



# CIVIC EDUCATION

IN THE

# ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

Case Studies across Six Societies

Edited by

JOHN J. COGAN, PAUL MORRIS,  
& MURRAY PRINT

# **CIVIC EDUCATION IN THE ASIA–PACIFIC REGION**

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### CIVIC EDUCATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

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# **CIVIC EDUCATION IN THE ASIA–PACIFIC REGION**

**CASE STUDIES ACROSS SIX SOCIETIES**

**JOHN J. COGAN**

**PAUL MORRIS**

**MURRAY PRINT**

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# Dedication

We respectfully dedicate this to all the teachers and other educators across the six societies that are the focus of this book, who work daily trying to teach their students to be good persons who will become effective citizens in their own communities, nations, and the wider world. Though seldom recognized, they educate daily for citizenship through what they teach and who they are as role models. To them, we are greatly indebted.

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# Contents

Series Editor's Preface	ix
Acknowledgments	xi
 <b>CHAPTER 1</b>	
Civic Education in the Asia–Pacific Region: An Introduction JOHN J. COGAN, PAUL MORRIS, AND MURRAY PRINT	1
 <b>CHAPTER 2</b>	
Civic Education in Australia: Four New South Wales Cases MURRAY PRINT	23
 <b>CHAPTER 3</b>	
Civic Education in Hong Kong: A Tale of Two Schools PAUL MORRIS AND ESTHER MORRIS	46
 <b>CHAPTER 4</b>	
Recent Developments in Civic Education: The Case of Japan KAZUKO OTSU	70
 <b>CHAPTER 5</b>	
Civic Education at the Crossroads: Case Study of Taiwan MEIHUI LIU	93
 <b>CHAPTER 6</b>	
Developing the Good Person: Civic Education in Three Thai Schools SOMWUNG PITTIYANUWAT AND SIRIDEJ SUJIVA	118
 <b>CHAPTER 7</b>	
Civic Education in the American Midwest: A Case Study of Three Schools JOHN J. COGAN AND PATRICIA VELDE PEDERSON	142



**CHAPTER 8**

A Comparative Overview: Civic Education across the Six Societies	167
PAUL MORRIS, JOHN J. COGAN AND MEIHUI LIU	

Index	191
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## Series Editor's Preface

This series of scholarly works in comparative and international education has grown well beyond the initial conception of a collection of reference books. Although retaining its original purpose of providing a resource to scholars, students, and a variety of other professionals who need to understand the role played by education in various societies or world regions, it also strives to provide accurate, relevant, and up-to-date information on a wide variety of selected educational issues, problems, and experiments within an international context.

Contributors to this series are well-known scholars who have devoted their professional lives to the study of their specializations. Without exception these men and women possess an intimate understanding of the subject of their research and writing. Without exception they have studied their subject not only in dusty archives, but have lived and traveled widely in their quest for knowledge. In short, they are “experts” in the best sense of that often overused word.

In our increasingly interdependent world, it is now widely understood that it is a matter of military, economic, and environmental survival that we understand better not only what makes other societies tick, but also how others, be they Japanese, Hungarian, South African, or Chilean, attempt to solve the same kinds of educational problems that we face in North America. As the late George Z. F. Bereday wrote more than three decades ago: “[E]ducation is a mirror held against the face of a people. Nations may put on blustering shows of strength to conceal public weakness, erect grand façades to conceal shabby backyards, and profess peace while secretly arming for conquest, but how they take care of their children tells unerringly who they are” (*Comparative Methods in Education*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964, p. 5).

Perhaps equally important, however, is the valuable perspective that studying another education system (or its problems) provides us in understanding our own system (or its problems). When we step beyond our own limited experience and our commonly held assumptions about schools and learning in order to look back at our system in contrast to another, we see it in a very different light. To learn, for example, how China or Belgium handles the education of a multilingual society; how the

French provide for the funding of public education; or how the Japanese control access to their universities enables us to better understand that there are reasonable alternatives to our own familiar way of doing things. Not that we can borrow directly from other societies. Indeed, educational arrangements are inevitably a reflection of deeply embedded political, economic, and cultural factors that are unique to a particular society. But a conscious recognition that there are other ways of doing things can serve to open our minds and provoke our imaginations in ways that can result in new experiments or approaches that we may not have otherwise considered.

Since this series is intended to be a useful research tool, the editor and contributors welcome suggestions for future volumes, as well as ways in which this series can be improved.

Edward R. Beauchamp  
University of Hawaii

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# Chapter 1

## Civic Education in the Asia-Pacific Region

### An Introduction

JOHN J. COGAN, PAUL MORRIS, AND MURRAY PRINT

This book is a study of civic education in six selected societies across the Asia-Pacific region (Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, and the United States). It focuses upon both the intended and implemented curriculum in schools with respect to the development of civic knowledge, skills, and values. Civic education, and the important civic values that underpin it, has become a focus of attention for many educators and education systems around the world in recent years. This attention has produced a plethora of specific policies and formal statements of curriculum goals for civic education in countries with established civic education programs as well as in those newly created democratic societies in which civic education is being introduced. Many factors contribute to explaining this phenomenon—the fall of communism and the reemergence of old state boundaries in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the former Soviet Union, social, cultural, and economic globalization, a perceived decline in social capital and growth of social disorder, significant movements of peoples across national borders, declining voter participation in elections, increasingly assertive indigenous peoples' movements, weaker civility within societies, widening gaps between the rich and poor, and declining civic participation.

Many governments and policymakers around the world are increasingly aware that these factors may destabilize their societies and threaten their governing elites, and have sought to reflect upon the fundamental nature of the citizen, the concepts of democracy, civil society, civic values, and democratic citizenship, and how the understandings that are essential to their successful functioning are acquired by all their citizens, particularly by students. Where governments seek to change or strengthen the nature of the relationship between the individual and the state, they often look to schools and increasingly to explicit programs of civic education.

This recent trend raises the issue of a need for a more critical analysis of the aspirations of both civic education programs generally and societal elites specifically. The goals of curricula and societal leaders have tended to be taken at face value and treated uncritically. However, the case could be made that civic education is often used by elites to cement their position and power. Perhaps one reason why the popularity of civic education has grown recently is that elites feel threatened and see in it

a way of preserving their own power, status, and positions. There appears to be a clear tension in civic education between those who see it as a form of political liberation and democratic emancipation and those who see it as a necessary form of social control and socialization. Thus, a more critical interpretation of the recent emergence of interest in civic education programs would suggest that this is simply another attempt by governing elites to maintain their power in contexts in which that power is increasingly challenged by forces such as globalization and localization.

In the past decade we have also witnessed a dramatic transformation in the way many countries in the world have sought to strengthen democracy and civil society. This has been and is the case particularly in East Asia and in Eastern Europe, where the growth in democracy has been commensurate with the decline of communism and the collapse of the Soviet Union. In East Asia there has not been a redefinition of national boundaries, but societies such as the Philippines, Indonesia, and Taiwan have seen more democratic political systems replace autocratic regimes.

To meet the concerns of governments and the changes in societies outlined above, a quite remarkable level of concern for civic education has occurred around the world, particularly in Europe (Advisory Group on Citizenship, 1998; Torney-Purta, Schwille, & Amadeo, 1999; Crick, 2000; Kerr, 2000; Haydn, 2000; Maitles, 2000). In many countries educators, politicians, bureaucrats, academics, and non-government organizations (NGOs) have actively pursued means to help students acquire the knowledge, skills, and values that will encourage them to become more active citizens, more engaged in civil society, and more committed to democratic values. In most countries this has taken the form of introducing and strengthening procedures for civic education as an integral part of the formal education system.

Several important international studies in civic and citizenship education conducted in recent years have examined the nature and impact of civic education programs and policies. In a recent study of multidimensional citizenship across nine countries, researchers found that the values promoted through civic education were perceived by policymakers as highly significant in accounting for areas of change with respect to citizen characteristics and future policy directions (Cogan & Derricott, 1998, 2000; Hahn, 1998). More recently the first phase of the Second IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) Civics Study identified the importance of civic education across countries in underscoring the values learned by students. However, none of these studies has given much attention to the Asia-Pacific region.

As the economies of countries in the Asia-Pacific region first boomed then fell into recession, calls for stable, civil societies, based either on the principles of representative democracy or on a vision of Asian values, have become clearer and more assertive (Huntington, 1991, 1996; Scalapino, 1997; Montgomery, 1998). Increasingly these calls have been directed toward purposefully addressing how societies might consolidate civil society. The specific goals pursued to achieve this task range

from encouraging active participation by citizens and establishing a culture of human rights to encouraging civility and consensuality within a democratic state (Sen, 1997, 1999; Montgomery, 1998). Specific attention has been drawn to what this means for school curricula and the values necessary for students to learn to become effective citizens in civil society (Cheng, 1997; Cummings, 1997; Cogan & Derricott, 1998, 2000; Print, Ellickson-Brown, & Baginda, 1999).

The rapid and profound changes brought about by cultural and economic globalization, together with what indicators suggest is a decline in social capital, threaten the cohesion and stability of many societies. Researchers agree that if societies are to cope successfully with such changes, they need large amounts of social capital, defined in terms of the health of institutions and the commitment of citizens to democratic values. Many researchers and policymakers are addressing these problems in the Asia-Pacific region (Fukuyama, 1995; Putnam, 1995, 2000; Montgomery, 1997; Woolcock, 1998; Cummings, 1997; Cummings, Totto, & Hawkins, 2001a, b; Lee, 1997; Heffron, 1997) and their work suggests that education has an important role to play in the formation and enhancement of social capital. Above all, as well as providing students with the necessary knowledge and skills, education teaches them the values, and especially the civic values, that are necessary for social cohesion, especially in times of rapid change.

The translation of civic values from policy into practice, particularly how civic values are addressed in schools through the curriculum, is of major importance in understanding the levels of social capital and the "healthiness" of any society. Yet despite the significance of civic education in formal education systems, in schools, we know far more about the aspirations and intentions of policymakers than we do about how they are translated into practice and understood by students.

### **Civic Education Defined for this Study**

Before going further, it is important to discuss briefly the term *civic education* as it is used in this study. There are many definitions and explanations of civic education, some contestation, and much discussion in the academic literature. For some civic education is essentially a normative concept, describing an educative process by which young people become informed and active citizens in their society (Patrick & Hoge, 1991; Civics Expert Group, 1994; Patrick, 1996; Kemp, 1997; Cogan & Derricott, 1998, 2000; Advisory Group on Citizenship, 1998; Bahmueller & Patrick, 1999; Liu, 1999; Otsu, 1999; Pitiyanuwat & Sujiva, 1999, 2000; Print, Ellickson-Brown, & Baginda, 1999; Torney-Purta et al., 1999).

For others, civic education refers to the study of government, constitutions, institutions, the rule of law, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens (Center for Civic Education, 1994). This is a more traditional view of civic education. Still others use the term citizenship education to either emphasize the processes of democracy, active citizen participation, and the engagement of people in civil society or use it as a



generic term that incorporates a set of more specific features (Advisory Group on Citizenship, 1998; Kerr, 1999; Porter, 1991). Any conception of citizenship education obviously depends upon a prior conception of citizenship and, in this regard, Porter (1991), as cited in Morris, Kan, and Morris (2000), distinguishes between three types of citizenship with each type having implications for the theory and practice of citizenship education. They are,

citizenship as 'status' (the relationship between the individual and the state), as 'volition' (embracing feelings of togetherness, community, culture and history) and as 'competence' (an active, involved participation in debate and decision making). (p. 259)

Others also distinguish between associated terms including civics, civic education, values education, political education, and citizenship education, e.g., Heater (1990) and Osborne (1982, 1991, 2000, 2001). But across the breadth of the literature, the study of civic education generally focuses upon three forms of learning: the knowledge, skills, and values that are perceived as important to become an effective citizen. Specifically this requires that students understand the institutions and systems involved in government, politics, and their political heritage, democratic processes, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, public administration, and judicial systems. It includes a set of skills or processes related to this knowledge such as active citizenship, critical reflection, inquiry, and cooperation. And finally there is a set of values that underpins democratic citizenship and civil society including a commitment to social justice, democratic processes, human rights, cohesion within diversity, tolerance, spirituality and religion, intercultural understanding, and ecological sustainability (Pascoe, 1996; Print, 1996; Patrick, 1996; Pitiyanuwat & Sujiva, 2000; Torney-Purta et al., 1999).

Civic education is obviously taught through the total process of schooling and, directly and indirectly, through most of the subjects in the curriculum, especially in such courses as literature, history, music, general social studies offerings, and the like. However, increasingly it is also taught as a subject in its own right, which leads to further definitional distinctions. For example, in the case of Thailand, "Civic education is seen as preparing children to become good national citizens, while citizenship education prepares them to become good world citizens and realize their international, not just national, responsibilities and roles" (Pitiyanuwat and Sujiva, Chapter 6, this volume).

For the purposes of this book, we have chosen to define *civic education*, in the broadest terms possible, that is, *as the formation through the process of schooling of the knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions of citizens*. The critical feature of this definition is that it views civic education not as a set of goals or aspirations, but rather as the means by which those aspirations, and the relevant civic knowledge, skills, and values, are planned and implemented through schooling. This definition allows us to examine both the intended and implemented curriculum as

well as the differences in the interpretation and practice of civic education across societies.

### **Identity and Values**

Print and Smith (2001) contend that "Countries across the Asian region . . . are experiencing a revival in civic education as they address problems of national identity, citizenship, democracy and civil society" (p. 101). Civic identity has traditionally been defined in national terms. More recently, however, this has been expanded to include the existence of multiple and overlapping identities at a variety of levels (Cogan & Derricott, 1998, 2000; Kennedy, 1997). These might include allegiance to local, regional, and even global communities. Alternatively, they might be cultural, ethnic, social, religious, or the like. This is especially true in societies that are multicultural and diverse. Even in the most homogeneous societies, citizens will generally possess an attachment to more than one identity. Although a sense of national identity remains a fundamental characteristic of citizenship in the twenty-first century, some policymakers increasingly see it as insufficient to meet the challenges of an increasingly interconnected world (Cogan & Derricott, 1998, 2000).

Although there are those who reject national identity as obsolete and argue rather for a more globally cosmopolitan citizenship cutting across or even eliminating national loyalties (Nussbaum, 1996), it is difficult to see the nation-state as being replaced in the near future. There are those who argue that the demands of a national identity must be combined with a realization that no nation can operate in isolation in today's world, so that citizenship must contain both national and multinational dimensions (Boulding, 1990; World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987; Ramphal, 1991; Commission on Global Governance, 1995; Cogan & Derricott, 1998, 2000; Liu, 2000; Otsu, 2000; Print, 2000; Lee, 1999; Pederson & Cogan, 2000). It seems likely that although there will be an increasing and steady trend toward the development of multiple loyalties, and therefore multiple identities, across a number of economic, political, social, and cultural entities, the concept of an identity with the nation-state will remain. Yet it too will be undergoing a transformation during the near future as regional and multinational concerns become more and more important.

The traditional legal rights and entitlements, associated with being a member of a certain national group or society, are being extended to the multinational level, as shown by such documents as the International Declaration of Human Rights, by the creation of regional governments such as the European Community, regional networks or associations such as ASEAN or APEC in Asia, and by the protections that citizens are afforded in times of civil conflict and war. The current war crimes investigations in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda are good examples of the latter point. Although there is argument and debate about how far reaching these guarantees should be (Marshall, 1950; Barbalet, 1988; Turner, 1986, 1989), the trends are

clearly in favor of more rather than less protection for individual citizens at a global level.

Further, we are witnessing the extension of the responsibilities, obligations, and duties that have historically been tied to citizenship in a particular nation-state being broadened to more global concerns. The environment is a case in point here as the kinds of issues impacting humankind are in reality local manifestations of global problems (Colborn, Dumanoski, & Myers, 1997; Brown & Kane, 1994; Steingraber, 1997; Reisner, 1993; Sandler, 1997; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1999). Acid rain, the fallout of volcanic eruptions, and the pollution and degradation of rivers, oceans, and seas do not respect national boundaries. Thus, civic responsibilities, obligations, and duties with respect to environmental issues are increasingly recognized as regional and global in nature. Consequently, citizenship assumes a more supranational dimension.

Underlying the development of civic identity, whether it is framed in national, multinational, or supranational terms, is a set of core foundational values. These vary from nation to nation. They are also often the subjects of intense debate in which honest and principled differences of opinion and perspective are revealed. They can be described in formal documents such as a constitution or bill of rights; in other instances they are understood or implied. They are the core principles upon which a society is based and they exert a powerful influence on civic education. Examples include, trust, loyalty, tolerance, and respect for civil and human rights, the rule of law, racial and gender equity, religious freedoms, multiculturalism, and others. Often these core principles represent an ideal rather than reality and their inclusion in a constitution or some other such document does not necessarily mean that they will be honored. Nonetheless, at their best, they represent a standard against which a society's behavior can be measured and an ideal to which citizens can be taught to aspire.

In the Pacific region, these core values are often associated with traditional family structures based in Confucian or Buddhist beliefs. This is true certainly in Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand and to some extent in Hong Kong. In Australia and the United States, such values are based more in the Judeo-Christian tradition. In all six societies that form the subject of this book, schools are expected to reinforce these core values and build upon them in terms of forming one's civic identity (Huang & Chiu, 1991; Lee, 1996; Bray & Lee, 2001; Cummings, Gopinathan, & Tomoda, 1988; Cummings, Totto, & Hawkins, 2001a, 2001b). There is also a continuing debate over "Asian" versus "Western" values and whether there are truly different sets of core, fundamental principles underlying Asian and Western societies (Hill, 2000; Kahn & Pepper, 1979; Kahn, 1979; Vogel, 1979). To date, Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore and Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia have been two of the most outspoken voices for "the notion of a set of distinctively 'Asian values'" (Mahathir, 1989; Mahathir & Ishihara, 1995; Hill, 2000, p. 177).

Hill (2000, pp. 179–181) contends that 1979 was a pivotal year in this debate about "Asian values" with the publication of three important books. These included

*The Japanese Challenge* by Kahn and Pepper, *World Economic Development 1979 and Beyond* by Kahn, and Ezra Vogel's *Japan as Number One: Lessons for America*. These books, along with Hofheinz and Calder's *The Eastasia Edge* (1982), suggested that the economic success of the newly industrializing Asian states arose from the fact that Asian cultures were based upon distinctively Asian values. Further they contended that "Confucianism, together with other ideological underpinnings, was seen by . . . observers as contributing to the strikingly shared patterns of behaviour and organization across the countries of the Eastasia region" (Hill, 2000, p. 181). However, Hill notes further that "From the late 1970s the desired cultural values were increasingly labelled 'Asian values' and were claimed to include traits such as 'thrift', 'industry', and 'filial piety'. Whether there existed in a readily identifiable form a set of values that could be seen as distinctly 'Asian' was . . . a matter of sceptical comment even among senior Singaporean government Ministers" (Hill, 2000, pp. 184–185).

Former Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, in replying to the Goh Report, which focused on the development of a set of core values for the process of nation building and specifically on the role of bilingualism and multiculturalism in attaining this end, set out what he believed to be the characteristics of a "good citizen":

What kind of man or woman does a child grow up to be after 10–12 years of schooling? Is he a worthy citizen, guided by decent moral precepts? . . . the litmus test of a good education is whether it nurtures good citizens who can live, work, contend and cooperated in a civilised way. Is he loyal and patriotic? Is he, when the need arises, a good soldier, ready to defend his country, and so protect his wife and children, and his fellow citizens? Is he filial, respectful to elders, law-abiding, humane, and responsible? Does he take care of his wife and children, and his parents? Is he a good neighbour and a trustworthy friend? Is he tolerant of Singaporeans of different races and religions? Is he clean, neat, punctual, and well mannered? (Goh as cited in Hill, 2000, p. 186)

The debate over the existence of a set of core "Asian values" continues and even became reinvigorated during the economic downturn that affected most Asian states after July 1997. Too much adherence to "Western values" and "Western ways" was cited again and again as the reason for the economic collapse, with Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, leading the call to refocus on "Asian" (Mahathir, 1989; Mahathir & Ishihara, 1995).

Another major and important recent empirical investigation of values in the Asia-Pacific region has been conducted by Cummings and colleagues (Cummings et al., 2001a). They conducted a survey of educational "elites" in 12 Pacific Rim countries inquiring as to What should be the future focus of values education in the Pacific Basin? Termed the Sigma International Elite Survey of Values Education, the survey sought to answer four core questions:

1. Why should there be improvements in values education?
2. What values should receive the greatest emphasis in values education?
3. Who should be the focus of values education?
4. How should these values be developed and transmitted? (Cummings et al., 2001b, p. 14)

This work builds upon the well-known study of Cummings, Gopinathan, and Tomoda in 1988 entitled *The Revival of Values Education in East and West*. The new work (Cummings et al., 2001a) concentrated on the Pacific Basin, however, and included 12 nations or societies: China, Hawaii (the United States), Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and the United States. The societies reported on in this book, i.e., Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, and the United States, are included in this list with the addition of Australia. Limitations of space make it impossible to give this work the attention it deserves. However, it is worth highlighting several of its more important findings.

The overarching concern was to ascertain what those elites surveyed believed to be the most important reasons for strengthening values education in these societies. The highest ranked concerns were to

“help young persons develop reflective/autonomous personalities,” “to provide a foundation for spiritual development,” and “to increase the sense of individual responsibility.”

The elites in most of the Pacific Basin countries seem to believe that a good society derives from the spiritual and intellectual strength of thoughtful and responsible individuals.

In the second tier . . . are more “collective” concerns such as “providing a guide for behavior in daily life,” “encouraging civic consciousness,” “promoting values of justice and equality” . . . While all of the values in this second tier make reference to social entities, the primary emphasis was on encouraging individuals to make wise choices in their associations with social entities as contrasted to blindly accepting societal prescriptions. (Cummings, et al. 2001c, p. 291)

When examining the “what should be taught” question, the curriculum and pedagogical issue, Cummings reported that

Across the Pacific Basin, the values areas receiving the most support were personal autonomy, moral values, civic values, and democracy. In the second group were work, ecology, family, peace, national identity, and diversity. Gender equality, global awareness and especially religion received the lowest priority for inclusion in the values education curriculum. But not all countries minimized these values. Malaysian elites ranked religion as the second highest priority (after moral values). Gender

equality was ranked fourth in Mexico. And Japan and Hong Kong gave moderately high priority to global awareness. (Cummings et al., 2001c, p. 294)

Regarding “for whom” and “how” values should be taught, there was broad agreement that instruction should begin at an early age where all children would receive a common program. The respondents suggested that the locus of values education should begin in the home but then be reinforced by schools, summer camps, religious institutions, national service, and internships. There was strong agreement among the respondents that “Without familial support, in the view of our elite sample, values education carried out in other settings is unlikely to have much impact” (Cummings, et al., 2001c, p. 297). As to the favored approach, the elites noted that “Schools are but one among several settings where a coordinated program of values education can take place. For the values education that takes place in schools, the elites of most Pacific Basin countries are favorable to having values education integrated across the curriculum” (Cummings et al., 2001c, p. 297).

In drawing conclusions for the future, Cummings suggests that a shift in thinking about the focus of values education in the Pacific Basin is in the offing and this may have implications for civic education, the focus of this book, in the region.

At the core of values education is the autonomous individual. In the past in many parts of the Pacific Basin, values education tended to be directive—to do this, do that. Individuals were taught social rules and expected to blindly and persistently follow these rules. But the new thinking in the Pacific Basin seems to be to move beyond rules towards a reliance on the judgement of the autonomous individual. (Cummings et al., 2001c, p. 299)

## **Civic Education and Values**

Values are a cornerstone of the educative process in schools, just as they are cornerstones of our everyday lives. The extremely significant role that values play in the educative process and the development of societies has been clearly identified (Huntington, 1996; Montgomery, 1998; Sen, 1999; Gore, 1999). Values appear to play a particularly important role in the formation of social capital, one of the foundation stones of civil societies and democracies (Putnam, 1995; Montgomery, 1998; Woolcock, 1998).

Values have been defined as an enduring belief that a particular mode of conduct, or some end state of existence, is personally and socially preferable (Rokeach, 1973). Similarly values have been defined as broad, transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in life (Schwartz, 1994). Such beliefs are general, abstract, and enduring and would include substantive values such the common good, power, affection, and rectitude (Cummings, 1997) as well as substantive values such as honesty, equality, well-being, freedom, and so forth. Consequently values are pervasive and affect our behavior in daily life in a multitude of ways. Education plays a key role in transmitting values (Cheng, 1997) and hence civic education, the vehicle through which values are promoted through schooling, has the potential to play a sig-