and they’ll get a citizenship Win It. So we do that aspect of citizenship, the behaviour, following the rules. (HW2-01)

Other teachers referred similarly to extra-curricular activities or structured programs which encourage student participation and self-improvement. For several schools, this includes structured programming such as the ‘Future Aces’ program which one teacher describes as

...sort of a citizenship program in school, it’s to build, you know, self esteem and good behaviour within the school...And so every month we have Aces assemblies and recognize students for certain attributes...Aces stands for, Attitude...

Okay...Yeah, so do they get, like, little tickets or something like that? Yeah, they get little certificates. Although on a daily basis you kind of do mini-alerts for when you see a student doing something. So whether it’s being helpful, or...you know, sort of doing what they’re supposed to, or holding a door for someone...”
Okay, yeah…So is that successful do you think?
It is successful, it does create a nice climate in the school. The assemblies, everyone always looks forward to them, it’s…they’re well received, and the kids, they want to be an Ace, so they like the assemblies… (TD2-01)

Another teacher in the same school board similarly identified the Future Aces program in the context of learned citizenship at school, as a structured way for students to learn citizenship attributes such as co-operation which could be tied in to citizenship rights and responsibilities (TD4-02). The students’ motivation to earn these achievements and be recognized in front of the rest of the school, they argue, has made the Future Ace program a success in their schools. Still, it is worth questioning what kind of citizenship such awards systems encourage, as compared to activities oriented towards global education, rights, or difference. Although the resulting academic climate may be positive, this appears to be achieved through students’ self-regulating response to expectations and possible rewards, qualities which are more reminiscent of the “marketization of education” and neo-liberal trends empowering competition, self-interest, and materialism (Faulks, 2006).

In Chapter 3 I discussed how character education programs - which have taken on renewed interest across several school boards in Ontario and will soon be administered across the province through the Ontario Ministry of Education - have been similarly framed as citizenship education inasmuch as they educate children about values and character traits aimed at improving group relations through respectful individual behaviour. Teachers in the predominantly rural school board were one such school which had taken on character education as a form of co-curricular and extra-curricular programming. One teacher described the format in this way:

each class does an assembly, on a character trait for the month…for this month, it’s going to be perseverance, and two classes are going to be doing that…my class is doing responsibility next month…So they do different things, they do skits, they do writings…and then they read them…and that kind of stuff, and then they…what we’re supposed to do is we’re supposed
to give out little sticky notes, you know, little slips so that if you, you know, catch someone, doing something for the character trait, we put them in a box and then their name is drawn and they can win an award. (C1-02)

Here there are various rewards for demonstration of behaviour which aligns with the character traits. Another teacher spoke about how she valued the character education because of her experiences in her own classroom, where she is frequently challenged by behavioural issues among the students and finds a need for students to learn about character traits like respect and responsibility. She finds that

There's a real lack of respect between kids and their adults, kids and their peers…One of my kids is in the office right now, for telling the EAs to kiss his butt. And had no problem doing that. […] And I'll, lots of times, go, would you say that to your mom? Would you speak to your mom that way? But then one of my kids today said, yeah, I punched my mom in the face today and broke her glasses. And the other kids were laughing, and I'm like… [shrugs] I don't get this!…(C1-07)

For this teacher, then, reinforcing behavioural guidelines in this way about being ‘good’ citizens is then integral to her being able to operate her class and also something she feels is necessary to correct a gap in learning that takes place outside the school. She finds, then, that encouraging ‘good’ citizenship is integral to her job operations within the school specifically, in support of their being able to do their jobs as curricular educators, and also a perceived need within children's lives in general.

There is some evidence to suggest that character education exists in a more implicit, unstructured form, even when the school has not taken it on as a formal activity. This relates to teachers efforts to help their students become not simply participants in school activities but also individuals who make ‘good’ decisions. It is by now clear that many teachers understand citizenship as a model of behaviour, or ‘good’ behaviour, which students are encouraged to learn while at school, and in ways which are not tied to achievement or
curricular work. While this is easily accomplished through structured systems of achievement or reward, this is also identified as part of daily school life:

So, citizenship stuff is just…helping them make decisions, like, the other day another teacher saw there was a bottle on the floor. And his class and my class were waiting to get up, and they all walked by this bottle on the floor. So we threw a $5 bill on the ground. The $5 bill got picked up but the bottle didn't…So we made an example that way, of you know, just, taking pride in your school and ahm, doing what's right when it should be done. (HW1-04)

This sense of citizenship as an active individual role underpinned by moral decision-making emerges not specifically from curricular programming within the school, but from the role-modelling efforts of teachers who take an interest in helping students to take on these skills. Without further contextualization in this example, it is difficult to conclude whether this teacher views such citizenship ‘decision-making’ in the context of active, empowered, participatory citizenship (Howe and Covell, 2005; Stasiulis, 1999), or in the context of children learning to act with respect for people and for the governing rules of the school space, something which is in turn viewed by teachers as a gap in student behavioural skills. Interactions within the school space which are unscripted by the curriculum documents and the extra-curricular activities within the school, are more significantly considered as education for ‘good citizenship.’ This kind of citizenship relates directly to the work of the school since it is undoubtedly easier to teach and to learn in an environment in which issues of behavioural discipline are minimized, however also reinforces the institutional nature of the school as a site where certain forms of behaviour is expected and normalized as ‘good.’ Although these comments do not emphasize ‘safe’ citizenship as strongly (Gallagher and Fusco, 2006; Hope, 2006), they reinforce the school space in general as a standardized site of self-regulating behaviour.

Moreover, further comments in the interviews reveal skepticism over whether this kind of programming is successful. Such priorities also under-write character education
programming, which I discussed in Chapter 3. The school I visited in Board C participated in character education as part of board-wide activities, which in turn was tied to a structured format of assemblies and certificate rewards as incentive for students participation. While this teacher perceives a need for teaching character education, and would be reluctant to eliminate it completely, she is skeptical about how many students genuinely take on the character education as values within their lives. She comments that

sometimes I really don't think that they do get it. I think it's, 'oh it's just another assembly'…And, you know? [For the students] it's more like, 'Am I going to get an award today?' Instead of 'Hey, we're really going to be focusing on 'fairness' today’… (C1-07)

This reveals her concern with the structure of character education, and skepticism over whether the activities accomplish the goal of transforming student behaviour, perhaps speaking to contemporary discourses which focus predominantly on individual citizen behaviour and efficiency, rather than the causes of inequalities (Basu, 2004; Faulks, 2006).

Although many of the teachers’ comments above indicate a well-meaning interest in teaching character education or similar expectations, it remains true that as long as these take place at school “however well intentioned these spaces are meant to be they become ones that adults create with a view to enticing the children to behaving in a certain way” (Thomson, 2004: 71). Additionally, in order to understand how the school functions uniquely as a children’s site of learned citizenship – particularly in the context of citizenship as a mode of behaviour – we must consider the nature of the school not simply in relation to provincial programming mandates and governance but also in relation to the local community.

Citizenship at School – Or at Home?

Ontario policies such as the Safe Schools Act (OME, 2000) prioritize safety within the school environment by justifying safety as a right of citizenship, and situate responsible
individual behaviour as an antidote to unsafe school space. As I discussed in Chapter 3 along these lines, these safety discourses thus contribute to a definition of citizenship which revolves around a self-regulating citizenry and scales both threats to citizenship and citizenship solutions at the level of the individual. As I discovered in my interviews, and as I will continue to discuss here, teachers are also concerned with student behaviour and responsibility, however this is justified not in terms of school safety but as a performance of citizenship. Still, to reduce the school to a site governed by marketized expectations of responsibility would not fully encompass the scope of student-teacher and student-student interaction that takes place. The school is also an important social site for children to spend time with their peers, a quality which may be considered in contrast to the broad norms and expectations reinforced by adults who govern that space.

Locally, however, teachers are concerned with student behaviour inasmuch as it affects their ability to teach, since if they do not need to address issues of discipline within their classroom it is more likely that they will be able to teach effectively and that students will be able to learn. Indeed, it is common for elementary school curricular and extra-curricular programming to be connected to off-site learning, at resource centres or public sites such as museums or places of government. I had anticipated that issues such as student finances, travel distance, or safety protocols and permission slips might contribute key potential barriers to such trips – but student behaviour is indicated more prominently here:

...we took them to ahm...City Hall, and the legislature back in September. Because that's when we started our unit on government. But unfortunately due to behavioural issues, they haven't gone on any other excursions, but normally yes, we do take them to the [Royal Ontario Museum]. So when we're doing Egypt and stuff, they get exposed to that...[...] 
*And do the kids, like, do you think they have an understanding of their behaviour, as, the limits on what they can do, and that sort of thing?* 
Absolutely, we went in June, on this [outdoor education] trip...and the two instructors that were there, couldn't rave enough about how well behaved they were.
Oh, really?
Yeah, and you know, and I guess...they understood, because they had understood that they had missed out on all these other excursions, and they were just really well behaved. (TD4-02)

Here student behaviour significantly influences how children experience their education and how teachers are able to deliver educational programming. When students successfully respond to behavioural expectations, this is more likely to contribute to a successful classroom – and a classroom with extended boundaries into other spaces of learning besides the local school. However, other teachers acknowledged their perception that students at their particular school were by and large fairly ‘good’ students as compared to others:

Just for instance, like just helping them recognize when they should be doing something when they’re not. Politeness and…but we have good students at our school, too, so…
I keep hearing that, yeah…
[chuckle] Oh, yeah, so in general, like if the worst thing we have around here is, too much talking, then…that’s pretty good. (HW1-03)

I think they also realize that…you know, to take care of the school ground, to be kind to one another, what’s acceptable behaviour and what’s inacceptable behaviour…And I think they also know what’s expected of them? And that’s…they know that they shouldn’t be chewing gum, that they should be focusing, and pencils are down, and…yeah, I don’t think there’s more I can add. They’re a pretty good group, they’re pretty strong academically. (TD1-02)

These comments are representative of many of the interview participants, which showed their day-to-day understanding of their students, and how well they follow the rules, their level of politeness, whether they are overly talkative in the classroom, and so on. Academic strength is one factor here, and academic strength and ‘good’ citizenship also appear to be compatible. Moreover, teachers value this ‘good’ citizenship behaviour not simply as an end in and of itself, but as something which contributes positively to the local community and society at large. What children learn and do at school:

is being pushed out into how they interact at home, how they interact in the community…Ahm, if you’re teaching those skills that promote individuality
within the school…contributing to what’s happening in this building…then hopefully that rubs off to what’s happening at home… (HW1-03)

Thus students’ activities at school are perceived as potentially beneficial for the community at large, although in other cases going to school may be a positive opportunity for social interaction which they may not find elsewhere. Teachers across all three school boards considered the range of activities available to students while at school, and view the school as a site of both spatial and social freedom for many students:

They love to chat and visit, they'll come in and be very friendly with their peers and talk about their weekend, so it's a very social age. And some kids I guess don't get that at home. Some only children in this class, so…It's a whole social connection for them. (TD1-01)

This Toronto teacher viewed the school as a valuable social site for children since their home lives may be busy enough that they are don’t interact with the same peers outside of school. Likewise a Board C teacher viewed the school as social community for students, since the students are separated from their school peers by significant travel distance:

I see it as that…because when some students live out in remote areas, the school becomes sort of like a second family for them, and really like a community [...] I mean they have their groups of friends, different sets of friends…You know, and particularly in our school when we come back after the weekend, if some students haven’t seen other students their age, I mean they need to talk, they need to play…It’s quite, I mean it’s quite…When they live out in the remote areas it’s not like they bump into them in the malls…As opposed to an inner city school in Toronto, where they might be seeing them all the time, or see them on the street playing after school… (C1-04)

The social nature of the school as a place where children talk, play, and generally interact with peers of their own age figures here as a significant part of school life, but also one which presents challenges for teachers who depend upon a structured environment to be able to teach and conduct the school day. Indeed, as Thomson (2004) has noted, such social aspects as children’s conversation and play time, particularly while on the school playground, are important aspects of children’s resistance to adult control of school space. The
prescriptiveness of school space is therefore not only visible through rules and regulations but is also “reflected in the children’s intentional rule breaking” (ibid: 76). For these teachers in a predominantly rural school board, the social nature of the school can significantly influence teaching, since “on a Monday, those are brutal teaching days here, because they haven’t seen their friends since Friday” (C1-06). Because the school is not simply an instructional space but a very social space for children, this influences the work of teachers who need to adjust their teaching methods to account for students’ varying attention spans within the classroom. Interestingly, this was not identified by the children in their activity sessions, but it was an important comment for the teachers as something which can negatively influence their ability to teach in an ordered classroom.

One way in which teachers differentiate the school from other children’s environments is the inherent disciplinary nature of the school. At school, children are expected to adhere to rules and regulations which govern their behaviour and their use of school space. Children are also legally required to attend school, by contrast to other ‘optional’ activities in their week such as hobbies, socializing with their peers, attending community groups or clubs, or attending church. One teacher thus emphasized the compulsory nature of school attendance as a key difference between children's experiences at school and elsewhere, since “if they belong to a team…it’s no-nonsense, it would depend on the leader. If you can’t do it then [gesture], hit the door” (C1-01). Further, he identified that this characteristic of school life affords students an experience that is more forgiving than the 'real world' of work or community involvement. If students are reprimanded or suspended for poor behaviour they’re coming back. It’s not like, ‘you’re gone’. Maybe in very extreme cases. But probably in a skating club or a hockey team, ah, it would depend on the coaches. So I think, probably out there in the community is more like the real
While the disciplinary nature of the school may reinforce standards of behaviour, attendance, and punctuality, this is considered still more relaxed than the expectations students will eventually face once they enter the workforce or the 'real world.’ This perspective provides an interesting contrast to some curricular discourse which emphasizes that students' learning experiences should ultimately prepare them for their future career paths.

In addition, to broad curricular expectations which are mandated through the Ministry of Education, teachers make local expectations clear about how and when students will complete their work and follow school rules. Because the school operates as a children’s social space, this influences the scope of the teachers' work as broader than specifically engaging with curriculum. This is clear from teacher’s reports that they engage with students whose lives at home present very different and varying levels of expectation and scheduling, as compared to what teachers expect in the group setting of the classroom. However, one Hamilton teacher in particular viewed this as a potentially positive quality, since in the community in which she teaches, children and young people are exposed to extremely mature challenges at very young ages:

I have another girl who’s thirteen or fourteen, her mom just let her get a tattoo. So you’ve got…They’re doing things younger than they should be. And I think that a lot of it is because they’re not getting the support or the rules that they should be. A lot of the parents around here are young. So it’s kids raising kids, and so they’re more doing the friendship thing, than they’re doing the parenting? So when they come here if they don’t get strict rules and guidance here, then it’s just going to be a cycle that continues. (HW2-01)

She identified many issues that students at her school as young as eleven or twelve might face, including drug use and pregnancy, and emphasized that while these are not issues that are unique only to her school’s local community, she perceives a significant difference in her community due to the nature of the parenting her students receive. For her, providing a
disciplined classroom is helpful not just for her own day-to-day teaching experience, but also for her students’ lives in general.

Moreover, teachers emphasize the significance of the basic living conditions the children may be accustomed to at home, influences their ability to be ‘good’ students and citizens in a profound way, over and above how well they are used to following school rules:

If they’re coming to school and they haven’t been fed, if they haven’t had a good night’s sleep because they slept with four in the bed last night…And, mommy just, you know, threw a cup at daddy this morning, or in some cases a knife…And then that child’s supposed to come off to school, and be ready. (TD1-02)

Her comments speak to the challenge of demanding a standard level of behaviour, respect, and attention, from students whose living conditions – which in turn influence their ability to be focused students – vary considerably between schools or perhaps even within the same classroom. She emphasized that the nature of students’ home lives affects their lives most sharply when they experience inequity that cannot be changed during their time at school. As I discussed in Chapter 3, this is one aspect of children’s lives at school which provincial educational policy and discourse – such as in the Safe Schools Act – fail to account for. Such problems affect more than one student’s performance on a test. For one Toronto teacher,

I’ve been in other schools and taught Kindergarten where the children have never even seen a book. So, the experiences they bring to the text, do set them apart from the other children. So, already those children that are coming in kindergarten, they’re already two steps behind the other children, they’ve already got catch-up. And…and it’s not their fault. And maybe it’s not their parents’ fault either, or the mother or father or whomever they’re living with. Things happen, right… (TD1-02)

These comments reveal teachers’ awareness of a great deal of variation in the home lives of the children who attend school, and how greatly this affects their ability to learn and to maintain healthy intellectual and social lives while at school. These are aspects of children’s lives which almost certainly affect their performance at school
according to markers of standardized testing and achievement, which in turn may not reflect accurately on their genuine level of knowledge.

The school environment and the adults who administer and work in it value norms of behaviour and group-oriented discipline because it eases their ability to teach, but also because there may be a perceived lack of these qualities in other areas of children’s lives. A teacher in another board commented similarly, that because some children’s lives at home are more difficult than others, the school offers an important opportunity not simply for children to be exposed to such group expectations but also to recognition:

I mean, kids could be having bad days and there’s a conflict going on, like parents getting divorced or whatever the case may be. And it crosses over into the school, that might affect their citizenship, but when they go home they might have to yell into a face to get attention. (C1-06)

The local school could therefore be a unique site for such students, where teachers’ expectations for ‘good’ behaviour within a group environment can lead to informal positive recognition. As the above comments illustrate, this can lend structure to the student’s lives at school since the school rules and expectations will remain consistent, and students are guaranteed a certain level of attention. However, one Hamilton teacher cautioned that they have to work a lot harder to be a good citizen at school than they do at home, at home, you know, they sort of have more ownership over the routines, more ownership over things going well, and they just sort of fit in…Whereas at school, there’s a whole lot of factors and a lot of things you don’t get any choice in… (HW1-03)

She noted a relative lack of choice in the routines and overall requirements in which the children participate, despite the fact that there are some small choices available to students (as discussed above) in how they complete their curricular work. Certainly, children’s experiences at home will affect their experiences at school. Although very few teachers mentioned explicit codes of conduct or other similar policies governing behaviour in schools
either locally or provincially, most did allude to the practice of fostering a school environment which encourages student discipline, respectful behaviour between students and teachers, and following school rules.

Educational discourse scaled through the Ministry of Education tends to represent the school as a site of achievement expectations, and where multiple stakeholders ensure that students achieve learning goals and work successfully with the curriculum. Children’s citizenship identities within the school are thus situated through their ability to exercise responsible behaviour and respond to achievement standards. However, the comments above suggest children's daily experiences within their local schools are defined by numerous other facets of their lives outside of how well they achieve curricular expectations. They value the school as a site of social interaction which cannot be duplicated at home. Moreover, because teachers perceive significant variation in their students’ experiences and expectations at home, they value setting such disciplinary expectations at school because of perceived gaps elsewhere. The nature of the school as a site of behavioural expectation figures here as an adult response to this variation. Although teachers value ‘good citizenship’ at school this relates less to broad concerns about achievement expectations than to their daily experiences of working with children whose home environments are extremely diverse. These comments situate the school as a space where teachers respond to student behaviour in order to maintain a successful classroom, by not simply delivering the curriculum but also encouraging and instructing students about ‘good citizenship’ characteristics. Further, citizenship is revealed as a set of characteristics and values which underpin an individual’s behaviour, only partially related to democratic group membership.

In Chapter 3 I briefly noted the uncertain territory of the school as a site of learned values, particularly as the Physical Education curriculum – which involves teaching sensitive
issues such as sexual health, and safety issues such as drug and alcohol use – cautions readers that “parents and guardians are the primary educators of their children” (OME, 1998b). Moreover, federally-scaled discourses around children and education clearly identify the school as one educational actor, affording the family the status of being a child’s ‘primary educator. The recently published document A Canada Fit for Children likewise comments that “the well-being of children is a shared responsibility in Canadian society…While a child’s first educator is the family…education and learning take place in other environments, including at school, in the community, and among peers” (Government of Canada, 2004). Indeed, such public discourses situate the school in support of the family. However, comments from teachers articulate a slightly different stance, that the school provides education for citizenship-like behaviour in response to the children’s families.

Many teachers will also list classroom rules in written format, as well as enforcing them in action. One indicated in particular how this helps to keep an ordered classroom environment, and that this is sometimes challenging for students who enjoy the attention that comes from eager participation:

Well, I have my rules… [indicates classroom rules list] well actually I changed one, number two has been changed… 'it's stay in your seat, during instruction'…We had a wanderer in this class and he's, he's gone now. But basically, treat others how you want to be treated, number one. And only one person speaks at a time. Sometimes they get, they want to be the one with the special answer, so they shout out five at the same time… (HW1-02)

Over and above creating an ordered classroom environment, these systems of rules are intended to ultimately encourage students to be mindful of their presence within a group. This is something which differentiates the school in many teachers’ eyes from behavioural expectations at home, since at school there is more of an impetus for children to take turns and “to give everybody a chance to shine and show their strengths, and to help others with their weaknesses” (TD2-01). In this vein, the school is situated as a place where children
learn values and behaviour associated with democratic citizenship ideals, such as respect, teamwork, cooperation, and voluntarism, and that this is unique to the expectations of the school environment and of the teachers who work there.

These reports from teachers help us to understand how expectations for ‘good’ and responsible behaviour are aspects of school life which are embedded into the school environment as a whole, not just as a space of curricular learning. Also, we may observe how the nature of the school as a space governed by local rules and regulations operates in response to and sometimes in tension with other children’s spaces, particularly their home environments. In turn, we may further understand how children learn about citizenship and how citizenship is currently articulated in the contemporary moment along lines of self-regulation and responsible behaviour, in ways which are both provincially- and locally-sited. While these are citizenship ideals which govern children’s lives at school, at the same time these are concepts which are articulated through the school but not necessarily through the curriculum or specific sets of knowledge. Teachers are concerned with how children are living their lives at home and school and how this relates to their learning ability, rather than simply what the children are learning while at school, and so this is articulated through their expectations that children adhere to rules and regulations while at school.

Before concluding, I would like to consider a few last comments from the interviews emphasize the nature of the school as a place of work, governed by multiple curricular and extra-curricular imperatives. Certainly, while teachers’ localized efforts can contribute a more balanced approach to citizenship education than might be suggested by provincial discourses emphasizing achievement and children’s adult futures, they also re-produce expectations of behaviour and ‘good’ citizenship within the classroom environment. This may ultimately limit the potential democratic nature of the school, as children participate in school space on
terms which are not of their own making. However, while the nature of the school as a site of normative behaviour and expectation for cohesive classroom participation would seem to limit children’s opportunities for active, empowered citizenship, from the perspective of the teachers this structure is crucial to their successful classroom operation. Classroom expectations of order, ‘good’ behaviour, and respectful interaction are integral to teachers’ articulation of any curriculum or educational programming, whether provincialized or locally supplemented. One Toronto teacher emphasized that, while classroom rules might seem burdensome or restricting, it is hard to shift from such internal classroom structures:

Because, yeah, you know what, it’s hard. For teachers, because you do…spend so much time trying to, ah, create a climate where they do listen and respect you, and so if you open it up like that it can be scary. (TD2-01)

Although my interview questions did not directly solicit comment on teachers’ workloads or time constraints, comments on these challenges often surfaced during discussion. Indeed, As the school gains increasing attention as a site education for not only education about the nation-state, but also for good character, teachers face increasing responsibility as the people who both administer the curriculum and act as role models for good citizenship in the school. Working with the curriculum alone is a challenge, as one Grade 5 French Immersion teacher points out, as she must deliver French language curriculum and also translate the mainstream curriculum (such as Arts, or Social Studies), in the French language. She is also challenged by the task of delivering French language curriculum in a community in which 98.6% of people speak English, and thus have less day-to-day exposure to other languages than elsewhere in the province (Appendix D). She asks:

The ones who have written the curriculum, and have never tried to actually teach it for a whole year? Put them in a French immersion classroom and let them see how impossible it is to try and cover everything they want covered, under the restrictions that they put on us…It’s incredible…
We’re supposed to cover the whole English curriculum as well, and we get – sorry - one period a day. So there’s no help in how to funnel that down, into one period, what can I teach in one period a day? (C1-03)

These comments reveal some frustration with the demands of organizing the curriculum into instructional components. In turn, comments such as these suggest that the rigorous standards in which the Ministry of Education has invested so much effort, in fact limits how effectively the curriculum can be consistently standardized, since local teachers will ultimately need to make decisions about what to include and what cannot be included in the actual classroom. Indeed, such comments were common in multiple interview sites, although many teachers still value their efforts in supplementing the curriculum with citizenship-oriented activities. I discussed earlier in this chapter how citizenship education in the classroom is often due to teachers’ skills in working with and supplementing the curriculum, although this is clearly only one aspect of their responsibilities at school. And yet, trends seem to indicate that teacher workloads will only increase due to provincial extra-curricular and co-curricular mandates. One such new program, instituted in the 2006-2007 school year, requires all students to participate in twenty minutes of physical activity every day while at school – not including extra-curricular activities – during instructional time (OME, 2006c).

The details of how schools may implement this new requirement are left up to local school boards, although there is no assumption that the school day itself will be lengthened to accommodate the additional programming:

Well we still have 2 full 30 minute [Physical Education] periods a week, 40 minute periods a week, plus the 20 minutes…the problem with that in my mind’s eye, is…they have that as a standard, we have French as a standard…but no where does it say that there is so many minutes for Language anywhere, or so many minutes for Math… (TD2-01)

It would seem, then that the Ontario Ministry of Education demands education based on broad expectations and quantifiable standards, and yet does not fully account for how this
will influence actual instructional time in which teachers must accomplish these standards.

Additionally, other comments raise questions about how teachers’ work at school increasingly involves teaching life skills that could easily be considered the domain of learning in the home. Another Grade 5 teacher reflects that

Why is it that we have to implement 20 more extra minutes of gym period, into our hectic schedule, why do we have to teach them about eating properly, and getting enough sleep, and...all these things that the parents should be doing? And...like, that’s what I’m finding. I think it’s a great thing that we’re educating them. But [...] why is it always on our shoulders to do everything? (TD4-02)

Earlier in this chapter I commented on teachers’ experiences in working with the Ontario curriculum, and how many teachers are challenged by the large workload this entails – even though this curriculum is accompanied by gaps in citizenship-oriented education which teaches themselves seek to fill. We cannot understand citizenship through the work of the school only in terms of the curriculum, and so we must also consider how teachers’ work at school is also not confined to how they deliver the curriculum. If children’s abilities to become self-reflective citizens is connected to their personal growth and interaction with their teachers and peers, this is therefore also dependent upon how much time their teachers have to manage their own teaching responsibilities. As teachers’ time constraints grow, it is likely then that supplementary efforts towards citizenship education may well fall by the wayside.

Closing Thoughts: Mediating the Provincial and the Local

This chapter has shown through an analysis of interviews conducted with elementary school teachers in three Ontario school boards, that citizenship is articulated through the Ontario public school in both curricular and extra-curricular ways. Through the curriculum, many teachers point to the significance of citizenship as a concept embodied by membership
in the Canadian state, and therefore find ways to engage with the curriculum in ways in which students can learn about aspects of Canadian government, rights and responsibilities, and civic history. However, citizenship emerges here in a dual capacity, both through the nature of membership in the nation-state and also through individual conduct and behaviour, decision-making, and responsible action. In this way teachers engage with the curriculum in a way which ensures students are able to learn about citizenship even when the curriculum does not mandate such learning.

At no point in the course of these interviews did any of the teachers outline a specific set of expert knowledge upon which citizenship education depends. As citizenship educators they are, however, dependent upon the resources available to them, and their comments above identify significant gaps in curricular support for citizenship education through social studies, current affairs, and rights education. Further, teachers who consider citizenship in alternate contexts such as equity and social justice; as a set of values; or as a way of helping students to reflect about their identities and think critically about decision-making, also find themselves supplementing the curricular expectations in order to ensure these citizenship ideas are articulated in the classroom. Thus, locally-scaled actors play a key role in both prioritizing which curricular guidelines to focus on in their classroom, and in finding resources which support their vision of citizenship education.

It is because citizenship education relates not just to what children learn but to how children learn, that we cannot consider citizenship only in relation to curricular learning. Teachers view volunteer opportunities as a way for students to learn to act as responsible citizens who are self-motivated to do good things which benefit the whole school environment. Other activities such as fundraising – for local or international causes – or student government, sports teams, and other clubs and opportunities, are similarly viewed as
ways for students to become ‘good’ citizens. While it is therefore possible to draw comparisons between the Ontario educational discourses revealed in Chapter 3, and the discourses of citizenship as responsible behaviour revealed here, this would also be an incomplete view on how citizenship is articulated through the local school. We may also observe how teachers value these opportunities because they allow children to explore personal interests and greater extra-curricular freedom than they might be exposed to at home. Within the school, their ability to explore their interests and sense of self is expanded.

Past research on citizenship and education has examined what form citizenship education has taken and could take (Gilborn, 2006; Halpern et al, 2002), and often paid particular attention to the specific curriculum format this might take, such as civics education or social studies (Evans, 2006; Heater, 2004). However, such studies have failed to account for the local role of teachers through whom citizenship education is actually administered. These findings show how institutionalized discourses may be both challenged and reproduced through the work of localized teachers, in different ways through curriculum, supplementary programming, and general classroom expectations. Teachers observe they have greater freedom in teaching for citizenship when they work more flexibly with the curriculum, and as a result the largely political aspects of citizenship covered by the curriculum may be expanded to include aspects of social citizenship and difference.

Proponents of children’s ‘active’ citizenship, underpinned and empowered by children’s rights, also argue in favour of recognizing children’s capabilities and interests in the present-day, not merely as future adults (Howe and Covell, 2002; Stasiulis, 2002). Still, current trends within discourses emanating from the provincial scale in Ontario represent children primarily as future adults, and accordingly value children’s education inasmuch as it is useful for children who will seek employment and opportunity as adults. While curriculum
development and change is a focus of significant concern for teachers and members of the public alike, this also tends to assume that citizenship education – or preparation for adult citizenship, as the current Social Studies curriculum tends to represent - depends on what children learn, rather than how, when, or where they learn, and with whom. One of the challenges of citizenship theory has been including children in the experience as contemporary individuals, not merely as future adults. Lister’s recent (2007) discussion on current empirical work, for example, acknowledges a conspicuous and continued lack of work which represents children within citizenship research.

While it may well be true that citizenship’s “terms of reference have begun to shift away from the decidedly ‘political’ form of citizenship, anchored in questions about the individual’s position vis-à-vis an overarching political body, to a more diffuse ‘social-cultural’ form of citizenship wrapped up in questions about who is accepted as a worthy, valuable and responsible member” (Painter and Philo, 1995: 115), it is difficult to draw complete distinctions between these two facets of contemporary citizenship. In the Ontario elementary school, this relates to the nature of citizenship education as both a curricular and non-curricular enterprise, and depends greatly on the localized interests of teachers. As we shall see from the next chapter, children’s views on citizenship are equally nuanced as those of adults working within the school, and once again speak to the dualized nature of citizenship education. These findings will speak to the situated nature of ‘good’ citizenship as a perceived expectation in children’s lives both at school and in their everyday communities. In the next and final results chapter, I will discuss my findings from the final phase of my research involving children, situated here as elementary school students.
Chapter Five: Children's Perspectives

In this research I examine how citizenship is articulated through Ontario public schools, through a multi-method approach which combines analysis of provincially-scaled discourses and interactive methods with both teachers and children. In Chapter 3 I discussed how public statements from the Ontario Ministry of Education broadly frame education as an achievement-oriented process governed by standardization, creating the responsibly-behaved individual as the end citizenship goal of public education. Children’s identities are then contextualized in terms of their future, adult selves, as individuals who will benefit from today’s educational ‘investments’ in the future. Through the provincial elementary school curriculum which defines citizenship predominantly through adult-oriented concepts such as governance and electoral processes. Limited opportunity is offered for children as students to understand themselves as citizens in the present-day, or as bearers of rights.

In Chapter 4 I discussed findings resulting from my one-on-one interviews with elementary school teachers currently working in three different school boards in Ontario. These interviews reveal the Ontario public school as a dynamic site influenced not only by provincial curriculum and policy but by locally-embedded relationships between teachers and students, the school and the family, and extra-curricular connections to the community and wider world. From teachers’ perspectives, citizenship at school relates largely to the curriculum in the context of the multicultural Canadian nation-state. As the curriculum is delivered and mediated locally, teachers work to supplement curricular expectations with local resources, extra-curricular activities, and teaching methods which support students’ expression of identity and exploration of personal interests.

However, viewed more broadly through the institutional space of the school and through specific non-curricular activities, citizenship is perceived more as a form of
individualized, self-regulating behaviour. Teachers act as role models in a school environment which is supported by rules and guidelines governing student behaviour, reinforcing expectations of respect, patience, and co-operation in their classroom. In this sense teachers reproduce the school as a disciplinary site, at times in tension with the home. As a result, citizenship cannot simply be characterized as a form of civic membership, but rather there is some evidence through non-curricular facets of the school of citizenship as a mode of ‘good’ citizenship-like behaviour and self-conduct. In this way citizenship is transformed as ‘good citizenship,’ which is not necessarily a pre-requisite for ‘Canadian’ citizenship. Although much of these discourses represent citizenship in a more individualized, flexible fashion significant to the local community, and reminiscent of neo-liberal trends, there is a tension here between this form of citizenship and reliance on the Canadian nation-state as the site of citizenship belonging, and regulator of rights and responsibilities. Teachers are also able to use their locally-scaled role to supplement their teaching with potentially rights-oriented curriculum.

In this chapter, I address the final stage of my research in which I engage children directly with questions related to citizenship and education, in order to better understand these concepts from the perspective of children themselves. First I will discuss my research methods and attend briefly to the process by which I gained access to working with children within school spaces. I will then identify some issues of positionality and power relations which became evident to me specifically in regards to working with children at school. The rest of the chapter will be devoted then to the findings which resulted from this portion of my research. Similar to the discussion of the interviews in Chapter 4, I employ (anonymous) direct quotations from the children’s sessions as a way of representing their contributions to this research and allowing their voices to be heard. Additionally, however, due to the
unexpectedly large number of classrooms which participated (17), I have also represented some of the findings in a table format in Appendix F.

Although citizenship has become a significant field of study for the social sciences in the 21st Century, and existing scholarship points to the school as a site where children can and do learn about citizenship, research with children on these topics remains limited. This project would be incomplete without some account of perspectives of children who spend a significant portion of their daily lives within Ontario schools. In the following section I will discuss the methods I used to work with children within local schools, and will then discuss the findings from this portion of my research.

**Children at School: Research Methods**

My research questions ask: to what extent do children identify the school as a site of citizenship; and how is children’s understanding of citizenship dependent upon the school or other spaces such as the home or local community? In order to gain some insight on children’s perspectives on citizenship, it was important for me to work with child research participants and not only with adults. With this in mind, for this phase of my research I made use of methods which were interactive and also easily afforded participant anonymity.

As I discussed in Chapter 2, power relations between the researcher and the ‘researched’ have received considerable attention in recent decades, along with the recognition that children are vulnerable to being taken for granted as less authoritative participants, due to their younger age and more limited vocabulary (Alldred and Burman, 2005; Christensen and Prout, 2002; Hill, 2005; Punch, 2002). Working with child research participants thus raises additional concerns over being aware of potential assumptions over researcher’s differential power and authority within the research. Thus, in selecting the above
combination of methods for this research project, one of my goals was to balance as much participatory authority and control as possible with the children with whom I worked. I chose to work with groups of children rather than speaking with children individually, to reduce the likelihood of power imbalance, to increase the likelihood of participant anonymity, and to minimize ethical concerns about my own position of authority. A situation involving a single adult questioning a single child within an enclosed environment would be more likely to cause intimidation and reduce the comfort level of the child participant, and also invite concern over safety issues.

In Chapter 4 I outlined the steps by which I gained access to the school sites, which involved first making requests with the school board and arranging permission with principals and teacher contacts within the individual schools. This process clarifies how this balance of authority in the school also involves the adults who govern and administer to the school spaces through the local school boards, and not only the teachers. In order to first gain access to the research sites and to begin to ask permission of teachers and their students to work in their classrooms, I first engaged the school boards through research applications to conduct my project in local school sites. Gaining access to school space thus requires persistence and patience, however, once I was able to visit teachers and students in their schools, I was made welcome and the research participants expressed their interest in participating and telling me about their schools. Through these visits I not only gained insight into citizenship ideas, but also gained a great deal of respect for the work teachers do, and the diverse experiences and perspectives that children bring to the school.

External research requests were sent to four school boards: Hamilton-Wentworth, Kawartha-Pine-Ridge, Toronto (all in Sept-Oct 2005), and to the predominantly rural ‘School Board C’ (in January 2006) which included a description of the research project and
copies of recruitment letters and Letters of Consent for all research participants (See Appendices C and H). These applications were all successful, although the response time between Boards varied from less than one month to up to four months. Some minor changes were requested which did not affect the substantive work of the research, nor the questions asked of the participants, but this included adjusting the Letter of Consent form so that only the parent signature was made mandatory although the child signature was still requested, and to identify that students would be filling out a written survey in addition to the classroom activities (in Toronto), or clarification on how long the session would take, to ideally fit the length of time in one school timetable period (common in all school boards).

The proposed classroom activities with the children did not pose significant concern, as these were interpreted as activities which could be compared similarly to the kind of classroom work that might already be conducted at school.

I received some suggestions that I might like to work specifically with Grade 5 students, as their Social Studies curriculum might have prepared them well for an activity session on citizenship. In the case of Kawartha Pine Ridge, the review committee requested that I adjust my research to conduct the activities with the children outside of classroom time, so as not to detract from the teachers' time spent with the mandatory curriculum.

However, in the end no teachers or classrooms were successfully recruited in this board. Additionally, in some cases the review committee expressed concern over how to occupy or account for the students who would not have signed letters of consent, as they might feel ‘left out’ of a unique event. I responded that I would work this out on a classroom-by-classroom basis with the teacher, but that ultimately I would be limited to working with students who had given consent and/or received parental consent. It has already been well-observed that children have the right to accept or refuse consent to participate in research
(MacNaughton and Smith, 2005), and so for this reason I encouraged the child participants’ signature, although my desire to require this signature equally with the adults was limited by the governing practices in the school boards. In the end, several participating classrooms did have a 100% response rate from the students involved. In the cases where some students did not submit their forms, the teacher assigned them separate work to be completed in a different area from my group work with the students.

Among others, Kellet et al have observed that despite the growing interest in children’s research, “much participatory research is generally adult-led, adult-designed and conceived from an adult perspective” (2004: 329), and it is unfortunately true that this project is also adult-led and adult-designed. However, I designed the sessions with the children to be as interactive as possible and to afford them the chance to participate based on their own knowledge and personal experience. Some acknowledged concerns in conducting research with children include accounting for their possibly limited or different vocabulary, shorter attention spans (Christensen and Prout, 2002; Kellet et al, 2004; Punch, 2002), and the use of interactive and creative methods (Davis, 1998; Veale, 2005), to afford them anonymity and ease. Moreover, creative methods can mitigate undesirably imbalanced relationships of power in children’s research. Adults’ power may be reduced or more balanced when children feel that they are a part of the research process. For these reasons, children’s researchers may choose to “employ structured activities as an alternative to interviews” (Davis, 1998: 328), such as drawing, storytelling, playing with toys, or participating in focus groups, since approaches such as these allow children to become more active participants in the research.

The specific activities I conducted with the children were varied, not limited to simply a list of interview questions. Because I was working through the schools and often
conducted both the teacher interviews and children’s sessions on the same day or during the same week, I worked with the children in their classrooms at school. The group sizes varied considerably as in several groups there were many students who did not submit their consent forms. The group size ranged from 10 students to 40 students, most commonly averaging between 20 and 25. I engaged the students in group discussion during which I asked them three general questions (See Appendix E – due to time constraints, it was necessary to focus on Questions 1, 3, and 5 only) and recorded their responses on the blackboard in the classroom so that these were visible to the participants. This was one advantage of using the classroom space, since all classrooms contained either blackboards or other recording aids designed for group work – however this could also be interpreted as a disadvantage, read as a common authoritative tool designed to be used by adults in the educational space. Had more time been available, I would have liked to have allowed the children to record their own answers on the blackboard, and this would have also helped mitigate such factors.

I then invited the students to work in smaller groups for role play, and for each group to choose a specific idea from the brainstorming webs which I had recorded, that they would then act out in a ‘skit’ or brief dramatic presentation. There were three significant reasons for choosing to work the child participants in this manner: The students could work with each other to decide what kind of scenario and information they would present, and thus maintain some participatory control within the research; By presenting their citizenship ideas in the format of a role play, the child participants were able to draw on their own perspectives in what kind of situations and spaces citizenship is articulated; And perhaps most importantly, the role play is an active method which stimulates the children’s interest more so than a simple interview or survey would be likely to do – in fact, during the research, some groups enjoyed it enough that the students wished to present their skits a
second time. One hindrance of working as an adult within school space is that it is difficult to maintain an interpersonal style which will “reduce and not reinforce children’s inhibitions and desire to please” (Hill, 2005: 63), however I also believe that the open-ended-ness of this activity was able to slightly counteract any traditional adult authority, as there was no single set of ‘right’ answers from which to choose. They were able to decide amongst themselves what to present, and how.

I discovered that the best group size for skits was between 3-5 students per group. Groups of only 2 students were less likely to be enthusiastic, and groups of 6 or more were more likely to have difficulty deciding on a single focus for their skit. In retrospect, a class size between 20-25 students allowed for all students to be able to contribute constructively to discussion and to further sub-divide into 4-5 students per small group. Class sizes larger than 30 were more likely to contribute to a distracting environment and therefore limit the amount of time spent on group discussion or skit preparation time. I believe this also reveals some day-to-day challenges of working with classes of 30 students or more, which is a recognized concern across the province (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2008a).

The third and final method was a brief survey (see Appendix E) which engaged the students with very similar questions to the group brainstorming and role play, and one additional question which asked the students to evaluate the activities by telling me what they enjoyed the most. My purpose in delivering this brief questionnaire was to provide another opportunity for the child participants to convey their ideas about citizenship in a more reflective, less intrusive way. Since some students might be shy about responding during a group discussion, the questionnaire allowed them to answer in written form. In retrospect, however, I am not convinced that this response format was necessary. In Chapter 4 I acknowledged some of the challenges of working as an adult within school space, which
is commonly invested with adult-oriented authority through disciplinary practices. One such example is through the regular grading of written work through curriculum. With respect to my own research methods, I realized too late that it is very easy for a written questionnaire – however anonymous or concise – to be interpreted as a test situation when completed in a classroom. I estimate that the more active methods such as role play are more likely to diverge from traditional classroom examination methods, and are more likely increase the children’s level of comfort. If children perceive that they are responding in a test format, they may also assume there is a ‘right’ answer, which would further mediate their responses.

In the end, I chose to devote my analysis to the brainstorming sessions and the role play. The questionnaire responses also tended to repeat the ideas which had been expressed in the interactive portions of the session. However, the questionnaires were extremely useful in one key respect – they included the question ‘what did you enjoy the most about today’s activities?’ Overwhelmingly, I received responses that indicated their enjoyment of the role play sessions. In general, the child participants enjoyed the role play portion of the activity session, and in several cases they asked if they could present their skits a second time.

**Research in Schools**

In conducting this research within school sites I have thus worked to delineate the nature of citizenship articulation in these places, at the same time attempting to work with the power dynamics and locally-scaled relationships which define these sites as schools. The multi-method approach of this project which took me inside school spaces was invaluable, given the multiple scales through which public education is governed, and the multiple actors operating in local schools and in their administration and governance. Children’s perspectives and not adults’ alone revealed their day-to-day context for these concepts in
their school experiences, recreation, and family lives. They revealed nuanced perspectives on how citizenship may be simultaneously experienced according to liberal and neo-liberal norms; to responsible or altruistic behaviour as well as identification with the nation-state, with laws and rules, and view the school as a site of preparation for adult life in ways not fully accounted for by provincial discourses.

Still, conducting research in this triangulated fashion engages with a variety of research issues unlike those encountered through textual analysis alone. In conducting research in schools which was both about children and with children, I planned my methods in such a way as to attempt to give the child research participants as much of a chance as possible to speak from their perspective in an unmediated manner. Moreover, given that children in school are accustomed to writing as a form of testing or graded work, I wished not to limit my research to a written format. As a result, I structured the children’s activity sessions in a way which began first with group discussion, and then moved on to invite them to work in small groups and decide amongst those groups what ideas they would choose to focus on in their role play. This afforded the participants some authority in what ideas they chose to express during the research and allowed them to work with their peers rather than responding only to my direction. As Veale has noted in relation to participatory research with children, such research should strive to reinforce “non-hierarchical relationships and reciprocal learning between participants and researchers” (2005: 254), and likewise I structured the activity session in this way allowing them some freedom to respond based on their own experiences in a creative fashion.

In many ways working in the classroom space was helpful. For example, all classrooms were equipped with blackboards, or other recording materials. Logistically, this made the brainstorming portion of the session easier in that there was a readily available
means of recording the brainstorming webs. Doing the recording in this way also allowed the students to see the items which were being discussed and recorded, and could refer to them later on by checking the blackboard, as they decided which ideas to present in the role play portion of the session. Additionally, because teachers remained present in the room, they were often helpful in recording the brainstorming notes onto paper.

However, these aspects of the classroom space are not without concerns. As I conducted the research I recognized that as an adult working with children within a school space, I would always be considered the authoritative figure – or one of the authoritative figures, as their teachers were still present although not directing the activities - and it is extremely difficult to completely reverse or even to shift this dynamic of power very far. Moreover, it is significant that the micro-geography of the classroom space was in most cases designed such that the students are meant to focus their attention towards an adult speaker at the front of the room. The students’ desks tend to be arranged in rows or clusters so that they will pay attention towards front of the room and the blackboard, where it is usually the teacher who speaks and writes. Indeed, as Katz has argued in relation to field research, the process of defining and conducting research in ‘the field’ imposes the researcher “on the time-space of others.” The researcher is “an outsider in this context, but once there, of course, [is] not marked outside the power dynamics of the space so marked” (Katz, 1994: 68). Although I was not the teacher, in conducting research in this manner within the school I was still the adult demanding the students’ attention, and this is a power dynamic which cannot simply be altered over the course of a single hour-long research session. However, the skit presentations gave the child participants opportunity to be the speakers, and not just the audience. I believe this significantly increased their level of enjoyment of the activities.
Moreover, I believe this reversal of inviting them to participate with some degree of choice in their role play expression, and to participate in front of the audience composed of the rest of their classmates, gave them the chance to temporarily shift this power dynamic. The use of humour in their dramatic roles emphasizes this. By making their classmates – and teachers – laugh as they presented their skits about citizenship, they gained some degree of control over their audience and also showed their comfort level over being in the ‘spotlight’ at the front of the room. Indeed, although the child participants were always subject to the same rules that would normally influence their time at school – such as in the language they were allowed to use - I found that in many cases students would use the role play presentations as an opportunity for comedic performance in front of their new audience. The students often exaggerated their roles in a way which generated laughter from their classmates who were watching – for example, in one skit (in TD2) a doctor administers a shot, but the ‘doctor’ exaggerates this almost in a ‘mad scientist’ tendency; In another scenario (below), a student plays a judge and acts like the ‘Godfather’ handing out justice:

[Scene, at school:]
A: "You suck!"
B: "You suck, poopy-head! I'm going to hurt you!"
C: "Bring it!"
[fight ensues]

[students are brought in for punishment]
D [assumes Godfather-like personality]: "You come to me, on the day of my race."
[lots of class laughter]
D: "And for what? You are suspended for nine days! Get out of here."
A, B, and C: [wail in disappointment]

[Scene, years later]
A: "Why isn't your work done?"
B: "Ah, I had to read my kids a bedtime story!"
A: "Unacceptable, you're fired!"
C: "Hey, you got fired!"

A: "Our play was about showing kids and adult punishment."
B: "Yeah, and the differences."
A: "In the first play it was, he got suspended, and then in the second one…
C: "He got fired. And he had to go see his friends and say he got fired."
A: "Right."

In another case the comic effect was so exaggerated that it became the focus of the role play activity, rather than the citizenship ideas themselves, such as in this example:

A & B: [Blind person walks along and knocks down an elderly person]
C: [girl helps the elderly person to down]
C: "Are you okay now?"
B: "Whooaaaa!" [falls off of chair]
C: "I've made this stick for you." [gives B a cane]
A: [slips and falls again] "Oh, no! I fell…"
C: [helps her again]: "Okay, you can walk! You can walk right here…" [helps her to use stick]

Here, the participants took more time to show the elderly characters falling down and getting up again than on other dialogue that might have probed or illustrated ideas about citizenship in more depth. In this case, having an opportunity to act in front of their classmates was clearly a stronger priority for them. While this meant that I did not gain deeply significant insight into their perceptions about citizenship from this particular skit, this did emphasize for me that the students found more personal value in adopting a different role in front of a classroom audience. As Davis has observed, “children make their own decisions about whether to participate and themselves identify which issues are sensitive during the research process” (Davis, 1998: 330). Although all children who participated had given or been given consent to participate, this use of humour reveals a potential means of subversion of the research process. At minimum, these participants found a way to turn their participation into a diversion from their usual school day activities. This was also possibly a way of participating selectively, only on their own terms.
The group dynamics of a classroom setting were difficult to predict, since they would vary between schools and between classrooms. In some cases, one or two very enthusiastic participants could have easily dominated the discussion, which is not something that would have been likely in a setting with smaller groups of 5-6 students or less. As a result, I conducted the brainstorming sessions by including encouraging comments, such as asking if anyone had not spoken who wished to. In the end, I am not convinced that one or two dominant students greatly skewed the thoughts of all the child participants, since the skits represented a variety of ideas and not all role play groups from the same classroom presented the same ideas. I think the group discussion was beneficial for the participants to hear others’ ideas in the group, as a way of focusing their own thoughts or presenting ideas to compare or contrast with their own and stimulate discussion. Citizenship is a broad concept which even my adult research participants had difficulty discussing without a moment for reflection, and so I was comfortable engaging the group brainstorming activity first and then moving on to small group work where the child participants could refine their ideas according to their own choices and thoughts.

Using interactive methods in this way was valuable, however if children are not interested in talking, it is hard to encourage them to do so in this kind of situation at all. In one classroom the teacher identified to me after the session that the group morale was low that day because a schoolmate’s sibling had been killed in an accident the previous day. As a result, it had been difficult to stimulate discussion immediately, and it took several minutes for the students to ‘warm up’ to engaging in a broad discussion about citizenship ideas.

Other constraints were more predictable, however, due to the school environment – one common example was the amount of time. Had I had more time available, I would have invited the students to do the written recording, or I could also have asked more detailed
questions or conducted the brainstorming in smaller groups. I had anticipated working with
the children for 1 hour, however it became clear that the true limits on my time were the
length of the classroom periods in each school’s daily timetable. This may vary between
boards and may be 45 minutes or 1 full hour. My ability to manage the time and
accommodate all parts of the intended research process was largely dependent on the size of
the class and the level of participation interest in the students. For example, if there were
many small groups with difficulty deciding on a role play topic or choosing ‘parts’, this
extended the amount of time needed. In many cases the interested teachers agreed to host
me for a ‘double’ period so that I would be able to work with their students for an entire
hour, or slightly longer if it was necessary. While I had planned for hour-long sessions and
could have easily increased this to 1.5 or 2 hours, unless a teacher was willing to give up two
class periods in a row I was most usually restricted to 40-50 minute sessions.

Much children’s research is broadly concerned with selection of research methods
which are well-suited for the questions under consideration, and the mitigation of such
positionality and authority issues which I have already begun to discuss. However, there is
relatively little acknowledgement of the relatively micro-level details which are of high
significance to child research participants and yet very unlikely to be anticipated by the
researcher. For example, I realized it was helpful, when they were preparing the role play, by
suggesting that they could write a script down if they wanted to, or that they could use props
– neither of these were required, but afforded them a much higher of personal control. I
discovered other simple strategies which were very important to the child participants and
raised their comfort level in the project. One such instance involved the role play sessions.
After the group discussion session during which I invited students to speak about their ideas
and I recorded everything on the blackboard so that they could see their contributions, I
then invited them to work in smaller groups and develop a short dramatic skit to represent the citizenship idea they thought was most important. However, in my plan of research I had not gone as far as to anticipate how to decide what order these smaller sub-groups would present in – this could be as few as two skits for smaller groups, but up to six or seven for the larger groups which had full classroom participation. The method of determining presentation order turned out to be of even greater significance for the child participants. I came to use the method of assigning each group a number and randomly drawing a number for the presentation order, which was in all cases accepted as a fair approach.

As the responses I received from both teachers and students attest, schools and classrooms rely on a certain amount of structure. Teachers in several sites spoke about the nature of the school as a disciplined environment, and children’s responses in brainstorming discussions and role play presentations (below) revealed a strong understanding of the sets of rules and instructions that they are expected to follow while at school. This also presented an intriguing set of circumstances for me as the researcher, during the process of deciding how to divide the children into smaller groups for the role play sessions, for which I had not pre-selected a single method. Allowing them to choose their own partners was my ideal choice, since this afforded them some control over their participation in the research. However, this could also lead to some difficulties, as some students might feel ‘left out’ of some self-selected groups and have hurt feelings, the group sizes might be uneven (which itself can lead to other issues – I discovered that group sizes between 3 and 5 children were ideal), or the process of deciding the groups might be time-consuming and hinder their preparation time or presentation time. Alternately, however, I discovered that the internal classroom environments were already amenable to small-group work since the students are often either already seated in small groups of 4-6 desks, or already have smaller group
divisions within the classroom – ‘reading groups’ was one such group division in more than one classroom I visited. In these cases the decision to align the child participants’ role play groups with existing classroom structures could be made with relative ease and in very little time, since the children were already familiar with that organizational format as well as the other students in those groups. However, this also limited that nature of their participation in the research, as they were presenting their ideas with partners not of their own choosing.

I reassured the child participants that I valued their responses and that there was no ‘right or wrong’ way to respond to the brainstorming discussion questions or to the role play. However, there were some instances when remaining an uncritical scribe was difficult. An example of this arose during the role play activities, in several of the classrooms. One common example of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ citizenship which the children enjoyed presenting was the representation of bullying at school, whereby the skit participants would show a student being bullied, as well as the potential consequences or solutions. In their desire to illustrate such situations, however, the participants would sometimes ask me if it was all right for them to use curse words in the skits, spoken by a ‘bad’ character. I was unprepared for this question when it was first raised. I found myself answering by asking the querents how their teacher would likely respond. In all cases the students considered this, thought the teacher would not allow it, and accepted that this would mean avoiding using those words.

I recognize that such a decision likely goes against the grain of the transformational research stance advocated by MacNaughton and Smith, which would by contrast challenges the researcher to “consciously and deliberately examine and challenge systems of power and truth that produce inequities and injustices” (2005: 112-113). Indeed, I am unsure whether this particular example of disallowing children to use curse words in their role play fosters justice or injustice in the social world of the school: disallowing such verbal expression, on
the one hand, places limits on how children may express themselves; on the other, it encourages respectful interaction between children and adults and children and their peers. In these cases I reported my exchanges with the child participants to the teachers, to communicate the students’ willingness to use such expressions by way of dramatic example. However, as a transitory visitor in these schools, I was unwilling to disturb the norms set in place, since, as the teacher interviews reveal, teachers depend on certain governing rules and codes of conduct in order to maintain an effective or respectful classroom.

Indeed, conducting research with children in the space of the school requires a nuanced negotiation of power relations, and it is unlikely that these power relations can be completely overcome by a lone researcher. These experiences represent a struggle to both gain valuable research and not interfere with the social environment in which I worked. Although I told all participants of my interest in hearing from them, that they were making contributions to new research and that there was no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answer, I was still likely to be perceived as an authority figure in the school. However, even amidst such constraints, none of the child participants lacked for a contribution to the discussion or role play. Those who participated were informed of what they were doing and accordingly had ideas to share. In many cases, they were eager to present the same activities a second time, limited only by constraints of the length of the school period in which I visited them.

**Children’s Citizenship Ideas: Hearing from the Groups**

In my findings in Chapter 3 I identified that while the curriculum does link citizenship with some liberal-democratic concepts including governance within the nation-state, immigration, and national history and geography, in general this is limited to only one grade level in the elementary school curriculum. Moreover, this contrasts with broad
provincial discourses promoting more neo-liberal visions of children as future citizens and contemporary achievers. I discovered teachers’ perspectives to likewise reflect a liberal view of citizenship in the sense that individual citizens hold rights and responsibilities as members of a group, and act in the interests of a public ‘good.’ Much of this aligns with modern theory traditionally denoting citizenship as territorial identity fixed at the scale of the nation-state as a realm of governance, regulator of migration, common identity, and multicultural belonging (Brodie, 2002; Gordon and Stack, 2007; Kymlicka, 2001, 2003), reminiscent of citizenship as “the rights and obligations that accrue to individuals as full members of a community, normally the nation-state” (Kofman, 1995: 122).

Still, when considered in respect to the work of the school, teachers’ perspectives on citizenship reveal a more strategic picture of citizenship consistent with normative behaviour and the conduct of responsible or ‘good’ citizens, upon which the school and the teachers working within it depend. Rather than an overtly democratic or political form of citizenship learned through curricular education, this citizenship more reminiscent of neo-liberal trends is layered with more traditional political citizenship assumptions, in which “the relationship between individuals and their immediate communities…swims into focus, and in consequence we must begin to take seriously the much more informal rules and norms” (Painter and Philo, 1995: 115) which govern citizenship education in school space. In contrast to provincial educational discourse which seems to privilege the latter far more than the former, the work of teachers inside the school seems to provide a form of balance between the two, as it is often through their efforts that citizenship rights education, social studies educational resources, and equity issues are blended with curricular mandates.

In this final phase of my research my interest was in considering children’s perspectives on what citizenship is and how this relates to their activities at school. In order
to accomplish this, I rely on a selection of interactive methods as opposed to the semi-structured interview format. Children’s researchers often make use of interactive and creative or dramatic methods to work with children, to maintain their interest and also ensure some personal privacy on the part of the child participants as they are not required to reveal intimate or awkward details about their own lives. Indeed, in the case of my project, I was most interested in hearing their ideas and what kinds of meanings and experiences they associated with citizenship, and this was easily accomplished through the use of oral and dramatic methods. As Veale has acknowledged in reference to her research with children which uses ‘storygames’, or games where children contribute to an oral story on a certain topic, “a problem with this method is that there are no established analytic procedures for interpreting storygames” (Veale, 262). Similarly, while I used children’s role play as part of the activity sessions, as this is not a traditional geographical research method, there are few guidelines on how to analyze role play results. I have chosen here to focus on a comparative analysis between the brainstorming discussion and the role play groups across the 17 different classroom sites, organizing the results according to the central discourses conveyed according to citizenship, education, and children’s lives. In this section I will discuss the results of the brainstorming sessions in a general sense.

Overall, these sessions revealed that while children may not articulate their ideas about citizenship in exactly the same manner as their adult teachers in the school – for example, they use different vocabulary, and relate easily to popular cultural associations – I think their understanding of what citizenship means is almost as nuanced as that of adults, or even equally so in some cases. While there was some variation in the children’s perceptions between different schools, these were revealed far more strongly in their selection of role play topics than in the ideas they reported during the brainstorming sessions. In the case of
the brainstorming sessions, the most common responses to each broader question were present in each of the three school boards (See Appendices I, J, and K as examples).

After the activity sessions had concluded, I reviewed each brainstorming web and recorded the responses for each of the three main questions. I then compared brainstorming web results for all groups, and noted which responses were the most common across all research participants. Table 2 below reflects the most common responses overall, to the first question about what citizenship means. As was reflected in the interviews with elementary school teachers, their students likewise displayed a dual understanding of citizenship in the sense of normative, community-oriented behaviour (such as being a 'good citizen' by helping in the community, not bullying, being a volunteer), and also as a formal identity associated with membership in the nation-state (relating to Canadian governance or legal institutions, voting).

**Table 2: Brainstorming Sessions – Most Common Responses Overall for “Citizenship”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th># Classrooms with this response</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(17 total)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Canadian citizenship/Belonging to Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Laws/Obeying Laws/Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Helping others/Being kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Voting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Becoming a citizen/Immigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Help community/Volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Differences in developed/developing countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Citizenship test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Donating $$ or food</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responses included in the table above were apparent across all three school boards, these participants held strong associations between citizenship and obeying laws, as well as a general sense of citizenship as something which relates to being Canadian or belonging to Canada. Here, the children understand citizenship as something which relates distinctly to Canadian practices of government and the law, including federal citizenship testing for immigrants, and voting. This is perhaps to be expected, since all Ontario students at the level of Grade 5 and up will have been exposed to a standardized Social Studies curriculum in which “they learn about Canada and the role of citizens in a democratic society within a culturally diverse and interdependent world” (Ontario Ministry of Education 2004a: 2), relating to concepts such as electoral and voting processes, immigration, and citizenship responsibilities. In the case of two classrooms in Toronto, the association between citizenship and legal governance had also been enhanced by interaction with class guest speakers who were legal professionals, and these and several other classrooms had participated in field trips to the provincial and/or federal houses of parliament.

However, additionally reflected in this list of the most common responses are ideas which associate citizenship with kinds of behaviour or charitable action, such as ‘helping others’, participating in the community, or giving donations of food or money to charitable causes. This duality between Canadian citizenship and community-oriented ‘good citizenship’ – which have the potential to co-exist, although one is not necessarily a pre-requisite for the other - has likewise been apparent in the previous phases of research undertaken for this project. Additionally, as we will continue to see in the discussion below, within citizenship as a form of legal justice and a system of laws exists the idea the ‘good’ citizen who obeys the law and follows the rules.
Similar to my interviews with teachers, citizenship as a rights-based concept was not as strong as other responses represented in the table above, in contrast to contemporary observations that “a viable state is important as a guarantee of rights” (Isin and Turner, 2007: 13), and the fact that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is one of the only points of curricular opportunities to engage students in citizenship rights education in Social Studies (OME, 2004e). However, the child participants did reveal at least minimal understanding of citizenship as a concept tied to rights in these preliminary discussions, and in some cases they responded in more detail about Canadian Charter rights such as mobility rights, women’s equality rights, or the right to speak different languages. Additionally, while most of the groups did not specifically name children’s rights as a part of what citizenship is, during the later discussion about citizenship and children specifically, many identified the different rights and privileges which represent forms of children’s citizenship protection. In Table 3 below, for example, several of the less frequent (but multiple) responses revolved around children’s rights to have a healthy lifestyle and that children outside of Canada may

**Table 3: Brainstorming Sessions – Most Common Responses Overall for “Citizenship and Children”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lack of adult privileges: drinking/smoking/driving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Children do not vote/Adults can vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Different responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Adults taken more seriously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Children do not pay taxes/bills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Children raise $$ for school or charity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Children go to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Adults are 18 and older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Different kinds of criminal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Right to be treated equally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Right to have food/water/health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Children elsewhere must work or marry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Helping older people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
be more likely to enter into ‘adult’ responsibilities such as work or marriage, at a young age. There was also some recognition that children and adults receive differential criminal punishment, and that the Canadian courts make allowances for children that do not exist for adults. Additionally, a minority of responses reflect an understanding of children’s fundamental citizenship rights: the right to be treated equally and the right to have food, water, and health. These responses in combination reflect a more nuanced understanding of children’s citizenship than simply a less-privileged life than that of adults. They represent children as individuals who share some fundamental citizenship claims with adults, and that there are circumstances in which children can and should be protected, reminiscent of contemporary scholarship which acknowledges that children’s active identities as citizens should not be represented as in conflict with children’s need to be protected (Matthews and Limb, 1999; Stasiulis, 2002).

One of the goals of this project is to engage with children’s perceptions on what citizenship is, and accordingly, I invited the child research participants to speak about how they think children’s citizenship may be delineated. Particularly since children are more often positioned as future adult citizens rather than as influential citizens in the present (Qvortrup, 1994; Christensen and Prout, 2005; Cohen, 2005; White, 2002), it is valuable to understand from children themselves how they think citizenship relates to their lives in the present. Interestingly, the participants responded to this question by acknowledging differences and perceived differences between adults and children. Some of the comments listed in Table 3 above are not aspects of life which are most often considered part of citizenship – for example, the legal age for driving or smoking cigarettes – however, they do reveal children’s perceptions of citizenship as something which delineates privileges, and adult citizenship as a more privileged experience than children’s citizenship.
Moreover, these comments may be read as an acknowledgement of the institutionalized nature of childhood as a social construction which “appears as a specific structural and cultural component” of contemporary society (James and Prout, 1997: 8). The age limits which define perceived ‘adult’ privileges such as driving, smoking, drinking, or even voting are ultimately non-universal and reveal no unified consensus on the age at which all adult privileges should be experienced. Yet, to the children participating here, they are known variables which separate their experience as citizens from that of adults. The second most frequent response was that children do not vote whereas adults do, however this was less commonly cited than the recognition of other legally-defined privileges held by adults and not children, such as drinking, driving, or smoking.

Their understanding of what citizenship is tended to include knowledge of formal adult citizenship practices such as voting, and this part of the discussion tended to also lead them to register other perceptions of what adults can do or what children cannot do. Most often this included driving, drinking, and smoking, but also things like paying taxes, paying bills, paying for insurance, and so on, such as in this comic presentation which I will highlight here:

B [to audience]: "Adults can do more than us. Adults can drive, but kids can't."
A [goes looking at cars]: "Mm, nice car! I'll take it." [starts to drive]
C: "I'm sorry, you're under age. I have to ask you to leave!"
A: "Arrgh!"

B: [to audience] "Adults can vote, but kids can't."
A: "Who are you going to vote for? I'm going to vote."
C: "I'm sorry, you're under age. I have to ask you to leave."
A: "Hey, quit bothering me!" [gets escorted away]
[audience chuckles]

B: [to audience] "Adults can drink, but kids can't."
A: [indicates beer-hockey promotion] "Ooh, there's a Stanley Cup in this one! Okay, I'll take a 24 pack of Molson Canadian!"
C: "I'm sorry, you're under age, you can't buy this."
A: "Aw, dang it!"
This presentation generated quite a bit of laughter amongst the audience, suggesting a level of sympathetic understanding, while also repeatedly identifying differences between things adults can do and things children cannot do. In this role play, citizenship is about how privileges and responsibilities are differentiated by age, such that children are not permitted to take on the same adult roles. Similar scenarios were presented in other groups, often resulting in laughter and audience sympathy (HW1-01-B; TD4-02-E).

I find this particularly interesting since my interviews with teachers revealed very little discussion if any which revolved around these differences in adult privileges. As Cockburn has observed in relation to such age requirements tied to responsibilities and privileges, “the boundaries of adulthood are constantly shifting” (1998: 109), but while the teachers recognized the rules that children are obliged to follow while at school, the child participants, by comparison, recognizes such boundaries between age groups rather than only those which exist among children.

These sessions also showed the child participants’ perception that adults and children also have different kinds of responsibilities, as they acknowledged that children go to school – ‘like their job.’ As we shall continue to see in further discussion below, these ideas were repeated in discussion about citizenship and school specifically. Additionally, several classroom groups commented that adults are ‘taken more seriously’ than children, and some even supported this by saying that adults are considered citizens but children are not. It is interesting to note that some children do consider citizenship in this way, as do many adults – that citizenship is an adult experience more so than a children’s experience.

As is apparent in Table 3 above, a few of the classroom groups indicated that children’s participation in school is one distinguishing characteristic of children’s citizenship.
In further conversation in the sessions, the third brainstorming topic engaged more specifically with the question of how citizenship relates to school, or to the activities children participate in while at school. This group discussion also revealed a range of responses, although many of these responses relate to each other. In discussion about citizenship in general the child participants associated citizenship with ‘helping others,’ participating in community life, and donating food or money to charitable causes. Here we find similar associating these kinds of behaviour with the school. The most frequent kind of response described charity fundraising that happens at school, with several of these same groups responding that international fundraising efforts were connected with citizenship at school.

The second most common response identified environmentally friendly, ‘green’ activities like recycling, or school environmental clubs.

Table 4: Brainstorming Sessions – Most Common Responses Overall for “Citizenship and School”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Charity fundraising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>‘Green’ activities/Recycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Preparation for adult life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Learning new things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Help to get a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Following rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>International fundraising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in school activities/clubs/sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Learn different languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Diversity at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Right to get an education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Get a good education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>School program for community service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, then, while the responses in Table 2 generally indicate children’s understanding of citizenship as a concept tied to the Canadian nation-state, and its governance, identity, and immigration, these responses in Table 4 reveal the school as a site of citizenship in a
different context. The two most popular responses reveal the school as a site of altruism and voluntarism, as do other responses which identify international fundraising and community service as part of the work of the school. Another common set of responses showed the child participants’ understanding of their experience at school as part of preparation for adult life, in general, or more specifically to help them obtain a job later on as adults. This is certainly a recognizable discourse within provincial curriculum and public statements, and so it is interesting that children within the schools have likewise formed this perspective even if in a limited measure.

Very few of these responses directly invoke the nature of the school as a site of curriculum-based learning, in contrast to contemporary scholarship which ties citizenship education to curricular learning (Evans, 2006; Heater, 2004; Kymlicka, 2002, which I also find an interesting comparison to the findings discussed in Chapter 4. Teachers view citizenship as an integral part of the work of the school, however their interviews revealed citizenship education emerging more dynamically through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities such as character education, achievement programs, sports and teams, and moral education for good behaviour. The children likewise acknowledged the citizenship-oriented nature of the activities which take place alongside or outside of their curricular learning.

Indeed, none of these top responses summarized in Table 4 address specific kinds of knowledge which children gain while at school, whether through the curriculum, or associated citizenship education at school around formal symbols or histories of the nation-state – such as singing the national anthem at school or learning about Canadian history. In discussion of previous two questions, the participants revealed some strong associations between citizenship and some curricular aspects of school life, however all three parts of the discussion also reveals links between citizenship and particular modes of behaviour. While
they also associate citizenship with the Canadian nation-state, they also tend to view
citizenship as experience which is divided by privileges that adults hold and children do not.
At school, they suggest citizenship more prominently as something governed by activities
and expectations outside of curricular learning. Extra-curricular activities, charity fundraising,
and community service are all citizenship activities which children acknowledge as sited
within the local school. These brainstorming questions garnered a great deal of broad
comments on how children may be considered to define citizenship, children’s citizenship
and citizenship within the school. In the role play sessions which followed, however, the
child research participants had the opportunity to reveal in greater detail how these ideas are
situated in everyday situations which they understand.

‘Acting’ as Citizens: Role Play in Children’s Citizenship Research

Perhaps the most interesting result of inviting the students to present smaller skits,
was that one topic in particular was much more strongly represented than in any of the
group discussions. Similar to the group discussion, the most common scenarios represented
within the role play sessions were those which had to do with obeying laws or the criminal
justice system. The second most common focus of the role play skits, however, was bullying
(See Table 5 below), which was not a common response within the brainstorming sessions.
The participants did often refer to citizens’ behaviour or to obeying rules, however in the
form of skits these ideas resonated more specifically in scenarios representative of bullying
and how to respond to bullying behaviour.

Through the brainstorming discussion, the participants linked citizenship to acting
within sets of laws and rules (obeying rules at school, or obeying the law in general), or to
different kinds of ‘good’ behaviour (helping others, volunteering time and money for
'Good citizenship' was often represented in skits by people being helpful, especially to elderly people or to other children being bullied. 'Bad citizenship', by contrast, was consistently represented by situations about bullying or by people committing crimes and breaking the law.

Table 5: Role Play Sessions – Most Common Scenarios Overall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th># Skits (75 total)</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Obeying Laws/Criminal Justice/Policemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rights/Equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Voting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Behaviour &amp; Punishment (Children &amp; Adults)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Citizenship Test (Canada)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Community Service (Funds, no litter, food drive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Helping Seniors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>School Behaviour &amp; Jobs (Correlation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were two classrooms in particular, each of which showed four role play presentations - two about being helpful to other people, and two about bullying (see Appendix G - HW1-02; C1-03). In these cases, the brainstorming web discussions had also yielded a range of responses associating citizenship with behaviour, discipline, and what citizens of different ages are or are not allowed to do. Within these two groups there was very little association between citizenship and the nation-state, diversity and difference, or rights, as opposed to individual responsibility and altruism. In the case of this classroom, the teacher (HW1-02) had also commented on her need to emphasize classroom code of conduct in an effort to address behavioural issues in the classroom. One of the role play presentations presented the following scenario (child participants in the skits are denoted anonymously as participant A, participant B, and so on):

A: “How much money you got?”
B: "Twenty bucks."

C: "Can you believe her?"
A: "That is not very rich."
D: [bully] “Yo, fool, gimme your money!”
B: [cries] "Oh, man!"
   [class laughter at this]
D: "What a baby! Thanks for your money." [leaves]
A: "Okay, let's go talk to the principal."
[HW1-02-B]

Such examples were common in all three research sites, and reveal the child participants’ connections between citizenship and bullying or their response to bullying.

Additionally, bullying was frequently presented as an activity which takes place at school, and in many cases seems to appear as an average part of daily life. The bully ‘character’ in the skit was often a source of comedy for the rest of the group watching, and the typical resolution depicted in the skit above revolved around simply talking to the school principal about what had happened. In a different classroom, however, another group represented while also acknowledging some underlying causes of bullying:

[Scene: A is being bullied by B]
C: “Hey, there’s a girl being bullied, come on!”
D: “Are you okay?”
   [they stick up for the bullied girl]
   [later]
B: “Can I talk to you privately please?”
C: “She has something to say”
B: “I’m sorry. ‘I’m just jealous. You get such good grades and you have nice hair. Sorry.”
[C1-04-C]

These participants went as far as representing a more nuanced depiction of bullying, showing bullies who are really just jealous of the one they bullied, and later allowing the bully and the bullied to become friends at the end of the skit. In combination, these examples reveal children’s knowledge about bullying as a significant experience in their lives, its consequences, as well as some of the reasons why it happens. The consequences of bullying behaviour are in fact well represented. In one Grade 5 Toronto classroom, below, children
presented a bullying scenario in which the bully is punished for poor behaviour, and the
bullied student is supported by the school principal:

Scene: [two girls fighting]
A: "It's mine, give me that!"
B: "It's mine!"
A: "Give me that!"
B: "it's mine, what's your problem?"
[they fight]
C: "I'm telling the teacher on you two!"
[C goes to find teacher, D]
C: "Teacher, they were fighting, and then she punched her."
D: "I have no time to deal with this. You two go to the office, right now."

[later, at the office, student C reports and the principal suspends student A]
[TD4-02-C]

This scenario presents a detailed everyday situation in which bullying takes place at school,
shows a bystander who helps by finding an adult in the school, and acknowledges the
method of punishment (suspension, in this case) for the student who did the bullying,
demonstrating everyday knowledge of the lived reality of consequences of unsafe or
inappropriate behaviour (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000). Although not every
classroom represented bullying scenarios in the same depth, I did find that the child research
participants across all three school boards commonly represented bullying in their skits.

Moreover, it is worth noting that in the province of Ontario in recent years, there has
been increasing attention towards safety in schools. This includes anti-bullying strategies
which emerged in response to the report of an Action Team commissioned in 2004 (Safe
Schools Action Team, 2005). In the discussion guide ‘Safer Schools…Safer Communities’
(Safe Schools Action Team, 2005b), anti-bullying strategies are invoked as one of few
programming initiatives which are discursively justified through citizenship and rights. In it,
anti-bullying initiatives are argued as a way of “supporting a community-wide model that
celebrates positive behaviours – behaviours carried by our students into their adult lives.
When we create safe, respectful learning environments, we build and nurture safe communities for all our citizens” (ibid, 11). As a result, it is understandable that both adults and children in local schools across Ontario would be knowledgeable of bullying and bullying prevention strategies, as students have been particularly identified through these Ontario documents as potential agents in stopping bullying.

While the child participants in this portion of my research project did not specifically identify bullying as a part of citizenship-like (or un-citizenship-like) experiences in group discussion, they did clearly represent this as a scenario in the role play sessions, which indicates an understanding of bullying as part of their day-to-day experiences. Overall, the group discussion revealed their association between citizenship and rules, laws, and helpful behaviour, and this willingness to represent bullying in their role play skits also reveals their familiarity with bullying as an act which is unlike citizenship.

This along with the explicit naming of ‘good citizenship’ or ‘good citizens’ in other life scenarios besides bullying, identifies children’s understanding of citizenship as an experience which is defined by how a person participates in markedly ‘good’ or ‘bad’ activities. Other citizenship practices like helping others or cleaning up the community similarly appear as things that ‘good citizens’ do, but ‘bad citizens’ might not do. In the same two classrooms which presented the bullying skits, above, other groups presented the following as an example of citizenship-like behaviour:

[Scene: 2 girls walking along]
A: "Come on!"
B: "Let's get going."
C: [elderly person walks by very slowly with help of cane]
[falls down]
A & B: [they help him to stand up]
[HW1-02-D]

[Scene: 2 elderly people walk down the street]
A: “Oh no! I’m falling down!”
B: “Me too! Ohhh!”
[slip, lose canes]
C and D: [approach help them out]
A: “Oh, get me my cane!”
C: [gets cane]
A: “Oh, you’re a dear, you’re a dear, you’re a great citizen!”
[C1-03-B]

The participants specifically use the phrase ‘great citizen’ to describe the nature of the helpful action. Similarly, another classroom in the same school represented an anti-littering campaign as an example of ‘good’ citizenship:

[Scene: kids smoking outside, throw their cigarette butts on the ground]
A: “And then, a couple of days later…”
[Scene: the same kids smoke and throw their litter on the ground]
[2 other kids come clean up]
[they put up sign: “don’t litter”]
All: “Be a good citizen, don’t litter!”
[audience laughs, applauds]
[C1-04-B]

From these examples, then, ‘good citizens’, do things like help elderly people and refrain from littering, activities which could be considered community service, but depend on individually altruistic decisions. These are actions which do not necessarily respond to specific institutional rules, but to a general sense of moral guidelines to do good things. These scenes represent the participants’ awareness of these ideas in children’s lives in their communities, and also often translate to their lives at school in a more structured way. In the same Hamilton school, for example, where volunteer service is common and helps students earn achievement certificates, another classroom presented a skit about their school’s community food drive:

[Scene: Sign reads ‘Food drive’]
Someone approaches:
A: “It’s a food drive, come and donate your food!”
B: “Why are you doing this food drive?”
C: “We’re doing this food drive to promote good citizenship among the school and community. Would you like to donate?”
B: “Sure!”
C: “Thank you for your contributions.”
A: “Food drive, be a good citizen and donate!”
C: “Thank you, you’re a role model in our community and in our school.”

[HW1-03-A]

‘Good citizenship’ emerges as an explicit term in the dialogue in this skit, reinforcing the idea of citizenship as a kind of ‘good’ activity, and good citizens as people who are role models, and active in their community to fill community needs. In this skit the school is represented as a site which enables this good citizenship by supporting organized community service such as collecting food donations. In this respect the child participants and the teacher interviewees showed some common ground in their understanding of how citizenship relates to the work of the school. Certainly these examples point to children’s perspectives on citizenship as a set of ‘moral boundaries (Plummer, 2001), however it is unclear to what extent they view these moral boundaries in conjunction with the public good of a nation (Kymlicka, 2001; 2003), or the community-scaled good achieved by an altruistic citizenry.

As in my interviews with teachers, I did not specifically use the term ‘good citizenship’ when I worked with the child participants, but in both of these phases of the research the participants spoke about citizenship using this phrase. The children represented this as a part of their daily lives, inasmuch as they know that good citizens do not bully, or they are helpful to people who are being bullied or who are older or less capable than they are. However, these role play presentations revealed a more nuanced representation of citizenship at school as simply a place where children behave as good citizens by trying to help people or trying not to bully others. As I will discuss in the next section, even within the realm of good citizenship children perceive a broader purpose for their time and school, and view this as something that relates to the concept of citizenship.
Citizenship and the School: Children’s Perspectives

Similar to the teacher interviews, the activity sessions with students across these three Ontario school boards showed evidence of perception of citizenship as not simply status as a member in the nation-state, but as a form of individual behaviour which has effects in society at large – in the nation but also in the local community in which the school is sited. Examples of good citizenship behaviour are familiar to children as the roles expected and valued at school, and indeed the school appeared most consistently within their skits in this manner. The children also related strongly to other opportunities and expectations which they experience at school, for example, joining clubs and groups.

This was a familiar comment from the teachers, however in an interesting contrast, the students also indicated that good citizenship opportunities for children – such as participating in extra-curricular clubs and groups – can also be considered examples of bad citizenship on the part of the adults. It has been well documented that citizenship entails practices of inclusion of some and exclusion of others (Fenster, 1998; Isin, 2000; Lister, 1997), particularly through the institutional scale of governance of the nation-state and practices embedded in racism and gender discrimination. It is certainly clear that the children’s contributions here acknowledge citizenship as an experience which has limits and exclusions. However their contributions here tend to identify citizenship limits as they are defined by adults (i.e. through age limits institutionalized to demarcate adulthood privilege), and in the school these limits are reinforced through rules and decisions made by the teachers within the school space, rather than through broader discourses of identity-based discrimination.

This was particularly evident in role play examples regarding participation in school clubs and activities. In Chapter 4 many of the teachers’ comments indicated this kind of
participation as a structured support for citizenship education. The children’s skits below revealed their perceptions of how teachers can limit students’ participation in school activities since they are the ones who administer the clubs:

[Scene: at school]
A [teacher]: "A-plus for you!" [hands paper to B]
A: "And an A-plus for you too! That was fantastic" [hands paper to C]
[School bell rings]
D [student]: "All right, school’s out?"
[Approaches A]
D: "Ah, Mrs [last name], I’d really like to be on that Yearbook committee, it really sounds like fun, I think I could do a good job. Could I please be on it?"
A: "I’m sorry, D, I don’t think so."
D: "Oh, okay, thanks anyway."
B [student]: "Hey, could I be on the Yearbook committee, I got an A!"
A: "Ah, you should probably just keep doing your studies."
C [student]: "Hey, could I be on the Yearbook committee?"
A: "I was just thinking about that, I have your name right here!"

One of the students in the groups then explained explicitly as a narrator that this ‘bad’ example could be changed if the teacher behaved differently and did not favour the same students all the time:

D: [to audience] "Okay, that was some bad citizenship, because that’s biased. And it was something that happened to me a while back!" [audience chuckles]
"So here’s our example for good citizenship…"

[Scene after school]
D: "Ah, Mrs [last name], could I please be on the Yearbook committee? I haven’t done anything this year and it sounds like a lot of fun."
A: "You know what, I have two spots left!" [signs him up and his friend B]
D: "Oh, great. This is so fair."
C: "Hey, could I be on the Yearbook committee?"
A: "You know what, I like to change it up a little, so I already signed up D and B. But you know, maybe next year. There’s always high school."

A second role play presentation in the same class revealed similar ideas, revealing children’s perception that teachers are biased in how they choose students to participate in clubs like their school Yearbook committee (see Appendix G). Here students acknowledge limits to their citizenship at school which result from an imbalance of power between
children and adults, and an imbalance of privilege between children. This is also something that was acknowledged during interviews with teachers in more than one different school board. Teachers reported their perceptions that it is often the same students who demonstrate citizenship who are selected to participate in more school activities. In fact, a teacher in this same school as the students in the skit above commented that it is true that not all students will be chosen for these Yearbook committee-type of activities, but from his perspective this is a result of the students’ differing academic abilities as opposed to the teachers’ personal bias:

…you know, unfortunately what usually tends to happen is that a lot of it might be based on academics. Because they can handle it, I mean here we’re talking about the students who you can kind of give them this and they will be able to do it. I guess that was the difficulty is how do you grab onto those kids who don’t have those skills… (HW3-01)

The students, by comparison, perceived that the students who were ‘good’ academically were given special attention, but did not make the same kind of connection between academic skills and the skills teachers look for in the school clubs. Both the students and teachers acknowledged limits to student citizenship – through participation in clubs – within the school, but for very different reasons.

It might seem odd to compare such observations to existing theory about citizenship participation barriers, however for the child participants involved, such measures of exclusion represent real and meaningful challenges to their everyday experience of the school as contemporary citizens. Both children and adults in the school acknowledge extracurricular activities as a form of citizenship participation for children, and yet this is also a form of participation which is ultimately controlled by adults, limiting the potential democratic nature of school space. Children’s spaces and decision-making abilities continue
to be governed by adult priorities (Holloway and Valentine, 2000; Matthews and Limb, 1999; Ruddick, 2003), and the children reveal a keen awareness of this reality.

It is clear from these sessions is that children in schools have a strong knowledge of rules and expectations, which in turn delineate citizenship-like action. This was well represented in their skits as many groups represented scenarios about obeying laws. While few teachers commented in detail on the relationship between citizenship and abiding by Canadian laws, this was one interpretation of citizenship which the child participants represented strongly. Children’s perspectives on law and criminal justice were often framed similarly in the context of good and bad citizenship, revealing ‘good citizens’ as people who obey laws, and ‘bad citizens’ alternately as people who do not. For example, one Grade 8 group in Hamilton presented a scenario involving shoplifting as a kind of bad citizenship:

[Scene: inside a store]
A: [steals something from the store]  
[alarm sensors beep on them as they make their way out]  
B: "What are you doing?"
C: "Why did you do that?"
A: "Because I didn't have enough money for the cat food."
D [shop owner]: "Hey, you all get out of here! You shouldn't do that."
A: "I'm not being a good citizen, I shouldn't steal stuff."
D: "That's right, remember that."
A: "I will be a good citizen from now on, no more stealing."

In the previous examples which represented bullying, children participating in acts of good citizenship were viewed as positive contributions to people or the community around them. In this case here, the participants showed a scenario in which the ‘bad citizen’ is reprimanded and reminded to be a ‘good citizen’ after they are caught breaking the law. Good citizenship in this case is both a personal decision and something compelled by law.

The nature of punishment and consequences for adults and children was a significant focus of the role play presentations, in addition to being a popular response in the group.
brainstorming discussions. I will continue to discuss this in the context of presentations which represent citizenship and the law, and this particularly shows children’s understanding of adult citizenship as something which they prepare for as child citizens. In such role play presentations, the school environment is revealed to play a significant role in teaching children about good and bad citizenship behaviour through rules and disciplinary measures such as detention. Research participants in a different Grade 8 Hamilton classroom presented the value of the school as a disciplined environment, since learning to follow school rules and accept punishment for breaking them thus affects children’s ability to abide by the law. The role play group below presented a scene in which skit Character A is bullied and beaten by Character B, who remains unpunished as a child and goes on to behave as a criminal as an adult. They then presented this alternative scenario:

D [narrates]: "If he had been punished…"
[back at school as kids]
B: "Hey."
A: "You look stupid, man."
B: "What?"
A: "Oh no!"
[B beats up A]
C: "Ah, you beat the crap out of him! You are suspended."
B, later, to A: "I don't want to take your money, or choke you any more."
[class chuckles]
D [narrates]: "The moral is that, like, what you do in school reflects on your future."
[HW1-03-C]

These participants thus revealed their understanding of the significance of school life as preparation for adult life, and even that poor discipline at school can reflect poorly on their future adulthood. This shows how rules governing behaviour at school are important because they help children to become responsible adults. A student who is punished while at school, for bullying another student, learns that his actions were wrong and later learns to correct himself. Another group in the same school revealed the school in a similar context as
a preparation for adult life, but here this conflated ‘good’ citizenship with democratic processes traditionally associated with formal membership in the nation-state, as school elections are compared to federal elections:

A [to class]: "Here is our example of students being good citizens by voting for the school president in the council. Here are the voters and here is [B], running for president."
B: "I promise to increase student chips days, and to lower the prices on chocolate milk! Children of the world, unite!"
C: "Unite!"
D: "I vote for [B]!"
[cheers]

A [to class]: "Here is an example of these students years later as adults. And they are still being good citizens by voting for their president. Here are the voters and here is [E], running for president."
E: "I promise to focus all my attention towards health care and towards a better learning environment for the children of our country."
C: "Well done!"
A [to class]: "As you can see, kids have the same responsibilities as adults, they dramatically change throughout their lives. Every day."
[HW1-03-B]

In this way we continue to see citizenship emerging through the school not as a set of knowledge or kind of membership, but as a kind of behaviour – in this case one which is formally linked to democratic behaviour. In many ways, then, the child research participants understood citizenship in the school in this context of behaviour and responsibilities experienced in the adult world, and this one stood out as an example of preparatory democratic citizenship as opposed to simply ‘good citizenship’. Moreover, children show a keen awareness here of the disciplinary and socializing nature of the school as an institution. Stamp commented almost three decades on the historical nature of the school as "preparation for responsible adulthood…through socialized group behaviour as well as mental discipline" (1982: 169), and these skits seem to confirm exactly these observations in the here and now.
Several of these skits also presented school citizenship in the context of preparing for a successful job in adult life. ‘Bad’ school citizens, by contrast, were represented as those who failed to succeed later on in professional positions. For example, in one popular scenario (HW2-01-C), students who come to school to learn go on to find professional employment as adults, whereas those who misbehaved at school end up working at McDonald’s. In a very similar scenario below, one group represents the significance of education by showing the consequences of ‘bad’ behaviour at school. Students who cheat and don’t take school seriously end up with less desirable jobs in the future, whereas the ‘good’ students are professionals. In this scenario, two girls cheat on a test and then don’t bother to show up for school the following day, or the two days after that, and the two ‘good’ students are left wondering what is going on by the time the third day passes:

[A and B go into town, encounter C and D]  
A: “Guys, why aren’t you in school?”  
C: “Don’t feel like it, like, why would we take the time to go to school? It’s like, so stupid.”  
D: “I just can’t be bothered.”  
B: “You guys need to go to school to get good jobs.”  
C: “Doubt it.”  
A and B: [laugh]  
A: “Whatever.”  
B: “So dumb.”

[Scene: Twenty years later: high school reunion]  
A: “Oh my gosh, hi you guys!”  
B: “We haven’t seen you in forever!”  
A: “So what’s your job?”  
B: “I’m a doctor, how about you?”  
A: “I’m a veterinarian.”  
C: “Oh, I work in a bargain shop.”  
A: “What about you, D?”  
D: “I’m a bag boy at the supermarket.”  
B: “Oh yeah, we saw you there.”  
A: “Yeah, me too.”  
[audience laughter][the end]  
[C1-01-B]
Once again, the good students are represented by their model academic behaviour which coincides with their adherence to school rules, asking permission before leaving school property. More significantly, such scenarios represent the school as a place which prepares children for adult life by helping them get ‘good’ jobs, and emphasize that ‘good’ students are the ones who are more likely to succeed. In addition to presentations such as these, however, the child participants revealed the nature of the school as a place which prepares children for adult citizenship by teaching them about following rules and laws. As Table 5 above shows, more than half of the classroom groups who participated in the research project represented criminal punishment scenarios. These were presented in the context of children’s lives and adult lives, but most often both, showing the participants’ sense of children’s citizenship as preparation for adult citizenship, through learning to follow rules and obey laws.

In liberal citizenship theory, the school has been characterized as a site where children may experience civics curriculum and also encounter fellow future citizens in respectful interaction. The school is ideally then a site of education for human character, competence, and capacity for citizenship “for it is here that we internalize the idea of personal responsibility and mutual obligation, and learn the voluntary self-restraint which is essential to truly responsible citizenship” (Kymlicka, 2002: 302). Certainly there are some examples here from the role play which support this perspective that responsible behaviour and ‘good’ character are important in the work of the school, in a potentially inclusive fashion. However, as we also saw in some of the examples above, this tends to be acknowledged not simply in the sense of contemporary respectful interaction between peers but as a method of becoming responsible, employable adults, more reminiscent of contemporary shifts away from inclusive citizenship (Basu, 2004; Mitchell, 2001, 2003). Moreover, a truly inclusive
model of citizenship has been characterized as not simply one in which citizens interact respectfully but as the structured guarantee of justice, recognition (and respect for difference), self-determination, and solidarity (capacity to act in unity in claims for recognition), as Lister has recently argued (Lister, 2007: 50-51).

Although children acknowledge formal participation for democratic citizenship – through voting and electoral responsibilities, and civic duties, more common were skits such as this one tended to translate the rules and norms learned as children as preparation for comparative circumstances in adult life subject to laws, punishment, or consequences for employment. Overall there is a keen level of awareness of the normalized forms of citizenship participation, either in the Canadian nation-state, or in private life in the workplace, altogether fairly traditional kinds of participation along the lines of the ‘marriage, market, and military’ (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Although I was admittedly disappointed not to encounter a more critical – if subtle, or differently worded – view of citizenship, or acknowledgement of different politics of gender, race, and power which have become so thoroughly explored in contemporary theory (Smith, 1989; Stachli and Cope, 1994; Taylor, 1989; Walton-Roberts, 2004), I believe many of these presentations represent acceptable forms of participation based on contemporary school experiences.

However, one key exception to this came in the form of presentations on adult citizenship participation in the national public sphere as voters. Civic duties and not simply responsible employment and ‘good citizenship’ were also something which were commonly represented as an aspect of citizenship amongst the role play skits, and emphasized citizens as people who are not only law-abiding but who uphold their duty as voters. Interestingly, however, these were not presented unproblematically. These Grade 8 participants below
offered a skit about how adults are just as likely as children to use citizenship privileges irresponsibly or with poor decision-making skills:

[Scene: voting day]
A[kid]: "Let's go vote!"
B[parent]: "You can't vote."
A: "Why?"
B: "You want me to explain it to you? Do you want me to embarrass you in front of all your friends?"
A: "Sorry."
[go to voting booth]
B [gets ballot]: "This guy's kind of a fatty. I think I'll vote for the other one."
C: "This guy's gross I'm not going to vote for him."
B [to the audience]: "Even some adults make the wrong decisions when they vote, so what makes society think that kids are any better?"

These participants not only criticize the limits of citizenship in the nation-state which assume adults as the participating citizens, but also reveal how they believe children are perceived to be more irresponsible than adults. By representing an adult exercising his right and responsibility to vote in such a cavalier manner, they criticize the assumption that citizenship should only be an adult experience since both adults and children may act irresponsibly.

A different role play presentation from a Toronto Grade 5 class also presented a skeptical view of adults and their citizenship responsibilities, by showing a scenario in which the adult Prime Minister of Canada (Stephen Harper) and President of the United States (George Bush) discuss their policies and address ‘broken promises,’ along with a third party criticizing the two politicians’ track records in Canada:

A: [to the audience] "We are going to have a trial here, and this is 10 years in the future, and Mr. Bush, God forbid, has joined Canada."

B [Stephen Harper]: "Ah, this man has had so many promises broken."
A [George Bush]: "What's one or two promises?"
B: "But it wasn't just one or two promises."
A: "Like what?"
C: "And you [B] promised to stop those smoking laws and that still hasn't happened yet. Why not?"
B: "Because some people need smoking."
In addition to treating adult citizenship with skepticism, this presentation revealed several facets of the participants’ understanding of how citizenship is defined. First, it represents citizenship as part of the political arena – and Canadian citizenship as something which is subject to American political influence. Second, the presentation also assumes that this political participation is in turn open to public criticism and accountability, since even ‘Mr. Bush’ is arrested in the end for breaking his campaign promises. However, the participants in this scenario are all adult figures, which leaves little room for assuming children are afforded a participation role in this kind of citizenship arena. Additionally, many of the skits also addressed citizenship participation in general, and not only participation in the school. In the next section I will draw attention to the children’s perspectives on citizenship as a form of legalized participation often underpinned by rights.

**Responsible Canadian Citizenship: Laws and Rights**

Several of the scenarios presented above represent ‘good’ citizens as people who obey laws, and that children learn good citizenship at school through the preparatory experience of obeying rules and adopting ‘good’ behaviour. I have characterized the shift towards ‘responsible citizenship’ at school largely as a hallmark of recent neo-liberal shifts institutionalized by such policies as the Safe Schools Act (Ontario Ministry of Education,
which privileges responsibility as non-threatening and self-regulating behaviour, and by the Ontario curriculum which broadly denotes the role of education as the means of providing children with skills “to function as informed citizens” and to “participate and compete in a global economy” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004a: 2). The few aspects of the curriculum which deal overtly with national citizenship draw attention to citizenship through governance by adult citizens only, as an aspect of Canadian national identity. We may observe from the children’s sessions above that learning about Canadian law is meaningful for students since they relate adult laws to rules and expectations which govern their lives as children. These participants observe citizenship as a signifier of membership in the Canadian nation-state, and suggest that responsible individual conduct is part of this. Many of the children’s role play groups also represent citizenship in the context of being a law-abiding citizen or recent immigrant in Canada, in ways which situate Canadian citizens as helpful and responsible people. Additionally, where citizenship is represented as a rights-based identity, these are also shown in balance with citizenship responsibilities.

One common scenario in different role play sites was for students to present a comparative pair of scenarios revolving around the law, correlating punishment at school with the prevention of criminal punishment for adults (several scenarios in TD1-01, for example). In such cases the participants made use of their knowledge of legal systems of criminal punishment (often showing not just the criminal act but the arrest and trial, complete with a period of jail sentence) as well as their knowledge of how discipline and punishment operate at school in conjunction with parental oversight (parents were often represented through phone calls from the school or through reprimands after the fact).

In such cases, while the participants did not explicitly identify ‘citizenship’ or ‘citizens’ in their performance, this is nonetheless the kind of scenario which came to the participants’
mind when invited to create a skit about a citizenship idea they thought was important. In
the case of children’s lives, citizenship rules are governed by adults in the school and from
the home, but in the case of adults’ lives this comes in the form of the police officers and
judges who enforce the law. One group in the same Toronto school presented a brief skit
which also involved a robbery, but used it as an opportunity to show Canadian citizenship as
the experience of legal rights, through the right to a fair trial. Their teacher related to me in
her interview how their classroom had had a visitor who worked in the legal profession, and
had done a mock trial in their classroom. Clearly, this participation had been meaningful for
the students in the class, who presented this short scenario:

[Scene: a robbery]
A: “Give me money!”
[robs someone]

[later, at court]
C [accused suspect]: “I didn't do it! I was there at the time the criminal was
there. Can’t I at least get a trial?”
B: “I'm going to play a video, from the robbery.” [watches] “I guess you were
wrongfully accused. We're sorry.”
C: “It's okay. Next time don't jump to conclusions.”
[TD1-02-A]

The students in this classroom had clearly recalled curricular and classroom concepts
and related them to aspects of citizenship, acknowledging citizenship as a mode of
responsible behaviour governed by laws, but also by legal rights guaranteed by the nation-
state. Moreover, other skits similar to this one above present an interesting overlap of
concepts of ‘good citizenship’ as responsible behaviour, and formal citizenship of legal
responsibilities within a nation-state. Several of the role-play groups also showed good
citizens as people responsible enough to act as witnesses in reporting testimony and proof
within the criminal justice system. For example, in this scene from a Toronto class:

A [on phone]: "911…Emergency, emergency!"
[police come to arrest for a crime]
[later, a trial]
B: "Witnesses of the crime reported that C killed him, because he was over by the factory."
C: "Maybe he punched him."
B: "Well, but that still doesn't explain why he got shot. Any other witnesses we have on the scene? Maybe the emergency services people who took the bullets out. I'll get them."
[police detectives called in]
B: "Police detectives, are the fingerprints on the gun a match?"
D: "They are a match."
B: "I declare C to be guilty!"
[C is taken away to jail]
[TD4-02-A]

This group represented individual citizens working – as witnesses of a crime – in cooperation with people from local emergency and police services to report and help solve a crime. Here, a citizen is someone who shows themselves to be responsible by reporting a crime, and is also someone who is supported by public agencies. It is possible that my earlier comments on children’s relative lack of awareness of citizenship as an exercise of power are not entirely supported, then, as these role play examples indeed reveal a keen awareness of structures of power embedded in legal and governance institutions. These do not identify a clear social justice perspective on rights and recognition, and yet I consider that there is certainly an awareness here of the kinds of tensions accompanying “the ideological, legal notion of universal inclusion in citizenship and the fact that in real life citizenship is based on power, which is exercised through the social, economic and political structures” (Staeheli and Cope, 1994: 445). Their perspectives on citizenship ultimately project an idealized vision of universal inclusion, and yet they recognize that this is enforced by legal structures and criminal justice.

This example above shows how the law and criminal justice system was one facet of citizenship which child participants were able to associate with rights, as they had learned about the law and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms through curricular material as well as
potential work with classroom guests, about the trial process and the nature of different scales of governance in Canada. While bullying was also commonly represented as a scenario relevant to citizenship and children’s lives, this was only very rarely related to citizenship and rights, rather as a general facet of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ citizenship. However, in one Toronto classroom in particular the students strongly connected citizenship with rights to the varying classroom skits and a variety of situations. For example, in the context of bullying:

A: “This is our skit on bullying. And I’m the person who’s being bullied, and he’s the onlooker, and these 2 are the bullies, and I’m Mr. George Bush.”
[lots of laughter]

B and C [bullies]: "Hey, give me your lunch money! Hey! Come on!"
A: [gets pushed around]
D [onlooker]: [goes to get teacher]
E [teacher]: "What’s going on?"
B: "Oh, we were just helping him."
C: "Yeah, I was just picking up his stuff."
E: "Go to the office, kids."
B and C: [go off to the principal’s office]

All: [to the audience] “This is a message from the TDSB. You have a right to go to school. But you have a responsibility to be nice.”
[TD2-01-C]

Other skits from this group’s classroom peers included scenarios about the rights and responsibilities of voting, having free health care, and being treated fairly and respectfully. In all cases the students related these scenarios to the concept of citizenship as a balance of rights and responsibilities and often to life in Canada. Although the ‘George Bush’ character in this skit did not play a significant role beyond being named as such, a second Toronto classroom also represented George Bush in their skits as well (in TD1-02), revealing an intriguing and at least passing association between President Bush and contemporary citizenship ideas. More significantly, the participants in this skit represented bullying as an aspect of their lives at school and as something related to citizenship and which infringes upon the citizenship rights of others.
They also represented rights as something which are accompanied by responsibilities, and vice versa, something which was not common in every classroom. Rights and responsibilities appeared again as a theme in another skit in the same classroom group, about health care as both a right and responsibility:

A: [to audience] “This is about a person who’s sick, and she has a responsibility to take a shot but she doesn’t want to. But she needs to.”
B: [to audience] “And we’re in Canada and kids have a right to get a shot, but people in Africa they don’t really get the chance to get to have shots.”

C [child]: "I don't want a shot, I don't want a shot, I don't want a shot…"
[calls doctor's office]
D: "Hello."
E [doctor]: "Hello
D: "I need to schedule an appointment for a sick kid."
E [has a 'mad scientist' manner]: "Well please come in tomorrow."
[one day later]
D: "Hello, doctor."
B: "Doctor, the neutralizer is ready.
E [mimes getting the shot ready]
[audience laughs a lot]
D: "All right, you have to get the shot now."
B: "You're really lucky, you know, some people in Africa don't get to have shots. And you'll be all better."
C: [gets the shot]
E: "Okay, all done."
C: "I feel all better now!"

Once again this citizenship situation was presented as a part of life balanced by both rights and responsibilities. In combination the skits reveal that these rights and responsibilities of citizenship are guaranteed both nationally – as part of membership in the Canadian nation-state – and locally – as part of daily life at school. Similar to the Toronto school in the previous examples about reporting crimes as responsible citizenship, this classroom was also composed of students from diverse backgrounds, including some from immigrant families. However, in the interview phase, their teacher attributed this strong representation of citizenship as a balance of rights and responsibilities to the fact that she had taught a unit on
these concepts as a part of the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum, several months earlier (without anticipation of my visit). In fact, she felt that activities about rights and responsibilities were closer to citizenship than the curriculum portion on aspects of government, and felt that this could be brought in more strongly in the classroom:

because they can talk about it from personal experience. And they can relate it to themselves, and their home, and their family, and even their…you can bring it down to their level, they can relate it to their own little worlds, to their community, their home community…I think that…it’s easier to talk about that. (TD2-01)

Citizenship rights education advocates have argued in favour of public curriculum which teaches rights education in concert with the citizenship responsibilities within the nation-state (Howe and Covell, 2005), and this classroom seems to confirm the likely success of these projects. In addition to these classroom activities about citizenship rights and responsibilities, the students had also received a classroom visit from members of Medecins Sans Frontieres), an organization which works to provide health care around the world (2007; the Canadian organization of Doctors Without Borders), and had thus been exposed to ideas around citizenship rights. The combination of curricular learning, classroom guests, and efforts of the individual teacher resulted in a different picture of citizenship than in many other sites. The children in this classroom did not associate citizenship with discourses of ‘good citizenship’ or good or bad behaviour as strongly as in other classrooms where rights discourses were much less prevalent.

Despite differences in the cultural and ethnic composition of the student body and the community at large (as indicated in Appendix D, research sites ranged from being almost entirely homogenous in Board C to a high degree of linguistic and immigrant diversity in Toronto), role play scenarios appeared in each board in some measure which represented citizenship situations about equal rights or general ideas about equality. One such example is
this one below, from a Grade 6/7 group in Board C who viewed women’s rights as a part of citizenship in Canada, as opposed to more limited rights elsewhere:

[Scene: at home, a married couple]
A [woman]: “Can I have money to buy a dress?”
B: “No!”
A: “Can I go to work?”
B: “No!”
A: “Ohhh. What can I do?”
B: “You can cook and look after the house.”
[A goes to do this and is sad]
B: [to the audience] “That’s the end. It’s supposed to be like, bad citizenship.”
[audience applauds]
[C1-01-E]

The implication here was that ‘bad’ citizenship can be equated with an absence of women’s right to work and participate in society outside of the home, rather than only as an absence of ‘good’ behaviour. Although children and children’s rights were not made explicit in this scenario or others from this board, skits involving citizenship rights did tend to be represented elsewhere. These appeared as an everyday part of children’s worlds and not just adults, in contrast to scenarios involving voting or taking a Canadian citizenship test. One such example is this one below wherein children play with their peers:

[some students approach a new student who is by himself]
A: "Hi do you want to play basketball with us?"
[new student joins them]
B, to A: "You're going to let him play, he's not even a Canadian!"
A: "It doesn't matter if someone's Canadian or not, we're all the same, we're all humans."
C: "I'm sorry, I should go." [starts to leave]
A: "No, wait! It doesn't matter to us that you're not Canadian."
B: "Yeah, I'm really sorry, I shouldn't have judged you."
C: "That's okay."
A: "Let's go play!"
[they go play basketball]

A: "To us, being in a society means that, even if you're new to Canada, you shouldn't be afraid to like, ask the other people if they want to play with you or not. Or, be afraid and say, oh, they're not Canadian, you can't let them play, and stuff like that."
[HW1-01-A]
Here, the participants established citizenship as a form of welcoming and respecting all people, and that children can do this by playing with other children and not allowing differences to prevent them from making new friends. This presentation also revealed that the participants considered citizenship in the context of their own lives at school, and that children can and should be respectful of people who are new or different from them.

A: "Hey punk, we don't want your kind around here!"
A: [beats up student B]
C, later: "Hey, are you okay? Let me help you up. Let's go tell the teacher."
B: "Okay."
C: "Just because you have a different skin colour and a different religion doesn't mean that you should worry."
B: "Ah, whatever."

C: "Our play is about how it's okay to help each other, and to treat everybody the same, because everybody's really the same inside. And, call people for help if somebody's like, in trouble."
A: "And you shouldn't treat people based on what they look like, it's what's inside that matters."

[HW1-01-D]

They blend the final messages of their skit in the end, emphasizing that citizenship is about helping other people because everyone is the same ‘on the inside’, and therefore citizenship is about not bullying others because everyone deserves to be treated the same. This also resonates strongly with the conclusion to a similar Toronto skit, which concluded with the comments that “we are all different, so let’s cherish our differences” [TD1-02-E]. In both of these scenarios, the students viewed discrimination as a result of racial or cultural difference as one source of conflict, a concept long familiar to contemporary citizenship scholars (Abu-Laban, 1998; Peake and Kobayashi, 2002). These role play presentations confirm the children’s awareness of how these issues may play out in the small scaled world of the school playground, as though in a micro-scaled public sphere. Indeed, the child participants here reveal not simply knowledge of bullying as a problem in schools – something well attended
by the Ontario Ministry of Education media – but also some knowledge of the underlying causes of bullying. These presentations are also supported by an underlying sense here that because the schools are situated in Canada, citizenship ideals such as respect and inclusion are valued and should be reinforced because these are also Canadian citizenship values. As I will discuss in the next section, many of the children’s citizenship presentations show their willingness to associate citizenship with Canadian governance and legal practices, and the implications of these for everyday life.

Becoming a Citizen: Children as Newcomers

Citizenship scholars consistently recognize ties between Canadian citizenship and the multicultural, liberal-democratic ideal, wherein “a nation produced and unified in its diversity through the expansion of democracy” extends the promise of inclusion and belonging not only to English and French Canadians but to people of all cultural groups (Mitchell, 2001). Portions of the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum provide support for such education, and some of the children’s responses above in role play and brainstorming discussion reveal their willingness to view citizenship as an inclusive and Canadian concept.

Although children’s scholars recognize the normalizing tendency of treating children as ‘human becomings’ rather than present-day ‘human beings,’ as though children’s citizenship is always in the progress of being attained until they arrive at adulthood (Christensen and Prout, 2005; Cohen, 2005; Qvortrup, 1994), it should not go unnoticed that adult citizenship is easily contextualized this way in the context of immigration (Kofman, 1995). The participants in these sessions held some awareness of both kinds of citizenship as a ‘becoming’ experience, something which was particularly evident in Toronto and Hamilton schools where larger proportions of the local populations were immigrants.
So, common skits involved scenes like the following from a Grade 8 classroom, showing an adult taking a test and later receiving a card:

C: "Hello, what can I do for you today?"
A: "Ah yes, I need to get my Canadian citizenship."
C: "Okay. Wait here."
[comes back with piece of paper]
C: "Okay, you have ten minutes. Fill out your form and when you're finished just wait here. I'll come back."
A: [writes test]
["ten minutes later"]
C: "Ah, here's your test. You have to get 60% or better for you to pass and get your Canadian citizenship."
[grades test]
C: "Here you go."
A: "Thank you." [reads paper] "Thank you, you will get your card in the mail." [to C]: "Thank you."
[HW1-04-C]

I learned in conversation with the teachers in the same school that at least one student's family had officially become Canadian citizens in that same school year, and several role play groups in this school presented a similar scenario about citizenship testing. Here, citizenship is very much a part of being Canadian, and depends less on 'good' behaviour than on passing a test or acquiring government-issued citizenship identification. Still, this does reinforce citizenship as a status which one acquires based on certain criteria, and that citizens must meet certain expectations in order to be able to identify themselves as 'citizens.' Several similar scenarios played out in Toronto, where many of the students were part of immigrant families or would have been exposed to the immigration and citizenship process (particularly in TD4-01, as briefly discussed above). This was at times so recognizable to the student audience as to provoke laughter:

C: [to audience] "Two weeks later. A mailman comes to each of their houses."
D: [mailman] comes to the houses, delivers the mail to each one
[audience laughs a lot at this part]
A: "Oh, my citizenship card! Oh, I'm so happy!"
B: "Me, too! I got my citizenship card!"
A: "Yay, now we're all citizens!"
Their skits carried these ideas over into the life of new Canadian citizens who are then able to help other new immigrants establish themselves in Canada. For example:

A: [to audience] "We are doing the part about helping new people find places, and owning a place in Canada."

A: "I have just come from England."
B: "Where are you going to stay?"
A: "I don't know, I don't have a place, yet."
B: "For now you can stay at my house, tomorrow we will look for a house for you to buy."

[the next day]
B: "So, should we look for a house?"
A: "Yeah. Have you seen any 'for sale' signs anywhere?"
B: "Yeah. I've seen one around here."
C: "House for sale, house for sale!"
B: "There it is. Okay, you go talk to her about the house, and I'll be outside here waiting."
C: "Do you want to buy the house?"
A: "Yes, how much would it be?"
C: "Probably...a thousand dollars."
[decides to buy the house, will come back later]

The characters in this role play continued with the purchase of a car, and then with the successful purchase of a house, thanks to the aid of the already resident Canadian citizens. Citizenship is here represented as being able to help people in this way, and also as the experience of being able to own a home and purchase a car. Another group took this same idea about helping people new to Canada, and interpreted it through children’s experiences at school:

A: [to audience] "Ours is about helping people in Canada find places."
B[to audience]: "C is home sick, so then, D heard that she was sick and so she goes to help her."
D [student]: "Do you know where C lives?"
B [student]: "Sure, she lives at [an address]. Do you want to come?"
D: "Sure."
[knock on her house]
C: [answers door] "Oh, hi!"
D: "Here is your spelling homework, to practice your spelling."
B: "And here is your French homework."
C: "Okay, bye guys!"
[B and D leave]
[TD4-01-C]

In this situation the child characters find out that a new student is at home sick, so they decide to bring her the day’s homework so that she is still able to do it at home. This is also specifically shown as language work, which might be particularly important for students whose first language is not English. In another skit in the same classroom, the role players represented more specifically how students who do not speak English as a first language benefit from help from their peers (TD4-01-F). Not only was this a familiar situation for the children presenting the skit, but the audience was engaged and receptive to what was going on in this scenario. I learned afterwards from the teacher that part of the audience laughter resulted from the participants playing the role of a familiar language teacher who works with ESL students at their school. This was an everyday situation involving children helping each other at school to engage with the teachers and language resources, and something that the participants connected with citizenship.

In response to claims that national citizenship identity is fading in an era of an increasing migration, Kymlicka has commented that “language tests, citizenship ceremonies and citizenship oaths are well-established features of Canadian citizenship procedures…and the citizenship ceremonies are positively cherished by immigrants as both a symbol of acceptance and occasion for celebration” (2003: 196). Indeed, the role play scenarios shown here reveal children’s keen awareness of the significance of such procedures in the acquisition of formal citizenship status. However, they do not reveal any sense of controversy over how these tests could be considered exclusionary, as all the role play characters manage to achieve success in the citizenship test and must simply wait for the
card to be delivered. In these examples, no one ‘fails’ the citizenship test, but rather the ideal of Canadian inclusion seems normal and achievable. In some skits the new citizens received their cards in the mail after a matter of weeks, in some cases the characters received their ‘citizenship’ right away on the premises of the citizenship office after taking their test!

In these examples, citizenship is depicted as a way of attaining membership in Canadian society, by both obtaining formal citizenship status and by being helpful towards other newcomers to Canada. Although children do not experience the same citizenship test situation which adults do, these role play scenarios show the child participants’ knowledge of this event as a citizenship-defining moment of achievement, which affects them as members of the new citizen’s family. Moreover, they do experience other effects of new citizenship in Canada, through attending school with other children who are already Canadian citizens. They perform ‘good’ responsibilities of supporting other newcomers their own age: helping them find their way around their new school; giving them their homework if they have missed a day at school, and so on. In this case, defining citizenship as a mode of behaviour is more inclusive of children than to limit citizenship to the process of achieving a formal status through immigration and testing, since it is predominantly the adults who perform those citizenship roles and associated achievements.

Still, where some diversity in the student body existed, likewise there was acknowledgement of the tensions inherent in the Canadian citizenship ideal. Though most students did not start from the point of recognizing that citizenship produces inequality (Abu-Laban, 2000; Kofman, 2005), some role play scenes identified some ways in which the privileges of Canadian society are only available to those on the ‘inside’ of citizenship. Health care was a common example, as was the more immaterial practice of being able to stand up
in front of the Canadian flag during the national anthem at school. For example, in this Grade 8 Hamilton classroom:

[Scene: school]
A: "Everybody stand up for O Canada! 'B', why aren't you standing?"
B: "I am not a Canadian citizen yet." [student talking with an accent]
A: "Why don't you go get your citizenship?"
B: "Because I have to do my test. And I have not done it yet."
A: "But Canada is a great place!"
C: "And you get free health care."
B: "Oh! If I get this card it'll be better? I go!" [goes off to get test [audience chuckles]

[Scene: at the citizenship office]
[takes test…]

[Scene: next day at school]
A: "Everybody stand up for O Canada! 'B' why are you standing?"
B: "Because I'm Canadian citizen now!"
A: "Okay."
[audience chuckles]
C [rap style]: "It's good to be in Canada 'cause you get free health. So when you get the card, you get free health. But it's kinda bad because you get a little taxes, you get taxed. But it's nice, because, free country, it doesn't matter if you're white or black. You can tell if you're a citizen by the way you act."

[HW3-01-C]

This skit combines several citizenship definitions at once, representing Canadian citizenship as an experience defined by acquiring citizenship status, receiving privileges such as health care, enacting responsibilities like paying taxes, and acceptance of diversity. The school then appears as a site where this Canadian identity is performed, through actions such as standing up to sing the national anthem.

Through additional sessions in the same school, I learned that there was at least one student in the school whose family were Jehovah’s witnesses, and that this had influenced the other students understanding about how national citizenship performances like singing the national anthem can conflict with some religious beliefs. In the skits they presented there was more than one occasion where they expressed an understanding of how that religious
Identity challenged formal citizenship participation in the nation-state, and that this challenge to citizenship identity was part of life at school:

[Scene: at school]
A: "Everybody stand up for O Canada."
All except B: [sing]"O, Canada…"
A [to B]: "Hey, why are you not standing up for O Canada?"
B: "Because I have religious reasons."
A: "And that is…?"
B: "I don't stand for O Canada because I only believe in my God, Jehovah. Don't give glory to other countries."
A: "Oh, okay."

[HW3-01-A]

In this example, the participants showed students declining to stand up for the national anthem as a result of their religious beliefs, and another group in the same classroom presented a very similar situation (HW3-01-D), in which the student’s classmates ask further questions about “how come you didn’t stand up for O Canada,” “don’t you know you get free health care,” and “Do your parents vote?” In the first example the role play participants presented the conflict and explained why the student in the skit chose to decline standing for the Canadian anthem. The second example presented the same scenario, but included other students in the conversation who then asked questions about why the student makes that choice. Such similar role play presentations in the same school about the same situation undoubtedly reflect a shared experience of that situation in their daily school lives. Indeed, this Hamilton school was the only site where this kind of situation was presented, and recognizes the conflict between citizenship identities as constructed through nation-state symbols and ceremonies, and religious identities among that same national population.

In fact, other role play groups which represented citizenship as a specifically Canadian experience were inclined to show that positive results can come from inclusion of cultural diversity. Although they did not represent religion as a conflict within the school,
one role play group in a Toronto classroom showed how new Canadian citizens can attain freedom of religion even if protest is necessary:

[Scene: group protest, right to practice own religion]
A: "I think we should be able to have our religion."
B: "I know, this is so ridiculous."
A: "We belong too, we should have a strike."
B: "I know, let's do it!"
[A and B carrying signs]
C [someone else not in the religious group]: "Hey, did you guys know that nobody else has the same religion?"
A: "Yeah, that's why we're going on strike."
D [passer-by]: "Hi. Why are you not letting anybody walk through here?"
A: "Because we're protesting."
B: "We want to practice our religion."
[A and B:] "We want to practice our religion, we want to practice our religion..."
[audience laughter]
C: "Fine."
A and B: "Yayyy!"

This presentation represents freedom of religion as an aspect of citizenship in Canada, which exists as a right of citizenship even if citizens must protest to ensure they have it – a protest which seems to find a resolution fairly easily, but a protest all the same. In fact, this was one of the few presentations which showed citizenship rights as something which are earned through protest, whereas most other presentations about citizenship rights represented citizens as people who have rights whether or not they have struggled to obtain them.

The children’s perspectives here reveal a willingness to view citizens as helpful people, and that this kind of interaction is fostered at school, by following the rules or helping friends who have been bullied. Their perspectives on citizenship tend to reinforce this as an ideally inclusive experience – particularly in Canada – however their young age also makes them aware of how the ‘partial citizenship’ or ‘not-citizenship’ (Cohen, 2005; Moosa-Mitha, 2004) is very much a reality in their lives. Children in several classrooms in Toronto and Hamilton did perceive strong associations between citizenship and membership in or
immigration into the Canadian nation-state, however the children-characters themselves were rarely the predominant ‘characters’ in such role play scenarios. The children themselves are not the people who are writing citizenship tests or voting in Canadian government elections.

Citizenship at School: Concluding Thoughts

In some of the examples above, we have seen how children across three school boards in Ontario view the school as a site where citizenship is performed, and where citizen-like behaviour is learned and expected. They also view this as a form of preparation for adult life, revealing children’s perceptions that children’s citizenship is perhaps taken seriously inasmuch as it is valuable for their future adult selves, something confirmed by public Ontario discourses and observed by current scholarship (Basu, 2004; Mitchell, 2003). Accordingly, many of the role play presentations also emphasize citizenship as a mode of behaviour which differentiates ‘good’ citizens from ‘bad’ citizens, depending on how well they follow rules, obey laws, carry out charitable acts, or behave as role models for others. However, in a limited fashion this reinforces their citizenship identities in the present day, since children are able to participate as ‘good citizens’ at school by helping out newcomers to Canada or help prevent bullying.

These ideas were also reported during the brainstorming sessions which preceded the role play activities. However, not all ideas from the brainstorming sessions were reported on in detail in the role play, including one notable example. In schools in all three boards, it was common for the child participants to comment on their school’s fundraising activities as a part of citizenship at school. Like the teachers I interviewed, the children also associated charitable fundraising and community service with citizenship at school. Students also readily
identified their schools’ volunteer activities such as lunch hour helpers, reading buddies, or environmental club. However, such ideas were under-represented in their skits, as we have seen above. Instead, we may observe two strong trends towards associating citizenship with either the predominantly adult experience of being a citizen in the nation-state or becoming one through immigration and citizenship testing. This view tends to differentiate citizenship according to age, assuming that children are less likely to be able to hold citizenship privileges and responsibilities than adults. Thus, while the children’s activity sessions revealed little knowledge of broader social justice perspectives on citizenship as a politics of recognition and difference (Lister, 2007; Moosa-Mitha, 2004), they do show an awareness of the exclusionary nature of citizenship – between ages, and in some cases between ‘different’ groups co-existing in Canada.

Particularly through the role play sessions, children reveal the school as a disciplined environment where rules and regulations govern the behavioural expectations which determine their citizenship goals as children, and affect their citizenship as adults later in life. They are aware of the expectations associated with this ideally democratic environment and recognize how such rules and regulations can define ‘good’ and ‘bad’ citizens and limit chances for future success. A minority of students view education at school as a part of their citizenship rights – something which was not strongly identified by teachers - or as an experience composed of a balance of rights and responsibilities. However, there is overall a stronger emphasis on the nature of children’s citizenship as the practice of certain responsibilities, which compares similarly to citizenship definitions offered by teachers in the same schools. Additionally, when we consider citizenship in this context, the school becomes a site of non-curricular citizenship learning where children show their citizenship
actively through their interactions with others, rather than passively through gaining specific knowledge.

In comparing these role play sessions with the children’s brainstorming sessions and with interviews with teachers in the same schools, I find connections between children’s perceptions of what citizenship is and how it relates to their lives and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities within the school, and with the localized efforts of individual teachers. For example, in one Toronto school in which the teacher engaged students explicitly with activities about rights and responsibilities, as well as community speakers, the students were also much more likely to associate citizenship with a balance of both rights and responsibilities. In another Board C school which participated in ‘character education’ activities throughout the school year, although some students understood citizenship as something which relates to both rights and responsibilities, during role play sessions the students were more likely to associate citizenship with responsible behaviour. In Toronto and Hamilton schools where some children’s families had experienced immigration to Canada, the students were likewise more likely to depict citizenship in the context of the process of achieving citizenship in Canada.

Indeed, there is a broad willingness to perceive citizenship, particularly Canadian citizenship, in terms of an inclusive experience of rights, privileges and freedoms, typically associated with the nation-state (Bowden, 2003; Kymlicka, 2001, 2003; Purcell, 2003). This is revealed in a general sense through role play scenarios that play out outside of the school. Ironically, it is the in-school scenarios which more often reveal strict limits and behavioural expectations which govern children’s actions. Moreover, children across the research sites view differences in citizenship privileges as well as responsibilities, and show a keen awareness of adult citizenship as an identity which comes with greater privileges which are
formalized in the law – not simply voting, but other differences such as the legal permission to drive, smoke, or drink alcohol - as opposed to children’s citizenship which they define through the absence of these same privileges. Perhaps more important than distinctions over how children's perspectives align with liberal, neo-liberal, or social justice perspectives on citizenship is the clear evidence that children are always aware of the limits which define what citizenship is, who citizens are, and what kind of citizen participation is considered ‘good’ or ‘bad’. They have nuanced knowledge of how citizenship plays out in day-to-day experiences and often in both inclusive and exclusionary ways, and are thus well-situated to learn more about how the ideal of citizenship still depends on critical engagement and recognition.

As contemporary citizenship scholars continue to recognize that a single or all-encompassing definition of citizenship remains elusive, we may at minimum acknowledge that citizenship refers to a dynamic community which “is not confined to the relationship between individuals and the nation-state, but also encompasses the market and employment relations, communities and households, or refers to a complex web of reciprocal obligations among families” (Stasiulis, 2004: 366). I believe the children’s responses above acknowledge this complexity of relationships and circumstances which have bearing on how we view citizenship in the current moment. Citizenship in the nation-state does indeed hold purchase in their ideal visions of how citizens should live as ‘good’ people, despite the fact that such discourse is increasingly mobilized in extraction from inclusive politics.

Although some variation exists in how children would define or contextualize citizenship in the context of their own lives, what many of these scenarios have in common is the representation of citizenship as a way of being, as a way of performing citizen-like acts and behaviour which are valued as good or helpful. Citizenship is often perceived as
something which is worked for or attained, either through immigration and the process of becoming a Canadian citizen, by actively behaving in ways which show good character or helpful and community-oriented action, or through continually obeying and upholding the law. It is also important to note that in their skits the child participants frequently combined more than one idea into their presentations. In one Toronto school, students combine an example of ‘bad’ citizenship with the privileges inherent in age differences, by presenting an adult bus driver who is both racist towards Chinese people and drinking while on the job. In Hamilton, another group reveals the citizenship of daily life and behavioural expectations as well as the formal responsibilities of voting as Canadian citizens.

Heater asks, "can children be expected to understand the essentially adult practice of politics?" (Heater, 2004, 167) Not only is there some evidence here to suggest that children of elementary school age do understand the adult practice of politics, but that citizenship itself cannot be assumed to be only the domain of curricular learning. In considering how citizenship is articulated through the local public school, we cannot assume that citizenship education depends on what children learn, but rather, it is more significant to consider how, when, or where they learn, or how that learning is relevant to the circumstances governing their lives.
Chapter Six: Conclusions

Amidst increasing interest in citizenship as a framework of territorial governance, individual and group identity, inclusion and exclusion, and interplay of rights and responsibilities, children’s citizenship has likewise become an increasing focus in contemporary scholarship (Cohen, 2005; Howe and Covell, 2005; Mitchell, 2003; Roche, 1999). Traditional citizenship theory acknowledging membership in a common territorial and imagined community simultaneous with in the nation-state has tended also to situate children as present-day participants in public school systems (Kymlicka, 2002; Marshall, 1950; Torres, 1998). However, this has tended to limit children’s citizenship to that which has relevance for their future selves as adults, reducing children to potential or partial citizens (Cockburn, 1998; Cohen, 2005), characterized more often in the present-day as ‘human becomings’ rather than ‘human beings.’ Moreover, research in this vein has been limited in Canada, and bears further scrutiny in contemporary times in which that which is defined as citizenship is being redrawn, amidst changing systems of governance which seem to delegitimize claims for citizen equality, popularize market logic over citizenship rights, and re-scale citizenship to the community and private interests over that of national or public interests (Basu, 2004; Brodie, 2002; Faulks, 2006; Painter and Philo, 1995).

Although it would be unrealistic to consider that children “are identical to adults or that they should enjoy exactly the same bundle of civil and political rights as adults,” it is more important to recognize that “children are social beings too, they are social actors and have much to contribute here and now” (Roche, 1999: 487). In this research I have thus endeavored to investigate citizenship discourses within public education in Ontario, in an effort to better understand how such broader transformations play out or are challenged within the local school space, in a way in which children are enlisted as contributors.
alongside adults. Although it has been argued that “schools must teach children how to engage in the kind of critical reasoning and moral perspective” representative of democratic citizenship (Kymlicka, 2002), schools are institutions ultimately supported by human action and it would be impossible to gain a more thorough understanding of citizenship and education without accounting for the perspectives of those who experience the school on a daily basis.

Through a combination of methods including textual analysis, semi-structured interviews, and interactive and creative children’s research methods, this research has examined how citizenship is articulated through public education in Ontario, at the provincial and local scales. These findings point to further shifts in how we understand citizenship, redefining this concept as something relating to ‘good’ behaviour and therefore the betterment of society as a whole. This definition is in turn tenuously tied to the scale of the nation-state as the governing citizenship institution, but remains nonetheless governed by the institutionalized policies, practices, and discursive meaning constructed through a centralized provincial education system in partnership with local schools and school boards. However, inasmuch as both children and adults within schools perceive citizenship as a form of responsible behaviour, this also allows citizenship to be held as an experience inclusive of both adults and children, towards which children actively strive in the present-day.

**Review of Findings**

I began in Chapter 2 with a discussion of how the concept of citizenship has been advanced through scholarly research, primarily in the past half-century. This section showed how citizenship studies have been predominantly influenced by Marshall’s mid-20th Century writings (1950) and defined such as full membership in a common community, accompanied
by civic, political, and social rights. In the context of the Canadian nation-state and many other Western nation-states in general, liberal models continue to hold sway, theorizing citizenship as a relationship between the individual and the governing nation-state, and citizenship participation as formalized adult practices such as work in the military, the market, or political governance.

Increasingly, traditional definitions have been contested as incomplete approaches to citizenship, particularly from scholars who examine geographies of difference. Universalist citizenship ideals which hold that all citizens are equal and are afforded the same freedoms, inadequately account for the ways in which many individuals experience only ‘partial’ citizenship claims, due to identities of gender, race, age, and so on, which may limit their abilities to participate fully in public life or their empowerment as individuals or groups sharing similar identity lines (Fenster, 1996; Peake and Kobayashi, 2002; Yuval-Davis, 1999).

Moreover, while citizenship has continued to be framed as a construct of the nation-state as structured and governed community of belonging and support for claims to citizenship, geographical research likewise consistently reveals how the nation-state is but one scale of identity and governance in an age of globalization and ‘glocalization.’ It is therefore uncertain to what degree national governance holds sovereignty over the construction of citizenship ideals, and also necessary to consider the multiply-scaled nature of citizenship as a simultaneously local, national, and global construct (Ong, 1999; Purcell, 2003; Sassen, 2001).

In Chapter 2 I also proposed a methodologically useful although not all-encompassing typology of citizenship outlining major defining characteristics of ‘liberal’ models of citizenship, as well as more recently observed trends of ‘neo-liberal’ citizenship. In this framework I outline major key words and phrases relating to differently oriented roles of education, participation, ‘active’ citizenship, difference, and rights. Although it would be
undesirable to characterize all forms of citizenship theory as belonging to one or the other of these two streams of theoretical work, this table formed a useful discursive framework which guided my discursive analysis of provincial documents in Chapter 3, and interview/oral statements made by teachers and students in Chapters 4 and 5. I believe my analysis reveals that in contrast to some contemporary theory which would seem to reveal the near decimation of the nation-state as a viable construct of citizenship theory, in fact both these streams of citizenship theory are evident within the contemporary Ontario school.

Canadian education is a multiply-scaled institution, and so in Chapter 3 I address a brief history of education in Ontario, as well as an analysis of contemporary citizenship discourses emerging from province-wide policy and programming. Over the past two centuries of Ontario history, public education has been held as a key instrument of children’s social and moral reform, emblematic of visions of an ideal citizenry. Over the 19th and 20th Centuries, education reformers directed increasing attention to the local school as a site of discipline, conformity, and upright morals. As a result, the school became significant as a defined space for children, at the same time demarcating childhood as a separate phase of life from adulthood. Over the course of the 19th and 20th Centuries, Canadian public education emerged as a social institution helping to define Canada as a nation distinct from Great Britain and the United States of America, at the same time cultivating children as ideal citizens, with loyalty to their country and respect for authority (Axelrod, 1997; Johnson, 1968; Stamp, 1982). Since Confederation, Canadian provinces have held administrative influence over public education, and the past two centuries of history of Ontario educational governance is marked by increasing centralization of all aspects of this administration, including curriculum development, delineation of school boards, and more recently, control of financial budgets and the institution of province-wide standardized testing.
Public education has been continually recast as the state agency with the most potential to transform Canadian society, and citizenship has long been recognized as a project of Western public education systems. Each generation of education reformers have been motivated by a desire to 'improve' Canadian society through the education of future generations, and create a future adult citizenry which would meet societal ideals of the time, from practical, morally responsible behaviour in early Upper Canada, to loyal British subjects, capable decision-makers, and more recently, productive and employable citizens strengthened by standardized curricular learning.

Visions of how to shape children’s identities as students and future adults have alternated throughout Ontario history between progressivist child-centred learning, establishing the child’s interests and skills as a framework for learning, and subject-oriented learning which prioritizes the authority of the teacher and the standardization of curricular learning. This latter framework has increasingly characterized Ontario education in the late 20th Century and early 21st Century, as educators strive to position children as skilled, employable, future citizens in a competitive national and global economy. The current moment in education in Ontario is representative of these recent trends, converging ever further upon citizenship as the ultimate purpose of creating quality in public education. A rigorous curriculum guided by broad achievement expectations combines with periodic province-wide EQAO testing (Education Quality and Achievement Office, 2007) to prioritize broad standardized test scores as the key markers of educational accomplishment. The results of these tests can further exacerbate tensions between schools and school boards and the Ministry, polarizing high scoring and low scoring schools and stigmatizing those who do not perform according to broad achievement standards (Basu, 2004; Jeffs, 2002; Gidney, 1999). Concurrently, Ontario Ministry of Education public statements continue to
frame educational goals in the context of quality, success, performance, and achievement. As is evident from statements of the past four years, educational spending on various initiatives from new textbooks to building and repairs is persistently characterized as an investment, with higher achievement as the end goal.

These broader discursive trends hold significant implications for how we understand citizenship and how children are situated as citizens through their participation as students in Ontario public schools. First, citizenship emerges as a predominantly adult experience, as children are characterized foremost as individuals who will benefit from their public education as employable adults in the future. Additionally, where the Ontario does focus specifically on aspects of citizenship in Canada, this tends to emphasize citizenship as membership in the nation-state through different scales of government, elections, and other adult-oriented forms of civic participation. Opportunities do exist for children to examine their own family history and identity, and to examine citizenship as a balance of both rights and responsibilities through, for example, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, however opportunities for understanding citizenship specifically in the context of children’s lives is limited at best.

Second, through the provincial endorsement of safe school policies and programming such as anti-bullying campaigns, citizenship is briefly framed as the experience of the right to safety, but is ultimately reconstructed as the performance of responsible action and deference to adult authority with the goal of creating schools as safe spaces. Through the Safe Schools Act (OME, 2000) in particular, citizenship is framed as “responsible citizenship”, prioritizing citizenship responsibilities over and above citizenship rights and creating the individual child as a potential threat to an ordered school society. Punishments for violating the terms of the Safe Schools Act reinforce citizenship attributes
of safety, responsibility, and ‘appropriate’ behaviour negatively by offering suspension and expulsion as the consequences for acting in an un-citizen-like way, as opposed to offering positive alternatives or addressing underlying causes of such behaviour.

The articulation of citizenship as a mode of behaviour and responsible, self-regulated action is further developed through the Ontario-wide adoption of character education as a co-curricular and extra-curricular program. This program offers positive reinforcement for the adoption of good character traits, through school-wide assemblies and achievement certificates, and encourages students to adopt character traits such as respect, empathy, fairness, and so on. This often emphasizes the creation of “a community that promotes the highest standards of student discipline and citizenship,” (Simcoe County District School Board, 2003), further conflating citizenship with the practice of responsible behaviour and measurable standards. Character education has recently been adopted province-wide, and justified by Ontario Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne as a means of creating a “school environment where civic responsibility and academic achievement thrive” (OME 2007b). Citizenship education is in this way virtually unrelated to curricular education, instead espousing discipline and behavioural norms valued in the school environment. Although this kind of citizenship easily includes children as contemporary citizens, as people whose current responsible behaviour will contribute to positive learning environments and civic society in the present, there is comparably little understanding of children as rights-bearing citizens or as present-day members of the Canadian nation-state.

In contrast to these discourses, I find in Chapter 4 that teachers in Ontario elementary schools present perspectives which define citizenship in a dual sense of both membership and belonging to the Canadian nation-state, as well as the practice of locally-scaled behavioural norms and responsibility. In relation to citizenship as articulated through
the work of the public school, what many teachers hold in common is that they find a lack of overt citizenship education in the Ontario curriculum. Teachers report consistently that they use local resources or individual efforts to build citizenship education into their daily curricular work. These findings affirm those in Chapter 3 which speak to an overall lack of distinct curricular citizenship education in Ontario, for even those teachers who find strong relationships between citizenship and the Social Studies curriculum benefit further from searching for additional teaching resources or adding greater attention to citizenship rights. Ironically, by working with the curriculum and supplementing this with rights education, personal identity exploration, teaching of equity issues, and searching out curriculum resources which support Social Studies, citizenship education in this way is tied very closely to a Canadian citizenship of the multicultural nation-state, albeit in a largely unstandardized fashion. It is predominantly through the efforts of local teachers that this citizenship education exists locally in a fashion which allows students some personalized form of engaging with citizenship as an interplay of both rights and responsibilities, and as an identity supported by the nation-state.

Additionally, however, Ontario teachers report their understanding of citizenship as more than a legal status or identity linked through rights in and responsibilities to the Canadian nation-state. The ‘good citizen’ emerges here as a key citizenship identity supported and in fact expected by those working within the school, due in large part to the nature of the school environment as a disciplined space. At school, children are encouraged to be ‘good’ citizens by adopting responsible behaviour which in turn contributes to successful teaching and learning in the classroom. Teachers view their role as educators in the capacity of not simply curricular educators but role models for behaviour which embodies ‘good citizenship’, characterized by respectful, self-aware, responsible action.
Citizenship is thus strongly articulated through the local public school through non-curricular activities, viewed as valuable opportunities for children to learn democratic processes, pursue their personal interests and skills, and interact competitively and respectfully with their peers. While these activities embody citizenship as democratic governance as well as personal growth and respect, others such as character education or achievement programs blend with these citizenship goals as well as with responsible citizenship, through character education and related programming which encourage students to adopt responsible behaviour through achievement certificates and similar opportunities. All of these activities are additionally significant as opportunities which for many children are unique to their identities as students, since they would not find similar recreational activities elsewhere. Aside from structured clubs and groups, teachers perceive great value in children’s interactions with their peers while at school, since the school is as much a space for social interaction and camaraderie as for academic achievement.

‘Good citizenship’, however, is primarily assigned to the school space in general, as teachers expect and depend on responsible behaviour from their students in order to operate a successful classroom. They recognize that ‘good’ citizens are often simultaneously achieving citizens, and that showing good citizenship is a key aspect of school life just as much as curricular learning. In general, non-curricular programming at school would seem to form a more varied and attractive form of citizenship education than the curriculum, and one which is supported by the local communities in which schools are situated. Good citizenship in the community is embodied by school food drives, for example, or good global citizenship may be accomplished by international projects which raise funds for disaster relief or development programs around the world. Students show good citizenship at school through strong academic achievement as well as by volunteering for tasks such as
lunchroom helpers or recycling duties. This is an ‘active’ citizenship which includes children in the present-day, but also maintains stronger connections to citizenship responsibilities than to citizenship rights, and limits children’s participation largely to forms of altruism and voluntarism. There is therefore less evidence to support calls for a children’s ‘active’ citizenship based in present-day rights-empowerment. While discourses at the provincial level seem to position children strategically as responsible citizens working towards achievement, future participants in the workforce, and as ‘investments’ for the future, discourses within the local school speak more to children as active individuals in their school and community.

In Chapter 5, I analyze the results of my research with children in the same Ontario schools as the teachers whose interviews formed the basis of the results in Chapter 4. Similar to the results in Chapter 4, in Chapter 5 I discuss how children also view citizenship in a dual capacity, in the context of membership in the nation-state and also as a mode of responsible behaviour. Just as teachers spoke of ‘good citizenship’, students also have a strong understanding of ‘good citizenship’ in the context of performing good and responsible behaviour. Through a combination of brainstorming discussion and dramatic role play, the child research participants revealed their knowledge of these concepts in relation to scenarios relevant to their own lives.

Child research participants in three school boards identified generally with citizenship as a concept defined through the Canadian nation-state or with its symbolic sites and emblems, such as Parliament Hill in Ottawa or a passport. They also have a general sense of citizenship as a Canadian experience, represented by the process of immigrants becoming citizens and taking a citizenship test. However, through the use of dramatic role play methods, they reveal broader citizenship meanings relating to a way of life and
responsible or helpful behaviour, which relates in particular to the school as a site of citizenship education.

Children view the school as a particular site where they learn good citizenship, and one widespread example of this is their view the school as a place where children are expected to not bully others or to help prevent bullying from taking place. This reveals an intriguing comparison with my discussion in Chapter 3, where I identify the Ministry of Education’s concerns with safety as a right of citizenship, and their accompanying engagement with safety campaigns including anti-bullying strategies which include children as aides to bullying prevention. In role play scenarios, children across three Ontario school boards revealed their perception of their response to bullying as a defining act of good citizenship, just as the potential for receiving punishment for bullying or breaking the rules might be viewed as the consequences of ‘bad’ citizenship.

In general, findings in Chapter 5 reveal how children view the school as a place where children learn to respond to expectations and rules much in the same way as adults are expected to obey laws or workplace expectations. In this way, children view the school as a preparatory site for adult citizenship in a consistent fashion which was unparalleled in the discussion with adult teachers. Children by contrast relate citizenship to laws and systems of criminal justice, and view ‘good’ citizens as those who obey laws and follow rules – or learn from their mistakes after experiencing the consequences of breaking the rules or behaving poorly – and ‘bad citizens’ as those who do not obey them.

For children then the school is therefore a key site of education for good citizenship. Children act as citizens by learning to obey rules at school and behave respectfully, and adults comparatively are expected to behave according to workplace standards when they hold employment. Good citizenship is also performed when citizens are helpful towards one
another, and the child participants reveal their own citizenship abilities in this way. They acknowledge the school as a place where they learn voluntarism and environmental awareness, which they can in turn pay forward into their interactions in the community by helping senior citizens, conducting food drives, or encouraging people not to litter. Still, this ‘good citizenship’ extends beyond the school to the experience of immigration to Canada, as recent immigrants might depend on already-landed ‘good citizens’ for help in integrating into their new home. It is once again difficult to characterize these findings as wholly part of one ‘liberal’ or ‘neo-liberal’ stream, although when it comes to their specific vision of the school as a site of learned citizenship, there appears to be a similar patter of curricular education for adult, liberal citizenship which under-writes contemporary neo-liberal citizenship for children in the present day.

Overall, despite their willingness to view citizenship as an inclusive experience – outsiders may ‘become’ citizens by passing a citizenship test; citizens are recognized by their ‘good’ behaviour which betters the group or community - children are highly aware of citizenship as a concept which has limits. For example: good citizens are people who are successful or who behave as good people, but bad citizens are punished for their poor behaviour or disregard for the law. They are keenly aware of the adult differences in power, privilege, and responsibilities, which children do not have. In Canada, they understand that newcomers can become citizens but only if they are able to pass a test and then only once they receive official identification, and they perceive that citizens are people who vote in elections, but children are excluded from this and are not considered mature enough. All of these examples reveal children’s knowledge of citizenship as a concept demarcated by specific actions, privileges, and behaviour, which are experienced unevenly.
In Chapter 2, my discussion of the citizenship literature identified the persistent relevance of the nation-state within citizenship theory, as well as the recognition that other scales of governance and identity are increasingly valuable in understanding citizenship as a sense of belonging and set of relationships. Indeed, as these results have shown, this same tension is clear in the perspectives of teachers and students in Ontario schools. There is a desire to conflate citizenship with an identity bound up with the Canadian nation-state, and yet day-to-day realities of the school present citizenship as a set of responsible relationships and expectations governed provincially and locally.

This research engaged with teachers and their students in three school boards across Ontario: Toronto District School Board (large metropolitan centre), Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (urban centre, recently amalgamated and including smaller suburban areas), and a third, prominently rural school board referred herein as ‘Board C’. I elected to visit these three different boards in an attempt to reach a balanced demographic, which I believe is confirmed by the census tract and community profile data tabulated in Appendix D. This was evident in the Toronto schools and Hamilton schools, for example, where the student population included children whose parents or whole families were recent immigrants to Canada, and their discussion reflected day-to-day familiarity with such experiences. By contrast, the vast majority of children in the classrooms I visited in Board C had been born in Canada, and had not been exposed as highly to the experience of immigration and accompanying cultural diversity of the students in schools where immigration was a common reality. This is indeed worth noting, as Canada continues into the 21st Century as a major immigrant reception country and citizenship becomes an increasing goal for newcomers to Canada.
However, this was the only major difference in the results between individual school boards, in terms of contributing to our understanding of how citizenship itself is defined. While children and teachers across all three school boards reported on citizenship in the context of the nation-state, these findings overall reveal citizenship as articulated through the local school as a concept tied only partially to curricular education associated with Canadian citizenship and national identity. Respondents of all ages across the research sites reported about citizenship education at school as it relates to non-curricular work or to the life and work of the school in general, which in turn translates strongly to citizenship as ‘good citizenship’ of individual behaviour and responsible action.

**Contributions to Citizenship Theory**

Scholars such as Brodie (2002) and Cohen (2005) have argued that citizenship theory which remains disconnected from the nation-state hold little meaning. This is particularly significant for children, where citizenship outside of the context of nationality is grounded only in the abstract guarantees of well-meaning adults (Cohen, 2005). As citizenship education in Ontario emerges only partially through the curriculum, and further only partially in the context of citizenship in the Canadian nation-state, Ontario schools provide a limited framework for children to understand themselves as citizens whose needs, responsibilities, rights and freedoms are grounded in more than ‘abstract guarantees,’ if we adhere to Cohen’s claims in particular. Indeed, if children are at best only partially engaged in concepts of how citizenship – and their own identities – relates to Canada and the formalized participation practices, immigration, and market imperatives which are governed through the nation-state, it is questionable to what degree they will critically engage with citizenship participation as adults. Certainly, contemporary citizenship discourses emerging
at the provincial scale point to adulthood as the time when citizenship takes effect – but what kind of citizenship are children prepared for?

The school emerges most prominently as a site of citizenship governed both by provincial, standardized achievement expectations, and local relationships between teachers and students, the school and the home, as well as tensions between the school and the provincial Ministry of Education. Citizenship, in the form of ‘good citizenship’ and responsible behaviour, is governed provincially and locally and lived out locally in the school and wider community. Children’s perspectives reveal general familiarity with the nation-state as a conceptual facet of citizenship and a site of common attachment. However, also reveal their day-to-day understanding of the behavioural norms and legal structures which, although formative aspects of the Canadian nation-state, do more to reinforce a moral, responsible, individualistic citizenship, defined by the performance of ‘good’ behaviour rather than national identity.

Through the school, relationships between the child and the nation-state are tenuous, and yet the local school and community forms a significant site for the production of citizenship discourse and identity construction, as a child’s education and sense of citizenship is, as we have seen, largely influenced by individuals working locally or mediating the imperatives of provincial governance. In this way children are constructed as partial citizens – responsible individuals whose actions and values influence the safety, happiness, and social integrity of their classroom peers and community. As rights-bearing citizens or as citizens whose politics of identity can and do influence how they engage with the world, children’s opportunities to explore these aspects of their citizenship are largely related to the local efforts of individual teachers. Teachers themselves are moreover limited by the preparation time they are afforded and by their access to relevant teaching resources.
Additionally, while teachers perceive the school as a site where children are expected to behave according to certain standards, values, and modes of conduct related to the performance of citizenship, they simultaneously question why the school is afforded this special role. Indeed, Torres (1998) has posited that the school and the family must work in cooperation as sites of citizenship education, and teachers expect too that the family home should also play a strong role in shaping children’s citizenship according to their ability to behave responsibly. However, they likewise view the home-school relationship as one shaped by tension as much if not more so as by cooperation, since teachers who do not find the support of parents feel their job as educators and role models is made difficult.

Citizenship, then, is articulated through Ontario schools in a dual capacity of the liberal-democratic model, represented by adult participation in formal civic and political spheres, and by the assumption that children’s citizenship is largely governed by the expectation that they will take on these roles in the future. Neo-liberal citizenship discourses emerging from the provincial level further augment the school’s capacity as a site of citizenship education, such that curricular education and non-curricular programming and general justification of the role of the school, all submit to measurable, contemporary standards of achievement. In turn, these discourses are accompanied and supported by behavioural norms and expectation which privilege a citizenship of responsibility over a citizenship of rights.

As is apparent from this project, however, the school does play a significant role in children’s lives and presents them with structured opportunities for learning and peer interaction which are not easily duplicated elsewhere. We have seen above how the role of the school as a site of citizenship education is apparent only in part as a site of curricular education. Indeed, the local influence of individual teachers who work to find teaching
resources, mentors, and strive to meet the needs and interests of the children in their individual classrooms, is as significant as the curricular context for citizenship education if not more so. Overall, this research has shown how actors in the Ontario public education system at the provincial scale and local scale perceive links between citizenship and education, and while no single definition of citizenship or citizenship education emerges from these findings, the results show that citizenship in large part articulated as the practice of responsible behaviour as a form of citizenship participation locally, nationally, or internationally.

Although it is true that similar citizenship discourses emerged from each of the three results chapters, these were not universally justified in the same way. In my findings in Chapter 3 I identified that while the curriculum does link citizenship with some liberal-democratic concepts including governance within the nation-state, immigration, and national history and geography, in general this is limited to only one grade level in the elementary school curriculum. Moreover, this contrasts with broad provincial discourses promoting more neo-liberal visions of children as future citizens and contemporary achievers. I discovered teachers’ perspectives to likewise reflect a liberal view of citizenship in the sense that individual citizens hold rights and responsibilities as members of a group, and act in the interests of a public ‘good.’ Much of this aligns with modern theory denoting citizenship as territorial identity fixed at the scale of the nation-state as a realm of governance, regulator of migration, common identity, and multicultural belonging (Brodie, 2002; Gordon and Stack, 2007; Kymlicka, 2001, 2003).

Still, when we consider citizenship in respect to the work of the school in Chapters 4 and 5, teachers’ perspectives on citizenship reveal a more strategic picture of citizenship consistent with normative behaviour and the conduct of responsible or ‘good’ citizens, upon
which the school and the teachers working within it depend. Rather than an overtly
democratic or political form of citizenship learned through curricular education, this
citizenship more reminiscent of neo-liberal trends is layered with more traditional political
citizenship assumptions, in which “the relationship between individuals and their immediate
communities…swims into focus, and in consequence we must begin to take seriously the
much more informal rules and norms” (Painter and Philo, 1995: 115) which govern
citizenship education in school space. In contrast to provincial educational discourse which
seems to privilege the latter far more than the former, the work of teachers inside the school
seems to provide a form of balance between the two, as it is often through their efforts that
citizenship rights education, social studies educational resources, and consideration of equity
issues are blended with curricular mandates. Although the logics of market orientation,
achievement, ‘good citizenship’, and adult expectations are arguably transforming the
Ontario public school, these also co-exist with limited liberal citizenship principles supported
by some of the curriculum and by local teachers’ efforts.

Methodological Contributions

In conducting this research I have combined three different qualitative methods as a
way of analyzing the articulation of citizenship through a multiply-scaled public school
system. Given the opportunity for local schools and individual teachers to interpret the
curriculum in their classrooms in different ways, or to supplement the curriculum with
additional co-curricular or extra-curricular programming, it would be difficult to draw
conclusions from the provincial scale alone. Public schools function as sites which are
subject to institutional governance and also as local places defined by community
relationships, interests, and needs.
Children’s research has gained attention in the past two decades across the social sciences and also in geographical research in particular (Aitken, 2001; Holloway and Valentine, 2000; James and Prout, 1998; Matthews and Limb, 1999), along with attention to children’s citizenship. Although children’s researchers have commonly employed a variety of research methods including focus groups, questionnaires, and interviews, often used with adults (Hill, 2005; MacNaughton and Smith, 2005), and also advocate the use of creative methods including storytelling, drawing, and photography (Pole, 1999; Veale, 2005), these are not often combined in the same project. I approached the children’s portion of my research with a combination of interactive methods which included brainstorming discussion as a group and small-group dramatic role play, in a unique effort to facilitate the child research participants’ ease in contributing, minimize some of the power imbalance inherent in research with children, and to increase their enjoyment of participating in a research project which took place on school grounds. Although it is arguably difficult to totally understand the world from a child’s point of view (Punch, 2002), I believe these efforts were successful in including children actively in the research process and validating their access to citizenship knowledge and experience.

Indeed, conducting research with children in the space of the school requires a nuanced negotiation of power relations, and it is unlikely that these power relations can be completely overcome by a lone researcher. These are issues which are unlikely to be completely diminished in the institutional space of the school, and other constraints of time, accessibility and permission, the group size and group morale, account for other facets of research in school which must be constantly negotiated. A different approach which engaged with the children outside of school space might have mitigated many of these factors by separating the research experience from the school which is consistently experienced by
children as a disciplinary space embedded with adult strategies of power, rationalized as positive influences which create ordered collective behaviour (Gallagher and Fusco, 2006; Ploszajska, 1994). Indeed, meeting both the child and adult research participants outside of school space would be intriguing, as it would be to approach both adult and child research participants with alternative or ‘creative’ research methods. It has been generally accepted that creative methods such as photography, drama, or drawing are valuable for children’s research, but there is little advocacy for the use of such methods with adults. Would adults feel they were being taken seriously as research participants if asked to participate in brainstorming sessions or role play presentations? Or would this provide a refreshing alternative from normative methods of the interview or questionnaire? These are questions which intrigue me for future work.

The Future of Citizenship Education?

I found great value in my interview dialogue with elementary school teachers, and specifically chose elementary school teachers of Grades 5-8 in order to refine the parameters of my research and to ensure I would be working with a group of children who were old enough to be able to articulate their own ideas and opinions. However, it would be fascinating to develop similar research with secondary school teachers and students, who engage with a more refined curriculum along with the personal growth challenges associated with adolescence and the ever-closer proximity to the end of high school and the accompanying ‘official’ transition into adulthood and ‘full’ citizenship.

Additionally, while my work with teachers gave me great insights into the life and work of the school as well as the day-to-day challenges of working as a classroom teacher, further work with administrators, principals, and members of local school boards would also
be an area for potentially rich qualitative research. This could lead to even greater in-depth knowledge of the ways in which local school spaces are governed locally, and how local actors mediate between community needs and resources and provincial programming and policy mandates. Such research could also involve further questioning on tensions between the school and the home, and what events, policies, or local practices support relationships of cooperation as opposed to challenge. Such work with administrators as research informants would, I anticipate, be even more challenging to access given their increasing time constraints as well as heightened public profile.

One further avenue for future research lies in work which engages with another potential site for children’s citizenship education not engaged in this project: the family home. Elementary school teachers in particular identified the tensions between education in the public school and the expectations and experiences children live with at home, which may be different from or even be counter-productive to the work of teachers inside the school. Additionally, it is clear from broad statements such as those contained in government documents like A Canada Fit for Children (Government of Canada, 2005), or in the Ontario curriculum documents themselves, that education is always considered to be the domain of the family as well as the school. It would therefore be valuable to hear from parents/guardians whose children are of school age, to probe these issues further and understand from the perspective of family members how they view the work of the school vis-à-vis their expectations for learning in the home.

For future work of this kind with children, it would be valuable to work with fewer groups over longer periods of time, as a single hour passes very quickly during an interactive session. With more research assistants, it would be possible to work with smaller groups of children for longer periods either consecutively or concurrently, to increase the ease of
participation – as compared to during group discussion in a class of twenty or more students – and decrease the need for discussion to be mediated by a single adult researcher. It would also be valuable to meet with the same group of children more than once, to engage with their ideas in a more focused manner – more time could be engaged with their thoughts on their curricular learning, for example, followed by more comparative focus on the school and other sites like the home or their recreational sites in the community. Overall, the child research participants were as likely to be valuable research participants as adults in the schools, and showed a diverse set of ideas about what citizenship is and how it is manifested at school and in daily life.

Still, despite this depth, both children and adult participants showed a willingness to believe that there is indeed one definition of citizenship, or that it can be summarized discretely by a few key tenets. In one of the final classrooms I visited, a Grade 6 student asked me at the end of our session, “can you tell us what citizenship is now?” It was a question I had been unprepared for, as my intention through this research process had not been to explain a definition of citizenship to the participants, but rather, to hear the participants’ thoughts about citizenship. In retrospect, I recognized that during some of my interviews with teachers, they had expressed towards the end of their interview that they were unsure if they were giving the ‘right’ answer or not. It was a genuine reminder that both children and adults may experience aspects of the research process in the same way, but more importantly indicated a broader perception that there was indeed a ‘right’ answer in how citizenship should be defined or discussed. Additionally, I believe this speaks to gaps in traditional citizenship theory which have incompletely accounted for children’s identities as citizens, or with the experience of citizenship in modern-states defined by shifting scales of governance and multiple scales of identity and belonging. Although not everyone defines
citizenship in exactly the same way, there are commonalities including willingness to consider citizenship as a solution to questions and problems in contemporary life.

It is because citizenship education relates not just to what children learn but to how children learn, that we cannot consider citizenship only in relation to curricular learning. However, I believe this research has observed some noticeable gaps in curricular learning as a potential basis for citizenship education, and these should not be discarded. Although the Social Sciences Grade 5 curriculum is viewed as the only – albeit limited – opportunity for citizenship education at the elementary school level, teachers in all three school boards identified a lack of resource support in delivering this curriculum, in direct contrast to curriculum in Math or Languages. Moreover, as children undertake this education in an environment in which teachers’ time and resources are increasingly stretched, it is increasingly likely that a citizenship of behaviour will be prioritized both provincially and in the classroom. Both of these trends are a disturbing hint of future educational priorities, and gaps needing to be filled if a citizenship based in children’s present day exploration of their identities, skills, and educational needs is to be realized.

Howe and Covell’s (2005) recent work in particular has advanced citizenship rights education as a key piece in overcoming contemporary classroom challenges as well as situating children as citizens in the present day. I agree that this form of education holds value in raising children’s awareness of their identities as bearers of rights who – just as adults - can and should hold the nation-states of which they are members accountable for protections and guarantees of social citizenship, particularly in an era when social citizenship rights are continually at risk. Rights education is a noticeable gap in Ontario standardized education, as is citizenship education which specifically accounts for children’s identities as children with needs, interests, and skills in the present day. Indeed, there are opportunities
throughout the elementary school curriculum and not only in the Aspects of Government and Canadian civics portions of the Social Studies piece, to raise awareness of citizenship as not simply passive bearing of rights but as an active attempt to create a socially just and equitable world. The Canadian past and present contain no shortage of challenges compounded by inequity, racism, gender discrimination, and exclusionary immigration practices. Educational curriculum on these aspects of Canadian history and current affairs could be strengthened with a critical citizenship perspective that acknowledges both the limits and the potential of the Canadian multicultural ideal, and education for the practices of recognition, unity, and justice, which form truly inclusive citizenship (Lister, 2007).

I return finally to Cohen’s recent reflection that “a society that is preoccupied with the adults children will become, is likely to pay less attention to the individuals that they are at various ages and stages of development” (2005: 230). If we are to consider children’s contemporary experiences at school in the context of citizenship, then, it is worthwhile recognize that although this kind of ‘good,’ responsible citizenship characterized by responsible participation in school life and respectful social interaction does not represent citizenship distinctly as a form of children’s rights empowerment, it does represent children as citizens whose actions have consequences in the present day. However, children’s identities are more complex than what may be measured in the moment of a test, or be outlined in preparation for adult life. It is difficult for standards of achievement to account for the full range of intellect, emotion, and personal experience which shape children’s abilities, let alone any sense of their individual citizenship. This research has shown that both adults and children view citizenship as an important part of the life and work of the school, and a citizenship education which moves beyond strategic, achievement and investment
oriented imperatives is possible if educators are supported in their efforts through renewed curriculum and attention to children’s identities and social citizenship in the present day.
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Appendix A - Interview script - One-on-one interviews with Elementary School Teachers:

1. How long have you been a teacher? Why are you interested in teaching?

2. How would you personally define your understanding of what citizenship is?

3. (Ontario Curriculum has been framed in some ways as part of teaching children to become citizens.)
   Would you say that the Ontario Curriculum identifies citizenship in a particular way? How so?

4. Do you think children's experiences at school encourage them to act as citizens?
   In what way?
   Is your perspective of what a ‘citizen’ is, at all different from how citizenship is framed in the curriculum?

5. What practices and/or resources exist at your school that encourage children to act as citizens?
   Are these different from provincial curriculum or mandates? I.e. are they local initiatives?

6. Tell me about what you use to teach the subjects you teach, i.e. the kinds of resources and spaces.
   How do your students make use of the space in your school, as you work through the curriculum? Are there certain spaces that are used more than others? (For example, do they tend to learn in the same classroom on a daily basis or in different rooms of the school, does learning take place outside of the school or off of school property, etc.)

7. What sort of choice do students have in the activities they do at school?
   What sort of choice do students have in the spaces they wish to use within the school? Can you give some examples?

8. Would you consider the school space to be different from other spaces, such as the home, the local community? For example, do you think children's activities here are different from what they do at home, with other children's groups, etc.
   What implications do you think this has for the students’ understanding of citizenship?

9. Is there anything else you would like to comment on about citizenship and the school? About your teaching experiences?

Brief, follow-up survey after interview (information will be kept anonymous):

1. How long have you been a teacher?

2. What grades/subjects have you taught in the past?
Appendix B: Principal Letter

Glenna Harris  
Department of Geography, University of Toronto  
Sidney Smith Hall  
Phone #  
Fax #  
Email: glenna.harris@utoronto.ca

Dear [name of principal]  

I am writing to you to invite you and your school to participate in a study I am conducting about relationships between children, citizenship and education. This research is part of the requirements for completing the PhD. program at the University of Toronto, Department of Geography.

My research examines children's citizenship and how it is currently defined in Canada. I am investigating how the Ontario curriculum articulates citizenship (for example, do curriculum resources identify children as active, current participants in society, or as more passive, ‘future’ citizens), but also how this curriculum is interpreted or supplemented within the local school. My goal is to interview elementary school teachers of Grades 5-8 within a selection of schools across Ontario, to find out more from them about how citizenship and education may be connected. All participation is voluntary, and no teacher will be identified by name within the research.

Since I am investigating children's citizenship, it is also very important for me to involve children in the project so that I can hear from them as well as adults. Children's ideas and opinions are valuable and may be different from those of adults, and so I also aim to work with a small number of groups of classroom students. I will invite the teachers I interview to participate with their students, but not every teacher who is interviewed will participate with their class.

Attached you will find a copy of the consent letter which will be provided to interview participants, and this will provide you with more detailed information about the project and give you more of an idea of what that participation will entail. You as the school principal are also invited to participate and be interviewed.

I thank you very much for your time and attention. I look forward to hearing from you and would be happy to answer any questions you may have. If I do not hear from you, I will be in touch within the next two weeks via telephone, to inquire if you are interested in participating.

Yours sincerely,
Glenna Harris
PhD. Candidate, Department of Geography
University of Toronto
Appendix C: Informed Consent

Letter of Consent – Interview Participants

Thank you for indicating an interest in participating in this research project. As an elementary school teacher in Ontario, your knowledge and experiences will be very valuable to this project.

The project is entitled: *Learned citizenship: Contemporary geographies of citizenship in Ontario schools*. The objective of the proposed research for this project is to examine how children’s citizenship is currently articulated within Ontario schools. Funding for this project has been made available through a Doctoral Fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

**Rationale for the study**

Many scholars have argued that citizenship is not known innately but must be learned, and current research identifies educational spaces as sites where children can and do learn citizenship. The relationship between citizenship and education has also been specifically identified in recent years within the Ontario curriculum, in particular at the secondary school level, and citizenship education initiatives have become prevalent in schools across Ontario.

I will be conducting interviews with elementary school teachers in 3-4 School Boards in Ontario, interviewing approximately half a dozen teachers at 2-3 schools in each Board. I will also be interviewing 1-3 elementary school students in a group activity setting in each Board, and inviting them to respond to a brief questionnaire. These interviews and group activities will be instrumental in understanding how the local school space is used to advance provincially mandated policy and curriculum, and also supplementary local programming. This project seeks to understand how children’s citizenship is articulated within curriculum and policy, and how education for citizenship may be learned differently or uniquely within school space.

**A Brief Overview**

Your participation in this project is voluntary, and will involve participation in a one-on-one interview of less than one hour in length, which invites you to reflect on your experience as a teacher in an Ontario school, your work with the curriculum, and your understanding of how citizenship is related to education in Ontario. The interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed later for the use of the researcher only. The interviews will take place at your school in a time and location which is convenient for you and for audio-taping.

This project will also involve at least one small-group session of less than one hour in length, with children in a classroom setting. These sessions will invite students to participate in brief discussion about what citizenship is, in some activities such as dramatic 'skits' to help them think about citizenship concepts such as rights and participation, and in a brief questionnaire. Following your one-on-one interview, you will be invited to involve students from your own classroom in this part of the project, and this participation is also voluntary for students.
What are the benefits and risks for you?
Although the findings of this study will not benefit you directly, by participating in this study you will have the opportunity to contribute to current research on the nature of citizenship and children's citizenship in Canada and Ontario. Your unique knowledge as a teacher currently working in the Ontario education system is extremely valuable. Your participation or non-participation will have no evaluative impact on your professional performance review.

There are no external risks to participating in the study. Only you, myself, and my supervisor will be privy to the data that is collected from your interview. The raw data (interview transcripts and audio tapes) will be kept in confidence and you will not be identified by name in the study. The raw data will not be available to the administration of your school. After the interviews have been transcribed, you will have access to a copy of the transcripts to verify the information. The raw data collected during the study will be secured in a locked file and after three years will be shredded. The results of this project will be published after completion and will be the subject of scholarly presentations. You will receive a copy of a summary of findings of the study, and may of course access the entire thesis once it is published if you wish.

When will your participation begin?
The interviews will take place at a time convenient to you, between now and June. The goal is to conduct all interviews before the end of [date].

Research Consent
**I have read this letter and understood the conditions under which I will participate in this study. (Please check one):

- I give my consent to be a participant in a one-on-one interview and also to host my class of students for the student group activities portion of the research.
- I give my consent to be a participant in a one-on-one interview only.

Signature of Participant:__________________________
Date:_______________________________

The best way to contact me is:
________________________________________________________
(email address, telephone #, etc)

<table>
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<td>Tuesday, [date]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, [date]</td>
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<td>Thursday, [date]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, [date]</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D – Interview Site Census Profiles

The following table reports on data from the Census Tract in which each school is located, as collected during the 2006 Census by Statistics Canada.

| Site   | Total Population | Population change (since 2001) | Residence in houses (single-detached) | Language at home English | Language at home Non-official language | Immigrants* | Immigrants since 2001 | Canadian citizens | Employment rate** | Unemployment rate** | Education** - High school only | Education** - College or equivalent | Education** - University degree or equivalent |
|--------|------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Canada | 31,612,897       | +5.3%                          | -                                   | 57.2%                    | 19.7%                                 | 88.9%       | 11.1%                | 19.8%          | 3.6%             | 94.4%          | 67.2%          | 6.3%                  | 26.8%                | 18.4%                                           | 20.5%                                               |
| Ontario| 12,160,282       | +6.6%                          | 56.1%                               | 26.4%                    | 68.5%                                 | 27.2%       | 80.3%                | 15.1%          | 28.3%           | 4.8%            | 92.6           | 62.8%                | 6.4%                  | 26.8%                                           | 18.4%                                               |
| C1***  | 5,526            | +12.2%                         | 86.4%                               | 8.1%                     | 95.1%                                 | 3.8%        | 98.6%                | 1.0%           | 6.8%            | 0.0%           | 98.2%          | 54.6%                | 6.7%                  | 24.9%                                           | 22.2%                                               |
| HW1    | 2,344            | +3.4%                          | 53.6%                               | 45.0%                    | 75.0%                                 | 24.4%       | 86.8%                | 11.1%          | 27.7%           | 1.3%           | 98.9%          | 51.5%                | 5.8%                  | 26.6%                                           | 23.7%                                               |
| HW2    | 3,263            | -5.3%                          | 70.4%                               | 13.1%                    | 79.7%                                 | 18.3%       | 88.6%                | 9.1%           | 16.9%           | 1.1%           | 97.5%          | 61.1%                | 8.8%                  | 31.3%                                           | 19.9%                                               |
| HW3    | 5,891            | +9.9%                          | 77.7%                               | 0.0%                     | 67.6%                                 | 31.1%       | 81.4%                | 16.5%          | 27.5%           | 1.3%           | 96.4%          | 68.1%                | 6.9%                  | 30.1%                                           | 22.5%                                               |
| TD1    | 5,235            | -3.5%                          | 86.6%                               | 0.0%                     | 76.6%                                 | 22.7%       | 88.6%                | 9.3%           | 31.3%           | 0.2%           | 96.75          | 67.0%                | 4.9%                  | 29.6%                                           | 18.1%                                               |
| TD2    | 5,523            | -4.1%                          | 2.8%                                | 64.7%                    | 67.7%                                 | 28.6%       | 87.5%                | 10.7%          | 29.5%           | 6.7%           | 84.3%          | 64.0%                | 9.4%                  | 17.7%                                           | 8.6%                                                |
| TD3    | 5,862            | +1.4%                          | 34.7%                               | 47.4%                    | 69.4%                                 | 29.6%       | 86.1%                | 11.9%          | 29.7%           | 1.3%           | 95.3%          | 63.7%                | 4.1%                  | 17.1%                                           | 12.7%                                               |
| TD4    | 7,124            | +2.6%                          | 12.5%                               | 83.3%                    | 35.0%                                 | 64.9%       | 47.9%                | 44.9%          | 63.6%           | 24.4%          | 68.6%          | 49.9%                | 11.8%                 | 29.0%                                           | 12.4%                                               |

Data gathered based on the Census Tract and Community Profile locations specific to each individual school site, through Statistics Canada (2006 and 2006b).

*Presented as a percentage of total Census Tract population

**Represents Census Tract population of those aged 15 yrs and older.

***Contains data from the representative Community Profile census, as the area does not qualify as a Census Tract.
Appendix E: Children’s Activity

Date: _________________

Classroom: ________________

Preface - Brief, plain-language introduction of myself and my interests with this project.

“What I would like to do here today is talk to you about citizenship and what you think citizenship means. Everyone should have the chance to answer and say what they think. Afterwards, I will give you a few minutes and if you wish you may write down some of your ideas about citizenship for me to read later, or you may draw a picture if you would like to draw what a citizen looks like, what they do, or where they learn to be citizens.”

Part 1:

1. Who can tell me about what the word citizen means? How about the word citizenship?

2. What kinds of things does a citizen do? How do we know if someone is a citizen?

3. Are children citizens? Do you think children are citizens in different ways than adults are? Do you think this is good or bad?

4. Do you think citizenship is something that we learn about in particular places? Where do you think citizenship is important?

5. Do you think going to school is a part of being a citizen? Why? What do we learn or do in school that teaches us about being citizens?

Part 2:

1. We’ve been talking about what citizenship is and now I’d like us to do something more active. Let’s split up into groups of 4 or 5 students per group. You may choose your own group partners, and if you can’t find a group then I will choose one for you.

2. I want you to imagine some of the things we’ve talked about that make a citizen – [examples from discussion] for example, the right to have a vote, or be treated with respect, etc. As a group, choose one of these that you think is the most important or most interesting.

3. You will have a few minutes to work together as a group and make up two short skits based on the citizenship trait you choose – in the first you will act out a situation where you have that trait, and in the second one you will act out what it would be like if you did not have that trait. What would those situations look like?

Thank you for participating in the activities today about citizenship!

If you would like, please tell me a little bit more, in case there are other things you can think of and didn’t get a chance to say before.
What did you enjoy the most about the activities today?

In what ways do you think YOU are a citizen?

What places do you think are related to citizenship? Why?

What do you think is most important about citizenship?

THANK YOU! For participating 😊
### Appendix F: Teaching Histories of Interview Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Yrs teaching</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1-01</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8 (J/I)</td>
<td>History, Geography (Core)</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1-02</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Phys. Ed</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1-03</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5 (K-8)</td>
<td>French, Core and Immersion</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1-04</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>French Immersion</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1-05</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>Core French</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1-06</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>Core; History, Geography</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1-07</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Special Ed (1-6)</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>HW1-01</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5/6 (other J/I)</td>
<td>Core; Science</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW1-02</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5 (K-8)</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW1-03</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8 (other J/I)</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW1-04</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7/8 (other rotary)</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW2-01</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>History/Geog</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>HW3-01</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>HW3-02</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5 (4-7)</td>
<td>Core French</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW3-03</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7/8 (6-8)</td>
<td>Core; Math, Language</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW3-04</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW3-05</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TD1-01</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5 (K-7)</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>TD1-02</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5 (K-9)</td>
<td>Core; Special Ed</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TD2-01</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 (4-6)</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TD3-01</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TD4-01</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TD4-02</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5 (K, 2, 5)</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>F</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board</th>
<th>Avg. Yrs experience</th>
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<td>Overall</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>16.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>HW</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TD</td>
<td>14.8</td>
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</table>
## Appendix G – Role Play ‘Skits’ - Summary of Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School code</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1-01</td>
<td>-fighting, bullying in the schoolyard -bullies are ‘not-citizens’ -Principal steps in</td>
<td>-Kids fighting -sort it out themselves, someone else steps in -‘good citizens’ part</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1-02</td>
<td>-Car crash -hijackers (‘bad’ citizens) -police chase and arrest</td>
<td>-School citizenship -students cheating on a test -cheaters end up in grocery store jobs -smart kids end up with professional jobs</td>
<td>-Video games -moral of video games as bad influence – exercise instead!</td>
<td>-No Litter -recycling -‘good citizens’ take care of the environment -clean up community</td>
<td>-Equality -anti-citizenship scene; a wife wants to go to work and her husband wants her to stay home and look after house and kids</td>
<td>-Family life -kids work and get jobs, later take care of parents when they are older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1-03</td>
<td>-Bullying -schoolyard boys bully another, kids step in to prevent it</td>
<td>-Helping -2 old people fall down and lose canes, 2 girls step in and help them -‘good citizens’</td>
<td>-Bullying -a kid gets bullied, teacher steps in and gives out detention to the bully</td>
<td>-Helping -2 older people get gifts from 2 girls</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1-04</td>
<td>-Police rescue/arbeit -police rescue a person being beaten up, arrest criminals</td>
<td>-Littering -some kids smoking, other kids come up and tell them not to litter -‘be a good citizen’</td>
<td>-Bullying -2 girls help out a girl being bullied -the bully is really just jealous of the other girl</td>
<td>-Friends, sleepover -a new girl gets invited to a sleepover; others think she’s ugly and don’t let her sit with them</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW1-01</td>
<td>-Canadian society, equality -2 boys ask a new kid to play, who is different from them, from a different place -have to play with everyone</td>
<td>-Voting -kids go to vote, but can’t because they are not 18</td>
<td>-Fundraising -some girls collect $ for Jump Rope for Heart fundraiser at school</td>
<td>-Bullying -boys fighting at school -one goes to teacher, stands up for kid who is bullied -‘everybody’s the same inside’</td>
<td>-Punishment -a kid is punished at school or fighting -an adult is punished at work by being fired - consequences for both</td>
<td>-Childrens’ lives -girls demonstrate curfew, doing homework, going with parents to vote, going to bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW1-02</td>
<td>-Bullies -at the arcade, some boys get bullied, security guard kicks out the bullies</td>
<td>-Bullying -kids get bullied at school ($), go talk to the principal</td>
<td>-Helping -2 girls help an elderly person to walk down the street</td>
<td>-Helping -2 girls help an elderly person and a blind person with their canes, help to sit down</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| HW1-03 | -Food drive  
-sCHOOL food drive  
‘thank you for being good citizens’  
-community links | -Voting  
-school council vote  
-linked to future – adult politics voting for president | -Law  
-in school, punishment  
-as adults,  
-harder adult laws  
-preparation as children at school | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| HW1-04 | -Canadian citizenship test  
-enrolling in Citizenship test to be able to go to university in Canada  
-person goes to take test with kids along  
-gets card ID | -Voting  
-kids go with parents to vote; parent tells them they can’t vote, too young; also, another adult votes without thinking about who he is voting for – adults make mistakes too | -Canadian citizenship  
-taking test to be a citizen  
-getting the card in the mail later | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| HW2-01 | -Courts system, punishment  
-a child is judged as not guilty, the real culprit is an adult who is sent to jail for the crime committed | -Volunteering  
-a family cleans up the park, ‘being a citizen is important’  
-give to the community | -School as success  
-badly behaved kids get McDonald’s jobs | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| HW3-01 | -Religion at school  
-expressing religious choice; Jehovah’s witness student doesn’t stand up for O Canada | -School, kids’ life  
-some kids go to school, come home, help grandmother, go to friends’ house | -Canadian citizenship  
-a student goes to become a Canadian citizen, then later can stand up for O Canada at school | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| HW3-02 | -Taxes  
-some people complain about taxes, go down to government offices to petition and protest | -Olympics  
-fencing at the Olympics, Canada represented | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| HW3-03 | -Bias in Volunteering  
-the same kids get picked to do the activities like Yearbook | -Bias  
-same kid gets picked to do all the jobs | -Bias’Bad Citizenship’  
-same kids always get picked for activities | n/a | n/a | n/a |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TD1-01</th>
<th>-Detention and Suspension</th>
<th>- Punishment for Stealing</th>
<th>- Good Habits</th>
<th>- Bullying and Detention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- girls in detention for fighting</td>
<td>- girls steal food from a store, get caught</td>
<td>- copying answers leads to bad report card grades</td>
<td>- bullies beat up a kid, get detention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- parent gets mad and sent to jail for attacking other parent!</td>
<td>- are punished as kids</td>
<td>- this leads to getting fired from job as adult</td>
<td>- as adults, a guy gets fined for hitting a police car, then sent to jail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- then, later on as adults, steal again and go to jail</td>
<td>- good habits important to learn at school</td>
<td>- always have to follow the rules as kids or adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- store owner is robbed, the police come</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TD1-02</td>
<td>- Right to fair trial</td>
<td>- Adults can do More</td>
<td>- Respect the Law</td>
<td>- Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- a robbery happens</td>
<td>- adults shown driving, voting, drinking, but kids can’t</td>
<td>- kids spray-paint and vandalize outside the school</td>
<td>- Some kids are drinking, fighting, vandalizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- at the trial, the true suspect is discovered</td>
<td>- a successful student later goes on to be a judge</td>
<td>- they get stopped – must follow the law and respect community</td>
<td>- another reports as a witness, the kids are then punished to ‘jail’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- an unsuccessful student ends up working at McDonalds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G TD1-02</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>- Laws</td>
<td>- Equality at School</td>
<td>- Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- demonstrating a future where Mr. Bush has joined Canada, he and Mr. Harper have broken campaign promises</td>
<td>- some teenagers are drinking and driving at same time</td>
<td>- A new kid gets teased; then others say he should be treated equal, should cherish differences</td>
<td>- Racism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Bush gets sent to jail</td>
<td>- shouldn’t do that</td>
<td>- must follow the law and respect community</td>
<td>- a drunk bus driver gets arrested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- people have a right to be treated fairly and be respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H TD1-02</td>
<td>- Voting</td>
<td>- Bullying</td>
<td>- Responsibility and Health</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- in Canada a right to vote; a man comes to Canada, gets citizenship, can now vote freely</td>
<td>- kids have a right to go to school and responsibility to be nice</td>
<td>- a child is sick and doesn’t want shot, but mother takes her to doctor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- mentions George Bush</td>
<td>- she has a responsibility to take her shot and lives in Canada where she has a right to health care</td>
<td>- she has a responsibility to be nice</td>
<td>- people have a right to be treated fairly and be respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TD2-01</td>
<td>- Responsibility and Health</td>
<td>- Bullying</td>
<td>- Racism</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- a child is sick and doesn’t want shot, but mother takes her to doctor</td>
<td>- kids have a right to go to school and responsibility to be nice</td>
<td>- a drunk bus driver gets arrested</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- she has a responsibility to take her shot and lives in Canada where she has a right to health care</td>
<td>- people have a right to be treated fairly and be respected</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>TD4-01</td>
<td>TD4-02</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| -Helping people new to Canada  
  -a newcomer from England gets help buying a house, car, exchanging $$ | -Helping new Canadians  
  -taking the test, then they get cards in the mail 2 weeks later |
| -Citizenship test | -Citizenship test  
  -people take test, become citizens  
  -then buy a house, go on vacation |
| -Helping people new to Canada  
  -a newcomer from England gets help buying a house, car, exchanging $$ | -Freedom of Religion  
  -protesting about having freedom to practice religion |
| -ESL at school  
  -a new student from India comes and goes to ESL class after school  
  -another student helps him find the class | -Rules  
  -at school, kids punished for being bullies  
  -at work as adults, adult fired for misbehaving at work |
| -Laws  
  -example of how life would be if there were no laws  
  -mayhem and murders, vandalizing | -Voting  
  -an election for president  
  -the kid can’t vote because he has to be a citizen and an adult first |
| -Reporting a Crime  
  -witnesses of a crime report at a trial  
  -true suspect is taken away to jail | -Crime  
  -someone new breaks a Canadian law, killing another person  
  -they go to jail because they broke the law |
| -ESL at school  
  -a new student from India comes and goes to ESL class after school  
  -another student helps him find the class | -/n/a |
Appendix H – Parental Consent Letter

[U of T Department of Geography letterhead]

Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to you to invite your child to participate in a study I am conducting about relationships between children, citizenship and education. This research is part of the requirements for completing the PhD. program at the University of Toronto, Department of Geography. Since I am investigating children's citizenship, it is very important for me to involve children in the project so that I can hear from them as well as adults. Children's ideas and opinions are valuable and may be different from those of adults.

Attached you will find two copies of a Consent Form which will provide you with more detailed information about the project and how your child can participate, in a session with his/her classmates at [name of school]. Participation in the project is voluntary. If you would like your child to participate, please return the signed form to [name of teacher] at [name of school], before [date] and I will collect them from [name of teacher]. Your signed parental consent form must be received by this date in order for your child to participate.

Thank you very much for your time and attention. If you require any further information, please contact me by telephone at 416-516-4504 or by email at glenna.harris@utoronto.ca. My thesis advisor is Dr. Emily Gilbert who may be contacted at the University of Toronto at 416-978-0751 or emily.gilbert@utoronto.ca.

Yours sincerely,

Glenna Harris


Letter of Consent for Parents of Child Participants

Title of project
My project is called: Learned citizenship: Contemporary geographies of citizenship in Ontario schools.

Who is doing the project?
I (Glenna Harris) will be conducting the research as part of the requirements for completing the PhD program in the Department of Geography at the University of Toronto. This letter describes my project and how your child can be involved.

Why am I doing this project?
I am investigating how children's citizenship is related to education. I also want to know what children think and what they know about citizenship. In order to do this I am interviewing elementary school teachers, and talking to their students about what they know about citizenship and how this relates to what they do at school.

What will happen during the study?
Your child will participate in a group activity with other classmates about citizenship, answer a brief written questionnaire about citizenship and the group activity, and may draw pictures if they would prefer this instead of writing. The entire session will last approximately one hour. During the session I will make notes on paper about what everyone says. I will also record the session on audio tape, which I will listen to later and write into notes (transcripts) to use for my analysis later on.

Are there risks involved in the study?
There are no anticipated risks in this study. I want to know what children know about citizenship, because children are citizens as well as adults. Their ideas might be similar or different, and your child's participation will help me to understand what children's citizenship is. Your child may also learn something new by participating, and may even relate it to some of the things he/she studies at school. Your child's participation will not be graded and will not influence your classroom grades or report card. If your child decides he/she is having a hard time participating, that is okay. Your child can decide to stop at any time if he/she wishes.

Who will know happened in the project?
Your child, me, your child’s principal and teacher, the other students in your class who participate, and my supervisor will know about what happened during the session. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the original information that I collect. This will be kept confidential and your child will not be identified by name in the study. The raw data collected during the study will be secured in a locked file and after three years will be shredded. After I have finished my study, I will make presentations and write articles about it for other researchers to read about and learn from.

Research Consent - Parent/Guardian
I have read and understood this form with _____________________ (name of child). I understand the conditions under which I will participate in this study and give my consent for ________________________________ (name of child) to participate in the activities described above, at ________________________________ (name of school).

Parent/Guardian Signature: _______________________________
Date: ________________________________________________

Research Consent – Child (optional)
I have read and understood this form with my parent or guardian.

I understand the conditions under which I will participate in this study and give my consent to participate

Name of Participant: ___________________________________
Date: _______________________________________________

(If your child is participating in this study, please return one copy of this form, with signature(s), to your child’s teacher, by [date] at the latest).
Appendix I: Brainstorming Webs – Site C1-03

Question topic: Citizenship

Question topic: Citizenship and Children
Question topic: Citizenship and school
Question topic: Citizenship and children
Children + Citizenship

- Some things adults can do
  - Having a good time
  - Be healthy, be happy
  - Have a good level
  - Not to be a burden

- Rights of children
  - Food, water
  - To be happy, healthy

- Deeply
  - Being different
  - Treated equally
  - Not as seen in other ways
  - Jesus for everyone as adults

- Kids at school, help coming
  - Think what you want
  - Can most things we can

- Children
  - Learn first
  - Have school to do conditions

- Home school
Question topic: Citizenship and school
Appendix K: Brainstorming Webs – Site TD1-01

Question topic: Citizenship
Question topic: Citizenship and school