

Alderson, P. (2018) Review of Bronwyn Hayward, *Children, Citizenship and Environment: Nurturing a Democratic Imagination in a Changing World*, London, Routledge, 2012, for *International Journal of Children's Rights*, 26, pp. 186-88.

We are increasingly confronted with dangerous environmental change, weakening democracies, growing social inequalities, unemployment and poverty especially among young people, and global economies based on unsustainable growth and waste in a finite planet. These problems all interact and intensify one another. Yet they tend to be addressed separately and rather weakly, given the urgent need to confront all these extreme dangers. Centres of greatest hope and promise for developing the necessary knowledge and shared practical action include schools, and many young people show their interest and commitment in varying ways including lively protest movements.

Bronwyn Hayward, a political scientist, provides a rich and complex analysis of the related problems and of an inspiring new agenda for ecological citizenship education to enable children and adults to learn to make a difference in the world. Besides ranging widely across the relevant academic disciplines, Hayward researched the environment and citizenship activities of 8-to 12-year-olds in New Zealand, and she worked at leading centres in England: RESOLVE (now developing into CUSP) at the University of Surrey, and the Tyndale Centre for Climate Change Research. The book clearly emerges from many interdisciplinary discussions.

Today's citizenship and environmental education tends to assume thin individualist approaches, which Hayward summarises as SMART: Self-help agency, Market participation, A priori universal justice, Representative decision making and Technological transformation. These neoliberal policies leave unchallenged the main drivers of ecological and social injustice, such as global industries and their pressures on governments. In response to SMART, as Hayward's interviews show, many young citizens fall prey to the hopeless authoritarian FEARS approach: Frustrated agency, Environmental exclusion, Authoritarian decision-making, Retributive justice and Silenced imagination. However, some interviewees are far more hopeful and partly from them Hayward developed the SEEDS approach to ecological citizenship education and action: Social agency, Environmental education, Embedded justice, Decentred deliberation and Self-transcendence. The SEEDS model moves from individualism through self-transcendence into shared agency that develops young citizens' democratic imagination and their positive 'handprint' for social justice. Besides reducing our negative footprints (excessive carbon or water consumption) we are asked to increase our positive social handprints that work to change the world. Hayward critically reviews limitations in the handprint idea, alongside ways to exploit it through social groups and structures, through challenging dialogue, democratic imagining, and memories. The memories of indigenous groups are of particular ecological value in New Zealand, since they draw on thousands of years of respectful Maori symbiosis with the natural world.

A common objection to our becoming more actively concerned about climate change is that many of us will have to change to a much lower standard of living. *Children, Citizenship and Environment* considers how the benefits outweigh the costs of social justice and fairer sharing of the planet's resources. The probing interviews and careful observations show how to encourage young citizens' respect for distributive, procedural and political justice as well as embedded ecological justice. Shared ecological activity can greatly promote human flourishing, as 9-year-old Ashley expressed during a campaign to preserve a local pool.

You feel very important and special, and you've got this kind of vibe inside you, cause you feel like you're getting heard and everyone in the world knows - cause you're shouting so loud and you're putting your heart towards something (p. 155).

Hayward gives many examples of how children are democratic, responsible citizens when they critically question, challenge and actively protest against injustice and damage to natural spaces. They range from being eco-worriers and citizen-scientists to streetwise sceptics. Different forms of citizenship are reviewed, analysing why many approaches make it harder not easier for young citizens to effect change.

This splendid book will be very useful to teachers and researchers concerned with environmental change, democracy and intergenerational justice. However, there are two serious gaps in the book. One is reliance on child development and education theories based on psychology. These tend to be thin and individualistic, and in their age-stage tradition to underestimate children's capacities. More attention to theories in the 'new' interdisciplinary childhood studies would have strengthened Hayward's central themes of children as already competent social actors and citizens.

The other strange omission for a political scientist is reference to rights. The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is mentioned once in passing as a 'charter'. The silence on rights loses the advantages of reinforcing the book's main concerns, the agency, education, justice, deliberation and shared activity in SEEDS, in the language of several UN Conventions with their inspiring Preambles, meticulously written by leading lawyers and philosophers, signed by most governments and ratified by very many. This near universal political consensus invests rights with the power to guide local, national and international policy making, and to make governments accountable to their citizens and to their peers in the United Nations if they renege on the agreed rights. Equal rights also provide the principled, practical, powerful tools for change, the remedies for wrongs that ecological citizens urgently need, to lay, as the Preambles say, 'the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world'. Advocates of children's rights have much to learn from *Children, Citizenship and Environment* and much to contribute to future work on these vital matters.

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