.

Chapter 10 Towards ecological citizenship

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Citizenship education contributes to education for sustainable development, through developing pupils' skills in, and commitment to, effective participation in the democratic and other decision-making processes that affect the quality, structure and health of environments and society and exploring values that determine people's actions within society, the economy and the environment.

Citizenship Education, QCA, 1999

The students we teach in geography classrooms are growing up in a world of stark contradictions. While prevailing forms of development continue to bring considerable benefits such as greater life expectancy, more gender and racial equality, and some extension of political freedoms, there is growing evidence of ecological degradation, economic instability, social exclusion, loss of cultural diversity, and psychological insecurity. In varying ways, and to varying extents, most of the world's people are living in ways that are ecologically, economically, socially, culturally and personally unsustainable. They urgently need an accountable, equitable and environmentally sustainable system of global governance and citizenship to tackle the problems created by unsustainable development and hasten to transition to more sustainable futures.

This chapter focuses on ecological democracy and citizenship in the context of globalisation and the need for a global democracy. After reminding readers of the evidence that we are not living sustainably, it proceeds to examine how dialectical materialism, regulation theory, and critical theory can help us to understand our current predicament and recast school geography in a more relevant and enabling form. These related ideas help to move geography towards a reappraisal of the relations between society and nature and society towards new forms of global governance that incorporate a strong commitment to sustainability. A school geography that incorporates appropriate critical theory and pedagogy can do much to develop ecological and global citizenship and the chapter concludes by considering the opportunities available to teachers wishing to promote the kind of outcomes encouraged by new curriculum guidance.

An unsustainable world

The Human Development Report from the United Nations (UNDP, 1998) states that global inequalities are worsening. Twenty per cent of the global population accounts for eighty six per cent of global consumption and one billion people have been left out of the consumption boom of the past two decades. Consumption has increased sixfold in the last 20 years and doubled in the last ten. People in Europe and North America now spend $37 billion a year on pet food, perfumes and cosmetics: enough to provide basic education, water and sanitation, basic health and nutrition for all those now deprived of these needs and still leave $9 billion over. The 225 richest people in the world have a combined wealth of more than $1 trillion, equal to the annual income of the poorest 47 per cent of the earth's population, some 2.5 billion people. Among the 4.4 billion people in developing countries, almost three in every five lack basic sanitation, one third have no safe drinking water, one quarter have inadequate housing, while one fifth are undernourished.

The same report also informs us that the burning of fossil fuels has quintupled since 1950, and it is the wealthiest one fifth of the world who consume more than 50 per cent of the total. The poorest one fifth are responsible for just 3 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions. A child born in New York, Paris or London will (on average) consume, pollute, and waste more in a lifetime than 50 children born in a developing country.

The Living Planet Report from the World Wide Fund for Nature (Loh et al, 1998) suggests that humans have destroyed more than 30 per cent of the world's natural wealth since 1970. Consumption pressure from increasing affluence has doubled in the past 25 years and politicians have been paying only lip service to the idea of sustainable development. Half the accessible supplies of fresh water are used up: double the amount of 1960. In the same period (1960 to present) marine fish consumption has more than doubled; wood and paper consumption has increased by two thirds; and carbon dioxide emissions have doubled.

Britain's young people are not isolated from such problems. The documentary *Eyes of a Child* shown on BBC 1 in June 1999 suggested that one in three children lives in poverty (in households with less than half average income); 20% live in a household where nobody works; one in eight has behavioural problems; one in three 14 year olds has tried drugs; and children commit 15,000 crimes each day. It is the poorest children who suffer most from the health problems associated with environmental pollution and are often most deprived of contact with the rest of the living world.

AN ET'S VIEW OF THE WORLD

Year 9 pupils imagine they are an ET (an extra-terrestial creature) approaching planet earth. They call up information about the planet on their computer screen. This tells them about economic production and distribution on earth, the welfare its people, and the state of its environment. Why are the people living in unsustainable ways and should they adopt the Blueprint for Change suggested in a recent issue of the *New Internationalist* (Ellwood, 2000)? Pupils debate the issues and alternative proposals for sustainable development on planet earth.

The root causes of unsustainable development lie in the way the world's economic, political and cultural systems are governed. People are not free and equal in the determining the conditions of their own existence and therefore cannot realise their common interest in sustainable forms of development. Lack of democracy means that powerful minorities control such key institutions of global governance as the UN, G8, OECD, NATO, IMF, WB and WTO. Regional, national and local politics are generally more democratic but here too such powerful interests as transnational corporations, high level think tanks, and newspaper owners, exert unfair influence.

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

Dialectical materialism suggests that the world is best understood not as a complex of ready-made things but as system of processes through which all things come into being, exist, and pass away. Things like mountains, forests, people, cities, governments and schools, are related and changing systems of processes and relations.

Relations between things enable systems to function with powers to transform themselves and other systems. Things are the constitutive and constituted moments of systemic processes, or flows of matter, energy and information, and it is impossible to separate things from the network of systems within which they are embedded. Part and whole, organism and environment, nature and society, are all dialectically related; the one constitutes the other and there can be few grounds for knowledge that seeks to understand the one without reference to the other.

Dialectics seeks to explain the general laws of movement or development in nature, society and thought and reflects four principles:

- totality (everything is related);
- movement (everything is constantly being transformed);
- qualitative change (the tendency to self organisation and complexity); and
- contradiction (the unity and struggle of opposites).

There is mounting opposition to such a world and growing evidence that a more democratic and sustainable alternative is struggling to emerge. People and movements have the ideas, resources and political will that will make this happen and amongst geographers and other social scientists new and rediscovered ideas are playing a key role. Dialectical materialism suggests how we might heal our relations with one another and the rest of nature whilst regulation and critical theory suggests how our responsibilities towards humanity and the biotic community might be balanced against our rights to self determination within a new form of global democracy.

Dialectical materialism, realist nature, and environmental politics

A geographical education that seeks to heal our relations with the rest of nature, should be based on a philosophy that overcomes the modern separation of nature and society by adopting a dialectical, systemic and materialist approach to the bio-physical and social worlds. Dialectical materialism maintains that the world is by its very

nature material. Everything that exists (including everything mental or spiritual) comes into being as a result of material causes and develops according to the laws of science. The rational discovery and application of scientific knowledge about the world enables people to make progress and realise higher states of development. The current challenge is to develop forms of knowledge, rationality and citizenship that can guide us towards sustainable development (Cornforth, 1961, Harvey, 1996).

Dialectical materialism clearly rejects the notion of an objective, knowable nature, outside society, of the kind promoted by positivist philosophy and much physical geography. It pictures a total reality that is the product of both ecological and social processes. Ecological processes result from structures in the physical and biological worlds (ecological relations) that allow a realist concept of nature (Dickens, 1996). This suggests that nature is the permanent ground of all human activity and environmental change, setting elastic limits on how we live or might try to live. Social processes are a distinct subset of ecological processes since humans have the ability to form social relations that shape their behaviour and affect ecological relations. Habits, customs, laws, language, technology, and such institutions as schools, are the outcomes of unique articulations of social relations in time and space. They are products of class, gender, political, spatial and other relations that act back on ecological relations ensuring that all places, environments and natures are socially constructed, both in a material and discursive sense.

While nature in a realist sense sets elastic limits on how people can live in the world, they themselves must decide what forms of ethics, politics and governance should regulate their relations with the rest of human and non-human nature. Environmental ethics and politics emerge once people realise that the world they inhabit is their own construction and responsibility and start turning the actions whereby they constitute nature into the objects of explicit and discursively justified communal choice. Environmental politics then becomes a struggle over social relations, their impact on ecological relations, and on our physical, mental, and social health. Radical environmental politics seeks to democratise social relations in order that mutually beneficial relations between humans, between humans and other species, and between organisms and their environment, can be sustained. It seeks to change the institutions, beliefs and practices that reproduce unsustainable social relations and to this end seeks to democratise the sites of power that shape all economic production and social reproduction (Hartmann, 1998).

Power, citizenship and global democracy

The global order is constituted by multiple and overlapping, dynamic networks of power. These networks contain seven sites of power that shape people's capacities and life chances, the kinds of technology and discourse that mediates their relations with one another and the rest of nature, their rights and duties, and hence their status as citizens.

The seven sites of power (and the aspects of people's lives that they condition) are:

- the body (physical and psychological well being);
- social welfare (opportunities to become an active member of the community);

POWER AND AUTHORITY

What is power? At one level, the concept of power is very simple: it refers to the ***capacity*** *of social agents, agencies and institutions to maintain or transform their environment, social or physical; and it concerns the resources which underpin this capacity ad the forces that shape and influence its exercise. Accordingly, power is a phenomena found in and between all groups, institutions and societies, cutting across public and private life. It is expressed in all the relations, institutions and structures that are implicated in the production and reproduction of the life of societies and communities. Power creates and conditions all aspects of our lives and it is at the core of the development of collective problems and the modes of their resolution. . . . .*

But the power of an agent or agency or institution, wherever it is located, never exists in isolation. Power is always exercised, and political outcomes are always determined, in the context of the relative capabilities of parties. Power has to be understood as a relational phenomena.

Held, 1995, p. 170

In politics and law, authority is now commonly understood as the right to perform some action, including the right to make laws and all lesser rights involved in ruling; it should be distinguished from POWER understood as the ability to compel obedience. This conception of authority has long been the subject of long and ceaseless dispute . . . .

Miller et al, 1991, p. 28

- culture (cultural identity);
- civil society (opportunities to join civic associations);
- the economy (capacity to influence the economic agenda);
- coercive relations and organised violence (ability to act without fear of physical force and violence); and
- regulatory and legal relations (ability to participate in political debate and electoral politics).

FASHION, POWER AND IDENTITY

Year 7 pupils carry out a survey of the clothing preferences of their peers. They learn about the manufacture and advertising of the most desired products and brands (Klein, 2000); the acquisition of power and identity through consumerism; and the nature of social exclusion in consumer societies. They consider whether fair trade, ethical consumerism, and charity shops allow young people to make alternative fashion statements that promote sustainable development and what regulations and incentives, in schools and elsewhere, might encourage such alternatives.

In the modern period citizenship, or the framework of complex interlocking relations which exist between rights and duties in any legal and moral system, has expanded to embrace civil, political and social citizenship. Citizens have acquired legal, political and welfare rights, along with corresponding duties, and each phase of development has been associated with particular ideas of justice. The primary container of citizenship has been the nation state, but the growth of global networks of power, the urgency of global issues such as climate change, and the emergence of local groups, movements and nationalisms from below, now challenge the power and legitimacy of the nation state and that of the present undemocratic inter-state system. Calls for new systems of global governance and citizenship are intensifying and political theorists, such as David Held (Figure 7.1), suggest models for our consideration.

In seeking to embed the principle of autonomy or self determination into all sites of power, at all levels from the local to the global, Held seeks to further extend the depth and breadth of citizenship. He wishes us to have rights and responsibilities across all aspects of our lives (all sites of power) and for these to be guaranteed and made real by governments and other institutions at all levels from the local to the global. Cosmopolitan democracy and citizenship allows effective co-ordination of social development in the common interest and is likely to lead to the protection, conservation and restoration of bio-physical resources and services in the interests of present and future generations. To use one of Held's examples, it would allow factories to be locally monitored and challenged, nationally regulated and supervised, regionally checked for cross-national standards and risks, and globally evaluated in light of their impacts on health, wealth and economic opportunities for others. In such ways an emerging global democracy will embrace an ecological citizenship that extends rights to future generations and other members of the biotic community and stems from an enlarged concept of justice (Roche, 1992, Smith, 1998). Some suggest that while the European Union is a need of much reform and democratisation, it has the potential to prefigures such a global democracy.

We will return to the role of rationality, education and social learning in fostering global and ecological citizenship once we have examined contemporary social change and the politics of sustainability.

Sustainable development as a new mode of regulation

Geography teachers seeking to foster ecological citizenship in the context of an emerging global democracy, should view much current advocacy of sustainable development and education for sustainability with caution. It can be explained by reference to capital's attempts to solve a crisis of profitability that emerged at the end of the 'post-war boom'. The shift from organised (Fordist) to disorganised (Post Fordist) regimes of capital accumulation in the past thirty years has involved new products and production processes enabled by new information, communication and biotechnologies; the privatisation of state owned industries and utilities; the deregulation of trade, labour and the environment; the intensification of globalisation and related developments in international political institutions; and the restructuring of social welfare, governance and citizenship. Profits have been restored by creating a capitalism with less work and lower corporate taxes in which *the losers have to pay for everything, from the*

welfare state to a functioning democracy, while the winners post dream profits and steal away from their responsibilities (Beck, 1999, p. 26). The resulting contradictions are outlined by Andre Gorz (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.1

Towards a cosmopolitan world order

- Global governance should be based on **the principle of autonomy**. All the world's people should enjoy equal rights, and accordingly equal obligations, in the specification of the political framework which generates and limits the opportunities available to them. They should be free and equal in the determination of the conditions of their own lives, so long as they do not deploy this framework to negate the rights of others. People should be self-determining and democratic government should be limited government. It should allow 'the people' to determine the conditions of their own existence while limiting 'the people's' power through a regulatory structure that is both constraining and enabling.

- Enactment of the principle of autonomy requires an expanding framework of legal principles, institutions and procedures, to extend and deepen democratic accountability at all levels from the local to the global. These can provide and enforce rights and responsibilities that cut across networks of power and provide the foundation for new forms of **global democracy, governance and citizenship.** Laws would delimit the form and scope of individual and collective action within the organisations and associations of the state, economy, and civil society, creating minimum standards for the treatment of all, and ensuring the effective co-ordination of social development in the common interest.

- Global democracy could reshape and redistribute political powers. It could **recast territorial boundaries of accountability** so that issues and agents which currently escape the control of nation states could be brought under democratic control. It could **reform regional and global regulatory and functional agencies** to give them a more coherent and powerful role in realising sustainable development. It could also **ensure that key groups, associations and organisations, from within the economy and civil society, become part of the democratic process**, at all levels from the local to the global. Such changes will require an expansion of the influence of regional and international courts to monitor compliance with an expanded framework of legal principles.

- Global democracy could ensure that **the production, distribution and exploitation of resources takes place according to principles of social justice and sustainability**. It could **use the principle of non-coercive relations to govern the settlement of disputes**, using force only as a collective option of last resort in the face of clear attacks on cosmopolitan democratic law.

Based on Held, 1995

Figure 7.2

The economy has grown much faster than the population. Yet the EU now has 20 million unemployed, 50 million below the poverty line and five million homeless. What has happened to the extra wealth? In Germany since 1979 corporate profits have risen by 90 per cent and doubled over the past ten years, while revenue from corporate taxes has fallen by a half. It now contributes a mere 13 per cent of total tax revenue down from 25 per cent in 1980 and 35 per cent in 1960. . . . Developments have been similar in other countries. Most transnational corporations, such as Siemens or BMW, no longer pay any taxes at home.

Gorz, quoted in Beck, 1999, p. 26.

As we saw in the introduction to this chapter, this shift to disorganised capitalism (Lash & Urry, 1987), or what some label postmodernity (Crook et al, 1992, Jenks, 1996), has intensified problems of environmental degradation and social exclusion and has led to greater advocacy of sustainable development (see Figure 7.3). A growing patchwork of international environmental agreements, increased corporate environmentalism, greater public awareness of environmental issues, and the incorporation of sustainable development into more local and national economic policies, all suggest mounting social concern with the nature and balance of production and consumption, and the emergence of sustainable development as a new mode of regulation (Reid, 1995, Gibbs, 1996). As such it becomes the justification for an ensemble of institutional forms and practices that guide and stabilise the accumulation process and create a temporary resolution of its crisis tendencies. As a means of institutionalising struggles between competing interests (capitalists, workers' and citizens' movements, and the state) it takes a variety of forms from the 'real' regulation of laws and concrete structures through to more intangible elements such as values and norms of behaviour.

In Britain the new mode of regulation has to establish itself as an integral part of the Blair Government's 'third way'. Jacobs (1999) urges the Government to rise to the challenges of globalisation, individualisation and social exclusion, by adopting policies of environmental modernisation that cover economic and industrial policy, health, food, risk management, the quality of urban life, and 'environmental inclusion'.

Figure 7..3 Sustainable development

There are many definitions of sustainable development. Two of the most common are:
Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
The Brundtland Report, Our Common Future, 1987
Sustainable development means improving the quality of life whilst living within the carrying capacity of the supporting ecosystems.
The World Conservation Strategy, Caring for the Earth, 1990

Agenda 21 agreed at the Earth Summit in 1992, discusses the substance of what sustainable development should mean, the process through which it can be decided on and achieved, and the management tools needed to achieve it.

Substance	Process	Tools
• Reduce use of resources and production of waste, increase resource efficiency, reuse, recycle • Conserve fragile ecosystems • Social equity (between and within countries and across generations) • Quality of life (broader than standard of living) • Respect for traditional knowledge, ways of life, diversity	• Active planning and management • Consultation, participation, empowerment • Decisions at most local possible level, local government pivotal • Partnerships and collaborations between all sectors	• Education, information, awareness raising • Capacity building, institutional know how, confidence, experience • Regulations and enforcement • Market management, taxes, levies, subsidies • Public investment

MODE OF REGULATION

This involves all the mechanisms which adjust the contradictory and conflictual behaviour of individuals to the collective principles of the regime of accumulation. At the basic level, these means of adjustment are simply the extent to which entrepreneurs and workers are in the habit of conforming, or are willing to conform, to these principles, because they recognise them (even reluctantly) as valid or logical. At another level, institutionalised forms are more important – the rules of the market, social welfare provision, money, financial networks. These institutional forms can be state determined (laws, executive acts, public finances), private (collective agreements) or semi-public (a social security system).

Lipietz, 1992, p. 2

Criticism of the Government in such policy areas as transport suggests that as an emerging mode of regulation, sustainable development is contested with different interests arguing for weaker or stronger versions of sustainability. Weak sustainability involves a form of techno-managerialism whereby capital seeks to ensure a continued supply of the conditions of production (natural resources and services, human health and welfare, urban and rural space) on its own terms and the state seeks to maintain the support of the majority of voters. It gives higher priority to environmental concerns in economic policy, employs largely technological and market mechanisms to raise the environmental efficiency of production and consumption, but assumes a high degree of substitutability between human and natural capital. So long as a constant quantity of capital is conveyed from one generation to the next, the conditions of sustainable development are satisfied (eg. ancient wetland is destroyed in the course of development and substituted by an equivalent area of newly created water space and fringing vegetation). Weak sustainability fails to incorporate a commitment to social inclusion and citizenship through redistribution, democratisation and empowerment, and functions mainly at the ideological level with the media and education used to enlist support. The private sector and the state offer various forms of public consultation and participation to help legitimate the new mode of regulation (eg. Local Agenda 21) and these can be used to advance stronger alternatives.

Weak sustainability's attempt to internalise nature (to ideologically redefine nature and subsume it within capital as a productive asset henceforth subject to rational management as in much environmental economics and green consumerism) is compromised by the need for capitalists and nation states to compete internationally. It meets opposition from those workers' and citizens' movements that seek stronger forms of sustainability. These start form the premise that society cannot simply let economic activity result in a continued decline in the functions and quality of the environment even though it may be beneficial in other ways. They specify minimum levels of environmental quality to be achieved, reject substitution of human capital for critical natural capital, and require an economy that is constrained within ecological limits. For green socialists (Pepper, 1993) ecological sustainability has to be realised along with economic, social, cultural and personal sustainability and this can only be done in a global democracy where the common interest in strong sustainability is likely to emerge. Gorz (1994) and Leipitz (1992) suggest that Europe should pioneer such democracy by using new technologies to liberate people from work and consumerism so that they have the time for personal and social development, including the restoration and revitalisation of civil society and its associated public spheres.

Public spheres, praxis and ecological democracy

Public spheres are political bodies such as trade unions and environmental groups that do not exist as part of formal political authority, but rather in confrontation with that authority. Along with the private sphere of the family and household, they constitute the lifeworld, our everyday taken for granted world where much social interaction and reproduction is governed by mutual understanding and democratic discourse. It is the lifeworld that allows our common interests to emerge, sustains our culture, and promotes its progressive rationalisation through a process of social learning or praxis whereby useful knowledge is continually refined by reflecting upon the results of applying academic and lay ideas in action (Dickens, 1996).

Praxis reflects dialectical materialism's insistence that all knowledge should be viewed relationally: as part of a totality that is always in a state of movement or change. There are no universal facts, laws or truths as positivism suggests and knowledge and truth are best approached as practical questions with the power and validity of ideas being demonstrated by their utility. Theory is a guide for practice and practice a test of theory. People are beings of praxis and it is through 'revolutionary' praxis (critical reflection and action) that they can overcome their alienation from one another and the rest of nature and realise higher states of development (Gadotti, 1996).

PRAXIS

Only with a liberated mind (of the people), which is free to inquire and then conceive and plan what is to be created, can structural change release the creative potentials of the people. In this sense liberation of the mind is the primary task, both ***before*** *and* ***after*** *structural change.*

This implies breaking the monopoly of knowledge in the hands of the elites, i.e. giving the people their right to assert their existing knowledge to start with; giving them the opportunity and assistance, if needed, to advance their self knowledge through self-inquiry as the basis of their action, and to review themselves their experiences from action to further advance their self knowledge. In this reflection-action-reflection process of the people (people's praxis), professional knowledge can be useful only in dialogue with people's knowledge on an equal footing through which both can be enriched, and not in the arrogance of assumed superior wisdom. [Praxis thus alters] *the relations of knowledge, to produce and advance 'organic knowledge' as a part of the very evolution of life rather than abstract (synthetic) knowledge . . to be imposed upon life.*

Rahman, 1993, pp. 195 – 6

In an age of disorganised capitalism it is NGOs and new social movements that are the main agents of praxis as they defend public spheres of democratic discourse from the instrumental rationality of private corporations and bureaucratic states (Jacobs, 1996). The action of environmental and development NGOs over such issues as world trade, seeks to translate sustainability from an ethical and political concept into a set of regulative social principles that find expression in the legal and constitutional realm and become an ecological social contract between the institutions of global governance and global citizens. It prefigures the kind of cosmopolitan democracy that Held describes (Figure 7.1) and means that the enactment of sustainability, or the creation of

sustainable development as a mode of regulation, is not left to experts. It becomes a social learning process that allows ecologically rational relations between society and the bio-physical world to emerge based on moral as well as scientific considerations (Barry, 1996).

The model of discursive or deliberative democracy favoured by advocates of strong sustainability combines representative and participatory democracy, suggesting that decisions should be taken at the lowest level possible (subsidiarity). It is associated with critical theory and Habermas' theory of communicative action with Dryzek (1996) suggesting that in an ecological democracy ideal speech situations (competent individuals reaching consensus through an appraisal of knowledge claims that is not distorted by power relations) should be open to a range of environmental discourses (Dryzek, 1997) and to the voices of future generations and the rest of nature. Politicians and citizens should listen to signals from the bio-physical world brought to them by scientists and others, and take account of the scientific, aesthetic, economic, cultural, and existence values that people find in nature when making their decisions. This is not to argue for the kind of ecocentrism associated with deep ecology, but for an ecological humanism that allows the continued coevolution of the human and bio-physical worlds (Soper, 1999).

CRITICAL THEORY

Critical theory draws on both Weber and Marx and shifts the focus from labour and the social relations of production to social interaction and the nature of language and morals. The principle claim of Jurgen Habermas, the foremost contemporary critical theorist, is that interaction has become distorted by the rise of positivism and instrumental reason that promotes science as universal and value-free knowledge and so fosters a distorted and incomplete understanding of our relations with one another and the rest of nature. His critical theories seek to reveal this distorted and incomplete rationality and empower people to think and act in genuinely rational and autonomous ways.

Habermas' ideas have been applied to environmental politics (Goldblatt, 1996) and geographical and environmental education (Huckle & Sterling, 1996, Huckle, 1997).

Geographical education for sustainability

So, what is to be done? How should these ideas from dialectical materialism, regulation theory and critical theory, shape the content and process of school geography in the light of new curriculum guidance both for the subject and for citizenship education?

Firstly geography teachers convinced of my argument, should regard themselves as transformative intellectuals seeking the further democratisation of society alongside progressive elements of civil society. They should engage in forms of professional development that extend their grasp of the kinds of critical social theory outlined in this chapter, its development and application by academic geographers, and the ways in which it might reform the contents of their lessons. They should become familiar with environmental politics (Elliott, 1998, Connelly & Smith, 1999), social theory and the environment (Goldblatt, 1996), alternative models of democracy (Held, 1987), and the ways in which nature is being increasingly capitalised and enframed by new forms of economic production and consumption (Braun & Castree, 1998). They should also develop their abilities to engage students as researchers in praxis or socially critical action research in democratic institutions that have extensive links with the community and the wider world. This means running schools and classrooms in democratic and sustainable ways and applying, the extensive range of experiential teaching and learning strategies used by progressive social, development and environmental educators (Huckle & Sterling, 1996). Children and young people have the right to participate in their learning and in the social construction of environments and sustainability, and there is a wealth of advice encouraging teachers to educate them in primary environmental care (Hart, 1997, Adams & Ingham, 1998, Johnson et al, 1998). Local Agenda 21 has revived the theory and practice of community planning and development (Selman, 1996) and progressive local authorities are involving schools in such new initiatives as visioning conferences and young people's parliaments.

Secondly geography teachers should recognise the value and limitations of the new guidance contained in Curriculum 2000. This seeks to secure students' *commitment to sustainable development at a personal,*

local, national and global level and gives geography a major role in developing citizenship through reflection and action on environmental issues and the *issues and challenges of global interdependence and responsibility.* It is supported by the findings of the national forum on values in education and the community: that schools and teachers can expect the support and encouragement of society if they base their teaching and the school ethos on commonly agreed values. The forum's statement of values relating to the environment (Figure 7.4) requires clarification if it is to reflect an ecological humanism, but by embracing responsibility to future generations and other species, it points to an appropriate ethical foundation for ecological citizenship.

Figure 7.4

Valuing the environment

We value the environment, both natural and shaped by humanity, as the basis of life and a source of wonder and inspiration.
On the basis of these values, we should:

- *accept our responsibility to maintain a sustainable environment for future generations*
- *understand the place of human beings within nature*
- *understand our responsibilities for other species*
- *ensure that development can be justified*
- *preserve balance and diversity in nature wherever possible*
- *preserve areas of beauty and interest for future generations*
- *repair, wherever possible, habitats damaged by human development and other means.*

National Forum on Values in Education and the Community, QCA, 1998

Figure 7.5

Education for Sustainable Development
Some proposed outcomes relating to citizenship and stewardship

By the end of key stage 3 pupils should:

- *Acknowledge their personal and collective responsibilities in relation to the social, economic and environmental health of their community and value their participation in activities that enhance it sustainability;*
- *Know how decisions about social, economic and environmental issues are made, that they impact on each other, and how they can be influenced locally and nationally through direct or indirect participation;*
- *Know how considerations of sustainable development, stewardship and conservation currently affect environmental planning and management.*

By the end of key stage 4 pupils should:

- *Understand and value the goal of sustainability and the collective decision making processes required to achieve it;*
- *Be prepared to work with others in partnership to resolve sustainable development issues;*
- *Understand how values and beliefs influence behaviour and lifestyles, and how some behaviour and lifestyles are more sustainable than others;*
- *Understand the rights and responsibilities that are emerging as necessary to achieving a sustainable society, and how they apply to themselves and to other groups in the community and wider society.*

Education for Sustainable Development in the Schools Sector, Panel for Education for Sustainable Development, 1998

Citizenship education is to be based on a framework of learning outcomes (key concepts, values and dispositions, skills and aptitudes, and knowledge and understanding) that promotes concern for the environment and common good: encourages reasoned argument and critical problem solving; and requires knowledge and understanding of sustainable development and environmental issues. It is sufficiently open to allow teachers to develop students' political literacy by exploring the nature of power, rights and responsibilities, across all seven sites of power at all levels from the local to the global. At best it allows the kind of global citizenship education proposed by Lynch (1992), and developed in the *What We Consume* module of WWF's *Global Environmental Education Programme* (Huckle, 1988 – 92), but without more detailed guidance of the kind provided by the Panel on Education for Sustainable Development (Figure 7.5), there is a danger that teachers will define citizenship too narrowly and that emerging forms of global governance will receive insufficient attention. Pupils are to be taught about *the world as a global community, the political, economic, environmental and social implications of this, and the role of the European Union, the Commonwealth and the United Nations*

(key stage 3), and about *the wider issues and challenges of global interdependence and responsibility, including sustainable development and Local Agenda 21* (key stage 4) but the effective delivery of such outcomes will require significant investment in professional and curriculum development.

Thirdly, geography teachers should acknowledge that in our disorganised capitalist society the foundations of social structure and agency are shifting from the sphere of production to that of consumption. Identity and politics are increasingly focussed on the goods and services people consume, the images and meanings that surround these commodities, and related issues of trust, risk, and quality of life. The old politics of distribution, government, and political parties has partly given way to the new politics of risk, governance, and the public sphere, but the new guidance on citizenship fails to adequately reflect this change (Lent, 1998). The politics of GM foods suggests that style, image and presentation are everywhere and that for young people particularly, the body is increasingly a statement of power, freedom, lifestyle, pleasure, and identity. Disorganised capitalism encourages and requires more fragmented, decentred, somatic and reflexive individuals, who are able to assess and criticise their own values and behaviour and alter them if necessary. The unified knowable self has ceased to exist and teachers should therefore learn to work with student's diverse identities, desires, and pleasures, engaging them in dialogue and activity that draws on their grounded cognitive and aesthetic understandings of nature, environments and sustainability (Hartley, 1997, Parker, 1997).

Such activity is likely to contain significant elements of media and consumer education (Morgan, 1997) and give greater attention to the body as a site where nature is constructed (Payne, 1999). It will convey a questioning and reflexive attitude; enable students to perceive the structural origins of their subjectivities (Castells et al 1999); accommodate diverse voices, from peoples and species variously located within ecological and social relations, and so develop the kind of communicative rationality that allows the democratic assessment of risk at the same time as it fosters ecological democracy, sustainability and the re-enchantment of nature. Elements of such pedagogy can be seen in the work of such organisations as Body Shop, AdBusters and Greenpeace, and in such new educational settings as the Eden Project in Cornwall and the Earth Centre near Doncaster.

ENGAGING WITH THE GM DEBATE

Inspired by the WWF publication *Internet to go!* (Webster, 1998) geography and English departments co-operate on a Year 10 study of the role of language and images in the debate over genetically modified crops and food. Students visit the websites of agro-chemical corporations such as Monsanto (www.monsanto.com/), NGOs such as Greenpeace (www.greenpeace.org), and government departments such as the MAFF(www.maff.gov.uk/), as well as more general sites (www.connectoltel.com/gmfood). Lessons explore the ways in which language and images communicate risk, uncertainty, and trust, and how politicians seek to manage risk in order to maintain public support.

Identity and ecological democracy

Furlong and Cartmel (1997) remind us that the young people we teach are confronted by an epistemological fallacy. While class, gender and other social relations continue to shape their life chances and the environments in which they live, these relations tend to become increasingly obscure as lifestyles diversify, collectivist traditions weaken, and individual values intensify. Unaccountable and undemocratic powers continue to deny them more sustainable ways of living, yet they are increasingly encouraged to regard the resulting risks, setbacks and anxieties as individual shortcomings that they must solve on a personal basis rather than through politics. Educational reform that promotes greater competition within and between schools to raise narrowly defined standards of attainment reinforces this fallacy and so compounds problems of establishing identity (Klaassen, 1996). It is to be hoped that the introduction of citizenship education will empower young people to reflect and act on a more realistic view of society and thereby to become part of the growing movement for strong sustainability.

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