

## BOOK REVIEWS

### ***Local Citizenship in the Global Arena: Educating for community participation and change*, by Sally Findlow**

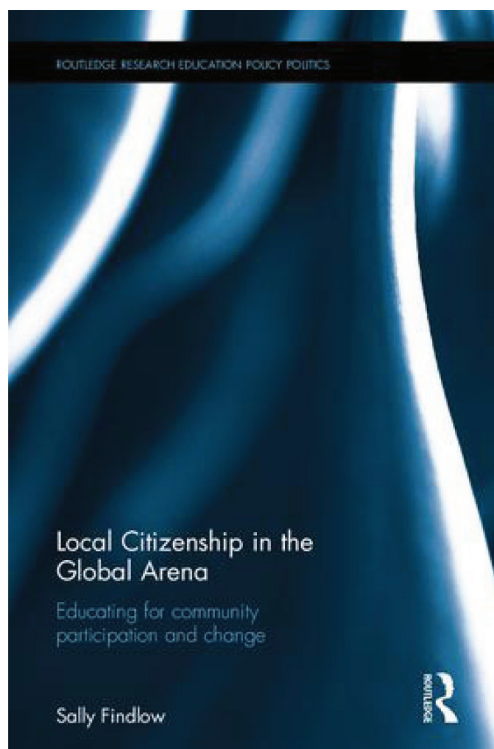
New York: Routledge, 2017, 176pp., £76 (hbk), ISBN: 978-1-138-85975-3, £24 (e-book) ISBN: 978-1-315-71697-8

Despite its compact 161 pages, Sally Findlow's first major work on education for citizenship is a thoroughly researched, dense read that explores an optimistic and inclusive vision for the future of the field. Findlow provides a detailed overview of several current lines of enquiry in the field and she attempts to further extend the debate on education on, and for, citizenship away from the sole domain of the nation state by raising questions about education's relationship with borders and place. It is disappointing that the same meticulous attention Findlow gave to her research was not paid to the editing of the book, which often distracts from the careful scholarship.

As a scholar whose past work has focused on higher education and nation-building, Findlow has produced a well-researched book that provides a comprehensive summary of current challenges in the field of citizenship, especially as it relates to the British context. This context remains Findlow's local point of reference throughout the chapters, and this book is most appropriate for those who share a background in British education.

This is a read for an academic audience, and would suit graduate students and academics familiar with the terrain and looking for a text that synthesizes current scholarship and provides several avenues for discussion.

Findlow's three aims are to explore several selected dimensions of citizenship she believes are integral to the purpose of citizenship education, to recount ways education has interacted with the development and practice of citizenship and to ask questions about education's 'place' in the current debate. All three of these she achieves, often through clear case studies from literature and her research, multiple perspectives and thoughtful questions. Despite all this, the book struggles to unite the aims to provide an overview of Findlow's vision. How can scholars harness these dimensions and interactions to better understand the relationship between education for citizenship, the local and the global?



In calling for a 'holistic and fluid' (38) reconceptualization, Findlow joins the chorus of scholars looking for new ways to express citizenship. However, the layout of the book reinforces the challenges scholars confront when arguing for a holistic vision. By isolating chapters by themes – community citizenship, protest citizenship, feminist citizenship and ecological stakeholder citizenship – Findlow makes a strong case for each, yet the book is unable to produce a new theoretical framework that vividly shows the interplay of these strands moving forward. The organization of chapters by dimensions is a common tactic, and might have been an editorial decision, but it left more questions than it answered as to how Findlow envisions these aspects of citizenship integrating on local and global scales.

A constant throughout the chapters is the attention to the notion of place and borders. One insightful argument was when she stressed the importance of understanding the history and politics that created the borders of today. She also brings in questions about the power of states and the system of neo-liberalism.

The best treatment of these issues occurs in the chapter on ecological stakeholder citizenship, which raises honest and hard-hitting questions about how to balance fairness and competition in education. It touches upon a much-needed investigation about the entanglement that education for citizenship shares with the environment and neo-liberalism. As her introduction implies, this focus on, and the potential to further unpack, the role of place and the environment in citizenship education is her current motivation, and I look forward to Findlow deepening her work on these questions.

Findlow injects a sense of urgency into her writing. This is most apparent through her attempts to incorporate events that were most likely unfolding as she was attempting to send the manuscript to press. 2016 was a year of upheaval for those studying citizenship education in the anglophone world. The British vote to leave the European Union, known as Brexit, followed by the unlikely ascension of Donald Trump to the American presidency, raised many questions about the role of education to explain, promote or challenge threats to multicultural democracy and institutions.

However, the book is almost too timely. While references to Brexit, as an example of what happens when the population has not received the form of holistic education for citizenship for which she advocates, occasionally bolstered her critique of the British experience, her references to Trump felt rushed and overly simplistic in comparison to her more considered and nuanced analysis. As such, the strongest case studies are those more historical in nature, where she has had the time to more thoughtfully reflect.

Overall, this book introduces Findlow as someone eager to join the conversation on education for citizenship that promotes social justice and embraces diversity, and reads as her exploration of the current literature, questions and opportunities.

With this book, Findlow has proven that she is eager to engage in the field of education for citizenship in the twenty-first century, and contributes a complex summary of the field with some exciting suggestions for next steps. While she argues that education can be both a problem and a solution, ultimately she implies that education must, and can, be harnessed and reconceptualized to empower students for their individual well-being and to encourage them to collaborate on the more global and pressing issues of the day.

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