

Lifelong Learning Book Series 18

Neil Hopkins

# Citizenship and Democracy in Further and Adult Education

 Springer

# Citizenship and Democracy in Further and Adult Education

# Lifelong Learning Book Series

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Neil Hopkins

# Citizenship and Democracy in Further and Adult Education

 Springer

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*for Dara and Frank*



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*I dedicate this work to the memory of Dr. Frank Lappin.*

Cheshunt  
May 2013

Neil Hopkins





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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

I have been a teacher in further education and adult education for over a decade, firstly as a teacher of adult literacy in colleges, workplaces and community centres, then as a trainer of teachers (often referred to as teacher education). My employment, throughout this time, has been in further education colleges. It is important to define my terms regarding 'further education' and 'adult education' in the context of English education (this is something I will be going into more detail later on in this chapter). I will be using the term 'further education' in this book to define full-time vocational education (that often takes place in further education colleges) or apprenticeships for young adults (16–19 years of age). 'Adult education' will be any education for students who are 19 years of age or older. Adult education courses take place in a range of locations and environments including colleges, schools, community centres, workplaces and people's homes. There is a degree of overlap between these terms (various adult education courses take place in further education colleges, for instance). For the benefit of clarity, I have been explicit where I am using the terms 'further education' and 'adult education' in this book although the terms are sometimes used interchangeably in English education.

My role as a teacher trainer has required me to observe hundreds of classes in the past 5 years in a very wide range of vocational, academic and professional contexts. This has been primarily to support new teachers with their teaching practice. One of the key issues I have continued to note over time is the narrowness of the curriculum that many students undertake as their introduction into a particular craft, trade or profession. The focus is often a rigidly-defined set of outcomes and competencies (which I refer to later in the book as 'the instrumentalist curriculum'). This is at variance with what is seen in other European countries where students on vocational programmes are still expected to study aspects of language, mathematics, sciences and the humanities. The work of Alasdair MacIntyre (particular his notion of practices as a set of excellences that encompass social, cultural and ethical qualities) led me to investigate whether the concept of 'citizenship education' (currently a contentious issue in the English school curriculum) could be applied to English further education.

As an adult literacy teacher in England one of the central concerns, for me, is that the government curriculum devised in 2001 is restrictive, focusing on the acquisition of language skills associated with employment rather than encouraging the study of literacy to further students' ability to operate as confident and assertive citizens. This concern was increased when citizenship tests were introduced for people applying for British citizenship. The course for students in preparation for this test, *Living in the United Kingdom*, is framed in narrow parameters. The test (and its associated course materials) requires students to acquire and memorise 'key' facts regarding British culture, history and politics. At no stage are students studying *Living in the United Kingdom* expected to demonstrate (let alone critique) the aspects of citizenship articulated in the test. Memorisation is deemed sufficient. The English education system is not fully serving adult students (be they literacy students, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) students, or students on other adult programmes) by not exploring citizenship when opportunities arise on the curriculum concerned. I have written this book with two hats on – as an academic and as a teacher. It is my intention throughout to aim the book at teachers working in the sector alongside academics with an interest in the field. The book is also an attempt to marry philosophy of education with the often neglected sectors of further and adult education.

The central theme of this book is citizenship and democracy in further and adult education. Whilst citizenship education has become an important issue in secondary education<sup>1</sup> with the publication of *Education for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in schools* (often referred to as the 'Crick Report') (1998) and the introduction of Citizenship as a subject within the National Curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 (see DfEE 1999), little has been made of citizenship education within the fields of further and adult education. This is in spite of important reports such as *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds In Education and Training* (FEFC 2000) in terms of further education, or *The Kennedy Report* (1997) (see NIACE 1999) regarding adult education, both of which emphasised the crucial link between education, citizenship and democracy in England.

I will argue that, in spite of the challenges citizenship education presents in further and adult education, there is a pressing need for it to be adopted as an important part of the curriculum for both areas of education. Currently, vocational education in FE is largely delivered using an 'instrumentalist' curriculum where the focus is on achievement of assessment outcomes at the expense of allowing students to investigate their chosen craft or profession in a more holistic fashion. It is my belief that citizenship education embedded into vocational programmes offers an opportunity (by exploring the social, ethical and cultural aspects of crafts or professions) for tutors and students to see the wider perspectives in which their vocations operate.

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<sup>1</sup>Michael Fielding's (2007) encapsulation of radical state education through 'the common school' and Kenneth A. Strike's (2000) description of 'schools as communities' are two significant contributions to the debate on schools, democracy and citizenship education.

Citizenship in adult education also suffers, in the present climate, from an over-emphasis on achievement of outcomes and qualifications. I will present a vision of citizenship in adult education that challenges this current mode, offering in its stead citizenship programmes where adult students have considerable degrees of ownership over the content and teaching methods on the course. Such courses, because they encourage and facilitate negotiation and participation involving all students, are utilising the rights and duties adult students encounter in their lives as citizens, as well as studying aspects of social power and change.

Citizenship education operates best in educational institutions that are themselves genuinely democratic, and the case will be made for further education colleges to adopt the tenets of deliberative democracy to ensure fair representation of important stakeholders within the institution as well as offering a forum for issues explored in individual classrooms or workshops to receive a wider hearing (and thus provide opportunities for cross-curricular projects and discussions).

Chapter 2 of this book will lay the platform, in terms of political philosophy, over what constitutes citizenship from a philosophical point-of-view. Much has been made of the debate over the past 30 years between liberals and communitarians regarding the balance between the need for citizens' individual autonomy and the sense of identity given by specific communities and nations. To view philosophers as sitting in different camps on the issue of citizenship is, admittedly, artificial but comparison of the different perspectives on what defines citizenship in contemporary democracies is informative for educationalists. Such questions as 'Can nations achieve genuine identification from citizens with different conceptions of the good?' and 'Is conflict or consensus the basis upon which contemporary democracies rest?' are crucial dilemmas to discuss and explore within any programme of citizenship education. The key texts that have provoked enormous debate within the area of philosophy and citizenship are John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* (1999 [1971]) and *Political Liberalism* (2005 [1993]). Whilst neither of these books are centred solely on citizenship, Rawls's description of the principles of justice required to ensure a society of fair and equal opportunity for citizens with very different outlooks on life has been highly influential. Chapter 2 will use Rawls's texts to frame discussion between philosophical liberals and communitarians on citizenship, the individual and the state (for a detailed exploration of Rawls' theory of justice and citizenship education, see Papastephanou 2005).

The focus of Chap. 3 will discuss where citizenship education currently occurs on programmes in further and adult education in England. A detailed analysis of particular syllabuses (such as Functional Skills, the Diploma in Creative Media and GCSE English) will investigate the opportunities within existing qualifications for teachers and students to explore aspects or issues around citizenship. It will be noted that the introduction of Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) into the Diplomas and similar qualifications (such as the BTEC National Diplomas) are an encouraging sign of the need to broaden the base of many vocational programmes to include course content around social and cultural concerns where citizenship education would be a natural fit for such content. However, as we shall see, although there are opportunities to explore citizenship education within certain programmes,

these links are not sufficiently encouraged or facilitated (in terms of resources or training) to enable vocational teachers to feel confident in planning lessons on such topics. This is unfortunate because, as I will argue in later chapters, citizenship education will work most effectively when it is embedded into vocational subjects rather than studied as a separate discipline (as has often been the case with Key Skills). Embedding citizenship into specific curriculum areas in further education enables students to relate social, cultural and ethical issues to their own area of work where it will be seen as practical and relevant. In terms of adult education, the adoption of the ‘Skills for Life Agenda’ in 2001 (and with it a new suite of qualifications for adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)) was a missed opportunity to explore citizenship as part of adult basic education. The government focus in England was on narrowing attention towards the language and number skills necessary for students to become more employable. This is in contrast to the situation in Scotland, where adult basic education has promoted a wider agenda around literacy, numeracy and ESOL to include the study of citizens’ rights and the role of language and number within given communities.

The approach taken in this book on citizenship education in the post-compulsory sector is to use two traditions identified by Andy Green and Norman Lucas (1999) as having particular importance in this area of education – these are the ‘apprenticeship’ tradition and the ‘self-help’ tradition. Citizenship education and the apprenticeship tradition will be explored in detail in Chap. 4 (in terms of the historical roots of the tradition) and Chap. 5 (where the English system of vocational education and apprenticeships will be compared to the systems employed in Germany and France), again with special emphasis on how citizenship education (under different names and terms) is incorporated into such programmes. It will be seen that the apprenticeship tradition is linked very specifically in this book to further education in England. Further education, as a term, rose to prominence after the publication of the 1944 Education Act. According to Section 41 of that Act, further education was defined as:

- (a) full-time and part-time education for persons over the compulsory school age; and (b) leisure-time occupation, in such organized cultural training and recreative activities as are suited to their requirements, for any persons over compulsory school age who are able and willing to profit by the facilities provided for that purpose (National Archive 2012).

Over the past decade or so, further education in England (within FE colleges at least) has moved increasingly towards full-time vocational courses for 16–19 year olds as well as accommodating the resurgence of apprenticeships due to changing government priorities around employment and skills training. My use of the term ‘further education’ in this book will, therefore, adopt the narrower definition based on contemporary practice in FE colleges (as opposed to the wider definition encapsulated in the 1944 Education Act). When I refer to further education, it will focus on full-time vocational courses for 16–19 year olds in FE colleges as well as apprenticeship programmes that blend workplace experience and training alongside college tuition (often in the form of the ‘day release’ model).



The term ‘adult education’ in this book is used to define a variety of courses (some recreational, some vocational) that take place under the aegis of different organisations or institutions such as the Adult Education Services of Local Authorities or certain nongovernmental organisations and charities (the University of the Third Age, for example). Classes in adult education take place in a vast array of locations ranging from community centres to pubs and people’s houses. Adult education is a potentially slippery term to define due to the sheer range of educational provision the term potentially covers. When I use the term ‘adult education’, I am aiming at a student body of 19 years old and above who will enrol on courses that are not necessarily government funded or supported. These courses can be of short duration (a 10-session watercolour course, for example) or long (a 2-year ESOL programme). Discussion around citizenship education in adult education will be covered in detail in Chap. 6.

I will make connections between the apprenticeship tradition (identified by Green and Lucas) and further education (as I have defined it in its contemporary guise) in terms of citizenship education. These connections are potentially very fertile. As will be shown in Chap. 4, the apprenticeship tradition has deep historical roots going back to the twelfth century in the form of the medieval guilds. The concept of ‘occupation as practice’ will be vital in discussion of how citizenship education could be incorporated into vocational programmes in FE colleges and apprenticeships. The work of Alasdair MacIntyre (especially in *After Virtue* (1985 [1981])) and Richard Sennett in *The Craftsman* (2009) will inform discussion on this issue. I hope to show that the idea of practices outlined by MacIntyre and Sennett expand the idea of crafts, trades and professions beyond the competency-based, instrumentalist curriculum currently on offer on many FE courses. Practices, in MacIntyre’s interpretation of the term, contain social, cultural and ethical requirements in order to achieve and maintain the excellences associated with the practice. It is in these links between the idea of a practice and the notion of excellences where citizenship education could form an effective aspect of vocational programmes in FE. This is because the concept of a practice (as embodied in many medieval workshops) went much further than simple demonstration of skill (although this was, of course, important). There were also social and ethical responsibilities that formed part of what it meant to be a good carpenter, bricklayer or chef.

Where MacIntyre’s influence is more problematic is in the notion of practices occurring within established historical communities. This presents potential difficulties for MacIntyre in terms of modern democracies where pluralism (in terms of differing conceptions of the good) is an abiding element. John Rawls has argued that

the diversity of reasonable comprehensive religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines found in modern democratic societies is not a mere historical condition that may soon pass away; it is a permanent feature of the public culture of democracy (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 36).

This contention by philosophers such as Rawls does not invalidate the important points MacIntyre makes on the social aspects of practices, but one must be mindful that MacIntyre is writing from a long historical perspective and some of the

attributes of the communities he writes about (the perceived agreement over what constitutes the virtues in fourth-century Athens or thirteenth-century Iceland, for instance) (see MacIntyre 1985 [1981], pp. 121–145) do not exist in contemporary democracies. Communities in the twenty first century are marked by a sense of fluidity and variety in terms of moral or religious beliefs in a way that the societies depicted by MacIntyre are not. It is with this necessary caution that MacIntyre's writings are used regarding concepts such as 'community' and 'society' in relation to contemporary education.

The idea of citizenship education as an integral part of vocational programmes is found in both Germany and France. In Germany, the dual-system for apprenticeships (where apprentices spend part of their week with an employer and the other part at a vocational college or *Berufsschule*) encourages the study of general education alongside the vocational specialism. Citizenship education forms a key aspect of *Geschichte und Gemeinschaftskunde* (history and social studies) where apprentices study such modules as 'The State and the Individual'. We shall see that the work of the Bavarian educationalist Georg Kerschensteiner was critical to the advocacy of a general education as a necessary aspect of any apprentice's training (as well as the importance of vocational education within the secondary school curriculum). Kerschensteiner's belief was that vocational education was not an education centred on the practical skills alone. For Kerschensteiner, a central element of the training in any craft was based on the study of how that particular craft operated within the given community or society and the practitioner's role as a citizen within that community (or 'communities', perhaps, given the diversity of contemporary democracies discussed above). Vocational programmes in France also incorporate citizenship education (or *éducation civique*). Where the French system of vocational education differs from the German model is in the state controlled *lycées professionnel* – these institutions answer directly to the French Ministry of Education rather than the German dual-system which is an alliance of the state, employers and unions. This is reflected in terms of citizenship education on vocational programmes in France where the curriculum is defined and articulated by the French Ministry. It will be noted that *éducation civique* in a typical *lycée professionnel* has a greater emphasis on the rights and roles of the citizen than similar courses studied in a German *Berufsschule*. One possible reason for this is the strong tradition of civic republicanism in France where the active participation of citizens within the body politic is viewed as a social virtue. As I have stated above, I will argue that a programme of general education (of which citizenship education might be part) running alongside the chosen vocational programme (as is the case in Germany and France) is unlikely to work in England. This is partly because the tradition of teaching general education for vocational students is not a particularly strong one in England (despite the often significant efforts made by teachers of Liberal and General Studies in the 1950s–1970s, for instance). The recent difficult experience of Key Skills (where literacy, numeracy and ICT were often taught separately from the main vocational curriculum to FE students) suggests that students want to see the practicality and relevancy of the subject under study. Therefore, I advocate the embedding of citizenship education into vocational

programmes (including examples in Carpentry, Hair, Business and Sport) to draw out the social, cultural and ethical issues within individual trades, professions or crafts. This view is based on the often excellent practice adopted by Liberal and General Studies teachers who attempted to make explicit links between vocational programmes and wider curriculum concerns.

The subject of Chap. 6 will be the self-help tradition in adult education and the influence this tradition continues to have on citizenship education for adult students. By using the work of historians such as E. P. Thompson (1991 [1963]), we will see how adults from oppressed or disenfranchised social groups have often set up their own educational provision in opposition to the state. Organisations such as the Corresponding Societies of the late eighteenth century, the Plebs League of the early twentieth century, and various women's and ethnic minority groups of the 1960s onwards have demonstrated how adult students form their own classes as a form of what one might call empowerment through learning. I will use the term 'active citizenship' in this context to define a type of learning where adult students question and critique the premises upon which their society is constructed. This could be through the forum of a discrete citizenship education course (for ESOL students, as an example) or through debate on the structure, timings and content of adult courses generally. The philosophy of Chantal Mouffe, particularly in her book *The Return of the Political* (2005 [1993]), is particularly informative in relation to active citizenship and the self-help tradition in adult education. Mouffe's belief in 'the permanence of antagonistic forces' (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 53), the idea that politics is always a site of conflict and that marginalised groups can only establish influence through the constant challenging of established norms and procedures, has affinities with the stance groups within the self-help tradition have taken towards the state regarding educational provision. It is in this sense of engagement, the desire to argue and, if necessary, attempt to change the societies in which they live that adult students demonstrate active citizenship in the sense advocated by Mouffe. Due to the diverse nature of adult education in England, various agencies (the Adult Education Services of Local Authorities and voluntary organisations) might work alongside the students themselves to facilitate courses embodying active citizenship although, by the very nature of the self-help tradition, the cooperation of these agencies is not a compulsory feature of active citizenship within adult education.

This book will also argue that it is not enough simply to study citizenship education on vocational or adult programmes. It is also important that the educational institutions where these courses are studied are themselves democratic. This will ensure continuity between the themes studied as part of citizenship education and the practices and procedures carried out by institutions themselves. It is vital, in my opinion, that educational providers exemplify, in terms of their democratic structures, an openness to different voices and different stakeholders that is a critical aspect of effective citizenship education. In Chap. 7, I will offer a model of deliberative democracy devised by Joshua Cohen (in Matravers and Pike 2003). Cohen's 'ideal deliberative procedure' is a discussion and decision-making method designed to try and reach consensus by ensuring different constituencies and representatives are given a fair opportunity to articulate their views and steer the content of a

given agenda. This procedure, in terms of further and adult education, is likely to work most effectively in FE colleges (where many of the structures necessary for deliberative democracy on Cohen's model are already in place) although this is not to rule out the possibilities of deliberative democracy across the very diverse organisations associated with adult education in England. In order for deliberative democracy to work in FE colleges, the issue of college governance needs to be raised. Currently, colleges are run by boards of governors that are not democratically elected. It is my contention that the various stakeholders or constituencies that have a vested interest in the success of a given FE college (senior management, staff, students, local business and voluntary organisations, the local communities the college serves) need to have fair and democratic representation on any college board of governors. It will be argued that the good practice many colleges already demonstrate in terms of student parliaments and student councils would naturally feed into a fully democratic board of governors. Having deliberative structures in colleges offer ample opportunities for debate on how citizenship education might cross over from specific vocational areas into exploring the themes and issues under discussion from wider, cross-curricular perspectives (some examples of which I will discuss in Chap. 7).

## Chapter 2

# Citizenship and Political Philosophy

Citizenship, as a concept, has been at the heart of political debate within the modern nation state since at least the time of the American War of Independence but where does it reside in current discussions within the seminar rooms of political philosophy? Over the past 30 years or so, citizenship has been integral to the argument between liberals and communitarians on the nature of the contemporary state and its institutions. Charles Taylor has, somewhat lightheartedly, referred to this as a debate ‘between two “teams”, with people like Rawls, Dworkin, Nagel, and Scanlon (team L), and Sandel, MacIntyre, and Walzer . . . (team C)’ (Taylor in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 195). Running alongside this discussion (and sometimes interlinked with it) is the extended conversation on deliberative democracy and its applicability to existing nation states, regions or other political forums. Can an institution that potentially encompasses millions of people be truly deliberative and under which format is that deliberation to take place – the citizen as autonomous individual or the citizen as member of a collective?

### 2.1 Tensions in Liberal Theory: Equality Versus Difference; Belonging and Cohesion

In this section I will be exploring the tensions in liberal theory around citizenship, particularly regarding the themes of equality and difference (in the context of the basic commitment to formal equality or equality before the law), and the issues of belonging and cohesion that are of central concern to discussions around citizenship.

Iris Marion Young has stated:

Modern political thought generally has assumed that the universality of citizenship in the sense of citizenship for all implies a universality of citizenship in the sense that citizenship status transcends particularity and difference (Young 1989, p. 250).

Young here views the concept of citizenship through the prism of liberal individualism, with the citizen as upholder and bearer of rights and responsibilities

that are applied equally to all within the body politic. The implication Young draws from this, based on the quotation above, is that citizenship (as understood by philosophers in the contemporary liberal tradition) places equality before particularity, universality before difference. But is this an entirely fair characterisation of the liberal perspective? Let us look at Rawls's idea of the 'overlapping consensus' for example. Whilst Rawls predicts universal (or near universal) accession to his principles of justice when put before citizens alongside other choices in the original position (Rawls 1999 [1971], pp. 130–139; pp. 153–160), this does not mean that he needs to abandon particularity or difference. This is because, in the overlapping consensus that upholds his principles of justice within the basic structure, citizens identify with the principles of justice through the lens of their own moral, religious or philosophical traditions:

when an overlapping consensus supports the political conception, this conception is not viewed as incompatible with basic religious, philosophical, and moral values. We need not consider the claims of political justice against the claims of this or that comprehensive view (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 157).

This is the essence of Rawls's 'reasonable pluralism', the notion that different traditions, articulating sometimes incompatible beliefs, can still come to agreement on 'constitutional essentials' if they acknowledge the 'burdens of judgement' (the idea that different belief systems are unlikely to prove one another fundamentally false or untrue) (Rawls 2005 [1993], pp. 54–66). Citizens thus come to embrace a 'political conception' (or constitution) from multiple perspectives that uphold universality while respecting difference. The idea of Rawls's political liberalism as being neutral enough to encompass a variety of comprehensive doctrines has been challenged by Eamonn Callan, amongst others. Callan has stated 'the conception of reasonable pluralism that Rawls needs . . . makes his political liberalism into a version of comprehensive liberalism' (Callan 1997, p. 21) thus denying to Rawls the belief that his notion of political liberalism can somehow navigate (in neutral fashion) the various reasonable comprehensive doctrines on offer in contemporary democracies. According to Callan, the requirements Rawls places on citizenship within political liberalism (one thinks, for example, of adhering to the 'burdens of judgement' as part of public reason) already makes Rawls's political liberalism a comprehensive doctrine in its own right.

Rawls's enterprise, however, does not go far enough for Young. Her arguments on group difference pivot on the proposal offering differentiated rights to specific groups in order to rectify historical wrongs or enable access to the political process:

The universalist finds a contradiction in asserting both that formerly segregated groups have a right to inclusion and that these groups have a right to different treatment. There is no contradiction here, however, if attending to difference is necessary in order to make participation and inclusion possible (Young 1989, p. 273).

What Young is advocating here is something close to differentiated citizenship. Just as a nation might need to recognise differentiated rights and representation to ensure historically marginalised groups are given an opportunity to fully participate in the political process, a comparable tendency occurs in the identification citizens

have with groups or causes beyond their identification with the nation as such. Citizenship here is multi-faceted or multi-dimensional, where attachment to a group or cause runs parallel to (and sometimes in conflict with) attachment to a nation.

Certainly Rawls has no truck with difference if, in the process, this conflicts with his principles of justice, particularly his first principle: 'Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all' (Rawls 1999 [1971], p. 266). There is no allowance for different treatment (as advocated by Young) here, although Rawls, in his framing of the 'difference principle' (the second of his principles of justice) does go further than what might be understood as formal equality.

The discussion up to now has focused on citizenship in terms of the conceptualisation and status of members of the liberal polity. But citizenship can also be thought of as a form of sentiment – of fraternity, of brother and sisterhood. As Roger Scruton has put it, 'unity is, in the normal instance, social rather than political' (Scruton in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 271). Seen in this light, there may be more common ground between Rawls and Young than the above discussion suggests. Rawls, contrary to the depiction of contemporary liberals as abstractionists, does not deny the need for emotional attachment to a nation or a sense of fraternity in any constitutional settlement or construction of a cohesive basic structure. His answer here is that most people's moral systems are not, on his terms, 'fully comprehensive' and allow for 'slippage'. This enables consensus between citizens holding potentially conflicting doctrines because

many if not most citizens come to affirm the principles of justice incorporated into their constitution and political practice without seeing any particular connection, one way or the other, between those principles and their other views. It is possible for citizens first to appreciate the good those principles accomplish both for themselves and those they care for, as well as society at large, and then to affirm them on this basis (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 160).

The principles of justice embodied in the basic structure can be incorporated into many moral viewpoints partly because citizens are not slavish in their adherence to their own comprehensive doctrines – they can view the usefulness of the principles separately (at first) from their other moral, political or religious views, slowly integrating these as time progresses.<sup>1</sup> Granted, this is still a long way from Young's demand for the placement of group identity and differentials at the very heart of the political system, but it does provide for different cultures and beliefs to engage with the basic structure on their own terms and therefore moves beyond the caricature of liberalism as a vehicle for atomised individualism. This is what Brian Barry articulates when he says, 'The partisans of diversity or tolerance are absolutely right to insist on the importance of freedom of association. They are in error, however, in

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<sup>1</sup>It is important to note, however, that Rawls's first principle of justice is framed in strict terms of formal equality and allows less room for interpretation and flexibility than his second principle of justice ('the difference principle').

suggesting that liberals are somehow inhibited by their principles from recognising its value' (Barry in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 255).

It would be a mistake, therefore, to perceive Rawls's version of liberalism as an appeal to individualism without the need for significant attachments to concepts such as 'community' or 'society'. Where Rawls differs from his communitarian critics is in his belief that contemporary democracies are, by definition, pluralistic in the sense of citizens adhering to the different conceptions of the good. It is Rawls's view that reasonable conceptions of the good are unlikely to reach agreement on many aspects of what constitutes a good life. Therefore, agreement, in terms of an 'overlapping consensus', is restricted to the basic structure rather than the wider social, religious or ethical landscape.

A powerful critique of Rawls on aspects of difference comes from Martha Nussbaum in her book *Frontiers of Difference* (2006). Nussbaum is more sympathetic to the liberal tradition than Young but still perceives Rawls's original position as a schema where agents are defined as 'parties [with] roughly similar needs and interests, or needs and interests in various ways complementary, so that mutually advantageous cooperation among them is possible' (Rawls 1999 [1971], p. 110). What, in Nussbaum's view, is Rawls to do for those citizens with mental or physical disability (for instance) where individual needs and interests are unlikely to be 'roughly similar' to Rawls's implied norm? The problem for Nussbaum begins with the original position itself:

Rawls's contracting parties are imagined throughout as rational adults, roughly similar in need, and capable of a "normal" level of social cooperation and productivity... In so conceiving of persons, Rawls omits from the situation of basic political choice the more extreme forms of need and dependency that human beings may experience (Nussbaum 2006, pp. 108–109).

Principles of justice drawn up in the original position, according to Nussbaum, will be based on systems of mutual benefit and advantage which will inevitably exclude or disadvantage citizens with physical or mental disability because their particular needs and interests do not fit into the 'normal level of social cooperation and productivity' (Nussbaum 2006, p. 108). This process will occur because 'Rawls believes that we can adequately design basic political principles without taking "abnormal" impairments, either physical or mental and either temporary or permanent, into account' (Nussbaum 2006, pp. 111–112). 'Abnormal' impairments are addressed at a later stage in Rawls's account by which time the two principles of justice have already been drawn up and agreed upon. It would be fair to say, if Nussbaum's criticisms are correct (and I think they are), that citizens with physical and/or mental disability are effectively disenfranchised through Rawls's construction of his original position. This is a serious flaw in Rawls's ability to address difference within his theory of justice.

As stated earlier, where Nussbaum differs from Young is in her overall attitude to Rawls's form of liberal contractarianism. Where Young is highly suspicious of liberalism's tendencies towards universalism (at the possible expense of specific groups' needs and interests), Nussbaum elucidates a 'capabilities approach' (Nussbaum 2006, pp. 69–81) which she views as a social minimum to offset the



mutual cooperation/benefit bias of many contract theories (including Rawls's). The capabilities approach to justice is neatly summed up by Amartya Sen (one of the key theorists of such an approach) when he writes:

In contrast with the utility-based or resource-based lines of thinking, individual advantage is judged in the capability approach by a person's capability to do things he or she has reason to value. A person's advantage in terms of opportunities is judged to be lower than that of another if she has less capability . . . to achieve those things that she has reason to value . . . The concept of capability is thus linked closely with the opportunity aspect of freedom, seen in terms of 'comprehensive' opportunities, and not just focusing on what happens at 'culmination' (Sen 2010, pp. 231–232).

Whilst Sen and Nussbaum are in large agreement when criticising Rawls's emphasis on primary goods in his principles of justice (particularly the difference principle) and Rawls's attempt to address issues regarding capability at the legislative stage of his theory (as opposed to the original position), Sen's marked emphasis on the concept of capability as being seen in terms of opportunities as well as what happens at 'culmination' sets him apart from Nussbaum's version.

Nussbaum sees her capabilities approach and Rawls's social contract theory as 'close relatives and allies' (Nussbaum 2006, p. 71) and, in distinction to Young, this approach is 'fully universal' (Nussbaum 2006, p. 78). By 'fully universal', I understand Nussbaum to mean that her capabilities approach can adhere to principles similar or identical to those drawn up by Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* although the capabilities she discusses require explicit acknowledgement and redress (in the 'difference principle' particularly). This is something Rawls omits from doing in either *A Theory of Justice* or *Political Liberalism* where the 'difference principle' is discussed on a mathematical basis (in order to 'calculate' the least advantaged members of society) rather than naming particular groups of citizens to be included and supported in any difference principle (as Nussbaum does). The capabilities approach is a means of ensuring that difference (particularly that of mental and physical disability) is addressed when principles of justice are discussed and agreed upon, not left to a later constitutional or legislative stage.

## 2.2 The Communitarian Perspective: A Sense of Patriotism?

For philosophers associated with communitarianism, the issue of citizenship is a central aspect of their critique of political liberalism. Michael Sandel, one of the most tenacious critics of Rawlsian liberalism, takes it to task particularly around the theme of community and personal identity. According to Mulhall and Swift

Sandel [believes] a Rawlsian polis would force its citizens to think of themselves as participants in a scheme of mutual cooperation, deriving advantages they could not have gained by their own efforts, but not tied to their fellow citizens by bonds whose severance or alteration would change their identity as persons (Mulhall and Swift 1996, p. 54).

Put simply, where Young attacks Rawls from the perspective of diversity (or, at least, differentiation), Sandel (and others) attack his form of liberalism on the

basis of a perceived lack of social integration. Citizenship means little or nothing, in Sandel's eyes, without this sense of social integration, for what is the purpose of citizenship otherwise? Sandel turns Rawls's original position upon its head by challenging the very thought of an agent 'untied' from her or his attachments as being, in any real sense, a tangible self at all:

While the notion of constitutive attachments may at first seem an obstacle to agency – the self, now encumbered, is no longer strictly prior – some relative fixity of character appears essential to prevent the lapse into arbitrariness which the deontological self is unable to avoid (Sandel in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 156).

It can be seen as debatable whether Rawls's agent in the original position is in any way a 'deontological self' but otherwise the meaning is clear: to remove or distance ourselves from our links with others 'even as a purely hypothetical situation' (Rawls 1999 [1971], p. 11) is to fundamentally affect our identity as social beings. From this angle on identity, Sandel draws implications for justice itself: 'As the independent self finds its limits in those aims and attachments from which it cannot stand apart, so justice finds its limit in those forms of community that engage the identity as well as the interests of the participants' (Sandel in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 157). Justice, for Sandel, occurs within culturally-specific contexts and cannot be abstracted beyond such contexts. When this is tried, we reach beyond the limits of what justice (as conventionally understood) can do – justice is always a construct of the community, a judgement devised and delivered by particular societies.

Is this depiction of liberalism as creating and sustaining 'the unencumbered citizen' something we recognise in Rawls? Certainly if citizenship entails a commitment to the same comprehensive doctrine amongst all citizens in a given body politic then Rawls has no truck with this – and this is indeed why he developed his conception of 'political' as opposed to 'comprehensive' liberalism, largely in response to communitarian critiques of *Theory of Justice*. Rawls is very clear on the inevitability and necessity of 'reasonable pluralism' in contemporary democracies, not just as a *modus vivendi* but as part of the very fabric of and justification for political liberalism. But this does not quite answer Sandel's point as Sandel is not specifically linking identity with agreement on comprehensive doctrines as such but more with the idea of a shared narrative: 'to have character is to know that I move in a history I neither summon nor command' (Sandel in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 155). Rawls is open to the concept of shared narratives – he, after all, links the modern definition of tolerance to the religious conflicts of Reformation and post-Reformation Europe to illustrate how a *modus vivendi* can mature or develop into an overlapping consensus (Rawls 2005 [1993], pp. 24–26). Where Rawls is more vulnerable is on the question of how this sense of narrative or history fits in with his thoughts on identity, particularly in *A Theory of Justice*. Much has been made of Rawls's adoption of a veil of ignorance within his original position – it is a controversial view, particularly on the subject of identity. Rawls writes:

no one knows his [sic] place in society, his class position or social status; nor does he know his fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, his intelligence and strength, and the like. Nor, again, does anyone know his [sic] conception of the good, the particulars

of his rational plan of life, or even the special features of his psychology such as his aversion to risk or liability or pessimism. More than this, I assume that the parties do not know the particular circumstances of their own society (Rawls 1999 [1971], p. 118).

The original position is, in short, ‘a purely hypothetical situation characterized so as to lead to a certain conception of justice’ (Rawls 1999 [1971], p. 11). This is, from a psychological point of view, problematic. Agents are expected to devise principles of justice that will bond them together as a body of citizens while putting to one side the events, struggles, debates and such like that helped to form them as a community in the first place. It is this idea that lies at the crux of viewpoints that see the conception of citizenship underlying political liberalism as too thin and, ultimately, inadequate. In the words of David Miller, the original position is in danger of producing little more than ‘constitutional patriotism . . . In other words, we have no examples of successful democracies with extensive welfare states where nothing holds citizens together beyond their allegiance to the state itself’ (Miller 2008, p. 378). The original position, by effectively washing away any linkage the agents might have to identity and history, is almost certain to create principles that appeal to the lowest common denominator, a constitution as *modus vivendi*, leeches of references to the past or common cultural bonds. In defence of Rawls, he argues for citizenship as (in part at least) ‘the capacity to honor [sic] fair terms of cooperation’ (Rawls 2005 [1993] p. 305) and of the well-ordered society as ‘a social union of social unions’ (Rawls 1999 [1971], p. 462) which certainly allows room for cultural and national identifications (although not at the stage of the original position). This has, however, led critics like Alasdair MacIntyre to question the feasibility of a nation state based on Rawlsian values. He doubts that the principles devised in the original position are strong enough, by themselves, to instil a sense of allegiance to inspire the citizenry to defend or protect their nation at times of peril. MacIntyre places liberalism and patriotism as opposites, believing

good soldiers may not be liberals and must indeed embody in their actions a good deal at least of the morality of patriotism. So the political survival of any polity in which liberal morality has secured large-scale allegiance would depend upon there still being enough young men and women who rejected that liberal morality. And in this sense liberal morality tends towards the dissolution of social bonds (MacIntyre in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 299).

What we have here, therefore, are critiques of Rawls from differing angles. Both take Sandel’s writings as a prompt – but whilst Miller challenges whether contemporary democracies (with significant and expensive welfare structures) could survive at all based on ‘constitutional patriotism’ alone, MacIntyre draws up patriotism against what he calls ‘liberal’ morality in the belief that it is only when enough citizens retain a patriotic stance (in distinction to a liberal one) that a nation will engender sufficient commitment and identification from people to want to defend it at times of crisis and peril. Commitment is the key word for both philosophers and only when citizens identify with nations are they prepared to pay taxes and fight for them.

How does Rawls respond to this challenge? We have already noted that Rawls acknowledges the need for identification with the basic structure in *A Theory of*

*Justice* when he states: ‘a well-ordered society (corresponding to justice as fairness) is itself a form of social union. Indeed, it is a social union of social unions’ (Rawls 1999 [1971], p. 462). This, however, does not solve the fundamental problem raised over the veil of ignorance in the original position. By *Political Liberalism*, Rawls has further developed his ideas on personal identity and the original position. This is achieved by his clarification of ‘the rational’ and ‘the reasonable’. According to Rawls, the rational ‘applies to a single, unified agent... with the powers of judgment and deliberation in seeking ends and interests peculiarly its own’ (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 50) whereas the reasonable is when people ‘are ready to propose principles and standards as fair terms of cooperation and to abide by them willingly, given the assurance that others will likewise do so’ (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 49). Rawls is very clear that the reasonable is not to be derived from the rational, including within the original position itself (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 53). In *Political Liberalism*, the reasonable and the rational supply two very different functions according to the original position. In terms of representation, ‘the parties as rationally autonomous representatives of persons in society represent only the rational’ (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 305) – I understand this to mean that agents, in this guise, have the self-interest of the people or communities they have been chosen to represent and will endeavour to negotiate the best possible principles for their ‘constituents’. Conversely, agents need to uphold different values or priorities when they approach the original position from the perspective of the reasonable. For Rawls

The reasonable, or persons’ capacity for a sense of justice, which here is their capacity to honor [sic] fair terms of social cooperation, is represented by the various restrictions to which the parties are subject in the original position and by the conditions imposed on their agreement (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 305).

So what we have, in essence, is a balance between protection of particular interests (the rational) and the acknowledgement of social cooperation (the reasonable). Where does this leave us in terms of citizenship and a stable body politic? I still believe Rawls is vulnerable to communitarian critics in his use of the veil of ignorance. If his definition of the reasonable involves restrictions on the knowledge parties can bring (or are aware of) in the original position, on what foundations are they to ‘honour’ fair terms of social cooperation in the first place? Where is the cultural or historical background in which such concepts are grounded (for these values are never learnt in the abstract)? MacIntyre has identified a similar point in his critique of Ronald Dworkin and, by implication, Rawls:

Ronald Dworkin has recently argued that the central doctrine of modern liberalism is the book that questions about the *good life for man* or the ends of human life are to be regarded from the public standpoint as systematically unsetttable. On these individuals are free to agree or disagree. The rules of morality and law hence are not to be derived from or justified in terms of some more fundamental conception of the good for man. In arguing thus Dworkin has, I believe, identified a stance characteristic not just of liberalism, but of modernity [emphasis in the original] (MacIntyre 1985 [1981], p. 119).

MacIntyre’s summary brings us back to the central difficulty with Rawls – if, in the original position, agents have no recourse to conceptions of the good

(philosophical, political or religious) then how is a set of laws or principles to be devised that will enable citizens (with different and potentially conflicting conceptions of the good) to identify and abide by these laws? Rawls does, indeed, allow conceptions of the good to figure in later stages of the political process (see Rawls 2005 [1993], pp. 334–340) and, as we have already observed, he is committed to the idea of his principles of justice being upheld in general by citizens holding different (and often conflicting) conceptions of the good as part of an overlapping consensus. However, this does not fully answer the reservations raised over the ‘birth’ of such an agreement. Negotiation and political representation (and the original position is, if nothing else, a *political* process) cannot occur without positions to negotiate *from* and a real body of people for agents to represent. The rational and the reasonable cannot function as Rawls wants them to function in an abstract, hypothetical situation because he is always vulnerable to the retort ‘rational and reasonable from *what* basis?’ and this must lead us back, ultimately, to culture and identity. MacIntyre has cogently raised the problem liberalism faces when addressing the concept of rationality when he states:

Related and parallel points arise for . . . proposals concerning how we should adjudicate between the different and incompatible accounts of justice advanced by rival and competing traditions. Insofar . . . as such accounts of justice are either derived from or justified in terms of particular conceptions of practical rationality, the impossibility of identifying a neutral standard by which to judge between competing theories in the case of the latter entails a like impossibility in the former (MacIntyre 1988, p. 333).

According to MacIntyre, the project liberalism sets itself around a neutral definition of rationality is doomed from the beginning. It is debateable, however, whether Rawls is actually advocating such a neutral position on rationality. Although Rawls states that ‘rational autonomy is modelled by making the original position a case of pure procedural justice’ (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 72), which certainly has overtones of neutralism about it, he also speaks of ‘[r]ational autonomy [as being a citizen’s ability] to form, to revise, and to pursue a conception of the good, and to deliberate in accordance with it’ (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 72). Here rationality appears to be framed, to some extent, by the citizen’s own conception of the good and avoids the charge levelled at Rawls’s version of liberalism by MacIntyre.

### **2.3 Radical Alternatives to Rawls: Wolin, Mouffe and Civic Republicanism**

Issues around the priority of the right and the good are important in the debate around citizenship. How citizens stand regarding these concepts is likely to have a significant impact on their commitment to a particular community or nation. If a citizen’s conception of the good is sufficiently strong, then any prioritising of right (by the state or others) on vital issues that come into conflict with this conception could weaken the citizen’s adherence to the state. In *A Theory of Justice*, Rawls

states that '[t]he principles of right . . . put limits on which satisfactions have value; they impose restrictions on what are reasonable conceptions of one's good' (Rawls 1999 [1971], p. 27). In *Political Liberalism*, whilst Rawls still invokes the priority of the right, he does acknowledge (perhaps based on criticism from communitarian critics to his previous work) that 'the right and the good are complementary: no conception of justice can draw entirely upon one or the other, but must combine both in a definite way' (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 173). This tension between right and good has been taken up by philosophers sympathetic to the civic republican tradition. Central to this tradition is the belief that political participation and activity by the citizenry is an integral good for both individual agents and the community-at-large. Writers invoking civic republicanism (or something similar) take Rawls to task on his emphasis on negotiation and settlement at the expense of continual agitation and protest. Whilst Rawls states, in *Political Liberalism*,

whenever there is a shared final end, an end that requires the cooperation of many to achieve, the good realized is social; it is realized through citizens' joint activity in mutual dependence on the appropriate actions being taken by others (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 204)

this is not enough for writers such as Sheldon Wolin. The political ends emphasised by Rawls, that of mutual cooperation through the medium of public reason, is, for Wolin, a means of anaesthetising debate and conflict. He writes

Liberalism's reduction of democracy is not by direct attack but results from an understanding of politics that Rawls shares with the contract theorists he cites. The understanding is one in which the meaning and scope of politics is to be "settled" beforehand, that is, before conflict and controversy among social groups and the alignment of classes is recognized (Wolin 1996, p. 98).

According to critics like Wolin, Rawls refuses to see politics in class or group terms – his emphasis on the right as prior to the good prevents him from doing this (because, by doing so, Rawls would leave himself open to certain comprehensive doctrines taking precedence, something he stringently wants to avoid). But this leaves Rawls, according to Wolin, open to the accusation that his theory is one of legitimising what is already in place. By putting the right always before the good, Rawls's model ensures

there are no politics of consent, no negotiation, and no seeing of consent through the eyes of different classes, groups, and sects, only a politics in which reason argues with itself to legitimize the contract, as though the central issue were rationality rather than disparities (Wolin 1996, p. 99).

In this attack on rationality together with his own emphasis on group struggle and group identity, Wolin is, to some extent, a fellow traveller of Young's. Both are suspicious of the universalising tendencies in Rawls's emphasis on compromise, settlement, rationality and public reason. Whilst I can appreciate Wolin's description of politics as that of struggle and strife (the extension of the franchise, the legitimisation of trade unions, the ongoing efforts to remove discrimination in various spheres of life are all examples of achievements gained through conflict and demand), his viewpoint is as vulnerable as Young's at fundamental points regarding

citizenship. For what neither Young nor Wolin are able to successfully argue, in my opinion, is how different conceptions of the good can operate in multi-cultural societies. Settlement and adjudication are not always to be viewed as synonyms for the status quo (at least as much was achieved through negotiated settlement in South Africa and Northern Ireland as armed struggle, it could be argued). By emphasising the good of specific groups or ‘strong feelings’ and zealous aspirations’ (Wolin 1996, p. 107), we still, ultimately, have the problem of how these ideas or pursuits are to be realised within a heterogeneous body politic.

A richer vein of enquiry in terms of critiquing Rawls’s tendencies around consensus comes from Chantal Mouffe. Mouffe treads a careful line between the liberal and civic republican traditions. She, unlike some critics on the communitarian wing (MacIntyre, for example), is willing to acknowledge the debts political philosophy generally, and conceptions of citizenship in particular, owe to liberalism. Mouffe writes: ‘A modern conception of citizenship should respect pluralism and individual liberty; every attempt to reintroduce a moral community, to go back to a *universitas*, is to be resisted’ [emphasis in the original] (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 56). The disagreement Mouffe has with liberalism is its emphasis on constitutional procedure and the embellished phrases of the Supreme Court – she accuses liberals such as Rawls of ‘reduc[ing] citizenship to a mere legal status, setting out the rights that the individual holds against the state’ (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 62). Civic republicanism, on the other hand, is credited with ‘emphasiz[ing] the value of political participation and attribut[ing] a central role to our insertion in a political community’ but is often found wanting in ‘conceiving the political community in a way that is compatible with modern democracy and liberal pluralism’ (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 62).

Like Wolin, Mouffe regards politics as an ongoing struggle between ruling groups and those collectives willing to challenge the prevailing hegemony but she is not prepared to sacrifice the gains made (in her view) by prioritising the right over the good or the universalising tendencies underlying Rawls’s conception of citizenship. Before I go any further, it is important to introduce Mouffe’s ideas on ‘agonistic pluralism’ that are essential to her work. By ‘agonistic pluralism’, Mouffe means a situation where

we accept the necessity of the political and the impossibility of a world without antagonism, what needs to be envisaged is how it is possible *under those conditions* to create or maintain a pluralistic democratic order. Such an order is based on the distinction between ‘enemy’ and ‘adversary’. It requires that, within the context of the political community, the opponent should be considered not as an enemy to be destroyed, but as an adversary whose existence is legitimate and must be tolerated [emphasis in the original] (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 4).

Toleration is conceived here in a very different way to how Rawls uses the term. Mouffe’s toleration is a toleration of opposition, a mutual respect between combatants in an arena which both regard as legitimate (as opposed to the ‘enemy’ who refuses to regard the arena – in this case democratic rules and principles – as legitimate).

Mouffe regards the opposition between liberalism and civic republicanism as a ‘false dichotomy between individual liberty and rights . . . or between civic activity



and political community' (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 65). What Mouffe proposes is that we move from 'seeing citizenship not as a legal status but as a form of identification' (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 65). However, due to the plural nature of contemporary democratic societies, she admits that 'there will . . . be competing interpretations of democratic citizenship' (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 66). Mouffe uses the concept of *societas* as the tightrope to navigate between liberalism and civic republicanism. According to her, *societas*

designates a formal relationship in terms of rules, not a substantive relation in terms of common action. The idea *societas* is that of agents who, by choice or circumstance are related to one another so as to compose an identifiable association of a certain sort . . . It is not a mode of relation, therefore, in terms of common action but a relation in which participants are related to one another in the acknowledgement of the authority of certain conditions in acting (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 66).

Because, in Mouffe's definition of *societas*, citizens come together as a collective through the acceptance of agreed rules and terms rather than through common action, there are considerable links to Rawls's overlapping consensus. Indeed, at this point, it is difficult to locate the fundamental differences between the two thinkers. It is Mouffe's belief in the inevitable and continuing aspect of conflict that the main difference with Rawls lies. The struggle is to extend liberties and rights, to take Rawls's project and stretch it to its fullest point. But this must be done through the rule-bound methods of liberalism, with sensitivity to the importance of the right over the good, and this is where Mouffe differs from Young, Wolin, Sandel or MacIntyre. As she states

a radical democratic interpretation will emphasize the numerous social relations where relations of domination exist and must be challenged if the principles of liberty and equality are to apply. It should lead to a common recognition among different groups struggling for an extension and radicalization of democracy that they have a common concern and that in choosing their action, they should subscribe to certain rules of conduct (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 70).

Groups will differ from one another through their specific actions but they will all be connected by the rules they have agreed to abide by. As I understand Mouffe's use of the term 'rules' here, it appears to be 'a common identification with a radical democratic interpretation of the principles of liberty and equality' (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 70). The immediate problem we encounter with the use of terms such as 'rules of conduct' and 'principles of liberty and equality' is that Mouffe is not entirely clear on what exactly these terms mean. It appears, based on the rest of her discussion in the essay 'Citizenship and the Political Community' (pp. 60–73 in *The Return of the Political*) that she is using these terms as they are used by various philosophers in the contemporary liberal tradition but she is certainly vulnerable to the charge of a lack of clarity in this passage.

This concept of *societas*, although sophisticated, does not offer a panacea to the liberal/communitarian argument. Charles Taylor agrees with Mouffe that rights are tied to obligations and this is the cement that might (and often does) hold citizens together in modern democracies (Taylor (1985) in Open University 2003: 3.2:8).



But where might such obligations occur when Mouffe claims there are conflicting and competing forms of democratic citizenship? This leads to difficulties on two fronts. Firstly, who are we to view as citizens (if there are competing forms and, by extension, definitions of citizenship) in order to make and require these obligations Mouffe alludes to? Secondly, is an adherence or attachment to agreed rules a very tenuous connection on which to base a conception of citizenship? Could Mouffe be open here to the same criticism MacIntyre levels against liberals generally of providing insufficient quantities of cement to bond people together into a society of citizens?

In summary, exploration of the tensions within the liberal conception of citizenship (as defined by Rawls) have implication on how citizenship education is facilitated in Further and adult education. This can be summed up neatly by the 'equality and diversity' agenda that is so important currently within colleges and other centres of post-compulsory education. Is citizenship education a means of advocating the reasonable pluralism described by Rawls in *Political Liberalism* as part of celebrating diversity? If so, is there sufficient attachment to the nation (and the college?) for citizenship education to have any meaning in terms of equal rights (for example) in a particular body politic? These are the tensions to be found in any exploration of citizenship education for the sector and liberal conceptions of citizenship only partly answer such questions. Critics of liberal theory, such as MacIntyre and Mouffe, are equally important in the conceptualisation of citizenship in the context of further and adult education and these two thinkers will be analysed in detail in the succeeding chapters.

## **2.4 Citizenship Within Further and Adult Education: Different Traditions, Different Perspectives**

The concept of citizenship advocated in this book is one of 'active' citizenship. By using the term 'active citizenship', I am extending the idea of citizenship beyond the purely legal definitions (the entitlement of people to vote in national or local elections, access certain welfare and health services, or obtain a particular passport) to include an ability to engage in deliberation on potentially controversial issues, identify the key ethical and moral implications of these issues, acknowledge how consensus can be problematic in contemporary democracies (where different comprehensive conceptions of the good are an integral part), and develop the capacity for rigorous questioning of policies and practices. I argue that active citizenship (from the perspective of citizenship in further and adult education) is best interpreted and analysed through the lens of two different traditions that form a significant part of post-compulsory education in England (the 'apprenticeship tradition' in further education and the 'self-help tradition' in adult education).

Active citizenship can be effectively facilitated in further education by exploring the idea of citizenship-in-practices. As seen earlier in this chapter, MacIntyre's and Sennett's conceptions of a practice involve the pursuit and attainment of the

excellences integral to such practices. The definition of active citizenship above can be fruitfully facilitated and investigated within the vocational courses students enroll onto because each trade and craft has ethical, moral and cultural issues that form part of that practice. Such investigations widen the vocational curriculum beyond the 'instrumentalist' version currently prevalent (as seen in Chap. 4) and enable active citizenship to be relevant to students by embedding forms of 'reasonable' deliberation (where respect and equality amongst the participants is crucial), rigorous questioning of social norms, the use of collaboration (as a teaching and learning strategy), and the identification of key ethical issues within the actual course students have enrolled upon (rather than studying citizenship as a separate subject).

In terms of adult education, I will argue that citizenship education has been exemplified through the self-help tradition where adult students have striven to take control of their education (often against the apathy or opposition of the state). Adult students throughout the centuries have embodied active citizenship in their attempts to create and maintain educational structures that best serve their desire for learning. These attempts, whilst not always directly oppositional to the government of the time, do portray aspects of agonistic citizenship identified by Mouffe in her depiction of disenfranchised or oppressed groups in society (as discussed in more detail in Chap. 6). The skills associated with active citizenship (as I have defined it) will be similar in adult education to further education (highlighted above). The implications for teachers in further and adult education regarding the facilitation of these skills will be developed in Chaps. 4 and 6.

In this sense, citizenship education is thus a dynamic between content and process. Bernard Crick neatly summaries this when he speaks of five 'procedural values' associated with citizenship education: 'freedom, toleration, fairness, respect for truth [and] respect for reasoning' (Crick 1999, p. 337). Citizenship education, for Crick, is where '[students] as well as teachers must have some freedom to choose what issues to explore and discuss' (Crick 1999, p. 344). In this sense, content and process within citizenship education is one where the 'procedural values' outlined by Crick are there so debate can take place in a (hopefully) respectful way. The controversial issues discussed (be they of an ethical, moral, social or cultural nature) will need to be explored using the skills and motivations of active citizenship I have just highlighted above. The relationship between content and process in citizenship education is, therefore, inevitably problematic. It needs to be acknowledged that debate and deliberation in citizenship education is not morally 'free' (in the sense that any subject or issue can be raised without respect for or sensitivity to the participants involved). The point regarding what is 'reasonable' to discuss within the deliberative forums of further and adult education will be investigated in detail in Chap. 7 (with particular emphasis on Rawls's definition of 'the reasonable').

A key question of concerns is: can citizenship education become a viable aspect of post-compulsory education in the early twenty-first century, and what would an appropriate conception of citizenship for this context look like?

In succeeding chapters, I will try to answer this question through an exploration of the different traditions that exist within further and adult education and how interpretations of citizenship affect the ways we might view citizenship education within these contexts. My approach is to consider what might be the realistic and creative means of incorporating citizenship in further and adult education programmes, drawing on the various conceptual issues and perspectives on the notion of citizenship developed within political philosophy. It is possible, for instance, to see how communitarian thinkers such as MacIntyre (particularly in *After Virtue*) can provide links between vocational education and citizenship through his description of traditions exemplified through excellence in practices. The pertinence (or otherwise) of this idea when applied to the craft or guild traditions will be explored, especially in terms of the question of whether the concept of apprenticeship, as currently understood in vocational education and training, has any connection back to the guilds' understanding of the term (as described by Richard Sennett in *The Craftsman* (2009)). In this context, it is important to consider whether terms like 'practice' and 'community' (which are crucial for MacIntyre in his evocation of citizenship) have anything like the same meaning or application when interpreted within contemporary pluralist societies, such as those spoken of in Rawls's *Political Liberalism*. If much of the historical resonance of 'community' and 'tradition' has been lost in the pursuit of modern liberal individualism, as MacIntyre certainly suggests it has, can we even begin to use concepts like 'citizen' or 'practice' in the way MacIntyre elucidates them when we begin speaking of current vocational education and its possible implications for citizenship education? Is MacIntyre nostalgic in his evocation of a world (largely lost) where education was achieved through the gradual acquisition of excellence under the supervision of master craftsmen or is this tradition more dynamic, resilient and adaptable (as Sennett, at times, suggests that it is)?

Discussion of the conception of the political community and the status of its members is also pertinent in relation to the procedural and managerial aspects of further education, for example the current development of 'Student Voice' in further education colleges. This mechanism for gauging and articulating student demands and needs has not been sufficiently problematised by either the institutions themselves or the government (through the aegis of OfSTED). How, for instance, are the rules and procedures within 'Student Voice' crafted to ensure a fair opportunity for all students to participate in the process? In truth, current practice displays a plethora of methods, forums and representations in terms of how FE colleges manage their affairs, and this could be seen as reflective of broader conceptions, on the macro level, of how citizens fulfil their various roles as members of a pluralistic liberal state. One way in which one could draw clear and coherent links between a political conception of the citizen in a liberal state and the way in which this conception is supported and nurtured within further and adult education is through the adaptation of particular decision-making theories across the areas of citizenship, community and college governance. The theoretical position of deliberative democracy could serve as one such example. Joshua Cohen, a leading

theorist within this tradition, defines the ‘ideal deliberative procedure’ in terms that can apply to many institutions (including FE colleges):

democracy, on the deliberative view, is not exclusively a form of politics; it is a framework of social and institutional arrangements that . . . facilitate free reasoning among equal citizens [and] tie the authorization to exercise public power . . . to such public reasoning (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 186).

Cohen’s ‘ideal deliberative procedure’ is a sophisticated version of such deliberation, a means of ensuring that decisions are arrived at through a fair process that values the participants as equal citizens. Cohen could easily be describing the diversity one finds in the student population of any FE college:

A deliberative democracy is a pluralistic association. The members have diverse preferences, convictions and ideals concerning the conduct of their own lives. While sharing a commitment to the deliberative resolution of problems of collective choice . . . they also have divergent aims, and do not think that some particular set of preferences, convictions or ideals is mandatory (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 346).

I shall look in greater detail in Chap. 7 at how Cohen’s version of deliberative democracy might enhance both the decision-making processes of colleges and, by extension, create a greater sense for students, staff and other important groups of having powerful voices within these institutions. Cohen’s procedure can serve as an important element within a robust conception of citizenship education, which can only benefit from the links made between programmes of study and college governance.

When we turn to the perspective of citizenship in adult education (in distinction from further education defined as vocational education for young people) it is the political philosophy of Chantal Mouffe that offers, perhaps, the richest critique of how citizenship education is currently determined and how it could be reinterpreted according to her analysis of both liberalism and civic republicanism. As we have already seen, Mouffe does not disregard Rawlsian liberalism out of hand – she respects the emphasis this form of liberalism places on rights, for example. However, Mouffe is highly sceptical of the consensual line often taken by Rawls (in his evocation of the overlapping consensus, for instance). Mouffe believes oppressed and under-represented groups need to take a confrontational view of their relationships with those in power as a means of establishing their own voice and opportunities to influence policy and debate. We will see in Chap. 6 how oppressed groups (the working class, women, ethnic minorities) set up and established their own forms of education often in direct opposition to Government and other influential sources of educational power and control. This tradition of ‘self-help’, the creation of institutions of learning by learners themselves, can be seen (on some levels at least) as an example of Mouffe’s philosophy in action. These are people often disenfranchised or denied access to forms of legal, social or financial redress who take responsibility for their own education in situations where dominant groups (be they ministers, legislators, civil servants or others) see their education as incidental or unimportant. It is Mouffe’s evocation of radical democratic citizenship, of groups working together to create channels of political influence and social

respect, that matches closely (though not without difficulties of interpretation at times) with a certain history of adult education in England over the past two centuries. Where Mouffe differs from a thinker like Young (in terms of group identity and citizenship) is in her belief that groups will coalesce and collaborate for only relatively short periods of time before their different conceptions of the good eventually lead to separation and new forms of configuration. In this sense too, Mouffe's thinking mirrors the history of radical organisations within adult education from the early nineteenth century onwards.

## 2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the theme of citizenship from two perspectives. Firstly, by looking at the liberal/communitarian debate over identity, I argued that Rawls's original position is vulnerable to attacks from communitarian critics (Sandel and MacIntyre particularly) as well as philosophers sympathetic to Rawls (Nussbaum) on the issue of how agents are supposed to draw up principles of justice. This removal of cultural or political narratives from the original position does leave the question of whether agents have sufficient personal identity to make decisions on principles of justice as prospective citizens, for who are they making decisions for and based on what backgrounds of thought? Rational choice theory is not enough for a political settlement existing in perpetuity. By itself, Rawls's version of liberalism is not enough to give a sufficiently robust conception of citizenship in the context of further and adult education. I have thus critiqued Rawls through writers sympathetic, in greater or lesser degrees, towards either the communitarian and civic republican traditions, arguing that MacIntyre and Mouffe are most able (of those thinkers under discussion in this chapter) to debate Rawls's prioritising of the right and the necessity for common attachment to a particular good in establishing viable political communities. This is especially the case when the debate is aimed at citizenship and democracy in further and adult education.

I have also started to explore how these issues in political philosophy relate particularly to further and adult education, arguing that different aspects of the liberal/communitarian divide offer different perspectives on the study of citizenship in the sector – particularly MacIntyre's concept of a practice (when looking at the apprenticeship tradition in Chap. 4) and Mouffe's agonistic interpretation of active democracy (when looking at the self-help tradition in Chap. 6). By taking each tradition in turn and relating it to a specific area of post-compulsory education (further education and the apprenticeship tradition, adult education and the self-help tradition), I will show how a sensitivity to historical traditions linked to sympathetic philosophical frameworks are necessary to envisage a coherent and realistic form of citizenship education for each context.

# Chapter 3

## Further and Adult Education: An Overview of Citizenship

### 3.1 The Crick Reports: Citizenship Education in the Compulsory and Post-Compulsory Sectors

The demand for citizenship education to form part of the National Curriculum reached its peak with the publication of *Education for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in schools* (often referred to in shorthand as ‘The Crick Report’). The primary aim of the report was nothing less ‘than a change in the political culture of this country both nationally and locally’ (QCA 1998, p. 7). The perceived lack of interest in politics amongst young people was highlighted as a major concern that citizenship education would try to revive and renew. According to Crick, ‘only 21 % of young people claimed to ‘support’ a political party and 55 % said they never read a newspaper’ (QCA 1998, p. 15). Education was seen by Crick as one way to promote ‘active citizenship’:

We firmly believe that volunteering and community involvement are necessary conditions of civil society and democracy. Preparation for these, at the very least, should be an explicit part of education ... Active citizens are as political as they are moral; moral sensibility derives in part from political understanding; political apathy spawns moral apathy (QCA 1998, p. 10).

The Department for Education and Employment accepted Crick’s findings to the extent of publishing a National Curriculum handbook for citizenship at Key Stages 3 and 4 to take effect from 2002 (DfEE 1999) – citizenship had thus made its entry onto the 11–16 curriculum. But what of those students in the post-compulsory sector<sup>1</sup> (FE colleges and other sections of lifelong learning) who are either very

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<sup>1</sup>The post-compulsory sector encompasses a broad range of education that takes place outside of schools and universities. For convenience, I have categorized this sector into ‘further education’ and ‘adult education’. My use of the term ‘further education’ in this book (to reiterate from the Introduction) concerns full-time vocational programmes for 16–19 year olds in FE colleges and work-based apprenticeships. It does not cover (for instance) the wide range of vocational courses

close to voting age or already eligible to vote? Crick was reasonably clear on the need for citizenship education to encompass these learners too. The report states:

although beyond the age of 16 there is no National Curriculum, the Secretary of State should consider how the proposed entitlement to citizenship education should continue for all students involved in post-16 education and training regardless of their course of study, vocational or academic (QCA 1998, p. 23).

Crick attempted to elucidate how citizenship could be incorporated into post-16 programmes with the report *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds In Education and Training* (FEFC 2000). The report acknowledged the importance of issues around citizenship for students in further education by stating:

we must always keep in mind that in the 16–19 age group we are dealing with young adults most of whom either directly or indirectly (through courses aiming at higher education) are moving towards the world of work, and that they have options at every turn; even the option to drop out. There is work, there is life in general (including home, family, friendships, sport and leisure), but there is also Citizenship. Citizenship is a vital link between work and life, as it is, indeed, between education and employment. (FEFC 2000, p. 4).

What is immediately apparent here is the explicit connection between citizenship and employment – that students in further education are more likely to navigate communal and political debate through the medium of their chosen work routes and goals. In Chap. 4, I will be looking at the ‘apprentice tradition’ where I will explore how citizenship education should be incorporated into vocational education as a means of addressing the social and ethical aspects of particular crafts, professions and trades. The importance of citizenship education in this context is to counter what Rennie Johnston has called

the dominant discourse of Lifelong Learning shaped by the economic imperative, framed very much in terms of human capital and concerned with the ‘economic individual’ (Johnston 1999, p. 176).

The conception of citizenship presented will be twofold. I will identify a conception of citizenship around vocational education (with particular focus on 16–19 year olds) that will use the ideas of Richard Sennet and Alasdair MacIntyre on the social aspects of given practices that go beyond a purely economic explanation of trades or crafts. In its place will be a presentation of vocational education that acknowledges the social and ethical perspectives within trades and crafts (particularly as part of given communities).

The second conception applies more closely to adult education – as with vocational education, the economic imperative of lifelong learning is challenged

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including adult apprenticeships, pre-vocational courses (for students studying vocational courses in schools) or job-related training for young people and adults on social security benefits. Further education, as traditionally conceived, is a diverse area of English education. My use of the term is restrictive, for the purposes of this book. Adult education, as I have conceived it, comprises courses for students aged 19 and over that are not necessarily driven by qualifications (although many have qualifications attached to them) and are taught in a variety of locations under the auspices of FE colleges, Local Authorities, and non-governmental organisations.

but from a different perspective. Because adult education is not always centred on training in a craft or profession (and is often recreational in focus), a conception of citizenship as ‘active’, in the sense of following a notion of citizenship that the student actively identifies with (as opposed to the ‘reasonable’ model often advocated by government programmes on citizenship in adult education) will be presented. The work of Chantal Mouffe is particularly pertinent in this context, with her ideas on ‘agonistic citizenship’. We shall see how this connects with adult education’s ‘self-help tradition’ as part of Chap. 6.

As Huddleston and Unwin point out, further education has ‘traditionally provided vocational education for jobs in engineering, construction, business, hairdressing and health, on both a part-time and full-time basis’ (Huddleston and Unwin 1997, p. 5). Training students for vocational roles is what further education colleges do best. But what impact might this have on citizenship within the sector? *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds* recommends that ‘Citizenship should be acknowledged as a Key Life Skill and should be given its proper place alongside the six *Key Skills* identified already’ (FEFC 2000, p. 7). We will explore the role of Key Skills in a moment but this proposal is certainly ambitious in what is often an over-crowded curriculum (especially on full-time programmes).

The report goes on to list seven key roles that students in further education are likely to perform involving aspects of citizenship: community member, consumer, family member, lifelong learner, taxpayer, voter and worker (FEFC 2000, p. 37). It is within these roles that likely citizenship scenarios could involve college students in realistic ways, exploring specific issues from various perspectives. This accords well with other vested interests in the sector who argue ‘Effective citizenship relies heavily on young people learning and practising skills, and then applying them appropriately to different types of citizenship activity’ (LSIS 2009, p. 6). But how exactly could further education colleges incorporate citizenship into the various vocational courses that they offer (as *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds* suggests)? One method adopted by colleges is to take a cross-curricular approach to citizenship – this is how Hull College decided to explore citizenship in a multi-disciplinary way:

Highlights included a “Question Time” event when local councillors were asked challenging questions by an audience of 200 students. In addition students participated in a celebration event, held at the Guildhall, Hull. BTEC National Performing Arts students performed emotive dance pieces; Foundation Tracks Business students produced a thought-provoking rap; and students from the areas of Childcare, Health and Social Care, Construction, and Art and Design displayed art work, sculptures, models, PowerPoints, photographs and poster work. (LSN 2006, p. 29).

However, it is only through a robust conception of citizenship education that such activities can have significant meaning for the students involved. It is by understanding how citizenship is informed through the notion of a practice (and how this practice relates to other practices) that genuine cross-curricular exploration of citizenship can take place in further education. For this to happen, Dance students (for example) need to be aware of how dance is conceived and perceived in different cultures and different times. Otherwise, the enterprise is worthy but, ultimately,



tokenistic. Genuine cross-curricular endeavours around citizenship education are richer when students have already studied and discussed where citizenship relates to their own area of the further education curriculum.

Are political philosophers amenable to Hull College's approach to citizenship? Michael Walzer's 'spheres of justice' offers promise, at least on the surface. He writes: 'The critical distributive problem in the sphere of education is to make children commoners of learning without destroying what is uncommon about them' (Walzer 1983, p. 216). Taking a cross-college approach to citizenship (by exploring citizenship across the institution whilst maintaining the different resources and perspectives unique to each separate vocational area or discipline), it could be argued, addresses the common/uncommon dichotomy highlighted by Walzer. He takes a pragmatic view to citizenship within the curriculum:

Nor is it the case, as some educational radicals have argued, that democracy itself is impossible without a public program of political education. Democracy is in danger only if such a program is organized undemocratically, not if it isn't organized at all (Walzer 1983, p. 209).

While this has the virtue of being free from dogmatism, it does leave us with the query: how could a programme that calls itself 'citizenship education' *not* be organised in a democratic fashion and still remain as an *effective* form of citizenship education? Surely the label implies some kind of methodology (or pedagogy) that facilitates and incorporates democratic practices within it. As highlighted above, citizenship education (in both further and adult education) is more than simply a set of skills or understandings. For citizenship to work in either context, the institutions in which citizenship education is delivered need to encourage and encompass active citizenship in the form of democratic participation and governance. Citizenship education without democratic educational institutions is only a halfhearted attempt at citizenship - the subject is nothing more than Personal, Health and Social Education by another name (citizenship education and college governance is investigated in more detail in Chap. 7). Walzer is on stronger ground when he speaks of the citizen as a person who 'respects himself [sic] as someone who is able, when his principles demand it, to join in the political struggle, to cooperate and compete in the exercise and pursuit of power.' (Walzer 1983, p. 310). The examples of political expression in the Hull College project offer hope that students, after completing their respective college courses, would have the necessary confidence to 'cooperate and compete in the exercise and pursuit of power'. This approach mirrors, to some extent, the practice in City of Bristol College where 'A citizenship steering group – with representatives from different faculties and senior management – has helped to raise awareness of citizenship across the college' (QCA [n.d.], p. 1). Where City of Bristol College falls down is in its lack of student participation in such a steering group – surely necessary if the college is to fulfil the 'democratic' part of Walzer's demands of citizenship education. As Walzer advocates, education is itself a sphere of justice, and if educational institutions are to raise the issue of democracy within their orbit, then this should be done democratically, with representative voices from the student body throughout the process.

### 3.2 Where Might Citizenship Education Fit into Current Further Education Courses?

What of the prospects for citizenship within individual subject or vocational areas within further education? Do curricula in the sector offer the flexibility and freedom to explore political and community issues within their parameters? The introduction of new specialised diplomas (often referred to simply as ‘The Diploma’) for the 14–19 age range in England over the past few years has provided the hope that citizenship could be facilitated within single programmes. QCA itself has acknowledged the need to address citizenship within Diploma courses and writes:

One area that offers a lot of potential opportunities for Diploma learners is citizenship. All Diplomas provide opportunities for citizenship links at varying levels, for example the public services Diploma makes a lot of obvious links, as does society, health and development. Other Diplomas may not make such obvious links but still have a lot to offer and much will depend on how consortia/centres have chosen to develop their curricula (QCA 2009).

Diplomas have, as an integral aspect of each, what are referred to as Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) and it is within these that citizenship might have a role to play. The Framework for PLTS consists of six categories: independent enquirers, creative thinkers, reflective learners, team workers, self managers and effective participators. According to AQA and City and Guilds, ‘The Framework of Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills 11–19 ... are essential to success in learning, life and work’ (AQA/City and Guilds 2009a, p. 10). For each of these categories, there is a potential seed in which citizenship might grow if given adequate heat, water and light. For instance, in the ‘creative thinkers’ category there is the assessment criterion ‘question own and others’ assumptions’; in ‘team workers’, there is the need to ‘co-operate with others to work towards common goals’ (AQA/City and Guilds 2009a, pp. 10–11). As the Diploma (at Level 1, for example) devotes 60 Guided Learning Hours (GLH) to Project work, it is certainly not inconceivable in a Creative and Media Diploma (to take one instance) for students to explore citizenship as a theme – this could be a multi-media presentation of an outstanding issue (say, the impact of young people’s voices on local or national decision-making). A project around the theme of citizenship here would clearly cover most if not all the PLTS assessment criteria. The focus on citizenship might prove more problematic in a Diploma such as Hair and Beauty Studies where it is less immediately obvious. Although Hair and Beauty Studies (like all Diplomas) follows the same PLTS criteria, it would require considerable creativity and innovation on the lecturer’s part to incorporate citizenship into such a programme whilst retaining the sense of relevancy that is vital if students on these particular courses are to remain engaged and enthused. I am mindful of not falling into the ‘vocational fallacy’ (where it is assumed students on certain vocational courses are only prepared to follow studies that are narrowly formulated to that particular craft or skill) but, nevertheless, the link still has to be made at some point, if only so the students themselves can draw connections between craft and

community. This is in an attempt to counteract what Hager and Hyland describe as ‘the traditionally, and dysfunctionally, separated domains of general and vocational education’ (Hager and Hyland in Blake et al. 2003, p. 285).

The danger is that colleges will follow the path of least resistance in order to accommodate some form of community engagement that does not expose students to a real engagement with citizenship programmes. The movement *away* from citizenship education in colleges, I argue, is already contained in ‘The Crick Report’ when it states:

We believe that the establishment of a framework and specific learning outcomes for citizenship education in schools should lead colleges to develop a coherent programme of enrichment activities (QCA 1998, p. 28).

What constitutes ‘enrichment activities’ in colleges is often very wide indeed. Generally speaking, enrichment programmes involve participation in activities or pursuits not traditionally seen as part of further education courses or curricula – examples usually include team sports, music events, leisure trips or outings, festivals celebrating cultural diversity, and links with business or community groups. Whilst these are all, in themselves, laudable projects that give a greater perspective to learning and life for students in further education, to follow Crick and incorporate citizenship into this kaleidoscope of activity is, I fear, to eventually lose it. What citizenship within enrichment programmes does not have (which it potentially does have in Diploma courses, for instance) is a sense of coherence or purpose. This is not to abuse or undermine in any way the many excellent efforts made by colleges in recent years to encourage a sense of ‘the learner voice’ through student governors, student parliaments and regular student meetings with senior or departmental managers (indeed, as discussed in Chap. 7, these innovations need to be reinforced and extended). *The Foster Report* (2005) called for a significant increase in the participation of students in the administration of colleges: ‘Colleges ... will be expected to develop and implement strategies for involving learners ... We expect learners to play a key role in institutional governance, with each governing body including at least two learner governors’ (DfES 2005, p. 37).

The movement towards an increased ‘learner voice’ in colleges indicates that further education has heeded, in part, the advice of Foster. This, however, does not imply a coherent strategy towards citizenship education in colleges. Too often parliaments, boards of governors and councils will only engage those students who are interested in the mechanisms of representation, the chance to trade opinions in committees. If we allow citizenship to remain within the auspices of ‘enrichment’, it will frequently be the case that students who are reticent about engaging in ‘official’ forums will avoid contact with the ‘learner voice’. David Lefrançois and Marc-Andre Ethier have argued:

The requirement of inclusiveness (or of equal participation) is most often difficult to produce in public debates. Certain people may be incapable of participating due to lack of information or education, while others may exclude themselves voluntarily due to lack of interest or time (Lefrançois and Ethier 2007, p. 3).

It is only through the integration of citizenship into current taught courses that *all* students are likely to feel confident enough to explore the wider political, social and community issues that affect their lives. There is often considerable scope for addressing these issues through an extensive tutorial programme or scheme-of-work and this could provide an alternative for courses that (unlike Diplomas) do not currently encompass PLTS as part of the syllabus. Indeed, there are already excellent personal tutors in further education who are following this path but, without co-ordination, the provision is inevitably patchy.

In spite of the acknowledgment that Diplomas do have the potential (in given instances) of encompassing citizenship into their programmes, the scope is still far less comprehensive than citizenship as part of the National Curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4. Even with QCA's endorsement of citizenship inside Diplomas, there are plenty of opportunities for partial or complete avoidance based on current (albeit very newly-developed) practice. Citizenship is only a *suggested* way of incorporating PLTS into Diploma programmes – there is no mention of it being compulsory. We also encounter, from a post-compulsory perspective, the age-old issue of 'embedding' – are lecturers and tutors whose subject specialism is Health and Social Care or the Built Environment or Hair and Beauty Studies expected to incorporate citizenship into their vocational programmes and where is the appropriate training for this? Further education does not have teachers specialising in citizenship education (with the exception of those colleges that offer Citizenship at GCSE and A level) and it seems unfair and inappropriate for vocational teachers to be expected to cover this aspect of the Diploma syllabus without support. One suspects that the delivery around citizenship will be patchy at best, reliant upon the creativity, innovation and passion of FE teachers going against the grain and going that extra mile (if I be allowed to mix metaphors). Awarding bodies such as AQA and City and Guilds do offer examples of schemes-of-work to support tutors preparing for the introduction of Diplomas into schools and colleges.

I looked at the scheme-of-work for the Creative and Media at Level 2 (as one of the more likely places to encounter citizenship elements within the suite of Diploma programmes). There are five schemes: 'Exploring Creativity' (Unit 1), 'Creating Inspiration/Creating Possibilities' (Units 2 and 3), 'Discovering Creative Potential' (Unit 4), 'Developing a Creative Response' (Unit 5) and 'Creative Teamwork/Promotion and Review' (Units 6 and 7) (AQA/City and Guilds 2009b). Of these schemes, it was only 'Creating Inspiration/Creating Possibilities' that showed any real potential for wider political and social issues with its emphasis on the study and analysis of Eddie Izzard, *Alice in Wonderland* and Buñuel's *L'Age D'Or*, perhaps by asking how students could explore the ways surrealism reinforces or contravenes contemporary systems of morality. On the evidence of this (albeit very small) sample, it is difficult to concur with the QCF's upbeat view on citizenship within the Diploma. If awarding bodies themselves are not offering support with this element, then there is little likelihood of vocational lecturers getting it elsewhere. As Osler and Starkey have acknowledged, 'some teachers remain ... anxious about the extension of student democracy and student voice'

(Osler and Starkey 2004, p. 152). Without the necessary backing from awarding bodies and others, vocational teachers delivering Diplomas are likely to avoid issues around citizenship for fear of treading a lone curriculum path into areas where they do not feel fully confident.

At least citizenship is acknowledged within Diploma programmes but, in the first tranche of five subject areas, only 12,000 students took these courses (BBC 2008) and, as we shall see in a moment, the future of the Diplomas themselves are bleak. What of the hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of post-compulsory students who *do not* enrol onto Diploma programmes – what happens to *their* citizenship provision? According to Tarrant ‘the focus of PCET [Post-Compulsory Education and Training] is too narrow: it aims to produce the worker, not the democratic citizen or the thinker, as though these were mutually exclusive’ (Tarrant 2001, p. 374). Whilst this is not always strictly true (there are vocational courses and teachers who do choose to investigate the perceived boundaries between the workplace and society) it is often the case that, in the push to meet Key Skills targets for Communication and Application of Number, the exploration of the Wider Key Skills (where citizenship might be investigated) are quietly diminished or forgotten completely. This runs against the very proposals set out in *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds* where, if anything, the demand was for an increase in the Wider Key Skills (through the inclusion of citizenship): ‘we firmly conclude that Citizenship should be recognised as a new and explicit *Key Skill*, not simply a plausible implication from the existing *Key Skills*’ [emphasis in the original] (FEFC 2000, p. 6). This proposal never fully materialised due to the low store set on Wider Key Skills across most colleges in further education. The advent of Functional Skills might improve this situation although, judging by the pilot schemes initiated by City & Guilds (for example), there appears to be a focus still on demonstrating competence in very specific literacy and numeracy skills rather than the ability to investigate literacy and numeracy within wider social projects (see City and Guilds 2009). It is within the realm of project work that FE students are more likely to have the space and time to explore issues around citizenship – in this context Functional Skills have the same potential as the Diploma. Although Functional Skills will emphasise problem-solving skills, the assessment is almost all exam-based which is likely to be a barrier to project work. One fears in this an echo of what Apple has described as ‘the calculus of values [that] are now in place in the regulatory state, efficiency, speed, and cost control replac[ing] more substantive concerns about social and educational justice’ (Apple 2006, p. 73). There appears to be worryingly little room in the current format of Functional Skills to explore citizenship (or other important social issues). To reiterate the thoughts of Tarrant, vocational students are coaxed towards being literate and numerate workers rather than confident citizens.

Unfortunately, the Diplomas have already been abandoned (after being given such a short period in which to establish themselves) as a significant qualification for 14–19 year olds by the present Conservative/Liberal Democrat administration. As reported by Rachel Williams in *The Guardian*,

The government will save £22.2 million by pulling the plug on academic diplomas being developed in humanities, science and languages and scaling back promotion and support for existing vocational diplomas in other subjects. The move is part of a drive towards a more traditional exam system (Williams 2010).

So the opportunity for Diplomas to have any genuine impact in regards to citizenship on full-time further education programmes is effectively over. The only vaguely positive note is that many of the non-Diploma vocational programmes (such as the BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Art and Design) do cater for the assessment of PLTS in 'a sector-related context' (Edexcel 2009, p. 14). The BTEC specification does 'map' PLTS opportunities for each of the units covered, although these tend to be generic and do not have the context or purpose that we found with the some of the Diploma specifications. For example, in Unit 13 of the Edexcel programme, 'Working with Interactive Media Briefs', we see 'adapting ideas to changing circumstances' for the 'creative thinkers' part of PLTS and 'managing discussions to reach agreements and achieve results' for the 'team workers' aspect (Edexcel 2009, p. 179). Whilst it has to be acknowledged that citizenship education is not a specific part of the brief for the BTEC course, there is little to encourage or inspire teachers or students to want to explore citizenship themes in Art and Design based on these bland statements. Although PLTS skills are covered, as far as citizenship education is concerned, this is a step backwards. Indeed, the terrain of further education is continually shifting. With the publication of the *The Wolf Report* (2011), the very future of Functional Skills is also open to debate. In the ninth recommendation of her report, Alison Wolf states:

Students who are under 19 and do not have GCSE A\*-C in English and/or Maths should be required, as part of their programme, to pursue a course which either leads directly to these qualifications, or which provide significant progress towards future GCSE entry and success. The latter should be based around other Maths and English qualifications which have demonstrated substantial content and coverage; and Key Skills should not be considered a suitable qualification in this context (DfE 2011, p. 15).

Such an influential recommendation does not bode well for Functional Skills as a serious subject of study in further education colleges in the near future. If Key Skills (or its successor, Functional Skills) are not considered suitable for students under 19, and colleges decide to adopt GCSEs instead, what are the implications for citizenship education for students required to study GCSEs as part of their learning programmes? If we look at the current course specifications for GCSE English with the AQA examination board (for instance), we find that the situation for citizenship within GCSEs is not dissimilar to that of Key Skills. The main opportunities for citizenship are within Unit 1 (Understanding and producing non-fiction texts) and Unit 2 (Speaking and Listening). In the Unit 1 AQA English/English Language paper for January 2011, there are questions around Jamie Oliver and 'healthy dinners', a charity webpage 'Sponsor a girl today', writing a letter to a headteacher explaining how to improve your school or college, and creating a leaflet to persuade young people in the area to take part in a sponsored event for charity (AQA 2011). Whilst it is undeniable that a creative English teacher, together with motivated students, could use such material to explore citizenship in a detailed and engaging

way, there is a distinctly apolitical feel to the content of the paper, a sense which is broadly in line with the National Curriculum on Citizenship at Key Stage 4. This is not to deny the usefulness and value in encouraging students to use language for the purposes of persuading people to join a charity or analysing the performance of their school or college, but there is little opportunity to explore the underlying political issues that embed all voluntary organisations and educational institutions. In Unit 2 of the AQA qualification, the component that addresses speaking-and-listening, the pattern largely remains the same.

According to the subject specification, students are invited to ‘listen to a speech extract on television and represent its main points and biases’, ‘deliver a speech to a wider audience’, ‘undertake a problem-solving exercise which is relevant to the local community’, and ‘perform as a pair a media interview on a relevant issue, such as child welfare’ (AQA 2009). On the surface, from a citizenship point-of-view, the speaking-and-listening seems to offer promise. Certainly, there is encouragement of debate and the requirement to analyse and critique potentially controversial issues (such as child welfare). The use of role-play in the media interview (for example) means students are certainly engaged much more proactively in the creation of a frame of reference around the issue discussed (which is missing, inevitably, in the Unit 1 examination paper) and allows for actual face-to-face engagement on different perspectives and opinions. Indeed, students are asked to ‘make a range of contributions, using creative approaches to exploring questions, solving problems and developing ideas’ and ‘participate in a range of contexts, including real life uses of talk and audiences beyond the classroom’ (AQA 2009). At one level at least, AQA must be commended on a refreshingly unprescriptive attitude to what constitutes ‘real life’ within the context of the qualification. That said, without a curriculum that is able to place such issues as child welfare within a wider political or social framework, it is difficult for students to see how a debate or media interview on child welfare (to continue the previous example) as part of an English speaking-and-listening assessment might relate to key legislation (the Children’s Act 2004) or the experiences of Victoria Climbié that led to such legislation. It is in hands of creative teachers to draw out the wider themes from these forms of assessment. Although the AQA GCSE English subject specifications are not explicitly addressing citizenship education in the speaking-and-listening component, we can see how parts of it conform to what Gert Biesta and Robert Lawy describe as ‘[t]he idea of citizenship as outcome’ (Biesta and Lawy 2006, p. 72). They go on to say:

[citizenship as outcome] reveals a strong instrumental orientation in the idea of citizenship education. The focus is mainly on the effective means to bring about ‘good citizenship’ rather than on the question what ‘good citizenship’ actually is or might be (Biesta and Lawy 2006, p. 72).

It is important to reiterate again that the AQA English course is not testing for competency, ability or aptitude in citizenship education per se but it can be seen that where there are opportunities to investigate issues that encompass citizenship within the qualification, the instrumental orientation described by Biesta and Lawy is prominent. The way learning is checked is largely outcome-driven and the



assessments do not ask for students (or teachers) to research citizenship themes from the wider political perspectives that would transcend instrumental concerns or viewpoints (as Biesta and Lawy have defined such terms). Perhaps too much is being asked here of the qualification but, as there is no compulsory study of citizenship as part of full-time curricula in further education, if citizenship education is to be of value to these students (as I think it should be), it is vital that opportunities presenting themselves in other subjects to explore citizenship education from a genuinely wide point-of-view (and look at the political, social and cultural pressures forming opinions, attitudes and policies) are taken and are not restricted to assessment outcomes or course specifications that confine debate and discussion. If, indeed, government policy chooses to follow Wolf's recommendations and make GCSE English a necessary subject for full-time students (16–19 year olds) in further education programmes (where they do not have grade 'C' or above already), then GCSE English should address the issue that Key Skills failed to address and take a fundamental look at how language informs and affects students in their ability to perform as active citizens in various contexts. One might even argue that if, as I will suggest, citizenship education should be embedded into vocational courses from a craft or profession-specific angle, then it could be GCSE English's role to draw these discussions into a series of investigations that go beyond the craft-specific towards general themes and concerns around citizenship. However, such ideas must not take away from the fact that, ultimately, GCSE English cannot be a citizenship course in disguise. The citizenship element, in my proposal, would be important but only as a part (and perhaps a small part) of any GCSE English programme.

Citizenship education in further education receives little attention in terms of key government agencies. OfSTED, in its report *Citizenship established?* (2010), stated that 'good practice visits [were] made to a very small number of post-16 providers' [my emphasis] (OfSTED 2010, p. 7) although the report did acknowledge that there was evidence of institutions 'developing a rich and varied range of opportunities for citizenship. These were highly appropriate for the various contexts in which they were working' (OfSTED 2010, p. 7). The report goes on to recommend that post-16 providers should 'in reviewing the curriculum, consider the contribution that citizenship education makes to the institution's broader ambitions' (OfSTED 2010, p. 8). Whilst a laudable aim, such recommendations cannot be fully addressed without support and training for FE teachers in the area of citizenship education (this theme is explored in more detail in Chap. 4). The standards body for teachers in further education, Lifelong Learning UK,<sup>2</sup> is very brief in terms of citizenship education. The teaching standards produced by LLUK in 2007 for teachers in further education (and some providers within adult education), *New overarching professional standards for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector*, only mentions citizenship once in the specifications: 'Use opportunities to highlight the potential for learning to positively transform lives and contribute to

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<sup>2</sup>LLUK ceased to operate from the end of March 2011. Many of its responsibilities have been transferred to the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS).



effective citizenship’ (LLUK 2007, p. 3). The term ‘effective citizenship’ is not explained or defined anywhere in the document for teachers or managers to plan or prepare courses to facilitate such an aim.

### 3.3 What of Citizenship as a Subject in Itself?

What of citizenship as a subject in itself? If it could be incorporated into post-compulsory curricula in some shape or form, what exactly would it look like? Crick identified three strands to the subject of citizenship (in terms of a subject within the National Curriculum): social and moral responsibility; community involvement; and political literacy (QCA 1998, pp. 40–41). Within these strands, three concepts are to be explored: values and dispositions; skills and aptitudes; and knowledge and understanding (QCA 1998, pp. 41–43). If we look at the current citizenship curriculum at Key Stage 4 (the closest, in terms of age range, to post-compulsory students), it is divided into 4 sections: key concepts (democracy and justice, rights and responsibilities, identities and diversity); key processes (critical thinking and enquiry, advocacy and representation, taking informed and responsible action); range and content; and curriculum opportunities (QCA 2007a, pp. 42–48). The National Curriculum for citizenship at Key Stage 4 largely follows Crick although there are some significant omissions and changes. Interestingly, these omissions are mostly in the area of government and politics. Neither electoral systems nor political parties are discussed in the latest version of the National Curriculum (2007) although Crick is quite explicit on the importance of students understanding how such mechanisms and organisations affect the political system itself (QCA 1998, p. 51). There is a danger, with these absences, of educationalists ‘playing safe’ and opting for a scheme of work that focuses on community involvement and social cohesion at the expense of political literacy (it is difficult to see how political literacy can be adequately addressed *without* covering the roles and perspectives of the various political parties). This is in spite of the fact that, according to the National Foundation for Educational Research, ‘the strength of attitudes to and future intentions concerning formal participation levels [for young people] are at levels which support the notion of the ‘democratic deficit’ (NFER 2008, p. 100). If true, this ‘democratic deficit’ can only be exacerbated by the timidity of the National Curriculum – one suspects avoidance of party political issues for fear of bias but surely bias often occurs most strongly where ignorance is dominant. The professionalism of citizenship teachers is likely to ensure that party political subject matter would not descend into party political broadcasts.

Is the supposed ‘democratic deficit’ a sign of apathy and disaffection with politics generally? This would not appear to be the case. The same NFER document states that Year 11 students, for example, ‘are not politically apathetic but they are increasingly aware of politics and its influence’ (NFER 2008, p. 100). This is echoed in the work of Osler and Starkey – in their survey of children they found that

Many of the young people were working collaboratively to solve problems and achieve a just, peaceful and democratic community . . . . Contrary to prevailing stereotypes, the young people we spoke to clearly articulated a sense of belonging and a sense of responsibility that extends beyond local and national horizons (Osler and Starkey 2004, p. 173).

So there does not appear to be, on this evidence at least, disengagement in young people with politics *as such*. The problem is more with the formal political system and perceptions of it. According to Shakuntala Banaji,

the trend [is] for young people to be more suspicious of and unlikely to trust government and formal politics than some older people . . . in the global literature aimed at teaching young people and children civic values, there is an emphasis on conformity rather than on critique, confrontation or challenge (Banaji 2008, p. 557).

The lack of emphasis on political parties in the National Curriculum is thus a lost opportunity. Taught effectively, there is a real possibility that many of the young people disaffected by the party political process but engaged with politics within the community or through single-issues groups could begin to see party politics as something that is relevant and useful to them. Whatever our views on the party political system, it is an important site of public space and citizenship education should be endeavouring to give students the confidence to participate in this space. In this context, Banaji clearly states, ‘there are no easily available, inviting and . . . effective alternatives to established parties and politicians for young people to turn to’ (Banaji 2008, p. 545). The National Curriculum, however, is not giving encouragement to teachers to pursue discussion in this vital area. Many teachers, already concerned over issues around balance and bias, are being nudged towards a quietist route by the silence around political parties within governmental departments or agencies. This silence potentially disempowers students, does nothing to address the ‘democratic deficit’ and goes against the spirit of Crick and *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds*.

That said, I will argue in later chapters that citizenship education (outside, perhaps, of ‘A Level’ Citizenship as part of a Year 12/13 ‘A Level’ programme and, perhaps, particular areas of adult education covered in Chap. 6 as part of the self-help tradition) should not be studied as a separate subject in further education colleges. This is due to the fact that, unlike some of our European neighbours, England does not have a strong sense of general education for students on vocational programmes. Whereas students and apprentices on French and German vocational programmes study *éducation civique* or *Geschichte und Gemeinschaftskunde*, we shall see that (despite several noble attempts over the decades), general education (that encompasses elements of citizenship) for vocational students in England has been notoriously difficult to establish and maintain. There are various reasons for this, including a historic downgrading of vocational education (in comparison to academic education) and, currently, an over-emphasis on vocational education as a set of competencies to demonstrate and fulfil rather than a broader, more holistic concept of craft or profession (This will be covered in detail when we explore the apprenticeship traditions in England (Chap. 4), and in Germany and France (Chap. 5)).

A programme of embedding citizenship issues, topics and themes within specific vocational disciplines is likely to be a more effective way of exploring citizenship in these programmes (as long as vocational teachers receive the appropriate support). This is not to deny that cross-curricula citizenship projects are vital and potentially highly creative (as in Hull or City of Bristol colleges). However, citizenship will have maximum impact where citizenship is seen as a real and integral part of specific vocational courses. I will offer examples through the succeeding chapters on how citizenship might be embedded in curriculum areas as varied as Sport, Hairdressing, Carpentry and Business. Not only does this enable citizenship to be studied and valued in vocational programmes but, I will argue, such studies are an opportunity for vocational programmes to extend their concept of craft and professionalism by encouraging students to investigate the ethical and social aspects of their chosen area of work.

### **3.4 The Apprenticeship and Self-Help Traditions in Further and Adult Education**

It is not possible to discuss the different approaches to citizenship education in further and adult education without some appreciation of the different and sometimes conflicting historical trends that are still reflected in the sector as a whole. These different histories will have implications for citizenship education in both further and adult education. Broadly speaking, we can speak of an ‘apprenticeship’ tradition with regards to further education and a ‘self-help’ tradition in the field of adult education that have evolved over several centuries. The work of Andy Green and Norman Lucas is insightful regarding the exploration of these two traditions. According to them, apprenticeships

[were] organised by independent employers and craftsmen with no public funds and little public regulation. This usually involved on-the-job training with little or no theoretical academic study, and was generally marginalised from mainstream educational provision and low in status. As a voluntary provision made by employers without state regulation, it well suited the dominant liberal philosophy of ‘voluntarism’ in education and training (Green and Lucas 1999, p. 10).

Running parallel to this tradition of apprenticeships was that of ‘self-education’ which, again according to Green and Lucas, was defined as

often organised through small associations and clubs and, on a larger scale, through the institutions of the labour and cooperative movements. In this political tradition, adult education took many different forms – from the common reading circles of working men and women to the Owenite Halls of Science and the ‘schools’ organised by the Chartists (Green and Lucas 1999, p. 10).

What Green and Lucas have highlighted here is the division still running through the heart of further and adult education (in England, at least). Vocational education aimed at 16–19 year olds often sits awkwardly with FE colleges’ remit to adult

learners. This division is often exacerbated through colleges having to answer to different governmental departments and funding agencies. We are currently in such a situation in further education where the sector answers to both the Department for Education and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (the Minister of State for Further Education and Skills is a minister in both governmental departments). I believe the partition of post-compulsory provision (with all its historical links and methodologies) into ‘vocational education’ and ‘adult education’ has had a very real impact on the prospects for citizenship courses in colleges. The most likely effect is that, while some attempts are made to incorporate a very lukewarm form of citizenship through the guise of ‘social inclusion and participation’ within 16–19 full-time vocational courses, adult learners, as has been elucidated above, will rarely have citizenship raised at all on their courses. One of the reasons behind this difference in focus around citizenship is due to the perceived lack of interest and engagement by young people with the democratic process. Yet this is not always borne out by the facts – Shakuntala Banaji has spoken of ‘low voter turnout [as] a phenomenon that affects other age groups [as well as young people]’ (Banaji 2008, p. 544) and that ‘young people in the UK appear to match older peers in [the] desire to communicate, research, debate, inform, suggest ideas, raise funds, protest and volunteer their time to particular causes and actions’ (Banaji 2008, p. 550). Undoubtedly, in spite of Banaji’s findings, the government’s drive to promote democracy amongst young people is one of the primary engines behind the subject of citizenship in school and (possibly) the 16–19 age range at college. I believe, however, there are two other reasons why citizenship is more likely to occur in a college course for 16–19 year olds than one catering for students aged 19-plus. The first reason is that 16–19 year olds are more likely to be in full-time education at a further education college than those aged 19-plus. According to the Learning and Skills Council, in the academic year 2005–2006 it was calculated some 773,457 learners aged 16–18 enrolled on post-compulsory courses compared with 3,068,372 learners aged 19-plus (LSC 2009). It was also calculated that 986,811 learners were enrolled on full-time programmes in further education as against 2,855,018 who were engaged in part-time programmes (LSC 2009). Whilst it has not been possible to get accurate records of exactly how part-time and full-time learner numbers compare across the learner age ranges, it is clear from the figures above that the vast majority of 19-plus learners engage in part-time courses at further education colleges. Due to the fact that time is inevitably limited on a part-time programme, it is often argued that there simply is not space to include citizenship and democracy within these courses. As it is the 19-plus age group that enrolls in significant numbers onto these courses, it is they who invariably miss out – it is perceived as much easier to integrate citizenship (using that concept very broadly, often under the cover of Key Skills or tutorial initiatives) onto full-time A-level, Diploma, BTEC and NVQ programmes. The vast majority of learners on these full-time courses are 16–19 year olds.

The second reason links to teaching and learning strategies within further and adult education. We looked above at the two main traditions that flow into what is now further and adult education – the apprenticeship tradition and the

self-help tradition. These two traditions adopted very different teaching methods with their respective learners. Put crudely, the apprenticeship tradition largely followed pedagogic means of instruction while the self-help tradition often followed something very akin to andragogy. Good practice within colleges over time has seen a convergence of these two traditions but they still have validity when viewing the landscape of citizenship and democracy within the contexts of further and adult education. Put simply, andragogy entails

**The need to know.** adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it ... **The learner's self-concept.** adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions, for their own lives ... **The role of the learners' experiences.** adults come into an educational activity with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience from that of youths ... **Readiness to learn.** adults become ready to learn those things they need to know and be able to do in order to cope effectively with their real-life situations ... **Orientation to learning.** In contrast to children's and youths' subject-centred orientation ... adults are life-centred (or task-centred or problem-centred) in their orientation to learning ... **Motivation.** adults are responsive to some external motivators ... but most potent motivators are internal pressures [italics in the original; emphasis added] (Knowles et al. 2005, pp. 64–68).

These six concepts that make up Knowles's definition of andragogy should not be seen in diametrical opposition to pedagogy. Knowles states: 'what this means in practice [the relationship between the concepts 'pedagogy' and 'andragogy'] is that we educators now have the responsibility to check out which assumptions are realistic in a given situation' (Knowles et al. 2005, p. 69). So pedagogy and andragogy are not necessarily oppositional but they do, nevertheless, involve different and often conflicting assumptions on teaching and learning. Certainly, lecturers who adhere to the self-help tradition within adult education are usually following andragogical as opposed to pedagogical models of classroom practice.

These two traditions of apprenticeship and self-help present different challenges and problems around citizenship in further and adult education. The apprenticeship tradition's clear links to pedagogical practice were tied to the FE lecturer's notion of himself (traditionally, it usually was a *he*) as a trainer or imparter of vocational skills (as opposed to a teacher *per se*). This tradition, whilst considerably eroded with the professionalization of the FE teaching force during the past decade or so, still makes it potentially difficult for vocational teachers with philosophical ties to apprenticeship education from embracing areas such as citizenship. This is what Paul Hager and Terry Hyland have referred to when they speak of 'concentrating on narrow job skills and competencies' (Hager and Hyland in Blake et al. 2003, p. 280). The Crick Report recommends

a coherent programme with appropriate learning outcomes building upon pre-16 school experience and which takes account of the increasing complexity and flexibility of the world of work ... and of the range and comprehensiveness of post-16 courses (QCA 1998, p. 28).

If vocational teachers are given the appropriate guidance, training and support (not currently offered with the Diploma or Key Skills), there are prospects of contextualising (where appropriate) citizenship within vocational courses. This is surely what Crick is arguing for in the quotation above.

The self-help tradition, however, offers its own potentialities and barriers around citizenship in adult education. I have already stated that self-help is amenable to andragogical methods. However, the negotiation required by andragogy (usually considered a strength by educationalists within adult learning) might pose difficulties of its own. We have already seen from Knowles that adult learners, in particular, approach their learning on a 'need to know' basis. What if a lecturer in a conversational Spanish class (for instance) decided to go along a citizenship tack (perhaps investigating, through role-play, how to complain to a public official in Spain or to undertake a class debate on current affairs in basic Spanish) and some of the class decided this was inappropriate or beyond what they had wanted when originally enrolling onto the course? Because adults tend to enrol onto adult education courses for the reasons highlighted in the definition of andragogy above, citizenship education within these courses has the very real question of 'winning over' students who have not chosen to pursue citizenship as such. One suspects that trying to embed citizenship within adult programmes, be they recreational (like the evening Spanish class) or qualification-driven, is unlikely to prove successful unless there is a very obvious point to the use of citizenship in these areas. The more productive route, perhaps, for citizenship education amongst adults is by drawing it closer to the core of self-help tradition through courses that celebrate empowerment and the articulation of community voices.

One of the more interesting developments over recent years has been that of 'adult informal learning'. This is defined by NIACE as

Learning of this kind may occur in the private realms of the family, workplace, cyberspace and the voluntary associations of civil society as well as through the publicly-funded post-compulsory education and training system. Such learning allows people to fulfil their individual potential and aspirations as active members of a democratic society (NIACE 2008, p. 7).

The Adult and Community Learning sector (ACL) is the provision where 'adult informal learning' is likeliest to flourish and where citizenship education can build and develop. Already many charities, non-governmental organisations and community action groups arrange meetings where people meet and brief one another on projects and campaigns that are important to the group. Inevitably, these projects will involve some kind of political, social or community agenda and, I would argue, the seeds are already here to nurture citizenship education through 'informal' methods. Citizenship would not be advertised as a curriculum offer in this context (as it would if offered in colleges) but colleges could play an active role by developing links with these organisations and bodies such as NIACE (National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education) to promote and enhance citizenship studies through existing projects.

The parallel traditions of apprenticeship and self-help in further and adult education can be detected, to some extent, in approaches to citizenship within political philosophy itself. Alasdair MacIntyre, in *After Virtue*, links communities to sets of practices that are passed down from one generation to the next. Practices involve the demonstration of virtues to the extent that 'what education in the virtues teaches me is that my good as a man is one and the same as the good of those others

with whom I am bound up in human community' (MacIntyre 1985 [1981], p. 229). Citizenship could thus be conceived as being part of a community with a shared history and set of virtues exemplified by the steady learning and demonstration of certain practices. As MacIntyre goes on to say

What is distinctive in a practice is in part the way in which conceptions of the relevant goods and ends which the technical skills serve – and every practice does require the exercise of technical skills – are transformed and enriched by these extensions of human powers and by that regard for its own internal goods which are partially definitive of each particular practice or type of practice (MacIntyre 1985 [1981], p. 193).

It is not difficult from here to draw connections with the apprenticeship tradition within further education. For what MacIntyre is relaying, in his historical analysis of the virtues, is partly an account of the master-and-pupil relationship that he traces back at least as far as Homeric Greece. Although MacIntyre believes this tradition is now effectively dead due to the advent of contemporary liberalism ('the barbarians are not waiting beyond the frontiers; they have already been governing us for quite some time' (MacIntyre 1985 [1981], p. 263)), it could be argued that the relationship between master craftsman and apprentice as traditionally conceived in further education has, at the very least, a semblance of the education within practices that MacIntyre describes (this contentious issue will be explored in greater detail in Chap. 4). According to Keith Breen's interpretation of MacIntyre,

The alternative to the liberal state and its associated institutions is a communal politics organized towards the common good. So conceived, politics is an activity 'through which other types of practice are ordered so that individuals may direct themselves towards what is best for them and for their community' (Breen, citing MacIntyre 2005, p. 490).

Citizenship, building on this view, is an extension and culmination of specific roles (or practices) recognised within the community. Politics is a means of creating the environment where these roles can be carried out effectively and cohesively and with the common good in mind. Whilst this is not so far removed from the apprenticeship tradition where on-the-job training is often, still, the norm, what is often lacking in the current forms of this tradition is an exploration of the wider social, ethical or professional issues related to trades. Citizenship education has difficulty finding favour in further education due (partly) to the continued effects of narrow curricula in vocational education.

The potential flaw in MacIntyre's depiction of citizenship is his emphasis on the common good. We have explored in the previous chapter how ideas of the common good are extremely problematic in contemporary democracies where pluralism is the rule rather than the exception. Apprenticeship, as traditionally conceived, was the education into a trade or craft that had evolved over many generations – it would be unfair to call the learning (and the concept of citizenship attached to it) 'static' but it was certainly where

the individual [was] identified and constituted in and through certain of his or her roles, those roles that bind the individual to the communities in and through which alone specifically human goods are to be attained (MacIntyre 1985 [1981], p. 172).



When the idea of common good is challenged, the edifice on which the apprenticeship tradition was erected might be seen as precarious (at least in the way MacIntyre understands the concept of ‘tradition’). Roles and practices, as conceived by MacIntyre, require an agreed set of values and virtues that have communal validation – all (or most) citizens in the community recognise and consider worthwhile the endeavors performed by the practitioners of such crafts (acquired usually through apprenticeship training) and the values implicit in them. However, according to many political philosophers, we are no longer living in political entities where such agreement exists on values, virtues and the common good. As Rawls states in *Political Liberalism*: ‘The political culture of a democratic society is always marked by a diversity of opposing and irreconcilable religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines’ (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 4). Clearly-established roles are much harder to maintain, nationwide, when society is a kaleidoscope of values and identities described by Rawls. The traditions MacIntyre (and others) rely on are simply one set amongst many. There is no longer the shared agreement required for such fixed roles to continue and flourish. It is therefore no surprise that the apprenticeship tradition, as embodying a rich view of human practice with its own internal goods and values, has found it as difficult to survive as MacIntyre’s ‘classical’ communities into the twenty-first century. The concept of citizenship and training embodied in both has been challenged from many sides.

I have discussed earlier in this chapter how different applications of citizenship education are implicit in the apprenticeship tradition within further education (where citizenship-within-practices could be seen as appropriate to vocational programmes) and the self-help tradition in adult education where students have often demonstrated an active form of citizenship in the creation of educational provision outside of government programmes (and often in opposition to such programmes). The self-help tradition has both socialist and libertarian aspects in terms of political philosophy. This is due in no small part to the tradition’s belief in ‘the ... radicalising effects of working-class self-education’ together with the state’s oppositional attitude (in the greater part of the nineteenth-century at least) to ‘radical ... self-education’ (Green and Lucas 1999, p. 11). As Richard Reeves, J. S. Mill’s biographer, reminds us, the 1867 Reform Act (some 45 years after the original Reform Act) ‘had the effect of adding a million voters, doubling the size of the electorate’ (Reeves 2008, p. 386) but still left millions without the basic citizenship rights needed in order to be able to vote. It is this aspect of conflict that makes links between the self-help tradition and Chantal Mouffe potentially fruitful. Mouffe is a particularly important theorist when looking at the self-help tradition because of her stance on conflicting views of citizenship in modern societies. Whilst MacIntyre’s vision of citizenship requires citizens to largely share a comprehensive conception of the good for a community to evolve and flourish, Mouffe regards citizenship (especially for those groups in society who have been oppressed, neglected or disenfranchised) as one of opposition and struggle between different conceptions of the good. For Mouffe, citizens take an active role by challenging the norms and orthodoxies linked to power in the state. One could argue (in Mouffe’s conception) that citizens help define the very act of citizenship



by challenging the state in this way. We can link the thinking of Mouffe with the self-help tradition when we note how groups within the tradition took a deliberate line towards creating and resourcing adult education to empower working-class people against the express wishes of the state. In this regard, self-help

concerns collective, public action; it aims at the construction of a “we” in a context of diversity and conflict. But to construct a “we” it must be distinguished from the “them”, and that means establishing a frontier, defining an “enemy” (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 69).

By implication, then, the creation of educational provision that is outside of (and sometimes in opposition to) government provision is itself a form of active citizenship. It adopts a model of conflict and restless combat against the ‘enemy’. This opposition to the state also feeds into the tradition’s libertarian tendencies. Whilst self-help doesn’t completely rule out connections with government (assuming it is of a sympathetic mind or bent), we can see libertarian aspects if, by libertarianism, we start ‘from the premiss of self-ownership’ (Barry in Open University 2003, p. 5.1.2). The working-class adult education institutes (of which the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA) is probably the most renowned) prided themselves on ‘self-ownership’ to the extent of creating bodies that were often owned by the learners themselves as part of a wider community, charity or union project (although, as we shall see in Chap. 6, this perception of the WEA has been challenged by various critics). It is this version of citizenship (both socialist and .libertarian, on the fringes of legality in its early manifestations) that Mouffe neatly captures when she writes:

the centrality of the notion of rights for a modern conception of the citizen should be acknowledged, even though these must be complemented by a more active sense of political participation and of belonging to a political community (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 83).

Mouffe does not, therefore, reject the importance of rights in terms of citizenship but is arguing that there is more to the concept of citizenship than simply someone who is the bearer of certain rights. A sense of participation or engagement with political institutions is vital to citizenship as well. In terms of the self-help tradition, this active form of citizenship has often been a necessity in order for certain adult groups to establish the right to an education of their choice in opposition to the established forces of the time. It is this sense of active citizenship that needs to be emphasised if citizenship education is to have genuine credibility in contemporary adult education.

The combination of individual rights and political participation articulated by Mouffe here does not, of course, eradicate the problems many libertarians will have with the state ‘allowing’, ‘creating’ or ‘upholding’ such rights but this is for another debate, well away from discussion on developments within further or adult education. What Mouffe’s observation does highlight is the idea of individual empowerment through collective struggle that is so crucial to the idea of citizenship within the self-help tradition that we are exploring here. Mouffe is sympathetic, in part, to the civic republican tradition within political philosophy where participation in political affairs is viewed as a significant good for both the individual and the community. According to advocates of civic republicanism, it is through this form

of participation that the citizen can strive for influence for her or his opinion on the issues of the day. It also benefits the community because it ensures the fullest participation of citizens within political institutions (this is especially important in states where the institutions are reliant upon the active participation of many citizens in order for these institutions to function fully). The self-help tradition in adult education is not explicitly connected to the conception of citizenship in civic republicanism. Indeed, the self-help tradition is a wide structure in which educationalists of various philosophical persuasions (Marxist, republican or liberal) found shelter or welcome. But where the self-help tradition is in clear sympathy with the conception of citizenship advocated by Mouffe is in the empowerment of citizens through active engagement with (and often opposition to) the authorities over the issue of who controls adult education. It is through these struggles that citizenship education, in the self-help tradition, is thus defined.

### 3.5 Conclusion

The current sense within further and adult education is one of missed opportunity with regards to citizenship education. Government agencies, in their focus on the 'democratic deficit' for school children, have ignored students in post-compulsory education. This absence can only mean that the drive towards Student Voice and Student Councils within colleges is likely to be seen as piecemeal. Without opportunities to explore and challenge social and political issues that affect their lives *outside* of the college campus (which only some form of citizenship education can adequately bring), students will see even the best examples of student participation as only one half of the whole. Such practices will operate in a shell, hollowed out from the debates informing life outside the classroom. In Chap. 7, a form of college governance (incorporating the model of deliberative democracy as exemplified by Joshua Cohen) will be presented as an attempt to offer genuine student participation in the management of further education colleges. This takes the good practice already found in Student Voice within pioneering colleges and incorporates it into the very core of the institution (through the election of college principals, college boards of governors and the opportunity for students to make a significant contribution to the ongoing debates on how colleges should be run).

Certainly the Diploma and Functional Skills (as I have shown) offer little new or exciting around this issue at the curriculum level. I have also endeavored, in this chapter, to show that citizenship education (as exemplified in the National Curriculum) has significant gaps, notably around the issue of political parties. Whilst young people show an engagement with politics *as such*, they are often alienated from the formal political process. The lack of coverage of political parties in citizenship education in the National Curriculum will do little to rectify the perceived alienation or redress the so-called 'democratic deficit' amongst young people currently. For students in both the compulsory and post-compulsory sectors, citizenship education is still an issue that needs to be addressed and challenged

in the contemporary classroom. The traditions identified by Green and Lucas in further and adult education (apprenticeship and self-help) offer varied perspectives on citizenship which echo, to a large extent, the conflicts over citizenship within political philosophy itself. I will offer ways of addressing citizenship education (endeavouring to embrace the various traditions central to further and adult education) within current programmes in later chapters.

# Chapter 4

## The Apprenticeship Tradition in Further Education

### 4.1 The History of Apprenticeship in England

In Chap. 3, I discussed how citizenship education could use aspects of the apprenticeship tradition in further education through the concept of ‘citizenship within practices’ (based on the idea of practices articulated by Alasdair MacIntyre) and how this compares with the self-help tradition in adult education where citizenship education might use Chantal Mouffe’s ideas on active citizenship to establish educational provision. In this chapter I will be studying in more detail how the apprenticeship tradition facilitates citizenship education and whether the tradition still has vitality within further education itself.

Historically, the apprenticeship tradition in further education can be traced right back to the European medieval guilds. According to Wolf-Dietrich Greinert,

From the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the craft guilds that grew up in medieval towns and cities determined the outward form of the class-based socialisation process . . . These comprehensive functions naturally included regulations for the recruitment and training of the next generation (Greinert 2005, p. 23).

Boys were trained from a young age (usually 14 years old) into a specific craft role (goldsmith, cooper and dyer are typical examples) in which they learnt the complexities of the profession along with the ethical and communal role they would be expected to play as a member of the guild once their training had finished. This would all be under the supervision of a master craftsman who had been through an identical training. This arrangement was formalised and extended in England in 1563 when the ‘Statute of Artificers . . . imposed the traditional seven-year indenture on some 30 crafts and, along with the provisions of the 1601 Poor Law, allowed pauper children to become apprentices’ (Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 23). The grip that the guilds had on apprenticeship education began to weaken at the turn of the nineteenth century. George Orwell, in his *The Road to Wigan Pier*, makes the observation: ‘Look around any country churchyard and see whether you can find a decently-cut tombstone later than 1820. The art, or rather the craft, of stonework has

died out so completely that it would take centuries to revive it' (Orwell 2001 [1937], p. 268). Orwell's view is a rhetorical one but it makes a solid point – the early nineteenth-century was a Rubicon for many crafts and trades. Once industry crossed that divide, the machine ensured that apprenticeships would never be the same again. Greinert talks of how 'the Statute of ... 1814 ... abolished the enforceability of seven-year apprenticeship as a requirement for access to trade, putting an end to the economic system of the guilds ... The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 finally abolished the last privileges of the guilds' (Greinert 2005, p. 29). This is contradicted, to some extent, by Winch and Hyland who find that as late as 1889 a 'Technical Instruction Act was passed by Parliament ... The markedly theoretical thrust of the Act reflect[ing] the territorial power of the craft guilds concerned to protect occupational secrecy' (Winch and Hyland 2007, pp. 13–14). The conflicting evidence of the influence of the guilds during the high water mark of the Industrial Revolution found by Greinert on the one hand and Winch and Hyland on the other can probably be explained by the transition of education from a wholly 'voluntarist' system (where businesses was largely responsible for any training undertaken by apprentices) to one where the government began to take on increasing control. The steady mechanisation of the workplace challenged (but did not initially destroy) the guilds' hold on apprenticeship training. What began to change, however, was the very nature of apprenticeship education and training in an industrial economy serving world markets. Winch and Hyland state that

The decline of craft work and the rise of mass production was to put apprenticeship[s] under ... pressure. Thus, by the mid-nineteenth century [the] traditional form of apprenticeship was being increasingly replaced by "live-out" arrangements ... largely because of the changing nature of work and social life following the Industrial Revolution (Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 23).

'Live-out' arrangements followed other social movements in emphasising the family unit in order to feed the increasingly vociferous fires of industrial capitalism. These were different from the traditional guilds arrangement where apprentices lived in with the master they were working for as part of their training. Employers were able to acquire cheap, ready labour in communities transforming and growing (in the industrial North and Midlands at least) at an exponential rate. The change in the 'live-in' arrangements for apprentices reflected the changes in families and communities generally – the old civic traditions were eroding while newer ones were only developing slowly. This trend was exacerbated by the creation of the Mechanics' Institutes in the nineteenth-century (the fore-runner of today's further education colleges). The small-scale training provided by the master craftsman's workshop was no longer adequate for the demands of mass production – bigger institutions were needed to ensure a large pool of trainees could be produced quickly to build, operate and service the new machinery and technology increasingly emerging within the industrial workplace. The Education Acts of 1870 and 1902 also legislated for greater state control of education in the move towards compulsory schooling. It was this pincer movement of greater mechanisation of the workplace and state intervention in education that eroded the influence of the guilds. However,

the guilds did not fade away completely from apprenticeship training in the late nineteenth century. They established the City and Guilds of London Institute in 1878:

By the time of its incorporation there were 17 founders, the Corporation and the 16 Companies, namely the Mercers, Drapers, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Salters, Ironmongers, Clothworkers, Dyers, Leathersellers, Pewterers, Armourers and Brasiers, Carpenters, Cordwainers, Coopers, Plaisterers and Needle-makers (Lang (1978) cited in Jarvis and Griffin 2003b, p. 58).

In time, this Institute would become one of England's largest qualification bodies, specialising particularly in curriculum areas typically associated with the apprenticeship tradition. As qualifications have developed over the last century, however, the links back to what might be considered a guilds education have become increasingly tenuous. I will look at this aspect in more detail later in this chapter when the issue of skills is discussed.

The apprenticeship tradition in the twentieth-century faced a medley of initiatives and proposals to rectify the perceived inadequacy and decline of Britain's economic performance in comparison with competitors (particularly France, Germany, the United States and, after the Second World War, Japan). The first attempt was through the Ministry of Reconstruction's Report of 1919 which stated 'Technical education is conceived as a means of improving economic efficiency in the interests of private gain' (cited in Jarvis and Griffin 2003b, p. 61) but also acknowledged the importance of co-ordinated courses of technical instruction that should be further broadened by the inclusion of studies which will enable the student to relate his own occupation of the industry of which it is a part, to appreciate the place of that industry in the economic life of the community in terms of social values (cited in Jarvis and Griffin 2003b, p. 63).

The wishes of the Report that 'the sharp demarcation of technical and non-technical studies should be destroyed' (cited in Jarvis and Griffin 2003b, p. 63) went largely unfulfilled. As Winch and Hyland have pointed out:

when a recognised national secondary system finally emerged in England in the 1920s and 1930s it was constrained by the hierarchical and stratified conceptions of the nineteenth-century curriculum in which vocational studies had a subordinate place (Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 15).

Such perceptions of a marked division between academic and vocational education in England in the early twentieth century permeated even literature. One finds, in D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love* (2011 [1920]), Hermione Roddice stating to an assembled audience of friends that 'Vocational education *isn't* education, it is the close of education' [emphasis in the original] (Lawrence 2011 [1920], p. 153).

The situation did not improve to any significant degree for vocational and apprenticeship training with the advent of the 1944 Education Act. Although the Act stipulated that each Local Education Authority should make provision for grammar, secondary technical and secondary modern schools in their area, few technical schools were established due to the 'hostility of both parents and employers of labour' (Dent (1968) cited in Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 15) – the parents wanted

their children to be able to access the privileged status of the grammar schools while employers detected an erosion of their own power in the establishment of technical schools. However, as the British economy began to slowly stagnate in the 1950s and 1960s ‘the traditional *laissez-faire* approach to VET [Vocational Education and Training] in England was increasingly challenged’ (Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 17). Initiatives like the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) and the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) were established by successive Conservative administrations to improve vocational education and training with mixed success. The MSC, according to the National Archive, was set up in 1973 to develop ‘a comprehensive manpower strategy for Britain and to advise the Secretary of State on employment matters’ (National Archive 2010) and was disbanded in 1988. The MSC was associated, in many quarters, with what were often regarded as low-quality employment training schemes (such as the Youth Training Scheme (YTS)), particularly during the period of massive unemployment in the early-to-mid 1980s (this theme is also covered in Chap. 6 when I look at how the government’s priorities veered heavily towards employment issues regarding adult education in the 1970s and 1980s). TVEI was established by the Government in 1982/1983 and ran for more than 10 years with the remit to ‘focus on and improve technical and vocational education for 14–18 year olds in schools and colleges’ (Lancaster University 2001). Whilst the MSC ‘came to be seen as an “increasingly sinister corporate creature that was changing the nature of British society – in particular, jobs, training and education”’ (Benn and Fairley (1986) cited in Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 18), TVEI did, at least, attempt to blur ‘The distinction between the vocational and the academic’ as well as offering an ‘exploration of the personal and social values which would guide [students and trainees] in life and sustain them when things got tough’ (Pring 1995, p. 92). These projects were developed at a time when the decline in apprenticeships was stark. According to Greniert:

Apprenticeship was exposed to a massive process of erosion in the economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s: while around a third of school-leavers entered an apprenticeship in the 1950s, and 236,000 trainees were still counted in processing industries in 1968, the number of apprenticeship contracts fell in the early 1980s to below 100,000 (Greinert 2005, p. 90).

The fear during this period was that Britain was moving inexorably towards becoming a medium-to-low skills economy. It has been calculated that ‘between 1964 and 1986, the number of apprentices in the United Kingdom ... fell by 74 %; over the same period, the number of trainees in the German dual system rose by 19 %’ [my emphasis] (Greinert 2005, p. 90). The Modern Apprenticeship programme, ‘established as a prototype in 1994 and launched nationally in 1995’ (Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 25), is the latest attempt by successive Conservative and Labour governments to rectify the declining number of apprentices in previous decades (the term ‘Modern’ has been dropped as of late and the scheme is now referred to simply as ‘apprenticeships’).

Winch and Hyland cite the Skills and Enterprise Network in their précis of what the Modern Apprenticeship scheme entailed:

[The] principal aims of MAs [Modern Apprenticeships] included the provision of employer-based learning for 16–25-year-old to NVQ level 3, the improvement of the supply of intermediate skills (craft, technician and supervisory) to remedy shortages, and the incorporation of “job-specific, key skills and occupational knowledge” to ensure that the “Modern Apprenticeship offers a relevant and flexible structure to the training needs of industry” (Skills and Enterprise Network (1997) cited in Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 25).

The success of the programme was evidenced by the fact that ‘[b]y spring 2000, 325,000 16–25-year-olds had joined programmes covering 82 industrial sectors’ (Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 27) and, importantly considering the necessity of apprentices acquiring skills and expertise at the intermediate level, ‘[t]he number of young people leaving the work-based route with level 3 qualifications doubled between 1995 and 2000’ (Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 27). The recent changes to university tuition fees by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat government are likely to make the current apprenticeship scheme an enticing alternative to degrees for young people in the near future. It will be interesting to see how these developments materialise and if sufficient places will be arranged to enable a significant increase in the take-up of apprenticeships (something which has not been the case up until now, when the number of applications-to-places has been very high). There has also been criticism in some quarters of the validity of some apprenticeship programmes (particularly at the lower levels) and whether they are adequately challenging for those apprentices or will lead to jobs at the end of the training period (see Watkins and Owen 2011).

## 4.2 Apprenticeship in the Post-Industrial Age

The ‘guild’ mentality, the passing on of expertise from one generation to the next in a workshop atmosphere where craft was seen as one of the community’s chief forms of excellence, did not disappear completely with the onset of industrialisation. It would be a mistake to view the transition from a pre-modern society to a modern one as the death of corporate values and the unimpeded march of liberal individualism. These values survived in modified form and further education, I argue, is an example of a location where such values and practices were sometimes retained (albeit often in hybrid or adapted ways).

How exactly were these values retained in further education? Firstly, it has taken up to the first decade of the current century to implement a fully professional structure for teachers in further education. William Richardson charts the post-World War Two landscape in the sector where, even by the 1970s, ‘less than a third of the 40,000 full-time teachers in FE colleges were qualified to teach’ (Richardson 2007, p. 397). Richardson speaks of a situation ‘symptomatic of FE as a whole, where the dominant tradition was of part-time, non-trained teaching staff’ (Richardson 2007, p. 397). The part-time, untrained nature of FE teaching was due in large part to the type of teacher recruited into further education colleges



before and after 1945. As noted by Robin Simmons, teachers were hired due to their industrial, business or craft expertise as opposed to their teaching or training experience:

Traditionally the culture and approach of FE teachers tended to be shaped by their occupational background rather than by pedagogy and there was some evidence of a lack of a professional approach towards education. Arguably, staff had little sense of vocation as teachers, but regarded themselves more as engineers, builders or accountants who happened to teach (Simmons 2008, p. 366).

The relationships between FE teachers and students were therefore still relatively close to the master-apprentice model encountered in the medieval workshop – they were, to some degree, still instructing and initiating students into a vocation as opposed to delivering a college curriculum or programme and this is reflected in the lack of professional training and identification with the teaching profession by many FE teachers during long periods of the twentieth century. They saw themselves as ‘vocational specialists’ and often referred to themselves as ‘instructors’ in order to maintain their identity with their industry or craft rather than view their role as that of teachers. According to Simmons, ‘it was difficult to identify FE teachers as part of the teaching profession in the same way that it is possible for school teachers’ (Simmons 2008, p. 366). This view, in terms of identity, was often replicated by students in further education – they usually regarded themselves as day-release or part-time apprentices rather than college students. If we look at enrolment data from the 1950s and 1960s, it shows that full-time students made up a fraction of the intake of further education colleges. Even the high water-mark of 1965 shows a mere 202,000 full-time students enrolled at colleges compared with 3,509,000 part-time (including day-release) students (Green and Lucas 1999, p. 17). The data here both reflects and reinforces the point that the college, rather than being a distinct educational entity, was often seen an extension of the industrial or craft workshop by FE teachers and students alike.

The terrain has changed considerably in the past 10 years, with the introduction of standardised teaching qualifications (OPSI 2007) and a professional body for teachers in the further education sector (IfL 2009). There are, inevitably, considerable changes in the working relationship between lecturers and students in further education today compared to similar institutions 50 years ago or, to go even further back, between master craftsmen and their apprentices. Colleges have largely moved away from the situation where they ‘tended to be rather loose conglomerations of departments with little overall cohesion’ (Simmons 2008, p. 365). It was in such situations of relative independence from other areas of the college that vocational lecturers had the ability or ‘freedom’ to adopt routines close to the older workshop practices of demonstration followed by observed student practice over extended periods of time. It has to be acknowledged, however, as Simmons points out, that ‘the teaching and learning was often pedestrian and uninspiring . . . Failure [was] sometimes serial in nature and non-completion were commonplace’ (Simmons 2008, p. 367). It would be salutary to remind ourselves, nevertheless, that change has not necessarily led to progress. As I acknowledged before, certain positive aspects of the previous relationships between master craftsman (or trainer) and

apprentice have been retained – the belief in the primacy of the finished product rather than unwarranted faith in blueprints or theories would be an example (the intuitive mixing together of ingredients without slavish adherence to the recipe by advanced Catering students comes to mind). This is what Sennett means when he states that '[c]raftwork establishes a realm of skill and knowledge perhaps beyond human verbal capacities to explain' (Sennett 2009, p. 95). The more negative aspects of earlier vocational programmes (such as the lack of identification with the teaching profession by vocational specialists highlighted above) have not always been replaced by something more beneficial to either teacher or student. Randle and Brady have identified the spread of an ethos where educational and funding targets have become increasingly important in further education. They argue that

if efficiency gains are to be achieved in further education then it is to the new breed of academic managers that responsibility for their delivery falls. In order to achieve such gains, we argue, control over the conception and design of academic work is increasingly being taken away, by management, from practitioners responsible for its delivery in the classroom (Randle and Brady 2000, p. 141).

Within such an ethos, students are often in danger of being viewed as part of an institutional target or a contribution to a particular funding stream and lecturers are under pressure to be effective and efficient with their time management. All of these factors can have a detrimental effect on the relationship between college teachers and students – the time and patience taken by a master craftsman in his workshop is difficult to replicate in busy environments where the guided learning hours have been trimmed to the minimum in order to maintain cost effectiveness. The increased professionalism of staff in the further education sector can therefore be viewed as a double-edged sword – what was mediocre or half-hearted has now been replaced by a regime focusing on standards and value-for-money that sometimes sacrifices key relationships between lecturers and students. The workshop element of old is seen as insufficiently dynamic for today's climate in further education.

The achievement-based, target-driven atmosphere of further education also detracts from an environment where the patient acquisition of vocational skills can be acquired by students. The pressures on teachers to 'get students through' NVQ (National Vocational Qualifications) and QCF (Qualification and Curriculum Framework) levels each year frequently leads to pressurised transitions between theory and practice in the race for students to demonstrate the competencies necessary to pass the programme and progress further. Teachers often complain, rightly, of the lack of consolidation time given so that they can explore fully the more technical aspects of a particular craft with their students (the differences between softwood and hardwood jointing in Carpentry, for example) that would enable tutors and employers to be fully confident that students embark upon their chosen careers fully competent in terms of acquisition of skills and occupational methodologies. Many vocational courses in further education (particularly for the 16–19 age range) are currently done almost exclusively on college premises using 'simulated' activities to replicate the working environment. Alison Wolf, in her recent review of vocational education, has stated that

DfE [Department for Education] should evaluate models for supplying genuine work experience to 16–18 year olds who are enrolled as full-time students ... and for reimbursing local employers in a flexible way, using core funds (DfE 2011, p. 17).

This is certainly a flaw in contemporary practice regarding vocational education in FE colleges and does not compare well with earlier examples (the day-release model of the 1960s or the earlier guilds' education) where education and work were much more clearly integrated. There are various reasons why, according to Wolf, '[England] is a market in which employers are very reluctant to take on young people' (DfE 2011, p. 43) but one significant drawback for the recruitment of young people in employment is the perceived lack of skills and training (even for those with vocational qualifications) that can only come with actual experience in an office, restaurant, building site or care home. Employers often argue that it is they who have to 'pick up the tab' in terms of the additional training required to bring new recruits to the levels expected by the company. It is hoped that recent developments between colleges and industry on 'experiential learning' (where students undertake some of their course in the actual workplace – my former college, North Hertfordshire College, has a partnership with a local hotel where NHC Catering and Hospitality students 'take over' the hotel for a week (NHC 2011)) are extended and given depth across the various industrial sectors so that students on non-apprenticeship programmes are given adequate opportunities to engage in 'real-life' situations in their particular area of work and apply what they have learnt in college. These periods are vital to any student's experience of vocational programmes and need to be seen as more than a basic form of 'enrichment' if employers are to take these courses seriously. As Dewey stated, 'The only adequate training for occupations is training through occupations' (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 228). Substantial workplace experience should be a necessary element in *any* vocational programme, be it an apprenticeship or a course that is more college-based. Where citizenship education on work-based programmes becomes problematic is in the potential conflict between the drive for cost efficiencies and profit against an ethical approach to crafts and professions. There is likely to be an ongoing source of friction for trainees and students in such contexts where the need for savings and cutting costs could jeopardise high standards of quality and service (for example). Hospitality and Catering are good examples of curriculum areas where the margins are often very tight for employers and where citizenship education might be seen as expendable regarding the demands of the business (embedding citizenship education within vocational programmes will be discussed in more detail below). However, I argue that trainees having a rounded view of their chosen profession (including the ethical, social and cultural aspects) that citizenship education offers within vocational areas (such as Hospitality and Catering) ultimately benefits businesses because it enables trainees to see the wider implications of their practice. To offer an example, a waitress who is aware of cultural differences around what constitutes good service in a multi-cultural environment is likely to be much more valuable to a restaurant than one who is not.

### 4.3 Vocational Training and Craftsmanship: Shifts in Comparison

The practice and craft narratives of MacIntyre and Sennett will take us so far, especially the idea of the craftsman (and increasingly craftswoman) as an exemplifier of virtues and embedded within a particular community. Whilst I have already acknowledged the importance of practices to citizenship education in further education, Sennett and MacIntyre (in their historical overviews of craft and the notion of a practice) are focusing primarily on periods in the industrial culture when notions of a community were, perhaps, more stable than they are in the multi-cultural environments of contemporary practice. Another critical aspect of transformation within further education has been the gender composition of both staff and students over the past 30 or 40 years. Richardson has observed that ‘FE students in England as a whole are in the care of a teaching force that is 60 % female compared to the 80:20 ratio of males to females that prevailed from the late 1940s to the mid-1970s’ (Richardson 2007, p. 405). If we look at student enrolments over a similar historical period, we find that from 1970/1971 to 1997/1998 the figures for males in all types of further education remained fairly constant (1,007,000 in 1970/1971 to 1,070,000 in 1997/1998) whilst recruitment of females almost doubled over the same period (725,000 in 1970/1971 to 1,410,000 in 1997/1998) (ONS 2002). These figures have radical implications for the apprentice tradition and citizenship education, for vocational education is no longer a male preserve in contemporary further education colleges. The older, invariably male-dominated, crafts and practices highlighted by MacIntyre and Sennett are no longer the choice of the majority of students in further education – they are just as likely to be enrolled on a Health and Social Care or Hair and Beauty course as a Bricklaying or Engineering programme.

So what we have, in essence, is a new conception of apprenticeship or at least of vocational education in colleges in the twenty-first century. Perspectives on current vocational education and training are seemingly not as reliant on the master-pupil relationship as previously. We can see this advocacy of development and change in Dewey when he speaks of

A society which makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is ... democratic. Such a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social change without introducing disorder (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 76).

In his talk of ‘flexible readjustment of institutions’ which lead to a securing of ‘social change’ Dewey could well be advocating a re-analysis of apprenticeship, the flexible readjustment coming from the increased and lasting engagement of women with further education. Dewey was careful, for instance, in refusing to view vocational education through traditionalist’s eyes. In his view

We must avoid not only [the] limitation of conception of vocation to the occupations where immediately tangible commodities are produced, but also the notion that vocations are distributed in an exclusive way, one and only one to each person (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 226).

Dewey was suspicious of vocational education that dwelt exclusively on the creation of product and centred on over-specialisation. Certainly there has been a significant trend in further education, in recent decades, away from courses working primarily with materials to ones working mainly with people. Dewey claimed that '[a]n occupation is the only thing which balances the distinctive capacity of an individual with his [sic] social service' (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 227). Increasingly, FE colleges have offered apprenticeships and work placements for students hoping to qualify as care workers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants (as examples). Students coming into these curriculum areas are very likely to have a different perspective on their craft or practice than what was traditionally conceived within apprenticeships. The 'material' these students are working with is, quite literally, other people in contrast to wood, metal, plaster or food produce. This creates a potential third element into any master-pupil relationship within such vocations – that of the patient, child, client. The dynamic is triangular as opposed to linear. There is another person to be considered in any educational or training context and their input will be as crucial or valid as that of the trainer or trainee – after all, the training is ultimately to help or support them as patients, school children or clients. This is not to say that the client was not important in the guild tradition, only that the client was a receiver of a finished product or set of goods rather than, as in the care tradition, the 'medium' upon which the care is actually practised.

I argue that the relationships developed within such vocational areas as Health and Social Care, Hair and Beauty, and Child Care do contain, often, as many significant elements of the apprenticeship tradition as more familiar vocations (although these care subjects were not, of course, part of any guilds training from which the apprenticeship tradition arose). Each of these areas contains practices (as understood from MacIntyre) that embody a sense of the history, traditions and ethos of the professions or vocations involved, although (as I will argue later in this chapter) current vocational training often skirts these important aspects of the craft or profession through an over-emphasis on an 'instrumental' curriculum that focuses primarily on sets of competencies to the exclusion of ethical or social issues. Each of the areas mentioned will have a core set of excellences that practitioners will seek to impart to trainees. These practices will be scrutinised and critiqued to a greater or lesser degree (depending on the traditions within the different caring professions) and adaptations and changes made accordingly (one thinks here of changes to nursing practice, for example, based on the increased responsibility nurses are now given regarding basic diagnoses in general hospitals). It would be difficult to refute the contention that the caring vocations contain significant aspects of apprenticeship, in the sense of the word I have described above, just as engineering, football or bricklaying do. One could even contend that these practices (hair dressing, care for the elderly, assisting children in school with specific learning difficulties) are closer to the original sense of the word 'vocational' (in terms of the

law or the church) than many crafts and trades currently linked with the term. These older vocations (priests and lawyers) did not produce material product but were services (in the widest sense of that concept) between people, for people. Nobody would argue that the law or the church did not contain aspects of apprenticeship – one wonders if it is because the careers I have been highlighting in this section have been, mainly, the preserve of women that it is sometimes hard to conceive of them as part of that apprenticeship tradition too. Dewey is correct in his contention that ‘occupation is the only thing which balances the distinctive capacity of an individual with his [sic] social service’ (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 227) – any craft or profession that educates its emerging practitioners into such expectations, I argue, includes elements of the apprenticeship tradition in its training. As we have seen, the relationship between practitioner and society was at the heart of the various medieval apprenticeship systems and should continue to be so today.

#### **4.4 Citizenship Education in Vocational Contexts: Implications of Recent Developments**

Recent developments, discussed above, including the significant change in the composition of students and teachers in further education have a potentially radical impact on citizenship education in vocational contexts. Dewey, with his emphasis on the need to develop an education that integrated all the faculties, claimed

[i]t must be seriously asserted that a chief cause for the remarkable achievements of Greek education was that it was never misled by false notions into an attempted separation of mind and body (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 108).

It can be stated that citizenship education attempts to bring together the mind and body on vocational programmes by connecting practical skill with awareness of the wider world (be it local, regional, national or international) in which such practical skills operate. Citizenship education in FE might draw on the combination of skills and issues within vocational programmes to develop a fuller conception of what it means to be a citizen. This is particularly important if we are arguing that citizenship education in further education should be viewed in terms of practices. Interpersonal communication, for instance, is often studied on vocational programmes from the angle of ‘customer care’. However, interpersonal communication is richer than this for any trade or profession and citizenship education (appropriately contextualised for vocational courses) could be the catalyst for a wider investigation of the cultural or social aspects of communication for practitioners (in terms of their relationships with clients or fellow professionals). What the introduction and increase in care programmes in further education offer is a particularly sensitised awareness of interpersonal communication vital to the citizenship education proposed for further education. This sensitivity is not an exclusive preserve of the care disciplines but provides, instead, examples of best practice that can be incorporated within any vocational programme. Put at its simplest, this can mean what Nel Noddings calls

‘the very heart of moral education – the quality of ordinary conversation’ (Noddings 2002, p. 126). It is not difficult to envisage, for example, a Motor Vehicle course that built into its curriculum different expectations around customer interaction in a garage environment as a means of integrating citizenship within a vocational qualification or the role bread plays in different cultural and religious contexts for students studying Catering. The quality in interpersonal relations exemplified by the care professions and exhorted by Dewey in his encouragement of ‘social service’ can be adopted and developed by any curriculum area in further education. It is vitally important not to see this quality as ‘gendered’ in any way. Although I have made the point that the expansion of care programmes has paralleled the vast increase in women students in further education over the past 40 years, we must not view care as somehow a specifically female attribute – again, as Noddings reiterates, ‘[c]are ... can be developed in a variety of domains and take many objects’ (Noddings 2005, p. 47). Any awareness of care, in its various manifestations, can have a significant appeal to all vocational areas, especially when explored as part of the citizenship element within each discipline. An appreciation of care also invigorates and expands the study of citizenship as an end in itself – it helps to ground citizenship within specific human relationships, thus preventing it from steering into overly abstract territory.

As part of current apprenticeship scheme, apprentices have to demonstrate the application of Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) as well as ‘[t]he technical skills and knowledge/understanding of the theoretical concepts specifically relating to the occupation or job role, together with knowledge and understanding of the industry and its market’ (Department for Business et al. 2009, p. 3). The incorporation of PLTS into the scheme creates connections between the Modern Apprenticeship and the new 14–19 Diplomas we have already looked at in Chap. 3. As we have seen with the Diplomas, PLTS offer the potential to explore citizenship issues within vocational programmes – apprenticeships, with their emphasis on enabling ‘more young people and adults ... to benefit from the experience of work based learning’ (National Apprenticeship Service 2010a), could potentially link elements of citizenship education with the practical context of a genuine workplace setting. Contextualisation is an important part of any vocational programme – if we take three of the categories listed under PLTS, namely independent enquirers, creative thinkers and effective participators, these can comfortably incorporate citizenship issues within an apprenticeship scheme. When applied to a Sports apprenticeship, for example, we can envisage a work-based curriculum that encourages students to investigate the links and potential conflicts between money, community and sport. The apprentices could explore their own organisation’s sources of funding and how it impacts on the community role most sports organisations attempt to undertake as part of their wider remit. In a football club, for instance, the students might want to research the similarities and differences between clubs owned by private companies or individuals and those where the community has some say over the election of board members. As part of the PLTS criteria, students would then identify where their own club ‘sits’ on the private/public continuum and the benefits and drawbacks of moving the organisation further one way or the other. This project could be extended through



apprentices interacting with local businesses and relevant community groups to get a fuller perspective on participation by these sectors in sport generally and sports clubs in particular. Hopefully, the club itself would facilitate the production of the final results of such a project in the guise of a website, advert, mini-documentary or podcast that could be used either ‘in-house’ or as part of the organisation’s wider networks. It is certainly possible to see how apprentices as independent enquirers, creative thinkers and effective participators are encouraged within such projects. Citizenship education, in instances such as these, operates contextually to enhance the vocational area (sport) and the work-based nature of apprenticeships (in this case, football clubs). It also covers the requirement to demonstrate the technical skills and theoretical concepts required by the apprenticeship programme (as envisaged by the National Apprenticeship Service). This topic has the benefit of being easily transferable – one can envisage a similar theme being explored by Catering and Hospitality apprentices on the nature of hotel ownership as company-owned, privately-owned or, in some countries, government-owned.

Whilst not specifically linked to current apprenticeships, Hartlepool College (in collaboration with Leicester College) undertook an initiative entitled ‘Respect’ as part of the Learning and Skills Improvement Service’s post-16 citizenship development projects for 2009/2010. One area of particular interest was on hair and hair types – as the project describes:

The starkest contrast was in the exposure the different groups [Hair students from Hartlepool College and Leicester College] get to different hair types. Training for Hartlepool learners is almost exclusively on Caucasian hair. By contrast, the Leicester learners are trained equally in three different hair types, Caucasian, African-Caribbean and Asian. The Hartlepool learners recognised that their peers were better prepared for life in multi-cultural Britain simply through the way that training takes place. Culturally, the groups found that the commonality of the syllabus was enough on which to build a relationship, indicating that common experience was important to the success of the day (LSIS 2010a).

It is precisely in contexts such as this one that the possibilities for citizenship within apprenticeships and full-time further education courses could be investigated and pursued. Although the initiative at Hartlepool College was for full-time college students, it is perfectly plausible to imagine apprentices working in a salon that caters for customers with different hair types and how this then relates to Britain as a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic society. Citizenship education here extends the sensitivity of the trainee stylist to existing and prospective clients (to the benefit of the employer) and expands the student’s own perceptions and horizons within a Hair training programme (thus maintaining the importance of contextualisation regarding citizenship education in FE colleges and apprenticeships).

## 4.5 Apprenticeship and the Idea of Practice

It was shown earlier how the apprenticeship tradition could be linked with MacIntyre’s belief in a community of shared practices where, by a practice, MacIntyre means



any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to . . . that form of activity (MacIntyre 1985 [1981], p. 187).

According to MacIntyre, the good society or the good citizen are exemplified in the extension of the virtues embodied within individual practices. The application of excellence initially displayed through particular crafts or activities can be taken and extended to the larger practice of governance of the community itself. While the beginnings of the apprenticeship tradition in further education in England were hardly auspicious as far as excellence is concerned – Green and Lucas cite one Victorian college principal describing the apprenticeship process as ‘six years of dull, repetitive drudgery that “failed to make anything but a bad, unintelligent machine”’ (Green and Lucas 1999, p. 14) – the emphasis on the steady accumulation of experience and technique through a relationship modelled on the master and apprentice roles dating back at least to the medieval guilds does provide pertinent links between MacIntyre’s concept of citizenship (see Chap. 3) and this particular aspect of further education (although such links, tenuous as they are at times, are being increasingly eroded and destroyed through the managerialist culture and instrumentalist curriculum in FE). The guilds, according to Richard Sennett, were a proxy family where ‘[t]he master craftsman legally stood *in loco parentis* to the journeymen and apprentices below him even if they were not his kin’ (Sennett 2009, pp. 62–63). The master-apprentice relationship within the guild was, then, something akin to familial ties but was also different in subtle and perceptible ways – ‘the guild master had a clear role as a father figure, one that expanded a child’s horizons beyond the accidents of birth, [however] it was a home held together more by honor [sic] than by love’ (Sennett 2009, p. 64). The bond was not, therefore, a blood bond but an initiation into the rites of the craft, an education of the younger by the elder craftsman into the methods and culture of a specific vocation (We have already mentioned earlier in this chapter how the 1563 Statute of Artificers established a 7-year indenture between apprentice and master). This relationship had very tangible benefits for the community – it provided a recognised pathway for boys and young men into respected and respectable employment with the added advantage of assimilation into the ethical viewpoint that was crucial to any guild: ‘Ethical behavior [sic] was implicated in [the craftsman’s] technical work. His craft was hands-on, like a clinical practice . . . the craftsman outward turned to his community’ (Sennett 2009, pp. 64–65). This pursuit of excellence through practice for the benefit of the community is very close to MacIntyre’s vision of citizenship. As we have already seen, MacIntyre views citizenship as an extension and widening of the virtues exhibited within other practices. The ethical behaviour developed in the guilds (for example) could be applied and translated into the governing of a town or city. Medieval guilds were especially effective in this regard because

the individual [was] identified and constituted in and through his or her roles, those roles which [bind] the individual to the communities in and through which alone specifically human roles are to be attained (MacIntyre 1985 [1981], p. 172).

Citizenship, in this sense, incorporated a person's role as much (perhaps more) than her or his identity as a discrete individual within a wider body politic – citizens were representatives of their craft (carpenters or coopers, for instance) more often than they were participants as themselves alone.

## 4.6 Skills and Practice

The concept of 'skill' is a crucial factor influencing the apprentice tradition. Richard Sennett has defined skill as 'a trained practice ... Skill development depends on how repetition is organized ... As skill expands, the capacity to sustain repetition increases' (Sennett 2009, pp. 37–38). But is skill, as Sennett suggests, the incorporation of certain physical and mental attributes or dexterities into a given occupational culture (as epitomised by the guilds)? Or is it simply the articulation of these physical and mental processes without any reference to the wider concept of craft? It is certainly Sennett's definition of skill that Christopher Winch is advocating in his paper on the German educationalist, Georg Kerschensteiner (I will explore Kerschensteiner's role in German vocational education in more detail in Chap. 5). Winch writes of the social aspects of vocational education by stating,

when it is done in a social context, in which worker/pupils are made aware of its broader social significance, it introduces a civic dimension into the workplace, of considerable educational significance (Winch 2006, p. 387).

It is this absence of the social element that is often identified in critiques of contemporary vocational education. Paul Hager and Terry Hyland speak of the concentration 'on narrow job skills and competencies [which has] effectively downgraded VET [Vocational Education and Training] in general and work-based training in particular' (Hager and Hyland in Blake et al. 2003, p. 280). There is a very clear movement here away from 'skill' as something integral to a practice or occupation towards a set of discrete or separate competencies that potentially cut across various disciplines (hence the devising of terms like 'transferable skills' by careers guidance counsellors and government ministers). This dislocation of 'skills', the practical and mental competencies, from their occupational bases is arguably something that the UK Government actively supports. In its White Paper, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills: Realising Our Potential* (2003), the Government states: 'We will review in each major employment sector the need for new adult learning programmes to develop generic "skills for employment". People might acquire a 'skills passport' or 'skills foundation' which records their key and generic skills' (DfES 2003, p. 26). However, in defence of the Government, there are also various extracts of the policy where emphasis is placed on the acquisition of skills as part of a craft or trade:

We will make it easier for those adults who most need extra skills by offering them a new entitlement to learning. We will prioritise our resources, with the ambition that over time we help everybody who wants them to gain at least the foundation skills for employability, with better support for young adults to gain more advanced craft, technician and associate professional qualifications (DfES 2003, p. 21).

However, the perception is strong that skills are becoming increasingly divorced from the occupations they used to be associated with. This is sometimes reflected in the development of vocational qualifications themselves. With the advent of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) from the 1980s onwards, governments and awarding bodies have pressed for what has been described as ‘a system founded on competence-based outcomes’ (Hodgson and Spours 1997, p. 15). This concern has also been highlighted within the apprenticeship framework by Alison Fuller and Lorna Unwin when they write:

Apprenticeships today are predominately a vehicle for delivering qualifications. Whilst the acquisition of qualifications is clearly important for individuals, they should not be the sole purpose of an apprenticeship (Fuller and Unwin in Dolphin and Lanning 2011, p. 33).

It could be argued that the competency-based model of qualifications has the advantage of ensuring vocational qualifications are clearly and neatly mapped to specific sets of skills that can be demonstrated in work-based situations. This emphasis on competencies is often delivered as part of what is called an ‘instrumentalist’ curriculum. According to Liz Keeley-Browne, an instrumentalist view of education is one that

enables us to see the curriculum as having a specific product, namely producing a skilled workforce for economic and social stability. It focuses on the importance of skills as required for economic stability and global competitiveness (Keeley-Browne 2007, pp. 100–101).

At first sight, this might sound encouraging as it emphasises the link the instrumentalist curriculum makes between learning and work (in the form of economic stability). This said, the instrumentalist curriculum is often weak on the wider professional issues (such as the relationship between practitioner and her/his communities) encountered within vocational occupations. Recent administrations have taken an interventionist stance regarding vocational courses (due to the perceived weaknesses of British industry and industrial training) rather than allowing the crafts and industries themselves to monitor and regulate their own training practices and standards (this is very different from the ‘social partnership’ model in German vocational education which is analysed in Chap. 5). Because the instrumentalist curriculum aims to lead students towards demonstration of occupational competency, often in the form of very specific skills (one might refer to them as ‘micro skills’), there is little room to investigate, discuss or challenge the professional ethos or virtues of the vocation the student or apprentice intends to enter. It is almost as if skills here are viewed as through a zoom lens, focusing on narrow, close-up depictions of manual dexterity, health-and-safety awareness or customer care. There is no room to express the wider social issues that any skilled practitioner (in the sense defined by Sennett) is likely to encounter on a regular basis through her or his work. What we often have instead, in the words of James Tarrant, is an environment whose ‘values are instrumental, there is no provision for the evaluation of work as a social institution . . . A utilitarian ethic is essentially means-ends orientated in the

sense that all actions are instrumental . . . Non-advanced PCET [Post-Compulsory Education and Training] has an ethos of means-end' (Tarrant 2001, p. 371).

The skills learnt are seen as means to an end – to make the student more employable, more productive, less likely to seek or need benefits. These factors are not necessarily bad things in themselves but there is a poverty of vision nevertheless. Skill has become an ability or competence performed in isolation without a true awareness or engagement with the community in which these very skills are requested and valued. In a response to the Government's *Leitch Review of Skills* (HM Treasury 2006), for example, the Trade Union Congress stated its concerns with

the emphasis placed on moving to a largely employer-led skills system and the danger this posed to marginalizing the needs and aspirations of the workforce. At the time the TUC said that it would continue to argue for building a more inclusive approach underpinned by social partnership arrangements, which would address the importance of strengthening both employer and employee demand for skills (TUC 2008).

This intervention by the TUC highlights an attempt to address the narrowing of the skills debate but is then let down by parochial concerns. Whilst one can applaud the TUC's efforts to steer the Government away from an over-emphasis on an 'employer-led skills system', it does not expand the skills constituency beyond an inclusion of employees into the 'social partnership arrangements'. Employee inclusion is very important but so also is community involvement if the national debate on skills is to achieve a sense of wider participation beyond the typical vested interests. It is not only businesses and unions who have an interest in a skilled workforce – a case can be made that, by expanding the discussion around skills beyond the usual constituencies of government and business/industry to include other elements of the community such as parents, students, educational institutions, charities, civic groups and non-governmental organisations (for instance), it is possible that the narrow definition of skill and the restricted curricula created as a response to this narrow definition will change. It is here that we can also return back to the points made earlier by MacIntyre on practices being embedded within identifiable communities rather than as things separate or operating in isolation. If the debate around skills includes community voices, then the social element currently lacking in skills training is likely to be re-emphasised through what Winch (again echoing Kerschensteiner) has called

social virtues . . . placing work first in the context of workplace relationships and second, in a broader social context. Kerschensteiner was particularly keen on developing an occupational consciousness in young workers, through showing how the occupation fits into the larger scheme of things and why one should have pride in it, by knowing something of its history and struggles (Winch 2006, p. 389).

Although I have been advocating that citizenship education is explored within vocational practices in further education (including apprenticeships), this does not mean that studying citizenship as part of a vocational programme restricts the students' perspective to the specific craft, trade or profession. As Kerschensteiner noted, an exploration of the histories and struggles of an occupation enable students

to draw out the possible implications for workers in other occupations or citizens in the wider society. Citizenship education also enables students to discuss how and where their particular occupation ‘fits’ into the local community (although, as I have acknowledged earlier, the concept of ‘community’ in contemporary democracies is a problematic term).

It is this exploration of the historical, cultural and ethical aspects of vocations that is currently missing through the general adoption of the instrumentalist model of curriculum favoured by government agencies in the form of NVQs and similar qualifications. Even the CBI, in one recent report, takes this narrowly functional view, arguing the need for ‘[c]utting funding for non-essential programmes including ‘adult safeguarded learning’ – which supports learning for its own intrinsic value and does not necessarily deliver an economically valuable result’ (CBI 2009, p. 3), ignoring the fact that topics and issues covered by the term ‘learning for its own intrinsic value’ might have real value for apprentices and other vocational students if appropriately contextualised.

By involving communities in the debate on what constitutes skill, there is the possibility of moving away from the links currently made between skill and competence endemic to the contemporary instrumentalist curriculum. Ronald Barnett makes a vital point to this effect when he differentiates between ‘work’ on the one hand, and ‘labour’ on the other:

We might say . . . that labour is precisely a set of competences, of performances according to an external standard. Work, on the contrary, is endowed with personal meaning, the standards being set or at least lived-in by the individual. For work, ideas of ownership, authenticity . . . care, craft and identification are relevant; as are, for labour, ideas of alienation, estrangement and commodification (Barnett 1994, p. 76).

The ‘work/labour’ distinction is essentially a Marxist one – Antonio Gramsci talks of how ‘[m]ass training has standardized individuals both psychologically and in terms of individual qualification’ (Gramsci 2000, p. 308). Where Barnett departs from the strictly Marxian use of these terms is in his emphasis on the educational aspects of the work/labour divide. While Marxists (such as Gramsci) see the linguistic division as endemic of industrial capitalism’s allocation of the means of production to a tiny elite, Barnett views the distinction through a narrow lens centred wholly on qualifications and training. Nevertheless, it is Barnett’s definition of ‘work’ that has often been lost in the desire to move towards competence-based vocational qualifications and it is this element, I believe, that can be re-established were citizenship to become a feature of vocational subjects. Citizenship education could help to introduce the community’s perspective on the definition of skill and extend the debate beyond the viewpoints of business, industry and government that currently dominate. Skill might again attach itself to specific community needs or roles in the manner described by both Sennett and MacIntyre (albeit in the guise of contemporary practice rather than a simple harkening back to the guilds). Barnett’s emphasis on ‘ownership’ is insightful here, for skill is not a phenomenon of individualist expertise (although it may, of course, be demonstrated by individuals at given moments). Rather, skill is a communal resource, a set of practices taught and valued by communities for the benefit of communities. The competency-based

approach (exemplified by most NVQs) perceives such demonstrations of expertise in a linear, two-dimensional way with 'clients reduced to being recipients of those skills rather than joint authors of the professional services that they require' (Barnett 1994, p. 80).

The concept of communities is, I recognise, a problematic one in contemporary England where debates over multiculturalism, pluralism and the absence of unifying symbols and loyalties on a local and national level are a continual topic for political discussion. This makes it difficult, but not impossible, to address the issue of the practitioner-in-communities (the plural is instructive here). What constitutes a community might be one of the points to discuss as part of the citizenship element within vocational programmes. How important is it for a professional to be aware and sensitive to the needs of different communities in her or his area of practice? What impact does multiculturalism or pluralism have on relations between practitioner and client? (An example might be that of asking Plumbing students what issues or differences might they need to be sensitive to when carrying out a project at a church, a mosque, or a community centre). Citizenship education embedded within such disciplines offers the opportunity to explore the belief that transactions between professional and client always occur within a specific locality and how it is the culture or cultures of these localities that determine what finally constitutes skillfulness and how manifestations of skillfulness are or should be applied. It is not enough to train vocational students in skills abstracted from the environments where the skills are practised – skills do not exist without the communities that value and verify them.

## **4.7 The Guilds' Legacy and the Instrumental Curriculum in Vocational Education**

Green and Lucas talk of the 'intellectually narrow' (Green and Lucas 1999, p. 14) basis of education that often occurred in the apprenticeship tradition in England, particularly in the nineteenth century, and we have already observed the division between vocational and academic education which has blighted the English system for the past 200 years. The implementation of vocational programmes that are functionalist in bent and avoid 'learning for its own intrinsic value', where the imaginative and ethical aspects of occupations are sacrificed to the need to meet readily observable and recordable assessment criteria is the current version of the 'intellectually narrow' Victorian curriculum (as depicted by Green and Lucas).

It is ironic that many trades spawned from the guilds' legacy, a legacy which, at its best, articulated 'The attribution of ethical human qualities – honesty, modesty, virtue – into materials . . . its purpose . . . to heighten our consciousness of the materials themselves' (Sennett 2009, p. 137) should adopt such means/ends outcomes. This is partly because the guilds' methods themselves (and the practices they passed down through the apprenticeship tradition) did not always operate at such elevated

levels. Sennett describes the medieval workshop as one in which '[a]uthority in the generic sense relies on a basic fact of power: the master sets out the terms of work that others do at his direction' (Sennett 2009, p. 69). Whilst Sennett acknowledges that this is a practice adopted by masters in many fields, from the 'Renaissance artist's atelier' to 'the modern scientific laboratory' (Sennett 2009, p. 69), it is not one that encourages initiative or imagination on the part of the apprentices. This is not to say that the methods employed were necessarily didactic – the style of teaching or training would have depended on the personality of the master running the workshop – but Sennett does state that whilst 'medieval craftsmen were [not] entirely resistant to innovation ... their craftwork changed slowly' (Sennett 2009, p. 70). It is possible to perceive, in the emphasis on occupational hierarchy and the slow adaptation to modern methods of production, how the guild structure both accommodated and resisted functionality. The hierarchical nature of the workshop entailed a strict division of labour, with apprentices given very specific tasks to undertake that bear strong resemblances to the micro-skills we have been looking at regarding the contemporary instrumentalist curriculum. However, in their ambivalent view of technology (developmental machinery was accepted or rejected depending on the particular guild at a particular time), the guilds raised a certain scepticism towards the need for faster and more efficient approaches to creation or output. It is by comparing these two factors, strict hierarchy and slowness concerning innovation, that we can see the ambiguous position the guilds adopted towards what would now be called functionality and the necessity of means/ends. Certainly, links can be traced from the medieval system through to contemporary practice regarding instrumental types of learning – indeed, this is one of the factors passed down to us through the apprenticeship tradition. An awareness of this situation must make us cautious in viewing the guilds as always exemplifying best practice around the subject of pedagogy for apprenticeships. There were stultifying as well as innovative procedures and the strict hierarchy between apprentice and master does not always fit comfortably with modern educational expectations of the trainer/trainee relationship. Current practice in vocational education needs to re-embrace the need for the patient acquisition of skill demanded by the guilds' tradition. This runs against what Wolf has suggested when she says

The young person who follows first a level 2 course in a vocational area, then a level 3 one, and then goes on to a long-term career in that sector is the exception not the rule. Instead, *young people who take a vocational qualification in one field very often end up working in quite different ones* [emphasis in the original] (DfE 2011, p. 37).

There is a very real danger of an over-emphasis on 'transferable' skills or 'generic' skills in this observation which runs counter to much of what I have been arguing in this chapter and what the guilds' tradition embodied. Of course, we are living in a very different employment climate to the time when the guilds flourished and that is why awareness of the guilds' drawbacks (in terms of a lack of innovation and an over-emphasis on workshop hierarchy) needs to be addressed. It would be a mistake, however, if the fast-changing demands of the contemporary labour market forced providers of vocational education and training to sacrifice a



holistic view of occupation and craft. There is an inevitable tension, here, between the immediate demands of employers (which I noted earlier in this chapter), the needs of students (if Wolf is correct in her observations) and the requirements on colleges to deliver a wider curriculum. I would contend, however, that a vocational education closer to the guilds' tradition (for all its flaws) would benefit trainees and employers alike by emphasising the notion of careers informed by ethical, social and historical processes.

#### **4.8 The Apprenticeship Tradition and the Idea of Citizenship: Contemporary Relevance**

The emphasis MacIntyre places on the citizen having a specific role within specific communities could have potential benefits regarding citizenship education for students on vocational programmes in further education (particularly on apprenticeship programmes), whilst acknowledging that the concept of 'communities' is a fraught one in current philosophical parlance (as stated above). The focus on local communities and the roles and responsibilities professionals have within their localities could give the study of citizenship an 'anchor' to students and trainees embarking on vocational programmes. They can draw on their local awareness and knowledge when investigating ethical issues raised within their chosen area of work as well as exploring wider national and international concerns. One of the dangers of such an approach, however, is how one defines 'community' in the variegated circumstances of contemporary societies. MacIntyre's evocation of citizenship is vulnerable to the criticism that it harks back to a milieu that no longer remains in place to any significant degree. Certainly, the political, cultural and sociological landscapes in which practices operate in contemporary England are very different from the medieval guilds or the Greece of Homer, Pericles and Aristotle (as described in MacIntyre's *After Virtue*) but that should not deter us from seeing the benefits his description of roles within specific communities could offer citizenship education within vocational contexts. As we discussed above, the fact that the idea and definition of communities is a problematic one currently can even be utilised as a debating point within citizenship education programmes in FE. By this stage of their educational careers, one would hope that students have the maturity to accept that such questions do not provide easy answers (or any answers at all) and that debate around practitioners in communities is a live one in which they can make valid and potentially important contributions. Such discussion might not occur within communities with the specificity articulated by MacIntyre but his thinking around the concept of practice is still pertinent (vital even) in any exploration of citizenship within vocational education for the reasons Chris Higgins explains:

What interests MacIntyre is the way that long-standing, complex human activities – arts and sciences, sports and games, trades and professions – activities that grow out of social life and remain cooperative in execution, tend to develop into distinctive ethical worlds (Higgins 2010, p. 240).



Those ethical worlds are a good deal more complex due to modern pluralism and multiculturalism but that does not diminish either the project of exploring the ethical aspects of practitioners-in-communities (under the guise of citizenship education) or MacIntyre's relevance to such a project.

#### **4.9 Citizenship Education in Further Education: What Are the Implications for Teacher Development?**

I stated, in Chap. 3, of the need for vocational teachers to be supported with course design and management if the embedding of citizenship education on FE programmes were to become a reality. Certainly, it would be unfair and unrealistic for teachers of vocational subjects to be expected to facilitate the investigation of citizenship themes and issues within vocational programmes without the necessary support (in the form of resources, subject-specialist support, and examples of course design and planning), especially as their main area of expertise will be within their vocational specialism. There is little support currently in place for vocational teachers (in the form of supportive materials and training opportunities) as citizenship education in England is focused primarily on Key Stages 3 and 4 in schools. OfSTED, in their report *Professional development for citizenship teachers and leaders* (2009), criticized the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) for the training offered to school and college teachers:

Although some of the training sessions benefitted from the differing perspectives of the teachers in the primary, secondary and post-16 sectors, the advantages of the mixed provision rarely outweighed the disadvantages, especially when the time allocated to direct training was short (OfSTED 2009, p. 5).

This report strongly suggests that the training offered to further education teachers as part of a 'cross-sector' approach (where teachers in primary, secondary and further education receive citizenship training as a group) has not met the needs of those teachers. By way of an alternative, the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) has provided further education-specific support to teachers in the sector through materials included in *For the sake of argument: Discussion and debating skills in citizenship* (2009 [2006]) and *Getting started with post-16 citizenship* (2009 [2006]), examples of which have been discussed in this book.

Where the work by LSIS is particularly effective is in the guidance it offers teachers in colleges to promote and facilitate discussion skills, the importance of negotiation and the encouragement of rigorous questioning (three key elements of active citizenship advocated throughout this book and introduced in Chap. 2) (see LSIS 2009a, pp. 9–49, for frameworks to facilitate and encourage active citizenship). It can also be argued that the materials offered by LSIS encourage teachers in FE to take a much more facilitative role when working with students on citizenship themes and topics (as a way of encouraging student autonomy).

However, the LSIS materials are generic and currently lack a set of vocational contexts in order to embed citizenship education within specific trades or crafts.

I introduced in Chap. 3 some of the key elements in andragogy (as defined by Malcolm Knowles). Andragogy is an educational theory associated primarily with adult students but can be used to inform learning with 16–19 year olds (although the assumptions andragogy makes of students might not always be applicable to younger students, especially regarding the depth of life experience brought to the learning environment). The embedding of citizenship education within vocational courses to ensure the learning is relevant for students echoes Knowles's contention that '[students] become ready to learn those things they need to know and be able to do in order to cope effectively with their real-life situations' (Knowles et al. 2005, p. 67). Knowles advocates 'peer-helping activities' (Knowles et al. 2005, p. 66) as a key learning strategy which mirrors the emphasis on collaboration and effective communication skills as important components of education for active citizenship. Where Knowles's theory is potentially vulnerable, from the perspective of citizenship education, is on the issue of self-directed learning. Mark Smith (quoting Miriam and Caffarella) states: 'self-directed learners, rather than pre-planning their learning projects, tend to select a course from limited alternatives which happen to occur in their environment and which tend to structure their learning projects' (Smith 2002). If self-directed learning, based on the evidence suggested here, is potentially confined to a student's immediate environment, then that is a cause for concern regarding citizenship education. While citizenship education considers the investigation and discussion of the student's immediate environment as important, it also advocates the exploration of wider national and international issues. It is support around these issues that is fundamental if teachers in further education are to facilitate the embedding of citizenship education effectively.

## 4.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have endeavored to describe how what Green and Lucas call the apprenticeship tradition in further education corresponds to the medieval guilds and MacIntyre's emphasis on practices within given communities. It is very contentious how far current vocational education and training in further education adopts techniques or methods close to the older guilds' traditions (due to the instrumentalist curriculum adopted within many vocational courses). However, much of the ethical and communal aspects of guilds' life can still have a place in further education (including apprenticeship) courses. Citizenship education (with the appropriate embedding of content to make it relevant and purposeful for students) offers an alternative to the present situation where vocational courses are often reduced to the display of narrow competencies and programmes. Embedding citizenship education in FE provides the opportunity for trades, crafts and professions to be studied more holistically (as activities that operate within communities and in terms of

work that is defined by occupational forms of excellence). We have noted that ‘communities’ is a hard-fought concept in the humanities at present where Rawls’s notion of ‘reasonable pluralism’ is the norm rather than the exception. MacIntyre’s presentation of practices does rely on communities where there is general agreement on comprehensive conceptions of the good (as seen in Chap. 2). However, I believe that his evocation of the skills and excellences demonstrated within practices still has validity in communities where such agreement does not exist.

The current skills agenda often takes an ‘instrumentalist’ curriculum as its base, emphasising skills-as-competencies rather than the wider perspective of the skilled practitioner as an expert in the ethical and social aspects of occupations as well. This is an area where citizenship education, properly contextualised, could enhance current skills training and development and provide this broader perspective. The recent government encouragement of the apprenticeship programme has the potential for ensuring quality education within work-based learning (although there are concerns over how the apprenticeship programme is currently being delivered). Again, the adoption of aspects of citizenship education within this scheme could benefit both employer and apprentice by linking enterprises to wider social, political and cultural concerns and thus sensitising individual businesses to varied client and customer bases. We need to move away from vocational education and training (either in colleges, in the workplace or a combination of both) that is functional to the detriment of a more holistic concept of vocation. Finally, as part of a wider exploration of the apprenticeship tradition, I argue that the caring professions (which have become increasingly popular in further education in the past 30 or 40 years) have significant affinities with occupations usually associated with such a tradition through the common adoption of a set of skills informed by best practice, a culture of analysis or critique, and established relationships between trainers and trainees. It is important to state that the historical examples of the apprenticeship tradition in this chapter (including the medieval guilds) are used in this context as ‘ideals’ against which current practice is compared and evaluated.

## Chapter 5

# Vocational Education: A European Perspective

I observed in Chap. 4 how apprenticeships and vocational education in England compared with provision in Europe (Germany and France). In this chapter, these themes will be explored in greater detail in order to analyse the possibilities and realities for citizenship education within vocational programmes across so-called ‘advanced’ economies. The perspective here will centre primarily on how England compares with Germany and France in the development of vocational education and training that incorporates elements of citizenship education. It will be my contention that nations where vocational education takes a more rounded or holistic view of craft, trade or profession (what Brockmann, Clarke and Winch term ‘general education, culture, and active citizenship’ (Brockmann et al. 2008, p. 555) are more likely to produce practitioners aware of the local, regional, national and international issues that impact on their practice, and how to work within environments affected by such issues.

### 5.1 Vocational Education: Comparative Histories of England, Germany and France

It is difficult to provide a neat chronological history of vocational education systems in the respective countries for the simple reason that each country experienced their own Industrial Revolution at different times and at different paces. That said, it is possible to draw parallels between the nations in Western Europe reliant on heavy industry for their development from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. By then, England, France, Germany, the Netherlands and other comparable countries were either fully established (or were well on the way to being fully established) in the production of coal, iron and steel that would fuel the major construction and engineering projects necessary to compete in a post-agrarian world.

I demonstrated in Chap. 4 that much of Europe followed, with subtle differences, a guilds-based tradition of craft training which ran from the twelfth century

(according to Greinert 2005, p. 23) into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was only in the nineteenth century that national educational systems in western Europe (as we would understand them) came into being with the unification of Germany and Italy (through the efforts of von Bismarck and Cavour respectively), the creation of a centralised state in France through reforms instituted by both Napoleons, and reaction to the miseries and deprivations of the Industrial Revolution in England with the publication of the Education Acts of 1870 and 1902. Wolf-Dietrich Greinert has identified three basic models of vocational education and training to emerge out of these embryonic national systems. He writes:

It is certainly no accident that historical research into vocational education and training has identified three “classical” European models of vocational training . . . These are the liberal market economy model of the United Kingdom, the state bureaucratic model in France, and the dual corporatist model in Germany. These three models, which received their basic shape during the First Industrial Revolution, were to some extent the main response to the erosion of the old craft-based model of vocational training in the countries of Europe (Greinert 2005, p. 12).

These models largely echo the relationships between the state, business and trade unions in each country. In England, the ‘voluntarist’ model has been one where business (with periodic encouragement from the state) is given the option to offer training to employees with little or no input from the trade unions (although this has changed somewhat over the past 10 years with the establishment of Union Learning Representatives in the late 1990s/early 2000s) (see UnionLearn 2011). In France, the state largely controls vocational provision (with input from business and, in certain instances, trade unions in the provision for apprentices). Germany, due to its culture of co-determination (discussed below), has a system where vocational education is primarily controlled and organised by a coalition of business organisations and trade unions (with the state providing support as the other social partner). As with any appraisal of national educational systems, these models are a simplification of often highly flexible and fluid partnerships and institutions but the models do provide a useful tool for transnational analysis and comparison.

Perhaps inevitably, vocational educational systems followed the economic philosophies within the countries under discussion as national regimes were attempting to transform their urban labour force from one that was primarily craft-based (where manufacture was conducted on the level of small-scale enterprises, often in family ‘cottage’ industries) to industry-based (in companies involving, sometimes, thousands of workers producing ‘heavy’ goods and equipment under a strict division of labour to ensure efficiency<sup>1</sup>). Greinert, however, identifies a ‘transitional’ stage between craft-based and industry-based enterprises in what he terms ‘the domestic system [which was a] typical instrument of commercial capitalism [and] became the dominant form of production in the English textile

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<sup>1</sup>One thinks immediately here of Adam Smith’s famous line on the efficiencies afforded by an effective division of labour in in manufacture (*Wealth of Nations* (1776) Book I Chapter I). For a fuller discussion, see Clifford F. Pratten’s ‘The Manufacture of Pins’ (1980).

industry' (Greinert 2005, p. 26). By 'domestic system', Greinert is alluding to a situation where the manufacture of certain products (such as textiles) were not necessarily factory-based but produced in an environment akin to a 'cottage' industry but on a greater scale than that of the craft-based workshop. Whether we choose to view this transformation in two, three or more stages, such transformations were necessary both for internal infrastructure (railways, housing, drainage, bridges, roads) and for the pursuit of empire (the same infrastructure as internal development but also including steam-powered shipping and high-calibre weaponry, for example).

## 5.2 German Vocational Education and the Influence of Georg Kerschensteiner

I have already looked in detail (in Chap. 4) on the evolution and development of a 'free-market' or 'voluntarist' vocational model in England and the rest of the United Kingdom over the past two centuries. It will be insightful to view here how European vocational education systems evolved historically in comparison with the English version. Winch and Hyland have pointed out that 'Germany has a strong and distinctive tradition of liberal education' (Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 36) and this has informed vocational practice there from the nineteenth century onwards. By this, Winch and Hyland are alluding to the fact that students in a German *Berufsschule* are required to continue their study of subjects that are often understood to form part of a traditional liberal education (history, geography, the social sciences) *as part of* their vocational programme (and are allocated specific hours for these subjects each week on every apprentice's study timetable). There is not the same division between the 'academic' and the 'vocational' in German apprenticeship training as there has usually been in English educational parlance. It is seen as essential for plumbers, carpenters, business administrators and motor mechanics to have a solid knowledge of the humanities as part of their education. I will argue that the integration of humanities (with specific reference to citizenship education) into vocational programmes gives German apprentices a more rounded and richer view of their crafts and professions. However, because of the lack of a tradition of general or liberal education on vocational programmes in English further education, I have argued that the embedding of citizenship education into the occupations themselves (rather than studied as separate subjects as is the case with the German model) is more appropriate. This issue will be discussed later on in this chapter. The focus throughout the book has been (and will be) on further education in England rather than vocational education within the secondary school sector.

The work and practice of Georg Kerschensteiner, the Bavarian educationalist and administrator, is particularly important with regards to citizenship education on German vocational and apprenticeship programmes. Kerschensteiner became the director of Munich's schools during the late nineteenth-century and 'introduced . . . a very extensive system of vocational secondary schools and post-compulsory

vocational schools from the early twentieth century until the 1920s' (Winch 2006, p. 381) before entering politics as 'a radical liberal deputy' (Winch 2006, p. 381). It is from this foundation that Germany's highly-regarded 'dual system' emerged. Put simply,

Kerschensteiner's [method] in Munich was to increase the practical element in school education in the *Volksschule* or elementary school (up to the age of 14) and to develop a mandatory element of college education for apprentices, which took the form of release for a couple of days a week. Thus developed the *Berufsschule* or vocational college, which worked in concert with the workplace to develop an integrated vocational education for apprentices between the ages of 14 and 20 (Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 34).

The incorporation of a college element into vocational education and training was to try and avoid the English malaise of dividing academic and vocational education into separate compartments (with the vocational sector treated as a poor second-best). In England, liberal education was (and often still is) presented in distinction to vocational education – to put it crudely, 'head' work was separate from 'hand' work. Kerschensteiner attempted to break this opposition by introducing more practical work into compulsory schooling and maintain the study of the humanities in apprenticeship training as part of a philosophy of general education where 'head' and 'hand' were not seen as diametric opposites but as equally vital to a full and vivifying education for children and young adults. Both facets were necessary to *Bildung* (the German-language concept of the growth and development of the young person).

Interestingly, Brockmann, Clarke and Winch link the development of the German dual system to the burgeoning German nation state as a means of 'co-opt[ing] the working classes' (Brockmann et al. 2008, p. 557). During Bismarck's long tenure as German Chancellor, anti-socialist legislation was put in place in 1878 as a means of stifling the popularity and influence of the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) 'but the German Reich [was] more or less ... forced to withdraw [this legislation] in 1890' (Sassoon 1997, p. 7) due to the strength of the SPD, 'the most successful socialist party of the time' (Sassoon 1997, p. 7). In 1891, Marxism was adopted as the official ideology of the SPD (Sassoon 1997, p. 7) and there was considerable debate in this period on how to integrate the SPD (in particular) and the working class (in general) into the nation state. As Donald Sassoon has noted, 'The fear of revolution gave impetus to the trend towards social integration' (Sassoon 2006, p. 609). This was helped by the fact that the SPD was prepared to adopt 'legal' (i.e. electoral) measures rather than 'illegal' (i.e. revolutionary) ones to gain political power. The dual system, with its blend of 'work-based training, underpinned by theoretical knowledge, and general education' (Brockmann et al. 2008, p. 557) was seen as a means of introducing young apprentices (who were mainly from the working class) to the benefits of the existing social order by demonstrating their value and usefulness within such a social order – vocational education was not viewed as a neglected educational route (as it was in England) and the continuation of 'liberal' studies ensured that apprentices were not denied access to areas of academic knowledge that might inform their craft or industrial practices.

It would be wrong, however, to regard the dual system as a purely political attempt (cynical or otherwise) to bring the German working class into the fold of the new German nation state. Kerschensteiner, during and after his time as director of Munich's schools, was a vociferous advocate of Dewey. According to Philipp Gonon, '[f]or Kerschensteiner, "vocational education" is education "which qualifies the pupil for the field of work to which he feels inwardly called"' (Gonon 2009, p. 184). We can observe similarities here when Dewey speaks of

An occupation [as] a continuous activity having a purpose. Education through occupations consequently combines within itself more of the factors conducive to learning than any other method. It calls instincts and habits into play; it is a foe of passive receptivity (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 228).

Dewey was very careful, however, to state the need for a varied education and not to become too focused on one skill or area of study. Dewey talks of the 'tendency for every distinctive vocation to become too dominant, too exclusive and absorbing in its specialized aspect. This means emphasis upon skill or technical method at the expense of meaning' (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 227). One could argue that Kerschensteiner's advocacy of the dual system, which (as paraphrased by Gonon) 'guarantees that the aims of the apprentices' education are not limited to mere technical training and the achievement of occupational qualification' (Gonon 2009, p. 248) is an example of Dewey's educational philosophy in action. One can also draw parallels here between Dewey's and Kerschensteiner's connections between a sense of vocation and citizenship: Kerschensteiner 'considered vocational education – which he wanted to be recognised as an essential component of education – to be an important requisite for citizenship' (Gonon 2009, p. 15) and that there should be no fundamental distinction or disparity between vocational and academic education. Dewey, as we have seen in Chap. 4, wrote that '[a]n occupation is the only thing which balances the distinctive capacity of an individual with his [sic] social service' (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 227). Vocational education is seen by both thinkers as an integral part of what it means to be a citizen – to apply one's trade, craft or profession within a particular society or community is an essential facet of both citizenship and practice. Citizenship education (in a vocational context) thus has this sense of a dynamic between identifying the social, cultural and political aspects of an occupation and how occupations inform students' sense of themselves as citizens in the communities in which they live and work. The embedding of citizenship education into vocational programmes in English further education should be aiming to address both ends of this dynamic if it is to be truly effective. In Chap. 4, the work of MacIntyre was used to inform the links between citizenship and practice in terms of vocational education. According to Chris Higgins

apprenticeship to a practice is a protracted process because it aims at nothing less than self-transformation. The apprentice not only must hone technical skills, but also needs to learn new habits of vision and judgement (Higgins 2010, p. 254).

Kerschensteiner and Dewey would both argue, I suspect, that some form of citizenship education would be imperative in order for practitioners in a craft or



profession to acquire the vision and judgement necessary to work towards the excellences inherent in such crafts and professions. MacIntyre would question whether such concepts as ‘society’ and ‘community’ exist in modern or contemporary Europe except as part of the ‘multiplicity of fragmented concepts’ (MacIntyre 1985 [1981], p. 253), identified as the inevitable consequence of liberal pluralism. However, MacIntyre’s connection between practices and forms of excellence (‘A practice involves standards of excellence and obedience to rules as well as achievement of goods’ (MacIntyre 1985 [1981], p. 190)) is still pertinent to the discussion. Clearly, Kerschensteiner and Dewey describe similar points of reference to MacIntyre in terms of craft and excellence. Where they might disagree with MacIntyre is on the latter’s pessimistic contention that the evolution of political philosophy over the past two or three centuries has meant that any striving towards a genuine sense of citizenship education is already doomed because there no longer exist the components (political, cultural, intellectual) to facilitate concepts such as ‘citizenship’, ‘nation’, ‘society’ or ‘community’ (as MacIntyre understands these terms).

What is interesting, based on the discussion directly above, is that, according to Gonon, ‘Kerschensteiner hardly mentions the political dimension of Dewey’s works [throughout his own body of work]’ (Gonon 2009, pp. 118–119). Gonon goes on to say

Dewey’s emphasis of the relationship between democracy and education refers [not only] to the school but also to the on-going education of the committed citizen . . . The democratic society that Dewey envisaged was a society founded on experience which is based on the model of the impartial researcher (Gonon 2009, p. 134).

Whilst it might be strictly true that Kerschensteiner was reticent in citing the political aspects of Dewey’s educational philosophy, the tenor of Kerschensteiner’s own practice is largely in accord with Dewey’s belief in democracy being a lifelong education for each and every citizen. Christopher Winch makes an explicit connection when he writes of Kerschensteiner’s sense of

civic education, which has strong affinities with Dewey’s conception of a democratic education, is particularly suited to forms of economic democracy such as the German system of *Mitbestimmung* or co-determination, which is a central part of German economic life and which has an established role in promoting economic success as well as giving workers a stake in their enterprises (Winch 2006, p. 383).

Co-determination is an approach to industrial relations adopted by West Germany after World War Two in an attempt to heal the divisions in society that occurred during the Weimar and Nazi periods. Negotiation and compromise between employers and employees are the key factors in co-determination. Companies (of a certain size) are required to set up works councils (made up of elected representatives of the entire workforce) who are given statutory powers to negotiate with senior management on issues that concern and impact on employees (see Page 2006). Worker representatives are also required on some company boards to ensure the employee voice is heard during strategic decision-making processes. Inevitably,

the trade unions (under the umbrella of the *Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB)* [German Confederation of Trade Unions]) are heavily involved in the organisation and recruitment of works councils and worker representatives although the stance taken by the DGB has traditionally been less confrontational than that of their British and French counterparts. This is because the model for co-determination is one of consensus (in this sense, it mirrors procedures and processes around the importance of coalition in (West) German politics after World War Two) although there have been signs of strain, particularly since Reunification and the incorporation of eastern Germany into the *Bundesrepublik*.

Here the extension of citizenship education within vocational programmes to the outside world of work is overt and tangible. Kerschensteiner's incorporation of civics into *Beruf* (or 'vocation') could have and has had very practical benefits regarding the ability of workers (in their role as trade union or worker representatives) to negotiate directly with managers at site, *Länder* (regional) and national levels (for more on German co-determination in industry, see Page 2006). Certainly, Germany's sense of industrial democracy has been strengthened by workers trained in a vocational system where educational time and space is given to exploration of the wider issues impacting on crafts, trades and professions through civics (or citizenship education). A detailed example of this will be shown later in the chapter when I discuss how citizenship education is incorporated into a vocational programme at a *Berufsschule* in Stuttgart. It could be maintained that such training enables workers (as colleagues and representatives) to acquire the necessary 'vision and judgment' to argue and debate from a perspective informed by philosophy, politics or sociology applied to their own work. This is a means of seeing beyond purely narrow self-interest (which has plagued British industrial relations, on the side of both management and trade unions, for more than a century). Christopher Winch, in his book *Education, Work and Social Capital* (2000) argues forcefully for the connection between German co-determination and worker autonomy (as well as the economic benefits that accrue from such autonomy):

co-determination [in German industry, for instance] can be seen as part of a wider development towards greater autonomy within the society; that it can further increase competitiveness through co-operative decision-making; that innovation can be increased through the development of organisational flexibility based on co-determination (Winch 2000, p. 185).

There are instances, however, where Kerschensteiner diverges from Dewey's contentions on vocational education due to the different philosophical and economic traditions both were writing within. Winch makes an interesting comparison of Adam Smith and Friedrich List regarding their views on economic motivation and activity. List was a nineteenth-century German economist who was influential in the creation of a 'National System' school of economics in contradistinction to the individualistic philosophy espoused by Smith and his followers. List saw a profound contrast between the behaviour of individuals and that of nation states (in terms of economic priorities and requirements) (see List 2005 [1841]). According to Winch, 'Smith's account of the economy was of a nexus of individuals and their activity, in

which values are produced, exchanged and consumed' (Winch 1998, p. 366). This is in distinction to List who, according to Winch,

[did] not separate out a moral psychology for economic life from one applicable to the rest of life, but [made] the assumption that a balance of self- and other-regarding virtues is just as appropriate in economics as elsewhere (Winch 1998, p. 370).

Smith was suspicious of certain educational institutions including 'the old universities and the guilds (with their associated system of apprenticeship) ... which acted to control the labour supply and to bid up the price of labour beyond what it would be in a free market' (Winch 1998, p. 371). In this sense, Smith personifies the classic Anglo-Saxon division of the economy from any form of political society (or, in Marxist terms, the separation of base from superstructure). In contrast to Smith, a Listian model of vocational education is one where '[s]tate intervention is likely to be necessary to create the condition for high-skill [education and training]' (Winch 1998, p. 373). What is presented here is a free-market 'voluntarist' view of vocational education (where employers are largely or fully in control of the process) compared and contrasted with a more 'corporatist' model (where vocational education is seen as a partnership between the state, employers, unions and other vested interests).

Whilst it would be simplistic to link Kerschensteiner with List and Dewey with Smith in some crude form of polarity, there are points at which comparisons (using the thinking of Smith and List) can tease out differences between Kerschensteiner and Dewey. Clearly, Dewey is highly sympathetic to the notion of education as being an integral part of the democratic society, his 'mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience' (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 68). Like Kerschensteiner, Dewey believes it is 'arbitrary to separate industrial competency from capacity in good citizenship' (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 92). Where the two diverge (if only slightly at times) is in the emphasis Dewey places on the individual in relation to experience (be that in the classroom, workshop or elsewhere). Dewey says

In just the degree in which connections are established between what happens to a person and what he [sic] does in response, and between what he does to his environment and what it does in response to him, his acts and the things about him acquire meaning. He learns to understand both himself and the world of men [sic] and things (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 202).

In comparison, Kerschensteiner 'would like to educate the community into a moral collective personality, which depends on the strength of the individual members' (Gonon 2009, p. 181). Here, individuality (whilst vitally important) is fused on one level into something greater than the individual, Kerschensteiner's 'moral collective personality'. There is nothing in Dewey that contains quite the same force of collectivism, for all his emphasis on terms such as 'community', 'society' and 'democracy'. It is not stretching concepts too far to see connections between the 'moral collective personality' advocated here and List's insistence 'on the importance of *productive powers* which he saw as all the means by which a nation generates, preserves and develops its ability to produce' [emphasis in the original] (Winch 1998, pp. 368–369). Neither List nor Kerschensteiner conceived production or the education of producers as an atomised process of individual

efforts or transactions brought into cohesion by some invisible hand. The moral force (particularly for Kerschensteiner) was in the notion that citizens are producers and producers are citizens. Smith, certainly, was unable or unwilling to see such a connection – for him, the producer (or any other worker, for that matter) ‘is a self-interested atom in a mass of other such atoms’ (Winch 1998, p. 370). Dewey’s interpretation is much more sophisticated – he would never agree to the depiction of society given by Smith. However, in Dewey’s description of modern society as ‘many societies more or less loosely connected’ (Dewey 2007 [1916], p. 20) there is a difference in the sense of social cohesion from that offered by Kerschensteiner. In fairness, Dewey is closer to Rawls than Smith in his view of society as (to quote Rawls) ‘a number of differing . . . political conceptions of justice compet[ing] with one another in society’s political debates’ (Rawls 2005 [1993], p. 46). What all three theorists (Dewey, Rawls and Smith) display is an adherence or identification with the notion of industrialised (and post-industrialised?) nations as comprising citizens far less connected or bound to one another than would be the case in Kerschensteiner’s moral collective personality. There are implications here for the way citizenship education is explored within vocational programmes by following either Dewey or Kerschensteiner (this is something we will return to later in this chapter). The main focus of German vocational education (in terms of apprenticeships and post-compulsory education) is the German dual-system and this is what we will now turn to.

### 5.3 The German Dual-System

The German dual-system has been the mainstay of German vocational education for many decades and is a partnership between employers, the trade unions and the state.

According to Gerhard Bosch,

[t]he main characteristics of the dual system of vocational training in Germany are its basis in duality and corporatism and the concept of occupation . . . The training is embedded, on the one hand, in firms and, on the other, in the state school system. Entry to a training programme is dependent on the conclusion of a training contract with a firm . . . Apprentices in the dual system take courses in the workplace as well as at public vocational schools, where both general subjects (language, economics, mathematics etc.) and the theoretical basics of their chosen trade or occupation are taught (Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 143).

To briefly put the German system into context, secondary education has been run according to three ‘streams’: the *Gymnasium*, which prepares students for entrance into university through a strictly academic curriculum; the *Realschule*, which is seen as an ‘intermediate’ stream and often focuses on technical education; and the *Hauptschule*, where students are given a general vocational education in preparation for work. Some German *Länder* (regions) also provide the *Gesamtschule*, which is roughly equivalent to the English comprehensive school. The proportions of

children going to each of these schools will depend on the provision for each school within a particular *Land* (as German education is devolved to the individual regions) but Bosch offers a national summary from figures for 2005:

- 8.2 % Leave school **without** the lower secondary school qualification
- 24.8 % Leave school **with** the lower secondary school qualification
- 42.9 % Leave school with the intermediate school qualification (or equivalent)
- 24.1 % Leave school with the Higher Education entrance qualification (adapted from Bosch in Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 141)

The *Berufsschule* is the vocational college that supports German apprentices in their education and training *after* compulsory schooling. As we shall see later on in this chapter, there is no strict progression between one type of German secondary school and the *Berufsschule* (many *Gymnasium* graduates, for example, often prefer to take an apprenticeship before going to university in order to gain high quality technical education and work experience) although, increasingly, students from the *Hauptschule* are finding it difficult to acquire apprenticeships due to increased competition for places and perceived weaknesses in the employability skills of students from this sector of German secondary education.

This form of post-compulsory vocational education (referred to as the ‘dual system’ because it involves both employers and the state in the training of apprentices) has a long heritage in the German education system. As stated above, the reforms advocated by thinkers such as Kerschensteiner, and the implementation (in the 1930s, for instance) of training ordinances (sets of competencies or skills required to be a craftsman or master craftsman in a particular field of employment) meant that vocational education was taken seriously within the German system. These training ordinances on specific crafts and occupations (see Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 145) provided both the foundation and the growth in the dual-system as a means of training people into specific employment sectors. What has been critical to the development of the dual-system is the deep participation of both employee and employer bodies, in the form of vocational training committees, who

decide on the suitability of firms to provide training ... examination committees for each occupation with equal representation for employers, employees and instructors [are established]. The unions, for example, have a right to delegate about 170,000 experts to these numerous local examination committees in all 343 occupations all over Germany (Bosch and Charest 2010, pp. 144–145).

This is markedly different to practice in England to the extent that ‘a commission set up by the English Ministry of Education to analyse German industrial training was astonished’ when they encountered the sense of ‘social obligation’ German firms had ‘to offer a training place to all young people seeking one’ (Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 152). Whilst the ‘voluntarist’ model in England has formed an industrial culture where companies have tended to take on apprentices at their own bidding, often without support or recourse to other social partners, in Germany firms are seen as key participants (along with unions or other employee associations) in a collaborative arrangement where apprentices are trained in the workplace alongside courses provided in state-funded vocational colleges (*Berufsschulen*).

In England something similar did occur from the 1950s to the 1970s through the phenomenon of ‘day-release’ apprentices. In 1965, for instance, according to Andy Green and Norman Lucas, there were 653,000 students on day-release courses in further education colleges (Green and Lucas 1999, p. 17). What is different between the dual-system in Germany and the day-release model in England is the level of partnership between employers, unions and the state. In Germany, as we have seen, employers and unions have been largely responsible for the maintenance and development of professional qualifications (through the review of industrial ordinances, for instance). In England, the trade unions have rarely had a long or solid input into professional qualifications (and certainly at nothing like the level of engagement found in Germany) while the links for the apprentices themselves between training at the workplace and at college were often unsystematic. William Richardson refers to research undertaken in Bristol in 1955/1956 by Liepmann where ‘failure and non-completion was “a general disease” of the provision on offer due to “the rough and ready manner in which technical courses were joined to apprenticeship”’ (Liepmann cited in Richardson 2007, p. 394).

The dual-system has continued as the standard vocational route for apprentices in Germany but it has not been without its critics, particularly with structural changes in the German economy since the 1990s. As Brockmann, Clarke and Winch have noted, throughout the past two decades there have been increasing pressures to open up the German dual system, as the sharp demarcation of *Berufe* [vocation] is no longer seen as suited to accelerating technological developments, one effect of which has been that employers have been increasingly reluctant to offer training places (Brockmann et al. 2008, p. 558). This would echo what Bosch has also noted regarding negative developments in the dual-system. As he states, ‘Over the past 25 years, the dual system has been through several major crises. In the mid-1980s, almost 700,000 new training contracts were concluded, while in 1995 the figure was only 450,000’ (Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 153). Although the numbers have increased since, with 631,000 new contracts concluded in 1999 and 550,000 in 2005 (Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 153), these are still well below the figures attained in the mid-1980s. Other factors, as well as the technological changes argued above, have been used to explain the decline in apprentice numbers, including the weakness of the eastern German economy after unification. But is there something in Brockmann, Clarke and Winch’s point about the acceleration of technological development and the dual-system’s inability to cope with such changes? The picture appears to be somewhat mixed. According to Behrens, Pilz and Greuling, there is a

strong connection between a successful performance in school and labour market opportunities in times of economic decline and political reorganisation [leading] to extended staying-on rates in the education system (Behrens et al. 2008, p. 94).

This would appear to offer little in terms of positives for the apprenticeship system as the evidence suggests that young people tend to remain in education when times are hard rather than seeking training or employment. However, Behrens et al. also find that ‘[y]oung people with *Abitur* [the German secondary-school certificate that allows entry to university] [who opt] for the dual-system are aiming

at vocational qualifications in the apprenticeship ... which can also be of use at university and afterwards' (Behrens et al. 2008, p. 100). Here is proof of the flexibility of the dual-system as it allows progression into higher education for those students wishing to acquire vocational education and training after they have completed the *Abitur*. So the messages given here regarding the currency of the dual-system in the contemporary German education system are contradictory. Recent downturns in the German economy have inevitably affected the ability of employers to offer apprenticeships (with the corollary of students deciding to stay on in the school system rather than risk their fortune in the labour market). Many holders of *Abitur*, however, have found that the mixture of academic qualifications with well-regarded vocational qualifications as part of an apprenticeship scheme enable them to go into higher education (often in the *Fachhochschulen* or 'universities of applied sciences') with work-related skills that will stand them in good stead employment-wise after graduation.

The German dual-system, through the influence of Kerschensteiner and others, has always been mindful of the crucial balance between vocational and general education as part of an apprentice's training and development. Let us take, as an example, the *Schule für Farbe und Gestaltung* (or commercial school for art and design) in Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg. Critically, from a citizenship education point-of-view, students at the *Schule* are required to study *Geschichte* (History) and *Gemeinschaftskunde* (Social Studies) as part of their vocational training (usually between one-and-a-half and two hours per week). In one of the modules at the mid-point of their training, students undertake a module on 'The Individual and the State'. According to the institution's website, this module

Looks at the tension between individual freedom and state power and raises the legitimacy of power and the participation of individuals in a democracy. Based on an actual case study – if possible, with a regional focus – the module attempts to recognise and understand the students' interests around the responsibility of opinion-forming parties, associations and social groups, as well as their own responsibilities, as citizens, in this process [my translation] (*Schule für Farbe und Gestaltung* 2011).

The module goes on to explore 'the historical emergence of the modern state and the emancipation of the individual, particularly around the democratic approaches adopted in German history, recognising the difficulties and dangers in building and maintaining democratic structures' [my translation] (*Schule für Farbe und Gestaltung* 2011). What is also interesting is the contemporary emphasis on 'the students' understanding that government action and the political commitment of the responsible citizen is required to meet the current threats of the democratic order' [my translation] (*Schule für Farbe und Gestaltung* 2011). One assumes that this is a reference to the current fears and concerns over terrorism (global and local) but there is something slightly paternalistic in the way this part of the course is phrased (particularly the use of terms such as 'responsible', 'threats' and 'order'). I will look at the difference between what I term 'active' and 'reasonable' citizenship in Chap. 6 (on adult education) but there does seem to be an instance of 'reasonable' citizenship applied here (by which I mean a form of citizenship where citizens are expected or required to adopt and follow behavioural norms instigated and upheld by the state and other powerful agencies). Finally, alongside the research and discussion



skills inherent within such study, the module also aims to embed presentation and problem-solving skills (as a means of providing general, transferable abilities that can be used in the workplace or academia).

What is impressive is the level of engagement with political issues and problems demonstrated by such an account. The fact that apprentices are expected to investigate the historical connections and disjunctions regarding democracy in Germany (Bismarck, Wilhelmine Germany, the Weimar Republic, the Nazi state, the West German economic ‘miracle’ and Communism in the East, Reunification) gives a real sense of democratic citizenship as something ‘longitudinal’ (Schule für Farbe und Gestaltung 2011), as an ongoing development (and sadly, at times, a loss). It could be argued that the study of politics as part of a general education in Germany appears to be reflected in the greater political engagement German young people show (in comparison with their English contemporaries). This is borne out by Karen Evans in a survey of citizenship and vocational education: ‘Among German young adults, our results indicate a wider interest and involvement in activities associated with citizenship than is apparent in their English counterparts’ (Evans 1995, p. 14).

The sense of citizenship requiring a historical perspective in order to give it context and content is strongly made by Gary Clemitshaw when he speaks of ‘the important play of history, especially traumatic experience, with conceptions of citizenship’ (Clemitshaw 2008, p. 138). Clemitshaw is critical of the conception of citizenship as articulated in the ‘The Crick Report’ (1998) where he detects ‘the absence of significant reference to identity, and to the history of the peoples that comprise the society it addresses, when compared with the conceptions of citizenship in other countries’ (Clemitshaw 2008, p. 144). (Clemitshaw does, however, praise Crick himself (as opposed to the Report) in another section of the article for his advocacy of history ‘as a vehicle for citizenship education’ (Clemitshaw 2008, p. 145)). As I have shown in Chap. 3, whilst the Crick Report advocated political literacy as a key part of citizenship education (see QCA 1998), this was not followed through in its entirety by the Government when it implemented the proposals of the Report. It is notable that whilst the Crick Report states very specifically the need to teach students ‘about the values, interests and policies of the main political parties and pressure groups’ (QCA 1998, p. 51), these are conspicuous by their absence in the National Curriculum document for Citizenship where the political process becomes individualised through such statements as ‘Pupils should be taught about ... the importance of playing an active part in democratic and electoral processes’ (DfEE 1999, p. 15) without any suggestion of the political and social vehicles students will need to join in order to play such an active role (except for reference to ‘voluntary groups’ (DfEE 1999, p. 15) – it does seem odd that these are mentioned when political groups *are not*). This is certainly in contrast with what is proposed in the German *Berufsschulen* where politics is seen as a historical process open to critical scrutiny, harking back to the ‘dangers and difficulties in building and maintaining democratic structures’ mentioned in the Schule für Farbe und Gestaltung’s prospectus for the module on ‘The Individual and the State’ [*Geschichte und Gemeinschaftskunde, GGK*]. There is nothing in the National Curriculum to suggest the genuine struggles and hardships required by successive generations to both attain and maintain democratic



citizenship. Everything is phrased in the uplifting language of ‘opportunities’, ‘diversity’, ‘respect’ and ‘community activities’ (DfEE 1999, p. 15). There are even fewer instances of the political process and citizenship being explored in the English equivalent of the *Berufsschule*, the further education college. This is something I will look at in more detail later.

How do vocational teachers perceive themselves and their profession in Germany? We saw in Chap. 4 that vocational teachers in England have viewed themselves as ‘vocational specialists’, identifying primarily with the trade or industry in which they first trained rather than as teachers with vocational expertise and experience. Certainly, the lack of professional status for vocational teachers in England has echoes throughout Europe. As Pradeep Kumar Misra has noted,

Given the basic importance of vocational learning for economic success, it is remarkable that its practitioners so lack the level of social recognition needed to establish it as a well-regarded profession that attracts societal affirmation as well as attracting appropriate individuals to practise as vocational educators (Misra 2011, p. 31).

In this landscape, it is perhaps no wonder that English vocational teachers stick closely (in terms of identity) to their initial career rather than the teaching profession. The lack of professional recognition is partly due to the fact that ‘in common parlance the word teacher refers generically to ‘school teacher’ and people hardly realise the contribution of VET [Vocational Education and Training] educators as school teachers’ (Misra 2011, p. 36). This phenomenon is more surprising in a German context where vocational education has, historically, a more prominent place within the education system. As we have already noted earlier in this chapter, vocational education is often the route of choice for students who have completed *Abitur*. University is not seen as the ‘default’ route for students leaving school with higher-level certificates. This is, in part, due to the respect given to apprenticeships and the dual-system in Germany. So why does it appear as though German vocational teachers, according to Misra, are held in low professional esteem alongside their English counterparts? It is important to bear in mind that Misra’s account is an overview of the European VET system and makes little differentiation between the *national* systems of vocational education. Richard Pring, in his analysis of vocational education, makes a crucial point about the difference between the English and German models:

Vocational training always has had a relatively low status in Britain. The “practical” and the “vocational” have seldom given access to university or to the prestigious and professional jobs as they do . . . in Germany (Pring 1995, p. 55).

It would be difficult to envisage quite the same lack of professional status and esteem for vocational educators in a system such as Germany’s, where the vocational route is respected and seen as a potential pathway into higher education than is the case in England where this has not been the case. Although, as Misra has detected, there appears to be a sense throughout Europe of vocational education and training as a poor relation (in comparison with schools and universities) it is important to express the point that this neglect is relative to each country – what is perceived as a lack of professional parity or esteem in England would not necessarily

be the same as in Germany (for example). Certainly, there are many indicators to suggest that vocational education (and, by implication, educators) in Germany is more highly regarded than it is in England.

## 5.4 The French System of Vocational Education: *Lycées Professionnel*

As with Britain and Germany, France has made significant changes to vocational education over recent decades. According to Philippe Méhaut, France has seen

the development of vocational training at *baccalauréat* (upper secondary education) level, the massification and vocationalisation of certain university streams, the recent reform of the framework for continuing training and the establishment for recognising prior learning (VAE) (Méhaut in Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 110).

However, there are noticeable differences between the way France has developed its vocational education system in comparison with both German and England. Winch and Hyland have noted that ‘France has developed a school-based, centralized VET system’ (Winch and Hyland 2007, p. 31) as opposed to German’s dual-system and England’s more voluntarist approach. The centralised nature of France’s vocational system reflects tendencies in education generally in France where the Ministry of Education plays a powerful role in the administration and development of educational institutions and the curricula taught inside them.

The current French school-based route Méhaut outlines as follows:

The bulk of vocational training at secondary education level . . . is provided in vocational *lycées*. Students enrol on a full-time basis and are thus regarded as being out of the labour force. The curriculum includes general subjects (French, history, foreign languages, etc.) and ‘vocational’ subjects. Students spend part of their time on workshop projects (on the school premises) and in-firm internships. The majority of vocational *lycées* are state schools (Méhaut in Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 117).

What is immediately obvious here is the relative lack of participation by employers and unions in the French system when compared to Germany. Although the *lycées* and *Berufsschulen* are both state institutions, the methodology is very different. Whilst the state-funded *Berufsschule* is one partner in a dual-system where employers and unions (through vocational training committees) form the other partners, there is not the same strong connection between the *lycée professionnel* and other social partners – the links made are relatively informal through the guise of work placements and internships rather than employer associations and unions having a vital input within the actual vocational qualifications themselves. In this sense, the *lycée* is an interesting counterpoint to the corporatist dual-system model in Germany and the voluntarist ethos traditionally espoused in England. Whilst Germany strongly adheres to the idea of social partnership when it comes to vocational education (certainly at apprenticeship level) and England has historically adopted an approach where employers lead on training (with

financial and other support from the state), France offers a model where the state is highly-influential in providing vocational provision.

It would be wrong, however, to think that *all* vocational education takes place at a *lycée professionnel*. As Méhaut makes perfectly clear, apprenticeships are an important aspect of the French vocational system too. He notes that, in 1998, ‘16 per cent of those leaving the education and training system earned their qualification through apprenticeships’ (Méhaut in Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 117). However, as in England, apprenticeships in France are ‘characterised by a high level of institutional instability. Although enrolment in apprenticeships increased in the 1960s (400,000 at its highest point), it fell to less than 150,000 in the mid-1970s and rose again more recently to about 350,000’ (Méhaut in Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 117). This rise and fall and rise again in apprenticeships in France mirror England’s experiences over the past half-century (as indicated in Chap. 4). Historically, however, ‘apprenticeships had many more negative aspects than school-based training’ (Méhaut in Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 117). According to Méhaut, ‘[p]ass rates were lower than those for school-based training, yet the qualifications did not offer any obvious advantages to individuals once they were in the labour market’ (Méhaut in Bosch and Charest 2010, pp. 117–118), although the image of apprenticeships has improved over recent years with the ‘integration of apprenticeships into general educational streams’ (Méhaut in Bosch and Charest 2010, p. 118). On reflection, it would be fair to say the *lycée professionnel* has had more prestige than the apprenticeship system in France. It is ultimately this contention that distinguishes the French vocational system from either Germany or England.

What opportunities are there for citizenship education within the vocational *lycée* in comparison with the German *Berufsschule* or the English further education college? In France, many students at a *lycée professionnel* (on completing compulsory schooling) would enrol onto a *brevet de technicien supérieur* (BTS) which is a 2-year full-time course (sometimes referred to as *bacc + 2*) after completing a vocational *baccalauréat professionnel* at the same *lycée*. This can lead to the pursuit of a 2-year higher education *diplôme universitaire de technologie* (DUT) (similar to the English foundation degree). The *lycée professionnel* also provides for students at pre-*baccalauréat* level through the CAP (*certificat d’aptitude professionnelle*) and the BEP (*brevet d’études professionnelles*) (for more on the current level of qualifications in the French vocational system, see French Ministry of Education 2010a).

According to the French Ministry of Education, students in the preparatory classes of CAP programmes are expected to follow a course of *éducation civique* which encompasses four main themes:

1. Rights and duties of members of the educational community:
  - the life of the student in the *lycée*
  - the rights of expression in the *lycée*
  - the rights of procedure
  - the prevention of violence in the educational community

## 2. Equality, differences, discrimination:

- an example of exclusion related to racism, sexism or disability
- the issue of equal pay for women and men
- the debate over positive discrimination

## 3. The citizen and the media:

- the power of media imagery
- freedom of expression and the new media
- A 'great' event and how it is reported in newspapers

## 4. The citizen and justice:

- Becoming a juror
- the law, rights and liberty

(my translation, adapted from French Ministry of Education [2010b](#))

Whilst the content covered in the *éducation civique* syllabus at a French *lycée professionnel* is broadly similar to that seen for *Geschichte und Gemeinschaftskunde* in a German *Berufsschule*, there are significant differences, too. The most obvious is in the emphasis placed upon positive rights in the French system (those rights enshrined in law to encapsulate a particular sense of active citizenship). This largely reflects the civic republican tradition (or Jacobinism) in France where, in the words of Rawls,

if the citizens of a democratic society are to preserve their basic rights and liberties . . . they must also have to a sufficient degree the 'political virtues' (as I have called them) and be willing to take part in public life (Rawls [2005](#) [1993], p. 205).

It could be argued that the definition of citizenship advocated and taught in French vocational education puts a greater emphasis on participation in the public sphere, possibly, than the German dual-system. We saw that citizenship education in Germany is far more concerned with 'responsibilities', particularly those of political parties and other influential groups, which shows a national sensitivity to Germany's recent past. However, there is the danger of a false dichotomy by deliberately setting up 'rights' on the one hand and 'responsibilities' on the other. What both systems demonstrate is a requirement of vocational students to analyse the political societies they live in (and their role as citizens within such societies). Although citizenship education is seen as an important element in its own right within vocational programmes in France and Germany (due to the strong traditions of general education in each), the methodology in both systems is 'to build citizenship from the daily environment of the student or apprentice to the larger questions society asks of its citizens [my translation]' (French Ministry of Education [2010b](#)). The question of how England fared when adopting a similar syllabus (General and Liberal Studies) for vocational courses from the 1950s to the 1970s is discussed below.

One of the drawbacks of French vocational education is, in the words of Catherine Béduwé and Jean-François Giret, 'the strong mismatch between initial

vocational training and jobs' (Béduwé and Giret 2010, p. 69). This is not a completely unusual phenomenon in European vocational education and training. Behrens et al., in the qualitative evidence they received as part of their study of the German apprenticeship system, had this response from an ex-apprentice in Hanover:

So first I served the apprenticeship which was very important for my personal development, because I wanted to leave school and do something decent, you know, something practical, reasonable and to work, but after some time this was not enough anymore (Behrens et al. 2008, p. 99).

Similar stories can be found for the progression of English ex-apprentices as well. Is it fair, then, to speculate that the French model of primarily training young people in *lycées professionnel* (as opposed to the dual-system in Germany, for instance) might be the cause of this 'mismatch' as identified by Béduwé and Giret? What the French system lacks (and this is the same for the current English model of full-time vocational education in further education colleges) is a substantial presence for employers. As we have previously noted, students at the *lycées professionnel* will attend work placements (often in blocks of several weeks at a time) but this does not give employers the same voice and influence around vocational education as we find in the German dual-system. This apparent lack of connection between vocational training and the workplace, I suggest, is a major contributory factor in the mismatch between vocational training and jobs for young people in France. The training takes place in relative isolation from the workspaces that young people will venture into after graduation from the *lycée professionnel* and the transition offered by work placement is often insufficient to fully 'introduce' students into the specific crafts, trades or professions they are planning to go into. The terminology around job descriptions in French vocational institutions reflects the division between initial vocational education and training (IVET) and continuing education and training (CVET) and emphasises the line between school and work. As Misra has shown, '[t]he concept of teachers are primarily used in the IVET system, trainers in the CVET system [in France]' (Misra 2011, p. 32). Whilst this difference in the name given to education professionals in different vocational contexts is not unusual in European systems (it is the same in Belgium, for instance), the use of 'teacher' for practitioners in the *lycées professionnel* and 'trainer' for those who teach in the workplace does reinforce the sense of a disjuncture between initial vocational education taking place at the *lycée professionnel* and learning that happens in offices, studios or workshops either through work-placement or after completing a BEP (*baccalauréat professionnel*) and entering the labour force. One does not detect this same sense of a marked transition between study and work in the German dual-system (where working for an employer is an integral part of the vocational model). It is, however, similar to the current tendency in English further education colleges for offering full-time vocational qualifications where workplace conditions are simulated and interaction with employers is through block-placement.

## 5.5 The Implications for English Vocational Education of an Analysis of the German and French Systems

As I have shown above, the English, German and French systems of vocational education are very different from one another in terms of their scope, institutions and openness to social partnerships between the state, employers and trade unions. England has maintained a largely voluntarist model of vocational education with the control and direction given to individual employers (although this has changed somewhat over the past 20 years with greater state intervention and the adoption of full-time vocational courses in FE colleges). France has adopted the state-funded and governed *lycées professionnel* as the primary institution for vocational education. Germany's dual-system is, to some extent, a combination of the English and French models although it goes beyond these comparisons through the implementation, within vocational education, of something similar to the co-determination model in post-World War Two industrial relations (in terms of the influence of *both* employers and unions in the administration and delivery of German vocational qualifications).

What defines the difference between current English vocational education, on the one hand, and German and French vocational education, on the other, is the emphasis the German and French models still place on the need and importance of a general education for vocational students. The study of *Geschichte und Gemeinschaftskunde* in German *Berufsschulen* and *éducation civique* in French vocational *lycées* is evidence of this. Yet this lack of general education on vocational courses in further education colleges has not always been the case. Bill Bailey and Lorna Unwin have charted the adoption, progress and demise of liberal education in further education colleges between 1957 and the late 1970s. Liberal education programmes were devised to strengthen and widen the curriculum for day-release students on college vocational programmes. According to Bailey and Unwin:

Courses in science and technological subjects could be seen as dangerous [in the view of policy-makers] to their students because of their over-specialized content, which left their graduates without the perspective of humanistic or liberal values to help them think about the uses and application of their knowledge (Bailey and Unwin 2008, p. 63).

This perceived lack of humanistic elements within science and technology subjects was seen as particularly 'dangerous' in the post-Hiroshima, Cold War environment of the late 1940s and 1950s when nuclear destruction was on the minds of many in government and education. After Hiroshima and Nagasaki (and, one might add, Belsen and Auschwitz), there was a palpable fear amongst legislators and opinion-makers of the 'amoral' aspects of science and technology – that these disciplines, in themselves, did not necessarily lead to tolerance, cooperation and humane progression (as was the case with attitudes towards science and technology in the Victorian period, for instance). Such fears and concerns were the catalyst for

such reports as Hutchinson (1956) (discussed below) and the steady incorporation of Liberal/General Studies into technical education from the late 1950s onwards.

Similar sentiments (albeit in a less apocalyptic vein) have been expressed by Richard Pring in his concept of ‘liberal vocationalism’. One of Pring’s fears regarding the academic/vocational divide that has crippled English education for two centuries is that

[Some] will be “liberally educated”, whilst the remainder are prepared through various training programmes for the world of work, remaining for the most part outside those intellectual and aesthetic traditions which mark out the educated person. Thus the difference between liberal education for the few and vocational preparation for the many becomes institutionalised within society (Pring 1995, p. 112).

It was this concern, voiced by many educationalists and others after the Second World War, which led to the adoption of General/Liberal Studies as part of vocational curricula from the late 1950s onwards. Bailey and Unwin cite *Liberal Education in a Technical Age*, the 1955 report by the National Institute of Adult Education (a precursor of the current NIACE), which stated: ‘there should be no stage or phase in education in which “the values commonly associated with a general education are dropped for a time because of the intense pressure of vocational preparation”’ (NIAE 1955 cited in Bailey and Unwin 2008, p. 63). What is fascinating about this position is that these are the very concerns expressed by Alison Wolf in her recent report on vocational education:

16–19 year old students pursuing full time courses of study should not follow a programme which is entirely ‘occupational’, or based solely on courses which directly reflect, and do not go beyond, the content of National Occupational Standards (DFE 2011, p. 14).

Certainly citizenship education would be an important case of going beyond the content on National Occupational Standards with regards to English vocational education.

What, then, did Liberal/General Studies consist of? According to Bailey and Unwin:

Often the schemes of work ... were based on ... four strands ... These can be summarised as: (i) the young worker in the adult world; (ii) the development of moral values; (iii) the ‘bridge’ between school and working life; and (iv) the continuation of [students’] general education ... In more concrete terms, these strands might include a study by students of their industry in its local context, discussion of current affairs and political issues, money matters, personal issues and ‘practical English’ (Bailey and Unwin 2008, p. 65).

What is striking about this synopsis of a typical Liberal/General Studies curriculum is just how close many of the subjects covered are to contemporary notions of citizenship education (particularly for 16–19 year old students). If we return to the report *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds In Education and Training* (2000), it states:

[w]hether in school, college or workplace, young adults should have opportunities to learn about their rights and responsibilities, to understand how society works, and to enhance the skills they need in order to be active citizens. These opportunities should be an integral part of all education and training programmes for 16–19 year olds (FEFC 2000, p. 12).



The only key points included in the quote from Bailey and Unwin that are missing in the extract from *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds* are those of ‘[the student’s] industry in a local context’ and ‘practical English’ and these are dealt with in various other sections of the later report. Looking at the module on ‘The Individual and the State’ taught currently at the Schule für Frabe und Gestaltung in Stuttgart, the similarities are impressive when compared with Liberal/General Studies in English further education. In both instances, the worker/apprentice is encouraged to be an active citizen (the connection between the relevant industry or craft and the local context seems to be more explicit in Liberal/General Studies than *Geschichte und Gemeinschaftskunde* although this might be due to the effects of translation). The study of democracy in the contemporary German *Berufsschule* also focuses more on the potential dangers facing democratic structures which might be due partly to national-historical reasons (the very fragile state of democratic structures in Weimar Germany, for instance) and the current political situation regarding the perceived threat of terrorism. What does not come across strongly in the *Berufsschule* is the sense of embedding political or citizenship education within vocational areas in order to contextualise the material or discussion. This, I suspect, is part of the importance laid on continuing general studies within vocational programmes through the influence of Kerschensteiner and the German tradition of *Bildung*. Because Germany does not suffer the same division of academic and vocational studies as England has historically, the incorporation of general education into apprenticeship programmes is accepted and deemed relevant and appropriate.

What I advocated in Chap. 4 is the embedding of citizenship topics and subjects into vocational programmes in English further education colleges. For citizenship education to have any authority or relevance, it needs to be incorporated within the vocational programmes rather than studied separately (as a practical example, the embedding of Key Skills has proved far more effective than teaching literacy, numeracy and ICT separately from the vocational subject). Interestingly, a good deal of practice in Liberal/General Studies in the 1950s to 1970s in England worked on something approaching the embedded model. Although many of the teachers in General/Liberal Studies ‘were arts and humanities graduates’ (Bailey and Unwin 2008, p. 65), through the Association of Liberal Education (formed in 1961), practitioners of General/Liberal Studies believed ‘[i]t [was] the duty of teachers to examine and revise the subject-matter and methods of their teaching’ (Bailey and Unwin 2008, p. 66). Some of these revisions of subject-matter and methods were attempts to create courses of general studies that were sufficiently contextualised to specific industries, crafts or localities to ensure they remained relevant for students studying on vocational programmes. It would be wrong, however, to see the introduction of General/Liberal Studies as entirely successful. There was often resentment from vocational tutors

who held the view that technical education was vocational and, as such, a complete educational experience in its own right. Therefore, to ‘add on’ an element of general education was unnecessary; this view was sometimes passed on to the students (Bailey and Unwin 2008, p. 66).



The term ‘add on’ is crucial here. If general education or citizenship education is seen as an ‘add on’, as something separate from the main course of study, then a certain amount of suspicion will arise around it. This was the case for General/Liberal Studies in the 1960s and 1970s and it would be the same for citizenship education in the early twenty-first century. There is not sufficient sense of a tradition of general education in England to ensure the acceptance of separate general or citizenship programmes in vocational areas from the various practitioners within the further education community. England has never had a Kerchensteiner to crusade for and implement such programmes.

To teach citizenship as something removed from other parts of the vocational curriculum would be a mistake, in any case. As I hope I have shown in Chap. 4, there is sufficient material in *any* vocational programme or course of study to explore the social, political and ethical factors implicit (and explicit) to the craft or industry. The Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS), as part of their materials for post-16 citizenship programmes, recommend that colleges ‘[d]ecide on the kinds of approaches to citizenship that will provide a good fit with your college’s curriculum’ (LSIS 2009 [2006], p. 12). This can apply cross-curricula (we have already seen how that might work with examples from City of Bristol College and Hull College in Chap. 3) but, critically, it also needs to apply within individual vocational areas if students are to see the relevance and purpose of citizenship themes. The best practice from the legacy of General/Liberal Studies in the 1950s to 1970s offers us possible ideas and solutions on how citizenship education might work in contemporary further education.

## 5.6 Conclusion

As the analysis above has shown, England, France and Germany have adapted their vocational education systems to meet economic, political, cultural and educational expectations. It has been noted that the model used by each country had radical implications for the delivery of vocational education and training (and the status and level of prestige accorded to such education within the overall system of learning). The English voluntarist model (although, over the past few decades, increasingly state-directed), the German dual-system and the French state-sponsored *lycée professionnel* are each nation’s response to the industrial and post-industrial climate they face as ‘mature’ economies and democracies.

What are the implications for citizenship education within English vocational programmes from this comparative study? We have seen that general education is still a very important facet of vocational curricula in both Germany and France to ensure *all* students receive (at least on paper) a ‘rounded’ education that does not enforce specialisation too early in a student’s career. It has been argued that the subjects and topics encompassed in *éducation civique* within the French vocational system or *Geschichte und Gemeinschaftskunde* in German *Berufsschulen* are vital for any form of citizenship education in vocational programmes. As

the English tradition of vocational education does not have a strong element of general education within it, a separate study of citizenship within vocational courses would be unproductive. This proved to be the case in the 1960s and 1970s when General/Liberal Studies were sometimes seen by vocational specialists as incidental or irrelevant to the craft or profession studied and were undermined accordingly. Citizenship education has a better foundation when best practice from contemporary European VET ('The Individual and the State' module from the *Schule für Frabe und Gestaltung*) or earlier English examples (the contextualised approach by some General/Liberal Studies teachers through the Association of Liberal Education) are used to embed citizenship themes, topics and projects *within the vocational areas themselves*. Each area of the vocational curriculum (be it Sport, Construction, Health and Social Care or Business) is rich and deep enough to enable political, cultural or environmental issues to be investigated and debated by young people enrolled onto these courses. This is not to rule out cross-curricula projects or initiatives but it is only within the specific vocational courses students have signed up for that they likely or willing to engage with the many citizenship issues inherent in any practice.

## Chapter 6

# The Self-Help Tradition in Adult Education

In Chap. 4, I discussed in detail how one of the two main traditions in further and adult education, the apprenticeship tradition, might accommodate citizenship education within its philosophical frameworks. In Chaps. 4 and 5, I discussed how citizenship education on vocational programmes in further education might benefit from exploring citizenship within occupational practices. In this chapter, attention is now turned to the other tradition, what Green and Lucas (1999) term the ‘self-help’ tradition. The self-help tradition differs radically from the apprenticeship tradition in that whereas much apprenticeship training (in the last century or so, at least) has taken place within further education colleges and workplace environments (often in the form of ‘day release’ courses where most of the theoretical learning was classroom-based and applied within the apprentice’s specific industrial context or placement), classes that epitomize the self-help tradition of adult education have tended to take place in a variety of locations and contexts from community centres to local schools and encompass a vast range of subjects from the purely recreational (watercolour painting and yoga) to basic skills (adult literacy and numeracy) to preparation for university and professional courses. We will see that citizenship education (as elucidated so far) can only be a realistic or appropriate prospect for certain courses within the spectrum of adult education. The students’ motivations for coming onto specific programmes and the ultimate purpose or aim of each course will determine whether citizenship education is a viable proposal within the given curriculum.

The term ‘active’ citizenship will be used later in this chapter in distinction to what I have termed ‘reasonable’ citizenship. Active citizenship, in the manner used here, is a conception of citizenship where citizens are encouraged and empowered to conceive their political, cultural and social situations as a form of praxis rather than the ‘reasonable’ model advocated by various administrations (particularly before, during and after the major Reform Acts which led to an increase in the franchise). In this sense, ‘reasonable’ citizenship is framed as adherence to established norms and beliefs in a relatively uncritical way as a way of integrating people into the body politic. I will be advocating a form of citizenship within adult education that

emphasises the ‘active’ over the ‘reasonable’, using thinkers such as Mouffe and Freire to inform what constitutes ‘active’ citizenship (it is important here to reiterate that the sense of ‘reasonable’ used in this context is not the same as that used by Rawls in *Political Liberalism*, for instance). The link between adult education and the self-help tradition is an explicit one. The self-help tradition is one (as we shall see) where adult students established educational provision based on their own needs and interests and this tradition has informed, to greater or lesser degrees, the thinking around the purpose of adult education in England over the past two centuries.

Robert Tobias defines active citizenship (in terms of adult education) as programmes that ‘encourage [students] to participate in education and action that involves political commitment’ (Tobias 2000, p. 419). Political commitment does not necessarily begin and end with engagement with political parties as such. What active citizenship encourages is a belief in ‘collective, public action’ (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 69). The public action in question could revolve around the course itself in terms of discussion between teachers, students and the institution involved over the method, timings and content to be studied. On its widest level, however, Tobias views active citizenship programmes as ‘those programmes intended to promote, inform, analyse, critique, challenge, or raise public consciousness about public policies or issues’ (Tobias 2000, p. 421). It will be instructive as to whether (or how) citizenship in adult education accords with this definition of active citizenship. The concept of active citizenship is also an important concept within ‘The Crick Report’ where, citing Professor David Hargreaves, the report makes a moral and political case for active citizenship: ‘Active citizens are as political as they are moral; moral sensibility derives in part from political understanding; political apathy spawns moral apathy’ (QCA 1998, p. 10).

## 6.1 History of the Self-Help Tradition

What we term as adult education in the modern sense began in the late eighteenth century when, as Roger Fieldhouse has described,

a variety of literary, philosophical and scientific societies sprang up in many provincial towns to meet the growing demand of the middle classes for scientific and philosophical knowledge, intellectual stimulation and a fuller cultural life. (Fieldhouse 1996, p. 11)

This reflected the growing power of the middle classes (in terms of mercantile and industrial wealth) to demand its participation in adult education when entrance to university was still largely restricted to a tiny elite training in law, academia or the Anglican church at Cambridge or Oxford.

This demand for education grew in the nineteenth century when the working class began to agitate for similar opportunities. This does not detract from significant developments in working class education formulated prior to this period. E. P. Thompson has written of the profound impact of the London Corresponding

Society (for instance) during the ferment leading up to and including the Napoleonic Wars with revolutionary France where it contributed to ‘the first stages in the political self-education of a class [encompassing] silk-weavers, watchmakers, cord-wainers, cabinet-makers, carpenters, tailors [and various other trades and crafts]’ (Thompson 1991 [1963], p. 170). The LCS’s main activities were centred on political discussion and agitation. For instance, Thompson has noted that

[i]n the first month of its existence [January 1792] the society debated for five nights in succession the question – ‘Have we, who are Tradesmen, Shopkeepers, and Mechanics, any right to obtain a Parliamentary Reform?’ – turning it over ‘in every point of view in which we were capable of presenting the subject to our minds.’ They decided that they had. (Thompson 1991 [1963], p. 20)

It was integral to the Society to correspond with other societies across the country to exchange ideas and opinions around self-education and political action (hence the use of the term ‘corresponding’ in the Society’s title). Sheffield contained an important Corresponding Society of its own and maintained important communication links with the LCS (Thompson 1991 [1963], p. 19). The LCS also corresponded with societies in Derby, Stockport, Manchester, Nottingham and Coventry (amongst others) (Thompson 1991 [1963], p. 133). One of the key texts read and debated in this period was Thomas Paine’s *The Rights of Man* (1792) where the author linked ‘political and economic demands’ (Thompson 1991 [1963], p. 120) in an appeal for democratic, republican government. According to Thompson, *The Rights of Man* was ‘found in Cornish tin-mines, in Mendip villages, in the Scottish Highlands, and, a little later, in most parts of Ireland’ (Thompson 1991 [1963], p. 118) as a political manual, almost, for the self-determination and empowerment of working class people. However, it was during the nineteenth century that these embryonic movements and developments hardened into associations with genuine mass collective force through the onset of trade unionism, Chartism and the early Reform Acts. Fieldhouse has remarked that ‘employers generally were making very little provision for workers’ education’ (Fieldhouse 1996, p. 10) and it was this vacuum into which the self-help societies formed and flourished in order to provide working class people with the education they were not able to obtain elsewhere. Again, according to Fieldhouse, ‘[t]he collective form of this self-education was the mutual improvement society, which promoted “friends educating each other” amongst the working class’ (Fieldhouse 1996, p. 14). The themes of self-help and self-improvement were, to some extent at least, indicative of the dominant strains in nineteenth-century society where emphasis was often placed on civil society as a means of addressing or alleviating noticeable gaps left by the state in terms of education provision (in fact, until the Education Act of 1870 there was little evidence of educational provision at state level at all in England with civil society largely assuming the role of primary organiser of local education through a variety of voluntary and philanthropic organisations as well as churches of the various denominations). Where the self-help tradition in adult education differed from the orthodoxy was due to the fact that working class people took control of such associations rather than being simply the recipients of such services (in the form of charity). This sense of working class empowerment was allied to such developments

as Chartism, the early stages of the Co-operative Society and the emergence of a substantial trade union movement (culminating in the formation of the Trades Union Congress). From this perspective, it can be claimed that Mark Murphy's contention that '[c]ivil society ... is championed ... by more radically inclined adult educators, who view civil society as the site of radical learning and political struggle' (Murphy 2001, p. 345) has its basis in the very beginnings of modern adult education. However, the initial vibrancy of the self-help movement began to wane 'with the defeat of Chartism [and] independent working-class education, like the political movements which harboured it, found itself increasingly isolated' (Fieldhouse 1996, p. 17).

The waning of such educational movements, with notable exceptions (such as the setting up of the City and Guilds of London Institute in 1878), continued until the beginning of the twentieth century when parallel developments occurred with the growth of labour colleges and the Plebs' League on the one hand and the formation of the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) on the other. According to Brian Simon

Plebs was the national organisation which ... was set up originally by the Ruskin [College] strikers to further their ends ... [T]here were by 1920 a number of local organisations known as Labour Colleges ... It was this movement that took institutional form as the National Council of Labour Colleges (NCLC) in 1921. (Simon 1992, p. 23)

In 1903, the WEA was established as 'an organisation which offered tutors of university calibre, and other forms of assistance, to groups of workers who wished to study' (Simon 1992, p. 18) and Ruskin College was the site of conflict between the WEA and what was to become the Plebs' League. Founded in 1899, Ruskin College 'aimed to provide university-standard education for working class people so that they could act more effectively on behalf of working class communities and organisations – trade unions, political parties, cooperative societies, working men's institutes' (Ruskin College 2010). The WEA saw Ruskin College as a means to increase the University Extension courses already offered to working class adult students in other higher education institutions. The class of 1907 at the college, according to Colin Waugh, were 'flatly opposed to the WEA/Extension model' (Waugh 2009) and organised the strike which led to the organisation of the Plebs' League. The focus of the opposition was over the control of education for adults. Those students striking at Ruskin were concerned that the WEA/Extension model gave too much power to the state (in the form of funding adult courses) and that education should be under the ownership of the adult students themselves. The League (through the creation of Labour Colleges) instituted courses with a specific focus on the study of Marx and other socialist thinkers and regarded the WEA as 'collaborationist, particularly since the WEA was ... offered, and had readily accepted, grants from the Board of Education ... to finance its work' (Simon 1992, p. 20). In this sense, we can trace the Labour Colleges' refusal to accept state financing as a later example of the self-help groups and improvement societies of the previous century. The colleges feared that such funding might compromise their radical curriculum. In the words of Edmund and Ruth Frow: 'The Labour Colleges

were concerned with education which consisted of working class subjects taught in a working class way' (Frow and Frow in Simon 1992, p. 92). It would be a mistake, however, according to Jonathan Rose, to view the WEA's agenda as completely apolitical. He states that whilst

The WEA disavowed propaganda in favor [sic] of 'impartial' and 'nonpartisan' education ... it enthusiastically affirmed that the simple act of bringing university teachers and working people together in the same classroom had a political objective. (Rose 2010 [2001], p. 266)

Rose, in his search through personal accounts of working class education of the 1920s and 1930s, has found that 'political militancy was as much at home in the WEA as in the NCLC' (Rose 2010 [2001], p. 273) which suggests that the maneuvering between the WEA and NCLC (National Council of Labour Colleges) could be attributed partly to 'the competition for resources and students' (Rose 2010 [2001], p. 279) rather than any sharp ideological differences between the two organisations.

This state of parallel development and provision between the Labour Colleges and the WEA continued through the 1920s and 1930s. The Labour Colleges instituted themselves into the NCLC in 1921. According to Simon, by 1923 the NCLC 'had gained nine affiliations from national trade unions; in 1924 22 unions were affiliated [and] by 1926 the NCLC were now running the educational schemes for 28 unions with 1,800,000 [members]' (Simon 1992, p. 33). Similarly, the WEA expanded their provision so that '[b]etween 1924–25 and 1938–39 the number of [WEA one-year, one-term and shorter courses] tripled – from 682 and 2,172, while the number of students attending them more than doubled – from 17,000 to nearly 40,000' (Simon 1992, pp. 57–58). The educational differences between the two organisations, however, remained marked. Throughout the inter-war years

[i]f the Plebs and the NCLC on the one hand stood uncompromisingly for an *independent* approach, championing Marxism ... as its ideological standpoint ... the WEA ... nailed [its] flag to a non-partisan pluralism [emphasis in the original]. (Simon 1992, p. 63)

The advent of the Second World War and the reconstruction in its aftermath saw major changes in adult education. Although, by 1950, '43 trade unions with 3.2 million members had full schemes with the NCLC' (McIlroy in Simon 1992, p. 193), the organisation began to develop a 'more practical trade union education and an increasing distance [was] taken from Marxism and the left' (McIlroy in Simon 1992, p. 186) which, perhaps, reflected 'the decline of activism and ... greater educational mobility' (McIlroy in Simon 1992, p. 175). This process culminated in 1962 when the NCLC merged fully with the Trades Union Congress Education Department. Meanwhile, the WEA, by 1960, 'was catering for a small elite. Established for the working class it had been colonised by the middle classes' (McIlroy in Simon 1992, p. 235). This contention is reinforced and extended by Rose who (using a 1953 report by WEA official Ernest Green) states that 'in a typical town in 1949–50, only one adult in forty-six was taking an evening institute course, and only one in 265 was taking a class in the liberal arts' (Rose 2010 [2001], p. 296) which suggests the decline began even earlier than McIlroy suggests.

Richard Hoggart, in his seminal book *The Uses of Literacy*, is unsparing in his belief that mass advertising, commercial television and consumer capitalism (beginning in the 1950s) were responsible for the creation of a democracy ‘whose working-people are exchanging their birthright for a mass of pin-ups’ (Hoggart 2009 [1957], p. 189). The inability ‘to ignore the myriad voices of the trivial and synthetic sirens’ (Hoggart 2009, p. 291) of a debased popular culture (based on American standards and genres) are what was largely responsible, in Hoggart’s view, for the trailing away of working class citizens from adult education classes in the decades after the Second World War. Hoggart’s vision is questionable at times (one could argue that the adoption of American blues and early rock-and-roll by young Northern and London musicians in the early 1960s created a distinctively English form of pop music through bands largely ‘untrained’ in a classical sense – a variant of the self-help tradition for the period). However, the figures offered by McIlroy and Rose above seem to validate, to some degree at least, Hoggart’s contention that ‘[t]he personal and social needs for self-acquired education seem by no means obvious and pressing today [the late 1950s]’ (Hoggart 2009 [1957], p. 290). Certainly there seemed to be a kind of cultural shift away from mainstream adult education from the late 1940s onwards that might be attributed, in part, to new forms of mass entertainment and the slow increase in expendable income for working class families (shades of Macmillan’s ‘You’ve never had it so good’).

It was, perhaps, due to this state of affairs that ‘[m]uch adult learning [took] place outside recognised and overtly educational structures and organisations’ (Clyne 2006, p. 26) and is yet another example of the self-help tradition in practice. Where mainstream adult provision no longer fitted the expectations of working people, ‘grassroots’ collectives and organisations set about creating their own educational establishments in a modern-day update of the self-help tradition. In the 1970s, the government commissioned the *Russell Report* (1973) on the state of adult education in England. According to Clyne, the proposals offered by Russell were ‘not radical’ (Clyne 2006, p. 44). They amounted to a ‘planned increase in the number of full-time staff employed in adult learning with appropriate career and salary structures’ and a ‘recommendation that the WEA should be funded by LEAs [Local Education Authorities] and the DES [Department for Education and Science]’ (Clyne 2006, pp. 46, 50). During this decade too ‘the NIAE [National Institute of Adult Education] . . . [became] a prominent national focus and source of information and ideas about adult education’ (Fieldhouse 1996, p. 60), eventually transforming itself into the current National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE), one of the most significant research bodies and pressure groups for adult education in the English-speaking world. NIACE has been highly influential in keeping adult education on the national agenda over the past 40 years with such projects as the highly successful ‘Adult Learners’ Week’ which celebrates adult learning every May in the United Kingdom.

The economic, political and demographic climate of the 1970s and 1980s offered varied prospects in the field of adult education. As Bob Cryer has pointed out: ‘[r]edundancy, early retirement and greater longevity have all presented adult educators with a challenge and an opportunity’ (Cryer in Simon 1992, p. 280). One of



the most interesting developments, from the perspective of the self-help tradition, was the growth in women's education and women's studies. The participation of women in adult education has a long heritage. To offer just one example, with the foundation of Clifton College (Bristol) in the mid 1870s, 'women formed two-thirds of the day-time enrolment [in the first session]' (Bird 1985, p. 5). What had changed by the 1970s and 1980s, however, was the advent of feminism as a credible political and cultural voice. With this voice came a demand to change the educational processes on which adult education had been traditionally run. According to Roseanne Benn

The influence of feminism and Women's Studies from the mid-1970s helped to broaden women's education and the curriculum because of the inter-disciplinary approach, the concern to change the way knowledge is constructed and the emphasis on student-centred, participatory learning. (Benn in Fieldhouse 1996, p. 388)

Women's groups began to mushroom and flourish, often outside of 'mainstream' educational institutions, especially when those institutions were not amenable to student-centred, participatory learning. Many of the attitudes and strategies advocated by feminist educators at this time found close relations with such radical thinkers as Paulo Freire. The explicit utilisation of student life experiences into the learning process and the challenging of strict tutor-student roles are typical examples of where such innovations have become incorporated, to a greater or lesser degree, into the orthodoxy of adult education in the late-twentieth/early twenty-first century.

By the 1980s, the term 'lifelong learning' became a frequently used term in the context of adult education. According to Legrand,

[lifelong learning] can be applied to strictly vocational education, that is, training and refresher courses in a particular skill. It may also cover the same ground as adult education, taken in a broader sense than training for a specific job, though not embracing the development of all facets of an individual's personality. But more and more frequently it is being applied to new activities and fields of research which are not included in the traditional notion of adult education, much less vocational training, and which express a desire for evolving a new style of education. (Legrand (1989) cited in Jarvis and Griffin 2003a, p. 216)

In this description, 'lifelong learning' becomes something of a 'catch all' phrase or concept, covering so much educational terrain as to be almost meaningless. But two aspects of Legrand's description are pertinent to the development of adult education (and its impact on the self-help tradition) from the 1980s. The first point regards linking adult education to strictly vocational ends. According to Clyne, 'it was to be the return to mass unemployment in the late 1970s and 1980s, rather than the recommendations of the Russell Report, which led to action by government on training and retraining issues' (Clyne 2006, p. 96). The phenomenon of mass unemployment (often long-term) amongst the adult population in the United Kingdom led the government to focus on adult training (if by training, we mean learning for a particular trade, role or profession) rather than adult learning in general. The remit of the Manpower Services Commission (explored in Chap. 4 and rebranded as the Training Agency in 1987) and, from 1990, the Training and

Enterprise Council was to alleviate high levels of youth and adult unemployment through various training schemes and models. Indeed, Clyne has detected (in successive governments from the 1980s onwards) ‘a consequent reduction in funds available for other forms of adult learning’ (Clyne 2006, p. 161) when governmental departments have chosen to concentrate funds into adult vocational training. In this sense, ‘lifelong learning’ is a misnomer, a way of presenting job or work training under a more palatable or attractive label. I will discuss elements of this use of ‘lifelong learning’ later in this chapter when I explore New Labour’s pursuit of a ‘Skills for Life’ agenda based on the Moser Report (1999).

The second point of Legrand’s that is key (certainly from the 1970s onwards) is the evolution of a new style of learning, especially when looking at women as adult learners. We have already noted above on how feminism became increasingly influential from the 1970s within adult education. Bob Fryer, in relation to this issue, has written:

Indirectly, the women’s movement has ... made its contribution to educational method. Although discussion-based learning has long featured in good adult education practice, the women’s movement’s emphasis upon the value of relatively unstructured groups, free from the constraint of hierarchy and excessive formality have been important. (Fryer in Simon 1992, p. 291)

This sense of taking control of learning through the breaking of educational hierarchies is typified by Fryer’s description of ‘the establishment of black study and community centres, providing opportunities for black ... women to engage in adult education work’ (Fryer in Simon 1992, p. 299). Here, particular groups of women have taken it upon themselves to create their own learning environments and educational provision.

These two examples of ‘lifelong learning’ from Legrand show, in one instance, a stifling of the self-help tradition in the form of functional, highly pragmatic courses in preparation for work, and, in the other example, a reinvigoration of the tradition through the example of black women creating study classes in local community centres to provide education that is unavailable elsewhere. One must be careful not to over-romanticise the latter example, as there are as many instances of failure as there are success in such circumstances (if, by success, we mean the ability to inspire adult learners to engage in learning over an extended period, and failure as its opposite). Sometimes the very informality and lack of hierarchy can be a challenge in itself which the student (or course) is unable to overcome, leading to bewilderment, apathy and resignation. It was the ‘Kennedy Report’ (‘Learning Works’, 1997) that was held up as the government’s advocacy of adult education in all its various shapes and forms. Kennedy advocated a widening of participation

by creating a national strategy for post-16 learning ... by establishing National Learning Targets taking in those outside the workforce and recognising achievement in basic skills, partial achievement and non-certificated learning. (NIACE 1999)

The background to the report was, partly, around the theme of social inclusion that was a central pillar to the New Labour administration. Kennedy advocated a need to view learning as a lifelong enterprise and that successive governments

had allowed a situation where many adults did not engage with or feel part of the post-compulsory education system. In this sense, Kennedy was reiterating much of what was already said by Russell 25 years earlier, although Kennedy was also acknowledging the changing economic climate (where industrial powers such as China and India were coming increasingly to the fore) and how it was imperative for the United Kingdom to embrace a 'learning society' in order to remain economically competitive. The government's response to Kennedy came in the form of *The Learning Age: Further education for the New Millennium* (1998). Whilst the report promised 'a radical vision to engage and draw back into learning those who have traditionally not taken advantage of educational opportunities' (DfEE 1998, p. 5), the adoption of specific targets indicated the way the New Labour administration was heading in terms of educational provision generally. However, on a more positive note, *The Learning Age* did challenge 'the excessive emphasis in the past on market competition . . . and that strong partnerships are now needed to develop efficient strategies for learning' (DfEE 1998, p. 9). The report acknowledged 'that adult education provided by local authorities and voluntary bodies has an important contribution to make (DfEE 1998, p. 10). The two emphases – the need for targets and the encouragement of collaboration – could and often did lead to contradiction in practice where different organisations ended up competing to achieve the targets set by government. There were also examples of courses and programmes set up for 'hard-to-reach' learners with the explicit intention of meeting targets but of little educational benefit or progression for those learners involved. Indeed, the very concept of 'progression' was anathema to some adult students who did not want to feel part of a system but to be able to enjoy education for its own benefits (as a continuation of the self-help tradition). Frequently, these students opted out of government-funded provision towards more informal courses where there was not the same pressure to achieve outcomes and targets. The varying experiences of Skills for Life and Adult and Community Learning typify this approach to adult education within government and educational circles.

*The Skills for Life Strategy* (2001) was the government's response to *The Moser Report* (1999) which highlighted the inadequacy of adult basic education (ABE) in England (much along the lines of *The Russell Report* 25 years earlier). Literacy, numeracy and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) became standardised into core curricula and national tests to ensure that teaching and learning nationally were measurable and better linked to employers' needs and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). One of the criticisms of the 'Skills for Life Agenda' is its rigidity (particularly in comparison to the Scottish model of adult basic education). It has been argued that '[w]hile the English curriculum tries to leave nothing to chance by specifying every detail, the Scottish curriculum specifies the framework and provides a tool for dialogue, then leaves everything to the tutor and learner' (Merrifield 2005, p. 21).

Skills for Life classes form a significant portion of Adult and Community Learning (ACL). Adult and Community is the term given over the past 10 or 15 years to classes funded by central agencies such as the Learning and Skills Council. The emphasis is often around partnerships between various educational providers,

including FE colleges, the Adult Educational Services of Local Authorities, local schools, and charities and voluntary organisations concerned with local community projects. The provision is vast (often encompassing recreational and non-accredited learning) but there is an concentration on social inclusion and the need to extend educational provision to adult students perceived as ‘hard-to-reach’ because of their previous negative experiences of compulsory education or lack of awareness of established courses (particularly those students for whom English is not their first language). As the term indicates, the majority of Adult and Community courses take place in the local community in non-traditional settings. This is partly to ensure the classes are as near as possible to potential students and also to remove the fear or reticence some students might have for programmes in a more formal environment. A great deal of ACL work is delivered through voluntary organisations such as the University of the Third Age (U3A). Originally created in the 1980s

U3As contribute to help socialise and to re-socialise retired people ... U3As allow their members to use and structure their time in learning and understanding, or of developing new mental skills, for personal growth or fulfilment; it may be for preparing themselves for new roles, pursuits, and activities, for making themselves more pleasant or more useful for family, friends, peers or the community, through mutual help and voluntary service. (Philibert in Jarvis and Griffin 2003a, pp. 362–363)

Here is an example of the self-help tradition showing demographic flexibility in adapting to the increased demand for education amongst retired citizens. U3As harness the skills and expertise of the community itself, offering courses and programmes to suit the needs of members that are delivered, where possible, by the members themselves. The U3A system has certainly been successful in establishing an extensive network of groups across the country although it could be argued that they tend to grow and flourish more readily in centres with large percentages of retired professional people and could be vulnerable to the charge of being socially narrow (it would also be interesting to see the ratio of Black British or Asian citizens involved in U3A clubs).

## 6.2 Adult Education and the Current Economic Climate

Where U3As and other voluntary organisations in Adult and Community Learning have suffered, however, is in the recent marginalisation of adult education. A clear example of this is the shrinkage in funding for ESOL programmes. According to Stephen Exley,

changes to ESOL funding – including the introduction of fees for many students and the elimination of programme weighting, which gives extra funding to certain elements of ESOL provision – have prompted fears that many of the most vulnerable learners could miss out’. (Exley 2011)

Such changes in funding could have the effect, according to Exley, of ‘prevent[ing] many learners from gaining citizenship through this route’ (Exley 2011). The situation in ESOL, along with cuts in many recreational courses for adults,

has culminated in the ‘Save Adult Education’ campaign launched by CALL (Campaigning Alliance for Lifelong Learning) to try and reverse the ‘[r]ising charges and course cut backs [that] have seen two million learners’ places lost from further and adult education in England since 2005’ (CALL 2010). It is within this difficult territory that adult education in general and the self-help tradition currently operates, especially with the cuts to funding announced by the Coalition government after coming to power in May 2010. A return to more informal methods (increasingly involving forms of virtual learning around social networking) that do not ask or require government funding is likely. From this angle at least, there are opportunities as well as challenges for the self-help tradition. Whether the tradition can adapt to embrace forms of learning that transcend specific localities (to encompass trans-continental participation with the advent of the internet) will be an interesting debate over the coming years. In a sense, it is a return to the start of our discussion, for what were the Corresponding Societies but learning forums that linked together students from a multitude of localities in the pursuit of learning?

It will be interesting to see what impact David Cameron’s concept of the ‘Big Society’ has on adult education. We will be looking at the ‘Big Society’ agenda in more detail in Chap. 7. Clearly, the current administration is placing greater emphasis on voluntary organisations taking the lead on areas of public service that would have previously be seen as the responsibility of the state and Local Authorities (partly in order to alleviate the cuts made to public services generally in order to offset the national debt). As far as adult education is concerned, there are both opportunities and worries with such measures. In terms of opportunities, the opening up of public services to voluntary organisations could enhance key relationships between the various stakeholders already being made within the framework of Adult and Community Learning. However, the concern is that adult education might simply ‘wither on the vine’ without the necessary funding from the state, increasingly removed from those institutions of democratic legitimacy and control (such as local councils) that could fight on its behalf. However, as the self-help tradition has shown over the past centuries, it is often under times of considerable stress that citizens establish educational provision based on their own needs and interests that are not provided elsewhere (for either political or economic reasons). Where such enterprises occur, it will be through the use of various information and emerging technologies. Groups of people will undoubtedly retain the desire to collaborate and share in order to educate themselves and each other. With this in mind, the spirit of the Corresponding Societies is likely to morph into contemporary social networks.

### **6.3 The Self-Help Tradition and Citizenship Education**

I wrote in Chap. 3 on how citizenship could be incorporated into adult education programmes through an emphasis on active citizenship. It was acknowledged that citizenship education for adult programmes would need to follow different forms

of delivery to vocational courses for teenagers as the courses themselves tend to be shorter in duration and more focused in consequence. Adult education's staple is the 2 or 3-hour evening class and often has a leisure or recreational motivation for the students who enrol. The time constriction involved and concentration, often, on recreational curriculum areas make the embedding of citizenship a highly unlikely proposition for educators in some areas of work (adult students on recreational courses do not want to be patronised by having to engage with content they perceive as irrelevant to the course they have enrolled upon). The sheer variety of courses within adult education could also be a potential barrier. As Prue Huddleston and Lorna Unwin point out (citing Squires 1987), '[the] adult education curriculum is "more diverse in terms of aims, content and form than anything that precedes it"' (Huddleston and Unwin 1997, p. 53). Accommodating citizenship education into a provision that ranges from conversational Spanish to balloon sculpture, genealogy-for-beginners to A-Level Physics is unlikely to be practical for all students at all levels within all subjects. A certain amount of prioritising (according to need and suitability) is both necessary and realistic. Indeed, there will be whole areas of adult education where citizenship is not appropriate in any significant shape or form (for the reasons highlighted above).

However, the diversity of adult education also has its advantages for citizenship education. With such a wide curriculum offer, there is a considerable canvas upon which to project themes and issues that incorporate some form of citizenship education. This incorporation can be explicit or implicit. To use ESOL students as an example, there are particular courses or elements they can take in colleges ('ESOL for Citizenship') that enable them to pass the examination now necessary for foreign nationals when applying for British citizenship. Aspects of this exam will include the British political system, a sense of the geography of the British Isles, education in the United Kingdom and a basic knowledge of some of the cultural icons and personalities that have shaped 'Britishness' over the centuries. Certainly, the ESOL for Citizenship syllabus is more functional and skeletal than the idea of citizenship education presented by Kristján Kristjánsson when he speaks of citizenship education as

concerned primarily with the transmission and inculcation of democratic values, not merely the teaching of facts about what such values involve. What is on offer is not mere "civics", as it used to be known in some quarters, but an extensive programme of character moulding. (Kristjánsson 2004, p. 210)

It would be difficult to envisage how a relatively short course such as ESOL for Citizenship could begin to address and accommodate the 'transmission and inculcation of democratic values' as highlighted above by Kristjánsson, even if this were recognised to be a good thing in itself by ESOL practitioners and students. Often it is not regarded as such – ESOL as a curriculum area rests on the celebration of cultural diversity where the transmission and inculcation of values (democratic, national or otherwise) are often very problematic. ESOL practitioners frequently use students' experiences and perceptions of life from their

home countries as material for teaching and learning. Acculturation and integration into the role of participating member of host communities will not come at the expense of an equal respect for the cultures and beliefs held by the students as part of their own national, ethnic or religious identities (because ESOL teachers are resistant to implementing anything that smacks of acculturation at the expense of respecting different cultures). However, citizenship themes and issues are covered and addressed on such courses, even if not always at a particularly deep level (I will be looking at the ESOL citizenship exam, *Living in the United Kingdom*, in more detail later in this chapter).

As stated above, the restricted number of guided learning hours on most adult courses is, undoubtedly, one of the major difficulties when linking citizenship with adult education. If it is problematic on a course such as ESOL for Citizenship where the citizenship element is explicit, how much more difficult is it likely to be on courses where the citizenship element will have to be implicit if carried out at all (as on most recreational courses, for instance)? Certainly, we cannot begin to expect the levels of engagement with citizenship found in the National Curriculum at Key Stage 4. But the diversity of adult education alluded to earlier does offer us opportunities to explore citizenship themes and issues as part of a wider programme or pursuit. There is a danger, I appreciate, in offering relatively small elements of citizenship into adult programmes – a point neatly encapsulated by Mark Murphy when he speaks of

[c]ivil society . . . viewed as providing a space for democratic practices, practices that can now avoid grandiose notions of social change and offer up more “self-limiting” approaches to adult education and social change. (Murphy 2001, p. 347)

‘Bit-size’ aspects of citizenship could be open to the ‘self-limiting’ agenda portrayed by Murphy where the exploration of ‘democratic practices’ amounts to little more than a token aside to issues of local community participation or awareness of cultural diversity. Incorporation of citizenship into adult education programmes needs to adopt the embedded approach I advocated in Chap. 4 (on apprenticeships and vocational education) if it is to be credible to both teachers and learners alike. Let me take, as an example, a genealogy-for-beginners course. Exploration of the history of family trees inevitably draws on themes of local community, immigration, women’s rights and social mobility. These are themes that already encompass parts of citizenship education and it is not, in my view, stretching the syllabus or curriculum too far to argue that embedding citizenship within a basic genealogy course is likely to enhance rather than detract from the main topic of study. Indeed, the investigation of citizenship themes is part of the main course of study because the issues discussed as aspects of citizenship are integral to genealogy too. It has to be recognised that citizenship fits more easily into certain adult education programmes than others. There are courses where citizenship might not fit in very easily at all – my earlier example of balloon sculpture is, perhaps, an extreme example of where the embedding of citizenship would be unnecessary, if not patronising for the students involved. Other examples might include short courses on pilates



or yoga although there are opportunities (even here) to investigate the historical roots of these exercises, how they form part of religious or spiritual ways of life. Some teachers, of course, already introduce these aspects into programmes and, it can be argued, they are exhibiting best practice, offering their students a wider cultural perspective on the physical exercises that are undertaken in the classroom. It would be difficult to argue that this is citizenship education in any substantial form, however. One must not forget that it is the pilates and yoga that the students have ultimately signed up for.

## 6.4 The Self-Help Tradition and Political Philosophy

I began to make connections in Chap. 3 between the self-help tradition and the thinking of Chantal Mouffe, especially in her *The Return of the Political* (1993) and how this text relates to the concept of active citizenship. Mouffe's belief that rights are attained by oppressed groups through agonistic rather than consensual political methods is insightful when applied to the self-help tradition. Mouffe states that

a project of radical and plural democracy recognises the impossibility of the complete realization of democracy and the final achievement of the political community. Its aim is to use the symbolic resources of the liberal democratic tradition to struggle for the deepening of the democratic revolution, knowing that it is a never-ending process. (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 72)

Fundamental questions of political rights and justice are part of a process of ongoing (indeed perpetual) argument for Mouffe. Mouffe recognises that disagreement is a fundamental and inevitable aspect of contemporary democracies. She chooses to emphasise the energies drawn from conflict by oppressed groups aiming to extend their rights as part of 'the permanence of antagonistic forces' (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 53).

For Mouffe, consensus always occurs as a manifestation of the dominant power's ability to dictate (albeit subtly, at times) the agenda upon which any political, cultural or social agreement is formed. In this sense, Mouffe follows Gramsci's observations on hegemony when he speaks of '[t]he realization of a hegemonic apparatus, in so far as it creates a new ideological terrain, determines a reform of consciousness and of methods of knowledge' (Gramsci 2000, p. 192). Hegemony, the establishment of political and cultural orthodoxy (or 'common sense'), always occurs as a result of power relations, and Mouffe (like Gramsci) constantly reminds us of this. Mouffe focuses exclusively on conflict to the detriment of consensus. It is true that consensus can sometimes be the ultimate result of conflict but this is not always the case. Claudia Ruitenberg states:

The difference with more deliberative approaches is that Mouffe views conflictual debate over the interpretation and implementation of those fundamental values and over the hegemonic social relations that best shape them as necessary and constitutive of the political domain. (Ruitenberg 2009, p. 276)



How does this discussion relate specifically to the self-help tradition? A consideration of Mouffe's conception of democracy and citizenship can help us to understand the political significance tied to the evolution of adult education in England (at least in terms of the self-help tradition). The reason for this is the confrontational or anti-compromise stance adopted by many in the self-help tradition from the late-eighteenth through to the twenty-first century. Brian Simon offers a concise description of where the self-help tradition fits into adult education generally:

working-class adult education emerged at the turn of the [twentieth] century in two main forms. On the one hand there was the self-help tradition, originally developing from the work of the Corresponding Societies, which came to be known as independent working-class education. On the other, the tradition of the provision of education *for* the working class – a movement which (in its modern form) originated at Cambridge University (and later Oxford) in the form of Extension lectures, and was later institutionalised in the Workers' Educational Association [emphasis in the original]. (Simon 1992, pp. 9–10)

At each stage of modern adult education, as we noted earlier in this chapter, there have been movements willing to confront the existing provision with radical alternatives, be it groups linked to Chartism and the early trade union movement in the nineteenth century, the Plebs League and NCLC at the start of the twentieth or women's studies and women's education linked to the development of feminism in the 1970s (as well as similar initiatives by various ethnic groups in the same decade as part of the movement for multiculturalism). All of these tendencies sought an independent path beyond the 'established' or 'mainstream' educational routes of the period. It is in this sense that they tend to follow Mouffe's own definition of active (or radical) democratic citizenship which 'will emphasize the numerous social relations where relations of domination exist and must be challenged if the principles of liberty and equality are to apply' (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 70). Active citizenship, for Mouffe, entails

a common political identity of persons who might be engaged in many different purposive enterprises and with differing conceptions of the good ... What binds them together is their common recognition of a set of ethico-political values. In this case, citizenship is not just one identity among others, as in liberalism, or the dominant identity that overrides all others, as in civic republicanism. (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 69)

Certainly, when we look back to groups within the self-help tradition, they hold in common a commitment to the extension of education to oppressed groups but their conceptions of the good differ according to the constituency they were set up to serve and campaign for. We could say that whilst Correspondence Societies, Co-operative Societies, the Plebs League and the women's movement had the shared aim of extending the scope of adult education generally, their focus and, by implication, their conceptions of the good were different to the extent that they were working towards furthering the interests of specific sections of society (be it men of working age, trade union members or women in the post-industrial period). Mouffe's evocation of a 'common political identity' only has a certain pertinence in this instance if, by use of the phrase, we mean organisations that adhere to the cause

of increasing educational opportunity to further a political cause, often in the form of emancipation or empowerment as articulated by Paulo Freire:

people develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation [emphasis in the original]. (Freire 1996, p. 64)

The self-help tradition, due to its emphasis on working-class adults creating their own educational structures, was a radical alternative to mainstream arrangements. This is not to discount the efforts made by the WEA and other bodies to gain entrance for working-class mature students into institutions of higher education but the phrase ‘responsible democratic citizenship’ is loaded with the sort of meaning the self-help tradition set out to avoid. The adjective ‘responsible’ implies a standard of conduct and behaviour drawn up by a society where, in the words of Iris Marion Young, ‘social power makes some citizens more equal than others, and equality of citizenship makes some people more powerful citizens’ (Young in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 224). It was precisely this sort of presumption by the powerful that particular groups of adult educationalists and students sought to challenge by creating alternative methods of teaching and learning devised to model or mirror forms of citizenship they found more appropriate to their beliefs or the causes they were espousing. The types of citizenship found within the self-help tradition are, I have argued, close to those advocated by Mouffe’s radical democratic variety where ‘new identities need to be created’ (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 86) that are not legitimated by those in power.

## 6.5 The Self-Help Tradition: Freire, Gramsci, New Social Movements (NSMs)

I argued in Chap. 3 that, due to the traditions of adult education evolving in a variety of contexts and situations, it would be unconstructive to view citizenship education for adults (by whom I mean students more than 19 years old) occurring exclusively in a college environment. As we have already seen, the history of adult education has significant workplace and community elements that cannot be ignored when locating the self-help tradition in contemporary educational practice. Any successful adoption of citizenship education for adults will need to make a multi-agency approach its chosen method of delivery if it is to avoid advocating ‘reasonable’ as opposed to ‘active’ citizenship.

Paulo Freire’s ideas around education and praxis are vitally important here. In *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), Freire writes of how ‘[t]o exist, humanly, is to *name* the world, to change it’ [emphasis in the original] (Freire 1996, p. 69). For Freire, an essential part of education and citizenship is to be able to identify our place in a given society and, once understood, to change that society for the better. Education and social change are crucial to the concept of praxis – an ability to apply knowledge in the pursuit of collective action. Active citizenship, by its very nature,

cannot be an academic exercise, a regurgitation of facts (or the ‘banking’ method of education, to use Freire’s terminology). A central aspect of any citizenship course having the concept of active citizenship at its heart is a belief in social change, that students have a sense of ownership within their communities.

Something akin to this is advocated by Freire when he writes

[t]he important thing, from the point of view of libertarian education, is for the people to come to feel like masters of their thinking by discussing the thinking and views of the world explicitly or implicitly manifest in their own suggestions and those of their comrades. (Freire 1996, p. 105)

We must be careful when translating the Brazilian context in much of Freire’s writings (where he is often talking about literacy for exploited rural workers on foreign-owned plantations or shanty-town dwellers on the fringes of a rapidly-expanding city) to a twenty-first century Western Europe with very different educational concerns, environments and agendas. However, Freire’s concept of ‘libertarian’ education (in the sense of personal independence and ‘free thinking’ rather than the political label attached to ‘libertarian’, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon world) is the most likely way of achieving an active rather than a merely reasonable type of adult citizenship course in contemporary England. This is because it is the citizen who determines (along with their comrades, associates or colleagues) what exactly that study might entail. I am using the term ‘reasonable’ here as an extension of what was discussed earlier where reasonable citizenship means conforming to standards or conventions laid down by the elite as the norm. This is in distinction to what I have called active citizenship where the citizens themselves are able or encouraged to define (in part, at least) what their form of citizenship actually is and how it is to be pursued.

It is important here to distinguish Freire’s ‘banking concept’ of education from his vision of ‘problem-posing education’. For Freire, in the ‘banking concept’, the students ‘are depositories and the teacher is the depositor’ (Freire 1996, p. 53). This form of education is a means of maintaining existing power relations where ‘[t]he teacher presents himself [sic] as [the students] necessary opposite; by considering their ignorance absolute, he justifies his own existence’ (Freire 1996, p. 53). This is in marked contrast to Freire’s depiction of libertarian education which ‘must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers *and* students’ [emphasis in the original] (Freire 1996, p. 53). This challenging of the teacher-student hierarchy fits closely with the self-help tradition where adult students work collaboratively to educate themselves (and one another) rather than relying on traditional educational roles and practices. Freire’s description of ‘problem-posing education’ summarises neatly how citizenship in adult education could work within the self-help tradition:

problem-posing education, which breaks with the vertical patterns characteristic of banking education, can fulfil its function as the practice of freedom only if it can overcome the above contradiction. Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who teaches, but one who is himself [sic] taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. (Freire 1996, p. 61)

Peter Mayo has analysed the similarities and differences between Freire and Antonio Gramsci in their approaches to the development of adult education, particularly in terms of the empowerment of particular social groups. One of the central differences between the two thinkers highlighted by Mayo is that, whilst ‘much of the focus of Freire’s early work deals with the *campesinos* in Brazil and Chile ... most of Gramsci’s writings which are of relevance to adult education focus on the educational needs of the industrial working class’ (Mayo 1994, pp. 137, 130). This difference in focus has implications for Freire’s and Gramsci’s ideas on how adult education is organised for the benefit of disadvantaged groups. Gramsci’s work with the industrial proletariat in northern Italy led him to place much more emphasis than Freire on the role of a revolutionary party or movement in the creation of structures to support radical adult education. His concept of ‘organic intellectuals’ is critical to his thinking on the transmission of new ideas associated with emerging social classes. According to Mayo (citing Ransome 1992), organic intellectuals are the

cultural or educational workers who are experts in legitimation. They emerge ‘in response to particular historical developments’ ... as opposed to ‘traditional intellectuals’ whose ‘organic’ purpose is over as society enters a different stage of stage of development. (Mayo 1994, p. 129)

For Gramsci, the *Partito Comunista Italiano* (PCI), alongside fellow travellers and supporters, potentially offered the organization and structure that would enable workers to engage with learning outside of the traditional or mainstream provision of the time. Gramsci developed his ideas on adult education from his experiences as part of the *Ordine Nuovo* group in Turin in 1919. It was whilst writing for the socialist periodical of the same name that Gramsci began to form important connections between the economy, politics and culture, ideas that were eventually to lead to his seminal thoughts on hegemony’s role in the maintenance of existing power relations in a given society. It was through the educational role associated with Factory Councils (and similar bodies) and facilitated by organic intellectuals (trained via PCI cells) that Gramsci envisaged the beginnings of what he referred as an alternative historic bloc to that currently in place in early twentieth-century Italy. Gramsci ‘used the term [historic bloc] to describe the [conditions and] manner in which classes or their factions are related’ (Mayo 1994, p. 128). Education was a critical component in the creation of an alternative historic bloc. It was through education that the industrial workers would eventually conceive, demand and establish new relations between themselves and those forces currently in power. The role of organic intellectuals in this enterprise was to inspire and facilitate such a transformation in the relationship between social classes. This development in Italy is not dissimilar to events happening contemporaneously in England with the formation of the Plebs’ League. Gramsci ‘did not consider ... the WEA ... to operate in the interest of the proletariat’ because, in his view, ‘the intellectuals involved were not organic and therefore committed to this class’. (Mayo 1994, p. 129)

One can see connections between Gramsci's view of adult education and the self-help tradition discussed throughout this chapter. Clearly, Gramsci's thought is in alignment with the self-help tradition generally in his contention that '[e]ducation . . . is [to be] seen [as the] means not only of cementing the existing hegemony *but also of countering it*' [my emphasis] (Mayo 1994, p. 128). According to Mayo (citing Hoare and Nowell Smith 1971), Gramsci believed

the social relations of adult education between worker-educators and worker-learners must be participative and radically democratic . . . That Gramsci was concerned with mitigating hierarchies between those who 'educate' and 'direct' and those who learn can be seen from his writing concerning hegemony and the role of intellectuals. He advocates a relationship which has to be 'active and 'reciprocal', one where 'every teacher is always a pupil and every pupil a teacher. (Mayo 1994, p. 132)

It is striking how close this passage is to Freire in *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in its challenging of traditional teacher-students relationships in adult education. For both thinkers, a key component of radical adult education was in the democratization of the educational process itself. Gramsci articulated a form of education (facilitated in the Factory Councils and elsewhere) in which 'many thousands of exploited workers discovered who they were and what they were capable of in the process of struggling for better working conditions' (Welton 1993, p. 153). Part of this discovery was the realisation by the workers themselves that they have it in their power to create and maintain educational structures and programmes for their own benefit and development. This is a key aspect of the self-help tradition – the belief that exploited or disenfranchised social groups are able to establish their own forms of education. We have seen, in the earlier sections of this chapter, where citizens have chosen to use their collective energies and strengths to pursue courses of study they deem to be important. In the process, the conventional hierarchy associated with teacher-student relationships are turned, if not upside down, then in such a way that a sense of equality is seen as appropriate.

Similar developments can be seen in radical social movements that formed from the agitation in Europe and North America after 1968. These groups are often referred to as 'new social movements' (NSM). According to Michael Welton, 'we need to view the NSM as learning sites in themselves' (Welton 1993, p. 152). In Welton's paraphrasing of Matthias Finger, where NSMs differ from the movements associated with Freire and Gramsci is because

NSM actors have abandoned an emancipatory politics (freedom from exploitation, inequality and oppression), opting instead for a life-style politics that focuses on the self-actualization of the person. (Welton 1993, p. 152)

This presents potential difficulties for the self-help tradition, a tradition largely formed out of the Enlightenment ideals associated with such emancipatory politics. Welton, however, challenges such a depiction of new social movements by stating that 'NSM actors selectively radicalize rather than reject modern values' (Welton 1993, p. 155). What defines new social movements is that they

are not only heterogeneous; they manifest internal philosophical differences and political strategies. The learning process within each of the movements is fraught with tension and conflict. (Welton 1993, p. 156)

What is interesting here is the emphasis on internal tensions and conflicts. This would appear to partly contradict the belief of Wildemeersch et al. that '[c]entral to the concept of social learning are processes of *action, reflection, communication and cooperation*' [emphasis in the original] (Wildemeersch et al. 1998, p. 253). The truth is likely to lie somewhere in between. The conflicts that are inherent in new social movements due to their heterogeneity are liable to stir the elements of action and communication identified by Wildemeersch et al. as essential to social learning but there also needs to be at least a semblance of reflection and cooperation for NSMs to function as learning sites over any extended period of time.

I have used the writing of Mouffe (in relation to adult education) to emphasise the conflict inherent *between* groups in political contexts (including the demands for a fairer system of education). Welton's contention that such tensions and conflicts occur internally begs the question: 'Is the self-help tradition relevant or applicable to such groups?' Clearly, NSMs have attributes that are unique to their specific context or setting but the self-help tradition can still inform these educational movements. Welton speaks (in a medical context) of the

emergence of a vast network of self help, social support groups, and health coalitions, where individuals learn about their well-being through interactions with peers, contests the dominance of the medical model. Men and women are struggling within self-help sites to learn how to take responsibility for their own physical and mental health. They are challenging the medical profession to construct the doctor-patient relationship as a pedagogical encounter. (Welton 1993, p. 160)

The diversity of needs and demands associated with such 'self-help sites' will mean that conflict is a necessary and inevitable aspect of their existence. However, it is possible that women and men coming together to establish learning structures in order to challenge the dominance of professionals will engender a certain cohesiveness as well. Conflict and cohesion are not necessarily diametrically opposed or mutually incompatible. Although I have been exploring Mouffe's ideas on agonistic citizenship in this chapter as a confrontation between separate social forces, it is not beyond the realms of Mouffe's theory to use this same sense of agonistic citizenship *within* social groups. New social movements have come to the fore in a period when many countries in Western Europe and North America are evolving into multi-cultural, post-industrial societies. Jurgen Habermas speaks of 'a pluralism of "ultimate" value postulates' (Habermas 1986, p. 182) – in the contemporary context, such pluralism is just as likely to occur within movements themselves (be they learning groups or other forms of social organization). It is for each group to utilise the conflict inherent in such diversity in creative and productive ways.

## 6.6 The Self-Help Tradition and Contemporary Practice

Why (to return to a point made earlier) is a multi-agency approach the best way of developing citizenship education for adults? By a multi-agency approach, I mean collaboration between FE colleges, the Adult Education Services of Local

Authorities, nongovernmental organisations (UNICEF and Amnesty International are respected examples), relevant charities, trade unions and (most importantly) citizens from the local communities. All of these organisations are potential means for the promotion of social change and collective action which are vital aspects of active citizenship. This sense of multi-agency reflects the varied contexts in which adult education takes place. As Prue Huddleston and Lorna Unwin have noted, '[i]nformal settings may be just as significant as formal areas [in adult education] . . . There is a sense in which nothing may be discounted' (Huddleston and Unwin 1997, p. 53). It is vital that this is in dialogue with citizens who might make up the student cohort to ensure that the content and delivery is not imposed but follows the tenets of what I have called active citizenship education by giving the students themselves a critical voice in the process itself. Such an education needs to work in tandem with issues citizens are encountering 'on the ground' (in the fight for local schools, hospitals, transport, crime prevention and a host of other possibilities) together with overarching perspectives on the national and international political landscape. This interaction between the local and wider horizons will help to give the curriculum a sense of specific community issues wedded to a concern for events elsewhere.

Examples of where citizenship (as a theme or subject) has been incorporated into adult education recently offer us a very mixed picture in terms of resources and practice. The *Skills for Life Strategy* (2001) which, in England, initiated a new focus on adult basic skills did offer some opportunities for students and teachers to explore citizenship in adult literacy and ESOL. The *Adult Literacy Core Curriculum* (at Level 2) has, as part of the speaking-and-listening component, an element that can be addressed through the ability to 'put forward a well-supported point at a meeting, e.g. of a parents' association or pressure group; as a representative of an interest group such as a union or residents' association' (LSIS 2010b) with supportive materials developed and shared by Skills for Life teachers on websites such as TALENT (See TALENT 2010). However, this is offset by the overall tenor of the *Skills for Life Strategy* which tends to focus almost exclusively on the financial, social and medical costs of low levels of literacy (with little or no mention of the political costs in terms of electoral participation, for example). The document itself states:

People with inadequate literacy skills could earn up to 11 % less than others . . . As well as losing out financially, people with literacy and numeracy skills deficiencies may suffer in other ways. Many have low self-confidence and low motivation. Their children are more likely to struggle at school. And they are more prone to health problems and to suffer social exclusion. (DfEE 2001, p. 8)

There is little or no mention of political literacy anywhere in either *The Skills for Life Strategy* or *The Adult Literacy Core Curriculum* (or, indeed, *The Adult ESOL Core Curriculum*). Compare this with the Citizenship subject specifications in the National Curriculum where, at Key Stage 4, students are expected to have

a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of topical events . . . the rights and responsibilities of citizens; the role of the voluntary sector; forms of government; and the criminal and civil justice, legal and economic systems. (DfEE 1999, p. 31)



Citizenship education, as defined by the National Curriculum, is dealt with only superficially by the adult literacy and adult ESOL core curricula in England. The emphasis is on functional literacy that will prepare adult students for work or improve their prospects if they are already in work. It is not to empower students to participate in political engagement or to confidently challenge authority in Mouffe's sense of a 'struggl[e] ... for an extension and radicalization of democracy' (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 70) or in any other sense.

This is true even in the area of Skills for Life that deals specifically with citizenship: the course and test for ESOL students applying for British Citizenship entitled *Living in the United Kingdom – a Journey to Citizenship* (Home Office 2007). The test asks such factual questions as the number of constituencies in the UK parliament or the definition of a quango rather than ascertaining any personal responses from students to political life or enabling them to chart any campaigns or issues they are involved or interested in. The qualification takes an extremely narrow view of citizenship, one that simply defines the term as the ability to recount and remember key historical, political, religious and cultural aspects of British society (for further discussion on the definition of citizenship portrayed in *Living in the United Kingdom*, see White 2008). It could be argued that *Living in the United Kingdom* highlights the concerns raised by Gert Biesta and Robert Lawy when they write: 'recent developments in citizenship education have stayed quite close to the individualistic conception of citizenship that emerged in Britain in the 1980s' (Biesta and Lawy 2006, p. 70). One of the manifestations of this individualistic tendency regarding notions of citizenship in England (at least) is the lack of affiliation or support for political entities 'below' the level of parliament (county, district and borough councils, as well as the unitary authorities). One of the criticisms levelled at the Labour Government's implementation of 'The Crick Report' for schools was its tepid interpretation of political literacy as a factual awareness of local institutions. This can be tied to Biesta and Lawy's criticism of the implementation of citizenship education into the National Curriculum in England. They write:

[One] problem with the idea of citizenship education is that it is largely aimed at *individual* ... people ... This not only individualises the *problem* of ... people's citizenship – and in doing so follows the neo-liberal line of thinking [emphasis in the original]. (Biesta and Lawy 2006, p. 71)

The ESOL citizenship qualification is, if anything, even more atomised in this regard, with the portrayal of the citizen as simply a user of local public services – the citizen-as-customer rather than the citizen as part of local (and national) communities. The qualification is individualistic through-and-through – the student sits in an examination hall or booth and silently answers multiple-choice questions without any other requirement or recourse to themselves as a citizen participating in local or national life. As far as the Home Office is concerned, British citizenship is the ability to correctly identify enough facts to enable a foreign resident to achieve a British passport. Nothing could encapsulate better the image of the private agent (I hesitate to use the word citizen for such a shallow set of responsibilities), minding her or his own business. As Mouffe has written



Since Benjamin Constant, in effect, it has generally been admitted that the ‘liberty of the moderns’ consists in the peaceful enjoyment of private independence and that this implies the renunciation of the ‘liberty of the ancients’, the active participation in collective power, because this leads to a subordination of the individual to the community. (Mouffe 2005 [1993], p. 36)

For all the protestations by the recent Labour administration (1997–2010) of social inclusion and placing the community at the heart of policy, it is very difficult to find in *Living in the United Kingdom* anything radically different from previous Conservative governments in terms of viewing society in essentially atomistic terms, placing the ‘liberty of the moderns’ high above the ‘liberty of the ancients’ when it comes to fostering a sense of genuinely active citizenship. Citizens are acquirers of facts and consumers of services, not the instigators of rights and duties. One wonders how David Cameron’s advocacy of his ‘Big Society’ will change or reinforce such conceptions of liberty and community.

Functional Skills is the latest suite of qualifications offered to students in post-compulsory education to replace Key Skills in English, Maths, and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as part of vocational and academic programmes in colleges, schools and other providers. It is also seen as the ultimate replacement of adult literacy and numeracy (Skills for Life) qualifications in an attempt to marry Key Skills and Skills for Life. The definition of ‘functional’ provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in their overview of Functional English is initially promising:

The term ‘functional’ should be considered in the broad sense of providing learners with the skills and abilities they need to take an active and responsible role in their communities, everyday life, the workplace and educational settings. Functional English requires learners to communicate in ways that make them effective and involved as citizens, to operate confidently and to convey their ideas and opinions clearly. (QCA 2007b, p. 7)

Here, reference to ‘communities’, ‘citizens’ and ‘opinions’ offers the very real prospect of a canvas wide enough to explore citizenship as a significant element of any literacy programme (and a generous and refreshing interpretation of ‘functional’ in comparison with the use of similar terminology inside *The Skills for Life Strategy*). This is reinforced by the development of Functional English as a qualification by awarding bodies on the basis of the QCA standards. For example, Edexcel suggest ‘a debate about a contemporary issue, such as identity cards’ (Edexcel 2010, p. 7) in their assessment of formal discussion and participation in a charitable recycling scheme (Edexcel 2010, p. 72) as part of an exemplar Level 2 writing paper. However, the assessment methods are primarily examination-based (and are similar to the ESOL citizenship qualification in this respect). Because of this, there is little opportunity to explore what Crick, in *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds*, identified as ‘a central feature of the development of Citizenship [which] must be identification of where an individual learner has reached in terms of knowledge and experience, leading to agreement to an individual package for their future development’ (FEFC 2000, p. 23). (*Just by way of an aside, Crick’s emphasis on the individual here seems to fall into the same interpretation of citizenship criticised earlier by Biesta and Lawy, namely citizenship as a form of personal development or*

*individual expression*). Granted, Functional English is not a citizenship qualification in itself, but if attempts were made to truly investigate some of the citizenship issues raised within the Functional English assessment papers (such as identity cards), these would be much more effectively facilitated through project work where collaboration and debate would be central to both the course delivery and the assessment. It is, in my view, exposure to extended collaboration and debate that is more likely to lead to progress for each individual student's knowledge and experience of themselves as citizens (noted as crucial by Crick) as opposed to the short-term discussion inherent in exam-based speaking-and-listening tasks or the incorporation of citizenship themes into formal reading and writing tests. If citizenship elements are to be taken seriously as part of Functional Skills, then a significant portion of the assessment needs to be undertaken by students collectively (and not just the speaking-and-listening aspect). Without this, Functional English fails in the same way that *Living in the United Kingdom* fails by taking what is a fundamentally collective enterprise (citizenship) and assessing it through an individual lens with all the potential magnifications and distortions this entails.

## 6.7 Citizenship and Adult Education: Implications for Teacher Development

Citizenship education in adult contexts lends itself to many of the tenets of andragogy (as elucidated by Knowles). Knowles is very clear on the importance of informal learning in relation to adult education: 'adults learn best in informal . . . settings' (Knowles et al. 2005, p. 61). As I have shown with regards to the self-help tradition, adult learning often takes place outside of traditional learning environments, particularly when that learning is the product of adult students taking control of their own learning. Knowles also echoes Freire, to some extent, in his challenging of the teacher-student hierarchy. Andragogy, for Knowles, acknowledges that 'the richest resources for learning reside in the adult learners themselves' (Knowles et al. 2005, p. 66). Where Freire differs from Knowles is in the central place Freire gives to the challenging of this hierarchy. Whilst Knowles suggests that the teacher-student relationship is more than simply the idea that the teacher holds all information and knowledge, Freire goes much further and argues that adult education needs to see the concepts of 'teacher' and 'student' as roles that people adopt interchangeably depending on the context and subject under discussion:

Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself [sic] taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. (Freire 1996, p. 61)

There is a strong tradition in adult education of teachers as facilitators – the idea that adult students are as likely, perhaps even more likely, to learn from one

another than simply through the teacher's own knowledge and experiences. This is especially the case in citizenship education where the students' priorities and perspectives will be central to any learning that takes place. Whether the teacher is sympathetic to Knowles or Freire, the negotiation of teacher-student roles is likely to be an integral part of any citizenship course in adult education.

What support is there currently for teachers wanting to develop citizenship course in adult education? Courses that formally incorporate citizenship education into their programme, such as ESOL for Citizenship, are often provided with supportive materials (in the ESOL case, *Living in the United Kingdom*, which was critiqued earlier in this chapter). However, there are resources and training available for adult teachers looking to incorporate citizenship themes and elements into their courses. In 2010, NIACE organized a series of regional events under the title of 'Learning for active citizenship' which were aimed at 'practitioners, organizers and managers in . . . adult [and community learning]' (NIACE 2010). The programme included discussion workshops on issues such as 'Does Politics Needs Parliament and Why Vote?', 'Digital Democracy' and 'Building the Base – Active Citizens, Active Educators' (NIACE 2010). One of the drawbacks of this potentially very valuable piece of training for adult teachers is that NIACE did not define specifically what it meant by the term 'active citizenship'. It is difficult, in these circumstances, for teachers to plan learning for active citizenship in any meaningful sense. It is possible that NIACE interprets 'active citizenship' similarly to the way I have defined the concept in this book (incorporating the skills of rigorous questioning, effective communication, and forms of collaboration, for example) but this is not clear in the literature.

The definition of what constitutes 'active citizenship' is a problematic issue for teachers in adult education. As I hope to have demonstrated above, the term itself is rarely defined in a consistent way (either in government policy, qualification standards or reports by adult education pressure groups). Without a clear definition of the term, it is difficult for teachers in adult education to plan programmes encompassing aspects of 'active citizenship' (however defined) with a sense of confidence regarding consistency.

## 6.8 Conclusion

What has been covered in this chapter is an appraisal of the self-help tradition and the possibilities for citizenship as a serious area of study within adult education. We have explored how adult education has evolved over the past two centuries both within and outside the self-help tradition and the efforts working people have made to create educational provision and institutions against a backdrop of apathy or open hostility from government and the educational establishment.

The primary contention made within this chapter is that citizenship education should be a vital aspect of adult education. The self-help tradition can offer examples of how voluntary movements can identify crucial needs in adult education

and facilitate them through the action of the learners themselves. It is highly questionable whether citizenship education in this context should always lead to qualifications. Whilst qualifications give any course (in the current educational climate) a certain validation of study, they can be guilty of constraining or confining programmes to 'what needs to be done to pass the course' which runs against the very spirit of what I have been advocating above. Citizenship in an adult education context, I argue, can only occur using a multi-agency approach of FE colleges, local authorities, charities, non-governmental organisations, community groups, trade unions and (most importantly) the students themselves which reflects the diverse nature of the provision in this area of the post-compulsory sector. In terms of the philosophical aspects of citizenship, I believe Chantal Mouffe's evocation of active democratic citizenship, where rights and duties are won and maintained through struggle by oppressed groups, mirrors most effectively the historical experiences of working-class students and educationalists within the self-help tradition. When we look at the Plebs League or the women's movement (for example), what strikes us is the element of challenge these enterprises were prepared to invest in order to create educational opportunities and environments that befitted their comrades or colleagues. It is this element of challenge (which Mouffe and the self-help tradition emphasise) that needs to be retained and harnessed if we are to provide a genuinely meaningful citizenship education for adults in the twenty-first century. As with Chap. 4, it is important to state that the examples of the self-help tradition offered in this chapter (the Corresponding Societies, Plebs League, women's groups) are used in this context as 'ideals' against which current practice in adult education is compared and evaluated.

## Chapter 7

# College Governance and Deliberative Democracy

The main focus of this book has been a discussion on how citizenship education might be developed or extended within the very different contexts of further and adult education. I have investigated how such concepts as ‘practices’, ‘communities’ and ‘citizens’ become increasingly problematic terms when applied within the very wide field of post-compulsory education. But what of the institutions that deliver vocational and adult courses? How is citizenship education embodied and modelled within the decision-making processes and structures within further and adult education? In short, what forms of democracy exist in post-compulsory educational institutions and do these support citizenship education? This chapter will focus on governance within FE colleges. It is vital to say at the outset that FE colleges are one of many institutions that encompass post-compulsory education. To centre attention on colleges is not to diminish the work or importance of other institutions or organisations in this sector. However, FE colleges are major providers (perhaps *the* major providers) of post-compulsory education and training in England and it is therefore instructive to explore how power is allocated and distributed in colleges as an extension of the debate over citizenship education in further and adult education.

### 7.1 College Governance: The Background

#### 7.1.1 *The 1944 Education Act and Local Education Authority Control*

The key year as far as governance in further education colleges is concerned is 1992. Until the *Further and Higher Education Act* of that year, FE colleges were the responsibility of the Local Education Authorities (LEAs). It was the LEAs who received the government monies necessary to provide the estates and pay

the teachers in order to maintain further education provision in their area. In this sense, FE colleges were under the same jurisdiction and guidance as primary and secondary schools in a given locality (along with other social and supporting services). The legislation which acted as the catalyst for the linking of further education to LEA provision was the *Education Act* (1944). The motivation behind the Act is summarised by Peter Clyne:

in recognition of the necessity to improve and increase the provision of vocational, craft and industrial education and training, LEAs were required [under the 1944 Act] to prepare Schemes of Further education provision for their areas, to include adult learning. (Clyne 2006, p. 23)

Although the Act carried statutory powers and enforcement, Local Education Authorities were allowed considerable flexibility on how they implemented the Ministry of Education's requirements. Robin Simmons, in a paper looking specifically at further education colleges in the era of Local Education Authority control, has stated:

With over 100 LEAs running colleges, it was not possible to speak with any great accuracy about a 'national' FE sector at this time [the period after the 1944 Act]. It was probably more appropriate to see FE as over 100 mini-sectors ... Possibly the best description of FE under LEA control was that it was 'variable' ... Each LEA was responsible for the general educational character of colleges under its control. However, the way in which this responsibility was discharged depended, to a large extent, upon what can be described as a 'local ecology'. (Simmons 2008, p. 361)

This variance in Local Education Authority perceptions of their own FE provision meant that

some LEAs allowed colleges considerable autonomy and discretion in their affairs whilst others were, at their worst, stifling and restrictive ... some colleges were proactive in seeking 'business' whilst others were far less dynamic. (Simmons 2008, p. 361)

Overall, the impression of further education in the 30 years after the 1944 Act is of 'colleges [as] essentially locally run organisations on the margins of English education – existing in a climate that has often been described as one of "benign neglect"' (Simmons 2008, p. 361). In terms of the communities they served, colleges under LEA control were 'a mishmash of brilliance ... and diabolical practice' (Ainley and Bailey (1997) cited in Simmons 2006, p. 362) and that the sector itself was a 'patchwork quilt' (Cantor and Roberts (1972) cited in Simmons 2006, p. 362) of innovation or prescription, democracy or bureaucracy depending on which part of the country the college happened to be situated. Simmons offers his paper as a reminder to those practitioners or managers in further education who yearn for a return to the pre-1992 landscape within the sector. It is a landscape where FE colleges were largely peripheral to the wider educational picture (although some colleges were given institutional freedom and a substantial presence in their communities by the more dynamic and far-thinking LEAs).

### ***7.1.2 The Move Towards College Independence: 1992 and Incorporation***

The legislation that led to FE colleges being removed from Local Education Authority control was several decades in the making. It is possible to see, during the Callaghan administration of the mid-to-late 1970s, a shift away from the ‘planned’ economy of previous decades partly as a result of the call for support from the International Monetary Fund in 1976 although, as Donald Sassoon has pointed out, there were larger forces at work: ‘The Labour government [of 1974–1979] was constrained by capitalism, that is, by market forces’ (Sassoon 1997, p. 505). With the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979, the monetarist policies that Denis Healey (as Chancellor under Callaghan) hinted at were given full expression in a series of measures that sought to expose public services to the disciplines and rigours of the ‘free’ market. One can also mark from this point in the mid-1970s a steady move towards the marketisation of education in FE. As a result of these measures, local government was increasingly under fire for supposed inefficiencies and lack of consumer choice (as well as harbouring dissident voices as in the case of the abolition of the Greater London Council in 1986 and the Inner London Education Authority in 1990).

*The Further and Higher Education Act (1992)* established further education colleges as autonomous institutions removed from the ambit of Local Education Authority control. The term ‘incorporation’ was used because, according to the Act,

For every further education corporation established to conduct an educational institution there shall be ... an instrument providing for the constitution of the corporation ... in accordance with which the corporation, and the institution, are to be conducted’. (HMSO 1992, p. 17)

Incorporation is the term used to describe the process when further education colleges were taken out of the control of Local Education Authorities and became self-governing according to powers laid down in the *Further and Higher Education Act*. These powers were delegated to college boards of governors (the composition of which will be discussed below) as a means of giving colleges independence from local government and a requirement to engage with the various stakeholders in the communities colleges serve. College principals were now given the title ‘Chair and Chief Executive of the Corporation’ as a formal acknowledgement of the change in college governance. But what exactly does this new corporation consist of? The governing body of each FE college comprises a board of governors. According to the Learning and Skills Improvement Service:

The overall minimum number of members of a governing board is currently 12 and the overall maximum is 20 within which there are specific categories of membership of staff, students, the Principal, general members and, if required, LSC [Learning and Skills Council, now the Skills Funding Agency] members and Parent members (particularly for sixth form colleges). (LSIS 2011)

It is particularly common for boards of governors to have members from the business and voluntary/charity sectors of the local community to enable individual colleges to have voices from these critical constituencies at the centre of planning and strategy although '[a]ll governors are appointed as individuals – including those governors who are elected e.g., staff and student governors and are not representatives of the organisations from which they come' (LSIS 2011). To emphasise the change from Local Education Authority control to FE corporation status, there is no statutory requirement for colleges to appoint local council representatives onto the board of governors (see DIUS 2007) although, in practice, many colleges invite councillors and other local government officials to become governors in order to utilise the experience and expertise such people have to offer, particularly in areas like district planning and co-ordination between different local agencies. However, there is currently little in the way of democratic accountability in how college boards of governors operate, either in terms of requirements of the board to report to local elected bodies or the necessity for those representing particular bodies (the staff for example) to report back on what has been discussed. Crucial and often highly detailed negotiations take place within the regular board meetings on such subjects as the condition of the college estate, the implications for particular courses or programmes by changes in government funding methodologies or the students' perception of the college. What we have at the moment is the deliberation without the democracy. It is frequently forgotten that being a college governor is a *political* role – it involves discussion and debate over the use of public monies and the direction of a public institution. I am using the term 'political' here in the way Chantal Mouffe uses it when she speaks of '[p]olitical life [as] collective, public action' (Mouffe 2005, p. 69). The decisions made by college boards of governors have a direct and important impact on public institutions (further education colleges) and thus there are significant political implications regarding the educational environment of a given locality (despite the protestations often made that governors are strictly 'apolitical'). Because of this, it is imperative that college governors are elected by the constituencies they represent. The charge of impracticality is likely to be voiced but the principle of election is already ingrained within two of the constituencies concerned (staff and students). As a practical example to offset this criticism, election of business representatives could be facilitated by the local Chambers of Commerce and the representatives from voluntary organisations by the local Council for Voluntary Organisations. A more detailed examination of the issue over the election of college governors is explored later in this chapter.

Every FE board of governors is required to adhere to the 'Instrument and Articles of Government for Further Education Colleges'. The Instrument and Articles currently require that the 'length of the term of office shall not exceed 4 years' for governors (DIUS 2007, p. 6) and stipulate that 'The Corporation shall meet at least once in every term, and shall hold such other meetings as may be necessary' (DIUS 2007, p. 8). One of the major criticisms of incorporation was the contention that removing colleges from Local Education Authority control would also remove colleges from democratic accountability (in the sense that colleges were no longer



controlled by officers answerable to local councils). There are counter-arguments to such viewpoints, however. James Avis, in a paper exploring 'localism' in further education, has argued:

there is a hint that the new localism addresses the democratic deficit through the recognition of political processes that move beyond those restricted to the ballot box. This can be seen in the inclusion of user voice in the shaping of regional public services and the manner in which these can call for the accountability of providers. (Avis 2009, p. 640)

This concurs partly with Simmons who detects a 'discourse of freedom' that accompanied 'the business rhetoric' (Simmons 2008, p. 362) amongst some colleges after incorporation. However, Avis's advocacy of 'user voice' is vulnerable to the charge of 'tokenism' in the public services, where the user or customer is given a say in debates that are often highly prescribed by professionals in terms of the agenda set or issues raised. Simmons's contention of 'a discourse of freedom' has largely been subsumed under 'business rhetoric' as colleges increasingly adopt the models and strategies associated with organizations in the private sector (the language associated with job roles and titles is an interesting example where the near-universal adoption of terms such as 'director' or 'line manager' are indicative of the new business ethos in further education).

What can be deduced from these contradictory voices (some in favour of LEA control, some advocating incorporation, some sceptical of either form of governance) is a sense of further education colleges given a certain degree of institutional latitude (within state regulations) but exposed in an unprecedented way to the vagaries and fluctuations of the 'quasi-market' (Simmons 2008, p. 363). Simmons describes incorporation as a 'system of state capitalism' (Simmons 2008, p. 363) in which colleges vied for state funding (through the Further Education Funding Council and its successor, the Learning and Skills Council) under the banners of competition, cost and efficiency. The FEFC, LSC and, now, the Skills Funding Agency (partial successor to the LSC, set up in 2010) are quangos established by government departments to determine the agenda regarding courses and qualifications delivered in FE colleges. This has been achieved primarily through the mechanism of 'weighted funding' where colleges enrolling students to achieve government-priority qualifications receive greater funding per head than courses seen as having less priority. Colleges are often pushed and pulled between competing and collaborating with other institutions in their area (both in further and higher education) by the different priorities and emphases placed on them by the funding agencies (who implement demands from central government).

Freedom from LEA control usually left colleges vulnerable to the sometimes contradictory voices of government departments (as dispensers of patronage) and business (as colleges' primary link to the job market). Colleges were often buffeted from both sides without having the institutional ballast found in most universities (in the form of academic autonomy and independence). Historically, as I have shown in Chap. 5, the English system of further education does not follow the German model of 'social partnership' where (in terms of vocational education), the state, employers and unions each play a vital part in determining the content and administration of

vocational courses in *Berufsschulen*. Whilst it has often been argued by Labour, Conservative or Coalition governments that further education is a collaboration between government and industry (in order to meet business needs), this is not always how it is perceived by the business community (who frequently identify the costs required to re-train students with inadequate skills after completing FE courses). It is my hope to show, later on in this chapter, how the use of democratic forms of governance in colleges will enable them to listen and adapt to the needs of their local communities (through genuine stakeholder participation) and therefore not have to rely on commands from agencies far removed from the areas in which colleges operate.

### 7.1.3 Further Education and ‘The Big Society’

Now that incorporation is 20 years old (a grand age bearing in mind the incessant change and development within the sector), what of the future for FE colleges? Avis defined ‘the new localism’ as:

the claim that as a result of the complexity surrounding policy interventions it is only by placing these in their local context that policy-makers will be able to respond effectively to the needs of the community they serve. For this to occur, locally based stakeholders need to be engaged in the formulation and development of policy. (Avis 2009, p. 634)

This set of circumstances could occur through Local Education Authorities, for example, although LEAs do not necessarily have the connections with business and enterprise seen as an imperative for colleges in the twenty-first century. Avis was writing this towards the twilight of the Blair/Brown ‘New Labour’ administration but what is interesting is just how closely this statement corresponds to David Cameron’s vision of his ‘Big Society’. Cameron formally announced the ‘Big Society’ in a speech in Liverpool in July 2010. He spoke of

a huge cultural change . . . where people, in their everyday lives, in their homes, in their neighbourhoods, in their workplace . . . don’t always turn to officials, local authorities or central government for answers to problems they face . . . but instead feel both free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities. (Cameron 2010)

What is at the heart of both Avis and Cameron’s depictions is the need for institutions to be answerable to their communities. In the case of Cameron this is taken even further, with an exhortation for ‘professionals [to be given] much more freedom . . . and public services [to be open] to new providers like charities, social enterprises and public companies’ (Cameron 2010). This is not to deny that there are also fundamental differences between Avis and Cameron. Avis’s work is focused particularly on the transformation of public institutions without blurring the distinction between the public and the private sectors. Avis is concerned with what he terms ‘the shift from government to governance’ (Avis 2009, p. 637) – how public bodies can be more participatory or inclusive without compromising the integrity of

their status and identity. Cameron's vision of the 'Big Society', as we have just seen, is a very deliberate blurring of these sectors, at worst a call for public institutions to be taken over by agents in the voluntary and private sectors. Such a vision can only lead to the debasement of the public realm itself, the very thing thinkers such as Avis are writing against.

The notion of education as a public good is a critical point here. According to David Bridges and Ruth Jonathan (citing Malkin and Wildavsky (1991)), 'A public good is one that the public decides to treat as a public good' (Bridges and Jonathan in Blake et al. 2003, p. 133). But what exactly does this mean? One interpretation is offered by Neal Lawson and Ken Spours:

the aim of education is more than individual fulfillment – it is about developing the collective capacity of people to be able to govern themselves, to transform wider civil society, the economy and government. Education is, therefore, a fundamental democratic issue. It can only truly promote the values of democracy when education itself is more democratically organized. This suggests a democratizing agenda that includes greater local accountability, a stronger voice for professionals organized in communities of practice, the development of inter-dependent relations between educators and their students, and devolving responsibility to the local level so that communities have the power to actually change their localities. This means moving from 'freedom from' and institutional autonomy to 'freedom to', whereby social partners working together exercise more democratic control. (Lawson and Spours 2011, p. 11)

A sense of education as a public good is, therefore, one where education is seen as a collective enterprise that further s and consolidates the democratic processes within society. A commitment to democracy is often seen as intrinsic to arguments for the idea of a public good because of the processes and practices associated with democratic decision-making (one thinks of the formal and informal debates that occur in various contexts to inform or persuade those interested or affected by such decisions). The participatory and inclusive aspects of democracy (where decisions are made on the basis of discussion and argument from all points-of-view and all sections of the community) can be seen as publically valuable, a benefit to the body politic as a whole (although societies that label themselves as democratic are not always as participatory or inclusive as they should be). This linkage of democracy, education and the public good can only happen effectively, according to Lawson and Spours, if education is itself arranged along democratic lines with the full engagement and participation of all the social partners involved in educational institutions. Autonomy for the institutions themselves is not enough, however. For education to become and remain a public good, it needs to belong to the communities such institutions serve. Later on in this chapter, I will advocate that, in the context of further education, it is imperative that members of the community are elected to college boards of governors in an attempt to ensure that colleges are truly accountable to the localities in which they work. Bridges and Jonathan (citing Grace 1988) state that

education be regarded as a public good because it seeks to develop in all citizens a moral sense, a sense of social and fraternal responsibility for others and a disposition to act in rational and cooperative ways. (Bridges and Jonathan in Blake et al. 2003, p. 133)

I will make the case that colleges operating using the deliberative democratic procedures articulated by Joshua Cohen could go a considerable way towards achieving such aims. Whilst the procedures cannot, by themselves, accomplish a moral sense or an ability to act in rational ways, the way debates are framed in deliberative democratic forums offer the hope and opportunity for arguments to be stated in ways that citizens from opposing or conflicting points-of-view could accept as ‘reasonable’ (in the Rawlsian sense of the term). Cohen’s model also aims towards agreement through consensus and decisions made on the basis of debate where various perspectives have been explored and voiced (although his ideas on consensus are problematic, as will be discussed later). The vision of further education colleges as institutions where deliberative democracy is embodied in its structure and practices is an example, I would argue, of education as a public good (in the sense defined by Bridges and Jonathan, together with Lawson and Spours). By incorporating deliberative democracy within their institutions, further education colleges are also ensuring that citizenship education is explored across the various curriculum areas (again, this is something that will be explored in more detail later on in this chapter).

There is much debate on how far David Cameron’s agenda is genuinely participatory in terms of the comments above on democracy and the public good (many critics detect a method for partially salving public-sector cuts in his ‘Big Society’ proposals) but colleges are certainly listening closely to what is being said. The term ‘community’ (or its plural, ‘communities’) is used a great deal by advocates of either ‘the new localism’ or the ‘Big Society’ and we have seen already, in previous chapters, just how problematic such terms are, particularly in contemporary democracies that are imbued with a very strong sense of Rawlsian pluralism. Certainly, the debate here is not around communities or localism in any definition MacIntyre would acknowledge as concrete or placed in a definite historical context. That said, the term ‘community’ is useful even if used loosely for a geographical area or a collection of local constituencies and stakeholders, and it is in this sense that the concept is being used in the current debate. One recent paper that reflects the existing situation is *A dynamic nucleus: Colleges at the heart of local communities* (NIACE 2011). I looked at the role of NIACE in Chap. 6 – it operates as the main pressure group for adult education in the United Kingdom and is regularly involved in discussions with government departments and other bodies regarding the focus and direction of adult education in the UK (to ensure adult students are not marginalized in terms of public funding and governmental priorities). The paper openly acknowledges Cameron’s speech by stating: ‘This vision [as outlined in the paper] has much in common with the Big Society: that it is a “can do” vision which links together public and private, community and charitable institutions’ (NIACE 2011, p. 8). However, NIACE acknowledges the vagueness and ambiguity in much of the current debate, saying:

The new ‘localism’ agenda and the ‘Big Society’ idea of devolved responsibility and increased levels of community ownership and volunteering have been well-documented without being rigorously defined. (NIACE 2011, p. 11)

So what is the paper (which has powerful co-sponsors in the ‘157 Group’ of outstanding colleges and the Association of Colleges) actually advocating? Interestingly, *A dynamic nucleus* goes back to the ‘radical adult education tradition [which] sees “communities” referring to ‘specific groups of actual people, not society as a whole and certainly not the market’ (Jackson cited in NIACE 2011, p. 14). The paper uses the terminology of the ‘Big Society’ to critique Cameron’s message, reminding us of traditions within adult education (such as the self-help tradition discussed at length in Chap. 6) that challenge the link between education and the market. Education here is viewed as a community practice in the very MacIntyrean perspective of ‘specified groups of actual people’. The report is disappointing, however, regarding the detail on how colleges are expected to structure themselves in such a way to ensure ‘local leadership and responsiveness that illustrates the principles of localism in a practical way’ (NIACE 2011, p. 22). Indeed, ‘localism’ as a concept is barely defined in the report. Instead, the reader is left with vague, catch-all phrases that do little to expand or extend the debate on colleges and their communities. We are told that:

Colleges are major public assets in their communities and leadership of colleges is informed by the principles of public value. These values and collaborative leadership styles should guide colleges’ role in their communities. (NIACE 2011, p. 24)

Yet what constitutes ‘public assets’, ‘public value’ or ‘collaborative leadership styles’ is never made clear and this is one of the major concerns regarding the current discussion – there is a lack of focus or definition on what exactly it means for colleges to be responsive institutions within given communities. David Cameron’s ‘Big Society’ speech and the responses generated in the various channels of debate offer promise but little in terms of actual substance. The Office for Civil Society, as part of the Cabinet Office, appears to be centring its ‘Big Society’ campaign particularly on individual voluntary endeavor (as part of a National Citizen Service) rather than any fundamental institutional change at the local level (see Cabinet Office 2011). It is my belief that certain types of deliberative democracy can offer the structure and analysis around public debate and public institutions necessary to ground democratic colleges within the educational spaces they operate within. It is to deliberative democracy that we need now to turn our attention.

## 7.2 Deliberative Democracy: an Overview of the Terrain

Deliberative democracy is a label attached to a collection of theories that offer the possibility of combining adherence to rules with a collective identity often inspired by the deliberative function itself. This is neatly encapsulated by Jon Elster when he writes (in terms of a definition of deliberative democracy):

the notion includes collective decision making with the participation of all who will be affected by the decision or their representatives: this is the democratic part. Also, all agree

that it includes decision making by means of argument offered *by* and *to* participants who are committed to the values of rationality and impartiality: this is the deliberative part [emphasis in the original]. (Elster in Elster 1998, p. 8)

One of the catalysts for the resurgence in theories of deliberative democracy over the past 10 or 15 years is the perceived dwindling of interest amongst citizens, in Western Europe and North America, towards conventional forms of representative democracy (as discussed in Chap. 3). The expression of opinion through the silent, isolated means of the polling booth is seen by many in ‘mature’ democracies as too infrequent and inadequate as a means of collecting the viewpoints of citizens. Deliberative democracy attempts to rectify the supposed gap between elected and electors or the many communities divided by differing conceptions of the good (for example) through devising procedures whereby decisions are attained after extended discussion and debate. The use of deliberation before voting on alternatives has, at least, two main advantages. Firstly, it often enables a wider range of opinions to be aired and challenged in the public arena. This view of the salutary effect of public debate goes back at least to J. S. Mill in *On Liberty* (1998 [1859]): ‘there is always hope when people are forced to listen to both sides; it is when they attend only to one that errors harden into prejudices, and truth itself ceases to have the effect of truth, by being exaggerated into falsehood’ (Mill 1998, p. 58). Secondly, it is hoped that engagement with the deliberative process by citizens with different views and opinions could, by the very act of deliberation in a public forum, engender a sense of community through collective decision-making. Increased exposure to debate, compromise and the exploration of hard cases is one way of fostering mutual respect and understanding amongst citizens upholding different conception of the good.

There are, however, potential criticisms with both points raised. There is obviously no guarantee that a multiplicity of viewpoints will necessarily lead to better answers or solutions to political problems. It could also be argued that the suggestion that the collection of different voices and perspectives to reach wise or sensible decisions is hardly unique to the theorists of deliberative democracy – the agora of Ancient Athens or the witenagemot of Anglo-Saxon England are but two examples from the past that operated on similar principles. Deliberative democrats are, of course, perfectly entitled to adopt such procedures but they are not exactly new. It is by no means clear that the use of deliberative processes will lead to a sense of collective identity amongst those involved. There is a danger that exposure to potentially conflicting points-of-view could lead to the very opposite – an unbridgeable divide over irreconcilable differences. Contemporary democracies are especially vulnerable on this point due to their inherent pluralism and has led certain communitarians, MacIntyre in particular, to fear the onset of relativism:

the rival premises are such that we possess no rational way of weighing the claims of one as against another. For each premise employs some quite different normative or evaluative concept from others, so that claims made upon us are of quite different kinds. (MacIntyre 1985, p. 8)

What we are led to infer from MacIntyre’s argument is that, if radically different claims are made upon us from people with potentially conflicting conceptions of

the good, then how are we to draw together into a common citizenry? There are not enough shared premises, according to such a view, for people to be able to identify with one another. This criticism is not aimed at deliberative democrats alone but it is one they need to be able to answer to avoid being vulnerable to the charge that their methods are little more than empty procedures.

So where do proponents of deliberative democracy stand on the issue of citizenship and how applicable is deliberative democracy to contemporary nation states? Will Kymlicka has written that '[d]ifferent models of citizenship rest upon different images of the nature of the state, and/or on different images of the nature of the individuals who belong to it' (Kymlicka 2003, p. 147). This suggests that we should not conceive of the term 'citizenship' as monolithic but as something flexible and adaptable to different contexts and situations. If this is true, then it is probable that different methods or theories of deliberation are likely to suit different forms of citizenship.

Generally speaking, deliberative democracy is seen, by its supporters, as a process that crosses the supposed divide between political and civil society. Gutmann and Thompson speak for many when they write:

Deliberative democrats . . . should also favor [sic] the extension of deliberative practices into civil society. They should take an interest in the whole range of intermediary institutions – those that act on citizens (such as the media, health-care organisations, professional sports), those in which citizens act (interest groups, private clubs, trade unions, professional organisations), as well as those in which they work (corporations, small businesses, government agencies, military service). From a deliberative perspective, the single most important institution outside government is the educational system. (Gutmann and Thompson 2004, p. 61)

Gutmann and Thompson are challenging Rawls's distinction between political and civil society. They resist the idea of political society as residing solely in Rawls's concept of the basic structure. Gutmann and Thompson argue for a much wider conception of political society that includes educational institutions, for instance. By widening the definition of what constitutes political society, notions of justice, rights and equality become a central concern of schools and colleges too.

Rawls differentiates between political and civil society by use of public and non-public reason. According to Rawls

to act reasonably and responsibly, corporate bodies, as well as individuals, need a way of reasoning about what is to be done. This way of reasoning is public with respect to its members, but non-public with respect to political society and to citizens generally. Nonpublic reasons comprise the many reasons of civil society and belong to what I have called the "background culture", in contrast with the public political culture. These reasons are social, and certainly not private. (Rawls 2005, p. 220)

If I have understood Rawls correctly, whilst institutions in the background culture need to have stated rules, regulations and procedures that are reasonable (at least to the members themselves), they are not constrained by the burdens of judgement necessary for public discourse within the basic structure: 'different authorities are recognised as relevant or binding by different corporate bodies' (Rawls 2005, p. 221).



If we view citizenship and deliberation as multi-layered and context-specific, how are we to ensure the possibility of deliberative democracy in the various organisations Gutmann and Thompson highlighted above? Is Rawls's descriptions of political and civil society a potential spur or barrier to deliberative democracy (particularly in civil society)? As indicated above, Rawls acknowledges that there are certain institutions within civil society that will remain (and are entitled to remain) resistant to any form of deliberative democracy – the Catholic Church is a typical example. However, this is not to be dismissive of deliberative democracy within civil society. There are many counterexamples of where forms of deliberative democracy are practiced successfully – Quaker meetings, some trade union branches and certain local pressure groups come to mind. The crux on what makes democracy deliberative is Joshua Cohen's definition of what he calls 'the deliberative conception'. Cohen states

In the deliberative conception ... citizens treat one another as equals not by giving equal consideration to interests – perhaps some interests ought to be discounted by arrangements of binding collective choice – but by offering them justifications for the exercise of collective power framed in terms of considerations that can, roughly speaking, be acknowledged by all as reasons. (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 186)

If we are to apply Cohen's deliberative conception to different applications of citizenship and organisational democracy (coming back to Kymlicka's original point), can we be so dismissive of equal consideration of different interests as Cohen states in the passage above? Such considerations are especially important in situations where citizens have profoundly different cultural, political or religious viewpoints for coming to the collective reasons they have agreed upon. If all these interests are not treated equally, then the agreement is likely to be invalidated in the eyes of these aggrieved groups or interests. In fact, there is unlikely to be any agreement at all (the issue of group representation and rights, particularly with regard to the writings of Iris Marion Young, will be looked at later on in the discussion on stakeholders and further education colleges). Deliberate democrats need to be prepared for the fact that, in a multicultural national state, 'citizens are different in different ways ... and so will relate to the state in different ways' (Kymlicka 2003, p. 153). This will not just apply to the state as such but certain aspects of civil society as well.

Cohen is on safer ground when he states that

democracy, on the deliberative view, is not exclusively a form of politics; it is a framework of social and institutional arrangements that ... facilitate free reasoning among equal citizens [and] tie the authorization to exercise public power ... to such public reasoning. (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 186)

Here is a real opportunity for breaking free of the distinctions inherent in Rawls's theory between political and civil society. Taken to its limits, deliberative democracy, according to Cohen, becomes a way of life rather than simply a method for achieving participation in a decision-making process (as part of the basic



structure). I accept that concepts such as ‘free reasoning’ will be open to different interpretations depending on people’s own conceptions of the good but this does not have to lead to free-floating relativism. Cohen is close to Rawls’s ideas on public reason when he states:

A consequence of the reasonableness of the deliberative procedure . . . together with the conditions of pluralism . . . is that the mere fact of having a preference, conviction or ideal does not by itself provide a reason in support of a proposal. (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 349)

Phrased in this way, pluralism does not lead inevitably to relativism. Reasonable convictions acknowledge the fact that different conceptions of the good will disagree on priorities or concerns. However, preferences that cannot or will not acknowledge the validity of different conceptions of the good disagreeing with such preferences forsake any claim to reasonableness in Cohen’s version of deliberation. These preferences are likely, therefore, to carry less weight in debates where reasonableness is sanctioned or emphasized.

How might Cohen’s ideal deliberative procedure work where notions of citizenship are varied and multi-layered? There are certainly aspects of Cohen’s ideal procedure that are highly amenable to multi-faceted versions of citizenship. He is very open to pluralism and goes so far as to say

A deliberative democracy is a pluralistic association. The members have diverse preferences, convictions and ideals concerning the conduct of their own lives. While sharing a commitment to the deliberative resolution of problems of collective choice . . . they also have divergent aims, and do not think that some particular set of preferences, convictions or ideals is mandatory. (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 346)

So far, this fits in comfortably with Kymlicka’s description of multicultural citizenship. It also tallies with Rawls’s belief that contemporary democracies are, by their essence, pluralistic. Where I find Cohen’s ideal deliberative procedure more problematic is when he talks of terms of association, for here he claims, due to the fact that democratic associations regard deliberative procedures as the source of their legitimacy, ‘it is important to them that the terms of their association not merely be the results of their deliberation, but also be *manifest* to them as such’ [emphasis in the original] (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 246). How the terms of association manifest themselves will be different for different citizens according to the preferences, convictions and ideals mentioned earlier. Is it possible that how citizens view the terms of association could itself be a source of disagreement (or even conflict)? Levels and intensities of identification have been used by many commentators to question the commitment of some citizens to a national body politic (one thinks immediately here of the ‘Tebbit cricket test’). Terms of association will need to mirror (in certain ways) people’s varying conceptions of the good for agreement to be reached in such a forum. This is something I will be looking at in greater detail in the sections below, especially regarding Young’s views on group rights and representation.

### 7.3 Deliberative Democracy and Further Education Colleges: Initial Thoughts

I will discuss later in more detail the issue of college governance but it is pertinent here to explore briefly how forms of deliberative democracy might work within further education colleges. At the moment, there is very little democracy of any kind in colleges – most governors are appointed, invited or self-selected to accord with the communities each college purports to serve (thus reflecting the interests of senior management, businesses, voluntary organisations, etc.) Often the only elected members of the board of governors are the staff and student representatives.

Will Kymlicka's ideas on different levels of citizenship offer interesting prospects when looked at from an FE perspective. Although Kymlicka is writing specifically of citizenship in a national context, the diversity of communities involved within any FE college replicates, to some extent, the situations he is writing about regarding nation states. The different constituencies (staff, students, senior managers, employers, community groups) will have different levels of commitment and different perspectives on the institution which Kymlicka's 'multi-dimensional' approach to citizenship might help to interpret. Certainly, as Gutmann and Thompson point out, deliberative democracy is as important a facility for decision making in civil society as in political society. As I will show later, 'Student Voice' has become a prominent issue within further education colleges to ensure student views are heard and acted upon. So it would seem, on the surface at least, that colleges might be open to some of the proposals offered by Gutmann and Thompson. However, the forums open for 'Student Voice' in further education are currently patchy in their democratic credentials. It is often debateable whether colleges are doing this for genuinely participatory reasons or because it has become an essential aspect of government inspection. Also, other constituencies (the most obvious being that of the college staff) are often neglected in terms of college governance and the communication between various bodies (the teaching staff and the college-as-an-institution, for example) frequently do not accord with any democratic procedures (deliberative or otherwise). There is still little by way of 'Staff Voice' in many colleges.

In terms of the deliberative processes outlined above, Joshua Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure could prove effective in ensuring college governance is more deliberative and participatory. The terms and results of deliberation should be manifest to the governors (and other representatives) as part of their involvement in a long-established institution and its ongoing development. However, this is not guaranteed. As we have seen, one of the strengths but also one of the drawbacks of college governance is the diversity of interests involved in its maintenance. Although we have argued that Kymlicka's concept of multi-layered citizenship could be applied to the levels of commitment and identification different stakeholders have with FE colleges, conflicting conceptions of the good between the various parties involved could jeopardise such terms of association. It is here that we should be most concerned with Cohen's emphatic contention addressed earlier that 'In the deliberative conception . . . citizens treat one another as equals not by giving equal

consideration to interests ... but by offering them justifications for the exercise of collective power framed in terms of considerations that can, roughly speaking, be acknowledged by all as reasons' (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 186). For if equal consideration is not given to the various interests (or if the deliberation divides into semi-permanent 'blocs' for the majority and minority interests) then there is the possibility of a breakdown in the terms of association. It is not enough for Cohen to say that collective power leading to reasons all delegates would acknowledge as such is sufficient. By equal consideration to interests, I am arguing that all the constituencies within a college deliberative forum are acknowledged and consulted as equal partners with legitimate interests *before* collective decision-making takes place. If, as I will argue below, other constituencies followed the staff and student bodies by implementing the election of their representatives onto college boards of governors, this will create an atmosphere where all interests have at least been legitimated through democratic processes. It is only through the legitimacy of democratic processes that a meeting of genuinely equal interests can take place. Cohen's depiction of his ideal deliberative procedure does offer rich prospects for FE institutions exploring the feasibility of deliberative democracy as a method of governance by neatly linking the main features of deliberative democracy (as defined by Cohen) to his ideal deliberative procedure (see Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, pp. 346–348).

## 7.4 Why Deliberative Democracy?

It is important to acknowledge that there is not one clear-cut definition of deliberative democracy. It is, in essence, a set of theories which share certain attributes, a key one being 'the need to justify decisions made by citizens and their representatives' (Gutmann and Thompson 2004, p. 3). But there are also significant disagreements within the field of deliberative democracy over such issues as what constitutes public reason, on what level and over what time-span deliberation should occur, and whether deliberative democracy is a variation of contemporary representative democracy or an attempt to conceptualise (and implement) modern experiments in direct democracy closer to the models of ancient Athens or eighteenth-century Geneva. What all philosophers who advocate versions of deliberative democracy agree on, to reiterate Elster's definition, is that the concept itself 'includes collective decision making with the participation of all who will be affected by the decision or their representatives' (Elster in Elster 1998, p. 8).

I argued above that certain theorists associated with deliberative democracy are able to provide the necessary structure and rigour to recent debates around colleges and communities. We looked above at Cohen's own interpretation of deliberative democracy where he argued:

In the deliberative conception ... citizens treat one another as equals not by giving equal consideration to interests – perhaps some interests ought to be discounted by arrangements of binding collective choice – but by offering them justifications for the exercise of collective power framed in terms of considerations that can, roughly speaking, be acknowledged by all as reasons. (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 186)

We noted that this framing of deliberation is problematic (especially Cohen's contention that not all interests need to be given equal consideration regarding procedures leading to collective choice) and we will discuss below just how contentious this could be in the arena of further education colleges (in the discussion around clarity of deliberative outcomes). It was acknowledged, however, that Cohen offers a strong counter-argument to Rawls's view that institutions within civil society are usually outside of the basic structure and are not, therefore, required to follow either public reason or Rawls's two principles of justice (although Rawls did concede that institutions outside the basic structure would be informed by public reason and the two principles in a society governed through justice-as-fairness). Cohen does not accept such a division between political and civil society. To restate his view: 'democracy, on the deliberative view, is not exclusively a form of politics; it is a framework of social and institutional arrangements' (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 186). This is a crucial point. Cohen here is advocating using deliberative democracy to inform decision-making in areas of life well beyond the confines of the legislative chamber or court of constitutional law. The application of deliberative democracy to the wider civil society has implications for decision making in further education. If Cohen is correct in his view (and I believe he is), then colleges will form part of such social and institutional frameworks by being public bodies in receipt of government monies and required to adopt and implement key pieces of social legislation (The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the Equality Act (2010) are important examples).

The idea of educational institutions embodying the social and political frameworks advocated by and for the community as a whole has a long heritage. Judith Suissa, in her book *Anarchism and Education* (2006), writes: 'The anarchist ideal of a socialist, communal society . . . stressed the need for a natural continuity between the world of school and that of the community' (Suissa 2006, p. 83). Suissa writes from a specifically anarchist perspective and this viewpoint offers an interesting counterpoint to Cohen's description of deliberative democracy. My reason for comparing Cohen with Suissa's work is that both writers address the concept of collective decision-making but from very different philosophical perspectives. Suissa presents educational establishments rooted in anarchist traditions where there is often broad agreement on what Rawls has called comprehensive conceptions of the good. This is not the case with Cohen's model, which emanates from a liberal perspective where agreement on comprehensive conceptions of the good is considered highly unlikely in contemporary democratic societies due to ethical or religious pluralism.

Before we explore these differences, we need to be reminded again of Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure as this is a vital component of Cohen's philosophy. Put briefly, the ideal deliberative procedure includes four main points:

1. The consideration of proposals is not constrained by the authority of prior norms or requirements.
2. The deliberators give reasons with the expectation that those reasons will settle the fate of their proposal.

3. In ideal deliberation parties are both formally and substantively equal. Everyone with the deliberative capacities has equal standing at each stage of the deliberative process.
4. Even under ideal conditions there is no promise that consensual reasons will be forthcoming. If they are not, then deliberation concludes with voting, subject to some form of majority rule.

(Adapted from Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 347).

What can be immediately noted is the emphasis in both writers (Suissa and Cohen) of decision making as a collective enterprise to ensure fairness and equality (where possible) within such a process. The difference is in the method or outlook. Whereas Cohen's evocation of deliberative democracy is heavily procedural (as is made explicit in the very phrase 'ideal deliberative procedure'), Suissa's depiction of deliberation in anarchist communities seems closer to what might be called 'a way of life'. She argues that

the school [or college is] a microcosm of anarchist society, in the sense of constituting a community based on solidarity and equality, seems to go one step further than the liberal humanist ideal that the way to moral progress lies in gradual intellectual enlightenment. (Suissa 2006, p. 81)

What is striking here is the phrase 'moral progress'. There is no sense of this in Cohen – indeed, he would find the concept of moral progress deeply problematic as he is largely in agreement with Rawls on the inevitability of reasonable pluralism in contemporary democracies (where citizens have different and often conflicting comprehensive doctrines). Cohen states that 'no institutional mechanism in a democratic society imposes pressure to reach agreement in ways that would erase *fundamental differences between moral, religious, and philosophical traditions* [my emphasis]' (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 190). So what we appear to have are two philosophical traditions that uphold the need for deliberation, equality and fairness in decision making but from two very different perspectives. Suissa's notion of the anarchist school or community implies an institution where there is partial agreement, at least, on certain comprehensive doctrines (particular types of socialism or collectivism, for example) while Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure' has been constructed to enable deliberation (and with it equality and fairness) to take place where there is no agreement (partial or otherwise) on comprehensive doctrines. The implications for either of these traditions (Suissa's anarchism and Cohen's liberalism) are in the *range* of agreement likely to follow such periods of deliberation. One might expect an anarchist commune to already harbour significant areas of agreement on what constitute the important priorities and perspectives within a given context by the fact that many (if not all) are likely to share similar values and ways of life that are tantamount to a shared comprehensive doctrine (although I appreciate this is a controversial point, as the following sentences show). Suissa has noted that for certain anarchists, 'the basic unit of social organisation is the commune' (Suissa 2006, p. 48) but Suissa herself is careful to add 'that anarchism overlaps liberalism in its emphasis on autonomy – although it does not assign the value of personal autonomy any priority' (Suissa 2006, p. 53). For Cohen,

as we have already seen, '[the] consideration of proposals is not constrained by the authority of prior norms or requirements' (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 347). The basis of Cohen's procedure anticipates a lack of agreement on shared norms or values prior to the process of deliberation. In fact, his method is predicated on such a lack in a way Suissa's anarchism rarely could be. What participants in Cohen's deliberative democracy adhere to is reasonable pluralism, 'that good-faith efforts at the exercise of practical reason, by reasonable people thus understood, do not converge on a particular philosophy of life' (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 187). It is almost impossible to envisage the same level of agreement in Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure as we might find in a forum where deliberators are essentially in accord with what constitutes a 'good life'. Stephen Mulhall and Adam Swift neatly encapsulate the issue when they write:

Even those who conscientiously and correctly exercise their powers of reason and judgment in the ordinary course of moral and political life face ineradicable obstacles to the attainment of agreement on comprehensive questions. (Mulhall and Swift 1996, p. 177)

Thus the range of agreement alluded to earlier is inevitably restricted within a forum as depicted by Cohen. This is not to diminish the very significant gains that can be made but they are gains always made through the burdens of judgment, acknowledgement that fundamental opposition (conflict, even) is an integral part of contemporary democracies and most deliberative arenas operating within such democracies.

Having said this, there are also considerable grounds for agreement between Suissa's anarchist educational institutions and Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure. Cohen views his deliberative democracy as 'an ongoing and independent association ... whose members expect it to continue into the indefinite future' (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 346). Whilst this is not an advocacy of fraternity as such, there are useful connections between what Cohen describes here and Suissa's belief that 'community both needs equality and provides the conditions for it to survive' (Suissa 2006, p. 66). A deliberative democracy, if it is going to have any purpose at all, needs to ensure that it will not fragment or breakdown at the first instance of disagreement or conflict. Without continuity, deliberators would have no confidence that decisions made within the forum would be carried out or implemented, thus jeopardising the whole deliberative process. This is not to assume that the community or association will last in perpetuity (or even into the longer-term). But the representatives (and those they represent) are likely to invest a certain sense of legitimacy in an association 'in which the connections between deliberation and outcomes are evident' (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 346) and that these connections continue to be made over time. Where Cohen and Suissa differ is in the level of cohesion amongst members or representatives within such an association. Rarely, if at all, does Cohen use the term 'community' because such terms present difficulties to philosophers committed to reasonable pluralism. The term 'community' often has, for writers of Cohen's persuasion, overtones of MacIntyre's vision of a fixed society sharing comprehensive conceptions of the

good. Whilst Suissa's anarchist communities are not necessary 'fixed' in the sense depicted by MacIntyre, she does state that

the anarchist stance involves more than just doing away with the state by establishing alternative means of social organisation; it involves a normative, substantive and ongoing commitment to a set of values and principles. (Suissa 2006, p. 81)

The deliberation portrayed in the 'Escuela Moderna', 'Summerhill', the 'Walden Center' or the 'Ferrer School' (see Suissa 2006, pp. 75–101) are as different from one another as we would expect of different establishments based on anarchist principles. But within each is a belief in an 'ongoing commitment to a set of values and principles' that is absent from Cohen's sense of 'ongoing'. In his deliberative framework, the articulation of values and principles need to be dealt with in a procedural way in order to ensure 'the protection of expression' (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 208) and prevent certain voices or groups dominating the discussion.

## 7.5 Deliberative Democracy: The Implications for College Governance

So far, this discussion has looked at deliberative democracy in a general, abstract way – but what points can be drawn for college governance by applying the tenets of deliberative democracy to the means by which further education institutions manage decision making? It must be made clear that the following discussion is not simply a critique of the current ways that colleges are governed but offers proposals for an alternative method of governance (through the use of Cohen's model of deliberative democracy). Robert E. Goodin claims '[d]eliberative democrats seek outcomes which will be regarded as democratically binding . . . involving a free and equal exchange among everyone who will be affected by them' (Goodin in Fishkin and Laslett 2003, p. 54). How close to this particular aim do colleges currently come? In Chap. 3 I analysed the recommendations of the Foster Report (2005) on student involvement in college governance. One of Foster's recommendations was that 'FE college governance arrangements should not be changed, but FE colleges and the Government should take steps to improve the diversity of governing bodies' (DfES 2005, p. 73). Unfortunately, Foster does not go into further detail on what exactly constitutes diversity in this instance. But is the Report correct in stating that the arrangements of college governance should remain as they are? Currently, there is little democratic accountability of colleges as educational institutions. It was seen in an earlier section of this chapter that statutory local government involvement ended with college incorporation in 1992. The vast majority of governors on college boards are unelected (members tend to be invited onto boards due to expertise or experience in business, industry, the voluntary sector or local community groups). Often the only elected governors are those representing the staff and student bodies within a particular college. There is, therefore, a significant democratic deficit

between college governance and other institutions within the public sector subject to direct public scrutiny (local health and police authorities, for example). The gap between college boards and democratic accountability can have a corrosive effect upon perceptions across the various communities associated with further education. This fear is articulated by such influential voices in FE as Dame Ruth Silver (the former Principal of Lewisham College) who states, in a *Guardian* article, ‘we need to radically rethink the way colleges and training organisations are governed if we are to prevent influential groups taking control and running the show for minority interests’ (Silver 2010). Silver offers this scenario as something for further education to be mindful of in preparation for Cameron’s ‘Big Society’. But these concerns are already current and valid. This is not to take away from the considerable hard work and dedication college governors put into the role (on a voluntary, unpaid basis which involves regular evening commitments). These efforts, in my view, deserve and require a democratic foundation in order to give them the utmost credibility across the communities individual colleges serve. Without this foundation, decisions made at a strategic level will lack the will or participation of critical constituencies at various moments in the life of the institution.

How might deliberative democracy remedy this perceived deficit in accountability? As part of Cohen’s ideal deliberative procedure, he articulated the importance of ‘[e]veryone with the deliberative capacities [having] equal standing at each stage of the deliberative process’ (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 347). Cohen is looking here at procedures once membership of a particular deliberative forum has been established. But let us take the process back one stage and ask about membership of college boards of governors. Is it unrealistic to suggest that democratic practices are applied to the recruitment of governors as well as to their conduct once recruited? If staff and students are required to elect their representatives, should it not be incumbent upon the business or community constituencies to do the same? The idea is not as far-fetched as it sounds. Michael Apple’s and Luís Armando Gandin’s work in Porto Alegre offers interesting perspectives on institutional democracy and community participation in an educational context. It is important firstly to put Apple’s and Gandin’s study into the wider framework of politics in this specific part of southern Brazil. Porto Alegre has been experimenting, for over a decade, in a ‘Popular Administration’ where ordinary citizens take an active and highly important role in the governance of the city. *Orçamento Participativo* (or Participatory Budgeting) is a fine example of the Popular Administration in practice – in the words of Gandin and Apple,

OP is a mechanism that guarantees active popular participation and deliberation in the decision making process for the allocation of resources for investment in the city. (Gandin and Apple 2002, p. 261)

From an educational point of view, these participatory structures manifest themselves in the form of the Citizen School. In order for such schools to exist within Porto Alegre, ‘a democratic, deliberative and participatory forum was created – the Constituent Congress of Education’ (Gandin and Apple 2002, p. 264). Important ideas go through various stages of deliberation ‘with participants of every segment



of the school' (Gandin and Apple 2002, p. 364) to achieve what Gandin and Apple describe as 'the centrality of the community as part of the educational and administrative spheres of the school and school system' (Gandin and Apple 2002, p. 264). The day-to-day running of Citizen Schools is facilitated by a School Council where '50 % of the seats [are] for staff and teachers and 50 % for parents and students' (Gandin and Apple 2002, p. 268). The School Council is responsible for policy and the allotment of resources which the Principal and senior team then implement. In a very interesting development, as part of this participatory framework, in the schools of Porto Alegre 'the whole school community elects the principal by direct vote' (Gandin and Apple 2002, p. 269).

It needs to be immediately acknowledged that Gandin's and Apple's study is of a very specific situation based on local political, economic and educational factors. In no sense would it be practical or appropriate for the system adopted in Porto Alegre to be incorporated wholesale in another country and another sector of education. Further education in England must find solutions to its own challenges (just as the schools in Porto Alegre are doing). However, there are practices and methods regarding institutional governance in Porto Alegre that would not be out of place in English colleges. The first of these is the direct election of college principals by those constituencies served by the college. One immediate problem is that these constituencies are not always clear-cut in their membership (phrases such as 'the business community' or even 'the local community' can often have a hollow, vacuous ring to them as I stated in a previous chapter). It is vital that such constituencies are well-defined if such elections are to take place. If the membership of such constituencies is too vague or amorphous then the links between the representatives and those they represent will be tenuous or non-existent. Accountability itself is therefore compromised as there is no clear body of people who the representative needs to respond and listen to. But is this as difficult as it might, on first analysis, appear? The bodies of staff and students at a given college are clearly recorded for each academic year, so one would think it relatively easy to establish 'electoral rolls' for both of them. In terms of the business and voluntary sectors, organisations working within a particular geographical area (say, a radius of 15 miles of the college) plus those outside the radius who work directly with the college could be given a vote. It is important to note with this proposal, however, of the potential impact of multi-national companies within a given locality and how business representation might prove problematic (especially when there is an issue that is contentious between the local branch and head office). The local community could be included by giving the vote to any resident within the political constituencies the college serves. What this adds up to, in effect, is a form of electoral college where the staff, student, business, voluntary and resident bodies are each given a specific say in who will be the principal for the college in question. The theoretical permutations regarding the weighting of each constituency in such a vote will vary according to the importance individual commentators attach to them but a split of 30 % for staff, 30 % for students, 20 % for business, 10 % for residents and 10 % for voluntary organisations might be one such model. This would ensure that candidates would have to appeal to *all* constituencies associated with the college

in order to stand a reasonable chance of election. This weighting of votes could also be used to ensure fair representation on boards of governors as well (currently most boards contain only one or two staff and student governors, for example).

An immediate rejoinder from many within the field of further education is that arranging the selection of college principals in this way would be impractical. But why need it be so? The candidates could be short-listed by an appropriately constituted board of governors (which will be discussed in more detail shortly) and they could be given a stipulated fund (similar to the funds given to political parties during electoral campaigns) in order to appeal to the different constituencies for a 3-week campaigning period (as a suggestion). One obvious benefit of electing principals is that it sets the democratic tone for college governance by involving (potentially) every person with a vested interest in the life of the college. From a student point-of-view, for instance, such a process has direct connections with citizenship education – one can envisage students organising and involving themselves in debates with the candidates on issues that concern them at the college or using such an election to forward and pursue campaigns that will be of benefit to them or the college as a whole. The report *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds* encapsulates the importance of colleges incorporating democratic structures in terms of governance to give citizenship education a sense of immediacy and relevancy outside of the classroom:

institutions themselves have significant opportunities to give students and trainees genuine experience of Citizenship. Many already do so with a great deal of success, for example through student governorships, student councils and membership of subject and course committees. We cannot stress enough that the essential values and dispositions we seek to encourage in young adults must be reinforced by institutional practice, and certainly must never be contradicted by that practice. (FEFC 2000, p. 24)

What could reinforce democratic structures within institutional practice in a more direct and meaningful way than the most senior representative of the college attaining her or his position through election? The message, to any student of citizenship education, is that democracy (and participation within its processes) is the vital ingredient in the selection of key positions at the college. It is what gives the position holder credibility and legitimacy across the various college constituencies.

Just as the selection of college principals would benefit from exposure to democratic processes and procedures, likewise with college boards of governors. We have already seen how democratic accountability has been eroded (in terms of boards of governors) since incorporation with no requirement for Local Authorities to provide members or the need for board members (beyond staff and student representatives) to face any form of election. As noted earlier, currently boards of governors at further education colleges are largely self-selecting. This lack of electoral transparency inevitably impacts on the work boards of governors undertake and achieve. Governors are not (with the exception of staff and student governors) elected by college stakeholders and, because of this, any discussion carried out as part of their duties does not carry the weight that would come with democratic legitimacy. It could be argued that the linking of electoral accountability with the models of deliberative democracy discussed above would be one effective way of

ensuring fairness and transparency in the area of college governance. As we have seen, Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure demands equality for representatives in the deliberative process. The need for governors to be held accountable (regarding these deliberations) to those they represent should facilitate a sense of openness. Gutmann and Thompson argue that

[i]nformed by deliberative principles as well as practices, citizens can modify and improve [those] other practices – making the routines of bargaining, campaigning, voting, and other important political activities more public-spirited in both process and outcome. (Gutmann and Thompson 2004, p. 56)

What of the procedures and practices *within* boards of governors? Here, Cohen's form of deliberative democracy is informative. I argued above that all the constituencies within a college deliberative forum need to be acknowledged and consulted as equal partners with legitimate interests before collective decision-making takes place. The election of governors within the various college constituencies (or bodies) is, in my view, the most effective means of ensuring all stakeholders are consulted on a regular basis (for consultation of important issues outside of the election calendar, perhaps college referenda might be a plausible option). Within a formal deliberative forum such as a college board of governors, it is imperative that the forum recognises the five features of a deliberative democracy identified by Cohen – namely, that it is independent and ongoing, that the members share the view that there are appropriate terms for their association, that the association is pluralistic, that the members of the association regard deliberative procedures as a source of legitimacy, and that the members recognise each as having deliberative capacities (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 346). As discussed above, the most problematic of Cohen's features, in regards to deliberative forums in colleges, is the belief that members of the association 'regard deliberative procedures as a source of legitimacy'. Cohen goes on to say:

it is important [to the members of the association] that the terms of their association not merely be the results of their deliberation, but also be *manifest* to them as such. They prefer institutions in which the connections between deliberation and outcomes are evident to ones in which the connections are less clear [emphasis in the original]. (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 346)

This is the most challenging of Cohen's features in terms of consensus and collective decision-making. One can envisage scenarios within a college board of governors (even one convened using a democratic method of election) where the perception between deliberation and outcomes vary according to the participants. A debate on the necessity of cuts in the college budget might be a case in point. Whilst the agenda and outcomes are likely to be viewed from one perspective for representatives from senior management at the college (the need to ensure the college is viable financially), it is unlikely that staff and students governors will perceive this issue from anything like the same perspective (their focus is likely to be on the impact on colleagues' jobs and possible cuts in college courses). At such a juncture, Cohen states 'deliberation concludes with voting, subject to some form of majority rule' (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 348). Power relations, in

terms of majority rule, cannot therefore be excluded from Cohen's model. This is not always as clear as it could be in his depiction of the ideal deliberative procedure where the procedure itself needs to be sensitive to the potentially corroding effects of power and influence on even the most sophisticated forms of deliberation. Cohen does make the claim that this need to revert, if necessary, to majority rule, 'does not . . . eliminate the distinction between deliberative forms of collective choice and forms that aggregate non-deliberative preferences' (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 348). Although Cohen's point is a valid one (we can, perhaps, agree that decisions made after deliberation between all the parties involved is more likely to be acceptable than those that do not), this does not constitute consensus. Although the outcomes might be manifest (in Cohen's use of that term) to all concerned as the result of the ideal deliberative procedure, if majority rule is finally reverted to in order to achieve these outcomes, there could still be a sense of resentment and exclusion from those parties not forming part of the majority. Returning back to the example of the discussion over college redundancies, where majority rule is enforced, those in the minority could feel resentful or resistant to the association itself (especially if the decision affects their or their colleagues' livelihoods, for instance). This might be especially true where the majority and minority form semi-permanent 'blocs' within the deliberative body. It is not clear from Cohen's deliberative model how such issues regarding majorities and minorities are formally addressed.

This issue also has implications when Cohen speaks (in terms of the deliberative process) of it being 'important to [all parties] that the terms of their association not merely be the results of their deliberation, but also be *manifest* to them as such' [emphasis in the original] (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 246). However, at the level of college governance, if semi-permanent blocs of majority and minority voices were to arise on a contentious point such as cuts to particular programmes or staff redundancies, it is difficult to see how such terms of association as Cohen advocates could be maintained over the longer term. What would be manifest to the minority is that their opinion, whilst listened to in the appropriate way, will not hold sway in the debate. At this stage, there will be irreconcilable differences which are likely to affect the terms of association itself. Whether deliberation could repair or heal such differences is not covered in Cohen's depiction of the process.

One possible solution to such issues of outcomes based on majority decisions is offered by Iris Marion Young in her advocacy of group rights and representation. I explained in Chap. 2 that Young is suspicious of 'universalism' in terms of rights and she argues, '[t]hough in many respects the law is now blind to group differences, the society is not' (Young 1989, p. 268). Her belief that 'some groups sometimes deserve special rights' (Young 1989, p. 269) challenges the notion of equality embedded in Cohen's model. Is there a place for some groups deserving special rights in the context of college governance? Much has been made recently of 'student voice' within FE colleges – Colin Forrest, for example, has stated, '[t]he issue of student voice in post-16 learning is developing across a number of dimensions' (CEL 2008, p. 25). Special rights in the college governance process (for students or any other stakeholder group) would be a mistake, however. This is because students

(and other groups) already have representation within boards of governors similar to what Young is advocating for ‘political publics ... democratized workplaces and government decision-making bodies’ (Young 1989, p. 265). To give a particular stakeholder the power of veto within college boards of governors would privilege certain college communities over others. A better solution is fair representation within the governing body itself (in terms of the number of governors allocated to each college constituency to militate against powerful voices dominating discussion and decision-making). What these representatives often lack is the necessary forms of deliberation and consultation between themselves and the people they represent (perhaps similar to the ‘communities of practice’ increasingly seen in both schools and colleges on pedagogical issues). There are rarely forums put in place for staff governors (for instance) to report to the staff body periodically on what has been discussed at governors’ meetings. Although some colleges do offer a ‘Governors’ Question Time’ every term for student governors to brief and take questions from the student body, this is not consistent across colleges (and is not usually mirrored in a ‘Governors’ Question Time’ for the staff body). James Fishkin offers a plausible relationship between representatives and constituents that might address such gaps in communication and information:

The representative may ... know his or her constituents well enough to have some idea of what they would accept, if only they had the information. This deference to the counterfactual deliberating public provides a way of thinking about the representative’s role that avoids the difficulty of following the public’s uninformed views, on the one hand, and of following the representative’s more informed but ... merely personal views, on the other. (Fishkin in Simon 2002, p. 234)

This view of representation has certain attractions. It acknowledges the tension between the public’s demand for input into the decision making of their representatives and the representative’s (perhaps inevitable) deeper knowledge of the issues and factors that form part of the deliberating process. Where Fishkin’s portrayal is currently weak, from the perspective of college governance, is in the apparent lack of any consultation between the representative and the body she or he represents. Such consultation is not beyond the realms of practicality. Unlike parliamentary constituencies, the number of citizens any college governor will represent will be relatively small (in the hundreds for most staff governors, several thousand for student governors and those representing businesses or the local community). Certain colleges are already taking this issue forward by establishing student ‘parliaments’ or ‘consultations’ (for example) where the student body can debate with their representatives on points that require raising and addressing at board of governors meetings. However, this is still not common practice across further education colleges as a sector. This procedure is even rarer between staff governors and their representatives (and non-existent where governors are co-opted or invited for their individual expertise). Such consultations would give a greater sense of group interests (in Young’s sense of the term) without the need for special rights for specific groups. It is to be hoped that representatives who are selected according to democratic procedures and who consult their constituents on a regular basis will be modelling the very group interests and perspectives that Young is

arguing for. This would also have the benefit of not compromising Cohen's need for equality as part of the deliberating process. This is because Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure is one where

parties are required to find reasons acceptable to others ... even if there is ... disagreement, and a need to submit to majority rule ... participants in the ideal case will need to appeal to considerations that are quite generally recognised as having considerable weight and as a suitable basis for collective choice, even among people who disagree about the right result. (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 197)

Although terms such as 'considerable' and 'suitable' are problematic terms (for how are they to be defined?), it is more likely that the 'considerable weight' and 'suitable basis' argued for by Cohen will be accepted and agreed upon as the foundation for any college deliberation if certain parties are not singled out for special status or accorded special rights. If decisions are to have value and legitimacy within FE colleges, then there needs to be parity between the various stakeholders in terms of the ability to direct the agenda. Colleges have been undemocratic for too long – governance according to democratic principles rather than any adoption of special rights for certain college groups is the best way to ensure all sections contribute to the decision-making process.

## **7.6 What Are the Implications of Deliberative Democracy for Citizenship Education Within Colleges?**

I discussed earlier how the facilitation of elections for the post of college principal could create an environment where students, staff, businesses and local communities discuss and debate concerns that affect them as participants within the institution. Such instances give very practical demonstration of the role of citizenship in the life of the college. Terms such as 'debate', 'election', 'argument' and 'issue' take on immediate relevancy when applied to decision making in the very organisation where citizenship is studied. The subject is no longer based on abstractions or hypotheticals but links itself to key issues raised as part of the college election process.

With the embedding of citizenship education within vocational programmes (argued in Chap. 4) and the introduction of a more student-centred citizenship programme for adult learners (as advocated in Chap. 6), the democratic college utilising aspects of deliberative democracy offers the third 'prong' or 'facet' to establishing a truly encompassing form of citizenship in further and adult education. Cross-college provision around citizenship is often used already by colleges to integrate different curriculum areas (the example of City of Bristol College offered in Chap. 3 is such a case). The danger with such developments or projects is their temporary or short-term nature. There is a tendency in colleges to plan themed weeks into the academic calendar ('green' weeks for environmental awareness, 'diversity' weeks to celebrate cultural pluralism) and cross-college citizenship

programmes often feature within such a framework. The danger of tokenism or what David Gillborn refers to as ‘the sugar coated pill’ (Gillborn 2006, p. 12) is always potentially there in regards to citizenship education in colleges. It is imperative, then, that any college delivering citizenship programmes as part of their curriculum offer (either within existing vocational and academic courses or as ‘stand alone’ programmes) have democratic structures in place for institutional decision making. Citizenship needs to have what is often referred to in educational jargon as a ‘whole organisation approach’ to ensure issues that are raised and discussed as part of citizenship courses have application and validity within the actual institution where the students are studying. What is being said here is nothing new – the Learning and Skills Council argued for similar measures in 2007:

Student committees or similar bodies can play a powerful role in bringing learner and management representatives together to work as a team. It is very important to ensure that bodies such as these are not just ‘talking shops’, and that they are fully integrated with other decision-making and governance structures in the organisation. It is also important to ensure that these bodies are not limited in their remit to issues such as facilities, and that they address core issues such as quality. Learners should have a role in determining the agenda of student committees and similar bodies. (LSC 2007, p. 23)

However, as indicated earlier in this chapter, students need to have a voice well beyond ‘student committees and similar bodies’. Their thoughts need to be heard in every forum within the college structure on such matters as the content of curricula, the appropriacy and usefulness of qualifications, and the structure of the academic year (see Gandin and Apple, ‘Decisions about the curriculum are . . . part of the [school] council’s deliberations’ (Gandin and Apple 2002, p. 269) for an example of how genuine student participation in the school government is articulated in Porto Alegre).

The adoption of deliberative procedures and structures by colleges can have profound implications for citizenship education within college curricula. Let me take an example of how such connections between college governance and specific curricula might work. As part of embedding citizenship into Carpentry and Business programmes, each cohort explores the relationship between their vocational areas and the issue of ‘international enterprise’. From a Carpentry perspective, such ideas as the sourcing of wood types (and the environmental impact on particular forests and woodlands) and where the carpenter ‘fits’ into the national and international building industry (as a sole craftsman/woman or as part of a building company) are likely discussion points. In terms of Business, the issue of multi-national companies outsourcing services to different labour markets (and the ethical implications of these practices), and where virtual businesses define the communities they serve are examples of potential areas of research and debate. It is perfectly possible (and even educationally beneficial) for students from both curriculum areas to share their approaches and findings. There are opportunities (in this example) for students from both curriculum areas to work together on looking at how a sustainable business model could be used for sourcing wood products and the necessity of using and planning for ‘green’ building resources in any college business plan debating the pros and cons of refurbishment or relocation (this in



the cross-curricular spirit similar to what we saw in City of Bristol College and Hull College in Chap. 3). However, for deliberative democracy to have an impact on the citizenship curriculum, the investigation must not stop there. The results need to be taken up and explored as part of the college decision-making processes. It might be that the student representatives of each cohort take issues surrounding these debates (on sourcing natural materials for college building ventures or the wider commercial impact of college internet advertising, for instance) to a student ‘parliament’ or for the student governor to take the points raised to a board of governors meeting. One could envisage students themselves taking ownership and implementing such decisions (in consultation with other stakeholders within the college). Where deliberation is important is in the processes provided so that discussions from such curriculum-specific issues can be aired and expanded upon in forums all are able to join or have, at least, elected representation. This is surely what the Learning and Skills Improvement Service means when it says

The issues central to citizenship, which are often controversial, are ones that affect people’s lives. Citizens need to be able to express their views on these issues and listen to what others have to say. The best way to do this is through the medium of discussions and debates that are conducted in a democratic, fair and reasonable way. (LSIS 2009 [2006], p. 7)

The fact that other stakeholder representatives in any such discussion have also been elected creates a virtuous circle of reinforcement around democratic values and participation. The process outlined above aspires to be deliberative because it attempts to follow the definition of deliberative democracy outlined by David Miller:

[The deliberative ideal] envisages [conflict] occurring through an open and uncoerced discussion of the issues at stake with the aim of arriving at an agreed judgement. The process of reaching a decision will also be a process whereby initial preferences are transformed to take account of the views of others. (Miller in Fishkin and Laslett 2003, p. 183)

I have used the words ‘aspires’ and ‘attempts’ because there are no guarantee that this process will end in either Miller’s or Cohen’s ideal of a deliberative democracy (in the sense of a consensus or set of agreed judgements). The acknowledgement of potential conflict is what differentiates an attempt at deliberative democracy from a mere ‘talking shop’. The procedures and values put in place by Cohen (debate as reasoned, equal and aiming at consensus) are there to try and ensure that decisions are ‘*collective – authorized by citizens as a body [emphasis in the original]*’ (Cohen in Elster 1998, p. 185). It is possible that conflict over issues will not lead to decisions based on reason, equality and consensus (this will depend on the dynamic between the various groups that make up the college and the strength of deliberative methods and procedures within the institution). However, even if the deliberative process ‘fails’ in the sense of not producing a decision all stakeholders can uphold as fair and reasonable (even if they cannot personally agree with it), this is itself educational from the perspective of citizenship education. Vocational classrooms should not be afraid of investigating why agreement could not be reached on an aspect of their craft, trade or profession. This can be expanded to investigations on differences of opinion between curriculum areas (returning back to the ‘international enterprises’ theme, say) or even across the college as a whole. As Chantal Mouffe has highlighted, politics is about ‘the permanence of



antagonistic forces' (Mouffe 2005, p. 53). What the process of deliberation does is make these conflicts transparent because the arguments are heard within public forums that follow procedures where opinions are required to be justified according to concepts such as public reason, Rawls's template for debate in public arenas (see Rawls 2005, pp. 216–220).

How do the points raised here around deliberative democracy affect the model for citizenship in adult education addressed in Chap. 6? Much of what has been considered already will apply equally to the adult education context. One would hope and anticipate that adult students would formulate, as part of any citizenship course, issues and concerns that they could then address to the college (or other educational body) within the necessary representational structures. Where adult education's connection with college governance is more problematic is the fact that much adult education (reading groups in friends' homes or recreational classes in community centres) occurs outside of formal educational structures (this, indeed, is one of the attributes of the self-help tradition). Whilst the relationship might not be oppositional between such groups and established educational institutions (groups often form around a perceived need that is not accommodated within 'mainstream' education), they will not necessarily receive support or funding from institutions. Their engagement with colleges or Local Authorities will, therefore, often be on a temporary or ad hoc basis.

Where deliberative democracy will be more pertinent in adult education as a whole is on the structure and content of the courses themselves. The tenets of deliberative democracy are applicable to class discussions around the structure, timings and location of a given course and the content to be covered. Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure could work well in adult classes. To reiterate, his key points are:

- The consideration of proposals is not constrained by the authority of prior norms or requirements
- Members give reasons with the expectation that those reasons (and not, for example, their power) will settle the fate of their proposal
- The parties are both formally and substantially equal. Everyone with the deliberative capacities has equal standing at each stage of the deliberative process
- Even under ideal conditions, there is no promise that consensual reasons will be forthcoming. If they are not, then deliberation concludes with voting, subject to some form of majority rule

(Adapted from Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, pp. 347–348)

It has to be acknowledged that some of the terms used by Cohen are problematic in this context, especially the notion of what 'deliberative capacities' are. Martha Nussbaum's thoughts on capacities (explored in Chap. 2) are informative on this question. She writes in response to Rawls's theory of justice (but the contention applies equally to Cohen):

[the] contracting parties are imagined throughout as rational adults, roughly similar in need, and capable of a "normal" level of social cooperation and productivity . . . In so conceiving of persons, Rawls omits from the situation of basic political choice the more extreme forms of need and dependency that human beings may experience. (Nussbaum 2006, pp. 108–109)

Cohen's ideas on 'deliberative capacities' need to be explained very clearly so he is not vulnerable to the charge of excluding certain citizens from the deliberative process. This is particularly true in adult education where students have often experienced extreme forms of hardship and difficulty (one thinks of students in Adult and Community, Inclusive Education or Supported Studies classes who have severe disabilities and/or learning difficulties). It is certainly disempowering and could go against the very heart of deliberative democracy to exclude participants on the grounds of capacity. It is quite likely that students with significant mental and/or physical disabilities are still able to contribute to a deliberative discussion through the medium of a trained interlocutor. Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure needs to be sensitive to the discussion around 'deliberative capacities'.

The advantage of using deliberative democracy as a method for decision making within adult education classes is that it provides elements of citizenship education within a practical setting. We discussed earlier how explicit citizenship education would not be appropriate for many adult classes (particularly those that are recreational). Debates over course structure, content, timings and location are examples of how citizenship and democracy can take place within *any* adult class and in any educational context. This would also extend and enhance good practice in adult education regarding genuine negotiation within the terms of learning themselves.

## 7.7 Deliberative Democracy and Citizenship Education as Content and Process

I have identified deliberation as a key element of active citizenship (as I have defined it) in this book. However, this begs the question over the content of deliberation within citizenship education on vocational and adult courses. Citizenship education involves deliberation on moral, ethical, social and cultural issues which are, by their very nature, contentious and controversial. So does it matter what the deliberation is about (as long as it takes place in the setting of further or adult education)? Rawls's definition of the reasonable is germane here:

reasonable persons see that the burdens of judgement set limits on what can be reasonably justified to others, and so they endorse some form of liberty of conscience and freedom of thought. It is unreasonable of us to use political power, should we possess it, to repress comprehensive views that are not unreasonable. (Rawls 2005, p. 61)

The content of any deliberation must show a degree of sensitivity to the likelihood that people will hold different (and potentially conflicting) comprehensive conceptions of the good. This means, therefore, that deliberation is not morally free from the constraints of upholding views or opinions that reasonable religious or moral systems (in the Rawlsian sense) would regard as reasonable (even if they did not necessarily agree with them). It needs to be acknowledged that deliberation, in the sense defined here, is problematic – what if students wanted to deliberate on issues that were inherently racist, sexist or homophobic (for example)? Such

views are, by implication, unreasonable according to Rawls's definition (reasonable doctrines would not see these views as in any way reasonable). There is thus the conundrum of whether such opinions can or should be voiced in any deliberative forum that considers itself reasonable. Further education colleges have the difficult balance of ensuring opinions that are offensive or insulting to certain groups do not gain hold in the college whilst being mindful that the suppression of such views leaves them open to the charge of not being fully inclusive. However, colleges could argue that inclusivity applies only to viewpoints informed by reasonable conceptions of the good. Doctrines that do not acknowledge certain groups of people as equals (in terms of the various college communities) cannot form part of the deliberative process – the equality of representatives within deliberation is an integral aspect of both Rawls's notion of public reason (Rawls 2005, pp. 442–443)<sup>1</sup> and Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure. Crick puts the issue of deliberation neatly where he writes:

The simplest statement of Rawls on 'fairness' would be that we should accept an outcome as fair if we can imagine that we are party, along with all others likely to be affected, in a state of equality (or equality of influence) to establishing rules to settle disputes without prior knowledge of the outcomes. (Crick 1999, p. 346)

Citizenship education (in the context of further and adult education) is a combination of both process and content. The content studied within vocational and adult programmes will be the various ethical, moral, social and cultural themes encountered within either vocational courses or as part of a citizenship course within adult education. Some of these issues have been highlighted in Chap. 4 where the opportunities for studying citizenship themes were identified in the Hair, Health and Social Care, and Sport curricula (for instance) as part of students' wider investigation of the craft or practice, or in Chap. 6 where examples were given of adults exemplifying citizenship education through the creation and control of their own courses. However, citizenship education is also a process too in the sense that the issues being explored are potentially controversial and need to be discussed in a way that is both challenging and respectful to the parties involved (students, teachers and administrators alike). As seen in other sections of this chapter, Cohen's model of deliberative democracy is one potential method for ensuring the process of deliberation is fair and equal. The process of discussing ethical or moral themes using deliberative methods is a way of trying to ensure students offer opinions or views that show respect for their fellow students (and teachers). However, Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure aims towards consensus and one of the things educators and students should ask themselves is whether consensus is either achievable or worthwhile in the context of active citizenship (that includes the rigorous questioning of conventional norms as well as the skills of collaboration and negotiation). I have shown in Chap. 6 how the work of Chantal Mouffe has challenged the very idea of consensus being a suitable goal within contemporary democracies. The tension between consensus and conflict is endemic

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<sup>1</sup>Although Rawls restricts himself to 'the public political forum' (Rawls 2005: 443) in his discussion of public reason.

to deliberation within any situation (citizenship education being no exception). One of the difficulties of discussing citizenship themes or issues within further and adult education will be how far deliberation aims towards consensus or is prepared to accommodate conflict. It might be said that part of the very process of citizenship education will be the exploration of this balance.

## 7.8 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the need for colleges to be wholly democratic if citizenship education is to have impact and relevancy for students. We noted how the change in college governance from Local Authority control to incorporation (where colleges are autonomous of local authorities and receive their funding directly from central government agencies) has often had a negative effect on the issue of democratic accountability. I advocate, as a counter to these trends, a move towards college governance where democratic practices and processes are fully implemented, from the election of college principals and governors to college boards having fair representation. This, in my view, would facilitate greater participation by all college stakeholders as well as providing lasting connections between issues discussed in citizenship classes and direct action (through debates and elections) within the actual institution.

However, it is important that the democratic structures are deliberative. It is not enough for colleges to implement voting procedures – any decision making requires the necessary forums of deliberation so the decisions arrived at are informed and strive towards consensus. Joshua Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure is a model of decision making that could be used effectively as part of the democratic college. It has been outlined how his theory closely matches, at times, the examples of anarchist educational institutions analysed by Judith Suissa – especially around the concepts of equality and participation. Many colleges are already following aspects of Cohen's procedure (consciously or unconsciously) through the creation of student 'parliaments'. These developments in good practice need to be taken further to cover all aspects of decision making and include all stakeholders.

It has been acknowledged that Cohen's ideal deliberative procedure can be problematic. We have discussed how the terms of association that form one of Cohen's five features of deliberative democracy requires 'institutions in which connections between deliberation and outcomes are evident to ones in which the connections were less clear' (Cohen in Matravers and Pike 2003, p. 346). It was argued that clarity of outcomes is a difficult measure when participants are coming from very different perspectives on any one issue in a college environment. Cohen's emphasis on deliberative capacities could also be perceived as a barrier to deliberation in colleges (and adult education generally) for students with severe learning disabilities and difficulties. Cohen needs to be clear on what constitutes deliberative capacities so as not to exclude certain students from the deliberative process.

The embedding of citizenship within vocational programmes in further education can only benefit from operating within institutions where decision making is deliberative and democratic. Issues that are raised within the classroom, workshop, studio or salon can be carried across to the wider college forums as part of a culture of creating informed choices and full participation in key college concerns. Even if consensus is not always achieved (the ideal result of Cohen's procedure), a lack of consensus on an issue can also be educationally informative from a citizenship point-of-view. In adult education, it was also seen how deliberative democracy might be used to set the terms of learning (location, timing, course content). This has the advantage of incorporating elements of citizenship into adult programmes where explicit citizenship content and delivery would be inappropriate. Indeed, adult educational institutions already use many of Cohen's tenets of deliberative democracy to establish opportunities for learning in their areas of work.

## Chapter 8

# Conclusion

The argument of this book is that the adoption of active citizenship within the contexts of citizenship-within-practices in further education and a Mouffeian concept of agonistic citizenship in adult education are two potentially effective means for promoting citizenship education in the post-compulsory sector in England. Currently, there is a focus on what has been termed the instrumentalist curriculum (especially in further education) where students are expected to demonstrate skills related to employment without having to investigate how these skills relate, in a holistic way, to the social, cultural and ethical aspects of a given trade, profession or discipline. This adoption of the instrumentalist curriculum can also be seen in adult education in England, especially in the concentration on literacy and numeracy for employment that formed a central part of the ‘Skills for Life Agenda’ in 2001. In defence of adult education, there are many programmes that do not follow such a curriculum model – the recreational programmes devised by both the Workers’ Educational Association and the University of the Third Age are typical examples of where courses do not always focus on ‘micro’ skills or the acquisition of units of knowledge separated from the wider concerns within a programme of study.

In this book, I have defined active citizenship as a series of skills, dispositions and motivations that include (although the list is not comprehensive) rigorous questioning of norms and the *status quo*, effective communication (both verbally and in writing), the ability to collaborate, and to deliberate in a respectful way with others (as equals) in terms of decision making. Active citizenship (within the context of citizenship education) involves debate and discussion around often highly contentious issues. These issues will not lead to easy answers (they might often lead to no answers at all). Because of this, the form of citizenship education I am advocating in this book is problematic. This is especially the case in regards to deliberation (which I discussed in detail in Chap. 7). Here, it was seen how deliberation is by no means morally ‘free’ – what is allowable for discussion within the various forums of further and adult education is itself a controversial debate. I adopted Rawls’s concept of the ‘reasonable’ as a means of establishing

parameters for debate that strive for respect and equality amongst participants (which I see as essential for any deliberation that will lead to fair decisions being made). However, I am mindful that this interpretation of the deliberative process (in terms of citizenship education) is open to criticism, particularly on the issue of how to ‘manage’ doctrines or ideologies that are (by Rawls’s and Cohen’s definitions) ‘unreasonable’ without being open to the charge of suppressing views openly advocated by parts of the student body. I argue that respect for others as equals is necessary to citizenship education in a contemporary democracy but I accept that others might well disagree with either my definition or interpretation of citizenship education in this context.

Citizenship education is a dynamic between content and process. In this book, I have demonstrated that the content of citizenship education in vocational programmes will be the debate around the ethical, moral, social and cultural issues that occur within any practice (I have given instances of where these issues could be explored on Hair, Sport, Business, Health and Social Care, and Carpentry courses). The skills and motivations that I have associated with active citizenship (as I have defined it) is the process within which such issues can be debated and discussed. Citizenship education in further education is thus a genuine interaction between content and process. In adult education, this interaction is, if anything, even more the case. Because adult education is strongly weighted towards students have a significant say in what is being taught, debate and negotiation over the content, delivery and structure of any course in adult education ensures the intertwining of content and process. Citizenship education in adult education is no different in this respect.

I have shown, in Chap. 2, how citizenship has become a contentious issue in political philosophy over the past few decades. The debate on the relationship between the individual and the state or whether nations can create a sense of identification in citizens with radically different conceptions of the good has raised important contributions from philosophers on all points of the liberal-communitarian scale. While John Rawls, in *Political Liberalism*, argued that citizens with different beliefs could identify with what he termed the basic structure through an ‘overlapping consensus’ of reasonable conceptions of the good, this was challenged by philosophers from various fronts. I identified Alasdair MacIntyre and Chantal Mouffe as having important criticisms of Rawls’s version of political liberalism. MacIntyre is sceptical over the level of identification citizens can have in a liberal polity where the state is neutral regarding conceptions of the good. In MacIntyre’s view, history has shown that states need to support certain conceptions of the good (and educate the young into these conceptions of the good) to create the bond or cement that will enable citizens to feel sufficient attachment to the state to defend it in times of strife and contribute to its wealth and welfare at other times. Mouffe is more sympathetic to Rawls’s liberalism but takes issue with his concept of the overlapping consensus. For Mouffe, the conflict between groups with different conceptions of the good is a necessary and inevitable aspect of modern democracies. The pursuit of consensus cannot to be a permanent or stable state-of-affairs in Mouffe’s philosophy because there will always be groups who are disadvantaged

or opposed to any consensus that has been formed, not matter how expansive or inclusive that consensus might be. Citizenship is a site of confrontation as far as Mouffe is concerned, and one's conception of citizenship is formed and re-formed as part of such conflict.

The discussion on citizenship within political philosophy has direct impact on how citizenship education is perceived in further and adult education. Political literacy, in the form of students being aware of their role as an active citizen within a community of varied institutions, is advocated strongly in the report *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds In Education and Training*: 'Active Citizenship by definition means positive engagement in social and civic life, outside educational and training institutions' (FEFC 2000, p. 24). The debate within political philosophy is over what constitutes political literacy or active citizenship. This has largely been encapsulated in the tensions between the citizen-as-individual and the citizen-as-part-of-a-community. These tensions are reflected in the perspectives politicians, academics and educationalists have taken towards citizenship education within the context of further and adult education. Are students studying citizenship primarily as individual bearers of rights? Are social/employment roles important in the discussion over citizenship education? These are the questions political philosophy has required those concerned with citizenship education in the post-compulsory sector to ask of themselves and their programmes.

The opportunities for citizenship education do exist in further and adult education as things stand. I have demonstrated, in Chap. 3, how the specifications on various courses do, at times, permit the exploration of wider social, cultural and ethical issues (especially around Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills on Diploma programmes, for example). However, there is little training or encouragement for tutors in further and adult education to fully engage with citizenship education beyond those courses already specifically aimed at citizenship as a subject of study (such as AS/A2 Citizenship or the ESOL for Citizenship qualification). Whilst there are some excellent examples of cross-curriculum projects in specific FE colleges such as Hull and City of Bristol, the promise offered by the report *Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds* (FEFC 2000) has largely failed to deliver. The advocacy of citizenship as a Key Skill has had very little take up within further education (in this sense, it suffered the same fate as the other 'Wider Key Skills') due to the pressure for colleges to get students through their selected qualifications in order to receive government funding. The rigorous attachment of funding to qualifications in further and adult education has often had a pernicious effect upon them both, preventing teachers from exploring subjects more holistically due to time and programme constraints. It is this pressure to achieve success within the instrumentalist curriculum (where students are largely assessed on the demonstration of 'micro' skills rather than showing an ability to investigate crafts, disciplines and professions from a wider, more holistic point-of-view) that has stifled any attempts to significantly integrate citizenship education into either further or adult education. The post-compulsory sector is, in my view, the poorer for this neglect.

Throughout this book, I have used Andy Green and Norman Lucas's depiction (1999) of further education and adult education as consisting of two distinct



traditions, the apprenticeship tradition and the self-help tradition. I have deliberately separated further education and adult education (by linking them specifically to these two traditions) as they present two distinct types of educational provision in the post-compulsory sector and two distinct challenges when it comes to writing about citizenship education. In Chap. 4, I make the case that the apprenticeship tradition can provide the necessary perspective and insight to support a reappraisal of vocational education and training in England in a way that is more conducive to citizenship education for students in FE. By looking back at the historical roots of apprenticeships (such as the example of the medieval guilds), I have shown how induction into a trade or profession usually involved an appreciation of the social and ethical aspects of the vocation as well as a rigorous training in the practical skills. The work of Alasdair MacIntyre (1985 [1981]) and Richard Sennett (2009) have been used to illuminate the discussion around vocational education and the concept of practices. Whilst Sennett offers an inspiring yet unsentimental portrayal of the guilds workshop in reality, MacIntyre gives philosophical underpinning to the concept of ‘citizenship-within-practices’ I have been advocating for vocational courses in further education and apprenticeship programmes in the workplace. I have linked the idea of citizenship-within-practices to further education because I believe citizenship education would work most effectively when embedded into particular vocational studies. I have attempted to show how this might work in a variety of vocational programmes (such as Hair, Sport, Construction and Business) because I am not convinced that citizenship education as a separate area of study would be effective on most courses in further education (the example of where Key Skills were studied separately from the vocational programmes is a case-in-point of how such arrangements do not work). Not only would the incorporation of citizenship into the actual vocational courses give these courses a wider, more rounded view of the craft, trade or profession that I have been advocating throughout this book, but it would also ensure that the elements of citizenship education studied would be practical and relevant for the students. Although MacIntyre’s evocation of stable historical communities is problematic (in terms of contemporary democracies where pluralism is inevitable), his linking of practices to their social and ethical concerns (alongside Sennett’s depiction of the medieval workshop) is an interesting philosophical platform from which to promote the concept of citizenship-within-practices as part of vocational education in England. It is vital that teachers in further education receive the necessary support and training to be able to embed citizenship issues and themes in vocational programmes (as their area of expertise will be focused, rightly, on their industrial knowledge and experience). This support is particularly important when we consider that citizenship education will inevitably lead to the debate of controversial issues that need to be appropriately facilitated by teachers in further education.

The idea of embedding citizenship education into vocational training rather than it running alongside as part of a course in general education runs counter to the traditions in both Germany and France (as seen in Chap. 5 where *Geschichte und Gemeinschaftskunde* and *éducation civique* were central elements of general education for apprentices or students studying in vocational colleges). This is

because the notion of a general education forming part of an apprentice's training is much stronger in both of these countries than in England. I have highlighted the major influence Georg Kerschensteiner had upon Germany's idea of vocational and general education as two sides of the same coin rather than as separate entities (as has so long been the case in England). The dual-system in Germany, where apprentices undertake training in the workplace for part of their working week and study in the *Berufsschule* for the other part (all under the auspices of the state, employers and unions) is an impressive example of Germany's post-war culture of co-determination in practice. In France, the situation is different in that the state has much more control over vocational education (which tends to be facilitated through a national network of *lycées professionnel*, although there are work-based apprenticeship programmes as well). Though England has attempted, at times, to follow the route set out in Germany and France by creating a parallel course of general education to run alongside vocational education for apprentices, this has often met with resistance or apathy from vocational teachers and students alike. The adoption of General and Liberal Studies in England from the 1950s to the 1970s included some innovative methods for engaging students in the wider issues that affected their working lives. One such innovation was the devising of contextualised resources for different vocational areas so that citizenship-related material would be relevant for apprentices and vocational students. It is practices such as these that I am advocating when I call for the embedding of citizenship education into further education courses.

The self-help tradition was the other tradition identified by Green and Lucas in their study of further and adult education and it is this tradition I addressed in Chap. 6. When the self-help tradition is explored, through the work of historians such as E. P. Thompson (1991 [1963]), it is evident how groups of adult students regularly sought to create their own educational provision in spite of the neglect or opposition of those who controlled educational provision at either the national or the local level. I have argued that a concept of active citizenship, using the work of Chantal Mouffe (2005 [1993]), is particularly effective when thinking of citizenship education within the context of adult education. Mouffe argues for a view of democracy based on the interaction between antagonistic forces or groups (rather than democracy as a working towards consensus). Politics, for Mouffe, is always about conflict – it is this conflict that provides the energy and new ideas vital to any society not intent on comfortable (or not so comfortable) complacency. The self-help tradition in adult education has often taken this oppositional stance, particularly when we study the work of organisations such as the Corresponding Societies of the late eighteenth century, the Plebs League of the early twentieth century, and the various women's and ethnic minority groups from the 1960s onwards. Their opposition often manifested itself in the form of a challenge to the very structure of educational provision. Each of these groups or organisations took active citizenship as their foundation (although they would not have necessarily used the term) in the sense that they were promoting their role as active citizens in the demand and creation of educational structures or courses to suit their needs. Their concept of citizenship was not defined through government-sanctioned

programmes but evolved as part of the struggle for learning itself. It is with the self-help tradition in mind that we must tread carefully when arguing for citizenship classes in contemporary adult education. The example of the ESOL for Citizenship programme, for instance, shows where government-sponsored classes can lead to anything *but* active citizenship as I have defined the term. Ultimately, citizenship education must be at the service of the adult students themselves (with other agencies supporting and promoting them where required). The aim should be one of empowerment rather than simply the gaining of qualifications – the very essence of praxis as educationalists such as Paulo Freire have argued for. Adult education is a hugely diverse area and citizenship education will play a large or small role depending on the course studied. Adult education consists of many recreational courses, for instance, and citizenship education can often be facilitated within them, both in terms of content (I offer the example of family history classes) or by negotiating the timing and structure of the courses themselves. As with Chap. 4, I acknowledge the need for support for teachers in adult education so they can facilitate citizenship education in an adult context. The self-help tradition (as we have seen) has a rich tradition of adult students taking a significant degree of control over their own education. If teachers in adult education are to demonstrate the effective facilitation skills necessary for citizenship education (in the spirit of theorists like Knowles or Freire) then they cannot be expected to do this alone without support from the appropriate organisations or training bodies.

The themes of deliberative democracy and college governance have been addressed in Chap. 7. It is my contention that citizenship education can only be truly effective in institutions that are themselves fully democratic. By fully democratic, I have argued that, in the case of further education colleges, the boards of governors need to be elected (rather than selected) from the stakeholders they represent. Alongside this, the composition of the boards themselves needs to show a more realistic reflection of the stakeholders that form part of any college community. As part of this, I also believe in the election of college principals (based on an electorate that encompasses the various constituencies with a vested interest in the college). This will not only give college leaders greater democratic legitimacy with the people they serve but will also facilitate citizenship education in the debates, manifestoes and votes such an election would provide. I have used Joshua Cohen's model of deliberative democracy (incorporating his ideal deliberative procedure) (see Matravers and Pike 2003) in order to expand the democratic processes within colleges to include negotiation and deliberation between stakeholders. Cohen's model, whilst not perfect, does place at the very centre the notion that all representatives have an equal say within any deliberative forum as well as the ability to devise and amend the agenda. As a mechanism of deliberation, it aims for fair agreement based on reasoned argument that could form the basis of discussion throughout the college. I have given examples of where the democratic structures within colleges could encourage greater cross-curricular exploration of citizenship issues by enabling students to raise important concerns, initially discussed in the classroom or workshop, within the wider college forums. Whilst I have focussed mainly on FE colleges in this chapter (because I believe

the governance of colleges lend themselves particularly well to the procedures in Cohen's version of deliberative democracy) this is not to exclude the possibilities of deliberative democracy within organisations that promote adult education (or even workplaces that support apprenticeships). I have explained in Chap. 7 the problematic nature of deliberation (in the context of FE colleges) and how Rawls's concept of 'the reasonable' is a way of ensuring respect and equality in terms of both the content of the deliberation and the procedure.

Why is citizenship education an important subject for students in further and adult education? Why do we need democratic colleges to support the study of citizenship education? I believe citizenship education is vital to both further and adult education for a variety of reasons. Currently, vocational education in England is organised around a narrow curriculum that encourages teachers and students to focus on the demonstration of skills without exploring their application in terms of what it means to apply these skills as a professional in local communities. This runs counter to practices in Europe, where the exploration of the cultural, social and ethical issues that affect practitioners in their chosen trades or professions is an integral aspect of any vocational education or training. I make the argument in this book that citizenship education within specific vocational programmes is a potential solution to this significant gap in current educational practice in England. By embedding the investigation and discussion of social, cultural and ethical concerns that are important within any profession, students are encouraged to view their chosen employment (and their role within it) from a genuinely holistic perspective as working citizens within specific localities and the wider world. In my opinion, citizenship education is likely to enable students to complete their vocational studies as individuals with a more rounded view of where their skills operate in social contexts – a reintegration of training to the social roles and responsibilities professionals have as citizens within given communities.

In terms of adult education, we need to move away from a model where citizenship education is seen solely as a means a defining 'Britishness' to integrate citizens from other countries into the British 'way of life' (as in the case of ESOL courses for 'Citizenship in the UK'). This is a potentially narrow and confining definition of citizenship education for adults and runs counter to the rich tradition of adult education I have referred to in this book. What is needed (I argue) is a more radical view of what citizenship education means for adult students. I advocate programmes where students are empowered to define their sense of citizenship by having a significant say in the construction and negotiation of the content within such programmes and how these programmes are run and administered. Adult students on citizenship programmes should own these courses in a meaningful way. The courses need to be vehicles for active citizenship, places where students participate as citizens and gain a very real sense of the impact they can have (individually and collectively) in the communities in which they live. Citizenship programmes in adult education are about students seeing themselves as potential agents of social development and change.

None of these programmes would be effective if the institutions in which they take place were not themselves democratic. Citizenship education and democratic

educational institutions are two sides of the same coin. Students need to be able to act as democratic citizens within the institutions they have joined if citizenship education is to have credibility and continuity within these institutions. I have argued, in the case of further education colleges, that democratic processes need to run right through the organisation, from the election of college principals to fair representation on college boards of governors. We must not forget that colleges are ultimately owned by the communities they serve. This fact needs to be acknowledged and embedded within the processes of college governance. It is not enough for colleges to have a piecemeal response to such proposals. Democracy needs to run right through the organisation as part of the culture and methods of decision making. Where such procedures occur, the opportunities for promoting active citizenship are potentially limitless. The entire college becomes a site of citizenship education in the best way possible.

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