Educating the national citizen in neoliberal times: from the multicultural self to the strategic cosmopolitan

Katharyne Mitchell

The paper is a broad, comparative investigation of shifts in the educational rhetoric and policy of three countries over the past two decades. Using England, Canada and the United States as case studies, I argue that the spirit of multiculturalism in education has shifted from a concern with the formation of tolerant and democratic national citizens who can work with and through difference, to a more strategic use of diversity for competitive advantage in the global marketplace. This shift is directly linked with and helps to facilitate the entrenchment of neoliberalism as it supports a privatization agenda, reduces the costs of social reproduction for the government, and aids in the constitution of subjects oriented to individual survival and/or success in the global economy.

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Department of Geography, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195, USA
email: kmitch@u.washington.edu

Introduction

If the Western citizen of the nineteenth century was a member of a consolidating nation, the contemporary citizen of the twenty-first century is a member of a deterritorializing state.[1] How were and are these citizens *educated* to be members of their respective communities? What is the relationship between state formation, economic organization and educational systems? How is this relationship changing in the contemporary neoliberal moment? And how are these fundamentally geographical queries? These are the central questions guiding this paper, questions I believe to lie at the heart of any understanding of how citizen-subjects are constituted as members of a particular democratic community.

My central premise is that national, public systems of education are currently under siege in many advanced industrial nations because of profound shifts in the social organization of the economy, and because of the altered spatial relationship of individual states to new global economic regimes. Flexible systems of accumulation,

interlinked and interdependent with the processes of globalization and neoliberalism, have vastly altered the state's relationship with economic actors and institutions, and at the same time have produced a new dynamic between the state and its citizenry.[2] In particular, contemporary shifts in the spatial dynamics of capital accumulation have had a strong impact on state practices and national narratives of citizenship and how children should be educated to be members of a democratic community (Torres 1998; Mitchell 2001).

Recent changes in the philosophy and practice of national education systems have taken many forms, but my focus in this paper will be on the shifting discourse of multiculturalism and on the growing pressures for greater educational standardization and accountability. In multicultural education there has been a subtle but intensifying move away from person-centred education for all, or the creation of the tolerant, 'multicultural self', towards a more individuated, mobile and highly tracked, skills-based education, or the creation of the 'strategic cosmopolitan'. The 'multicultural self' was one who was able to work with and

through difference, and conditioned to believe in the positive advantages of diversity in constructing and unifying the nation.[3] The 'strategic cosmopolitan' is, by contrast, motivated not by ideals of national unity in diversity, but by understandings of global competitiveness, and the necessity to strategically adapt as an individual to rapidly shifting personal and national contexts.[4] These changes in the philosophy and practice of multiculturalism in education, and in educational policy in general, I believe, are related to the new imperatives of globalization as perceived by neoliberal politicians and educators.[5] Those pushing a neoliberal agenda in education stress global competitiveness, the reduction of the (publicly financed) costs of education, and of social reproduction in general, the necessity for greater market choice and accountability and the imperative to create hierarchically conditioned, globally oriented state subjects – i.e. individuals oriented to excel in ever transforming situations of global competition, either as workers, managers or entrepreneurs.[6]

A comparative examination of these questions using three different case studies allows me to trace the genesis of public education in different locations and conduct an archaeology of the general relationship of national education systems to state formation and economic change. In choosing England, the United States and Canada as my case studies, I am indicating the widespread nature of change, but also showing the ways in which cultural differences remain strong, and spatial variations are crucial.[7] The work is intended as a broad, comparative synthesis of contemporary trends in Western-based education systems rather than an in-depth examination of each nation's education policies or the contexts in which these policies are changing. Although I argue that a general shift is occurring in many Western nation-states, exactly how this shift plays out is greatly dependent on the individual state's historical and geographical patterns of educational development.

The shifting spaces of citizenship

In order to understand the constitution of a citizen in any given age, it is important to conceive of the overall process of citizenship formation as one that is shifting, contested and profoundly spatial (Turner 1986; Marston and Mitchell 2003). In the medieval period, for example, a citizen was, by definition, an inhabitant of a city or town; his location as a townsman conferred on him civic rights as a 'free' man.[8] A few centuries later, the citizen was understood to be a free member of a state or commonwealth. In both of these early usages, the citizen was one who was specifically defined through his location in space – initially as a member of a town, then later as a member of a state.

If there was a move in citizenship formation from the city to the national scale during the period of nation building, what are the contemporary spaces of citizenship formation, as nations are de-consolidating? What is the new scale of citizenship, and how are citizens constituted within and by it? State deterritorialization raises questions about the contemporary formation of a democratic society, as the processes of democratic participation within communities formerly defined by a distinct, national territory, are rapidly changing. For example, a citizen's right and duty to participate in a *national* democratic system is one of the primary conceptual understandings of citizenship in most Western nations. The idea of democracy, here, refers not just to the opportunity to vote, but to be an active political participant within that system, and to work responsibly for the improvement of the community. The *spatial* component of citizenship is relevant because of the connection between democratic participation in the physical and social environment, i.e. the community, and the implicit understanding of 'community' as ultimately a national one.[9] Even theorists of radical democracy rely, at least implicitly, on the nation as the ultimate space of final determination.[10]

What happens then to the concept of democratic, *national* citizens when the nation no longer contains those citizens, when the citizens are increasingly 'trans'-national, and the nation itself is tightly networked with others in a global system of social, political and economic interdependency? For example, many denizens of contemporary European communities are incorporated into the political structures of those societies and exercise various rights and duties associated with political participation, without holding any formal citizenship status (Soysal 1994, 3). Further, the state's ability to provide the protective rights and benefits associated with this status may be selective or fragmented, with degrees of protection related to economic considerations such as migrant remittances, rather than to actual physical membership within the state's territorial community.[11]

Currently, many states no longer recognize the 'natural' citizenship rights and obligations of community membership based only on the principles of blood or territory. The nuanced meanings and benefits of citizenship have become far more contextual and flexible than this, depending rather on the importance of global economic indicators, as well as the different levels of power of various state sectors at different moments in time (Castles and Davidson 2000). This strategic flexibility disrupts long-standing ideals and norms of what citizenship, especially with respect to both nation formation and political participation, is all about. As citizenship inexorably moves between scales in different historical and geographical moments, from a local to a national, supranational or transnational set of positionings and back again, the being and becoming of a citizen as an active participant in a democratic community, shifts. How that citizen should be disciplined by the various apparatuses of the state alters in tandem. For example, is it more important for citizen-subjects to learn to work with and get along with others, especially those who are perceived as different, in order to aid in the formation of a national community? Or is it more important for a citizen to become a globally oriented economic player, one able to work with, but also around the deterritorialized, highly flexible nature of individual states' constructions of citizenship? The answer, I believe, has to do with the relationship between state formation and the global economy at a particular moment in time and space.

The question I'd like to pursue here, then, is the institutional practices through which citizens are constituted as members of these constantly rescaling communities. How are these citizens formed and reformed through time? How do they, in Althusser's phrasing,

> learn the 'rules' of good behaviour – the rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, and of course, the respect for the socio-technical division of labor and rules of order established by class domination? (Althusser 1971, 132)

Democratic communities, I argue, are formed and maintained largely through various institutions of governance and practices of governmentality – the development of 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 (Foucault 1991). I believe that the institution that is perhaps the most crucial in both the formation and maintenance of democratic communities (through the creation of subjects interpellated through the liberal values and norms of the modern nation) is the institution that is often the *least* studied in academia: the institution of education.[12] In this institutional venue, the new model of the strategically cosmopolitan citizen is clearly of growing relevance.

The schooling–society nexus

Although the general scholarship on the relationship between schooling and governance is fairly thin, there have been a number of useful theories concerning the links between systems of national education and national economic formations. The main tenor of this work from the 1970s related primarily to examining how systems of public education were developed and maintained largely for the purpose of sustaining capitalist systems of accumulation. In essence, the work probed the classic question of the relationship between production and social reproduction, using Marxist categories to define and articulate the ways in which the institution of national systems of public education was deeply imbricated in capitalist formation over time.

While the early work in this vein sought to make a direct link between the timing of industrialization and the rise of national systems of education in several nation-states during the nineteenth century (e.g. West 1975; Sanderson 1983), later empirical work indicated that what was actually taught in the early classrooms could not be linked directly with the kinds of skills that were becoming increasingly desirable in the industrial workforce.[13] Thus the most obvious linkage between the rise of industrial capitalism, and the 'training' of a new workforce through the emerging systems of national public education, was not clearcut.

A second wave of thought regarding the articulation between education and the economy emphasized the reproduction of the social conditions of capitalist labour rather than the actual production of capitalist labourers. In this literature, schooling was depicted as a key controlling mechanism, which could ameliorate some of the social ills associated with the rise of industrial capitalism. As a tool of social management it had the capacity to legitimate inequality, defuse explosive class relations

associated with the productive process, and deliver the 'appropriate' societal norms and expectations to the society's future workers (Bowles and Gintis 1976, 10). In other words, as an institution intimately involved in the reproduction of consciousness, education was a key mechanism used by dominant elites to achieve a certain type of subordinate consciousness which aided in the maintenance of an unequal system of class relations (see also Katz 1971). Although agreeing with the fundamental assertion of a connection between education and the production of an unequal class system, a number of other scholars eschewed the structuralist tone of these arguments, and sought to find a balance between the structuring forces of the economy, and the agency of individuals and groups in asserting their own socio-cultural positions (Willis 1977; Apple 1979; Carnoy and Levin 1985).

In work beginning in the 1990s on the schooling–society nexus, a number of scholars began to examine the role of education in *state* formation, arguing that the previous privileging of economic considerations led to a general neglect of the crucial role of the state in instituting and maintaining national systems of education. In a large comparative study, Andy Green (1990) linked the development of nineteenth-century education systems to the general development of the modern state, especially its relationship with its citizen-subjects. Green argued that modern education systems in Europe and North America were an important means for furthering state development with respect to its mercantilist aims and its training programmes for bureaucratic positions and state manufacturing projects. Perhaps even more importantly, however, 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 (see also Weber 1976; Gellner 1983).

In the past decade, there has been an even more concerted effort to link the development of educational systems and the process of state formation in numerous countries worldwide, including Asia (e.g. Hill and Fee 1995; Wong 2002). Much of this research has focused on the ways in which incipient national educational systems were an integral part of broader political struggles over the making and remaking of state citizens and their social identities. State schooling was not just about the creation of a literate population or a trained workforce, but was implicated more generally in the creation of a particular kind of state subject – one schooled in the norms and proper codes of behaviour related to national citizenship.

Further, the project of schooling served primarily to uphold the existing power structures within the nation-state. By various practices of authority, categorization, regulation and subjectification, public schools became sites through which a bourgeois social order was inscribed and perpetuated through time. In countless, often minor and seemingly insignificant technologies of regulation and control, national education systems normalized unequal relations of power, and served to solidify the rule of dominant classes, mediate class systems and colonize civil society. For example, practices relating to the formation of categories, such as the category of the truant, or to public announcements and inspections such as public exams, report cards and announcements of behavioural deficiency or lack of proper comportment, subtly but relentlessly transformed children into 'schooled' subjects of the state. These incipient technologies of power were a crucial aspect of state building, as well as instruments of bourgeois hegemony (Curtis 1988). Thus the educational 'project' was far greater than mere schooling itself, but rather encompassed the creation of social identities, the maintenance of power relations, and the reorganization of the relationship between a capitalist economic formation, the state and its citizen-subjects.

Although educational historians have investigated the shifting practices of individual states through time, few have looked at state formation in spatial terms, and none have investigated state formation in spatial terms other than the nation. In nearly all work in education theory, the nation is written as a methodological endpoint, and the development of educational systems is related strictly to the events, practices, meanings and contexts of the individual and bordered, territorial state. Educational historians foreground the temporal/historical development of the state, the shifting *political* moments and processes which affect education for national citizenship, but they have neglected to take into account the concept of citizenship in relation to territory.

We need to examine the ongoing *spatial* production, disintegration and interlinkages of the state territory over time, interlinkages which have great implications for national education systems, both with regard to its philosophical underpinnings and its practices. In the contemporary moment,

schooling and school change is linked not just with changes in the nature of (national) labour–capital relationships or to the internal formation of the nation-state, but also with spatial changes related to the state's connections with the global economy, including the globalization of production and consumption, the transnationalization of migration, and the 'spatial splitting' of modes of production and social reproduction.[14] Most state formation work looks at education within a discrete national territory. But the contemporary processes of globalization and neoliberalism have put new pressures on the state from scales without and within the nation, and thus the education of national citizens in connection with both state formation and political economy, must now be considered within this global framework.

Multiculturalism in education

One of my main interests in multiculturalism is in the ways that it, as a concept, has been put into the service of the liberal state. Although it has played a different role in each of the Western states that have adopted it as either an official, encouraged or merely tolerated philosophical framework, as a general concept it has had a significant impact in nearly all school systems in Western Europe and North America in the last three to four decades (Parker 2002a; Schiffauer *et al.* forthcoming). What ideological work does the concept do, and why is it currently being devalued and transformed in the context of increasing global and neoliberal pressures on national education systems?

Multiculturalism functions as a key national narrative of coherence and unification in countries with a large immigrant population. The essence of the nation *is* difference, and what makes the state strong and legitimate is its ability to unify these differences in a single project, that of nation-formation. The state engages in this project through its regulations of individual and (carefully delineated) group rights, such as evidenced in the philosophy and practice (and legislation in the Canadian case) of multiculturalism. For Canada in particular, multiculturalism is an official state doctrine that has allowed an uneasy truce to be formed between the original two colonizing powers, the British and the French. It also represents an effort to inculcate immigrants into a national 'mosaic', wherein difference is professed to be welcome and even advantageous to the state (Kobayashi 1993;

Mitchell 1993). For Canada, and to a slightly lesser degree for the US and England, the concept of multicultural citizenship serves as an example of the tolerant and munificent liberal state, ever willing to open its doors to outsiders, and to accept and protect cultural difference (see Taylor 1994; Kymlicka 1995). It is part of a broader narrative of liberalism and the freedom of the individual, and through this narrative, it serves to 'perform' the liberal state and create a sense of a unified, tolerant and coherent nation, despite the multiple differences evident in the population of its citizenry.

Secondly, multiculturalism operates as a fundamental institutional and conceptual tool giving the state an enhanced ability *to control* difference (Asad 1990). As a conceptual apparatus, it allows the state to set the terms of the 'difference debate'. These terms are highly individual: they are concerned with individual rights and preferences – the right to choose and display difference with respect to individual identity. Cultural pluralism is encouraged, but only so long as the included groups follow certain rules, and are willing to be contained within the strict parameters of liberalism, that is, to 'accept' liberalism as a fundamental philosophical starting point (see, for example, Appiah's 1994 critique of Taylor 1994). And while group difference is acceptable for 'cultural survival' (e.g. in the case of the Québécois), it is only acceptable in certain carefully circumscribed times and spaces (e.g. within the province of Quebec).

Third, multiculturalism aids in the exportation of liberalism, and hence capitalism, abroad. For example, the philosophy of American pluralism in the 1930s and 1940s was framed as an extension of equality of opportunity to all members of the national body. This extension was crucial in justifying the expansion of liberalism overseas during these years. Without the language of inclusion (e.g. for those who were previously disenfranchised within the system, such as African-Americans), American criticism of fascist dictatorships in Europe and Asia would appear hypocritical, and would impede the exportation of liberalism and the market overseas. In his study of colour and democracy in the American century, for example, Singh (1998, 475) showed how the 'moral status of American nationhood and the status of Black nationality' were inextricably intertwined during the decade of the 1940s. It was only with a more just society at home that the United States could claim the rhetoric of a 'civilizing' mission abroad.

The democratic impulses behind the early formulations of multiculturalism were thus clearly linked with America's 'world-ordering ambitions' of that time (Singh 1998: 475–9; see also Mitchell 2001).

In the field of education, multiculturalism draws directly from this Deweyan nationalist legacy. Multicultural education in liberal, Western societies is concerned with the creation of a certain kind of individual, one who is tolerant of difference, but a difference framed within certain national parameters and controlled by the institutions of the state. The subject interpellated through multiculturalism in education believes that cultural pluralism is good, or at least necessary, for national development, and is able to work with others to find sites of commonality, despite differences.

All of these understandings of how multiculturalism functions vis-à-vis the state, especially with regard to the most effective constitution of a national citizen and national identity, have a certain logic when implemented within a nation format. Both progressives and conservatives have found common ground in the utilization of multiculturalism as a containing metaphor for 'difference' within the community, although with different opinions as to the relative advantages or disadvantages of retaining the concept through time. But both groups begin with the assumption that the community in which citizens are formed is a national one, and that citizens will be regulated and disciplined by the state. What happens when the community is no longer necessarily a national one, and the state's interest in disciplining populations and regulating the actions and relations between actors is not based on a territorial population, but rather on a much larger, supra-national scale?

I believe that multiculturalism was able to operate effectively as a conceptual philosophy in the service of state formation during a certain kind of economic regime or period of capital accumulation, that of high Fordism.[15] During this time, in many Western nations such as the US, Canada and England, the economy grew rapidly but was relatively protected from outside competition. The relations between capital and labour were regulated through various mechanisms of state control, and an interventionist, developmental or welfare state took off to varying degrees in numerous nations (cf. Aglietta 1979). At the same time, immigration from non-Western countries, especially from Asia into the United States and Canada, and from the Caribbean into England, increased rapidly, disturbing the image of a dominant norm or narrative of cultural nationalism implicit in all three nations (Castles and Miller 1998).

Multiculturalism, in this context, could operate effectively as an instrument of state formation on a number of levels, including serving as a national narrative of coherence in the face of immigrant 'difference', as a broad technology of state control (of difference), and as one of many capillaries of disciplinary power/knowledge concerning the formation of the 'well-schooled' subject educated in liberal tolerance and willing to work for national unity within this philosophical framework. In all of this, but especially in the constitution of national citizens able and willing to work *through* difference *for* the nation, multiculturalism was a strategic partner in the growth and expansion of a Fordist regime of accumulation around the world.

However, with the decline of Fordism, and the rise of contemporary transnational lives and neoliberal pressures in the past two decades, this type of state subject has become increasingly irrelevant. There is no longer much need for the multicultural subject interested in working towards harmony across the differences of race or class, one able to find points of convergence in the general spirit of a nexus of production and consumption benevolently regulated by the state. The spirit of harmonious accumulation, for the capitalist, the worker and the nation, is gone, and the multicultural self is no longer the ideal state citizen. Further, multiculturalism has always carried the risk of creating culturally relativist citizen-subjects, those who no longer hold a strong orientation to a central authority, such as the state, but rather perceive morality in the world as endlessly variable and hence, subject to negotiation.

This particular form of multiculturalism is thus increasingly perceived by contemporary neoliberal politicans as either irrelevant or negative as a political philosophy, and is now being undermined in educational systems in a number of liberal democracies. It is rapidly being replaced with a meaner, harder logic of competition on a global scale, and of a strategic, outward-looking cosmopolitanism. In the following section I provide three case studies, from Canada, the US and England to back up my claims. I believe we are now at a point of increasingly virulent attacks on the spirit of democratic multiculturalism in education. This shift away from the multicultural self is playing out and will continue to play out differently in each of

these three countries. But there is an overall logic and general trend that goes hand in hand with these states' moves toward a neoliberal political framework in the context of an increasingly laissez-faire global economy.

The Canadian system

Canada's system of public education was developed primarily in the period between 1840 and 1870, and was part of a deliberate strategy by political liberals to forge a new political nationality (McDonald 1978). Although there was little formal opposition to the expansion of a national system, the differences in language and religion between the two colonizing powers led to major divisions in the form and content of educational curricula and pedagogic philosophies. The deep divisions played out in the formation of distinct educational regimes between the provinces, as well as in a general geographic decentralization of the educational system (e.g. Wilson *et al.* 1970).

The *British North America Act* of 1867 (now the *Constitution Act*) united the colonies in a federal system under the British Crown, and gave the provincial legislatures exclusive jurisdiction to make education-related laws. This early provincial independence increased the already broad differentiation among all of the provinces in terms of language of instruction, secularism and denominationalism, as well as in the more general attitude toward the political philosophy of liberalism itself. Despite these ongoing differences, however, a fairly broad consensus developed over time vis-à-vis the benefits of liberalism and the schooling of children in political liberties and civic obligations. Quebec and Newfoundland remained the hold-outs in this regard, representing the most divergent positions from this otherwise fairly broad liberal hegemony (Manzer 1994).

Although the system was decentralized and there were some large variations among the provinces, the galvanizing force behind most educational policies and practices was the broad understanding that public schools were crucial institutions in shaping the incipient national character. As Canadian identity consolidated in the nineteenth century, the national education system was put to work to manipulate, mold and otherwise inculcate, 'the state of the public mind'.[16] Egerton Ryerson, the linchpin of educational reform in Ontario (and widely influential throughout Canada) in the mid-

nineteenth century, firmly believed in the power of education to create model Canadian citizens and patriots who could be depended on to uphold the status quo and support the state in times of crisis. As he put it, through its emphasis on moral and social behaviour, public education was essential in creating 'safe' citizens.[17]

The general tone of educational policy from its development in the nineteenth century through the middle of the twentieth century, reflected a political liberalism that was premised on the overriding belief that individual opportunity and equal access to education, coupled with a strongly hierarchical and divided system of occupational classes, would benefit both the socio-economic order and state formation. Industrial expansion, state formation and national character development could all be accommodated within the broad tenets of liberalism, despite the provincial variations based on differing language and religious denominations.

Beginning in the post-war period and gaining ground in the late 1950s and 1960s, however, a different strand of liberalism began to hold sway among a number of educational authorities. This new framework, what Manzer (1994) terms 'ethical liberalism', drew intellectual sustenance from the ideas of philosophers such as John Dewey, who had long argued for a greater focus on the development of each individual to his or her fullest personal potential through educational programmes geared to the 'real-world' situations of plural, communicative democracy. Ethical liberalism was a broadly humanistic philosophy emphasizing the specific differences and needs of each individual child, and tailoring the system of schooling to fulfilling those needs. Further, it was broadly inclusive, providing special opportunities for talented or challenged children, but also bringing students considered 'different' back into a mainstream learning environment. In this educational framework, a single type of education could never accommodate all of the different variations of student needs and learning styles, and thus it behoved the authorities to provide a highly differentiated, flexible and forgiving system, one wherein each person could reach personal fulfilment in whatever path he or she might choose. One of the primary features of this mode of learning was the fundamental acknowledgement of the wide scope of difference within human society, and of the necessity to embrace this difference through daily interaction in the schools, as well as in the society at large.

Although borrowing from the English liberal tradition of John Stuart Mill, and the American tradition of Dewey, the framework of ethical liberalism became a quickly established force in Canadian educational circles, and achieved some degree of hegemony in the decades of the 1960s and 1970s. As with Dewey's pronouncements on democratic citizenship in America, ethical liberalism in Canada quickly became bound up with a strong nationalist agenda. During the 1960s, Canada experienced rapidly increasing immigration from non-European regions of the world, and was also rocked by violent expressions of dissent from Quebec, culminating in the Quiet Revolution (see Behiels 1985). At the same time, First Nations groups began to organize and make claims for cultural rights, land and economic reparations for hundreds of years of suppression at the hands of the dominant colonial powers. The promotion of ethical liberalism or multiculturalism was quickly wrapped in the mantle of ethnic tolerance, and utilized as part of a newly stylish cultural pluralism that was intended to placate the immigrants, the French and 'the natives', all in one fell swoop.

The tolerant Canadian state, held together by narratives of unity with and through difference, was a key touchstone of multiculturalism in education. During this period, students were taught that the Canadian cultural mosaic was a defining feature of Canadianness, and that multiculturalism was the superior method for the integration of immigrants, especially in comparison with the 'melting pot' strategy of their southern neighbour (Lipset 1990). The concept of multiculturalism contained, as a foundational core, the belief that working with and through cultural difference was a key to participatory democracy, and that local communities must maintain their autonomy and distinctive traditions in order for this democracy to work (Manzer 1994). A key geographical component of ethical liberalism thus took shape in the advocacy of a continued *decentralization* of educational policy and practice. Decentralization would allow for more egalitarian decision-making and a greater inclusion of difference, and thus extend the multicultural and democratic mantle nationwide.

At the same time as this educational framework was extended, the Fordist period of capital accumulation took shape in Canada in the 1960s and 1970s as the state increasingly regulated business and extended social services to a wider group of citizens. The Canadian welfare state grew rapidly, expanding in areas such as national health care, public housing, unemployment insurance, care of the indigent, children and the elderly, and a number of other venues (Banting 1987; Moscovitch and Albert 1987).

Although multiculturalism in education was widely accepted and implemented through most of the national system in the 1960s and 1970s, it was always opposed by rival theories which foregrounded greater structure, standards and traditional methods of teaching. The proponents of greater standardization in education began a concerted attack on ethical liberalism in the late 1970s, and beat back some of the innovations of the prior two decades. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, both policy and practice in education reflected a shifting (though still highly contested) mood of politicians and administrators towards a new framework of educational 'excellence', perceived to be more appropriate for facing the pressures and challenges of the new global economy. These shifts accompanied a large-scale attack on the rhetoric and practices of welfarism in Canada, and the rapid entrenchment of neoliberal policy throughout the 1990s.[18] A key component of this entrenchment was a shift in the role of government away from the direct provisioning of social services, and towards the position of social contract management (Jenson 1989).

In the late 1980s, two major reports on public education were published, both of which expressed criticism of the current system (Radwanski 1987; Sullivan 1988). These two reports were cited extensively by business interests and federal agencies in the following years as 'proof' that the national experiment in multiculturalism was a failure, that public schools were in decline, and that Canadian students were rapidly falling behind their peers in crucial areas such as maths and science. In one section of the Radwanski report, the link between investing in a new kind of education and creating a new kind of work force was blunt and categorical. He wrote:

> Education has long been recognized as an important contributor to economic growth, of course – but now it has become *the* paramount ingredient for competitive success in the world economy. (Radwanski 1987)

He went on to conclude that child-centred education (or education for the multicultural self) was no longer a relevant educational framework, given the new kinds of technological needs and

employment possibilities of the global economy (cited in Manzer 1994, 214).[19]

The struggles over educational priorities and philosophies mounted throughout the 1990s, with provinces often establishing a particular kind of programme based on one philosophy or another, only to reverse it a few years later based either on a change of government or a change of heart. In 1991, the Progressive Conservative government, under Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, attempted to direct educational administrators towards a more skills-based curriculum, especially in the fields of science and technology, and away from the more 'unstructured' learning environments of multicultural classrooms.[20] Although this early attempt to influence the provinces in the realm of educational policy was not particularly successful, it was accompanied by a constant rhetoric that the public schools were 'failing', which had the desired effect of producing anxiety among parents, and hence the ongoing possibility for a major reorganization of the system.

Throughout the 1990s the antagonists of 'ethical' multiculturalism formed institutions that countered multicultural ideology with a constant refrain of 'excellence', 'accountability' and 'global competitiveness', which they juxtaposed negatively with the current educational system.[21] In the classroom itself, opponents of person-centred education demanded an externally established curriculum, frequent testing, mandated letter grades, quantitative accountability standards and a 'back to basics' method of teaching. In recent years, these demands have frequently been backed by both provincial and federal legislation mandating more standardized testing across all grades, as well as greater accountability measures for students' academic performance and for systems of public school financing.[22]

Alongside these philosophical and practical changes, there has also been a strong shift in the geography of control over the schools themselves. Beginning in the 1990s, nearly every province in the country reduced the number of school boards that were active in educational decision-making.[23] Overall, this change reflects a sharp transition from the decentralized pattern of the educational system evident since its inception in the nineteenth century, to a far stronger degree of centralized control by the provincial administration. In Ontario, this move was accompanied by legislation in 1998 which shifted school board control over financing (through the imposition of educational property taxes) to provincial control.[24] These changes reflect not just a loss of local autonomy and control, but a direct threat to the practical workings of procedural democracy, which, as discussed earlier, relies on a decentralized system for egalitarian decision-making and greater inclusiveness.

Public education in England

A national system of public education did not develop in England until late in the nineteenth century. Even at this relatively late date, the implementation of the system was weak, with little financing set aside for public education, and with no unified central authority to monitor its progress or development. As a result, national education developed slowly and sporadically throughout the country and remained highly stratified between public and private systems. There was little uniformity of curricula or methods or teacher training between different schools, no integrated policy of admissions or fees or examination systems, and no coherent plan for the linkages between elementary, secondary and higher education. Up until quite recently, there was no educational constitution, a minimal parliamentary role in education, and little sense of a unified or integrated national system (Green 1990).

These divergent policies and practices were reflected most conspicuously in the deep and ongoing divide between public and private schools. In a manner similar to the United States and Canada, the national system of education in England served to reproduce and legitimate dominant class relations. But unlike the other two countries, public education was not called upon to assist in state formation either through the constitution of properly disciplined national subjects oriented towards a newly unified national identity, or through the actual process of coordinating and controlling educational development. It was not until the postwar decades that the institution of education began to play an active part in the ongoing development of the English state.

In the 1950s, immigration from non-European regions, particularly from the Caribbean, began to rise (Castles and Miller 2001). During this time, the education system remained strongly monocultural in orientation, stressing the English language and cultural mores, and advocating complete assimilation to the 'British' nation-state. By the late 1960s,

however, alongside the rapid development of a strong interventionist state, assimilationist policies became more contested, and the philosophy of multiculturalism in education began to assume a more dominant role. In articles and government reports of this period, there is evidence of an emerging consensus on the importance of allowing 'difference' to be expressed in schools (e.g. trousers or hijab for Muslim girls, or turbans for Sikh boys). The public recognition of different immigrant cultures began to be encouraged through the public sphere of public schools, where children could learn about one another and learn to accept, and even celebrate, cultural diversity (Gill *et al.* 1994; Schiffauer *et al.* forthcoming).

Within a decade, however, this type of multiculturalism came under increasing pressure from the conservative right, for supposedly exacerbating racial divides and contributing to a decline in educational standards. For a time, progressive administrators and educators were able to direct the prevailing multicultural sentiments into a stronger 'anti-racist' educational campaign, especially following a 1979 report by the Rampton Committee, which described the devastating impact of racism on black schoolchildren. But these efforts were to be short-lived. With the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979, and the concerted shift away from the welfare state policies of the previous era, the growing multicultural and anti-racist hegemony of the previous two decades began to be dismantled.[25]

In 1988 the government unrolled its *Education Reform Act* (ERA) which, though continuing to express a rhetoric of tolerance, effectively elided the earlier report's anti-racist and multicultural language. The ERA of 1988 introduced three major changes to the educational system, all of which rapidly moved the educational system in a neoliberal direction. The first was a shift to a school-based system of financial management, away from the control of the generally more progressive Local Education Authorities (LEAs). The second was a provision for schools to 'opt out' of LEA control and become 'grant-maintained' schools, receiving funding directly from the central government. The third change was the development of a national curriculum.

Although packaged as a move towards greater decentralization, in effect these three reforms massively increased central control over both the structure and organization of the local authorities, and over the individual schools themselves. The introduction of a national curriculum effectively gutted the possibility for further multicultural educational initiatives in education, since all schools were now forced to adopt the same curriculum, which was based on the concept that all children had the same opportunities, rights and access, as all others.[26] The standardization and homogenization of the curriculum facilitated the possibility for more standardized tests, which soon followed. As with the neoliberal shifts in education in the United States and Canada of the same time period, the language in which these reforms were promoted revolved around three key words: 'choice', 'excellence' and 'accountability'. They were also accompanied by the same insistent drumbeat of the decline and failure of public schools and the necessity to reform them in order to meet the challenges of the new world economy.

The transition to school-based financial management was part of a broader neoliberal strategy at the start of the third term of Thatcher's Conservative Party government (re-elected in 1987), which emphasized the restructuring of local authority service provision. As noted by the British Council, the overall approach of this government was to 'encourage contracting out of the delivery of services to the private sector, though responsibility for securing and managing the services has remained in the public sector'.[27] This form of privatization was extended to a wide range of services in addition to education, and represented a strong shift to a kind of governmental system of contract management. In addition to weakening the LEAs (and other local authorities considered too 'progressive', such as the Greater London Council), this form of private contracting controlled by the central government facilitated the hiring of outside teachers from the commonwealth countries, who were brought in to aid in the weakening or destruction of powerful (and progressive) teacher's unions, and who could, at the same time, be paid considerably less than teachers with British citizenship.

Thus, although still greatly contested and with uneven effects felt across the country, there was a general change in the philosophy of public education in England in the late 1980s, as well as some important policies, which moved education for democratic citizenship away from the short-lived dominance of 'ethical liberalism'. Even during its high point in the 1970s, the philosophy of multiculturalism remained focused on individual ethnic difference within a liberal, nation-based and capitalist framework. Nevertheless, it did contain the notions

of individual fulfilment, person-centred education and the value of cultural difference for democratic citizenship, some of the hallmarks of ethical liberalism. These 'quaint' ideals were rapidly squelched with the rise of the Conservative Thatcher government, and have remained buried despite the victory of a Labour government in the mid-1990s.

In 1997, for example, Prime Minister Blair allowed the establishment of government-funded, faith-based schools.[28] This legal and publicly funded separation of ethnic groups out of the educational mainstream marks the wholesale retreat from a Deweyan logic of cultural pluralism in the classroom as the foundational core of proceduralist and democratic citizenship for the nation. At the same time, David Blunkett, Blair's first minister of education, made it clear that the market would drive further changes in education: 'I make no apology for placing higher education at the heart of the productive capacity of the knowledge driven economy' (cited in Rutherford 2002). And Peter Mandelson, then minister of trade and industry, said in a speech, 'Knowledge and its profitable exploitation by business is the key to competitiveness' (cited in Rutherford 2002).[29] Like the preceding government, the mantra of Labour remains the ideal of global competitiveness and the strategic use of pluralism for an international corporate agenda.

Education in the United States

In general there was fairly widespread support of the concept of public education in the United States, and the major struggles involving educational development and expansion revolved around the degree of local vs state control, rather than over the ideology of common schooling itself. The early schools developed locally, often out of previously established private or religious schools, and the national system remained highly decentralized for decades. Over time the autonomous, district schools became absorbed into a centralized system of town schools, but the highest level of supervision or control remained at the state level, with little or no federal intervention through the mid-twentieth century (Green 1990).

Public education grew alongside an expansive capitalism in the mid-nineteenth century and tied in with national narratives of social mobility, personal freedom and the opportunity for individuals to become active entrepreneurs within a dynamic capitalist system. Children were schooled in the ultimate liberty of the individual, but also in the 'proper' mode of operating as upright and moral citizens within the (national) community. Moral discipline 'became increasingly associated with schooling' and this moral schooling became targeted more and more towards an internalization of discipline by the students themselves (Kaestle 1983, 67). The link between the inculcation of a properly socialized moral citizen, and the inculcation of work habits and beliefs beneficial to the development of capitalism was strongly apparent throughout this early period (see also Bowles and Gintis 1976).

At the same time, however, the constitution of the model capitalist worker and entrepreneur was only one aspect of schooling which interested the advocates of public education. Immigrant children were also the subject of intensive interest, and there was a concentrated drive toward assimilating minority cultures into a common Anglo-Protestant culture. Reformers were interested in 'civilizing' the heathen immigrants and training them to become intelligent American citizens. This involved separating immigrants from their 'inferior' cultural mores and habits brought with them from the old country, and educating them as to the superior norms and narratives of their new nation, as well as to the great advantages of the American economic system and mode of government.

It was not until the decade of the 1960s that the philosophy of pluralist democracy, or multiculturalism, began to attain some degree of dominance within the United States. A number of federal education laws were passed in the 1950s and 1960s which guaranteed at least some degree of accordance with the liberal values of equal access. These included the *National Defense Education Act* of 1958 and the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* of 1965, both of which expanded educational opportunity for the poor and increased federal financing in selected areas. In general, the legislation and the Supreme Court decisions of these decades showed an interest in questions of equity, and in the access to educational opportunity for all Americans, rather than a narrow concern with educational standards.[30] In the schools themselves, 'moveable desks' became the norm rather than a deviation, and a Deweyan-inspired emphasis on child-centred learning and differentiated curricula and methods of teaching and learning was widely accepted. These incipient reforms, however, soon came under bitter attack.

With the election of the conservative Republican president Ronald Reagan in 1980, a neoliberal era was ushered into American politics, and its effects began to be felt in education almost immediately.[31] Responding to an executive summons for a report on the state of education in the United States, the National Commission on Excellence in Education delivered, in 1983, a scathing indictment of public education entitled, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. This official report, the first of a long series of government reports and proclamations attacking public education, began with a discourse of public schools as failing. It followed with an anxiety-producing narrative of a national lack of competitiveness in comparison with other nations, caused primarily by poor educational preparation. Picking up on this theme, some commentators even suggested that American schools were to blame for the country's declining predominance in the international marketplace (Aronowitz and Giroux 1985, 200). The ongoing refrain of the report, and many others which followed, was the massive failure of the educational system to prepare students for employment in the changing world economy. For example, in the report of the Economic Growth Task Force in the same year, it was stated that public schools 'are not doing an adequate job of education for today's requirements in the workplace, much less tomorrow's' (Task Force on Education for Economic Growth 1983, 23).

These reports were accompanied by the awakening voices of neo-conservatives, who sensed the shifting winds of the debate. In addition to adding to the constant refrain of public school failure and the need for higher standards and more attention to the 'important' subjects such as maths, science and high technology, conservative educators and administrators began to lead a concerted attack on the philosophy of multiculturalism itself. The quote by Chester Finn below, taken from an academic journal of 1982, is representative in this regard:

> The sad fact is that for close to two decades now we have neglected educational quality in the name of equality. Trying to insure that every child would have access to as much education as every other child, we have failed to attend to the content of that education. Seeking to mediate conflict and forestall controversy over the substance of education, we begin to find ourselves with very little substance needed. Striving to avoid invidious comparisons among youngsters we have stopped gauging individual progress by testing . . . Hesitant to pass judgement on lifestyles, cultures and

> forms of behavior we have invited relativism into the curriculum and pedagogy.[32]

The statement invidiously suggested that the multicultural practices of the past few decades (i.e. the lack of judgement on lifestyles and cultures) led to the overall weakening of academic 'excellence' in the school system. As Aronowitz and Giroux pointed out, the statement bolstered the position that 'greedy/single-minded group(s)', i.e. those with 'different' needs from the mainstream, forced the curriculum away from attention to the 'basics' and dragged down the 'normal' students and the nation with them (1985, 4). Even more than this, the statement manifested one of the deepest fears of neo-conservatives concerning multiculturalism in the classroom, the fear of 'relativism', or a declining orientation to a central, all-knowing authority such as a teacher or a state.

At the state level, the mantra of 'excellence' began to pervade educational discourse from pre-kindergarten classes through the university, and throughout the 1990s various kinds of 'accountability' and 'excellence' measures were introduced in every state and at every grade level.[33] In the state of Washington, for example, state-wide standardized tests are now required of all public school children in Grades 4, 8 and 11, with expansion to annual testing proposed for the future. Further, because of shrinking funding in the state, the current governor recently proposed to drop social studies from this now critical state-wide test, indicating an even stronger emphasis on the remaining subjects: maths, science and reading. Because of the increasing pressure on public school teachers to 'teach to the test', dropped subject areas will quickly cease to receive attention. Thus civics education, or the study of citizenship, democracy and governance (in addition to history and geography), will quickly become 'irrelevant' as subjects of study. These themes, of course, form the heart of ethical liberalism and the constitution of the democratic citizen.

George Bush's, *Education Reform Act* of 2002, 'No Child Left Behind', was the most sweeping federal-based reform since the 1950s. In his speech outlining this new Act, Bush invoked the now familiar refrain of public schools as failing – especially with respect to preparation for the 'changing world'. He said,

> The quality of our public schools directly affects us all as parents, as students, and as citizens. Yet too many

children in America are segregated by low expectations, illiteracy, and self-doubt. In a constantly changing world that demands increasingly complex skills from its work force, children are being left behind.[34]

Tellingly, the word 'segregation' in this speech no longer refers to racial and class separation caused by racism and poverty, but rather to 'cultural' values which are holding unspecified groups of children back. The 'answer' to the problem of low achievement is in the erasure of difference, and assimilation to the norms and codes of American 'excellence'.

The 2002 *Reform Act* encourages states to raise standards, and will hold schools accountable for improving student achievement. This accountability is to be achieved with federally mandated testing to ensure that *all* schools are held accountable for student achievement, and with federal funding directly linked to test-based levels of achievement. In Bush's speech, and in the *Reform Act* itself, the language of multiculturalism, democracy, citizenship and personal fulfilment is completely absent. In this neoliberal vision of education, educating a child to be a good citizen is no longer synonymous with constituting a well-rounded, nationally oriented, multicultural self, but rather about attainment of the 'complex skills' necessary for individual success in the global economy.

Conclusion

Multiculturalism is a touchstone of liberalism in many Western states and it has been a strongly promoted concept in educational policy for several decades. Currently, however, the conceptual basis of multiculturalism is being transformed. Why and how the contemporary processes of globalization and neoliberalism are producing this fundamental shift with respect to citizenship education in general, and multiculturalism in particular, formed the subject of this paper.

The rationale for the development of nineteenth-century systems of public education was state formation and economic development within the enlightenment ethos of modern liberalism. In most 'modern' states during that epoch, the introduction of a national education system was a bold and calculated effort to introduce children to a particular way of thinking and working and to a particular way of belonging to the nation at the same time. But this membership and this way of belonging was predicated on a very distinct and bounded

national space, and also acted reciprocally to produce and consolidate that space.

For the past century, it was assumed that the citizens of any particular civil society would be constituted and contained within this nation-state format. But this assumption is no longer valid. In a period of global interaction and interdependency, where communities are frequently defined by their economic practices and networks across and outside of the national space, rather than through some form of territorially bounded and geographically delineated cultural lineage, citizenship formation has been irrevocably transformed, and children are now being educated for citizenship in new kinds of ways.

Historians of education have shown that the uneven rise of national education systems was related to state formation, particularly with respect to the advancement of social cohesion and national identity. In this regard, multiculturalism was a useful tool of state integration and territorial consolidation in the West, and became a dominant rhetoric with the advance of Fordism in the mid-twentieth century. In this period, the idea of the possessive individual of economic liberalism became a more rounded, more completely formed multicultural self – with great possibilities for self-fulfilment and personal development within ethical liberalism. The Fordist state, involved in shoring up labour, stimulating demand, expanding civil society and generally encouraging new ways to be a proper citizen-consumer, facilitated and was facilitated by this kind of educational system.

In recent years, however, there has been far less confidence or interest in the ability of education to perform the development functions of social solidarity, democratic citizenship and national identity. Multiculturalism, as an educational philosophy, has begun to move to a more strategic form of utilizing culture for economic purposes, and away from a sense of individual fulfilment and of the necessity of forming bonds of social and national cohesion. Although multiculturalism has always been strongly linked with capitalism, it was once also accompanied by the spirit of the ethical self – the necessity to work with and through difference and to find harmonious solutions to problems in a democratic process. These national narratives are now in the process of shifting away from multiculturalism and towards a sense of individual patriotism and strategic entrepreneurialism.

With a declining sense that working with difference is an important strategy of national unification, many states have begun to allow or even encourage the 'separation out' of different groups from the public educational system.[35] This incipient breakdown is increasingly accompanied by a growing interest in transnational citizenship narratives within the framework of global capitalism. Modern forms of 'economic' or civil liberalism work well with this new type of strategic multiculturalism, as they are all associated with national interlinkages and the extension of the citizen-subject across borders and into other state territories. The new strategic cosmopolitan serves as a nodal agent in the expanding networks of the global economy. He or she is the new, superior footsoldier of global capitalism. Meanwhile, the heretofore crucial narratives of national coherence and unity have been supplanted by narratives of individual patriotism. This has already infiltrated the educational sphere of the United States, as evidenced by the introduction of 'patriotism' legislation in Oklahoma, Nebraska and Colorado, the renewed observance of the daily 'pledge of allegiance' and by the many pronouncements of conservative educational critics, like Lynne Cheney, who write extensively on the subject of how to teach patriotism in schools.[36] In the context of the contemporary disintegration of multilateralism and internationalism, this brand of individualism and unreconstructed national patriotism will most likely spread to other nations and become the new educational hegemony of the twenty-first century, if teachers, parents and citizens are complacent in the face of these changes. This is one of the many crucial struggles that we must concern ourselves with in this current moment of danger.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1   I am using the term 'deterritorializing' somewhat loosely here to describe an era wherein state practices regularly stretch across borders, particularly with respect to the disciplining of 'subject' populations overseas.

2   This new dynamic involves the constitution of the neoliberal subject through various processes of governmentality. For a classic overall analysis of these processes see Nikolas Rose (1990 1999). For an investigation of subject formation of the wealthy in the era of flexible accumulation, see Ong (1999). For interesting work on the constitution of flexible transmigrant labourers, see Rouse (1991) and Kearney (1991). The best discussion of the rise of flexible regimes of accumulation remains Harvey (1989).

3   The formation of this type of subject position is based on what educators call the 'Deweyan' model. For a general introduction to Dewey's philosophy as it pertains to education, see Dewey (1924). For a discussion of Dewey's influence on contemporary educational philosophy, particularly the issues around pluralism and democracy, see the work of Walter Parker, especially Parker (2002a 2003).

4   There is, of course, a strong class distinction between those who are able to exercise personal choice in adopting a strategically cosmopolitan subject position (e.g. business school students), and those for whom rapid adaptation to and awareness of changing global contexts (strategies often associated with cosmopolitanism, see Ulf Hannerz 1990) is a defensive tactic utilized, though often unsuccessfully, when threatened with redundancy. Thanks to Sue Ruddick for encouraging me to be more explicit about these distinctions.

5   See the chapters in Ravitch and Viteritti (2002) for a good sampling of neoliberal discourse as it plays out in the education field. See Parker (2002b) for a liberal democratic critique of this trend in educational philosophy.

6   See Sue Roberts (2003), for a discussion of the constitution of the ideal type global manager in the era of globalization.

7   I should underline here as well the Anglo-American bias of these three case studies, which all exhibit some symptoms of the American Business Model (ABM) form of neoliberal enframing. Also, the changes that are now being proposed and contested are playing out quite unevenly *within* each national territory. Despite the caveats related to the difficulties inherent in macro-level comparative analysis, however, I still believe that the *general tenor of my critique* holds for most liberal Western democracies now in the thrall of neoliberal systems of governance.

8   These civic rights were gender specific, as only men could become citizens at this time.

9   Both Dewey and Habermas, for example, in widely divergent theoretical articulations of democracy and citizenship, assume that the nation is the final endpoint for procedural democracy. On Dewey, see Mitchell (2001); on Habermas, see Calhoun (1992). See Wimmer and Glick Schiller (nd), for a discussion of the widespread and ultimately limiting reliance on what they call 'methodological nationalism' by most contemporary scholars.

10   See, for example, Matthew Sparke's (forthcoming) theoretical elaboration concerning the implicit national

framing of agonistic democracy in the work of Laclau and Mouffe (1985).

11 In some cases, these remittances provide a tremendous and much needed source of revenue for the state, thus providing a substantial incentive for the state to intercede in the protection of these 'overseas' citizens. See, for example, the work of Sarah Mahler (1995).

12 There are, of course, a number of important exceptions, including the work of Andy Green, Michael Apple, Henry Giroux, Martin Carnoy, Michael Katz and Joel Spring.

13 See Green (1990), Goodlad (1979) and Hochschild and Scovronik (2002) for discussions of the empirical inconsistencies and mixed findings in some of this early theoretical work.

14 See Mitchell *et al*. (2003) for a fuller analysis of this concept.

15 Fordism is periodized here as the late 1940s through the late 1970s. For a discussion of some of the features of Fordism, as well as its decline, see Harvey (1989) and Amin (1994).

16 The quote is by nineteenth-century educational superintendant of Ontario, Egerton Ryerson, as cited in Manzer (1994, 76).

17 The two quotes are from Egerton Ryerson, 'Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada' in Hodgins J G ed *Documentary history of education in Upper Canada, 1791–1876* (28 vols, Toronto, 1894–1910), vi: 200. Cited in McDonald (1978, 98). See also Curtis (1988).

18 There is now a large literature on the decline of welfarism and the rise of neoliberalism in Canada. A good study of the former is Rekart (1993). See also Akerman and Granatstein (1995), Ruggie (1996) and Armitage (1996). For a discussion of neoliberal policy changes in the financial industry in Canada, see Tickell (2000). For a discussion of the Free Trade Agreements (CUFTA and NAFTA) and their links with neoliberalism, see Clarkson (1993).

19 Following these 'official' reports, a number of provinces began to follow suit with similar types of reports and campaigns, e.g. the Ontario Premier Council's reports: *Competing in the New Global Economy* in 1988; and *People and Skills in the New Global Economy* in 1990; and from the Economic Council of Canada, *A Lot to Learn: Education and Training in Canada* (Ottawa Minister of Supply and Services Canada 1992). See also the New Brunswick, Commission on Excellence in Education, *Schools for a New Century* (Fredericton: Commission on Excellence in Education 1992). These reports and documents and the kind of policy shift they imply are insightfully analysed by Ronald Manzer (1994, 212–37).

20 See, for example, the consultative paper put together by various federal ministers, Canada, Prosperity Secretariat, *Living Well . . . Learning Well* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada 1991).

21 Two examples from British Columbia include: 'Teachers for Excellence in Education' and 'Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education'. The latter organization, which was established as a charity in 1996, commissions research reports and articles related primarily to the 'failings' of the current system, the necessity for greater school choice and the importance of accountability in education.

22 See, for example, the numerous reports from the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training from 1997, e.g. 'Excellence in education: Ontario's plan for reform', on the Canadian Educational Policy and Administrative Network (http://www.cepan.ca/rrnew/sg/educational_reform.htm).

23 See Ontario, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 'Backgrounder: Education Reform and Finance in Other Provinces', 13 January 1997 (http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/nr/97.01/res-tbe.html).

24 For a detailed description of both the amounts and the organization of all of the provincial and state funding systems in Canada and in the United States, see the individual reports prepared by the Education Finance Statistics Center of the National Center for Education Statistics available on the US Department of Education web site (http://nces.ed.gov/edfin/state_finance/stateFinancing.asp). My information on Ontario is garnered from the 'Ontario' report prepared by the Education Finance Branch, p. 1 at the same URL.

25 For a general analysis of the Thatcher government's attack on welfarism in England and the introduction and expansion of neoliberalism, see Hall (1988) and Pierson (1994).

26 This 'national curriculum' represented the first major effort to standardize and homogenize what is taught in the public schools.

27 British Council, 'Public Sector Reform in Britain' (http://www.britishcouncil.org/governance/manag/reform/psref11.htm).

28 Roman Catholic and Church of England schools have been government funded for many years in Britain, but these schools are widely attended by children of all faiths. Further, Blair's decision facilitates the separation out of religious groups, such as Muslims and Sikhs, who are more readily perceived as 'different' within the context of Anglo-Protestant hegemony in defining British culture and society (e.g. see Gilroy 1987).

29 See also the National Skills Task Force final report from June 2000, which proposes 'a new national skills agenda intended to develop the UK as a high-skill, high-value-added "knowledge economy" in the 21st century'. The Task Force was set up by Blunkett in 1997. (http://www.eiro.eurofound.ie/2000/10/Feature/UK0010196F.html).

30 The 1954 court case, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, was undoubtedly the most important of these.

31 For more general analyses of the Reagan/Bush neoliberal era and its ongoing effects on privatization and declining

welfarism, see Joe and Rogers (1985), Pierson (1994) and Peck (2001).

32 Chester Finn, 'A Call for Quality Education', *American Education* (January–February 1982), p. 32. Cited in Aronowitz and Giroux (1985, 4). Finn served as assistant secretary of education in the Reagan cabinet.

33 For a great discussion of the current use of the word 'excellence' and its obliteration of any form of critical reasoning, see Bill Readings (1996). For a discussion of the contemporary changes in schooling in the last decade and their philosophical and practical implications, see Giroux (2001).

34 From a speech given by George Bush in January 2002.

35 In addition to the separation out of Britain's faith-based groups, both Canada and the US now allow for separation from the public-school mainstream through the establishment of government-funded 'charter' schools.

36 For example, Colorado Bill 02-136 was introduced into the Colorado Senate and approved in 2002. This bill was titled, 'A bill for an act concerning the teaching of a unit on patriotism in each public school in the state'. The summary stated: 'Requires each public school in the state to teach, in each grade level offered in the school, an age-appropriate unit on patriotism, including but not limited to a discussion of the rights, privileges, and responsibilities involved with United States citizenship and a historical review of what it means to be an American.' I am indebted to Annie Wiberg-Rozaklis for finding this bill and bringing it to my attention.

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