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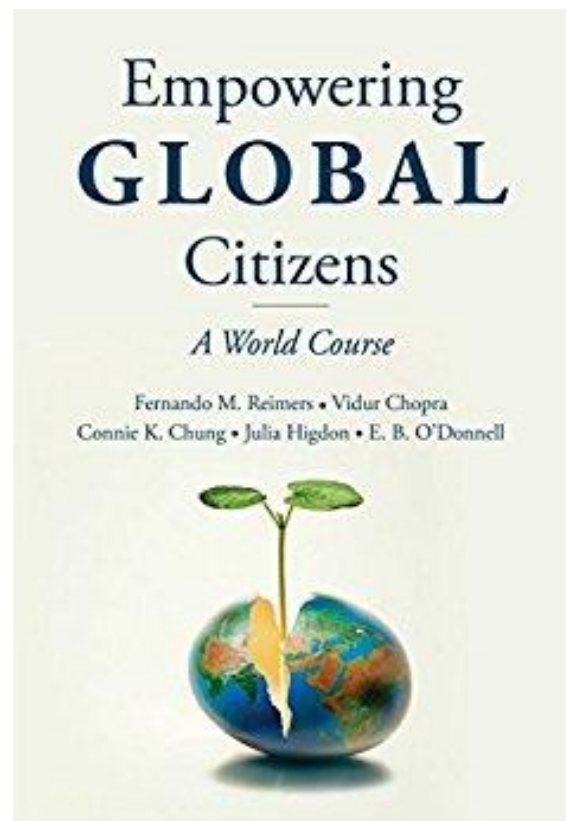
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Today more than ever, we must educate citizens with a global perspective. I began my review of *Empowering Global Citizens: A World Course* in the days leading up to the recent U.S. presidential election. In the context of my own experience, both studying and doing research in a university and in high schools in the United States for the last four years, the election brought to mind two related ideas with which I have struggled in recent years regarding the relationship between the United States and the rest of the world.

First, I recalled the irony that every year the United States celebrates the “World” Series, a championship that rarely includes baseball teams from outside of the US. Words have the potential to create reality, and the very idea of reducing the world to the boundaries of the United States has impoverished its inhabitants’ concept of the world for generations, and to a great extent condemning them to an increasing apathy and in some cases ignorance about global issues. In



2006, for example, a National Geographic survey of students aged 18-24 reported that 54% were unaware that Sudan is a country in Africa and 75% could not identify Indonesia on a map. Education must invite these students to look outward. Second, I noticed how deeply the idea of American exceptionalism is embedded in the practices and habits of this country. Could a course on global citizenship offer Americans something more important in this world than mere particularism or localism? How could a country, whose national identity is based in large part on the idea that others desperately desire to imitate its culture and way of life, educate its children and youth to look outside their borders?

Election night came, and Trump won the presidency, having campaigned on a foreign policy promise to reduce American engagement with the world. That night, he received congratulatory phone calls from Theresa May, prime minister of the post Brexit UK, and from Jean Marie Le Pen, who may lead France in a similar direction. Recent trends towards global integration have abruptly shifted in favor of a more closed world that emphasizes national identities over cosmopolitanism—the idea that all human beings are part of a single community based on a common ground of morality. The election results not only strengthened my assessment of the relevance of *Empowering Global Citizens* for the United States; it increased its urgency, for the new world that we face will need more than ever citizens with a global perspective. In particular, future students will have to engage a more challenging world where a renewed ideology of intolerance of others is quickly permeating the globe. The threat to the post-World War II regime of international alliances that Trump and others pose, the continued opposition to migrants in the United States and Europe, and the increasing likelihood of a nuclear confrontation, reveals the great responsibility of the educational system to push back.

Against this backdrop, *Empowering Global Citizens*, invites educators to a timely reflection on two issues: the development of a trend, especially in the United States, to create a type of education that integrates the global into the local, and an actual curriculum meant to tackle the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

In the first part of the book, the authors discuss the history of several efforts that both academia and international agencies have made towards a more global view of education and its effects. The authors show different programs that historically have sought to expand cosmopolitanism as well as active efforts for advancing peace in the world. In particular, they highlight the role of the United Nations and the concept of human rights behind the growing number of programs that encourage an education with a global perspective. This section also devotes, by exposing programs that have proved to be successful, space to a reflection on the benefits of such efforts at the curricular and pedagogical levels: how they have mitigated global conflict, sparked creativity and innovation, and engendered more equality.

In its second part, *Empowering Global Citizens* provides an example of a curriculum. It certainly does not intend to be the first curriculum that touches on the issues of making the global part of the local, nor does it introduce the idea of global citizenship for the first time. It does, however, break new ground in its interdisciplinary approach and the inclusion of research and analytic skills in the vein of programs as it is the case of the well-known International Baccalaureate. As the authors state, “we missed an explicit curricular sequence and the kind of content that would provide all students with foundational knowledge about globalization and global affairs” (p. xxi). In response, they have constructed a well-organized template for a curriculum on relevant global issues for grades K to 12.

The template starts in kindergarten with the title “Our World is Diverse and Beautiful”. In fifth grade, students dedicate the year to “Freedom and The Rights of Individuals: Social Change Around the Rights of Individuals,” and in last year of high school to “Growth and Development in Latin America.” The curriculum provides goals, units, activities, and capstone projects for each of the grades. In seventh grade, for instance, students will spend the whole year understanding how change in society can be driven by collective organizations as change makers. They will study units such as the Civil Rights Movement, the Environmental Movement, and inventors as change makers. Regarding the latter, the curriculum states that they will learn about how inventors create rapid social change in the world and its environment. Students will be inspired to plan a future where new inventions help preserve the environment, and will act in the use of technological inventions. The main pedagogical activity during this grade will be to work in teams selecting an invention that has impacted the world and the environment (lightbulbs, cameras, etc.). Focused on the effects of the invention they will go back to the inventor’s biography, the idea and its history, the way in which it was spread, and then explore the impact of the idea. The rationale of this and of all of the curriculum, is that students will become citizens in an adaptive way, where through project-based and group learning, they will become agents of change.

Although this work has sparked conversations at the teacher and leadership levels in schools in the US and elsewhere *Empowering Global Citizens* unfortunately does not provide any guidance about who should teach the curriculum. Indeed, the authors seem to think that the success of the curriculum depends only on its implementation. In my opinion, for this reason the work misses the opportunity to examine the type of teachers and teacher training that would maximize its


success. I wonder if the authors’ confidence comes from the fact that Reimers’ *Think Tank on Global Education* provides a training course for teams of teachers who would implement the curriculum. Reimers, professor at the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University, and the Global Education Innovative Initiative Center he leads is dedicated to the goal of teacher and educator leader formation, although with a focus on research more than practice. Regardless, the authors miss an opportunity by overlooking a discussion of the profiles of teachers needed to enact the *World Course*. In this sense, I would suggest an appendix that directly expand on the implementation part with regards to teachers themselves.

Besides this omission, the reflective and practical merits of *Empowering Global Citizens* deserve attention from teachers, administrators and other members of school communities who believe in the importance of fostering a culture that not only tolerates differences, but also values them. Especially in the current political and social context, the US needs to put more effort than ever before into developing citizens with a global mindset. Such citizens would accept and value individuals around the world looking for a better place to live. A more solid citizenship that incorporates difference, I would argue, is also needed for domestic reasons. The tension in this country with regard to race and nativism, would might be mitigated by providing a K-12 curriculum to future generations of U.S. students. Other countries around the world would also benefit from empowering their own citizens with a global mindset, as I tend to think that in the developing world, globalization is primarily connected to trade. This curriculum could unquestionably help educators around the world build awareness of the need for global citizenship education and a global citizenry dedicated to human rights.

About the Reviewer

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