Framing the Good Citizen

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This article interrogates the norms of good citizenship invoked in and across different social domains, using the example of citizenship education in the UK as one field in which good citizenship is constituted. It is possible to make visible the political struggle inherent in the mechanisms of framing the good citizen by unpacking the differences between citizenship as acts, status and virtues. This is a necessary step in assessing good citizenship claims in the absence of moral and political absolutes. We deploy a two-tiered account of Butler's theory of performativity to examine how ordinary citizenship acts are preceded by elite rhetorical framing. We conclude that citizenship, like democracy, is always enacted in particular contexts in which positioning, method and motives play an important part.

Introduction

Our aim in this article is to contribute to the important task of bringing to the debate on good citizenship greater theoretical depth and empirical richness. We interrogate the norms of good citizenship invoked in different social domains and extend our analysis across as well as within particular domains, using the example of citizenship education in the UK to illustrate our argument. At the centre of our efforts is the specification of a framework for analysing invocations of the good citizen. The aim of this style of analysis is to reveal or unmask the making of conceptions of the good citizen and good citizenship. The good citizen is a figure who is 'framed', or set up, by political and academic observers alike; framed in the sense of viewed from a certain perspective, and in the different sense of set up for a particular purpose (to contribute to a sustainable society or cohesive community, for example). Indeed, the frames constitute ideas of the good citizen and the desired practices that flow from that: there is no single normative ideal outside frames. By deploying an interpretative methodology, it is our intention to make visible the political struggle inherent in the practices and mechanisms of framing the good citizen, and to speculate on the possibility of assessing such claims in the absence of moral and political absolutes.

We argue that a focus on good citizenship means a focus primarily on acts of citizenship, showing how key actors performatively construct both the content (approaches) and products (domains) of good citizenship, indicating a constitutive relationship between 'elite' representations and 'ordinary' performative acts of citizenship and their specific contexts. As we will go on to elaborate, the invocation

of the good citizen is twofold: the frame itself is produced through elite actions (the constitution of a domain and an approach) and in turn provides the repertoires of possible acts and social roles that are deemed to be 'good', as performed by ordinary would-be citizens themselves. Analysts therefore need to embrace the inevitable plurality of conceptions of the good citizen, and would benefit from a specific set of linked concepts that can genuinely help us to map and to understand invocations of good citizenship. Given this plurality we also need cross-contextual ways in which to judge varied claims about the capacities, behaviours and attitudes of good citizens. Our hope is that the framework generated and illustrated here is sufficiently flexible to aid analysis across countries, cultures and contexts, despite its roots in UK experience. Because of its sensitivity to context, we argue that as an interpretive device the framework can usefully 'travel'.

The enigmatic figure of the 'good citizen' is conjured up regularly in UK politics—Michael Sandel's Reith Lectures (Sandel 2009) on 'A New Citizenship' provide a prominent recent example—but the notion rarely comes under close analytical scrutiny from the perspective of citizenship 'acts'. This has been the case, we argue, for two key reasons. First, established patterns of normative thinking have squeezed out close analytical work, and second, where the latter has been evident it has been confined too closely to single areas of concern or policy. Let us look at these two issues briefly.

The notion of the good citizen is important, not least because it plays a key role in politicians' discourses, when some forms of behaviour among citizens are being encouraged and others discouraged. Perhaps it is this role that makes scholars wary; certainly the strongly normative (if not moralising) and often ideologically motivated nature of good citizen discourse does not chime readily with aspirations to analytical neutrality.

Of course, there is a long tradition of normative discussion in political theory around models of citizenship. Republicans see good citizens as ideally possessing certain virtues and oriented primarily to the collective good of the community. Liberals see good citizens as individuals, with rights and freedoms, who respect the rights and freedoms of others as they pursue their interests. Socialists see good citizens as seekers and defenders of social and economic equality. Greens see good citizens as those who live sustainably, and encourage the same in social and political institutions. Feminists have viewed citizenship as a gendered term, not without potential but needing transformation towards new forms of inclusion and recognition.

Where norms of good citizenship are invoked by political scientists, they often rely on culturally specific images of the democratic citizen derived from ancient Greece, conflating citizenship with behaviour and values (Van Deth 2007, 404). The same holds true for accounts of the 'bad citizen' (Christ 2006)—taken as someone uninterested in public affairs. The relationship between good citizenship norms, behaviour and virtues is an important one which we take up in the next section, but it is important here to distinguish our approach from those that seek to gauge, measure or define conceptions of good citizenship (Conover et al. 1991; Theiss-Morse 1993). These accounts carefully and empirically examine shared norms, understandings and self-identifications of the good citizen, but offer less sustained

discussion of the practices and mechanisms associated with the rhetorical framing of the good citizen—or the influences on *how* people arrive at understandings of the good citizen.

Mapping these discussions and positions is a reasonable task, but differs from the task we set ourselves here, which is to focus on how the good citizen is invoked in particular contexts—deploying an interpretive mode in which normative discussions play only one part. Sensitivity to context is central. This includes sensitivity to the fate of good citizen discourse in different times or periods. Concern about citizens' attitudes and activities tends to come and go in waves. Different political actors at different times raise citizenship issues as part of other current issues or debates on the public agenda. In the 1980s, for example, debates centred on liberal versus community notions in politics and political theory. In the UK today, citizenship issues are raised in the complex and overlapping contexts of global dependencies, movement of peoples, religion and tolerance, for example. Waves of concern also give rise to new institutions; for example the government-linked NGO, the Institute for Citizenship, was set up in the late 1980s as a response in part to the then prime minister Margaret Thatcher's assertion that there is 'no such thing as society'.

A further limitation of existing scholarly accounts is that invocations of the good citizen tend to arise in specific domains of public concern or public policy. 'Faith' has been one prominent recent example. In the UK, issues of faith, culture and citizenship have risen up the public agenda in the midst of concerns for community cohesion and security following the attack on the World Trade Center in New York on 11 September 2001 and specifically in the UK following the terrorist attack on the London transport system of 7 July 2005. Positions within this domain of citizenship discourse have differed widely. Government concerns have tended towards security and cohesion; inter-faith groups have stressed the search for common values, while academic observers have pointed out complexities of within-faith and inter-faith connections and issues of definition of 'faith'. Questions of 'Britishness' (and 'loyalty', 'shared values' and 'commitment') have also been prominent. These debates and contestations have jointly produced a new domain of concern—that is, faith and the good citizen—specific to particular situated events and in the context of a heightened state of anxiety about terrorist threats and ethnic diversity in the UK. Just as in this one domain, invocations of the good citizen in other domains, such as education, healthcare, environmental responsibility or the citizenly responsibilities of corporations, are subject to sporadic and at times equally fierce debate. The key point is that close attention to a single domain distracts from the highly varied ways in which these very domains are constituted, reinforced and contested. Attending to the constitution of these various domains requires us to focus on citizenship as a set of practices, and requires that we distinguish between citizenship acts, status and virtues.

Citizenship Acts, Status and Virtues

A key starting point is that the figure of the 'good citizen' emerges when the primary focus is on *acts* of citizenship, rather than primarily on citizenship as a

status. 'Good' citizenship is about what citizens do, rather than who they are. As Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman (1994, 353) have commented,

> we should expect a theory of the good citizen to be relatively independent of the legal question of what it is to be a citizen, just as a theory of the good person is distinct from the metaphysical (or legal) question of what it is to be a person.

It is worth noting that Kymlicka and Norman suggest that acts are 'relatively independent' of status. This formulation denotes that there is a complex process of interconnection between the two, despite the utility of keeping them analytically separate. Citizenship ceremonies in the UK, for example, are about bestowing, or symbolising the bestowal of, the formal status of British citizenship, but at the same time participants take part in (or enact) through ceremonies a depiction of the content of good citizenship. Visually UK citizenship ceremonies involve a display of symbols—the crown, the flag and the regalia of authority of the local mayor or other dignitary—conveying a sense of both citizenship and subjecthood. The ceremony's pledge involves promising to 'observe laws faithfully' and bear 'loyalty to the UK', which arguably cuts through other potential loyalties (for example to Scotland or Wales, or to a faith community, or to a transnational or diasporic community). Clearly, in this as in other cases, there is a close link between citizenship as act and as status. At one and the same time, both (1) the status and (2) a particular rendering of the status are performatively constituted through framing.

It is true that citizenship is most often understood as a status, for example qualifications of membership of the citizen body. But from citizenship ceremonies, education and consumption to debates about corporate citizenship, we can see the importance of practices and acts that carry ideas about what good citizens can and should do. The notion of acts of citizenship here is offered and interpreted in broad terms. They are acts that, according to certain framings, define good citizenship and good citizenly conduct. This broad approach differs, for example, from Engin Isin and Greg Nielsen's (2008, 2) designation of acts of citizenship in terms of ruptures in conventional modes of citizen action, that is, as a quite specific type of citizen action, signifying a break from *habitus*. We take from Isin and Nielsen a concern for the way in which acts *produce* subjects, but instead focus on ordinary acts-in-context and their framing *as* virtuous. We therefore avoid making a clear distinction between some extraordinary or transformational acts as 'virtuous' and everyday *practices* as passive and apolitical. Transformational or rupturing acts clearly have political purchase, but can also be used in themselves as normative and normalising frames for good citizenship, as in UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown's account of *Britain's Everyday Heroes*, which charts the civic contributions of 'good people striving to make Britain a better place' (Brown 2007, 12). Acts-in-context (as practices) equally confer political struggle in so far as they perform or make subjects, and when taken together with the constitutive nature of framing, the conditions of possibility are set for the enacting of citizenship, the establishment of citizenship roles and the creation of visions of the good citizen. For example, when looking at the fairly prominent notion of corporate citizenship, one question to be asked is whether, although corporations as such do not possess the *legal status* of citizens, by *acting* like 'good citizens' they can claim for themselves some form of *moral status* of

citizenship (see Thompson 2005; Moon et al. 2005, Néron and Norman 2008; and Wood and Logsdon 2008 on the debate over whether corporations can be good citizens).

Having illustrated the links between acts and status, we nonetheless keep 'ordinary' acts conceptually distinct from status and focus upon them in this article. This is because the idea of the good citizen is primarily about what citizens do, or what they should (or sometimes are forced to) do. It is acts, rather than status, that would seem to distinguish 'good' from 'bad' citizens. As we shall see, a key part of what citizens do concerns what they are enabled to do, in terms of what they know, what skills they have, their access to material resources and what subject positions are available to them as accepted norms, expectations and virtuous character. Melanie White (2006, 111) notes that, while in political theory citizen character may be recognised as a social construction, 'the concept typically appears as a pre-political good whose social origins are hypostatized or forgotten'. As such a moral or behaviourist approach to political theory lends itself to the promotion of civic duty, education for citizenship and character education—shared by liberals and civic republicans alike (White 2005, 475; see also Dagger 1997, 195; Sabl 2005). This moral orientation neglects questions of how citizen virtues, habits and competencies are framed, and how these frames are assembled—or in White's terms *how the character of the good citizen is governed* (White 2005, 474). We are concerned in the next section with how frames of the good citizen can be said to be performatively produced, developing our interpretative method from the work of Judith Butler (1990 and 1997) and Erving Goffman (1969 and 1974). It is to this framing that we now turn.

Framing

The frames within which good citizenship is enacted are co-constructed by different types of actor: elite and ordinary.[1] Without wishing to reinforce a binary distinction between the two, but rather seeking to explore the relationship between them, the focus of this article is largely limited to relatively 'elite' actors—governments, other public agencies, NGOs, corporations and indeed academic commentators—and their constitution of ideas of the good citizen. A great many groups and individuals can and do have ideas of good citizenship. But it is the framings by relatively elite actors that are most often public, and that both enable and constrain the manner in which citizenship is 'lived' by ordinary citizens. It is therefore crucial to address the nature of specific framings of the good citizen, and the tensions that are inherent in them (Van Deth 2009). These frames provide the roles through which specific acts, status and virtues of citizenship are performed. 'Good' citizenship acts, in order to be publicly understood as such, need to be performed within the parameters set by the frame. In that sense (elite) actors enact the frames within which (ordinary) citizens then enact/perform their good citizenship.

We deploy the notion of framing to capture the contextual particularity of invocations of the good citizen, whether it is in terms of the latter's behaviours, attitudes or capacities. Within the idea of framing, there are a number of other concepts that specify factors we should attend to when looking at particular debates and claims

about good citizenship. These concepts, taken together, are designed to help us to capture the richness of the modes, styles and content of invocations of good citizenship. Frames are not objective or unchanging entities. They are reinforced or diminished by a variety of constitutive acts, and as such the term 'framing' captures better than 'frame' the mechanisms and practices associated with invoking the good citizen. In this section we will first set out the components of framing and the links between them, and secondly clarify some important points concerning their deployment, using the example of citizenship education in England for illustrative purposes.

Framing consists of (1) *a domain*; and (2) an *approach*. The domain is the area of concern within which different arguments about good citizenship are located. Key areas of concern in the UK context, for example, are: the state of democracy; the state of citizenship education; the fostering of governance; understanding national character; environmental sustainability; community cohesion; or corporate citizenship. A domain is the product of efforts to constitute particular ideas of good citizenship; the approach is the means by which that constituting work is done. Constituting the domain—for example, good corporate citizenship—in effect constitutes a way to locate, recognise and interpret (and value) a developing repertoire of acts with respect to good citizenship—acts which are not necessarily restricted to individual persons as actors, but which incorporate, in the above instance, the acts of institutions and corporations. There may be competing conceptions of a particular domain, and different approaches to establishing or analysing a given domain. In fact, such competing can actually reinforce a sense of the presence or reality of the domain in question, while ensuring that its boundaries and the relative importance of its constituent elements remain contested.

The approach refers to how and why elite actors seek to constitute and reinforce particular domains of good citizenship, and can in turn be broken down into its constituent elements:

(2a)   the *positioning* of the originator of certain arguments (both the subject's self-positioning and their institutional positioning, including self-imposed and wider institutional constraints);
(2b)   the *motives* of the originator in putting arguments about the good citizen (self-assumed and self-described motives, as well as potential other-ascribed and contextually suggested motives); and
(2c)   the *methods* used by the originator. These include a range of approaches familiar in social science and social and political theory, such as interpretive, explanatory, critical and normative methods, as well as methods commonplace in contemporary politics such as agenda-setting, the representation of problems to be solved, virtues to be promoted and pragmatic ways of achieving political goals.

Tracing particular cases through the field defined by these concepts leads to specific conclusions about the good citizen within a given domain. The domain of educating citizens is one sphere through which to interrogate framings of the good citizen and citizenship claims—particularly in light of its fairly recent introduction as a compulsory secondary school subject in England. It is an important domain for framing the intersections between citizenship acts, status and the shaping of character,

competence and virtue of future citizens. Citizenship education has also been subjected to intense academic scrutiny (Osler 2000; McLaughlin 2000; Pearce and Hallgarten 2000; Kerr et al. 2002; Heater 2004; Olssen 2004; Osler and Starkey 2005; Faulks 2006; Gillborn 2006; Frazer 2007; Arthur et al. 2008; Kiwan 2008). It is therefore instructive to examine the bases on which commentators have sought to assess good citizenship claims and frames in this context. The domain of citizenship education is shaped materially and institutionally through the writing of policy recommendations ('The Crick Report', QCA 1998), its legislation through the statutory 'Citizenship Order' (QCA 1999), the provision of guidance and advice to teachers, the inception of PGCE (Post-Graduate Certificate in Education) teacher-training courses and the production of examination questions and textbooks. These activities involve constructing a specific sense of the good citizen to be fostered through education.

As such, the domain of citizenship education will highlight particular aspects of the framing model, such as framing mostly by elite actors (as opposed to those citizens and future citizens who are 'being educated'), a focus on the individual as good citizen and his or her duties (as opposed to organisations or institutions as good citizens).

The very notion of citizenship education frames the good citizen in particular ways, namely as someone who needs to be educated to be a good (better) citizen, in ways devised by others. This places those pronouncing on citizenship education in some kind of position of authority, both in terms of their self-understanding and, frequently, in terms of their institutional position (for example as experts commissioned by the government or as academic experts). Similarly, it puts those then charged with delivering citizenship education in an institutional position of authority over the (future) citizens they are educating. Those being educated are placed in the positions of not-yet-good-enough citizens, of having to learn what being a good citizen means and how they should act in order to be good citizens. The motives of those framing citizenship education are presumably either to find a way to produce better citizens (and by implication to establish the understanding that this is necessary, desirable and feasible) or to critique the idea that citizens need to be educated (or educated in this particular way). The methods employed include normative, processual and critical arguments, designed to establish what virtues a good citizen ought to possess and how these virtues should be encouraged/produced; and bringing forward alternative theoretical frameworks from which either the very notion of citizenship education, or citizenship education in a particular form, can be critiqued.

In terms of the approach to framing citizenship education we can usefully trace the positioning, motives and methods of the proponents of citizenship education. The Crick Report's approach to citizenship education is positioned as one informed by civic republicanism and pluralism in contrast to modern liberalism (Crick 2002, 501). Bernard Crick's rejection of the figure of the 'good citizen' reflects this civic republican standpoint, and instead he promotes a new figure of the 'active citizen' who is effective, participative, publicly minded, politically literate and sceptical. The citizenship claimed and valued here means 'people *acting together* publicly and effectively to demonstrate common values and achieve common purposes' (Crick 2007, 247, emphasis in original).

Motivated by an account of improving the 'health' of democracy (QCA 1998, 8), citizenship education is directed towards a societal context that is represented as politically apathetic, at youth who feel alienated and cynical and at a pluralistic British population, who, it is said, need to find common ground (QCA 1998, 13–17). Here, the good citizen is put forward as someone who is socially and morally responsible, involved in their community and politically literate. However, Crick (2007, 243) again carefully distinguishes between the good citizen and the active citizen. He asserts:

> It seems elementary to me that there is a difference between being a good citizen and being an active citizen (Crick, 2000). One can be a good citizen in an autocratic state. One can also be *only* a good citizen in a democratic state, that is one can obey the law, pay taxes, drive carefully and behave oneself socially (say minimising offence to others) but not work with others on any matters that effect public policy (emphasis in original).

Crick is therefore critical of earlier approaches to citizenship education, such as the work of the Commission on Citizenship (NCC 1990), which he notes promoted a particularly partisan version of 'highly moralistic "good citizenship" of which Douglas Hurd, Kenneth Baker and Chris Patten spoke: the moral virtues of helping others and behaving well' (Crick 2002, 492). Crick's method, then, is to invoke the 'active citizen' as a common-sense response to the social, political and cultural context of the UK presented above.

The framing method deployed by those, like Crick, who have promoted citizenship education in this sense involves presenting the justification of these explicit attempts to shape young people as good, that is, 'active', citizens as an apolitical and non-partisan approach (Crick 2002, 494). Method is therefore related to positioning, where actors (whether individuals or organisations) will often attempt to position themselves as more-or-less neutral and objective—they seek to elucidate citizenship and good citizenship from a general vantage point. For Crick, this means locating his approach as a reflection of the 'procedural values' of 'Freedom, Toleration, Fairness, Respect for Truth, Respect for Reasoning' (Crick 1999, 343), which (as he recognises) stem from a specifically 'Western tradition' (Crick 1999, 337).

Indeed, efforts have been made to unpack the methods followed by the Crick committee in arriving at a consensus framing of the good citizen. In particular, Dina Kiwan (2006, 131) has asserted that the citizenship education policy-making process excluded ethnic minority voices, questioning the internal consistency of the Crick committee's claims as an act of (non-inclusive, non-participatory) citizenship in itself. Similarly, Pykett (2007) has explored how multiple framings of the good citizen were dealt with by the Crick committee in order to resolve potential conflicts of opinion and ensure that the final recommendations were politically acceptable. This resolution suggests that realpolitik was a crucial framing method in the case of citizenship education. Some policy-makers involved in the Crick committee had their own framings to pursue—the good citizen as critical and rights-driven, rather than active, responsible and compliant; as engaged in experiential, community learning rather than complying with an education system driven by testing and standards; or as a global, rather than a UK, citizen (Pykett 2007).

We move now to academic and popular critics of citizenship education, who are equally concerned with framing the good citizen—positioning themselves variously as politically motivated critics, 'common-sense' advocates, sociological interpreters, impartial evaluators and/or outside observers. By examining existing criticism of the 'official' framing of the good citizen as actively involved in the community, as socially and morally responsible and politically literate, we can identify the alternative framings offered as a basis for such critiques. While the motives of critique are not always to create an alternative framing of the good citizen in education, such a figure often emerges from the analytical work of criticism. Methods employed by critics include revealing inconsistencies, exposing competing claims to the good citizen, reviving the value of political contestation, describing alternative claims, outlining historically contingent claims of the good citizen and, indeed, deconstructing the basis from which citizen claims *and* critiques can be brought about.

Alternative framings of the good citizen can arise from such critiques. For instance, Elizabeth Frazer (2007, 258) condemns the vagueness of the acts and virtues of the good citizen figure promoted in citizenship education:

> To be sure with this kind of very general definition we can speak of a 'good citizen' as any one who, in any community whatsoever, pulls their weight with regards to the common good, upholds the organisation and its values, takes responsibility and so on. And we do talk this way. But if we consistently think of citizenship without any reference to political power, we are omitting something crucial.

In reviving a positive sense of the political as necessarily difficult and conflict-based (Frazer 2007, 258–259), the framing of the good citizen that emerges from Frazer's criticism is of someone who has a 'positive appreciation of the values of politics' (Frazer 2007, 261). This is someone who is committed to seeking and participating in legitimate procedures for political decision-making, rather than somebody who simply acts responsibly in an ill-defined community.

In other analyses of citizenship education, critics draw attention to the apparently homogeneous figure of the good citizen whose ethnic difference is erased. Audrey Osler (2000, 27) highlights how the Crick Report fails to deal with the issue of racism as a threat to democracy and identifies a 'colonial flavour' to its writing (Osler 2000, 30). David Gillborn (2006, 83) states that the citizenship education policy is a 'pretend treatment for institutional racism' which he underlines as a reality of the current education system, stating that citizenship education leaves the systematic problem of racial exclusion intact (Gillborn 2006, 88)—painting it instead as an individual problem. Here, critics focus on the way in which citizenship education policy therefore frames the bad citizen as an overly individualistic character responsible for racial conflict or an individual from an ethnic minority who fails to integrate *themselves* fully into a tolerant majority community (Osler 2000, 33). By implication then, the good citizen framed in such critiques would be someone who understands and challenges institutional injustices and barriers to citizenship from a human rights perspective. These critics reject the search for a 'common good' shared by citizens in favour of a genuine respect for diversity.

It is therefore clear that challenges to the official framing of the good citizen in the domain of citizenship education exist in many forms. Other frames (most notably in the form of critiques) equally make claims about the characteristics and activities of the good citizen, though few, of course, become government policy—marking out the practices, mechanisms and institutions of elite rhetorical framing as particularly ripe for analysis. It is important to assess critically the basis of citizenship claims by which educators seek to nurture good citizens, as well as to understand the political goals and practices of their critics. This is particularly pertinent in the domain of education where invoking the good citizen manifestly seeks to improve and shape the future domain of democracy.

The Politics of Performative Framing

As the example of the framing of citizenship education in the Crick Report and its critiques shows, framing is concerned with the formation of the virtuous *character* of the good citizen as determined by their *acts* of citizenship, or what the active citizen *does*. This involves invoking particular moral traits and values which in turn shape our interpretations of the contexts in which the citizen acts. So the relationship between framing and contexts is a mutually constitutive one, reflecting Jacques Derrida's (1988, 152) famous assertion that 'there are only contexts, that nothing *exists* outside context ... but also that the limit of the frame or the border of the context always entails a clause of nonclosure' (emphasis in original). In the example of citizenship education, framing the good citizen as 'active' is made possible by framing the context (in which the introduction of citizenship education is deemed necessary) as one in which young people are apathetic, antisocial, dealing poorly with diversity and lacking a cohesive sense of national identity and civic responsibility. The performative nature of the relationship between framing and context is noted by Ian Hunter and Denise Meredyth (2001, 71), who argue that civic education does not simply reflect or express the moral consensus of the political community but indeed *constructs* it. They therefore regard citizenship education as at risk of 'turning the school system into an instrument of moral coercion, jeopardizing its role as an instrument of social governance' (Hunter and Meredyth 2001, 69). The framing of the good citizen as active and reflective, they suggest (Hunter and Meredyth 2001, 88), may be itself specific to the 'western' context in which the Christian enlightenment norm of 'critical autonomy and confessional enthusiasm' informs the everyday practices of schooling.

The broader point here is that good citizens are made, not born, and that they are made in, and by, the image of key actors whose acts constitute operative ideas of good citizenship. Not all acts or frames have equal purchase; those that are materially and institutionally embedded and proposed by elite actors have more of what can be termed performative power. To use the dramaturgical metaphors of Goffman (1969 and 1974), there is staging and scriptwriting for the good citizen which presents a figure of the good citizen to be enacted. This goes some way towards explaining why framing has important implications for political theory—limiting as it does the range of subject positions available to be performed, while at the very same time opening up the possibility for multiple and coexisting frames. Goffman's (1974, 10) concept of frame analysis as an interpretative schema for the

organisation of experience is instructive in that it suggests a concern not with who the good citizen *is* but with *how* the good citizen is mediated and framed—how the status of citizenship is not possessed, but performed; 'something that must be *realised*' (Goffman 1969, 81, emphasis added).

Butler's (1997) reading of the politics of the performative helps us to get to the heart of what is at stake in this performative account of framing and the realisation of the good citizen. She raises vital questions as to whether citizens will choose or accept to play the role as offered to them. Through her analysis of speech acts, she points us towards the fine-grained mechanics of framing with which we are concerned. For Butler (1997, 3), illocutionary speech acts such as the moment a judge says 'I sentence you' constitute in the very act of speaking both the 'deed' itself and the addressee him/herself. In the same way, framing the good citizen actively constitutes the domains in which such frames seek to intervene, and since speech acts proceed within an already delineated 'linguistic domain' (Butler 1997, 28), the conditions of possibility for speaking subjects are already framed. Thus, the mechanics of framing, the organisation of experience through elite rhetoric, the symbolic and material reproduction of the good citizen and the institutional reification of such frames become integral to assessing critically *the politics of the performative constitution of the good citizen through acts*. Two important elements of Butler's thesis are worth noting here in relation to the framing of the good citizen in the domain of citizenship education. First, that the framing of the good citizen requires a *recognition of authority*—as we have noted, claims, frames and critiques of good citizenship in the field of education abound, but only the elite framing offered in the Crick Report became a statutory instrument legislating for a particular kind of citizenship education. Secondly, performative speech can become *efficacious* through written texts and reproduced language (Butler 1997, 32)—in this case, through the Citizenship Order, National Curriculum programmes of study and the numerous instructional textbooks on citizenship education for teachers and pupils alike.

Butler's work is generally understood to be an exploration of the way in which citizens perform *themselves*—acting out certain repertoires that fit with context-specific framings of what it means to be a good citizen. However, it is possible to discern a second level of performativity in her theory, particularly where she emphasises the role of authority figures and powerful texts. 'Ordinary' citizens need a repertoire to act out, in order to constitute themselves performatively as (good) citizens. This repertoire comes from the framing of a domain and the use of an approach for invoking the good citizen. As such, a 'prior' or 'primary' stage of performativity is necessary, referring to the construction of a domain in which the performance of particular social roles is made possible. In distinguishing between these two levels of performativity, and offering the shorthand of 'elite' and 'ordinary' actors, we are prompted to concern ourselves with the politics of performative framing. Understanding how power is diffused through the mechanisms and practices of framing opens up the possibility of 'insurrectionary speech' (Butler 1997, 163)—speech acts that exceed and evade the linguistic domain within which they are enacted—and as such offers a basis for theoretical critique without resorting to essentialist normative claims.

Making visible the political struggle associated with the process of assembling and reproducing particular framings of the good citizen, we would argue, enables a

critical assessment of the moral framings of citizenship claims in specific domains, just as moral political theory more generally can be opened to critique—there being no final philosophical position from which to judge framings of the good citizen. The interpretive method involves unpacking the positioning, motives and methods of citizenship claims, and understanding the way in which the representation of the context or domain in which the good citizen acts is itself part and parcel of the performative framing process.

As the idea of 'framing' and the above comments strongly imply, we suspend in our work the idea that there can be a neutral perspective, or one ideal conception, of the good citizen, whether related to virtues, behaviours, claims or actions. This is because there are unavoidable issues of domain and approach (positioning, motive and method) to be taken into account for any given case. But there is a great deal of understanding to be gained from close attention to and interpretation of claims in their specific contexts.

Conclusion

The question remains of how best to assess good citizenship claims in domains such as citizenship education, where multiple perspectives and critiques prevail. The broadly interpretive frame employed here carries with it a relativising perspective. That is, it takes seriously the notion of good citizenly acts, and even virtues, but sees these as gaining their substance through enactment in specific contexts. There remains normative or critical potential in the idea of the good citizen when it is approached in this way.

Note first that there are limits to the invocation of the good citizen; the latter might be invoked in a plurality of domains and within a range of approaches, but in nothing like an infinite variety of ways. The figure of the good citizen can mean many things—varied connotations will escape stipulative attempts to stop at a single denotation[2]—but it cannot mean just anything in, or for, any domain. Figurative approaches stress an intersubjective bounding of socially acceptable meanings of concepts, as opposed to literal strategies aimed at objectivity, and abstract ones aimed at an atomistic subjectivity. We are not without critical resources for interrogating the frames and claims of good citizenship. Our approach has been based on a premise of visions of the good citizen being proposed (framed, invoked), not imposed; on constitution and not imposition. We have provided a framework that aims to open up these propositions and constitution to critical scrutiny.

The complexity of invocations of good citizenship has been mapped out here in terms of domains of concern about, and approaches to, the good citizen. We have stressed how conceptions of the good citizen are performatively constituted through framing devices. We have sought to illustrate and interrogate this point through richness of empirical reference and through detailed discussion of the basis of good citizenship claims. A theory of the framing of good citizenship allows us to interrogate the positions and motives from which different actors make claims about good citizenship and to unpack the methods by which they make these claims. Understanding positions, motives and methods can help us in interpreting

and assessing competing invocations of the good citizen and allows us to step away from largely normative arguments of both politicians and academics which assume that there is a convincing universal essence that *makes for* a good citizen. Instead, the account we provide here seeks to investigate the politics that underpin the very *making of* the good citizen. We have asserted that good citizenship, like democracy, is always enacted (cf. Saward 2003), there being no inarguable definition of the virtuous citizen. Such definitions are always changing, and are related to the specific context in which good citizen propositions are made.

A number of key themes have emerged, each of which is suggestive in terms of how research on good citizenship ought to be conducted. First, there is an unavoidable situatedness to framing and invocation of the figure of the good citizen. The reality of widespread disengagement from, and disenchantment with, representative democratic politics is now largely accepted as a fact for the UK and several other countries, not least in the affluent west. Political and research attention is focused on citizen re-engagement. Issues of war, the environment, globalisation, cultural difference and massive movements of peoples have also placed citizenship issues firmly on to the agenda, not least around environmental responsibility, corporate ethics and education for citizenship. It is such large-scale issues and questions that prompt invocations of the good citizen. Or, in other words, a theory of the good citizen cannot, we would argue, help but be contextual, and there remains more detailed work to be done in order to take fully into account the located reasons for its emergence and the specific character that debates around it take on in terms of domain and approach.

Second, there is a dynamic plurality of perspectives on 'the good citizen', and on ways of enacting good citizenship. The idea of the 'good' citizen is as evocative as it can be elusive; other adjectives applied to citizen acts, such as active, proactive, effective, engaged and even 'good enough', are sometimes preferred by participants in UK debates. Equally, there are numerous ways to analyse and to interpret acts of would-be good citizenship, influenced by the positioning, motives, goals and guiding ideas of the observer. Government agencies, for example, still work on blueprints for ideal citizens, and NGOs talk of fostering active or effective citizens, but their notions of what constitutes good citizenship will be quite different.

Third, despite the plurality and complexity of the topic, we are not without resources or direction; assessments of claims about good citizenship are possible and feasible, if done with due sensitivity to context. We have shown that contextual and intersubjective sensitivity is vital, while showing too that new analytical and inter-pretive tools are needed to deal with this complexity. We have proposed an approach that helps us to identify the core products and content of good citizenship invocations, and brings both greater empirical breadth and theoretical depth to the study of the good citizen. This approach, highlighting the performative constitution of the domains of good citizenship, still leaves space for critical or normative assessment of invocations. Using this sort of framework can, we trust, help us to recognise and appraise the ethical force of the notion of the good citizen while bringing a constructive scepticism to given claims about the good citizen.

As a final consideration—or provocation—our contribution also implicitly enters into long-standing debates about the scope of the concept of citizenship itself.

Behind these issues is a concern that multiple and varied invocations of the good citizen play a part in 'inflating' the meaning of the concept of citizenship generally. There is a real tension around the scope of 'citizenship': some would expand it to include new claims, for example ecological, cultural and sexual, while others decry such 'inflation of meaning' and seek to confine its scope in terms of a more limited and conventional notion of status. Should scholars of citizenship be seeking to 'pin down' and limit its meaning, or can they be content with tracing the expanding and increasingly complex scope of its reference—or in other words keeping a rein on citizenship's tendency to be a 'momentum concept' that accrues meaning (Hoffman 2004, 12)? Is there a job to be done, tightening definitions and establishing boundaries? There do seem to be two threads underpinning varied topics in the field of citizenship knowledges and capacities. The first thread holds the view that citizenship's meaning is necessarily evolutionary, seeing change as an opportunity to critique existing orders and incorporate new claims, domains and frames into the analysis of citizenship. The second thread sees continuity, constrains meaning and holds the view that citizenship has a necessarily persistent meaning. Our analysis is located in the first thread, concerned with understanding how particular meanings of citizenship can be made to persist. Our framework provides a set of questions to be asked of good citizen claims, and a set of interpretative tools for unpacking the political positions, motives and methods that bolster such claims. This framework is developed from an understanding of good citizenship acts as performative in their constitution—as such it does not resort to foundational judgements of citizenship norms but instead examines political struggles located between the spaces of elite rhetoric and ordinary citizenly acts.

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Notes

1. Examination of the relationship between elite rhetoric and 'public opinion' is a central concern in political studies, and equally so in the field of media and communication studies (Ober 1989; Zaller 1992; Koch 1998; Entman and Herbst 2001; Schildkraut 2002; Entman 2004). In particular, Druckman and Nelson (2003) investigate the interactions between elite framing and interpersonal conversations between citizens. Druckman (2001) has also explored how citizens *use* frames rather than being subject to their apparent manipulative forces. And Manza and Cook (2002) conversely explore the impact of ordinary citizens' framings on public policy.

2. See Barthes' *S/Z* (1974) on the interplay between denotation and connotation and the inevitably disruptive effect of connotative meanings.

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