

# Education for cosmopolitan citizenship: drawing on international experiences to strengthen theory and practice

**Keynote presentation**

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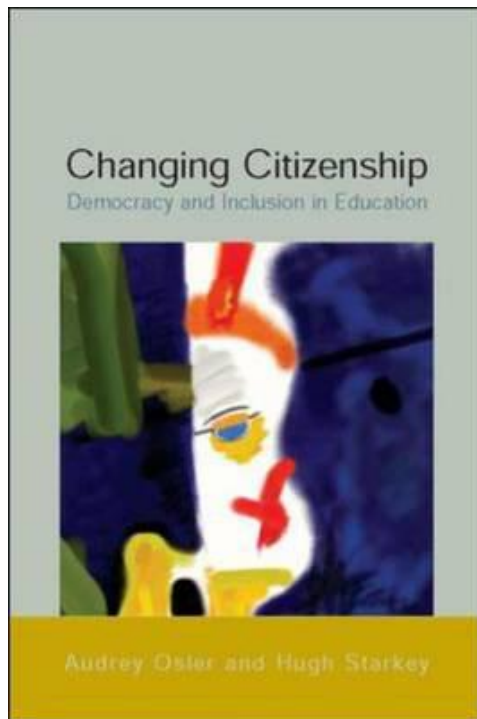
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# Framing this presentation

- \* Drawing, directly and indirectly, on my **international experiences** of teaching and research: in Europe, East Asia, North America, Latin America and the Middle East, in both democratic settings and post conflict contexts
- \* Presenting the arguments for ‘**education for cosmopolitan citizenship**’ founded in human rights
- \* My understanding of **human rights education** is not primarily about rights violations (or ways in which governments criticise each other) but about **human rights as universal entitlements and principles for living together**
- \* Arguing that there are not only sound **pedagogical reasons** for reviewing how we develop citizenship learning, but also pressing **geopolitical reasons** for rethinking this area of the curriculum

# Education for cosmopolitan citizenship

## Changing Citizenship Osler & Starkey, 2005



- \* From 2002, we proposed concept of 'education for cosmopolitan citizenship' as a means of expanding the vision of citizenship education prevalent then
- \* Citizenship education had recently been introduced to the national curriculum for England, and the model adopted was proving to be influential in a various settings worldwide.

# Education for cosmopolitan citizenship

## Chinese translation of Changing Citizenship

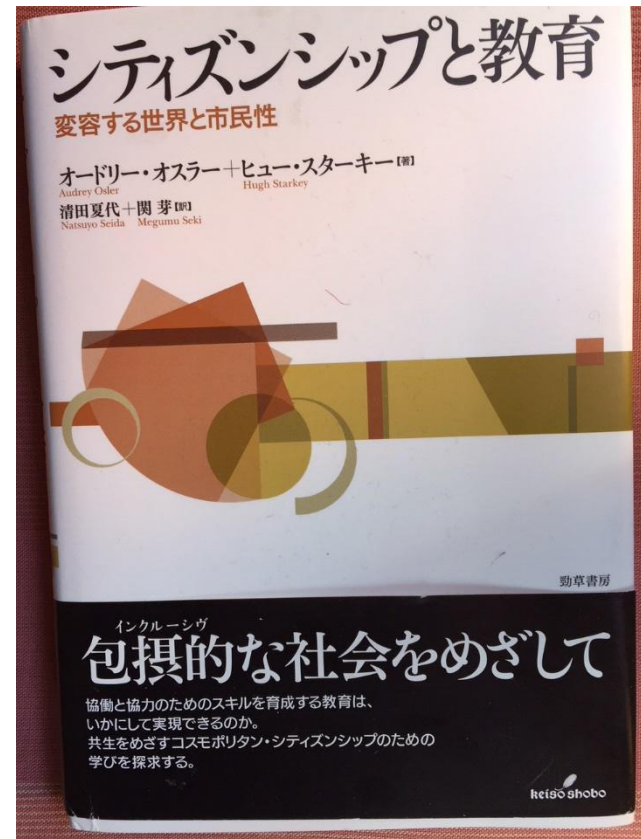


- \* We challenge a narrow approach to citizenship education where students focus on local communities and their nation, but fails to look beyond nation to the region or the wider world.
- \* We argue for an approach to citizenship learning founded in human rights

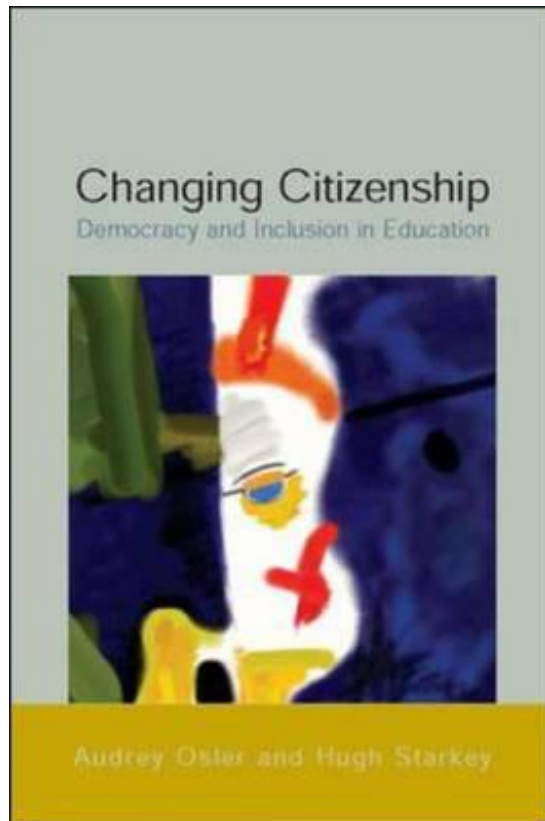
# Education for cosmopolitan citizenship

Japanese translation of  
Changing Citizenship

- \* examines research data from young people living in communities characterized by diversity
- \* identifies these young people as **emergent cosmopolitan citizens**
- \* They are negotiating daily their **multiple loyalties and belongings**



# Education for cosmopolitan citizenship



## Citizenship as:

- \* Status
- \* Feeling
- \* Practice

# Citizenship as status

- \* Relates to nationality/ passport
- \* An exclusive either/or status
- \* But schools in many parts of the world are also educating young people who don't hold citizenship status
- \* But all students are holders of human rights: an inclusive status

# Citizenship as feeling

- \* Citizenship is a feeling: a sense of belonging
- \* Feeling of belonging depends on sense of security (physical, psychological, social) and an absence of discrimination. Sometimes security is linked to citizenship status.
- \* Building citizenship education on human rights permits an **inclusive** sense of belonging
- \* Addresses rights to which **all** are entitled, regardless of citizenship status



# Citizenship as practice

- \* Citizenship can also be understood as a practice, what Isin (2008) refers to as ‘acts of citizenship’
- \* The practice of citizenship can take place in communities, in sports clubs, schools, at work etc.
- \* The practice of citizenship does not depend on status
- \* The absence of a **feeling** citizenship may undermine the **practice** of citizenship

Reasons why education for  
cosmopolitan citizenship is  
needed...

**geo-political +  
pedagogical**

# Global political climate

- \* economic difficulties, demographic change and uncertainties, have encouraged populist movement and leaders
- \* Populist rhetoric suggests easy solutions to complex problems, blaming the most vulnerable (e.g. refugees, foreigners) for society's ills.
- \* those who have suffered the negative impact of globalization, economic crisis and austerity policies are urged to put 'our people' first
- \* Citizenship education that promotes solidarity and peaceful coexistence is vital

# One example of challenging global political climate: the Weimarization of Europe?



- \* **Weimar Republic 1919-1933**
- \* Cultural innovation, artistic development, creativity
- \* Attempts to create a fair humane society
- \* Democracy fragile
- \* hyper-inflation and depression
- \* gender and generational conflict
- \* political violence and terrorism
- \* Racism and antisemitism
- \* **Processes of exclusion which eventually led to war and genocide**

# Pedagogical reasons for education for cosmopolitan citizenship

- \* Promotes student **participation** in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- \* Empowers students to struggle for justice in their own lives and those of others: **moral responsibility**
- \* Human rights principles (justice, peace, solidarity, respect for difference) enable high **ethical standards**
- \* Teaches **interdependence** and **belonging to multiple communities**

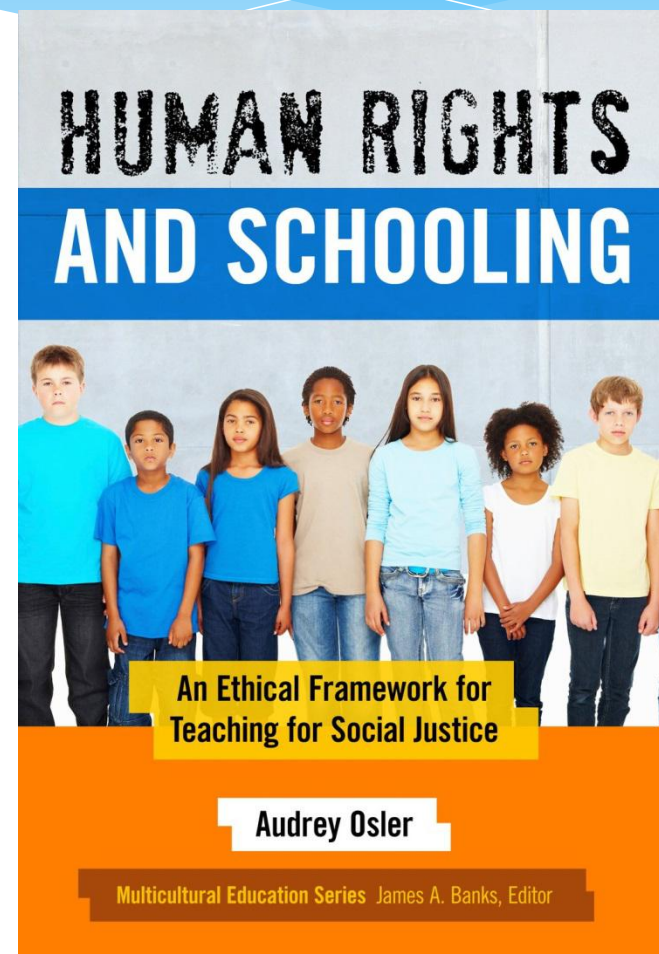
# The problem of traditional approaches to citizenship and democracy in education

- \* In classrooms we have many students who are not citizens
- \* Some don't aspire to citizenship
- \* Some are refugees, undocumented migrants, stateless persons
- \* Others, although citizens, feel excluded and are 'othered'
- \* BUT ALL ARE HOLDERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Education for cosmopolitan  
citizenship is founded on human  
rights

# Human rights as an ethical framework: a means of strengthening education for all

- \* Teachers College Press, New York 2016
- \* Part of a longer-term project of drawing on human rights to challenge injustices in through education
- \* Develops argument for education for **cosmopolitan citizenship education** underpinned by *human rights and cosmopolitanism at all scales* from the local to the global
- \* Addressing **curriculum**: content and pedagogy
- \* **Re-imagining the nation as both multicultural and cosmopolitan**





# Learning *about*, *through* and *for* rights (UN Declaration on HRE and training, 2011)

- \* Human rights education:
- \* Learning *about* rights (knowledge);
- \* Learning *through* rights (democratic upbringing and school practices e.g. student councils; learning to live together, recognition of difference);
- \* Learning *for* rights: making a difference (critical patriotism)

# What are human rights?

- \* human rights are ‘an expression of the human urge to resist oppression’
- \* Then HRE must necessarily be about supporting students to name inequality, challenge injustice, make a difference, develop **solidarities** at local, national and global levels
- \* It is such solidarities that enable us to look beyond populist appeals

# Problematic human rights education: human rights heaven and hell (Okafor and Agbakwa, 2001):

Teachers sometimes consider human rights abuses at home insignificant



So they teach about human rights abuses elsewhere - danger of moral superiority

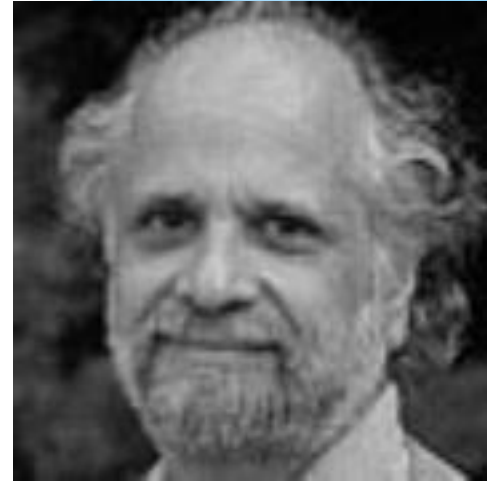


# Ways forward

theorizing and applying human rights and social  
justice education

# The narrative imagination

- \* 'The right to narrate': Bhabha (2003)
- \* Narrative as pedagogical tool in HRE
- \* Successful (& on-going) struggles for rights
- \* Students can tell own individual and collective stories
- \* Narrative troubles the dominant national narrative



Homi Bhabha  
Post-colonial theorist

# The right to narrate

- \* To protect the 'right to narrate' is to protect a range of democratic imperatives: it assumes there is an equitable access to those institutions – schools, universities, museums, libraries, theatres – that give you a sense of a collective history and the means to turn those materials into a narrative of your own (Bhabha, 2003)*

# Cosmopolitanism and human rights at home

- \* To revitalise education for social justice we need to **re-imagine the nation as cosmopolitan as well as multicultural**
- \* Involves reconceptualising the curriculum to avoid promoting an exclusive national identity – need to encourage learners to see themselves as part of a nation whose interests are not necessarily opposed to other nations/ regions/ religions
- \* A form of education which equips students to ***challenge injustice in the here and now***

Teachers and students engaging in  
acts of citizenship ... some  
examples



# High school students in Gwangju, South Korea (May 2007)

- \* Conference for educators
- \* Ministry of Education was introducing human rights education into schools
- \* Students argued it was no good reforming the school curriculum unless the authorities reformed the school system and the high stakes examinations
- \* Education **about** rights needs to be accompanied by human rights **in** schools, addressing problem of high teen suicide rates.



# Reimagining Japan with the help of a superhero: Nara, Japan (November 2015): Mr Ogawa



- \* Challenging the borders of the nation
- \* Using popular culture to question insider/outsider positions
- \* Discussing identity, belonging, hate speech
- \* Facing up to difficult global political inequalities
- \* Kitayama, Y., Osler, A. & Hashizaki, Y. (2017) Reimagining Japan and fighting extremism with the help of a superhero: a teacher's tale. *Race Equality Teaching*

# Education for cosmopolitan citizenship: an ethnic studies teacher in Osaka, Japan 'Min-Ji' Osaka, Japan



- \* Far-right political movement promoting hatred and xenophobia
- \* Operating though the Internet
- \* But effectively challenged though the courts using International human rights standards in the absence of effective laws against hate speech

# Education for cosmopolitan citizenship: Osaka, Japan



- \* Facing structural inequality and discrimination as 3<sup>rd</sup> generation ethnic Korean
- \* Employed to teach language and culture but facing “the difficult past “
- \* Building students’ political skills for change

# Learning to live together: Beijing Normal University graduate students

## May 2017

### Building collective narratives



- \* Comparing family histories and grandparents' stories to history textbooks: creating **new collective narratives**
- \* Applying a feminist lens to 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese history – the Cultural Revolution and the Back to the Countryside Movement

# Exploring possibilities of human rights education: graduate student University of Washington, Seattle, USA

Studying children's human rights

July 2017



- \* Examining children's human rights as a way of teaching for social justice and against racism and white supremacy
- \* How can UN Convention on Child Rights support teachers in a nation that hasn't yet ratified the Convention

# Teachers educating for human rights: responsibilities to students

- \* Draw on theory and put it into practice (reflexive)
- \* Know there are always new things to learn
- \* Recognise and build on students multiple identities
- \* Respect children's rights
- \* Prepare their students to participate in their local communities
- \* Help students to understand and contribute to an interdependent nation and an interdependent world
- \* Equip students with skills to be politically efficacious
- \* Care for and about their students (Noddings, 2013)
- \* Are ready to struggle for justice

# Why do we need to embrace human rights and cosmopolitan values?

**All human beings are vulnerable:**

we need an moral and political framework in education which is inclusive of us all

