

2021

# GOOD CITIZENSHIP

A Series

# 02

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# 03

## AN INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS GOOD CITIZENSHIP?

### **The Good Project Team**

The problems facing the world today are ample and, in a globalized and interconnected planet, are more likely to affect all nations and all persons. The international community recently witnessed the degree to which a previously unknown pathogen, COVID-19, could within weeks disrupt daily life for billions of people. Climate change poses an urgent threat for the survival of human beings as well as the numerous species with which we share the earth. Social disparities along racial and ethnic lines persist and are in some cases widening.

It is imperative for people (especially those with the time and resources to do so) to address these issues and to do so collaboratively. When we consider people coming together in pursuit of a goal that will benefit the common good, the terms “civic” and “citizenship” often come to mind.

How do those of us on The Good Project define “good citizenship”? What are the ways of thinking that will encourage citizens to contribute to a better world?

# 04

Launched in the middle 1990s, The Good Project initially investigated how individuals were carrying out their work under conditions of rapid technological change and strong market forces, which have only accelerated in the succeeding quarter century. Our research team conducted in-depth interviews about work with individuals drawn from a a range of domains—including law, medicine, journalism, and education. We asked our informants to consider their formative influences, beliefs, values, supports, obstacles, responsibilities, ethical standards, and allied issues. As a result of this extensive research, our “good work” framework emerged. As we now conceptualize it, good work is characterized by “3 Es”: it is high quality (Excellent), concerned with consequences (Ethical), and meaningful (Engaging).

The bulk of our research has focused on people’s professional lives. But the role of worker is obviously not the only role that individuals occupy in their multifaceted lives—nor is work the only sphere in which we interact with and influence others. One may, for example, think of oneself as a “mom,” a “daughter,” and a “friend,” and act differently depending on which role is dominant in a particular moment.

“Citizen” is yet another lens through which we might view ourselves. And so we have recently pondered: Can we conceptualize “citizenship” in ways that will encourage people to do “good” for the benefit of all?

# 05

## **What is a “good citizen”?**

First and foremost, when referring to citizenship, we do not simply mean legal citizenship in a particular nation or country. Instead, in our formulation, a citizen is an inhabitant of a place or community, whether or not that comes with legal recognition. Although it is undoubtedly more difficult without legal citizenship, we believe everyone has a right and a responsibility to participate in civic life.

Accordingly, at The Good Project, we extend our conception of the 3Es of ethics, excellence, and engagement to describe and evaluate the meaning of “good citizenship.” With that schema in mind, good citizens are individuals who strive to do the right thing, not principally for their own self interest but for their broader communities and for society (ethics); know the rules, regulations, and norms of their particular communities and contexts, as well as conditions when it is proper or even necessary to defy them (excellence); and take an interest and find meaning in working for the betterment of community and society (engagement). As examples familiar to readers, we think of Cesar Chavez, Dr. Martin Luther King, or Malala Yousafzai; and while most of us cannot presume to accomplish what these heroic figures have accomplished, these exemplary citizens nonetheless serve as inspiration.

# 06

This way the 3 Es of good citizenship manifest themselves and resonate with one another will differ depending on one's values, environmental circumstances, and upbringing. For some individuals, voting regularly may be sufficient political action to qualify as "doing the right thing." For others, weekly protests calling for large-scale social change might be necessary in order to feel one has done enough. The issues that are salient to particular individuals will also vary.

At The Good Project we have gathered evidence in support of our claim that "good citizens" are ethical, engaged, and excellent. In our analysis, they are also able to critically consider the rings of responsibility; in so doing, their ultimate actions should be beneficial not only to themselves, but also to those in their various communities. It follows, then, that individuals would be acting in accordance with the principles of "good citizenship" if:

- When encountering dilemmas, individuals took the time to critically think about how they define the various communities and tried to act, or not act, in accordance with what they felt would do the most good for their communities rather primarily than for themselves (ethics).
- Individuals took the time to know the norms, rules, and/or laws of their various communities (excellence).
- Individuals displayed an interest in events and issues relevant to their various communities (engagement).

# 07

In the accompanying set of blogs, we explore good citizenship and good work through a variety of approaches and perspectives. Featured are:

- A discussion of the distinctions between a good person, a good worker and a good citizen
- The application of the Good Work “5 Ds” framework to unpack a dilemma
- A discussion of how good citizenship can be achieved through good work
- A consideration of the meaning and the achievement of global citizenship.



**08****GOOD PERSON,  
GOOD WORKER,  
GOOD CITIZEN****Lynn Barendsen**

At The Good Project, our primary focus over the past two and a half decades has been on understanding the nature of “work,” identifying the features of good work across the professions, and developing frameworks, tools, and resources to help nurture good workers and good work.

However, we have not been concerned solely with the individual in the workplace. Although “work” has been our research focus, we recognize that individuals are not only workers. We all play other roles outside of work environments; such roles often require responsibilities to our families and friends, to our neighbors, to society, and to the wider world. In addition to being a good worker, what does it mean to be a good person and a good citizen?

To unpack these questions, it’s helpful to think about two concepts: neighborly morality and ethics of roles.



# 09

First, what does it mean to be a good person? This is where the concept of neighborly morality is useful. We often describe neighborly morality as the Golden Rule: treating others in the way that you yourself would like to be treated. We notice ‘good people’ in the grocery store (offering to help others carry packages), in our neighborhoods (shoveling walks for elderly neighbors), or on the road (waving others into lines of waiting traffic). Good people think the consequences of their actions upon other—especially those whom they encounter in daily life.

A good worker is judged on work performed—and here we can make use of the concept of ethics of roles: the standards by which different professions measure their workers. Is it of high quality in terms of the standards of that particular workplace? Additionally, is the work ethical, taking into account the particular ethical standards of that workplace or profession? To be sure, not all workers are subject to the equivalent of a Hippocratic oath; nonetheless, workers are (or should be!) attuned to the ethical implications of their work or an ethical code which might include “doing no harm” or taking responsibility for one’s efforts. And does the worker find meaning in work? To be clear, a good worker may not feel excellent, ethical, and engaged every single day; but in general, a “good” worker strives to meet each of these criteria to the best of his/her ability.

# 10

As we consider good citizenship, it might be argued that neighborly morality and ethics of roles both come into play. Think “good person” with a civic lens: good neighbors consider their responsibilities to their neighborhood and treat others as they themselves would like to be treated. These are the elements of neighborly morality.

However, the ethics of the role of citizen are also relevant, involving knowing the expectations of a citizen in one’s community, region, or nation. In the US, for example, do individuals vote, and when they do so, are they well informed about candidates and questions on the ballot? Do they consider their responsibilities as citizens and recognize the impact of their civic actions (or lack thereof)? And finally, are they engaged—paying attention, educating themselves about current issues, and taking action, as appropriate? Of course, the meaning, rules and values of citizenship may vary from place to place. Nonetheless, the 3 Es constitute a useful starting point for considering how individuals understand their civic duties.

Recently, there has been a resurgence of attention to civics education—overdue, in my opinion, and vitally important. At The Good Project, we embrace an approach that guides not only the citizen, but also the person and the worker, by encouraging responsibility in all the spheres of our lives. We advocate a sense of neighborly morality, acknowledging that our “neighbors” are now global as well as local.

# 11

The rules governing many spheres of work are also changing—new roles are being created (for example, in the digital realm), and old ones are disappearing (in many white collar positions). Alas, we can't always rely only on overly politicized educational systems to offer guidance about standards for good work. Across many communities and institutions, including in educational systems, responsible adults need to model appropriate behaviors and attitudes. Only in that way can we hope to have members of the emerging generation accept their responsibilities in all they do, as persons, as workers, and as citizens.



# 12

## 5 DS, 3 ES AND ONE GOOD CITIZEN

### The Good Project Team

Given recent events in the United States—increasing political division, yawning inequality between the country’s richest and poorest inhabitants, and well-documented violence directed towards people of color—the need for “good citizens” is compelling. And that’s just within our borders. We need to attend as well to worldwide issues such as climate change and the current COVID-19 pandemic. Everyone is now a global citizen as well.

Our overarching goal at The Good Project is to help foster moral and ethical reflection in students and adults. One promising means of doing so is to practice reflecting on real-life dilemmas as they are encountered. In our conception, such reflection optimally draws on “Five Ds”:

- Defining the dilemma one is faced with;
- Discussing the dilemma with others;
- Debating the pros and cons of various courses of action;
- Deciding on an action (or deciding not to act); and
- Debriefing the dilemma by reflecting on what went right, wrong, or what might be done better next time one encounters a similar situation

Let us take each of these in turn.

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## Defining the Dilemma

In our work on dilemmas, we speak about times when people are not sure about the “right course of action” or feel torn between conflicting responsibilities. To date, we’ve compiled fifty dilemmas in our online dilemmas database; these can be drawn on in discussions on all sorts of topics, across the range of ages, demographics, and fields of endeavor.

As just one example, let’s use our dilemma “Divided Loyalties.”

*Sara is the executive director of a national nonprofit that represents the concerns of America’s independent workforce, including freelancers, consultants, part-timers, and the self-employed. Sara’s grandfather was vice president of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union, and although she never met her grandfather, she has been very much influenced by his work as a union organizer.*

*Soon after being recognized as one of a group of outstanding social entrepreneurs, Sara was invited to the World Economic Forum (WEF), a meeting of leaders of governments and corporations from around the world. Because the WEF gathers so many powerful individuals together, there are often protests of one form or another, and Sara would have been forced to cross a picket line in order to attend the WEF. In this case, she felt torn between a loyalty to her roots in the labor movement and a responsibility to her role as a noted social entrepreneur.*

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Clearly Sara feels a dilemma. One way to clarify that dilemma is to say that she is torn between her sense of neighborly morality and the ethics of her role. Neighborly morality refers the ways in which individual treats those in their immediate social circles; it includes behaviors such as honesty, kindness, caring, attentiveness, and other prosocial behaviors. In contrast, ethics of roles refers to the standards, norms, and regulations expected of those acting in a professional capacity (including students); one might think of the Hippocratic Oath for those in the medical field or the ethics expected of a journalist, a lawyer, a teacher, an auditor..

In Sara's case, she is being asked to adhere to the ethics of her role as a social entrepreneur—to advance the causes that she espouses in a responsible way. On the other hand, feelings of neighborly morality might call for her to show respect to those on the picket line—especially given her strong feelings of familial loyalty.

## **Discussing and Debating the Dilemma**

How should Sara decide what to do? What would it mean for her to act as a good citizen in this situation? In turning to discussing and debating the dilemma, we often suggest that individuals turn to respected others—mentors—in order to ask for their advice.

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Importantly, a mentor might not always be a single person to whom one looks up; rather, that mentoring role might be assumed by a fictional character, or individuals might pull different lessons from several individuals, a process we've referred to as "fragmenting." At The Good Project, we also speak of the importance of "anti-mentors"—looking to examples of who we don't want to be in a situation. Thus, in this situation, Sara might ask mentors in her life what they would do in a similar situation in order to be respectful to both family and work responsibilities, or, instead, what they did if they ever encountered a similar experience. (And if the mentors were not available, she might try in her imagination to recreate the advice that they might have given.)

In debating the possible courses of action, Sara should also refer to the Rings of Responsibility—whom will each course of action serve? To whom will she be acting responsibly if she crosses the picket line? What about if she elects to skip the WEF meeting altogether? Which action allows her to better serve her communities in an ethical, engaged, and excellent manner? For example, Sara might consider that:

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- **By attending**, she might help her national nonprofit; she also could be furthering the needs of the communities that her nonprofit serves; she would be upholding her ethics of as a social entrepreneur; and she would be fulfilling a responsibility to wider society by serving an underrepresented workforce.
- **By not attending**, she might serve her image of herself as a supporter of workers as she honors the picket line; she could be serving her family by upholding her grandfather's union legacy; or she might be serving her community (and the broader society) if she is publicly displays her support of others in the labor movement.

In wrestling with this dilemma, Sara would also need to consider her own values and how they might affect her decision regarding this dilemma. Perhaps she is already aware of her own values; or perhaps she might conduct an inventory, by taking a survey such as The Good Project's Value Sort. Which course of action would be more aligned with Sara's own values? We often speak about alignment as something that occurs when various groups or parties want the same thing or are working towards a common goal; but this desired balance can also occur within an individual when someone's thoughts, actions, and values align with one another.



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## Deciding on a Course of Action

Which course of action should Sara take? As we've described it, a "good citizen" is someone who acts in accordance with all three "Es" –specifically taking into account the community or communities to which that person belongs. Again, she might consider:

- **Ethics:** Sara has acted ethically if she makes a decision in light of her responsibilities to her several communities (to her organization, to the unions, to the ideals represented by the freedom to demonstrate), and if she acts in a manner that she believes will ultimately do the most good.
- **Excellence:** Sara knows the norms and rules of her various communities well and in fact, her desire to adhere to the norms of one of those communities (i.e., not to cross a picket line) was what brought about her quandary. She recognizes that if she does an excellent job at the event, the potential impact she might have will expand her connections within the political community.
- **Engagement:** Sara has been deeply engaged in her work. Because this event brought together multiple communities of which she considered herself a part, the issues were especially relevant. She also is engaged with her family and does not take that affiliation lightly.

# 18

## Debriefing

When posing such a dilemma to students, we typically do not reveal an answer—it's the process of applying the 5 Ds that is crucial.

However, here we can reveal that Sara elected to cross the picket line. She concluded that the harm her action might cause would ultimately be outweighed by the good she might be able to achieve by attending the event, making contacts, speaking on behalf of her beliefs about labor, and ultimately, furthering her cause. She acted in accordance with what she felt might, eventually, do the most good. In some ways, she chose long term over short term gain. Upon reflection, Sara was not fully at peace with her decision (she said she could never feel fully at ease crossing a picket line), but she felt that she made the best choice she could have at the time.

As mentioned above, there may at times be overlap between “good work” and “good citizenship.” In this particular case, Sara understands herself to be responsible to multiple communities and does her best to take these communities into account in her decision-making. The good work of a nonprofit director requires Sara to be a good citizen.

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Debriefing also involves a consideration of longer term consequences. Did Sara's decision cause any family estrangement? What did she accomplish at the event, and were these accomplishments worth crossing the picket line? Would she make a different decision in the future, and why? These are the types of questions to consider in our efforts to foster good work and good citizenship.



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## GOOD CITIZENSHIP THROUGH GOOD WORK: A PERSONAL REFLECTION

**Shelby Clark**

On average, the American worker spent 38.6 hours at work in 2019-- that is almost 2 hours above the OECD average of 37 hours per week. Some scholars estimate that Americans spend 90,000 hours of our lives at work. Given how much time we spend "on the job," it is perhaps not a surprise that our employment often ends up serving more of a role in our lives than solely as a way of earning wages. For many, it's a way of finding purpose and meaning. For others, it is a way to perfect a craft or hone one's skills. Still yet, for others, a job is a way for an individual to contribute to society and do good; that is, it is a way to contribute as a citizen. It is this last contention that I most wish to consider. What is the relationship between one's work and citizenship? Below, I reflect upon my own struggle with the question of the relationship between good work and good citizenship.

When I went to college at Johns Hopkins University, I thought I was going to become a musicologist-- someone who studies the history and structure of music. The summer after my sophomore year, I trekked to the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, to track down a Bach score for a faculty member who was abroad. I then spent the spring of my junior year abroad in Vienna, where I completed a musicology internship with a Gustav Mahler expert.

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As a sample task, I translated one of Mahler's letters from old German into English; I spent weeks listening to Mahler's Symphony No. 1 on repeat for an assignment. The summer before my senior year I applied for and received a grant to conduct research at the Cleveland Orchestra that would serve as the basis for my senior thesis. I sat alone in the archives--week after week after week--looking at how the Orchestra's repertoire changed in response to WWII. In the fall of senior year, I navigated from my Arts and Sciences campus across Baltimore to the Peabody Conservatory so that I could take history of music classes not offered on my campus; musicology was not really a major offered on either campus and was instead something I had somehow convinced two advisors to allow me to pursue under their guidance. Later that year, I signed up for the GREs as I thought about applying to PhD programs for musicology. Yet, by spring of my senior year, I had applied and was accepted into several Masters programs for counseling. What happened?

Being a good citizen--one who is actively civically engaged--does not mean that you necessarily show up to vote every four years, nor does it mean that you have to be the best volunteer in your community. Being civically engaged, or a good citizen, can occur in all sorts of ways. Indeed it can be all encompassing; it is something you can be doing, or thinking about, learning about, or working towards, at any time of your day, in any location.

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Besides immersing myself in classical music in college, I had also worked all four years of college in the college career center. I began by answering phones and then slowly worked my way up to being the main assistant to the internship director. I spent 12 hours of my week thinking about how college contributed to students' career success. I pondered how students could find a job that they valued--one that would both give them a sense of purpose, one in which they would find meaning.

As I reached the middle of my senior year of college, I began to apply these questions to myself: Would I find meaning in life as an academic? Would my research as a musicologist be of value to society? In which ways? In all, would I be a good citizen if I became a musicologist?

The purpose of this blog is not to demean the profession of musicology; my musicology advisor was one of the best mentors I have ever had, and I still have the utmost respect and love for classical music and its history. My purpose is to question how we think about the connection between our work and our citizenship. For me, working in the career center, I was very aware that Americans spend a large proportion of their waking hours on their work. Having just witnessed the 2008 financial crash and the societal pathologies which had led to it, I was inspired to make sure that my work would meaningfully contribute to my wider communities and societies.

# 23

At the time, I wasn't sure if publishing in academic journals for musicologists or other historians would fit the bill. I knew that I always wanted music and history to be part of my life; but I just wasn't sure if a life as a musicologist was going to be right for me.

How often do individuals similarly aspire to make a difference in society through their careers? In a recent survey of alumni from mission-based international schools, two thirds of respondents noted that the way they felt they were making the most impact in the world was through their job or career. Of the eleven options shown for how to make a difference, the second highest chosen was making a difference through one's family or friends, at just under a half.[1] For example, one individual in the study made note of her attempts to make a difference through her career:

*Interviewee: Yes. Well, I'm really trying as much as I can within the curriculum that I have to be that person at the school.... I really try to just be a way to broaden their horizons a little bit, and be a person in which they can see someone else than they're used to, even though I'm also from the same municipality. I grew up here and all of that, but just having experienced the things that I have, and met the people that I have and just being the person that I am being...coming back here to a place where, it's still very, like we don't really talk about it, it's still very to taboo in many ways...I try to push small change within my classes.*

[1] This is a yet unpublished finding from a study conducted by my colleagues and me at Harvard Project Zero

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*Interviewee (continued): I'm very specific about not pushing any gender norms in my classes that I teach...they ask me a bunch of questions. Like, are you a boy or a girl? Like, does that even matter? Trying to have those kinds of things....I feel like it's my one way of creating change right now. Just trying to have these kids be slightly more open-minded than they would have if I weren't there.*

*And so in the music that they listen to ... or the way they think about English, maybe I can even get one person to become a little more fond of English, a little bit fond of learning languages. That would be something for me that I would have felt like I would have succeeded. So, I feel like right now my job is where I can create the most change. And I feel like I can, I feel like that's actually feasible, which is very fun, but that's also a huge responsibility.*

*The fact that I can change these kids' minds when they're so malleable. I feel like that's where the biggest arena [is] for that right now. And I'm obviously trying to make that a good thing and trying to use it for good.*

This person is a teacher, generally a career considered to be a service to the community, but, in addition, through this career the individual is trying to change norms regarding gender and other issues. As they see it, their career enables them to be a good citizen.

By the end of my time at college, I turned to counseling as a way that I thought I could meaningfully impact society. Rather than sitting in an archive creating research, I decided that I needed to work directly with people in order to try to bring about tangible change in their lives.



# 25

Within two years I had received my Master's in counseling, with a focus on school counseling. Thereafter, I went to work as a high school school counselor in St. Paul, Minnesota. Working with refugee students as well as students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, I did feel that my work was meaningful and created some tangible impacts for some students.

Yet, by the end of two years, I knew it was time to return to my original love: research.

Let me apply some of our concepts to my own biography. At The Good Project, we define "good work" in terms of three attributes (the three Es): **Ethical** work seeks to have positive impacts on clients and on the broader society; **Excellent** work is high in quality; and **Engaging** work is meaningful and purposeful for the worker. Upon graduating from college I was so determined to contribute to society--obsessing about the ethical impacts of my work-- that I forgot about the importance of finding meaning and purpose in one's work. This is not to say that I disliked being a school counselor, but rather that it never seemed to fit quite right. I missed research, I missed books, and I missed having a constant "purpose" when I went home at night. In terms of the three Es, I believe that I did ethical work; I hope that it was excellent in quality; but I did not feel sufficiently engaged.

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I am fortunate--I was able to take a circuitous path back to my enduring love of research. By doing so, I believe that I am able to fulfill all of the 3Es of good work. Even more so, I was also able to find a way to merge good work with my initial hope of contributing to society more broadly; as such, I fulfill some of my own citizenship goals through my work.

I ultimately spent four and a half years at Boston University pursuing a Ph.D. in Applied Human Development. I learned how to use psychological principles and apply them directly to everyday educational issues (in my case, I focused on curiosity and issues of character and social justice education). After graduating, I was able to move into my current position at The Good Project. On the project, I apply psychological concepts and methods to understand educational settings better – an ultimate goal is to create curriculum and assessment materials that hold promise for improving educational practices and outcomes. I feel hopeful that the work we do can make a difference in the lives of students, teachers, educators, and, in some way, over time, influence the larger education system.

As noted above, citizenship has a tendency to become an all encompassing idea. It can mean being politically engaged (e.g. voting), or it can mean social activism (e.g. protesting climate change).

# 27

For me, it means in some small way trying to contribute to creating a better and more equitable education system for all. Thus, a broad variety of choices exist for how one might go about being a citizen and contributing to the greater good. Yet, given the large role that work plays in the lives of American citizens, and in the lives of citizens of many other nations, it is worth reflecting on not only whether you are being a good worker (ethical, excellent, and engaged) but also whether or not your work allows you to be a good *citizen*.

But that's just my story. I ask you, the reader: How do you understand good work and good citizenship? Do you see these concepts as related, or as distinct roles within your life? Has your understanding of good work and good citizenship changed over the course of your life or as you've held different jobs?



## 28

## THE HOPE OF GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

**Danny Mucinskas**

The concept of “citizenship” has become the subject of renewed interest and attention. After a relative decline in the use of the term in the second half of the twentieth century, citizenship is now more discussed than ever before. Yet while the designation of “citizen” can be traced back millennia in human history, it has a multiplicity of manifestations and interpretations that elude singular definition.

Use over time for: citizenship



In the Western tradition, citizenship is commonly said to originate in the ancient Greek polis, city-states such as Athens and Sparta. These city-states created hierarchical social systems dominated by a small group that had the leisure to be involved in government affairs. Citizen was a status given to the few: wealthy, native-born men. In the Roman era, citizenship expanded further to encompass the free people who lived within the boundaries of the empire.

# 29

The forms of citizenship practiced in antiquity subsequently had a profound influence on the way that citizenship was institutionalized in states and nations in the following two thousand years. During the Renaissance, classical texts like Plato's Republic and Cicero's writing on politics and citizenship were rediscovered. They influenced visions and theories of the role of citizens in a political body. In societies such as the United States and the French Republic, which were (literally) revolutionary, the way that citizenship was constructed as a set of individual democratic rights stems from certain Greek and Roman ideals and practices.

There has been no historiographic consensus regarding the meaning of citizenship across time and space; it is clear that societies outside of the Greco-Roman tradition also developed complex views and systems of membership to communal and political entities. For example, in Chinese history, the state was composed of a ruler, mediating officials, and subjects (or min, people in a political community), in reciprocity with one another. This schema allowed for determinations of who was and was not included in Chinese society by virtue of the interrelationships of these three groups; for example, those not subject to a ruler would not be considered part of the state. For many pre-Columbian Native Americans, tribal belonging was based on complex kinship ties.

# 30

In the Middle East under the Ottoman Empire of the nineteenth century, the closest analog to citizenship was the designation of being a subject of the empire as a multiethnic political jurisdiction (which became complicated for immigrants and those who intermarried with non-Ottoman subjects).

The smattering of cases presented above make plain that citizenship itself is far from a monolith; it has variously involved considerations of status, relationships to rulers, wealth, place, rights, kinship, interactions with other states, and various combinations thereof. Unfortunately, these designations have also been used at various times to exclude particular classes of people from being designated citizens, based on race, gender, immigration status, and other traits.

How, then, when citizenship itself is so fraught and nuanced a term, has discussion or invocation of “global citizenship” become so prominent in the educational landscape today? What does global citizenship mean? Can the idea aid in building a vision of citizenship that is at once inclusive, widely applicable, and productive?

Of course, this is a tall order. Moreover, these questions carry special weight at a time when international interdependence is at an all time high. Today, events that may appear to be geographically distant are often of immense local consequence.

# 31

When civil war broke out in Syria, a humanitarian refugee crisis tested the limits of other nations to accept migrants. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Wuhan, China, quickly spread across the Earth through efficient travel networks. Carbon emissions created in large part by the world's most developed nations will in all likelihood erase some island nations from the map in the coming decades unless drastic action is taken.

Undoubtedly, more crises will erupt. Education in global citizenship is one tool that can help humanity meet these challenges by emphasizing shared responsibility to create solutions.

Similarly to citizenship itself, global citizenship has not been universally defined and adopted; it covers wide ground and is the subject of debate and disagreement. However, a meta-review of global citizenship identified several features that visions of global citizenship have in common:

- It is a mode of thinking that connects the worldwide to the local;
- It incorporates self-awareness and awareness of others, including ones who differ manifestly from those in one's daily surroundings;
- It is a practice that entails both empathy and knowledge of other cultures;
- It cultivates ethical decision-making; and
- It is actively participatory.

# 32

At the heart of global citizenship is a conviction that humans are capable of learning how to think and can as well choose to act mindfully in relation to the worldwide community. Global citizenship acknowledges interconnectedness, calls for intercultural sensitivities that bridge differences, and ultimately requires actions that are ethically-oriented. Using The Good Project's rings of responsibility, global citizenship entails a sense of responsibility that extends to the outermost possible ring of international society and transcends borders and identity groups.

Thus, even though there are many versions of global citizenship in existence, and global citizenship education has been the subject of robust criticisms (for being neoliberal and inherently Western in nature in particular), the framework nonetheless holds promise. Whereas old views of citizenship, rooted in regional policies or traditions, were fragmented, inconsistent, and frequently exclusionary, global citizenship has the potential to unite and drive productive effort through connection and problem-solving.

Due to its significance and potential, frameworks of global citizenship have unsurprisingly been taken up in large numbers by educational institutions and international organizations. The adoption reflects wide-ranging support. For instance, national curricula in Canada, China, the United States, and several European countries now include global citizenship-related competencies.



# 33

UNESCO has committed to educational programs that foreground “global, not local issues” and that encourage learners “to become active promoters of more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable societies.” The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015 present a set of priorities, such as poverty relief, amelioration of climate change, and preservation of biodiversity, that have the potential to focus and direct efforts in global citizenship education for the period ahead. The OECD has also included on its international PISA tests a measure of global competence, a related construct.

In recent years, The Good Project has collaborated with programs that prioritize forms of global citizenship education. Two examples indicate what global citizenship education can look like in practice.

1. The Global Citizens Initiative, a program that gathers a select group of students from around the world for over a week and introduces them to ideas including “good work,” entrepreneurship, and design thinking. The hope is that graduates will design projects that solve real-life issues in their home communities and beyond.

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2. The United World Colleges movement, a network of 18 schools around the world. Gathering a deliberately diverse international cohort of students at each site, UWC has a mission for peace and a sustainable future. The first school was founded in post-World War II Europe by notable German-born educator Kurt Hahn, with a goal of fostering greater intercultural understanding at a time when international tensions were heightened.

In seeking to foster intercultural understanding, both programs draw on psychologist Gordon Allport's intergroup contact theory, which has now been supported by many subsequent studies. The theory asserts that prejudices between groups will be reduced through contact situations, especially in conditions of equal status, intergroup cooperation, common goals, and support by social and institutional authorities.

To be sure, while not every educational experience can involve intergroup contact, the approach is one promising way to further the development of skills and mindsets related to global citizenship. Others include participatory service learning or virtual reality games that encourages meta-cognition and problem-solving.

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As international interdependence deepens, the human population continues to grow, and environmental, political, and social challenges abound, global citizenship as an idea and an educational imperative can help prepare students to engage productively with others and the world. By its nature, national citizenship alone is limited in scope. In contrast, global citizenship can invigorate action in directions with wide benefits for all, in accordance with goals such as the UN SDGs, peaceful co-existence, and international collaboration. These are worthwhile goals, the absence of which have been at the root of human conflicts throughout history.

Naming these goals helps to explain why global citizenship and global citizenship education is so important: without the ability to understand one another and do work for mutual benefit, the greatest problems facing humanity may overwhelm us. The promise of global citizenship is to create collaborative solutions for future success and prosperity for all. But whether global citizenship necessarily grows out of local citizenship—or remains in some sense in conflict with it—remains to be determined.



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## GOOD CITIZENSHIP: CONCLUDING NOTE

**Lynn Barendsen**

In this blog series, we—members of The Good Project team—have sought to illuminate the relationship between good work and good citizenship.

- *What is Good Citizenship?* explains that we have extended the 3 Es of Good Work—excellence, ethics and engagement—to elucidate the concepts of “good citizenship.”
- *Good Person, Good Worker, Good Citizen* investigates the distinctions between these various roles, drawing on two key Good Project concepts: neighborly morality and ethics of roles.
- *5Ds, 3Es and One Good Citizen* applies the five “Ds” of Dilemmas (Define, Discuss, Debate, Decide, and Debrief) to analyze a difficult decision faced by a social entrepreneur. We consider her choices and reflect upon what we can surmise about both good work and good citizenship.
- *Good Citizenship Through Good Work* proposes that these two concepts may in fact coexist. Personal reflection is used to unpack ways in which good citizenship might be achieved through good work.

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- *The Hope of Global Citizenship* traces some of the many meanings of citizenship; it describes the increasing importance of a newly developed concept, global citizenship.

In our current work on The Good Project, we continue to investigate, reflect upon, and encourage good work and good citizenship.

- For several years, we have collaborated with the Global Citizens Initiative—an effort to empower young global citizens to become leaders of positive change. Our research team is actively involved with curriculum design and evaluation.
- Our team has also collaborated with the Better Arguments Project, a national civic initiative founded on the belief that we rather than fewer arguments, we need better arguments. Our collaboration is based on a common understanding: Better Arguments (including dimensions of historical context, emotional intelligence, and the acknowledgement of power dynamics) have the potential to lead to Good Work (which features the three Es of Excellence, Ethics and Engagement).

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- We are completing a large-scale study of the United World Colleges movement—a network of 18 schools around the world that pursue a mission for peace and a sustainable future. The learnings from this study are already adding nuance to our understandings of good citizenship, and we look forward to further insights from the extensive data gathered.
- Finally, we would be remiss if, in this discussion of citizenship, we failed to mention our own responsibilities with respect to racial justice and the Black Lives Matter movement. At The Good Project, we encourage long-term conversations about racial justice. We promote resources that enable discussions of race in the workplace and classroom, written by diverse authors and representing a variety of perspectives.

These are just a few ways in which our current work addresses good citizenship. We continue to learn through our research and our collaborative relationships. We trust that our own understandings will continue to evolve and hope that insights gained will prove useful to various communities.



# Contact Us

## **Lynn Barendsen**

Lynn has been working on the GoodWork Project since 1997, and current research also includes a study on Quality and Good Collaboration. Lynn has written articles about young social and business entrepreneurs and young professionals in theater and business, and authored several chapters on GoodWork related research, including, with Howard Gardner, a chapter on the Young Worker in a Global Age in the Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology and Work (Oxford University Press, 2009). With Wendy Fischman, she co-developed the GoodWork Toolkit, designed to help develop a common language that school communities and other institutions can use to define their work and identify their goals. Lynn has published articles on African American and regionalist literatures, and taught courses in literature and film, English and American literature, and expository writing.

## **Danny Mucinkas**

Danny Mucinkas is Project Manager for The Good Project, overseeing the project's digital presence and connections with partners and practitioners. He is currently working on a multi-year research study investigating the educational impacts of United World Colleges and a number of other diverse international schools on their students. He is Office Manager for Howard Gardner. Danny joined Project Zero in 2012 and holds a B.A. in History and International Relations from Boston University and a graduate certificate in nonprofit management from Harvard Extension School.

## **Shelby Clark**

Shelby Clark is a senior research manager for the Investigating Impacts of Educational Experience project, a longitudinal study investigating the educational impact of the United World Colleges. Shelby's work focuses on the development of intellectual and civic character strengths in adolescents and young adults, with a focus on strengths such as curiosity and open-mindedness. She received her Ph.D. in applied human development from Boston University, an M.A. from the George Washington University in school counseling, and a B.A. in history and music from Johns Hopkins University. Shelby formerly worked as a school counselor in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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