

Conclusion: Some Elements of An Emergent Discourse on Children's Right to Citizenship

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It may be assumed that by editing or contributing to this collection we all subscribe to the central notion that children should be considered to be citizens. It would be difficult to argue differently, however, since that question only makes sense when merged within a selection of definitions of citizenship. It is the unique nature of each contribution that reveals the many routes one might take toward justifying that argument. We do not draw our arguments to a common conclusion that state or suggest a single means by which children will henceforth enjoy citizenship. Our outcome, if at all definable, is that we offer the insight of a few aspects of a more detailed argument that must follow on from here.

Key components in numerous and sometimes divergent perceptions of citizenship have located its definition within either status or practice, as membership of a nation state or as being a bearer of rights. The movement toward a human rights basis for understanding citizenship is regarded as having greater potential for inclusion, particularly among the many marginalised groups (Lister, 1998) in as much as it is a response to the many changes that have eroded 'traditional' foundations of citizenship (Turner, 2001). We shall return to these issues later but will first deal with the question of a particular international standard contributing to the definition of citizenship. In this case it is, needless to say, limited to reference to the UNCRC. Should we assume that with the specific rights conferred on them by that convention, children and young people up to age 18 years can be considered citizens? Two distinctive points of view can be considered in pursuit of a solution to this question. The first appears to answer in a positive vein, whereby it is argued that the convention provides a set of specific rights giving substance to an assumption of children's citizenship. The second, however, provides contrary arguments that state that the very existence of the UNCRC itself provides specific evidence that children are not full citizens.

Such markedly conflicting views appear to give rise to the idea that citizenship is not only a much disputed concept (Lister, 2004) but one

which at the same time inevitably has inclusionary and exclusionary forces. This is what Lister describes as the "janus-faced nature of citizenship [which] operates simultaneously as a mechanism of both inclusion and exclusion and also a language of both discipline and resistance..." (2004: 4-5).

Arguments supporting the thesis of the incongruity of the UNCRC for the promotion of children and young people's citizenship can be classified within two main categories. On the one hand, the foremost and very simple argument is that if there had been any real intention of including children as citizens then human rights would have been made unconditionally available to them. To begin with, the UNCRC provides effective *de facto* exclusion of children from citizenship defined in terms of human rights (for instance Sgritta, 1997; Milne in this issue). Here we are dealing with the notion of 'full' citizenship. On the other hand, diverse considerations of the convention's content provide evidence of children's exclusion rather than inclusion. Sgritta (1997) observes that there is actually no correlation between different adult concepts of citizenship; for instance, between those of Marshall who distinguished between social, civil and political citizenship and the rights laid down more recently in the UNCRC. As Milne (in this edition) says, children are denied vital rights, especially in the domain of economic and political rights. Along with the argument that the UNCRC "overlooks entire domains of rights" Milne considers other limitations. It could be said that the image of the child that appears in the UNCRC is, in the author's words: a picture of the upright citizen that does not entirely correspond with the philosophical notion of the human being as a bearer of rights [...]. He or she is probably less of an individual than the philosophers would have wished them to be and whose life is carefully moulded by health, education and welfare for most of their life.

Then again, the same assumption of the child being nurtured by the institutions of the welfare system hardly fits in with the lives of the majority

of children; i.e. those who live in the greater part of the world that qualifies as 'underdeveloped'.

That setting particularly highlights the degree of constraint there is on participatory rights at the centre of any model of democratic citizenship. The convention fails to give guidance on how to implement and direct those rights although it gives a set of essential conditions for the extension of participatory rights which generally need to be interpreted before application by adults. Participation is a conditional 'privilege' that is submitted to adult evaluation of children's capability and competence as well as their understanding of the definition of the child's best interest (for instance; Milne in this issue)

These questions recall debates that started before the convention was born and we would suggest that there is substantial evidence for the need to return to some of these issues. Franklin (1986: 14-15) borrows a categorisation of rights in four groups from Freeman and Wald which he describes as welfare rights, protective rights, adult rights and rights against parents. As with any classification, they are one way or another tenuous so that it could be argued that welfare and protective rights could be put in the same category and that the same could also happen to adult rights and rights against parents (*ibid.*: 16). However, one might also argue that the distinction between adult rights and rights against parents should be maintained. It does remind us that the first aim of the UNCRC is to define the duties of the state rather than the duties of adults who take care of children. Adult rights, described by Franklin, are as follows:

... adult rights, suggests that children should have the same rights which are currently enjoyed in monopoly by adults. The claim is based on the judgement that age is an arbitrary and irrational yardstick by which to offer or withhold a privilege. Children are currently denied many rights which adults consider essential for living a full, free life. They lack rights to vote, work, marry and drive and are subject to eleven years' compulsory education. Granting these 'adult' rights to young people would massively extend their autonomy and independence in these important areas. The arbitrariness involved in age limits and restrictions is an inevitable consequence of the unevenness of the process of human development and maturation; not all twelve-year-olds are the same. Therefore any law which restricts those under twenty-one from doing X will exclude many

twenty-year-olds who have the necessary capacities to do X, while allowing anyone over twenty-one to do X without regard to their capacities and competencies. But to acknowledge the dilemma does not provide a solution. Freeman suggests three options. First, we can accept the inevitability of some age restrictions, even though they may be arbitrary, but try to reduce injustice by ensuring that the specified age is low enough to exclude only the minimal number. Second, we can abolish all age-related restrictions or third – and this is Freeman's preference – we can proceed on a 'case-by-case' basis and thereby identify those twenty-year-olds who may be sufficiently mature to exercise the rights from which the law generally precludes them. The difficulty with this last option is that there is rarely any objective test which allows us to measure any individual's competence to exercise these rights, and the 'case-by-case' approach could lead to discrimination against individuals and to greater arbitrariness. (1986: 15-16)

The UNCRC constantly refers to 'case-by-case' decisions when conferring the right to participate. Examination of some of these 'case-by-case' decisions suggests that arbitrariness might take the form of 'avoiding children's mistakes' and promoting the 'desirable outcome' or their 'best interest' - clearly defined from an adult point of view (for instance: Van Bueren, 1995; Alderson, 1998; James and James, 2004). 'Case-by-case' decisions on children's participation might thus be seen as constantly threatening children's inclusion in decision-making processes in numerous spheres. Furthermore, the UNCRC itself is far removed from any authority to sanction children's participation in decision making which would grant them 'adult' rights. Participation is not intended as a means of entitling children to work, leave school, vote, be married and so on that are then fundamental rights. Even young people's part time work whilst they are at school remains strictly regulated under protective, welfare rights that concur with those that predominate in the UNCRC. Ironically, some of these are themselves fraught with contradiction. In some countries we see examples such as the 'deferment' of adulthood when somebody who has passed their eighteenth birthday wishes to leave school but may still need parental authority to allow the school to effectively 'release' them. Likewise, whilst children's employment is highly regulated, skills training, work experience,

placements during vocational training or simply an apprenticeship workplace can find young people working hours and in places child labour legislation prohibits or at least limits. Thus young people are often expected to conform rather than share in making decisions despite the fact, one might argue, that it should be their incontestable right.

If we adopt this view, it may be that we can only conclude that participatory rights, as too some other rights included in the convention, can only be considered what Franklin (1986: 13) describes as 'moral rights' that only 'prescribe justifiable entitlements' but that are not endorsed by the law, or, in Maggioni's (1997: 3) words, cannot be acted on and are destined to remain 'good intentions'. Further restrictions are the usual type of limitation one might expect that relates to public safety, public health, public moral, freedom of others and so on. A further restriction, as Milne says, is that the UNCRC does not elucidate duties and responsibilities that accompany rights. The definition of citizenship that is viewed in terms of status and combined with rights and responsibilities is highly controversial. However, it seems to require a debate on what a good (or bad) citizen is and what that contributes. What Milne suggests is that in the absence of such a debate, what appears to be the case is that there are actually some implicit definitions of the 'bad' citizen who is deprived of (some) rights.

Roche (in this issue) also suggest the need for critical appraisal of human rights. He refers to the: 'escape clauses' which human rights instruments contain provide the 'opportunity' for dominant understanding of the 'good citizen' and the 'good life' to prevail: the seeming universal of human rights masks the practical reality of the triumph of vested interests, social prejudice and private property. The idea of community hides differences of interests and power within the community – between men and women, different ethnic and religious groupings and adults and children".

Despite Roche's critique focusing on the European Charter of Human Rights and his contribution positively assessing the potential of the UNCRC (see below), the same questions are highly likely to arise in the examination of any human rights instrument.

There is another set of arguments that might lead to a conclusion about the inappropriateness of the UNCRC as a vehicle for the promotion of

children's citizenship. Those can be found in examination of specific situations some children experience and for whom the UNCRC appears to provide an indistinct definition of their rights. For instance, Ennew (1995) looks at street children's rights and draws attention to the ambiguity of UNCRC articles in respect of children's work and prostitution. Simplistic interpretation prioritising child protection might, in some cases, go against the child's best interest. Similarly, restrictions contained in article 32 that declare the right of the child to be protected against exploitative and hazardous work that undermines his or her development and simultaneously refers to other international standards on minimum age have been seen also as source of restraint in policy making in the area of child labour (Ennew, Myers and Plateau, 2003). More specific to children's participation is an uncertainty that has been raised by the fact that children's participatory rights (as well as rights of families etc.) are conditionally related to the child's 'maturity' (article 12) or 'evolving capacity' (article 5). Interpretation of those conditions may, of course, vary according to who is applying them and the social environment in which that happens. However, this does raise the case for examination of any degree of ambiguity that effectively allows everything between the most liberal and uncontrolled application of a participation article to its *de facto* total prohibition.

Many more examples could be cited here. It thus seems to indicate that evaluation of the UNCRC as a tool for the promotion of children's citizenship requires a far deeper and wider examination of literature to identify UNCRC articles that have been recognised as having, for example, weak, perhaps ethnocentric or even ambiguous content when applied to children in general or to specific groups of children or particular societies. As Alderson (1999) suggests in her study of British children's experience of democracy at school, reference to human rights, in some cases, might appear the most appropriate means by which to construct a wider picture of children's rights.

Let us now move on to the positive response to the same question whereby the UNCRC is seen as a basis for children and young people's citizenship. It should be stressed that texts of the kind frequently produced by NGOs neither provide detailed examination of the justification for the use of the concept of children's citizenship

nor do they define it. Some experts do, instead, come up with notions of children's citizenship around their rights as they are expressed in the UNCRC.

The foremost argument in favour of the UNCRC is certainly that it has been thus far the most successful instrument of its kind, ratified by the majority of nations, providing children with basic rights of life, adequate standard of living, education, healthcare, aspects of protection, etc and also treat them as subjects. If the principles of this convention became universal common practice, those rights would entirely change the face of the world.

Roche (in this issue) looks positively at the potential of the UNCRC as a basis for children's citizenship. His examination of the European Convention on Human Rights identifies the lack of consideration for children's specific interests and rights, concluding that "there are grounds for scepticism regarding the inclusiveness of human rights". In this sense, the UNCRC alternatively provides a considerably more clear basis for considering children as subjects: "The UNCRC [...] has given rise to new political possibilities providing a resource whereby the necessary re-imagining of adult-child relations, which is at the heart of the children and citizenship debate, can take place.". The UNCRC is seen as influential not only because of governments' reporting procedures but more widely because its "scope and language [...] provides a platform upon which children and young people, children's rights NGOs and activists have campaigned, and are campaigning, for change in social practice".

Alderson, Hawthorne and Killen also present arguments about the potential of the UNCRC for considering children as citizens. Their exploration of the 'edges of citizenship' through the study of the experience of premature babies in a neonatal intensive care unit in the United Kingdom immediately provides a redefinition of rights. The authors think of rights as "embodied, aesthetic, interactive, emotional, political economic and socially contingent". Despite intentionally focusing on 'provision' rights, their analysis includes elements of protection and participation as they relate to the UNCRC. One of the central ideas is that rights are interactive and relational (rather than exclusively personal) and leads on to complementary attention to the rights of the many partners involved; children, parents, medical staff, etc. What they avoid is oppositional views on

rights such as adult against children's rights. This incorporates some contradictions, for instance when a parent is herself a child according to the UNCRC and compulsory school attendance appears, at least in practice, to have the priority over baby care which includes, for example, breastfeeding. Participation here is understood mainly as civil rights whereby positive responses, as too modes of resistance, are expressions of agency and babies' attempts to communicate their needs or wishes. Another key idea here is, and there are certainly many more of them, although an analysis of embodied, aesthetic, personal and contingent rights does not exclude other aspects of rights, such as political and economic ones.

One might read Alderson, Hawthorne and Killen's contribution as a plea for a holistic approach to the application of the UNCRC wherein the three Ps are simultaneously relevant in any consideration about children's citizenship. They suggest that the three categories of rights might overlap.

The distribution of rights around the three Ps¹ is not without problems. As in other attempts to classify children's rights (for instance; Franklin, 1986) or adult character of citizenship found in Marshall's classification (Bulmer and Rees, 1996) there are different definitions whereas the same agenda, organisation or practice might be classified differently according to the observer.

It is, for instance, very often accepted that education is classified in terms of provision rights. In Lansdown (1994) it is viewed as part of children's social rights. However, education appears to become a form of protection when it relates to children's exploitation at work or children's risky leisure activities in the streets. Article 32 states the right of the child to protection against harmful or exploitative work that is applied as prohibition under a specified age but supposes that compulsory education will protect the child with little attention to whether or not its provision is feasible. Qvortrup (2001) observes that protection often includes situations or practices (or prohibition of practices such as physical punishment) considered harmful to the child's development. Despite the need for protection, he argues that this often gives rise to seeing children as 'human becomings' rather than 'human beings'². Protection most commonly appears to describe practice whereby adults place a kind of barrier between the child and his or her environment. Child protection rights include, for instance, his

or her placement as a barrier against abusive parents. Protection might imply some form of exclusion, for instance from the family or from dangerous work. Instead provision appears to describe practices whereby the child may be offered goods or services. Participation appears to describe practices which recognise the child as a subject, including his or her right to express opinions and see them taken in account. Education, we believe, is more concerned with practices in which the child learns skills and knowledge, to apply those, and also acquire competence in a wider context than offered only at school and includes, perhaps, such extras as informal learning and peer experience.

As a matter of fact, any of these dimensions can provide information suggesting 'inclusion' or 'exclusion', whereby there can be tension between them. Most frequently tension is notable between protection and participation. Where a child has gained the competence to protect him or herself against an acknowledged risk an external barrier appears to be a limit or exclusion rather than an asset. Singling out education allows us to see some of the divergences inherent to participation whereby, for instance, some children appear to want to learn to participate as much as to participate and where some adults appear to want children to learn rather than to really exercise their power to influence (for instance Wyness in this issue). Similarly, a good quality participation process, in Hart's (1992) terms, is based on good preparation of children involved, which is the condition that distinguishes genuine participation from manipulation. When confused with education, however, adult lead participation simply risks becoming a new turn of phrase for socialisation (Ennew, 2000). Furthermore, Wyness (in this edition) observes that some adults tend to 'protect' children's representatives from political participation itself, since they consider its content too ideological.

It also seems to us that there is sufficient material to suggest that an examination of children's citizenship based on the UNCRC has to explicitly distinguish education from provision and protection. However examination also needs to focus on other elements that do not fit in any of these categories. On the side of the convention many of the articles belonging to one or another category also include restrictions of rights, so that issues touching on public health, public order or security are criteria for limiting children's

participatory rights. So are adult evaluations of the child's maturity. The limit of children's self-determination strongly depends on context. Ennew, for instance, describes participation in an NGO context around the question of '...how to incorporate... [children's] ...specific needs and views into decision making processes within the context of what is possible institutionally and culturally...' (Ennew, 1998: xviii).

What is institutionally and culturally possible sets a scene for social control imposed on children's participation and deserves scrutiny of its 'bien-fondé' that relates to other dimensions which are sources of conflict with rights of other citizens and so on.

What we learn from the above tells us about the indivisibility of rights and the contradictions and dilemmas implied therein. Whatever we conclude on the inappropriateness or the adequacy of the UNCRC, we have to conclude that any attempt to define children's place on the basis of an isolated article or a single dimension appears to be too narrow to allow us to think about children as citizen bearers of rights as well as subjects. Furthermore, clashes and contradictions are inherent to human rights in general and, as Roche says, there is a need to avoid a universalistic approach of human rights which "fails to acknowledge the complexity of debates".

One might argue that children's participation would be better understood if replaced in such a complex and contradictory context. So what is this beginning to tell us about 'participation' itself? All contributors appear to give serious consideration to children and young people's participation and participatory processes in thinking about their citizenship, although more critical concerns appear about the way participation has to be conceptualised and the gap existing between adult and children's rights.

One major drawback about this edition is that contributions primarily focus on research, experiences and experiments within the UK context. This probably has several implications. Firstly, it clearly has implications for the cultural dimension and images of childhood and children which are rooted or implanted in UK practices. Another point is that participation is intended as part of a 'welfare system' and very often integrated into existing structures. It gives a limited framework for thinking about realities where children lack the most basic provision, for instance relating to health and basic living standards or where their

social environments are comprised of life threatening conflicts, disasters, pollution or poor socio-economic conditions. In the absence of basic provision it might be easy to explain why, in developing countries, experts consider children themselves as 'the first resource' (for instance Ennew, 2000b) rather than organisations or structures. By focusing on provision and protection, child welfare in industrialised countries also generates an image of children as vulnerable and incompetent, thus limits potential for creative children's participation initiatives. One might thus argue that we should learn from experiences in the south. There are, despite that, very good reasons for examining the UK context of children's participation in detail (as well as children's rights more generally). To begin with, because it clearly indicates that at so-called developed countries are somehow relatively far from being able, at this point in time, to fully implement the UNCRC. Essays in this issue offer important suggestions that are of the greatest importance when proposing a critical approach rather than naïve optimism in promoting children's participation around the world. As Morrow, Wyness and Cockburn (in this issue) appear to suggest, there is probably rather more need for critical examination than burgeoning experiments and consultation exercises.

Despite experience of children's participation being relatively recent in the UK, researchers have been reviewing literature and examining projects for some time, providing a substantial amount of important information and suggesting some imperative questions.

Children's individual involvement in decision-making processes related to social work, despite being fixed in national legislation, has received little provision until recently. Although children today are both more often informed about their rights and formally included in decision-making in the welfare system they still feel they are poorly informed and prepared for meetings where important aspects of their lives have to be decided upon. When invited, and thus giving their opinion, they often feel that this produces little if any change in the final decision (Sinclair and Franklin, 2000).

Similarly, the UK has witnessed an escalation of collective experiences children's participation in relation to community work, school councils, parliaments, NGO work, etc. They are a valuable experience and great expertise has been gained

in procedures and strategies to involve young people. However, there is a general conclusion that these initiatives have a very limited impact in terms of changes in young people's lives and environments (see Morrow, in this issue). Some experts go as far as to suggest that repeated consultation might be limited in order to avoid creating frustration and mistrust in active citizenship among young people (see for instance Hill, et al., 2004).

When looking at participation as a performance, these observations appear to lead to a certain amount of pessimism: young people are far from being given a place as a citizen and social control of them is very strong³. It raises a question as to whether *children's participation* is just a catchphrase associated with a set of practices in a society that is resisting children's citizenship. There are probably many complementary interpretations of what has recently begun to be acknowledged as a relatively limited outcome in participatory processes.

One of those interpretations emphasises what can be seen as a lack of differentiation of children according to ages, situations, etc. For instance, where the range of children's involvement in individual decision-making processes includes ages zero to 18 years, one might argue that at present children's opinions are only included when they are in written or verbal form and it is required for those to be expressed in relatively explicit terms in venues and conditions determined by adults. Procedures that require use of such skills appear to be for the most part inadequate for very young children, babies and toddlers. Although any categorisation based on age is arbitrary, it should be emphasised that we should never expect to see data showing 100% of children's involvement exactly because of this. For instance, research appears to indicate that processes should be adapted to the needs of children and young people with disabilities and severe learning difficulties as well as young people for whom English is not the first language (Sinclair and Franklin, 2000). A key question essential for exploration of the reasons for limited participation is therefore about the ability to adapt techniques and strategies to the range of children involved. Alderson et al. (in this issue) suggest that there are other ways of exploring young children and even premature babies' wishes, feelings and preferences which, needless to say, demands re-conceptualisation of 'rights' and

'participation'. We must, however, draw attention to the point that the hospital setting in which the study was carried out presents us with a very different character to other contexts in which one is less able to carry out prolonged observation. In this sense, each 'sphere' or 'arena' of participation requires the development of location and situation specific techniques and concepts if they are also to include different types or groups of children. A further and strictly related question is exactly about such conceptualisations, where there is more and more evidence about the limits of any concept of children's participation that exclusively focuses on the young person as an autonomous decision maker. Participation as an 'independent performance' is not necessarily what children are demanding (for instance Morrow) and valuable decisions would be invalidated as 'participation' by use of such an approach. It is a question that directly relates to the status of the child as an active citizen and member of a community, thus characterising his or her interdependence rather than independence (see below).

Another way of understanding the limited outcome of children's participatory experience may be related to the 'young' character of what we are looking at itself. One could argue that children's contribution is at present promoting passive participation at the very least, whereby children become visible and take part, developing skills and training methods for both adults and children. All of these are preconditions for increase active participation that might be achieved in the future.

A further means is to locate the problems in adult and, more generally, practitioners' resistance and sometimes in the form of hostility toward children's involvement in decision-making processes. Such difficulties appear relatively often in UK based literature and Wyness provides an example within the school context, although his analysis also locates that nature of resistance in a broader context.

Another possible way of understanding the above is that children and young people's impact is limited because participation is a single dimension within a more complex system including, for instance, the objectives of health provision, protection, education, social control, etc. If we pursue such a hypothesis, we would have to admit that in child protection related issues, the child's opinion is likely to be accepted

if it does not question the attainment of acceptable standards of protection. Similarly, Wyness's research clearly shows that participatory experiences and children's opinions in school settings are generally accepted when educational objectives are not threatened. In fact, pupils' agendas in schools councils often clash with adult ones and are thus not acted on. Political dimensions in participatory processes within school can be also undermined by educational objectives. Actually, one might observe that the objectives of protection have also become more important in participatory experiences around the world. Literature seems to suggest that children need to be protected from diverse risks such 'abuse', 'conflicts', 'frustration', 'tiredness', occurring in participatory settings (see for instance Hart et al., 2004, Ennew et al., 2004). How much priority is given to protection related objectives? In his contribution, Roche observes: "Today there is not much space in public discourse to resist calls made in the name of child protection".

Limited outcomes of children's participatory experiences would, thus, also have to be explained by the predominance of education, protection and provision in adult and institutional initiatives promoting children's citizenship and through the clashes with the participatory objectives. Social control is clearly part of that, as suggested by Wyness (in this issue).

Among the contradictions, one we find in Morrow's contribution relates to another aspect of children's experience: the experience of conflict. When children describe their concerns and interests relating to the environment, the issue of their lack of power seems to explain their attempt to damage the cars of those who are destroying their green environment. One might find the characteristics of conflict also in Alderson, Hawthorne and Killen's contribution, whereby premature babies sometimes appear to be expressing something which may be their rejection of medical treatment or at least some aspects of it. If conflict has been recognised as a key characteristic in children's relationships with adults, as well as part of any socialisation process from early age (for instance: Waksler, 1991), it is in point of fact a central characteristic of family life as much as of political and community life. Indeed, one of the features of the main concepts of children's participation is the complete absence of conflict and its analysis. In Morrow's article,

the reader might be impressed by the absence of conflict in the UK policy background focusing on the promotion of social capital and social cohesion as an entirely conflict free process. Morrow precisely points out the need to examine clashes in policy as well as their impact on children's lives.

To us, it seems difficult to conceive children's involvement in decision-making, political participation and their citizenship without reference to the inevitable conflict of interest and conflictive interactions that are part of that. The lack of analysis of conflict leads to a view of aspects of children's 'spontaneous' participation only through the lenses of social control, obscuring the sometimes very positive processes in terms of learning and of the specific interests of children that participation might help to reveal. Again, clashes between policies should be scrutinized. Good examples of such problems appear in Cunningham and Lavalette (2002) on children's involvement in strikes in Wales and in England. In the past, their political involvement was dealt with in the framework of education and compulsory attendance rather than within participation and actively learning about citizenship. Despite the importance the UK government placed on education for citizenship when introducing new policies to this end, Cunningham and Lavalette (2004) observe that the 2003 demonstrations against the Iraq war in which some young people were involved were treated within the same framework, whereby such forms of participation have been displaced into the context of education and social control (relating to compulsory attendance) failing to recognise anything positive about this form of political participation which might be, in the eyes of those young people, meaningful, effective and highly educational.

Cockburn (in this issue) adopts another perspective in his examination of young people's participation: "The ambiguity of participation of children and young people in political decision-making is not due to a lack of opportunities, as is demonstrated by the plethora of consultation and participation guidance by the government and other organisations, but rather the ambiguity arises from an obstructed form of communication". Distorted communication is not just about relegating childhood to the private sphere but is related to the complex and diverse boundaries between public and private (see below).

Despite being very limited, the examination

of problems relating to participation certainly provides some important lessons. What we have seen prevents us thinking that children's active citizenship can be promoted through crude measures focusing, for instance, on the generalisation or multiplication of experiences of practices or the improvement of techniques and strategies. They also somehow indicate that it is an oversimplification to locate margins within interactions with practitioners who trigger resistance or lack the necessary training. Such interaction is shaped within institutions and by social and legal frameworks that determine objectives and practices which might clash with participation to an extent. Analysis has to include policies and their contradictions (Morrow) as well as more general social and ideological contexts which determine practices toward children (Wyness). 'Children's participation' is a concept covering very different practices in various spheres and contexts and it is very unlikely that one might extrapolate key and generalised lessons from only one of those spheres. Its critical appraisal might probably take into account the complexity encompassed in children's identities (with their different images, competence and interests), interaction with adults and other children, structures (including access and selection) children have available to them and diverse objectives of the organisations involved, contexts of policies and ideologies (which might vary from one place to another and certainly do from one country to another).

One of the questions we raised asked how we specify 'children's citizenship' as distinct from that of adults and should we do that at all? Our proposition is that interest in a debate on the subject of citizenship expands the examination in a constructive manner. We would argue that using a pluralistic approach (for instance, Cockburn in this edition) it may be useful to look at adult citizenship in order to reconsider the debate and avoid its pitfalls. On the one hand, there are risks involved in considering much subdivided definitions of the child's place in our society, for instance focusing exclusively on participation or protection. The idea of citizenship needs to be anchored within the indivisibility of their rights. On the other hand, there are the risks related to the adult desire to create a perfect world for children that would exist without contradictions, conflicts and tensions that characterise the adult world. As a result, children can only be placed outside the adult world. Bearing the basic characteristics of

citizenship in mind might provide a useful tool for limiting an idealisation of children's lives.

Again some of these questions have been discussed in the past and it would have a more than certain interest to return to these key questions. Franklin, for instance argued that:

Children are claiming and require an expansion of both kind of rights, but the pursuit of protective rights should not be seen as antithetical to the achievement of self-determination rights, or vice versa. If the question of age is removed for a moment and the discussion centres on human rather than children's rights, the picture becomes clearer. Adults can, and indeed do, enjoy both self-determination and protectionist rights without any necessary tension between the two, although there are some cases where they may conflict. The law prohibiting women from underground colliery work is an example where a concern with protection inhibits self-determination. Generally, however, an adult at work enjoys the protection from hazardous conditions and exploitative employers provided by health and safety legislation without any sense of loss of autonomy (1986: 17).

We also raised a set of questions that attempted to draw out views and indeed evidence for greater inclusion of children in democratic civil society. When asking what democracy is available it need not be specifically for children. The extent to which democracy has been examined meticulously by learned men and women for well over a century and the general lack of consensus they arrive at already begins to answer that. Thus far, it would appear, there is no single, commonly agreed definition of what democracy is. Where research has approached the apparent recipients of democracy there appears to be even less concurrence. There is subsequently at best only a still very vague idea about what democracy is available to anybody. We can, as some contributors to this edition have done (i.e. Alderson) extrapolate particular points out of very specific facets of the whole at best.

Knowing what democracy means to children is an equally imponderable question when there is no real knowledge about what it means to adults. It seemingly means something different to each person asked and those who have attempted to define democracy are again anything but unanimous in their findings.

Participation in democracy clearly does not bestow full citizenship since there are many

reasons why individuals may be excluded exemplified by phenomena such as '*berufsverbot*', permanent residence in a country other than that of birth and nationality and many other examples. Certainly the lack of political franchise, most economic rights and privileges, exclusion from particular things legally or socially and various other restraints would indicate children are not full citizens.

Whilst it is to some extent possible to compare children to the progress of women over the last century or so, that is not possible without a vast degree of caution. Although it is assumed that full citizenship rights extended to all men before the women's fight for equality began the reality is quite to the contrary. In many parts of the world universal suffrage began with men of a certain standing, was eventually extended and, during the twentieth century, many countries began to extend the same political right to women. In the USA women were granted suffrage in Wyoming in 1869 not long after slavery had been abolished. Full universal suffrage came in 1920, although black and native American citizens had to wait longer in many parts of the country. Some of the race laws abolished in some states at the time of the Civil War in the nineteenth century finally disappeared in some southern states during the 1990s. Modern Switzerland was formed with a progressive proportional representation electoral system in 1848. Women were given universal suffrage in most of the country in 1971. At local level, some gained suffrage earlier, however, even that aspect of 'democracy' was only completed toward the end of the century when women in some Swiss cantons finally acquired voting rights. In that country men still retain the control over women's capital and property and retain the right to decide where they will live. In 1918 all men over 21 and women over 30 years of age in the UK were given the right to vote, it was some time before women gained parity with men. In Kuwait women still await virtually all rights including suffrage. Many other basic citizenship rights only came slowly to women, often requiring the permission of their male next of kin to exercise them.

Not all countries extend rights to women at all today. As the history of the twentieth century will show totalitarian regimes of various kinds withdrew rights from selected social groups. There are still class, caste and ethnic differences that describe the share of democracy people

enjoy throughout the world. Men and women are still generally subject to different employment, salary and promotion standards, even where laws forbid gender discrimination. Homeless people lack most basic rights in virtually all countries. The entirety of what we often assume to be democracies with their wide ranging rights for citizens have countless caveats that should be taken into account.

In short, whilst almost any person may be referred to as a citizen of a democratic country, there is no absolute guarantee that the individual will enjoy the rights ostensibly delivered by the two key words 'citizen' and 'democracy'. There is no obvious solution available to this dilemma and thus no easy way in which an apposite argument for children's full citizenship can be fought through to success.

Thus turning to the question of participation it is naturally important to know what a child is participating in. The diversity of social and cultural settings in which this may happen also modifies what they are participating in. Thus we are without absolute standards and one might be tempted to add that in general definitions of participation are themselves confused and highly contentious (see for instance Invernizzi and Milne, 2002 and Edwards et al., 2004). Any assumptions that may be drawn on the basis of enjoyment of parts of the UNCRC, for instance articles 12 to 15, do not supersede the principles of the adult assessment of 'best interests' or 'evolving capacities' as in the preamble, articles 3 and 5 respectively. They justify even apparently random exclusion when a grown up believes, even if erroneously, a young person cannot do something at their age. In this sense, much as any constitutional law may appear to offer and protect full citizenship within its boundaries but usually not universally achieve that end, the UNCRC does not begin to offer or protect it for children. To assume otherwise is to misunderstand the limited scope that may, unquestionably, propose some of the steps toward a young person learning and thus being ready for some aspects of citizenship.

We also allow for the inevitability of seeing that to begin with there are some challenges in conceptualising citizenship. One might question the relevance of such theoretical debates that are so far removed from children's realities. An answer can be found in the need for a critical examination that some contributors have underlined, whereby

the place of children in society as well as in participatory processes does not necessarily include them as was intended. Again, the reasons for a theoretical debate are probably to be found in the fact that notions of citizenship might concurrently promote inclusion of some members and exclusion of others.

Finding commonalities and discrepancies among our contributors expressed through their concepts of citizenship is a task a good theoretical background would unquestionably make considerably easier. When reading each contribution one might however point out a number of issues that represent some of the key intellectual challenges that an attempt to conceptualise children and young people's citizenship has to face.

The first issue, already discussed in regard to the UNCRC as a basis for the conceptualisation of citizenship, is the distinction between full and partial citizenship. The convention provides only some of the rights adults enjoy (Milne in this issue), so do we have to understand it as a tool for 'partial' citizenship or is it more simply a tool that excludes them from citizenship? This debate is a reminder of the existence other qualifications and concepts which should be examined at the same time as ideas of inclusion and exclusion and, for instance, the notion of "gradual citizenship" (Cockburn in this issue) or "interdependent" citizenship (Cockburn, 1998; Roche, 1999).

Accepting the principle of children's partial citizenship with the UNCRC as a basis does not solve the question of their exclusion. Many more questions arise. Is not the fact that the UNCRC was initially conceived as a welfare instrument (for instance Franklin, 1986) pointing out that, despite evident positive aspects, it requires critical appraisal? Partial citizenship implies decisions about what rights can be given to children and which not, at which age and so on. An important lesson learned from the liberationist approach to children's rights is that it warrants scrutiny of any curb on children's rights in that it might be based on assumptions that justify exclusion rather than promote their interests. This would argue in favour of a critical appraisal of any legal tool, image, concept, policy or practice relating to children's citizenship.

A further set of questions might ask whether children's rights or entitlement (and thus their 'degree' of citizenship) may also vary in any of the different spheres in which children are

involved, which makes any definition of citizenship more difficult (see Cockburn, in this issue). In the UK context there is a general agreement about the fact that the legal instrument and practices in different arenas consider children as incompetent or disabled. As Wyness observes, policies and organisations tend to make objects of practices and professional projects of them rather than subjects. What, thus, are the priorities in term of rights? If participatory rights have to be seen as the touchstone of their citizenship, can it be conducted as a residual right which cannot challenge the interpretation of other rights that are related to protection or provision? How then do we deal with different treatment reserved for different spheres? What is probably most challenging in the UK context is that in the majority of spheres children are considered incompetent but there is also an exceptional one in which they are explicitly recognised as competent and responsible for their actions. This is in the field of juvenile justice (James and James, 2004) where the main objective is social control but for our purposes may give rise to further grounds for consideration of what competence really is.

A key question in the overall examination of the position of children is in relation to definitions of citizenship. In their essay, Alderson et al. use a definition that focuses on rights: "Citizens are people who are recognised by the state as rights-holding members of their society", which includes every citizen's civil, political, social and economic rights. This departs from a nation state definition toward a UNCRC basis for analysis, with a return to the notion of rights that, in their study, includes multiple dimensions such as emotional, aesthetic, relational and interpersonal, economic social and political ones.

However, as stated earlier Milne (in this issue) suggests that a definition of citizenship expressed exclusively in term of rights might be problematic and simply leave the balance of rights and obligations to which children are *de facto* submitted entirely tacit. Again we are confronted with the contradictory forces embedded in the concept of citizenship. If citizenship is a status made up of duties and rights, it most certainly represents the possibility of the enormous potential for exclusion of those who do not fulfil their contributions and the omission of examination of responsibilities might equally be adverse for children.

In fact, the importance of their contribution

to society has been made invisible and the language of rights has contributed to that. A significant number of children provide valuable and essential contributions to the economy, through domestic tasks (for instance Morrow, 1994; Liebel, 2004), as consumers, as workers and so on. The main and most invisible contribution of children to the modern economy is in fact their compulsory school work (Qvortrup, 2000). However, it remains an impossible task for a number of children around the world, through lack of provision as well as other factors such as poverty or difficult life circumstances. Rather than being confined to developing countries, it is a situation that groups of children in European countries also have to face (see for instance Invernizzi, 2004). If the balance of responsibilities and rights is kept implicit or exclusively defined through duty to attend compulsory school, we might run the risk of viewing them as 'second class' citizens rather than expressing any of the many experiences we would like to see recognised as part of 'children's citizenship'.

Beside the 'formal' definition of citizenship, it is necessary to have the counterpart definition of 'active citizenship'. Cockburn (in this issue) challenges the more traditional concepts of formal, individual and universal definitions of citizenship around the state and from Held adopts a definition in terms of "membership of a community in which one lives one's life and involves 'the struggle for membership and participation in the community' (Held, 1991: 20)". This allows Cockburn to say that "If children and young people are to play an active role in shaping the future direction of society and thus the common good (both of young people and adults), they must be able to participate in the decision-making that affect their lives. This needs to be done at both a 'formal' level, through voting and representation, but also citizenship must be located in the wider arenas where human beings are embedded within social relations".

It is in this arena where human beings are embedded within social relations that one might locate the question of children and young people's resistance to control and discipline brought to bear on them. That is generally expressed in terms of the lack of protection or education and not recognised as agency and a demonstration of active citizenship.

A further key issue is also addressed in Cockburn's contribution that concerns the

tension between universalistic and relativistic definitions of citizenship. Drawing lessons drawn from feminist theorisation of citizenship, he offers a plea for a radical and pluralistic definition of citizenship which requires “an acknowledgement of different ‘ways of being’”. Different ways of being which, if not acknowledged, might allow exclusion and oppression appear to be at several levels. The primary concern is about the difference between adults and children. The idea that children’s exclusion or domination is based on imposed images of childhood and children has become an important paradigm in the sociology of childhood and has led to opportunities for children and young people to define themselves, their needs and ambitions. However it would be simplistic to imagine that such an approach has gained general support and one might easily find other concepts of citizenship not based on rights and the status of subjects but, for instance, around play and learning as key features of childhood (Jans, 2004).

Another level of analysis is about differences between children themselves that relate to their age, gender, experience and identity, circumstances and culture, economic and social conditions. It is at this level that debates about ethnocentric assumptions set in motion by the UNCRC need to be situated. It is important to recognise the dangers of universal assumptions since some applications of the UNCRC have been recognised as being stigmatic and potentially oppressive for some sectors of the population in developing countries (Boyden, 1990) as well as in European ones (for instance Pupavac, 1998).

The challenge is equally important when examining a specific and more precisely defined context in which children live. Morrow and Roche (both in this issue) clearly underline the importance of considering the many voices and opinions of children, characteristics which Cockburn considers a key challenge for a conceptualisation of children’s citizenship.

A few basic arguments are identifiable in contributions for a concept of a children’s citizenship that might be inclusive of all children. One is that citizenship firstly needs to be about diversity. Diversity among children, in line with Cockburn’s view, is just one of the differences characterising members of any society. Could we thus say, and against the general trend, that children’s citizenship is not fundamentally different to that of adults? Then also children’s rights are also

about the relationship between children and adults and not only about children (Roche, Alderson et al., Morrow). Furthermore, is that a universal definition of children’s citizenship that cannot oversimplify their reality but must instead recognise complexity (Roche) which includes contradictions and tensions embodied in it? Additionally, it is not only about educating or training children in order to participate but there is a need for political spaces, for instance, where it is necessary to change in order to accommodate children (Cockburn). When reading Wyness, one might also suggest that basic assumptions about the way child welfare needs to function also requires to be challenged in order to treat them as subjects or citizens. Moreover, as in Alderson et al., if citizenship is about human beings as rights holders and active members of society, a pivotal and common issue is respect for their struggle for survival, or more generally respect for human being’s efforts to build a positive and meaningful experience whatever it is in education, health care, protection, family life, community or elsewhere.

An additional intellectual challenge in conceptualising children’s citizenship is when it refers to the relationship between private and public spheres as addressed by Cockburn’s contribution. Referring to feminist work on citizenship, he is at odds both with the exclusive location of children within the private sphere and an idealisation of that sphere, mainly the family, as a democratic space for children. On the one hand, for some children (as well as adults) the private represents a space for abuse, exploitation and violence as also do institutions such as schools, children’s homes and other settings intended to protect children. On the other hand, Cockburn suggests that distorted communication between private and public are exactly what obstructs the effective participation of children (see above).

Cockburn adopts key principles of Young’s (1998) work on citizenship: “a) no social institutions or practices should be excluded a priori as being the proper subject for public discussion and expression and b) no persons, actions, or aspects of a person’s life should be forced into privacy”. Thus, no public should exclude women, young people, immigrants but, as a corollary “privacy should be retained as a space where an individual can exclude others from” and “withdraw”.

Domestication of children’s lives and

experiences is an issue implicitly or explicitly challenged by other contributors. Alderson et al. refuse to consider premature babies' struggle for life as disconnected from political and economic rights that are more likely to occur in the lives of the most deprived groups in the UK. Morrow criticises approaches of social capital which only contemplate children's bonding capital and thus only the private sphere.

The initial implication of what we are seeing here is that in order to promote children's citizenship it is necessary to identify ways in which social policy defines children's place and whether that tacitly places them within the privacy of the family. Although at first this might seem persuasive, it is also very one-dimensional because, as Cockburn suggests, there is no clear distinction between private and public spheres. Instead there are numerous different spheres moving from the most private to the most public. Rather than beginning by accepting them as they stand, they probably need to be looked at in the way children enter and use those spheres themselves. Boundaries might well need to be redefined when, as for instance in Matthews et al. (2000) streets become a space for a number of young people in which they reconstruct their own private space.

Cockburn's conclusions underline the complexity of any notion. If it is to promote children's participant citizenship, as Cockburn says, there is firstly the need to promote a pluralistic vision of citizenship where children and young people's voices are acknowledged and inform policy makers. The political spaces need to change themselves. Furthermore, he considers that "it must continuously re-appraise the boundaries of the public and private sphere in operation as drawn by politicians, policy makers, commentators and academics". He also observes that, despite the need to maintain the respect for differences, children will have to form an alliance with others who suffer discrimination and marginalisation.

The task of a continuous reappraisal of boundaries of the public and private appears to be the right principle in many respects and also because of the numerous and diverse spheres in which children are involved. If participation and politically active citizenship spheres seem to clearly require less 'private' life controlled by adults, one must also bear in mind the idea that the 'private' must also be retained as the sphere to which children (as too adults) can retreat. How

does practice and policy appraise these boundaries in the sphere of child protection or education, when children's lives and their personal history might, in fact, become very public and where protection, compulsory education or partnership between agencies and institutions seem to have priority over their right to privacy?

The question of dependence, independence and interdependence characterising the relation between adults and children is probably very closely linked to the above. Images of independent adults and dependent children have occasionally been challenged within the social sciences. Examination of family life and organisation has underlined children's contributions in economic terms as well as domestic work and care of family members and points out that a concept of interdependence is probably more appropriate (for instance Solberg, 1990; Morrow, 1994; Zeiher, 2001). Interdependence also draws on the idea that in order to empower children there is very often a need to empower their communities (Cockburn, 1998). For Roche (1999), interdependence is understood as a key feature of children's partial citizenship. Conceptualisation in terms of interdependence is also vital in the examination of children's participation in decision-making processes. In her analysis Morrow (in this issue) suggests that conceptualisation might, in fact, have become isolationist: there is a danger of abstracting children's participation as an end in itself and thus losing sight of the way in which children and adults are interconnected, and the ways in which adult structures and institutions constrain and control children in important ways. In other words, there is a danger of children's participation becoming, in a curious way, too 'child focused', and I suggest that it might be helpful to return to basic questions about what children's participation means in the context of hierarchical structures in which their lives are conducted.

Alderson et al. (in this issue) also highlight the importance of interdependence underlying the interactive characteristics of rights. Participation, like protection, provision or education, occurs outside the framework that government, agencies and various organisations tend to promote. Analysis of participation in 'natural' settings seems to indicate that young people do not necessarily need isolation in order to participate. This is evident in Morrow's discussion of participation in the family (in this issue). In her

work on medical consent, Alderson (1998) similarly observes the importance of shared decision-making processes as one of many expressions of autonomy.

Possibly, it is the fear of manipulation of children, as too the need to prove their competence, that has thus far justified the fact that most often children's participation needs to be a process whereby they are separated from adults. Those who are involved are assumed to be there only for sakes of their protection, education and support. It may thus be necessary to reconsider 'traditional' concepts of participation. However, a singular notion of interdependence might then be problematic.

Again, that appears to make different sense in different domains. In health related decisions parental influence over children's decisions seems to be read as interdependence and does not appear as necessarily being problematic. In child protection social work settings, where allegations of adult abuse are a major concern, this interdependence in decision-making might appear under a different light. This is reminiscent of the formulation Alderson et al. use:

Rights [...] exist within moral communities when people harm or help one another, and this links to early experience of interactive citizenship...

Similarly Roche's contribution might suggest that interdependence might be confused with dependence and give weight to adult opinions rather than children's. Morrow's contribution does not deal with the issue of public and private demarcation but considers interdependence in decision making. It would probably be interesting to explore the way children themselves see such concepts. When reading Morrow one might be tempted to suggest that their views on participation may change depending on the space where a particular opinion is formed. It is in the family context that Morrow locates the demand for shared decision-making processes and learning processes rather than individual decisions. In the school setting, however, the assertion she reports appears to be asking for their opinion to be acted upon rather than being especially educational experiences or limited consultations.

However, even the more public domain of school does not exclude interdependence any more than spaces in the community do. When suggesting that children should seek alliances with other marginalised groups, Cockburn also

seems to indicate that in any of these different spheres, the isolation of children can undermine their active citizenship.

If it needs to be included in a possible conceptualisation of children's citizenship then interdependence has to be seen as a key feature of organisations for not only children but also for adults. However, this is not as simple a question as it might at first appear. How do different children experience interdependence and how does that appear in the more public sphere? What about those children, such as ones living alone, who sometimes seem to demand not interdependence but independence? What about their specific relationships of interdependence where peers replace adults? Moreover, a question arises about the example of children in institutions who have little chance of experiencing interdependence with adults who, as professionals, are theoretically unable to form such relationships. Will consideration of interdependence applied to children become a characteristic that will promote recognition of their 'real' position and relation with adults or will it be, for instance as we see in Milne in this issue, yet another justification for the gap between rights and citizenship considered as one for adults and the other for children and young people? If women had put forth arguments that were not about equality but with regard to difference and interdependence would they have gained franchise and gradually equality?

Finally, we must turn to the relevance of the concept of citizenship. Whilst reading this, one might find different arguments for the relevance of that notion. Firstly, it is about the simple fact that children are not incompetent and immature human beings but are instead rational and able to deal with complex realities and express opinions. In Roche's contribution, one can see that the social sciences have largely demonstrated this and the promotion of children's citizenship is a matter of revision of their legal and social position in our societies and overcoming traditionalist views:

Yet one key theme within the child liberationist position was the idea that the adult-child distinction had been over drawn by traditionalists and that children were more sophisticated and competent than many commentators were prepared to allow.

In Alderson, Hawthorne and Killen one might also find explicit arguments for the relevance of

the concept of children's citizenship. On the one hand, it appears to contribute to explanation of the contradiction wherein some routines and structures undermine the good intentions of supporting the babies' health and welfare. On the other:

Far from denying or trivialising rights, attention to premature babies' rights and citizenship can illuminate how human rights are embodied, aesthetic, interactive, emotional, political, economic and socially contingent. The babies' resistances also illustrated the relevance of rights to them as sentient, active meaning makers, within the private family and the public neonatal units.

More arguments are made by Alderson et al. that give children the possibility of expression, move away from arbitrary definition of needs and interests toward a definition of rights and emphasise the principle of respect and dignity. Whereby negative aspects could be in the form of selfish individualism, claims, threats of litigation, the authors consider that the UNCRC proposes another understanding that encompasses solidarity and community.

There are probably further conditions that need to have attention drawn to them. Dealing with participant citizenship in the political arena, Cockburn reminds us that the same setting has to accommodate children and thus a pluralistic approach positively recognising differences is indispensable. He also highlights the fact that the foundation of exclusion, which he identifies in the relationship between the public and private realm, is not the concern of identifiable 'bad guys'. Instead he suggests that the boundaries between public and private that exclude children are to be constantly reappraised by scrutinising the work of all who define them (Cockburn, this issue). This includes us.

We probably need to accept the hazardous nature of the task which might remove power and provide legitimacy for domination rather than promote children's rights. Restriction of such risks would appear to be part of a holistic approach that takes into account the basic principle of the indivisibility of their rights as too an examination that gives prime importance to the places in which they will restructure their views.

Work needs to be done in each of the fronts the contributors have identified: re-conceptualisation of citizenship and public space that accommodates children, consideration of children's experiences and views and specific life situations,

critical reappraisal of 'rights', including those given in the UNCRC, deconstruction of practices and policies which treat them as objects rather than subject and so on.

Why should we work on children's citizenship? It is probably an uncertain and abstract concept that risks becoming misinformation. However, it has certain advantages. It questions the place of childhood and children in terms of not only images and identities but also as formal and legal boundaries. It requires a holistic approach and reinforcement of the principle of the indivisibility of their rights. It also invites comparison with adult situations and rights which might reduce the impact of existing and well established idealised views of a happy and safe childhood experience which all too often does not correspond with reality. Moreover, it appears to us that despite being equally as abstract as the notion of children's participation, the idea of children's citizenship somehow forces us to go back to children themselves. Underlying all of this there is a clue as to how to break through the almost monopolistic, fashionable tendency to promote children's participation that very deliberately separates adults and children in most cases instead of giving them a share in the duties and responsibilities that form cohesive societies and the foundation of the civil and human rights that protect them.

NOTES

- 1 Often quoted, Lansdown's version is as follows. Provision: "Articles recognize the social rights of children to minimum standards of health, education, social security, physical care, family life, play, recreation, culture and leisure". Protection: "Articles identify the rights of children to be safe from discrimination, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation, substance abuse, injustice and conflict". Participation: "Articles are to do with civil and political rights. They acknowledge the rights of children to a name and identity, to be consulted and to be taken in account of, to physical integrity, to access to information, to freedom to speech and opinion, and to challenge decisions made on their behalf" (1994:36)
- 2 Similarly, individual expressions of children's opinions, or baby resistance described by Alderson et al, are generally recognised as be part of civil rights, unless children's participation takes collective forms which may be included in political rights. However some form of children's participation in organisations like unions could also be included as children's social rights, as in Rees and Bulmer's (1996) collection of papers about Marshall's view that includes adult unions.
- 3 Recent evaluation in developing countries also dimini-

shes general optimism about children's participatory experiences being capable of promoting real changes for children (for instance Ennew et al. 2005)

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ABSTRACT The concluding essay presents the editors’ attempt to identify some of the issues contributors consider may be recognised in a concept of children’s citizenship. It addresses the question of the pertinence of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a basis for children’s citizenship in contrast to some of its limits and strengths. Contributions looking at the issue of children’s participation show relatively limited outcomes from that experience and offer possible and complementary explanation. It also presents what the authors believe are among the most challenging issues in an examination of children’s citizenship. There is discussion of problems of definition (for instance partial, full and gradual citizenship) boundaries between public and private spheres, tension between the many articles of the UNCRC (usually classified as the 3Ps), notions of independent, dependent and interdependent relationships between adults and children. It may be that the latter seems to suggest a need for reconsideration of citizenship that ceases to segregate children and relates rights to their everyday lives.

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