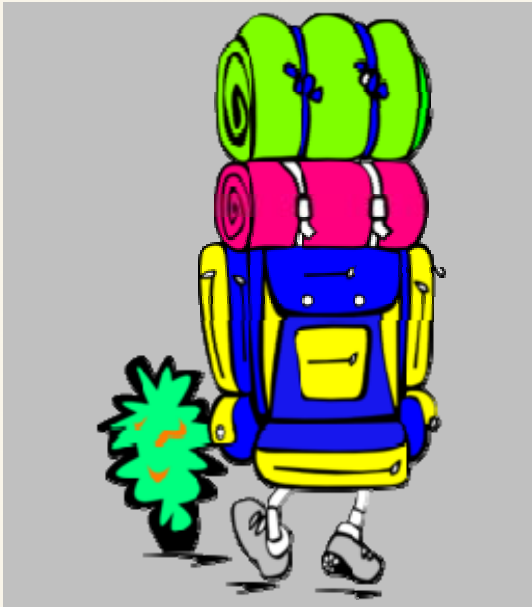


TAKING CRITICAL THINKING TO CRITICAL LITERACY BY INFUSING MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

LESSONS FROM TEACHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Karen Pashby (with testimonies from Julia Sapiano & Dong Ling Chen) OISE/UT



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WHAT IS THE RESEARCH ABOUT

This presentation will share experiences of bridging critical global citizenship education theory and practice through a multiple perspectives approach to sensitive global issues. It will relay successful tips from using the Open Spaces for Dialogue and Inquiry Methodology (developed by Vanessa Andreotti, Linda Barker, and Katy Newell-Jones in the U.K.) as a means through which to engage a critical global citizenship education and to serve as an alternative to binary, pro-con, debates. The presentation will also include testimonies from teacher candidates and examples of how they put the theory into practice in their lesson and unit plans for secondary social studies.

OVERVIEW

Within the contemporary context of globalization, there is strong sense of a need to include global issues in the classroom and to promote global citizenship (Pashby 2006, 2008). In educational scholarship there are calls for a 'critical' approach to global citizenship education (Andreotti 2006; Taylor 2011; Eidoo et al 2011). The theoretical and empirical research promotes moving beyond simply including global issues towards building in critical literacy skills that identify and examine the different sets of assumptions underlying differently positioned sets of perspectives on global issues (e.g. Andreotti & Souza 2008, Pashby 2011). Pike (2008) argues that despite a great deal of scholarly attention, little in the way of global citizenship education is being done 'in practice'. As a PhD Candidate researching global citizenship education and an experienced secondary school teacher working as part of the instructional team in the BEd program at OISE, I have set out to bridge the perceived gulf between theory and practice in global citizenship education.

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FINDINGS

Teacher candidates and practicing teachers appreciate frameworks that move beyond pro-con debating in order to engage critically with the complexities inherent to contemporary global issues. A particularly important point is the importance of examining multiple perspectives and engaging students in some critical self-reflection around the context out of which they come to an issue before asking them to give and defend an opinion. Another key point is the importance of identifying mainstream and marginalized perspectives as well as locating sets of assumptions and tensions defining 'conflicting' views rather than setting up 'pro-con' binaries.

IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This presentation promotes the inclusion of critical literacy and critical global citizenship into initial teacher education and professional development. Teachers and teacher candidates are ready and eager to use frameworks such as Open Spaces for Dialogue and Inquiry. The presentation demonstrates a successful attempt to bridge the perceived divide between what critical scholarship is promoting and what educators are doing in their classrooms.