

Arlés Caruso Larrainci
*Reflections on citizen
education: a glance
from Latin America*

The notion of citizenship has been changing from the exclusive democracy of Ancient Greece, through the reworking of the concept in the Illustration. In Latin America the economic, political and social conditions that characterized the second half of the last century were radically modified in this century: the State was drastically reduced, politics were democratized and the inequality, poverty, migrations and exclusion were aggravated. The sign of our times is the diversity of identities that coexist in each territory, in conjunction with grave environmental deterioration. The citizen education that these new conditions demand should take into consideration the reconstruction of social fabric based on the formation of democratic values and an ethics in which the subject recognizes him/herself and recognizes diverse identities, is empowered and able to influence public policy and function as an interlocutor of the State.

Rosa María Torres
*Citizen participation
and education*

In this article, the author defends the idea that the participation of citizens in educational decisions and actions is necessary in order to maintain, develop and transform education in the directions desired. She argues that there is a growing presence of civil groups in the discussion and decision making on «public matters» as well as a greater use of the term *participation* in governmental and international agency discourses. None the less, in order for civil society to truly affect decisions on education, it is necessary that they fully understand the following terms: *education*, as a life-long process; *civil society*, as a complex and conflictive entity, not being restricted to non-governmental organizations; and *participation*, understood as a tool for development that is obtained through group strategy that includes all the actors involved in the educational field. At the end of the article some Latin American and Caribbean experiences of citizen participation in education are described.

Luz Maceira Ochoa
*Gender and citizen
 education: Reflections on
 the challenges for
 democratic education*

Although equality of gender is a necessary condition for a democratic society, a study of different programs of citizen education in Mexico, both state and non-state funded, reveals that the gender component is included in discourses, but rarely in a transversal way, meaning that said programs don't intend to fully question values that perpetuate gender inequality. The article gives clues on ways of analyzing educational programs from the perspective of gender, including discovering if gender equality is included in the democratic values that are being promoted. Citizen education should tend to transform gender relations based on democratic values. This implies that the efforts that are deployed for citizen education must include all participants and be carried on all levels.

Silvia Conde
*Citizen education
 centered on the develop-
 ment of civic and ethical
 competencies*

In order to develop civic and ethical competencies among students and professors it is necessary to organize educational experience in a consistent and congruent way, as well as to generate a horizontal, democratic, critical and dialogical pedagogical relationship. The article deals with the general elements of a proposal for citizen education based on the development of eleven civic and ethical competencies. It assumes as its purpose the formation of citizens competent in order to consolidate democracy as a way of life and government, coexist in diversity and build social relationships and politics based on the ethics of democracy. The main guidelines of the reform of the civics curricula in elementary schools in Mexico were derived from this proposal and it constitutes the base of citizen educational programs developed by the Instituto Federal Electoral.

Raúl Leis R.
*Youth, democracy and
 civic education*

Latin American society is excluded from development and expresses a very low level of participation. This indicates, according to the author, to a need for the construction of "high density" citizenship that synchronizes socioeconomic development with the processes of democratization. The article refers to research on political culture carried out with youth. This study revealed, on one hand, that young men and women identified themselves as civil society rather than as political society which is evidence of a lack of credibility in the party system. In the second place, it revealed that youth demand greater participation, in opposition to the elitist and authoritarian exercise of power. And, thirdly, the study shows a tendency toward a greater definition of spaces of identity for youth. The article concludes with seven recommendations for citizen education with youth.

María Arcelia
González Butrón
*Education for citizen
participation in local space:
an experience in Michoacán*

Citizen participation in the political discourse and the decentralization of governmental functions were the context for the experience dealt with in this article based on work in a small rural municipality in the state of Michoacan, Mexico. The author describes the process of planning and follow-up of the governmental plan of the municipality, carried out with the participation of the local population, two non governmental organizations and the University of Michoacan. The central part of the narrative deals with participation, since citizen education was concomitant to the process. Another central aspect of the experience was the coordination of different actors in order to achieve the best possible results in the context of local space. The author suggests the promotion of a culture of the rights of people to participate in planning and evaluating the actions of government and to watch over their execution as one of the most important things learned.

Gabriel de la Paz
*Education for the
exercise of free and reason-
ed voting: A new focus on
the management of civic
education policies of the
Federal Electoral Institute*

During the first semester of 2006 the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) carried out a program of educational intervention with the purpose of developing competencies among Mexican citizens for the free and reasoned exercise of the right to vote. The activities involved in civic education were carried out in three hundred electoral districts in the country and concentrated on the population groups most vulnerable to the phenomena of voting abstention and the buying or coercing of votes. With this program the IFE initiated an innovative process in the advocacy of policies on civic education that emphasize strategic planning, as well as the focalization and qualitative evaluation of educational intervention.

Alain Santandreu
*The silent revolution.
The second generation of
participatory budgets:
citizen's education put to
the test*

The proposal of participatory budgets was born in Latin America as an option towards a democracy that would be inclusive in decision making related to the use of resources. The participatory budgets constitute a way of policy making that emerged from local governments (municipal and regional). In this new proposal of participation, two different moments or generations can be identified marked by the dimensions of their objectives. The first generation is characterized by the intention of improving citizen participation in the assignment and control of municipal resources, questioning the traditional practices of public management. The outstanding characteristic of the second generation is the massification of participatory budgets on a national scale so that participatory planning (and execution) of municipal budgets became an obligation. The development of digital media, particularly the internet, has facilitated citizen participation to a certain degree by way of on-line consultation and other resources.

Haydeé Vélez
Andrade
*The formation in and
for democratic
coexistence*

This article reviews an experience in education and citizen participation in elementary schools in a lower middle class neighborhood in Mexico City. The model involved boys and girls, teachers and parents and included the following stages: diagnosis of the community from the point of view of the boys and girls, the publication of results and sensitivity training in the community and, finally, campaigns based on the concerns expressed by the children. This experience shows the need and the viability of using structures such as parents' associations and school councils as spaces for community participation and citizenry education for all of the school community. The article shows that this type of proposal strengthens the capacity of schools and encourages student participation.

Leticia Landeros
Aguirre
*The citizen's experience
and its role in the
docents's notions on
civic and ethic formation:
recent findings*

This article is based on research done by the author with four civics and ethics teachers at the middle school level. Each one of them tells, through their own story, of the specific ways in which they have constructed notions of citizenship through association with political, union and religious groups. Using this approach the possible relationship between these trajectories and the way the teachers currently face the curricula for the civics and ethics class was analyzed: the way objectives are understood, what the values to be formed are, the priorities in content and what the methodological focus is.

Traducción: *Catherine Ettinger McEnulty*