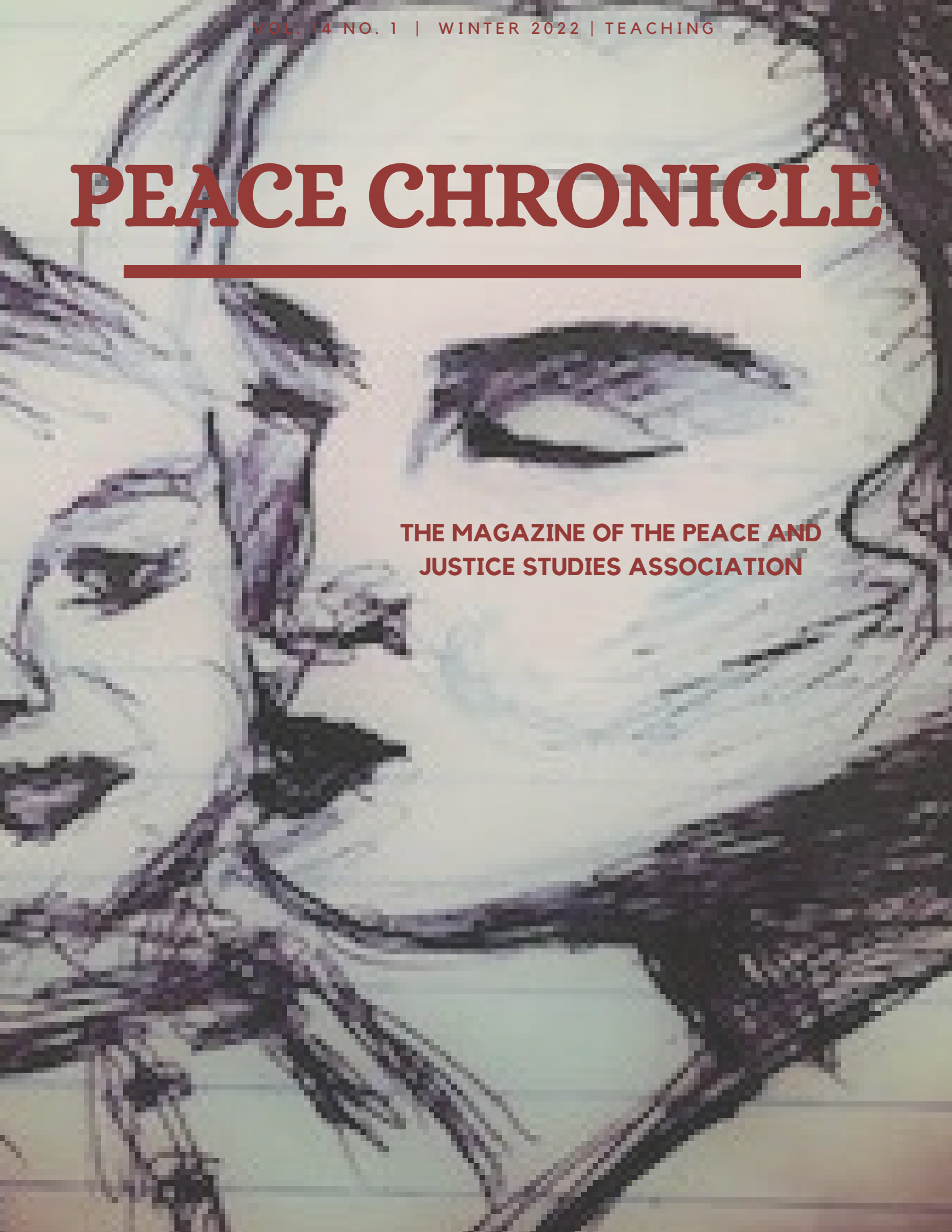


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PEACE CHRONICLE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE PEACE AND
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PEACE CHRONICLE

The Magazine of the Peace and Justice Studies Association

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COLLEGE BRIDES WALK 2022 DOMESTIC AND DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS: SCHEDULE OF VIRTUAL EVENTS



Gladys Ricart was murdered by her abusive ex-boyfriend shortly after this photo was taken. We organize and walk in her honor and in honor of other victims of domestic and dating violence.

Performing Arts Night, February 7, 6:30-8:00 pm EST: Enjoy spoken word, music, skits and more about abuse and healthy relationships.

Survivor Panel, February 15, 6:30-8pm EST: Hear the stories of survivors as they showcase their resilience. Organized by No More Tears.

Legal Issues Panel, February 17, 6:30-8:00pm EST. Learn more about policing, prosecution and victim advocacy related to dating and domestic violence.

College Brides Walk Opening Session and walk, February 18, 10:00 to 11:00 am EST. Hear from survivors, advocates, actors and performers about dating and domestic violence.

Consent and Boundaries in Healthy Relationships, February 18, 12-1 pm EST. Learn more about how to create and maintain healthy relationships.

Thanks to our sponsors, Barry University, No More Tears, The Humanity Project and the Peace and Justice Studies Association.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

LAURA FINLEY

As guest editor, I could not be more pleased with both the quantity and quality of the submissions for this issue! "Teaching peace" resonated with so many people, including members and Board members of PJSA, students, scholars, and activists. Included in this issue are articles focused on research, teaching, and activism. Entries range in length and include everything from more formal, journal-style submissions to teacher's lessons, reflective essays, poetry and unique art. Contributors are from many different countries, disciplinary backgrounds, and walks of life.

We've arranged the submissions in the way that we felt made the most sense. Those addressing the foundations and principles of peace education are at the beginning, followed by lessons for teaching peace. Reflections by students are next, then more activist-focused entries. The issue concludes with four beautiful poems. Some entries include relevant images and interspersed throughout are creative photos and amazing art relevant to the issue's theme.

I wish to thank Wim Laven, Editor in Chief of *The Peace Chronicle*, for the opportunity to guest edit and for his unwavering efforts to make this magazine truly wonderful. Thanks also to Gabriel Ertsgaard, Interviews Editor, Julia Skeen, an intern who assisted in soliciting art, and the utmost

gratitude to Emma Lovejoy, Production Manager, who takes all the submissions and makes them into a beautiful and readable magazine. I take responsibility for any errors in the issue.

A word on the cover art: "The Kiss" is a custom sketch by Art of Gis. It reflects the joy of motherhood and the hope for teaching peace to the youngest among us. Other work by Art of Gis is included herein. Art of Gis showcases the talents of Gisbert Heuer, a native of Germany who is now based in South Florida. A classically trained vocal performer, vocal teacher and actor, Gisbert began sketching during the start of the coronavirus pandemic. His work is available for purchase, and he also makes custom sketches on request. He can be reached at 954.326.7239 or look for Art of Gis on Facebook.

CONTRIBUTORS



Laura Finley is a former high school social studies teacher and currently Professor of Sociology & Criminology at Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida. She is author, co-author or editor of more than 30 books as well as numerous journal articles and book chapters. Dr. Finley is also a contributor to PeaceVoice and is actively involved with a number of peace and justice efforts, including serving as Co-Chair of the PJSA Board of Directors.



Sarah Schmidt is an instructor of Peace and Conflict Studies and an administrator of international education at Kent State University. Her areas of research include peace pedagogy, critical peace education, and peace theory. Sarah attended American University's School of International Service and acquired a master's of Ethics, Peace and Global Affairs with a concentration in human rights and social justice in the Middle East and North Africa. During her time at American University, Sarah served as the Program Coordinator of the Mohammed Said Farsi Chair of Islamic Peace. Sarah is a PhD candidate in the Cultural Foundations of Education program at Kent State University.



Dr. Sylvestre Nzahabwanayo is an Associate Professor in Philosophy of Education at the University of Rwanda, College of Education (UR-CE). He holds a Post-doctoral Certificate in Curriculum Studies obtained at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and a PhD in Philosophy of Education completed at the University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa). His research interest is about citizenship education, peace and values education for young people in conflict-affected communities. Also, he has interest in de-colonizing education where he considers issues related to unpacking the relevance of indigenous knowledges, philosophies, languages, and practices as a way of addressing epistemic injustices. His PhD thesis is about Itorero, a revived non-formal citizenship education program for high school leavers in post-genocide Rwanda. Additionally, he has a strong background in Social Psychology with a focus on understanding people's subjectivities using Q-Methodology.



Ilham Nasser is the director of Empirical Research in Human Development, at the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) and part of the initiative on Advancing Education in Muslim Societies (AEMS). She has spent over twenty-five years in research addressing children's development and their psycho-social wellbeing. She is also a teacher educator and curriculum developer who trained teachers on civic engagement, forgiveness, and diversity in many communities around the world. She holds a PhD in Human Development and Child Study from the University of Maryland-College Park. Dr. Nasser was a faculty in teacher education (promoted to Associate Professor) at George Mason University and is the author of peer-reviewed books, journal articles, and book chapters in education. Her recent research focus is on teaching and learning as well as curriculum development in sociocultural and political contexts and ways these influence children's development. Dr. Nasser has launched the first curriculum and regional research on forgiveness in the Arab World. She is the past President of the Peace Education Special Interest Group of the American Education Research Association (AERA). She is the co-editor of the Journal of Education in Muslim Societies (JEMS).



Jocelyn Wright (she/her) is Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Mokpo National University in South Korea. With a background in linguistics, education, and language teaching, she became very interested in exploring research and practice in the areas of Nonviolent Communication and Peace Linguistics. She is currently facilitating an international group for peace linguists and peace language educators (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/peacelinguistics>).



Mercedes EliceGUI is a teacher of English from Argentina, with over 15 years of experience delivering private classes and 2 years as EFL teacher in Secondary school. She is taking a Bachelor degree in English language at Rosario University, specializing in literature.



Elsa Barron is a community organizer with Hoosier Interfaith Power and Light and a Research Assistant at the Wilson Center Environmental Change and Security Program and the Center for Climate & Security. She also works as an Environmental Journalist at the Payne Institute for Public Policy at the Colorado School of Mines and as a freelance writer. Her writing has been featured in the Wall Street Journal, the Chicago Tribune, and the Hill, among others. In addition to writing, she is the host of the podcast, Olive Shoot, which highlights reasons for hope in the midst of the climate crisis through the diverse angles and approaches of environmental peacebuilding around the world. Elsa Barron graduated summa cum laude from the University of Notre Dame with majors in biological sciences and peace studies and a minor in sustainability. As a part of her senior capstone, Barron collaborated with a fellow student, Karli Siefker, to develop and implement an environmental education program designed for youth caught up in the criminal justice system. Upon her graduation, Barron was awarded the Glynn Award for academic excellence and leadership and the Yarrow Award for the potential to shape the field of peace studies. She was also awarded a Fulbright Grant to study environmental violence and peacebuilding in India



Jessica Feggstad is a faculty developer in the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Madison College, in Madison, Wisconsin. Jessica has 15 years of experience teaching talented and hard-working community college students in the field of Interior Design. She earned her master's degree in adult education from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and her bachelor's degree in interior design from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



Matthew Sargent is a faculty member in the Department of Sociology at Madison College, Madison, Wisconsin where he began teaching in 2004. He is also a member of the Executive Council of the Wisconsin Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies. He received his PhD in Sociology from the University of Kentucky, his MA in Sociology and BA in Anthropology from the University of Louisville.



Matthew Johnson holds an MA in Peace and Conflict Studies from Hacettepe University (Turkey) and a BA in Journalism from the University of Maryland, where he began his activism organizing against war, poverty, racism, mass incarceration, and gender-based violence. He currently serves as the Publications Chair of the Peace and Justice Studies Association. He has published several articles and contributed to many books related to gender, racial, social, and restorative justice and is co-author/editor (with Dr. Laura Finley) of the 2018 book *Trumpism: The Politics of Gender in a Post-Propitious America*. He is also a contributor to *PeaceVoice* and *The Good Men Project*. Johnson currently works as a User Experience Researcher.



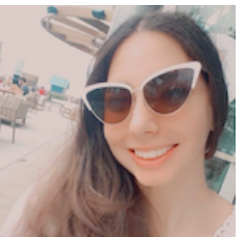
William Geimer is Professor of Law Emeritus, Washington and Lee University. A veteran of the US 82d Airborne Division, after graduating with honours from University of North Carolina School of Law, he served as one of five original Public Defenders in that state. Before joining the law faculty at W&L, Bill advised anti war organizations in Fayetteville, NC and later founded and directed Farmworkers Legal Services of North Carolina. At W&L, he taught criminal law and procedure, civil procedure, juvenile law, and evidence. He founded Virginia Capital Case Clearinghouse, at the time the only clinical program in the US providing trial level assistance to attorneys defending death penalty cases. Bill and his wife are Canadian citizens living in British Columbia. After practicing law there as well as periodically returning to the US to teach at several law schools, he retired to write *Canada: The Case for Staying Out of Other People's Wars*. He currently serves as Executive Director of the Greater Victoria Peace School and as chapter coordinator for World Beyond War Victoria.



Al Mytty is the Coordinator of the Central Florida Chapter of World BEYOND War, and Founder and Co-Chair of the Florida Peace & Justice Alliance. He has been active with Veterans For Peace, Pax Christi, Just Faith, and for decades, has worked on a variety of social justice and peace causes. Professionally, Al was the CEO of several local health plans and devoted his career to expanding healthcare coverage and making healthcare more just. Educationally, he has a Master of Social Work, and attended the United States Air Force Academy, voluntarily resigning because of his growing distaste for war and militarism.



Niko Coady is a Psychology and Gender and Women's Studies student at UNB Fredericton. She is originally from Oyster Bed, PE but found her passion for gender studies and women's activism at UNB. She is currently pursuing a certificate in Family Violence Issues and hopes to continue her work in this field after graduation. Niko continues to find ways to apply intersectionality to problems in her community and she is incredibly grateful for all of the support she receives from family, friends, and members of the UNB community.



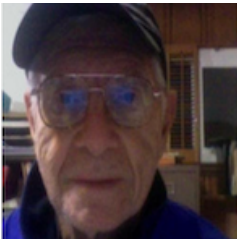
Melissa Tumbeiro was born in Cuba but raised in Miami FL, making me a Cuban American raised in an immigrant household. I graduated from Barry University with a Bachelor of Science in Sociology and now I am pursuing a master's degree in Sociology at The New School of Social Science. My personal experiences and the way I was raised made me become an empathetic person and I have used this in my work and in understanding individuals and society. My goals in life are to be the best person I can be and to give back to my community, I care about social justice and solving social problems in peaceful ways. I am a pacifist, and I am a vegetarian: Do I think these two statements are correlated, yes. I would describe myself as a scholar in search of the truth and I hope to enlighten people in a positive way.



Gabriel Ertsgaard is the Interviews Editor for The Peace Chronicle. He earned his Doctor of Letters from Drew University with a dissertation on environmental themes in a medieval legend. He previously taught university English courses in the United States and China. His criticism, poetry, and fairy tales have appeared in various print and digital publications.



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Marc Pilisuk is a Peace and Conflict Studies scholar and Professor Emeritus of the University of California system, having taught at UC-Davis and UC-Berkeley. He currently teaches and supervises graduate students at Saybrook University. Pilisuk is the author of *Hidden Structure of Violence: Who Benefits from Global Violence and War*, a coauthor of *The Triple Revolution*, the author of *Poor Americans: How the White Poor Live*, a coauthor of *The Healing Web: Social Networks and Human Survival*, a coauthor of *International Conflict and Social Policy*, a co-editor of the three-volume anthology *Peace Movements Worldwide* and the author or coauthor of over one hundred academic journal articles. He is the founder of *Psychologists for Social Responsibility*, past president of *The Society for Study of Peace, Conflict and Violence*, and the recipient of *PJSA's Howard Zinn Lifetime Achievement Award (2012)*.



Bob Knotts is the author of 27 books, five plays and many nonfiction articles, lyrics and poems. His newest book is *"Beyond Me: Dissecting Ego To Find The Innate Love At Humanity's Core."* He founded the *Humanity Project* in November 2005 to create programs and materials that would help people based on ideas expressed in his writings. www.rsknotts.com



Brooke Tracy is in her final year of the Honours in Psychology program at the University of New Brunswick, with two minors in comparative cultural studies and business administration. She has worked as a research assistant in several areas, including youth conferencing in the criminal justice system, transdiagnostic therapy for adolescents, Indigenous health, and cultural psychology. She plans to incorporate peace studies into her work as a graduate student in clinical psychology, conducting research on immigrant families and access to care for those experiencing social disadvantages.



Jennie Barron lives in Nelson, BC (Canada) and teaches peace studies and restorative justice at Selkirk College in Castlegar, BC. She is also the Chair of the Mir Centre for Peace at Selkirk College, where she organizes a speaker series, films, community conversations, trainings and myriad special events. Her academic background is varied and includes the study of social movement politics, allyship between environmentalists and Indigenous peoples, food justice and urban space. She is currently initiating a research project aimed at improving dialogue and listening across social and political divides.



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Artwork from the series *Nonviolence Means...* by Rosie Davila, for Campaign Nonviolence.

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR CRITICAL PEACE PEDAGOGY

SARAH SCHMIDT

The concept of praxis exists in the space between theory and practice related to human interaction with the world, a rift that is not easily merged in many disciplines— “a dialectical synthesis of theory and practice oriented toward transforming extant social relations. Praxis emphasizes the reflective human capacity to alter the natural and social world, sheds light on the historical specificity and structural foundations of that world, our ideological formation within it, and the conditions in which antagonisms take root” (Scatamburlo-D’Annibale, et al, 2018, p.550). In the *Prison Notebooks*, Antonio Gramsci asserts “the philosophy of praxis does not tend to leave the simple in their primitive philosophy of common sense but rather to lead them to a higher conception of life” (p.332). Paulo Freire takes an explicit social lens, describing praxis as “reflection and action directed at the structures to be transformed” (Freire, 1970, p.13). He further elucidates the praxeological turning point, asserting that through praxis, oppressed people can acquire a critical awareness of their own condition and engage in a struggle for liberation (Freire, 1970). This praxeological turning point is at the heart of critical peace pedagogy.

Both peace theory and critical theory are situated as counterhegemonic in nature, serving as the antithesis to dominant, oppressive, cultural norms and societal power dynamics.

The genealogy of both theoretical frameworks indicates an antecedent of problematic, dominant theories that influenced cultural superstructures still present today. The emergence, foundational concepts, and goals of both critical theory and peace theory present an opportunity to help support and fulfill the aims of practitioners in their respective fields of research and practice. If peace pedagogy is a normative approach to teaching and learning that aims to reduce violence in all its forms through liberatory methods, critical peace pedagogy integrates peace pedagogy with critical pedagogical methods, thus incorporating the shared vision of transformation. Both peace theorists and critical theorists regard school with a double-edge sword – the hopeful vision of schooling as a carrier of democratic values, peace, global citizenry, etc., while also recognizing the harmful impact that formal schooling has perpetuated. As such, peace pedagogues commit to an authentic peace that requires the ongoing

search for strategies, cognitive and emotional, that cultivate critical peace. With a goal of transforming society to reflect the pillars of positive peace, critical peace pedagogy seeks to address multiple forms of violence; thus, this approach brings an explicit focus on the structural implications of disproportionate power that perpetuate violence. To counter this reality, through the adaptation and adoption of critical pedagogical strategies, praxeological action is meant to transform structures and situations of violence as a form of peacebuilding. Formal school settings take focus for peace pedagogues as a space of great influence and agency development.

Counterhegemonic in essence, the incorporation of critical pedagogies deepens the scope of peace pedagogy to create a method that is “forged with, not for, the oppressed (whether individuals or peoples) in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity” (Freire, 1970, p.48). Consistent with both critical theory and peace theory, critical peace pedagogy represents an educative practice that is founded on equal distribution of power and agency. Knowledge acquisition thus becomes an act of humanization, essential to the process of peacebuilding. Through dialogue-based co-learning, critical peace pedagogy holds the potential to dismantle hierarchies and forge equality between students, as well as educators because the classroom becomes an environment of humanistic authenticity and discovery – this cultivates an environment where critical consciousness is raised, with an action orientation as the ultimate educational goal.

Further, critical peace pedagogy merges critical and peace theory to form a method of teaching and learning that not only creates an environment where students are encouraged to think critically and engage in reflective dialogue as a tool to raise

consciousness about violence in the world, but also cultivates the agency and praxeological position to engage in peaceful action. The transformative goals of critical peace pedagogy also engage the educator, who, when constantly reevaluating their own perspective and position of privilege, actively listens to their students and places value in the renewed perspectives gleaned from student engagement and dialogue. It is in this environment that teachers also serve as peacebuilders. As a first step in the process, critical pedagogues encourage a democratic relationship founded on trust between teacher and student. To initiate a relationship of trust, content-knowledge based hierarchies and rigid dynamics of power must be dismantled. As Freire asserts, without trust, authentic and critical dialogue is impossible (1970). This is especially true in a pluralistic society where not only are multiple viewpoints represented in one space, but also where hegemonic violence is at play, indicating that disproportionate value has been placed on certain perspectives and life experiences over others. In contrast to the traditional power structures of the classroom, the dialogical act of praxis is transformative— “liberation is praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it” (Freire, 1970, p.79). Critical peace pedagogy as a theoretical approach views education precisely in this way – as a practice of freedom. Its dialogical method deepens critical consciousness and presents teachers and students as subjects of liberation, by way of consciousness raising.

Contextualizing Critical Peace Pedagogy

If violence is omnipresent in the framework of positive peace theory, learning within the context of critical peace pedagogy becomes an act of resistance. Further, critical peace pedagogy fosters

an environment where omnipresent violence can be countered through the process of unlearning oppression. Unlearning, as presented by pedagogues, is equally important for each side of asymmetric power and privilege. In the context of schooling, oppressive dynamics seep into the learning environment in multiple ways, but the most explicit example includes the disproportionate power between teacher and student, which can lend itself to oppressive, and thus violent, dynamics. "The overwhelming evidence is that the dominant or hegemonic model [of education] globally, with some exceptions, is authoritarian rather than democratic. Education in democracy, human rights and critical awareness is not a primary characteristic of the majority of schooling" (Harber and Sakade, 2009, 172). Through the strategies above, critical peace pedagogy establishes education for social consciousness, self-realization, and collective nonviolent action, rather than education that reinforces structuralized hegemonic violence, submission, and oppression.

By integrating peace pedagogy with critical pedagogy, both pedagogical frameworks are deepened to better address the most pressing issues of our contemporary world, with issues of violence as one of the most acute. Contemporary violence manifests in direct ways (armed conflict), which interlock with structural violence and leads to other related forms of violence. The task of peacebuilding is rightly daunting and will succeed only with a multilateral, multi sector shift in ideology, policy, and culture. "This threat, though having to be controlled in many ways, not least tackling the relevant social issues at their root, presents many with a carte blanche to trample on hard earned democratic freedoms and rights. The situation is said to further spread the 'culture of militarization that engulfs youth, about which

much has been written in critical education" (Borg and Grech, 2017, p.172). Critical peace pedagogy, with praxeological action at the core of the conceptual framework, holds the potential for transformation. Through critical peacebuilding in teaching and learning, critical peace pedagogy not only aims to counter violent realities, but also cultivate positive peace.

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PEACE EDUCATION AROUND THE WORLD: STRATEGIES FOR CONFLICT AND POST- CONFLICT EDUCATION FOR PEACE

SYLVESTRE NZAHABWANAYO

From a presentation given for International Peace Day, 2021, at Kent State University, Ohio, USA.

It is a privilege and honor to be part of this discussion around peace education. In my presentation, a focus will be laid on (i) definition(s), scope and methodologies of peace education with a view to highlight how these considerations play out in the Rwandan context; (ii) the balance/tension between the universalism of much mainstream thinking on peace and the need for cultural specificity where I will argue for postcolonial peace education; and (iii) challenges involved in peace education in Rwanda. In this presentation, I draw from a number of sources. These include my teaching of the module “Citizenship and Transformative Education” – a compulsory module for all year one students at the University of Rwanda (UR); my involvement as Co-Investigator in the Project “Mobile Arts for Peace: Informing the National Curriculum and Youth Policy in Kyrgyzstan, Rwanda, Indonesia and Nepal”, funded by Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC - UK); my role as Co-Investigator in the Project “Research-led peace education as a crisis prevention in Central Africa Republic”, funded

by the British Academy; my role as Principal Investigator for the Project “Building cultures of peace in Rwandan schools”, funded by Global Challenge Research Fund (GCRF), UK Research Innovation Fund (UKRI); and the review of the academic literature.

1. Definition, scope and methodologies of peace education

Different conceptualizations of violence lead to varied ways of characterizing peace and peace education. If we restrict ourselves to describe peace simply with the lens of absence of physical violence, a view will be held that peace education has to aim for establishing negative peace. But if we conceive peace more broadly and delineate its contours in the form of structural and symbolic violence, then a more enriched view of peace education is achieved where peace education is meant to establish positive peace. In what follows, I unpack this argument in a more even handed manner.

Peace education for negative peace: human rights education, international education, and conflict resolution:

The academic literature around peace education shows that varied ways of describing peace and peace education are premised on different forms of violence. Direct violence involves the immediate relationship between the perpetrator and the victim of violence, and most of the time it takes the form of physical violence. Armed conflict, genocide, terrorism are examples of direct violence (Chaudhuri, 2015; Galtung, 1969; Galtung, 1990; Harris, 2004).

Structural violence, on the other hand, does not need the direct relationship between the perpetrator and the victim of violence. It is built into social, economic, and political structures at the local, national, regional and global levels. It chiefly involves the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities and prevents people from actualizing their potentials. In this regard, it is synonymous with social injustice (Sen, 1999; Snauwaert, 2011). Unequal access to and unfair distribution of services such as education, health, natural resources (land) are examples of structural violence (Chaudhuri, 2015; Galtung, 1969; Galtung, 1990; Harris, 2004; Kester & Cremin, 2017). The third category is cultural violence which refers to norms, values, self perceptions and affiliations, attitudes, beliefs and ideologies that orchestrate and perpetuate direct and structural violence. Cultural violence can happen for instance through religion, ideology and science (Galtung, 1990).

According to Galtung (1990) and Chaudhuri (2015), the three types of violence are inextricably connected and mutually reinforcing. For instance, direct violence may result from structural violence.

It may erupt in the form of resistance on behalf of those who are oppressed. On the other hand, the privileged group may also resort to direct violence as a way of maintaining its hegemony and dominant position. In addition, direct and structural violence are both rooted in ideologies and beliefs that propel people to enforce physical harm or fuel social injustice or discrimination. Thus, between the three forms of violence, there is a relationship of interdependence and mutual support.

It is only after grappling with different forms of violence that the pathway to understand peace and peace education is paved. This orientation suggests that in order to curtail direct violence negative peace is needed (Chaudhuri, 2015; Galtung, 1969; Galtung, 1990; Harris, 2004; Kester & Cremin, 2017). Negative peace refers to the absence of direct and physical violence in the form of war, armed conflict, and terrorism. For achieving negative peace, there is a need to have in place a kind of peace education towards negative peace. Here peace education is described as human rights education (aimed at recognizing the claims individuals can make principally to the state about how they should be treated), international education (geared towards peacekeeping in and between nations), and conflict resolution (whose goal is peacemaking skills development) (Harris, 2004).

In the context of peace education as conducted in post-genocide Rwanda by government institutions, educational systems, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, it is noticeable that the vast majority of peace education initiatives tend to focus on negative peace, i.e. the absence of direct or physical violence. Although the 2003 Constitution as amended to date calls for building a state committed to promote social justice and social welfare, and that there are observable policies,

programs and laws meant to fight discrimination in its different forms, there is a limited emphasis placed on positive peace in the form of structural approaches to reconciliation, human rights education and a willingness to establish stable peace. Also, it is noticeable that there is a tendency to conflate peace education and character education. Here a view is held that change in youth and adult behaviors will necessarily result in peace (Novelli, Lopes Cardozo, & Smith, 2015; Sayed & Novelli, 2016) – a view that requires much closer scrutiny. This is the case, for instance, of peace education initiatives undertaken by the Aegis Trust whose aim is to catalyse attitudinal and behavioural change, and thus awaken positive behaviour. The same tendency is also apparent in broad peace education initiatives led by government institutions (e.g. National Unity and Reconciliation Commission – NURC; the National Commission for the fight against Genocide – Commission Nationale de Lutte contre le Genocide – CNLG; National Itorero Commission – NIC). The Peace education conducted by these institutions place an emphasis on values and taboos, unity and reconciliation, and genocide prevention. Echoing some past studies (e.g. Doerrer, 2019; Galtung, 1969) I argue that the central aim and primary contribution of peace education is/should be to address structural and cultural violence.

Peace education for positive peace: Critical peace education

Structural and cultural violence require a broader notion of peace beyond negative peace. They call for positive peace, which posits the creation of social, economic, and political conditions that foster justice, equality and well-being. Positive peace is achieved through a specific kind of peace education beyond human rights education, international education, and conflict resolution. It

calls for critical peace education (Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Freire, 1993; Hantzopoulos, 2011; Kester & Cremin, 2017) where young people and adults are equipped with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes necessary to identify various forms of injustices existing in society and work towards their eradication. A number of studies argue that critical peace education offers a constructive response to structural and cultural violence (Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Brantmeier, 2013; Freire, 1993; Hantzopoulos, 2011; Kester & Booth, 2010; Snauwaert, 2011). This kind of peace education is also described as developmental education (Harris, 2004).

Brantmeier (2011) posits that there are five stages of critical peace education for teacher education: raising consciousness (about oppression) through dialogue; imagining nonviolent alternatives; providing specific modes of empowerment; transformative action; and reflection and re-engagement. Simply put, critical peace education is informed by the critical pedagogy of Paul Freire (2003). It is committed to the idea that education projects and scholarship should pay attention to issues of structural inequalities and aim at cultivating a sense of transformative agency to create new social, epistemic and political structures with a view to promote peace and social justice (Bajaj, 2015).

Looking at ways in which peace education is conducted in post-genocide Rwanda, it is apparent that a very limited emphasis is placed on critical peace education orientation. I tend to believe that not only does peace education aim to change learners and adult behaviors in a way that achieves peace (e.g. peacemaking skills development, values education, character education), it also aims to teach young people and adults to identify and address structural forms of oppression existing in

society at all levels, i.e. socioeconomic, political and cultural.

In terms of scope and methodologies, depending on the location where peace education is taking place, it has been described as in-school and out-of-school peace education (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009). With regard to the in-school scheme, peace education can be a stand-alone subject or embedded through some subjects like social studies, philosophy, and history. Peace education may also permeate or inform all subjects. In Rwanda peace education permeates all the subjects on the curriculum. Aegis Trust in collaboration with the Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) have developed a peace and values education program (PVE) with guides for teachers and model lessons plans which allow teachers to embed peace education in all subjects. In a recent data collection that I conducted to evaluate the teaching of PVE in schools, it was noted that the cross cutting approach has some advantages and limitations. The advantage is that all teachers are concerned to educate in peace education through the medium of their respective subjects. Problems associated with this approach include the lack of time for some teachers to talk about peace education because they are under pressure of completing the program. Also, some teachers have not been trained to use PVE materials and in some schools PVE materials are non-existing or insufficient.

Regarding content, the academic literature (e.g. Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009) suggests two approaches to peace education: indirect and direct approaches. The indirect peace education does not directly address the conflict (i.e., its goals, historical course, costs, or the image of the rival). Instead, it concerns itself with very general themes relevant to peace

such as (i) reflective thinking – questioning held beliefs including dominant assumptions; (ii) tolerance – a person's or group's readiness to bear, to allow, and even hear opinions (thoughts or attitudes) that contradict his or her own; (iii) ethno-empathy – the ability of a person or a group to experience what the other ethnic group feels or thinks; and (iii) human rights, and conflict resolution. The direct model of peace education addresses directly key issues and themes at the heart of the conflict. It deals with themes such as conflict and peace (the essence of the conflict, reasons, stages, consequences, and resolution methods), the peace process – various peace processes undertaken; presentation of the rival; history of the conflict; and creation of new affect and emotion – and the recognition that collective fear and hatred must be reduced and collective hope, trust, and mutual acceptance must be actually fostered. In the context of post-genocide Rwanda, several initiatives and programs address peace education but this is done implicitly. In other words, there is no detailed engagement with the nature, history and consequences of the conflict.

2. Striking the balance/tension between the universalism of much mainstream thinking on peace and the need for cultural specificity: towards postcolonial peace education

Postcolonial peace education constitutes a synergy between post-colonial theory and critical peace education. Here post colonialism refers to periodicity but also to a mode of analysis. As an analytical tool, it seeks to examine processes of knowledge production and their role in the creation and perpetuation of neo-colonial violence and order (Williams, 2013).

Postcolonial peace education is characterized by two features (Kurian & Kester, 2019; Zakharia, 2017; Zembylas, 2018). First, unlike critical peace education which concerns itself with immediate, localized social injustices and positions the work of liberation in the mind of the oppressed, postcolonial peace education perceives structural violence beyond the immediate local context and challenges broader postcolonial structural violence, i.e. the violence posed by colonialism despite its apparent end. Postcolonial peace education locates structural violence in the world order deeply rooted in colonialism persistent in areas such as economics, politics, social, and international relations. In other words, post-colonial peace education locates the work of liberation in the dismantling of structures of lingering colonization.

Second, postcolonial peace education argues against a monolithic conception of peace education where peace education is characterized as the absence of violence. It is a problematisation of a universalized vision of peace and peace education. Postcolonial peace education recognises the validity of other peace education theories and practices especially those from indigenous or colonized people. Understood this way, there is no regulation, universalization, and standards of what peace education ought to be (Zakharia, 2017).

According to Kurian and Kester (2019), postcolonial peace education seeks to allow voices of the Global South to inform theory and practice, thought and praxis in peace education. It argues against the marginalization of peace approaches from or working in the Global South. Postcolonial peace education is a way of addressing epistemic violence in peace education, i.e. imposing western beliefs in peace education on colonized populations. In short, it is an invitation to broaden peace education

epistemology and praxis (Sandoval, 2016; Sumida Huaman, 2011; Williams, 2016; Zakharia, 2017; Zembylas, 2018).

Within the framework of post-colonial peace education, peace is conceptualized in terms of recognition, acceptance of diverse cultural worldviews, epistemologies, and practices that are conducive for peace. Here there is an invitation towards recognizing context-specific approaches in peace education. Practically, this means that in designing peace education programs there is a need to (i) draw from local peace education theories and practices; (ii) adapt practices to the context in which they take place; and (iii) include beneficiaries and stakeholders in the design of those efforts (Davies, 2004; Gittins, 2020; Salomon, 2011; Wessells, 2013). In other words, peace education materials should be context-specific, better co-produced, co-created and not parachuted in from other places. In this discussion, some of the questions to be considered include: (i) What is the content to be delivered? (ii) What are the pedagogies suitable for peace education? In this regard, local peace education stakeholders must be included in the process of deciding about priorities, content and approaches to peace education. These include public institutions, NGOs, civil society organisations, and faith-based organisations.

Two ideas from this reflection on post-colonial peace education are central to peace education practices in Rwanda. First, peace education cannot overlook the important role played by the world order in the creation and perpetuation of structural as well as cultural violence. In this regard, neo-colonialism should feature on the content of peace education programs in Rwanda. The second idea is that locally generated peace education initiatives

and practices yield better results than parachuted ones. In this regard, the contribution of home-grown knowledges and practices to peace education should be highlighted. These include, for instance, Abunzi - mediation committees; parents' evening forums [Umugoroba w'ababyeyi], Umuganda (community work), Umuganura (day of harvest), Girinka (get a cow), Umushyikirano (National dialogue), Ndi umunyarwanda (I am a Rwandan program), and Itorero. The point is that peace education in post-genocide Rwanda might examine ways of using these locally inspired forums to expressly address direct (physical), structural and cultural violence. In other words, the question would be to examine ways in which home-grown knowledges and practices in peace education can be used to address direct, structural and cultural forms of violence for the promotion of a peaceful coexistence.

3. Challenges involved in implementing peace education in Rwanda

In talking about challenges in peace education in Rwanda, I draw from the work I conducted in the framework of a peace education project funded the British Academy in collaboration with the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies - SOAS, King's College London (UK).

In conflict affected settings peace education does not go without difficulties, tensions and contradictions. In the context of post-genocide Rwanda, some of these tensions are chiefly related to the interpretation and teaching of history, the deconstruction and re-construction of ethnic identities, the individual versus the collective memory, the prevalence of unexpressed and unhealed wounds, and the temporality of peace education. In paragraphs to follow, these contradictions are unpacked with great care.

3.1. History interpretation and teaching

The conflict that led to the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi is deeply rooted in history. One of the major tasks of peace education is to interrogate history by teaching both young and adult generations the real account of the past in a way that fosters peace, reconciliation and social cohesion. Teaching history in post-genocide Rwanda is an arduous task particularly because of three major reasons: defining the content to teach and how to teach it; engaging with some sensitive concepts; and the positionality of the history teacher.

It is difficult to define the Rwandan history content to teach and how to teach it. The history of Rwanda is mainly seen alongside three periods: the precolonial, colonial, and post-colonial era including the genocide and after-genocide period. The interpretation of what these periods mean especially in terms of unity of Rwandans is subject to debate. The academic literature shows that there are serious contradictions on how people consider some parts of the Rwandan history. As a matter of fact, in terms of the precolonial period, while some argue that the period was deeply characterized by unity and social cohesion among Rwandans, others show that even before colonialism there were inherent tensions within the ruling regime. Reference is made here to the Rucunshu case (Watkins & Jessee, 2020). Another case in point is the 1994 genocide against Tutsi whose narratives are as diverse as they are tellers. In the materials we collected there is evidence suggesting that history teachers are faced with the difficult to teach some parts of the Rwandan history because of various interpretations. The excerpts below demonstrate these difficulties.

"Some teachers are afraid to talk about history (pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial as well as independence period and genocide) in most cases because they do not have knowledge about it, others are not convinced of what happened or what they are told to teach. Still others feel ashamed to talk about some of those topics because of their identities. We have developed a teacher guide but for some reasons it is not well used and that becomes a challenge to REB. (MKR)"

Another challenge linked to Rwanda history teaching is the use of certain concepts especially those related to ethnic identities (Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa). Caution in using some concepts is also required when talking about the 1994 genocide where uttering some concepts might be seen as genocide ideology. The current government is committed to promote an inclusive discourse of citizenship chiefly anchored on Rwandanness at the expense of potentially dividing ethnic affiliations. However, the history of Rwanda is deeply embedded with ethnic concepts to the extent that a history teacher can hardly avoid them. In this context the caveat resides in striking the balance between remaining faithful to historical facts and not compromising the Rwandanness philosophy, i.e. *Ndi umunyarwanda*. Consider the following opinion:

"The other thing is about the use of certain concepts, and some of the teachers were hesitating to use them. When you have history modules and people in charge of teaching them are afraid to use some concepts in those modules, this is also a challenge. [...] First, when it comes to talking about ethnicity, let me say it well as we are in the research framework. When it comes to using these concepts Hutus and Tutsis, teachers are afraid to use them. Second, some concepts are frequently used during the genocide commemoration period, and when there are misused, they may lead to the genocide ideology. There is some fear of using certain words because they may be considered as genocide ideology. So, people rather avoid their use. (SNIC)"

The positionality of the history teacher is another challenge. What is at issue here is that some teachers are reluctant to narrate or teach some parts of the Rwandan history because they might have been affected by them in one way or another. Also, in some cases some teachers might be holding an opinion different from and inconsistent with the public narrative. In such cases, the history teacher chooses the route of avoiding those topics for the sake of protecting his/her positionality.

"If a teacher is from a family that participated in the killings during the genocide, he/she is ashamed, afraid to engage in discussions related to genocide in classroom. When she/he is given such a topic [genocide related topic] for discussions in class, it becomes a challenge for the teacher because whatever she or he teaches, students regard him/her as also a perpetrator. For a teacher who survived the genocide, discussions of the genocide related topics reminds him/her of what happened during the genocide. (MKT)"

This finding joins Buhigiro's (2020, p. 28) who affirms that "the teaching of the genocide against the Tutsi is not an easy task because the teacher has to be careful not only in the choice of the methodology but also in selecting words to be used in a history class and taking into consideration the Rwandan socio-political context." In other words, even 24 years later teaching the genocide against the Tutsi raises some concerns. The teacher is expected to bear in mind that the vast majority of Rwandans are still under the hangover of genocide. Therefore, great caution must be taken in choosing the teaching methods, words to be used and the topics to be covered and/or avoided in public debates. These strategies put the teacher on a safe side, and the wellbeing of both learners and society at large is not compromised.

3.2. Deconstruction and re-negotiation of ethnic identities

In an attempt to do away with ethnic cleavages that marked the recent past, Rwanda is committed to an inclusive conception where ethnic identities have been replaced by the national identity, i.e. Rwandanness. In peace education, it is almost unavoidable to talk about ethnic identities considering the central role they have played in shaping the Rwandan history and conflict. The current prohibition of using these concepts puts teachers (and other educationalists more generally) in a difficult situation. As a matter of fact, in peace education some learners find it difficult to square the nonexistence of ethnic identities (Hutu, Tutsi and Twa) with the appellation of genocide as the 'genocide against Tutsi.'

"One of the sensitive topics is this concept of genocide and its consequences. But it is also about ethnicity. For example, young people in any session we have had with government institutions, this one question always comes up: if you say that we don't have Tutsi and Hutu in Rwanda, and we still have the "Genocide against Tutsi" in our constitution, how do you connect that? (GUC)"

Another tension exists between the public discourse (or official curriculum) and narratives prevailing in private spaces. In the materials we collected, it was found that although the public discourse is dominated by the national identity narrative (Ndi Umunyarwanda), private spaces (e.g., families) transmit another narrative where ethnic identities and ideologies are deeply recognized and transmitted from old to young generations. The argument here is that there is a contradiction between the official curriculum and the hidden social curriculum which creates confusion among learners in peace education. This situation suggests

that although ethnic identities have been deconstructed in the public space, they are being re-constructed in private spaces and are unofficially shaping people's interactions.

3.3. Genocide: Individual versus collective/national memory

Although the 1994 genocide against Tutsi was ubiquitous over the Rwandan territory and has had a wide coverage across all corners of the country, people have experienced it in so many different ways. The idea is that there is a noticeable heterogeneity in terms of people's experiences and affects. In peace education, it is critical to talk about various forms of violence that characterized the past conflict. As mentioned previously, these forms include physical or direct violence, structural violence and symbolic violence. In conflict affected societies, one of the ways to avoid the recurrence of violence is to preserve memory of past events. In the context of post-genocide Rwanda, what is at issue in peace education is to select which and whose memory to preserve in such a way that every victim of the genocide feels included and represented. In the materials we collected, it was revealed that some individual memories are ignored. In other words, the collective memory tends to silence individual ones. Findings from the materials collected suggest that some forms of violence are talked about while others are given little to no consideration. The non-recognition of some memories is likely to slow down efforts towards unity and reconciliation.

"There is an official version of what happened but problems regarding genocide are like cultural ones: each one stands on the side of what s/he experienced. When someone talks about genocide, s/he refers to his/her killed father, his/her killed mother, his/her cows that were eaten, and so on. Others also had experienced several other things. So, everyone considers genocide in his/her own sight. Thus, it is difficult to put together all those experiences. (AB)"

This finding corroborates other studies (e.g. King, 2010; Ndushabandi, 2015) which showed that the current Rwandan leadership selectively highlights some memories of violence while others are repressed and this is likely to hinder sustainable peace. The official memory is transmitted through memorials (e.g. Kigali Genocide Memorial – KGM), Ingando re-education camps, and schools. More generally, King (2010) classifies memories alongside four categories: Tutsi recognized memories, somewhat recognized Hutu memories, unrecognized Hutu memories, and unrecognized memories of ethnically mixed Rwandans. What is evident is that much work remains to be done in terms of memorization.

3.4. Prevalence of unhealed wounds

The vast majority of Rwandans still bear the scars of the genocide despite the fact that 27 years have elapsed after this tragedy. During our study, it was revealed that the prevalence of those scars is due to limited safe spaces where various segments of Rwandans can meet and express their wounds. Also, it was noted that actors in the healing process are themselves wounded and we are experiencing a scenario where 'medical doctors are at the same time patients'.

The prevalence of unexpressed wounds has been recently highlighted by the Rwanda Reconciliation

Barometer (NURC, 2020). It was shown that 26.9% of Rwandans perceive that non healed wounds caused by genocide and divisive ideology constitute a threat to sustainable peace, unity and reconciliation. The commission (NURC, 2020, p. 174) recommended that safe spaces be created to allow free expression of historical trauma and wounds.

"Actors involved in peace education be they public or civil society organizations should create safe spaces (secure places) for dialogue and listening sessions in small groups. Those spaces should be well structured for participants to feel comfortable and share their wounds or suffering. [Les acteurs impliqués dans la consolidation de la paix, tant publiques que ceux des organisations de la société civile, devraient créer des espaces sûrs (lieux sécurisés) pour le dialogue et des séances d'écoute en petits groupes. Ces espaces devraient être bien structurés pour que les gens se sentent confortables pour partager leurs souffrances]."

This wakeup call comes after realizing that existing social cohesion driven platforms (e.g. Ndi Umunyarwanda sessions) had been diverted into forums for rushed apology and forgiveness (NURC, 2021).

3.5. Peace education and temporality

At this juncture the puzzle is about stability and change in terms of content and approaches to peace education. The question becomes whether peace education should restrict and confine itself to genocide and other ethnic identity related problems or there is a room for considering other issues that affect profoundly the lives of Rwandans and constitute a serious threat to the social fabric. These threats to peace include for instance, family conflict, teenage pregnancy, increasing cases of suicide and homicide, gender social norms and interpretations, the growing unemployment, issues related to current expropriation and compensation

instances. In the materials we collected, other potential aspects to be considered in peace education were highlighted. These include rule of law, human rights, catering for in and out-of-school children with disabilities, sexual reproductive health education, non-violent communication, healing from past trauma, resilience and adaptation, citizen participation in decision making processes, and family decision making.

Essentially what is at issue is to know whether it is healthy to entertain a one-size-fits-all content and pedagogy of peace education. Is openness in content and form desirable in peace education? In the context of Rwanda, the critical question is to establish what should remain and change in peace education 27 years after the genocide. In the materials we collected it is apparent that stability and homogeneity in peace education were brought into question. Consider the following respondent' opinion.

"I would say that people who are involved in peace education do not address issues of diversity. You find out that men and women as well as youth are given same content or we use same methodology which I think is not a good strategy. If we want to address sensitive or difficult topics then we should address them depending on the category of people and their specific needs not only in peace education even in other fields, people are taken as homogeneous. (MKT)"

Conclusions:

In conclusion, tensions and contradictions discussed in this section call for a re-examination of both content and approaches to peace education as it is conducted by various actors in post genocide Rwanda. Such a re-examination would involve all actors involved in peace education, i.e. state and non-state actors. Also, a more coordinated effort across all peace education actors would allow a

thoughtful discussion of these tensions with a view to indicate the best way to resolve them.

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Gisbert Heuer

YOUTH WELLBEING AS A PATHWAY TO PEACE EDUCATION IN MUSLIM SOCIETIES

ILHAM NASSER

Peace education is a needed area of educational programming that is relevant to all learners and most critical in vulnerable communities impacted by wars, conflict, and economic and political instability. Research on attitudes about psychosocial wellbeing may provide additional insights into forming a peace education agenda as an alternative to violence and wars. For example, research on forgiveness and reconciliation contributes to educational thinking about implementing conflict transformation programs as part of learning modules (Abu-Nimer, 2018). The difficulty is not in the research per se but in the implementation in different contexts, especially when conflicts do arise. Starting early to infuse peace education that addresses skills such as empathy, forgiveness, and self-regulation as part of the curriculum among youngsters reinforces this approach. As interventions in forgiveness education have shown, life skills can be taught through hands-on activities and modeling, among other techniques (Abu-Nimer & Nasser, 2017). This is also true when empathy, as a learned behavior, is also targeted (Castillo et al., 2013).

This article highlights the contribution of a study on socio emotional learning and its implications for

accumulated knowledge on peace education in Muslim societies. Understanding the views of youth and educators about sets of psychosocial skills provides guidance on ways to infuse them as a starting point towards peace, whether it is in the classroom or beyond. Unfortunately, there is quite a lot of skepticism and mistrust of the intentions of researchers in many contexts around the world, especially in Muslim societies. Some of it has to do with many communities' fears that there are hidden agendas behind research and interventions, especially when generated by Western countries. This stems from the lack of knowledge of local contexts and the lack of consideration of socio-cultural aspects that is at play by western organizations, such as conflict resolution and reconciliation rituals (Abu-Nimer & Nasser, 2017). These, in part, contribute to the failure of international agencies to address values of peace in Islamic schools and in Muslim societies in general. Programs on peace building, for example, seldom include the cultural sensitivities that exist around communication skills, gender differences, age, etc. I suggest and reiterate the need to localize the interventions and to frame them in cultural, religious, and political contexts.

Further, socio-emotional education (SEE) and learning should be part of peace education as it provides an integral framework that is relevant to preparing the younger generations for a complex world across the North and South binary. SEE or Socio emotional learning (SEL) is defined as the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions (www.casel.org). There is weight to the emotional, social, and spiritual aspects of learning across contexts when SEE is part of a peace education framework (See Figure 1). In fact, this also provides an institutional entry point in places where it is a challenge to introduce peace education as a standalone program. Further it allows access in places where peace education is misused and or overused (<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.602546>). Peace education needs to include education for the whole person so that human beings can have a sense of fulfillment in various aspects of life (Bresler et al., 2001).

In a study of youth in 15 Muslim societies and based on previous research, we identified three qualities that allow for personal transformation: open-mindedness, responsibility, and a collaborative collective (Nasser et al. 2020). Rather than zooming in on extremism and its prevention among a small minority of youth in Muslim societies, this study directly addresses psychosocial wellbeing of learners in Muslim-majority communities, thereby taking a hopeful and an asset-based approach to identifying views and attitudes under the three mentioned categories (Nasser et al., 2019). The study explored the attitudes of secondary school and university students, teachers, and administrators on values and competencies such as empathy, forgiveness, gratitude, sense of belonging, and self-regulation. This study contributes to educational transformation efforts in the communities of interest and the promotion of youth learning and education. The skills targeted are all important and relevant for peace education and the development of non-violence approaches to solving conflicts (García-Vázquez et al., 2020). In addition, the study provides evidence-based recommendations for the implementation of sound and appropriate

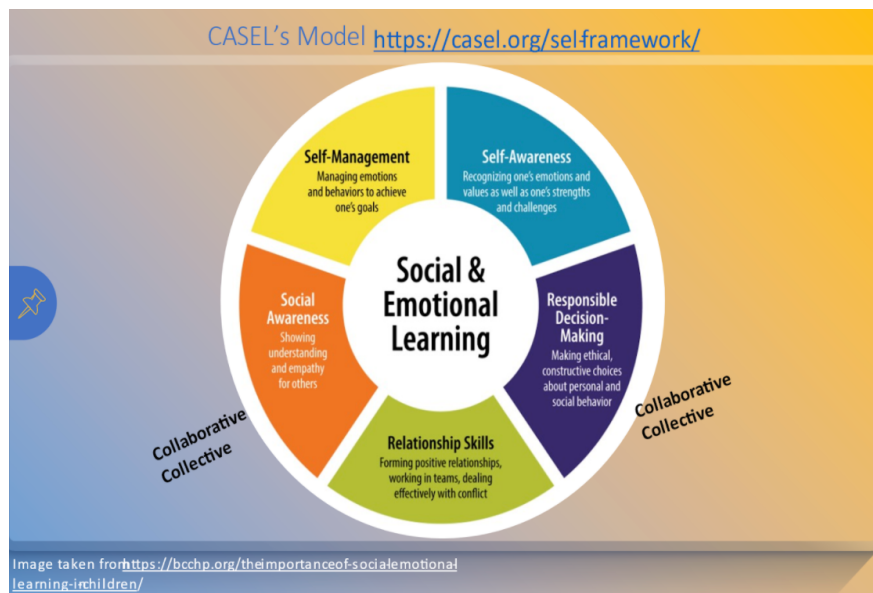


Figure 1: The Modified CASEL Model based on the SEL website

practices and policies to enhance personal transformation (Nasser et al., 2019).

More than 20,000 youth participated in the study over a two-year period between 2018-2020. The insights suggested and lessons learned from this study identify competencies and values that promote each one of the three qualities mentioned. In fact, when collecting feedback about the survey items, young people expressed enthusiasm about the opportunity to be asked about social values and personal skills. Conceptually, open-mindedness was defined as a value and a skill that includes the ability to think matters through, to adapt and maneuver in solving problems with critical thinking skills, and to examine all sides and perspectives (Proyer et al., 2011). Responsibility was defined as the ability to not only react to contextual and social cues; rather, it was defined as people's capability to proactively manage and control their functions and actions (Bandura, 1989; 2001). The collaborative collective builds on the sense of community and shared values that drive the understanding that it is not sufficient to rely on the clan and immediate collective, but rather encourages the interdependence to the betterment of life for all. In this scenario, there is room for forgiveness and reconciliation in cases where individuals or communities are engaged in violence. Building the foundations for these three qualities in schooling experiences is a contribution to peace education tools and skills. Competencies such as empathy, gratitude, and forgiveness are essential in educating for wellbeing and the feeling of being included, accepted, cared for, and supported. Educating to increase youth's sense of belonging is also important because it links to social support that has been found to positively correlate with coping mechanism, physical and socioemotional wellbeing (Allen et al., 2018).

Previous research suggests high correlations between the constructs we measured in the study and general healthy growth and coping mechanisms, including physical and mental wellbeing. For example, empathy highly correlated with prosocial behaviors and social connectedness (Oriol et al., 2020). Forgiveness also correlated highly with empathy and gratitude (Marigoudar & Kamble, 2014). There is also a positive relationship between social responsibility, justice, and collaborative citizenship and constructs such as empathy and forgiveness that we measured (Dyck, 2014). In fact, one of the highlights of this study is its indication of the important role empathy plays in predicting other variables among Muslim youth and educators.

One of the recommendations of the study is to nurture a critical thinking orientation and intentionally address the competencies mentioned earlier in the curriculum and in pedagogy. For example, teaching ways to ask open ended questions and engage in dialogue as an alternative to violence and as a tool to discover world views, including blind spots and hot buttons. It allows the person to self-reflect and develop constructive ways to manage relationships with different identity groups. Dialogue also deals with misperceptions and negative assumptions that fuel negative attitudes and justify exclusion and discrimination. When taken to a deeper level, dialogue can unveil the fear of the other and guarantee a safe space to delve into difficult and painful issues in the relationship with the other or the group. In many schools in Muslim societies, we must start with the skills of asking open ended questions and having conversations with the students instead of frontal teaching and rote memorization.

Dialogue as a teaching methodology does not have

to start with controversial issues. On the contrary, learning to have a conversation and engaging in dialogue can be between peers, a teacher and students, and teachers and administrators. Despite the power and influence of economic, political, and social structures that inherently block transformation and personal and social changes, starting with these skills will improve students' wellbeing and open the door for considering views of the self and the other. This, of course, is in parallel to nonviolent social and political movements for resistance that are also essential components for change. Dialogue is not a substitute for social and political action but when combined with Socio emotional education, it has the potential to lead to peaceful resolutions of conflicts, at least on the interpersonal levels.

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PEACE LINGUISTICS AND COMMUNICATION FOR A BETTER WORLD

JOCELYN WRIGHT

Quality of life is important to all of us. Love, equality, security, and harmony in human relationships contribute, but it may not be easy to enjoy these without peace.

It has been noted by great communication specialists that “One cannot not communicate” (Watzlawick, Beaven & Jackson, 1967, p. 51). Thus, in every moment, we communicate whether more or less peacefully, in ways that tend to humanize or dehumanize, connect or disconnect, and we do so both verbally and nonverbally.

While we cannot control everything that happens around us, I have learned from the study of Nonviolent Communication by clinical psychologist Marshall B. Rosenberg (2005) and followers, that with consciousness, we can make choices about how we express ourselves and how we listen to others. In line with this, Rebecca L. Oxford (2017), a well-known language education educator, emphasizes that 'peace consciousness' involves awareness, attention, intention, and effort towards expanding peace.

Peacebuilders acknowledge that it is possible to cultivate peace in different dimensions from the individual to the social and even ecological.

Collectively and simultaneously working in each dimension and across fields, of course, we can make greater strides.

Peace Studies has been branching out since the 1960s. Following Peace Education and Peace Psychology, a newer bud is Peace Linguistics. For its part, this interdisciplinary field can help us examine communication and see how language is effectively used (or not used) to meet our transformative goals of reducing or improving our handling of conflict, violence, and war and, more positively, by building and sustaining peace.

Linguistic peace or violence may be manifested in multiple ways in any given situation or context. Our choices of language varieties (mono- or multilingual, regional or 'standard'), modes (spoken, written, and/or signed), or registers (formal or informal) can serve to empower or disempower, dignify or humiliate. Use of simple and transparent rather than ambiguous or obscure styles can aid comprehension or, on the contrary, mystify, muddle, or otherwise impede it, enhance inclusion or result in exclusion. Similarly, the speech acts we select (cf. observing vs. judging, requesting vs. demanding, inquiring vs. interrogating), the diverse grammatical devices and structures we employ to

carry these out (choice of sentence type, active or passive voice, pronouns, modals, etc.), certainly our vocabulary use, our tone and other associated nonverbal behaviors (e.g. silence, hesitation) and strategies (e.g. conversation or topic initiation/conclusion, turn taking, overlapping, response time) may also produce more constructive or destructive communicative effects on relationships.

It is easy to envisage a colleague at work saying they might 'shoot' you an email to inform you they are right 'on target' to 'execute' a project by a certain 'deadline' but how might the effect be different if they instead said they might 'send' you a message to let you know they are 'on track' to 'complete' a project by a 'certain date'?

Since violence has in many ways been naturalized in mainstream language use, insidious effects may not always be apparent. However, as sociolinguist Karol Janicki (2105) points out, repetitive exposure to words (priming) affects beliefs, which may induce or prolong peace or conflict.

Sexist, classist, ableist, ageist, racist, homophobic, nationalistic, nativist, or otherwise intolerant uses of language in interactions, narratives, and other discourses (with insults and hate speech being particularly perceptible examples) can and do lead to all kinds of physical, psychological, social, and cultural violence (e.g. bullying, suicide, rape, honor killings, exploitation, detention, genocides, wars, ecocide, etc.).

However, with this vital tool, language, leaders of all kinds can give speeches that inspire peaceful relations. Policy makers can create important documents like the United Nation's *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948). Diplomats and

mediators can draft sustainable quality peace agreements. Language planners can develop effective multilingual policies. Historians can document and analyze peace-promoting figures, ideas, movements, and events and discuss those that failed to do so in that light. Journalists can get the public to reflect on important issues through their reporting, question established ideas, and challenge stereotypes, biases, and false information. Health professionals can more empathically care for patients and families in medical situations. And artists and media producers of various kinds can share more peaceful worldviews and imagined possibilities.

In education, curriculum designers, materials developers, teachers, trainers, and assessors can choose which topics and contents to focus on and what language and skills to raise awareness about and include in their local syllabuses, audio, visual, or textual resources, and classroom activities, tasks, and projects. They can also decide how to best assess these to contribute to their situation or context-specific peacebuilding goals. In line with this, they can consider which teaching methods or approaches to adopt, adapt, or develop, knowing that their work with students can support present and future peace.

As individual users, we also have a role to play in our everyday lives. Again, the question is, what quality of culture do we wish to communicate?

To finish with a quote, the celebrated peace linguist Francisco Gomes de Matos says, "May communicative peace be with you" (Gomes de Matos, 2005). May it indeed be with us.

Acknowledgement

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NONVIOLENCE MEANS ...

NONVIOLENT



SCHOOLS



Rone Dairla

CAMPAIGN NONVIOLENCE



LITERATURE AS A TOOL FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING AND LIFE ENRICHMENT

MERCEDES ELICEGUI

When we think about peace, we often relate it to war, famine, global catastrophes, but what about everyday peace? What about inner peace?

These last two years all of us have been struggling because of the pandemic. Being quarantined has not been easy. Some of us have been lucky enough to stay safe, to keep our jobs, to be confined within comfortable houses and to have enough to live with. But others were not so fortunate. Some got ill, some lost family members, some were not able to continue working, some were forced to stay within a house with not enough room for everybody to live in comfortably. And that led to other issues.

As a teacher of English as a foreign language in a private secondary school in Argentina, I have seen my students struggle with the disease, but also with depression, eating disorders, self-harm.

In such moments, I cannot focus on teaching language and forget about my students' inner battles. I need to reach them out and hug them, if not physically, at least emotionally. We all know that teaching implies building bonds and today that is more necessary than ever. Students cannot pay attention to their school goals if their minds and souls are not in peace. Each of them needs to

feel safe, worthy and loved as a person; they need to know that they are much more than a surname in our attendance roll.

However, as a teacher of mine told me some years ago when talking about these questions, we are teachers of English. At that moment I felt angry and strongly disagreed with her. I thought, and still think, that being human is above being a teacher. Now, when a little more water has gone under the bridge, I believe I have come to understand what she meant: we do not need to be this or that, but to integrate both aspects of our being into our classroom experience, and working with literary pieces helps me tackle both, language teaching as well as life events.

As I work with teenagers, who are dealing with leaving childhood behind, I started the year working with the poems "Things I'd do if it weren't for my son" and "Things I'd do if it weren't for my mum" by Tony Mitton. These poems portray the different perspectives a mother and her son have on everyday matters. After reading the compositions, we move to analyze each point of view, paying special attention to the feelings involved: are mother and child angry with each other? Can people think or feel differently about

the same things? Does that mean they do not love each other?

Then, we focused on our feelings- how did we feel when reading the poem? Did we feel related to the kid's position? What about the mother? Can we understand her? - to finally reflect on our reality at home.

I do hope that by giving my students the possibility of thinking and reflecting on everyday issues and offering them with a safe space where they can share what they are facing or struggling with, I am helping them gain confidence in the use of language as well as providing them with tools to approach their battles in a better way, therefore contributing to their inner peace.



"Things I'd do if it weren't for my son" and "Things I'd do if it weren't for my mum" retrieved from Mitton, T. (1997) Big Bad Raps. Orchard Books, London.

PARADISE IMAGINED: ENVIRONMENTAL PEACE EDUCATION IN CARCERAL SPACES

ELSA BARRON

Where does the material that makes up a tree come from? When asked that question, many of our students turned to the soil for answers, inferring that a tree pulls itself out of the dense matter of the ground. However, the real answer is quite the opposite. A tree, amazingly, pulls itself out of thin air. It is an accumulated mass of carbon dioxide gas that ultimately forms the strong trunks and towering branches of our world. In a class of students at DePaul Academy, an alternative justice center in South Bend, Indiana, we asked everyone to pause, take a deep breath in... and out... and meditate on the interconnectedness of that breath. The oxygen from that breath may have come from the respiration of the trees just outside of the window, while the carbon dioxide we expelled might soon be taken back up by the seedlings we planted in the classroom for photosynthesis. Every moment of our living, breathing life reminds us that we are part of a community- kin with unlikely tree-folk and many others.

However, many systems and structures are designed to disconnect us from that kinship, and possibly none more than carceral architecture. Foucault argues that the brute power of the state is well represented by its carceral structures. In his work, he particularly emphasizes the physical

environment of prisons; the architecture is representative of a larger system of biopower where the state is able to survey and control bodies, subduing the larger society into conformity (Foucault 1979). These structures of punishment, surveillance, and intimidation lie far off from the realization of peace and justice and provide unique challenges to peace education and relationship building within the context of the criminal justice system.

Previous studies in prisons have revealed that engagement with nature is helpful in moderating stress levels, contributing to healing, and developing community (Brown et al. 2015, Moran and Turner 2019). In the Nordic context, which seeks to integrate green space into the prison environment, "watching clouds, birds, daylight, weather and so on could enhance rehabilitation and diminish physical and psychological violence" (Moran and Jewkes 2014). In contrast, concerns in the UK around cost and security have led to a barren architecture that enforces a physical structure of punishment (Moran and Turner 2019). The design of carceral spaces relates closely to the potential of the justice system to be restorative or punitive, to create peace or perpetuate violence.

In response to this research, we designed and implemented a sustainability curriculum with a particular focus on environmental justice and access to nature for a cohort of at-risk students at DePaul Academy, an organization in South Bend, Indiana that serves as an alternative to the traditional juvenile justice system and focuses on providing more holistic support to its students. The curriculum followed a general three-part progression: first, a basic introduction to sustainability with climate science woven throughout the curriculum, second, framing the environment and sustainability through a justice lens, and third, grounding these topics in personal experiences in order to translate them to new ideas and action to create a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

In week one, we showed students a video of a newborn praying mantis battling a jumping spider. While the praying mantis had almost no defense mechanisms, it assumed a large, menacing pose, threatening the spider until it ultimately backed off. As we reflected on the video as a part of our exploration of how humans relate to nature, we asked students if they connected to the insects. One student remarked that he connected with the praying mantis because he had witnessed how humans demonstrate the same kind of behavior-when we are threatened, we often try to make ourselves look big and tough to avoid getting hurt. In the classroom, accusations began to fly about who had practiced this behavior recently, trying to act tough to hide inner weakness. The students were realizing that we are not so different from the world around us. In fact, we might find ourselves kin with a baby praying mantis or a jumping spider.

In week three, we asked the students to share with us which animal they connected most with and

why. One student remarked that he was a flying fish. He explained that he couldn't survive fully in the water or in the air. No matter where he went, he was always at risk of trouble, or even death. We were amazed by the profound and vulnerable nature of this reflection that came from such a simple question about how we relate to animals. We learned that if the space for reflection and connection was provided, students would fill it with their own experiences and identities.

In week five, we had students map their communities, making note of ten important landmarks. After mapping out these landmarks, we had students reflect on the environmental elements of their maps- did they have access to green space? Fresh produce? Bodies of water? Public transportation? We then asked students to think about three changes they would like to see made to their map- either adding or removing elements to make them more environmentally just and sustainable. One student shared that he would like to see the corner gas station in his neighborhood replaced with a farm. Another explained that he wanted to build a community park with lights that would stay on at night to keep people safe (and for late-night basketball playing). Through this exercise, we engaged in the first steps of futurism: imagining how the world could be different. In this case, students, as the experts on their home communities, were able to begin identifying and imagining ways that their homes could be made more sustainable, relational, and peaceful.

Over the course of the class, we were able to see students' conceptions of nature evolve. In initial conversations, students almost always indicated positive, yet distant ideas of nature. Students used words such as "healthy" to describe the natural

world, equating all things natural with goodness and wellbeing. Therefore, introducing concepts such as climate change and environmental degradation required a significant shift in student thought. The assumption of nature as healthy was likely the result of a common misconception: that nature exists far away from our own lives. Similarly, it is a common misconception in the field of peace studies that nature is unrelated to structures of violence and is irrelevant to the process of building peace.

Beckoff theorizes that a disconnect from our Earthly home is dangerous in that it maintains unrealistic conceptions of the natural world and allows students to remain unaware of their inherent relationship with Earth (Beckoff 2014). To address this dangerous disconnect, we relied heavily on experiential learning to impactfully connect students to course content. Experiential learning not only responded to students' lack of access to the natural world but also actively engaged and empowered students to make the education their own.

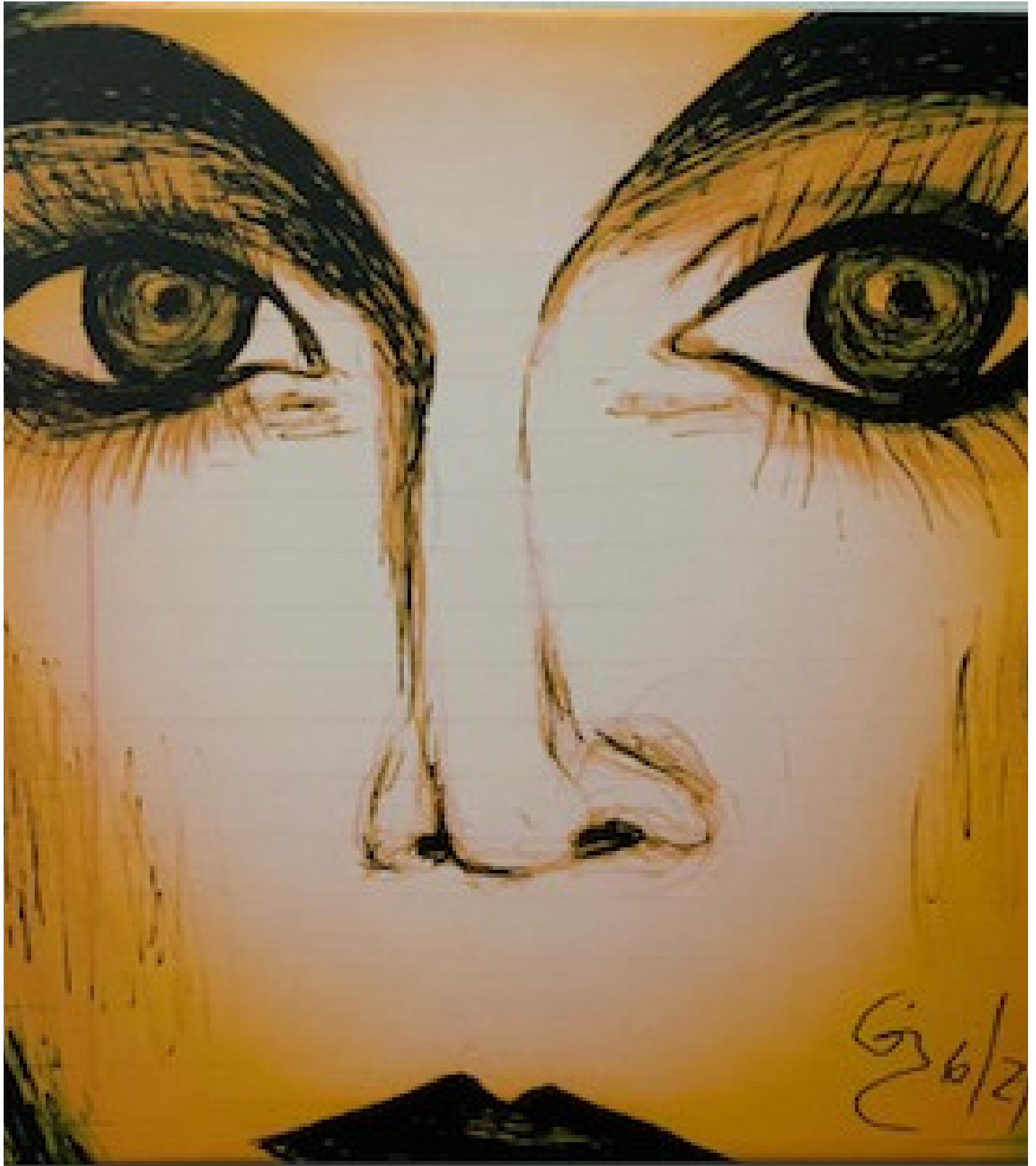
For students in a carceral setting, in which their personal lives and possessions are heavily regulated, access to physical materials is especially important. When we would bring physical objects from the environment for the students to encounter, we observed a heightened level of care, as students wanted to collect, examine, and preserve these new treasures. For example, when we brought in leaves for students to sketch, students did not simply want to observe the leaves for drawing, but held the leaves in their hands, and then pressed them into their binders to take with them. Introducing physical objects, especially natural objects, to the classroom fundamentally altered the students' environment in a positive way.

Early in our program, several students expressed a desire for the "fresh air" of nature, calling themselves "locked in" at DePaul. Our students clearly longed for connection with the natural world, but it wasn't accessible to them. Environmental peacebuilding education seeks to work with students' experiences to draw them into a fruitful relationship with the world around them. These relationships can be the foundation for healing from trauma and rebuilding peaceful communities.

Every breath of fresh air that our students longed for is actually a practice of relationship-building. It is a dance with the trees in the exchange of life-giving gases. It is a reminder that our bodies are tied up in a global system, one that currently faces existential challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss. However, these breaths give us the energy and hope to imagine a different kind of future. This future emphasizes relationship over extraction, restoration over punishment, and peace over injustice. With this vision, it is possible to say that paradise is not only lost, but that it might also, one day, be found.

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Gisbert Heuer

TEACHING PEACE

MELISSA TUMBEIRO

Humans, biologically speaking, are just like any other mammal: animals with basic needs and instincts that occasionally use their brain to govern the present world. Similar to most animals, humans have often solved conflicts with aggression and force. However, humans have evolved now for thousands of years and are supposed to be the smartest and most developed creature in the animal kingdom. Therefore, humans should know how to control themselves, be civilized, and move on beyond the violence and aggressive tactics when solving a problem. If humans should know better, why is something as easy as fixing world hunger still an issue we are facing today? World hunger has been a problem since the end of time, due to endless violence and greed. Would the opposite of violence and greed, peace and human generosity, be the answer to world hunger and all other problems in the world? I believe that teaching peace can not only fix world hunger and save many lives, but also change the world we live in.

Many believe that world hunger is still a concerning topic today that is caused by food shortage. In reality, it is caused by violence and human greed. Countries that have or are experiencing world hunger are developing counties that were/are in poverty and do not have resources to make their own food (Wonderopolis, 2021). These countries are in poverty as a result of war, terrorism, and being taken advantage for

being naïve, trusting a supposed ally that said that they knew best (Wonderopolis, 2021). Henceforth, these allies do not freely help anyone, they are greedy and are always doing something for themselves, using violent acts and aggression to get what they want. Thus, leading these developing countries to poverty, which leads to world hunger, and ends in suffering nations. This cycle of violence and greed is what is causing the world problems. The reason why I use world hunger as an example to promote peace is because it seems like an easy problem to fix with a simple answer but is instead a very complex due to the conflict resolution methods we use today.

Switching from violence to peaceful approaches can be as easy as switching your diet from omnivore to herbivore. When we make the choice to change to vegetarian/vegan diets, we do it for various reasons. These reasons could be for health, or for religious, ethical, or budgetary rationales. It all starts with changing our viewpoints and actions. If this was the case, world hunger can be solved in these two parallels ways of becoming a vegetarian or a pacifist. As you can see, both want animal cruelty to stop. They mutually advocate for a peaceful life, whether it be in the world for humans or for animals. They equally want the cruelty of violent methods and treatment to stop being applied to humans or animals and promote humane ways of living. Furthermore, these two

solutions emphasize the practice of empathy and understanding, bringing back the rights to animals and humans. Lifestyles are easy to change, it all depends on when you start and how much commitment is given to the cause. So, why not start by teaching and applying peaceful methods as a lifestyle choice just like vegetarianism or veganism.

The definition of peace is described as a time frame that is tranquil and calm, where everything seems harmonious in the world making perfect sense. Some people may say that these periods of times do not last for long, due to there always being conflict. Nevertheless, conflict is a natural thing that is always occurring. I do not see conflict as a bad thing; I see it as a necessary obstacle since sometimes it reflects problems that are in need of addressing: "conflict is needed to turn the world upside down to turn it right" (David LaMotte, 2018). Usually, short term violent solutions do not solve the problem and instead break-up the peace for longer than it was established. Conflict is necessary for there to be justice in the world, with the keyword "justice" being fair and reasonable toward an action. Many people want a peaceful and just world, what this means is that peace can come out of justice and justice can be made by being fair when applying punishments (David LaMotte, 2018). A peaceful approach to solving problems lead to a fair and ethical world and conflict resolutions leads to more peace instead of disturbing it. The focus is on the way to solve conflict, which determines whether it gets resolved or prolonged into something worse. And the way to resolve it is through peaceful means. That is why teaching peace is important to maintain these long peaceful periods while resolving conflict for the long term and fairly.

Peace in action starts off by teaching ideas, values, and principles of peaceful conflict resolution in

schools and the homes and other social institutions. Authority figures like teachers and parents are the first to teach the new generation how to act in the world; that's why they should be the first to educate the youth on peace. There are family values that teach sons and daughters on how to solve conflicts in peaceful and reasonable ways, like developing healthy nonviolent communication skills and developing empathetic emotions to understand others' feelings. In schools, teachers should teach about equality and respect, while the school should offer courses on peace studies, conflict resolution classes, reading literature on famous peacemakers, and peaceful movement that occurred throughout history. Teaching peace on an individual level leads to systemic changes globally.

Teaching peace not only effects people in an individual manner but also a societal way, based on how we see ourselves and how we see society. If a person is taught to peacefully communicate, pay attention and actively listen to someone when they are talking, that makes the other person be heard and understood, and show them that they matter and are not alone. Moreover, a person learns to respect others' opinion, not be offended but try to understand, nor to use foul language when disagreeing. An individual who is learning peaceful methods knows that words have power and words can hurt, so choosing to talk in a logical and acknowledging tone can lead to clarity, understanding, and long-lasting solutions. Learning about peace makes the individual be empathetic and compassionate towards the other. Learning about peace affects yourself as an individual by becoming compassionate on how you treat and see others, as well as your emotions that then shape your actions. Once you learn about peace, you change, and you have a different perspective about life on an individual level of self, which is reflected

on the way you handle problems in society, making it change too.

Society is affected by teaching peace due to representation; we are reflections of society and society reflects our actions. Acting in peaceful and nonviolent ways first starts with practicing peace in all aspects of your life, that's why "working on a skill when it doesn't matter so when it does later, it comes naturally" (David LaMotte, 2018). Peace should be used and applied in everyday life as a lifestyle, so when it comes to a conflict, it can be resolved in the most natural and honest way possible. If everyone is actively applying peacemaking skills and attitudes, then active listening is making people be heard and understood. No longer would there be ignorance and loneliness in the world due to peace practices. More people are going to feel connected and welcomed to form more supportive communities together. The learning of peace brings about changes by making communities feel unity and solidarity and no longer feeling disconnected, lonely, and isolated from the world and left to fend by themselves in a forgotten void. Peace in the society is not when everything is quiet and calm, but it's when everyone's needs are being met, producing a well-functioning society.

In the end, teaching peace is more than teaching a subject, just like being vegetarian is more than healthy eating. Our choices in life reflect our standing on matters and the process of how we go about it symbolizes evolutionary growth. Looking within ourselves, at our actions and what type of effect our actions' consequences have reveal many aspects of ourselves and society. For instance, world hunger tells us that our violent ways are not working and it's time to change our ways to a peaceful one for a more successful alternative.

Changing systemic aspects in society and within ourselves is hard at first but once you start and see the progress it can display more clearly the big picture that for a world to be fair and just, teaching peace and acting in peaceful methods should be the first options when it comes to solving a conflict or problem. This essay was inspired by two peace advocates, Colman McCarthy and David LaMotte, that taught me what peace was. They claimed that peace is love and harmony and that is exactly what the world needs right now.

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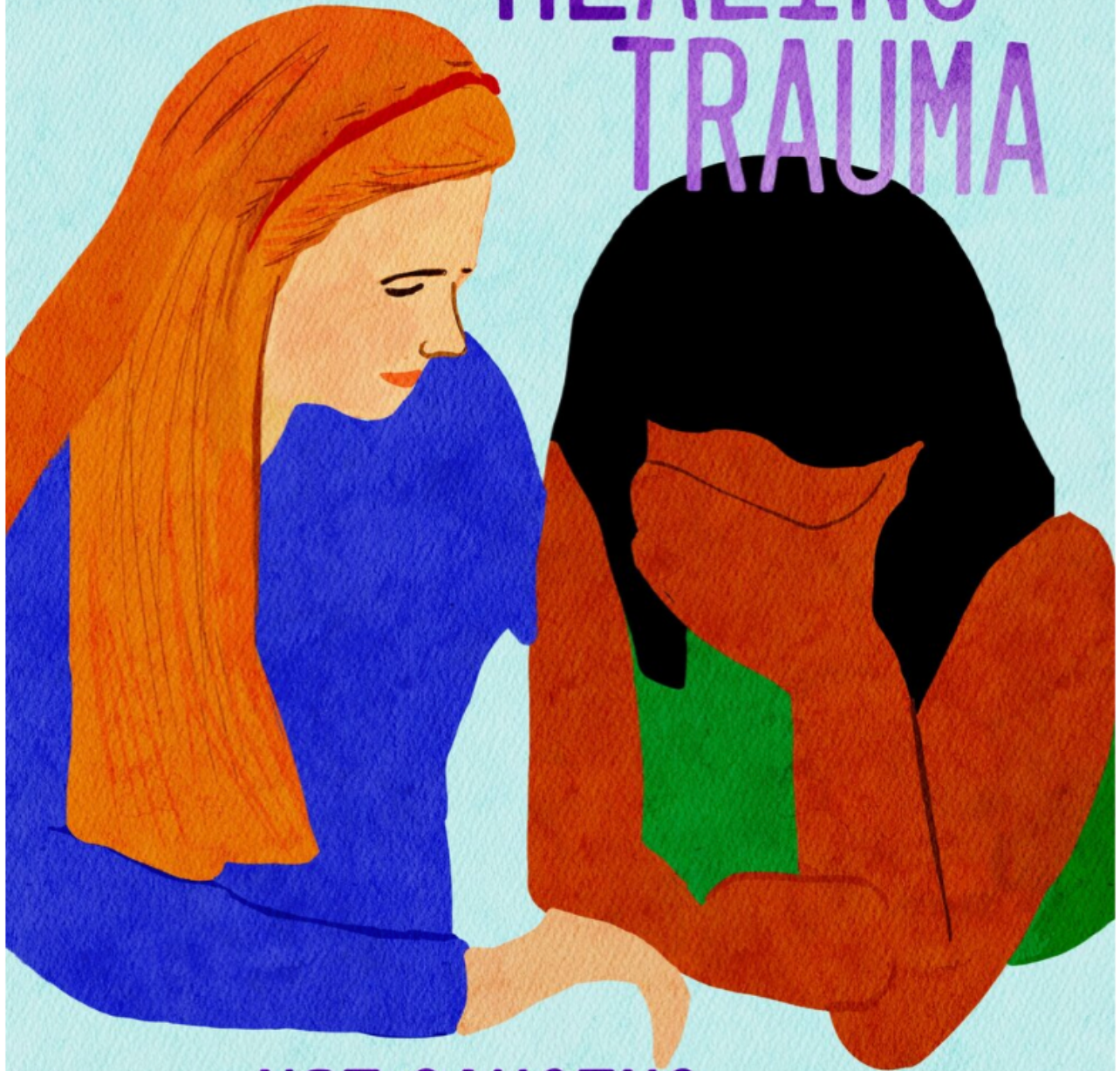
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NONVIOLENCE MEANS...

HEALING TRAUMA



NOT CAUSING
MORE HARM



Rosie Davila

CAMPAIGN 
NONVIOLENCE

USING SERVICE-LEARNING TO TEACH PEACE IN EVERY RELATIONSHIP

LAURA FINLEY

Among all types of violence in the U.S, the one that affects the greatest number of youth is dating violence. The same holds true of college-aged students. Yet many schools and universities do a poor job of teaching young people about dating violence and about what constitutes a healthy relationship. When they do, the typical model is to devote one class session, either via a video or guest speaker. Campuses with more resources might call in a well-known speaker but still tend to host one-time events. These do not necessarily reach all students, and oftentimes the programs are quite passive and not engaging to students.

Service-learning is one pedagogical method that has been applauded for engaging students, in particular on social justice issues. Service-learning involves having students assist community partners with their work while also gaining a better understanding of course material. Further, service-learning advances the school or university as it becomes more fully involved in the community.

Since 2011, I have been coordinating a campus-community collaborative program to raise awareness about dating violence that also incorporates a service-learning component. The College Brides Walk (CBW) was birthed when I met activist Josie Ashton, who completed the original Bride's March in 2001 in honor of Gladys Ricart, a

woman who was murdered by her abusive ex-boyfriend on the day she was to wed another man. Agustin Garcia gained access to the location where she was posing for photos and on September 26, 1999, shot her in front of her family. Ashton was appalled not just by the case but by the subsequent media attention, much of which blamed Ricart for "moving on too quickly" and blamed the murder on his "jealous rage." With permission from the Ricart family, Ashton donned her own wedding gown and walked from where the murder happened in New Jersey down to Miami. This spectacle of a woman walking in her wedding gown generated much-needed conversation about dating and domestic violence, helping to correct many misconceptions about the issues. I met Ashton at a speaking engagement, and we determined that we should bring her walk to campuses, as college students need this information and rarely attend walks in the community. Working with partners at many other campuses, we started the College Brides Walk (CBW).

More than a walk, CBW includes speakers, workshops, exhibits, multimedia, arts, and ongoing opportunities for service. Students have helped plan the events, researched information to be presented at them, performed songs, spoken word, dance and poetry, helped set up and tear down,

coordinated marketing and social media efforts, reached out to additional community partners, and more. Feedback from students involved in serving with CBW has been great, as they note their general lack of knowledge about the issues of dating and domestic violence and how the activities helped correct misconceptions they held, as well as the fact that they “enjoyed” their participation. Students note that enjoy is a difficult word given the troubling issue that is the focus of the movement, yet they like that they get to be part of something and feel good that they contributed. Further, students note that it is great to get to learn about resources on campus and in the community, as we invite our campus sources and area nonprofit organizations to table at the event and usually incorporate a panel of speakers on local resources as well. Many students then go on to engage with these agencies as volunteers or even interns. Further, students appreciate that we partner with other campuses and schools and thus they get to interact with students from different colleges, universities and high schools.

We had to adapt our efforts in 2021 due to the pandemic. Like it did for everything, COVID-10 offered both challenges and opportunities. We held the event virtually, encouraging participants to conduct their own walk safely in their community and document it with photos and video. Because it was all virtual, we were able to expand the number of sessions we offered throughout the month and make them available to people outside of South Florida. PJSJ became a co-sponsor, and several members had students attend these events. We also had to identify remote service opportunities. Every year we create a memorial powerpoint that we also download into hard copy signs that features photos and descriptions of people who have lost their lives to domestic or dating violence.

My colleagues and I have generally done the research for this, but this year I was able to have some students remotely conduct the research.

Importantly, we recognize that the bridal imagery may be off-putting to men who want to get involved, which reflects historical views that domestic violence is a “woman’s issue.” While we retain the name and imagery due to the origin of the movement, we work very hard to reach out to men and boys to get them involved. The service-learning component of the event helps with that, as the courses that require service-learning, notably Perspective Consciousness and Social Justice and Introduction to Theology, are required for General Education and this students of all genders and backgrounds need to engage in service for course credit. We introduce this service option to students at the beginning of the spring semester and in doing so, make it clear that it not just for women but for everyone to learn how to disrupt abusive relationships and assist those in need.

We are also getting prepared to launch a peer education program, Peace in Every Relationship, which will include extensive training for interested students, who will then provide presentations on dating violence and healthy relationships on campus and in the community.

We welcome the chance to offer more information about the College Brides Walk and to help other campuses start their own. For additional detail, check out our website at www.collegebrideswalk.com or contact Laura Finley, lfinley@barry.edu.

UNGRADING IN PEACE EDUCATION: RETHINKING THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL ASSESSMENTS

JESSICA FEGGESTAD AND MATTHEW SARGENT

For the past few years, a renewed interest in emancipatory education has been gaining steam from the larger masses within higher education. Though isolated generations of scholars and teachers have sought to build peace through their classrooms and writing, a shift in our environment has propelled an expansion of teachers wishing to develop a more critical consciousness. The popularity of such authors as Robin Diangelo (2018), Ibram Kendi (2019), and Nikole Hannah-Jones (2021) has made the questioning of systemic inequities more palatable within the public sphere. Trainings and seminars have multiplied, responding to the continued polarization of our country with the hope of education as a healing salve. Universities and colleges are reviewing curriculum and faculty professionalization; and there is an influx of anti-racist work in our collegial organizations.

In the fields of peace and justice work, the expanded interest in emancipatory education is always welcomed. Many scholars and teachers who have long been in such trenches have found themselves dismissed, questioned, and isolated (see hooks, 1994). Finding growing support through the interests of anti-racism and transpolitics, for

instance, allows acceptable practices to be challenged even more. It is not enough to diversify content or experiment with inclusive assessments. To nurture the success of students, and success of students as a whole being and participant in the community, a critique and modification of grading practices is a must. It is our argument that leaving unchecked grading practices within introductory peace courses is more a practice of dissonance and is contradictory to the aspirations of the field.

A theoretical and material arena filled with assumptions, the subject and practice of grading ought to be front and center of teaching peace. Challenges to grading have consistently been around for decades, but a more systemic critique has been gaining steam in the twenty-first century that parallels topics within peace and conflict studies. Power and authority, hierarchical relationships, competition and coercion, rewards and punishment, and the tracking of populations are deeper concerns that find their material manifestations in the application of the "A" or the "F" and under the guise of "teaching and learning." Challenging the practice of grading is a critique worthy of peace studies but is often limited to schools of education or isolated seminars in

teaching colleges (see for example, Reeves, 2004; Feldman, 2019; Blum, 2020). Here, we provide some introductory themes into the critiques of grading with the view that ungrading, the shedding away of traditional grading frameworks in education, may very well be a base element for an emancipatory education.

Madison College is a community and technical college in Madison, Wisconsin with an enrollment over 30,000. As with other states, we are a part of a system of statewide two-year schools that offer vocational training, transfer programs, and continuing studies and are bound by a network of credentialing networks of recognition. As a community college, we differ from other schools that have taken up the critique against grading. In contrast to small liberal colleges with insulation and collaboration of size and money, large Ivy League schools with the safety of privilege, or the vast professional graduate programs that explore pass-fail options in an experiment on student applicant pools and acceptance rates, community colleges sit between the local K-12 system and either employment or transfer opportunities. Such differences are important when considering additional characteristics of the students we serve, such as first generation, impoverished, or undocumented (to name a few). And, to truly thrive, community colleges are their best when a *Homo communis* is nurtured and realized over a lamented *Homo aeconomicus*.

Our college leadership recognized years ago that serving the community is to serve our students. Well before the Summer of 2020, Madison College recognized the realities of inequalities, understood our school as a safe space in the midst of a larger toxic environment, and supported instructors and staff in lifting up all students. To do otherwise would

be to reject the very essence of a community college. The endeavors to create and sustain such an environment has been messy, with plenty of tensions and pragmatism. Yet, within this live-and-learn environment, we are asked to consistently place student success at the center of our existence.

To fulfill this objective, we began to question the role of grading and its relation to the student as a whole being within an equitable relation to all others in a network of equanimity. Community colleges are often the trauma centers for the inequalities that disrupt the development of our students and communities. Content expertise is often not enough for teachers to reach students, and adventures into experimental assessments or experiential learning are beneficial but can also backfire. Still, as long as these forms of dialogue and experiential learning practices are bound with grading practices, student growth and fulfillment will be limited. What follows are brief descriptions of a larger mission to reconsider grading and why. The descriptions are meant to plant the seed for larger discussions.

Honor the journey of learning through supportive and motivating grading practices. No one expects a child, or adult, to be able to ride a bike on the first try. We allow for and embrace the concept of practice, support, failure, and more practice, over and over without judgement or penalty until mastery occurs. Learning new skills or knowledge in formal education should be no different, yet many grading practices handed down to educators penalize students for making mistakes while learning, rather than solely basing the final grade on summative assessments, which are a truer demonstration of a student's knowledge. Students are often allowed only one chance to complete a

graded assignment and then must live with the grade earned on that one chance, rather than allowing resubmissions. Through these practices, students are indoctrinated to chase points, causing performance anxiety and sometimes academic misconduct, rather than embracing a realistic learning journey that allows for growth and mistakes along the way.

Embrace grading practices that rely on evidence of student learning, rather than on behavior or compliance. Our community college students are likely to be part-time students and full-time caretakers and employees. College coursework is just one of many responsibilities and challenges in their lives. While important, we need to see students as a whole person, for whom schoolwork is only one part; just as we would like acknowledgment of work/life “spillover” and grace. When course grades incorporate harsh penalties for late work, deductions for perceived non-participation in class, or added points for supposed effort, we are now assessing conduct rather than knowledge or skills. Basing grades on behavioral observations also leaves room for our biases and assumptions about our students which gives rise to inequities and reinforces an authoritarian position.

Restructure traditional grading scales to provide proportional opportunities for success and failure. The 0-100 percent or A to F grading scale typically sets the delineation between passing and failing at 60 percent, meaning that 60 percent of the scale is inclined towards failure and only 40 percent towards passing. A controversial concept is to cut the scale off at 50 percent, thereby creating a scale that has equal proportions for each grade 50-59 F, 60-69 D, 70-79 C, and so on. When the traditional grade scale is so heavily skewed towards failure, it can be difficult for students to ever recover from

even one failure early in a course. In cases where students make mistakes early, but resolutely persist through their learning journey and improve, establishing the lowest grade possible as 50 percent allows for a system in which students can potentially still succeed.

Ungrading concepts such as these can be a challenge to grapple with for faculty. Doing so requires re-evaluation of long-standing beliefs and traditions. Contemplation of change can expose an educator’s insecurities and vulnerabilities to peers. This is no different than what we expect of students in their learning. We frequently articulate that learning can be uncomfortable and difficult at times, therefore we should expect nothing less of ourselves. As a community college, we recognize that innovative means toward student success can be a reprieve from the gatekeeping mechanisms typically found in higher education. Building and supporting practices of ungrading reflect a reconciliation where the dignity of the student is nurtured and the demands of a false meritocracy are silenced. Moreover, incorporating and expanding ungrading practices ought to be embedded within the classrooms of peace and conflict studies where such pedagogical practices align with course content. A call for integrating ungrading practices into our formal learning environments of peace studies is a call to model the very mission of building peace and nonviolence. Providing content and skills-building practices in formal settings should not be suffocating, dehumanizing affairs of biased competitions or false expectations, but a life-affirming, community building path where all participants embrace learning and growth in a just and equitable manner.

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CONFESSIONS OF A FORMER EDUCATOR

MATTHEW JOHNSON

In my formative years I struggled with a lot of things outside the classroom—tying my shoes (didn't learn until I was 7), riding a bike (didn't learn until I was 19), driving (failed the driving test three times), dating (too many failures to summarize)—but inside the classroom I thrived.

Reading and writing came naturally, and I was placed in advanced classes once they became available. I didn't always like traditional methods: In high school I decided I was more interested in hands-on learning and applied knowledge, which made newspaper production my favorite class. Once I became a section editor, part of my role was instructing my writers on the reporting process. I became an educator and didn't know it.

I intentionally chose a big university (over a much larger financial aid package to attend a smaller one) so that I could experience everything I saw in teen movies—even though I never drank a drop of alcohol the entire four years. In retrospect I could have used more than a few drops. I was as sober and serious as a college student could be. But I was somehow more serious about changing the world than I was about my grades.

My passion for social change and community service led me to tutor and mentor children off

campus. I even volunteered at a youth detention center and worked with young men whose backgrounds could not have been more different from mine. Despite these experiences, it took months of post-graduation unemployment for me to decide to go into teaching. I started as a substitute in multiple Maryland counties and was eventually hired as a full-time teaching assistant in 2009 at the aforementioned youth detention center. I lasted less than a year—and it was a minor miracle I lasted that long.

I had many jobs over the next ten years, and I served either directly or indirectly as an educator in all of them. I trained schools, community groups, and summer camps in mediation and conflict resolution; I chaperoned green and gifted high schoolers through the mean streets of Baltimore, Oakland, and Chicago; I taught at a mostly Black, all-girls public school (I'm White and male) and a mostly White private school—and for many reasons, few of which relate to identity, was not cut out for either.

I have a complicated relationship with teaching. At times the relationship feels unhealthy and unsustainable. Other times it's romantic. (I mean this in the literary sense of the word.) When I'm teaching in the right context, it doesn't feel like

work, even when I'm putting in 10- or 12-hour days. It feels like freedom. I become a different person: Someone who gets out of bed on a weekday with a purpose.

Passion can be your best friend and your worst enemy. A couple years ago I transitioned to a more lucrative career that I have passion for in theory but not so much in practice. In fact, I would argue that a lot of educators do not derive much passion from practicing—which is why they've chosen to be educators in the first place. It doesn't mean they can't practice (I hate the adage that states otherwise.) Practice, in most cases, revolves around the ego. People practice because they want to get better at something and, in many cases (but certainly not all), prove something to themselves or to someone else. **Folks with nothing to prove become educators.**

Of course, by trying to prove I have nothing to prove means I'm in effect proving—that I'm a hypocrite. But I'm teaching you, dear reader, through my hypocrisy. This gives me joy. Otherwise, I'm just a hypocrite with no passion or purpose.

Being an educator means you get to put your flaws on display for educational purposes. Every mistake is a teachable moment. A classroom or setting where intentional learning occurs is the ultimate safe space. It's one of the few places where you're given permission—even encouraged—to fail so that you may later succeed. I'm not sure it's even necessary to label education "peace education" or "justice education." Education is not only a precondition for achieving anything in life, but it is also progressive in its essence.

Of course, people can be taught to kill, steal, lie, and cheat. Yet, the act of learning—despite the

nature of the teacher or subject matter—is almost synonymous with progress. As we learn more, we improve. But this does not mean knowledge alone leads to the best course of action. If knowledge were the only variable, perhaps this would be the case—but people are driven primarily by emotion, which necessitates the filtering of knowledge. No one has the time or energy to react to everything.

I am not a psychologist, so I won't go further down this rabbit hole. I will simply posit that the weakness of people is not that they have too much knowledge: Knowing how to kill or steal does not lead a person to do so. Plus, the more people know certain types of information, such as how to protect themselves from a deadly virus—for example—the more humanity benefits.

We can blame many things for the evils of the world, but I don't think we can blame *too much* education. Thus, serving as a teacher is one of the few things I can do in this world without regret. I hope to do so again very soon.

TIME TO TALK ABOUT THE “F WORD”

WILLIAM S. GEIMER

Teaching peace requires teaching about the world as it is, the world as it can be without violence, and practical steps toward that peaceful world. It is important also to teach that we do not have to start from scratch. Much work has been done over the last century. Civil society organizations and institutions with great potential have come into being. Unfortunately, however, teaching about the world as it is also requires alerting people about setbacks. Because Canada marches in lockstep with the U.S., it is important for Canadians to know as early as possible of dangerous developments there.

Some U.S. mainstream media outlets are gingerly beginning to hint at the “F Word”. Their timidity is understandable. After decades of willing participation in “shining city on the hill” and “leader of the free world” propaganda, how could any of them dare suggest that the U.S. could be drifting into fascism? Yet a comparison with pre-WWII Italy strongly suggests this possibility. A discussion is in order because the machinery is in place to make the transition from democracy to fascism happen as rapidly as it did in Italy.

Such a transition would further threaten 80 years of work by peace forces around the world. The U.S. is already the most powerful and dangerous country on the planet, with military bases

everywhere. It is a country awash in nuclear weapons and often contemptuous of international law.

Hyperbole? Far left fantasizing? Let us start with an accepted definition of fascism, then see how the experience of the U.S. currently and that of Italy 1921-1943 relate to the components of the definition.

Fascism: A far right, authoritarian, ultra nationalism characterized by dictatorial power, forcible suppression of opposition, and strong regimentation of society and the economy.

It would be unwise to rely on the current state of democratic institutions in the U.S. as a bulwark against fascism. It can't happen here? Let's see.

Italy Fascists lost parliamentary elections badly in 1921. Yet 18 months later, they were in power. Their charismatic leader, Benito Mussolini, pointed to others as the cause of the country's problems by instigating racial hostility and antagonism between the resident population and immigrants. The fascist movement grew rapidly, drawing adherents ranging from gangsters to sincere patriots. The center left government did not appreciate the seriousness of the threat.

U.S. A fascist minority could well gain power in 2022, enabled by many of the same factors. Going well beyond gerrymandering, right wing Republican legislatures will bring that about. Currently, 19 states where it was already difficult to vote have enacted laws targeting people of color, the old, and those with disabilities. The laws purposely reduce the number of polling places available to them, as well as reducing the number of drop boxes for ballots, and limiting early voting. In two states it is a crime to help an elderly or disabled person return a ballot. In one it is a crime to give water or food to anyone waiting in line to vote.

There may well never be another opposition candidate declared the winner of a close statewide election. Because of the aforementioned suppression laws and others, there will be very few such races. But just in case, the voter suppression laws also give state legislatures power to interfere with certification by election officials, sometimes making them criminals for doing their job.

There is no remedy at the federal level for this, thanks to the current version of an old, racist, user-friendly device called the filibuster and lack of will from the current government. Aside from suppression of the opposition, there will be no shortage of legitimate voters for fascism. Trumpian fascism has also drawn adherents ranging from gangsters to sincere patriots. The gangsters had a dress rehearsal on 6 January 2021. Many others all along the spectrum recently won an election in Virginia, which is not even a voter suppression state. The current center-left government is unconcerned, convinced it can "out organize" voter suppression. See how well that worked out in Virginia?

But a fascist takeover requires a considerable degree of violence, doesn't it? Yes.

Italy Militias, known as black shirts, engaged in a widespread campaign of violence and intimidation against opponents.

U.S. Right wing militias are on the rise, in numbers and openness. Almost all Republican office holders are fine with that. Even the few remaining mainstream Republicans are increasingly subject to threats and intimidation against themselves and their families. Police and vigilante violence against people of color continues unabated. The largest expense item at the trial of people accused in the violent 2017 neo-Nazi rally in Charlottesville, Va. was security for the victims. Threats and violence are increasingly the province of those asserting a right to spread a deadly disease.

But the policy pendulum swings and it always swings back, right?

Not this time. Not for a long time and a period of massive injustice.

Italy Mussolini really had no policy agenda except the regimentation of society on behalf of the wealthy interests who largely financed his rise, including the suppression of organized labor. The trains were already running on time. His primary policy objective was to stay in power.

U.S. Republican legislators, drinking of the Trump cult Kool-aid, are exactly the same. With the exception of an interest in regimentation of society and pro-rich economic policies, they only have slogans: "Freedom!"; "Make American Great Again!". Try to name one current Republican policy other than staying in power. And unfortunately, staying in

office is the principal goal of the opposition. No one is acting on the wisdom expressed by candidate Pete Buttigieg in 2020: "Do the right thing, then explain it."

Policy on regimentation of society, known popularly as the "culture war", is another matter. Fascists have a keen interest in that. In addition to always showing the public who their enemies are, blaming all problems on them, and never accepting any responsibility themselves, fascists do have policies about regimenting society in their image. Two of the most important policy areas are women and education.

Italy The fascists' stated mission was to "rescue women from emancipation", essentially to limit the role of women to motherhood.

U.S. Abortion is effectively unavailable to the poor now and soon will be even less available to all women. A 19-year-old woman who used drugs during pregnancy is currently serving 4 years in prison after having a miscarriage. There are sexual predators in Congress, on the Supreme Court, and of course in the person of the last President.

Italy Educational policy under Mussolini was the inculcation of a national religion of nationalism, all ostensibly in conformity with the doctrines of the Catholic church.

U.S. Would-be fascists work for an educational system that is "one nation under God", by which they mean their version of the Christian god. Already forbidden, not by federal statute but school district by school district, is any criticism of current "no risk" capitalism, or U.S. exceptionalism. Discussion of historical truths about racism and

colonialism is likewise forbidden. Overall, critical thinking has not been taught for decades.

No analogy, of course, is perfect. And the purpose of this essay is not to make the case that the U.S. will descend into fascism, especially in exactly the way that happened in Italy. Rather, it is to contend that it is time to put aside the patriotic nonsense that was so important to the rise of fascism and talk about the U.S. as it is. To examine it realistically, and without hatred or rancor. After all, for Canadians it is that elephant that has grown even larger since Trudeau the elder identified it. From such an examination, I suggest we will find that the U.S. is a country whose government and people are no better or worse than any other. A country as susceptible of adopting violent oppression of its people and others as were Italy and Germany. It has at least the potential to do more harm than those nations could ever dream of. So, it is past time to open the discussion about the "F Word".

NONVIOLENCE MEANS...

EVERYONE IS

WELCOME

HERE,

MIGRANTS

AND

IMMIGRANTS

AND

MORE



Roxie Davila



CAMPAIGN NONVIOLENCE

WHAT IF "THE SEVEN HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE" WERE APPLIED TO NATIONS?

AL MYTTY

The bestselling book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People—Powerful Lessons in Personal Change* by Stephen R. Covey was released in 1989. In August 2011, Time magazine listed *7 Habits* as one of "The 25 Most Influential Business Management Books".

When I first read the book in 1991, I was busy in my professional career trying to balance work, life, family, business relationships, community causes, and my spiritual life. Personal peace, relational peace, and world peace were not in my thoughts, values, and actions.

I watched the news on television and believed the U.S. Gulf War was a just war to defend the people of Kuwait and force Iraq to leave Kuwait. When the Soviet Union dissolved, I was glad. I thought democracy had prevailed. The U.S. had won the Cold War. Americans were the good guys, or so I naively thought.

I paid little attention to the Iran-Contra scandal when the U.S. illegally sold weapons to Iran and used the profits of those sales to support the Contras in Nicaragua. I knew little about the U.S. training of assassins, and the assassinations committed in Central America.

The Balkan states were confusing to me. I ignored the expansion of NATO, the placement of weapons much closer to Russia, the U.S. military bases and installations scattered all over the world, and the threat the U.S. was to world stability.

Over the years, my attention to U.S. foreign policy increased. I have come to realize that U.S. policies focus first on military might and force, while we "defend our national interests." Our addiction to war, militarism, military interventions, CIA plots, and coups, are the methods by which we claim to support freedom, democracy, and the rule of law around the world.

Now retired and devoting my time and energy as an activist for peace, I re-read *7 Habits*. I wonder, "If those habits make for effective people, and effective corporations, can't they also make for effective societies and even countries? Can these *7 Habits* be part of a framework for a peaceful world?"

Fundamental to the *7 Habits* is an abundance mentality, a way of thinking that there are enough resources for all humanity. In contrast, a scarcity mindset, zero-sum game thinking, is founded on

the idea that if someone else wins, someone must lose.

Covey describes the habits people need to move from dependence to independence and progressing to interdependence. Similarly, societies and nations, can move from dependence to independence to interdependence. However, independence (my country first) without progress to interdependence...leads to adversarial relationships, competition, and war.

We can accept and embrace our interdependence and adopt an abundance mentality, believing there is enough food, water, space, air, renewable energy, healthcare, security, and other resources for all. Then all of humanity can thrive, not just survive.

The global pandemic has been an opportunity to reveal our interdependence. Mitigating global climate change is another. Human trafficking. Drug trade. Refugee crises. Human rights abuses. Nuclear weapons. Demilitarizing space. The list goes on. Sadly, we squander opportunities to be effective and embrace interdependence, and the world sinks into violent conflict and war.

Let us see how using Covey's *7 Habits* at the tribal, societal, and national levels might work with an abundance mentality instead of zero-sum game thinking.

Habit 1: Be Proactive. Proactivity is taking responsibility for one's reaction to events and taking the initiative to respond positively. Our behavior is a function of our decisions, not our conditions. We have the responsibility to make things happen. Look at the word responsibility—"response-ability"—the ability to choose your response. Proactive people recognize that responsibility.

At the societal and national level, nations can decide how to respond to events in the world. They can look to new treaties, mediation, unarmed civilian protection, the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, a reformed UN General Assembly all as ways to proactively seek solutions to conflicts.

Habit 2: "Begin with the end in mind". What is the individual, societal, national vision for the future—the mission statement?

For the U.S., the mission statement is the Preamble to the Constitution: "**WE THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES**, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

For the UN, the mission statement is the Preamble to the Charter: "**WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED** to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

AND FOR THESE ENDS to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good

neighbours, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

So, is the U.S. fulfilling its mission statement? How about the United Nations and its member nations? We have a long way to go if we want an "effective" world.

Habit 3: "Put first things first". Covey talks about what is important versus what is urgent.

The priority should be the following order:

- Quadrant I. Urgent and important (Do)
- Quadrant II. Not urgent but important (Plan)
- Quadrant III. Urgent but not important (Delegate)
- Quadrant IV. Not urgent and not important (Eliminate)

The order is important. What are the urgent and important issues facing the world? Global climate change? The refugee and migration challenges? Starvation? Nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction? Global pandemics? Sanctions imposed by the powerful upon others? Exorbitant amounts spent on militarism and preparation for war? Extremists?

How would the peoples of the world decide? How about the UN General Assembly, without the threat of veto from the Security Council?

Interdependence. The next three habits address interdependence--working with others. Imagine a world where all people recognize their interdependence. How would we manage pandemics, global climate change, famine, natural disasters, hostilities, and violence? Think with an "abundance mentality." Can we work together so that humanity can survive?

Habit 4: "Think win-win". Seek mutually beneficial, win-win solutions or agreements. Valuing and respecting others by seeking a "win" for all is better than if one wins and the other loses.

Think about our world today. Do we seek win-win, or do we think we must win at any cost? Is there a way for both sides to win?

Habit 5: "Seek first to understand, then to be understood". Use empathetic listening to genuinely understand the other position. That empathetic listening applies to all sides. All peoples and nations should seek to understand what their adversaries want. Imagine if seeking first to understand could become a habit. Understanding does not mean agreement.

Disagreements and conflicts will always occur. However, war and mass slaughter will be less likely when people genuinely understand one other.

Habit 6: "Synergize". Synergy means that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Imagine what societies and nations could accomplish when they seek win-win relationships, seek to understand each other, and work together for goals that they cannot do alone!

Habit 7: "Sharpen the saw". Just like individuals need to take care of their tools, so nations need to evaluate and hone the skills and tools needed to be effective. The tools of war and violence have not brought peace. Other tools are available and ready for us to use.

"World peace through nonviolent means is neither absurd nor unattainable. All other methods have failed. Thus, we must begin anew. Nonviolence is a good starting point." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

When will we adopt a new way of thinking? We need to replace our habits of environmental destruction, war, militarism, and violence with new habits. Dr. King also told us that humankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to humankind.

WHY PEACE AND JUSTICE STUDIES NEEDS AN INTERSECTIONAL LENS

NIKO COADY

Truthfully, I do not believe that we can accurately, successfully, or productively discuss women in nonviolence or peace-driven movements without looking through an intersectional lens. Intersectionality encourages activists to push themselves, think outside the traditional box, and do the extra work needed to ensure that we do not ask the same unanswerable, one-dimensional questions. Intersectionality allows us to create authentic relationships, build trust and confidence with communities for genuine and meaningful engagement. As women continue to push for more awareness, activism, and policy changes around violence against women and the fight for women's rights, intersectionality is clearly a concept that can help push change forward and show politicians, perpetrators, and patriarchal systems how many obstacles women are facing underneath the surface of gender.

We often think of intersectionality as a theory we apply to a separate subject, or as a concept that we must understand in order to create change in other areas. However, in the world of peace and nonviolent movements, we must push ourselves to reframe our perspective. The lens in which we look through. If we can see the world through this

intersectional lens, the world around us suddenly becomes full of opportunities for help, and for change. Right now, we often look at the world and see hate, worry, chaos. Little opportunity for change and gigantic barriers we must destroy before tackling any obstacles. But applying intersectionality allows us to find the empathy, compassion, and hidden paths of change that are embedded into these barriers.

Our current approach to global justice and peace issues often involves comparing our suffering to others. Seeing justice through an intersectional lens allows us to remove comparison from the equation, and to simply see how these problems affect our identities and different groups. For example, we often discuss how the epidemic of sexual violence affects young women. We leave the suffering of so many others out of the conversation, because it feels as though there is no comparison to this groups' suffering. However, when we are trying to find solutions to sexual violence, seeing the problem through an intersectional lens can help us to better address it. Thinking of the older women who are afraid of sending their daughters to postsecondary schools can help us understand how traditional attitudes impact our systems.

Considering the fear that marginalized groups such as Indigenous people, Black women, and members of the 2SLGTQIA+ community often carry can help us to provide better resources and properly train publicly funded supports, such as law enforcement and social workers. Remembering that many men are carrying internalized guilt for their gender, without knowing how to discuss it or address it, can help us push conversations into the open and provide spaces for honest understanding. Problems like sexual violence don't have to be about who is suffering the most. When looking through an intersectional lens, we can see the puzzle pieces of global suffering that form a whole problem, and this allows us to understand the intricate connections between each group.

As a student, I am lucky to be in a space where I get to continue learning and evolving, and challenging traditional theories is encouraged each and every day. However, you do not need to be a student to change your lens. We can all be better listeners. We can empathize with each other, and help understanding how our individual suffering affects those around us.

Intersectionality is not just about improving the theories we have already created – it's about learning how to change the world around us, one step at a time.

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A SPACE FOR PEACE: AN INTERVIEW WITH FRANCISCO BURGOS

INTERVIEWED BY GABRIEL ERTSGAARD

Francisco Burgos is Executive Director of Pendle Hill, a Quaker study and retreat center in Pennsylvania, where he previously served as Director of Education. Prior to joining Pendle Hill, he was Director of the Center for Community Initiatives at the Monteverde Institute in Costa Rica. From 2012 to 2015 he was Head of School at Monteverde Friends School in Costa Rica. He also served with the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C. and the American Friends Service Committee in Baltimore, Maryland. Burgos has an M.A. in Sustainable Development from The School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont, and a Doctor of Education from Universidad de La Salle in Costa Rica.

GE: Could you tell us about the mission and history of Pendle Hill, as well as your role there?

FB: Pendle Hill was founded during the Great Depression (in 1930) to provide an educational platform for Friends and seekers. Our founders wanted to create some space for renewal and transformation in an academic setting, but without being an accredited setting. That vision allowed to first generation of Pendle Hillers to embrace the monastic tradition of worship, working together, and building community with a Quaker lens. We were an institution that wanted to incorporate and represent the many branches within Quakerism,

while at the same time being open to the world. This was a very welcoming community that invited people to discern what their vocation was in the world.

By the time I joined Pendle Hill as Director of Education in 2017, we no longer had a residential student program. (I became Executive Director during the pandemic, and until recently served in dual director roles.) At that time, my job was to figure out how to bring back transformative programs, but through short-term courses: a week, a weekend, a day. And we needed to leave space for the exploration of art and spirituality, for peace studies and social action.

GE: What did you learn about Pendle Hill during the process of renewing your educational offerings?

FB: Within that process, one of the first things that we did was identify our roots. We realized that there were several pillars that have always been within us. I can name a few of them:

(1) The strong sense of community. Every offering, whether art focused or spiritual activism focused, is an invitation to the people who decide to join us. That sense of community works in two ways: first,

the inner community created within the program itself, and second, the impact that participants are able to have in their own local communities.

(2) How our programs connect to the world today. As our history shows, we have always made the effort to respond to our social reality through a faithful lens. That is, we try to listen to the inner voice in order to respond with creativity and intentionality to those social realities that are in need of transformation.

(3) The inner work that each individual needs to do. There is always a dance between what I am called to do for my own transformation and the support I can give to the communal transformation that is necessary today. One cannot happen without the other, so we also want to create a space for that personal self-work.

GE: What role does peace education, specifically, play in your programming?

FB: In the areas of peace and social justice, our main focus has been on programs that offer nonviolence training. A good example is the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). We have been a host of AVP for many, many years. During the pandemic, we have had to think about how to offer this as a hybrid experience into the future. We also offer programs that explore how to conceptualize peace beyond the absence of violence. This involves conceptualizing peace as putting love into action. This involves conceptualizing peace as a roadmap for justice, including environmental justice. Our exercise of nonviolence has to consider how we're engaging with creation.

For our First Monday lecture series, we invite a guest lecturer every month. They challenge and provoke

us to look at a topic that otherwise we may not be affected by. Those topics explore the many ways we can be more proactive in the work that is required to promote peace and mutual understanding around the globe.

We also offer workshops that allow people to explore ways to protect their communities, to make them more resilient, while promoting mutual understanding. For example, we have integrated programs that look at racial reparations.

Dismantling structures of racism is a particular and practical way of welcoming peace within our groups. So far, the offerings we have done under that theme have been fantastic. People have not just committed themselves to going back and engaging with others in their local communities. They have also made financial commitments to make reparation a priority within their personal lives.

GE: How does peace education intersect with your arts offerings?

FB: Many of our arts courses have invited people to the next level by exploring art in a unique way. This involves looking at art as a spiritual expression that speaks deeply about our journeys, both the individual and the shared ones. Within that process, how can we create a space for the beloved community? That requires from us a strong intention for building peace along the way.

When I think about our offerings that explore art and the transformative work of peace and nonviolence, several artists-in-residence come to mind. Their own art exploratory process is a great example of the peace work that we are called to promote and do. Why? The creative process requires that you look over and over at the things you are working on. Peace work has a similar

process. How we try to solve conflict is completely different if we remember that this is a moving situation. We need to revisit our work over and over as we look to move forward in the process of conflict transformation.

One day, I went to visit an artist-in-residence, and he had this beautiful painting based on Psalm 129. I thought that the painting was done. The next day, I went to the studio again, and he had completely transformed the entire thing. He explained that his overnight work was a reflection of his own struggle with school shootings, especially violence at the high school where he used to work. He didn't just want to create an artwork that reflected a passage of scripture, he wanted that passage to reflect the situation in which he was living. Through that, he wanted to promote the sense that peace is possible. This is just one example of the things that I have witnessed during my time at Pendle Hill. And this is how we see that the intersectionality between peace, the arts, and many other layers is very live here.



NO PARKING
IN FRONT
OF THIS
BUILDING

HIKING BLIND

BRANDON SWANN

Feet on the ground, one after the other.
Forward momentum, steep angle ahead, elevation gain.
Familiar and free, this trail is accessible to people like me.

Finally, I see the peak!
Tired legs and feet tramp forward and upward,
Tenaciously trudging to the top.
"Tis a false peak!" A gulp. A sigh.
This fake summit does make a nice place to rest, however.

"Might as well!"
"Phweew! Steep climb!"
After a short rest,
Dedication drags my dry body back to it's feet,
Dutifully dodging fragile plant-life in a feeble ecosystem.
Daylight is dim when I realize:
"I have made it! It will be a beautiful sunrise!"
I fall asleep- accomplished.
A dream.

Upon awakening, I see from the inside that my tent is covered in beads of rain drops and the wind has changed.

I put on my warm wool shelter to cover my skin as the glorious sun appears to disperse it's rays and warmth across my accomplishment.

I pack up and begin to conquer other peaks,
But never considered the other side,
Which is now apparent as I want to continue on this path.

I never considered the other side.
The path eroded.
I am standing on a peak with nowhere to go.
I am buffeted by the elements.
I have created isolation for myself.
A path has eroded.

Time to pull out a map and compass.
There are only certain ways that are passable.
Maybe, I will meet a fellow traveler.
Maybe, someone else is clearing a new path.

But I can't wait til then.
North bounders and South bounders cuss the mountain, alike.
For all the work that was done in building and preserving,
It is no longer viable for recreation or travel.
Only CEO's, trail maintainers, scientists, and government officials may visit it now.
Restrictions of rights.
Erosion.
Here we are, years later.
A corporation bought the mountain,
"To preserve it."
"They" will let "us" know when "we" can enjoy it.
One day, "they" will make a beautiful landscape for "us".
But they never do
And there is no "us".
There is no mountain to see,
Only one trail, on one side of it, but it depends on the side you came from.

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I wrote this poem to be an allegory for Civil Rights and racial reconciliation in the United States.

TO CRY AND TO CRY OUT

MARC PILISUK

I began life with a cry,
A cry said that something inside
was not in harmony
with this world of buzzing confusion.

Beyond my inner discomfort
The sound was also a cry out
to a world beyond myself,
to care for me, to comfort me,
with a soft teddy bear
and to welcome me into a web of loving care -
To a world of beauty, with laughter and
amazement

Many moons have past
I recall the times I felt ready to cry
Over pains, sickness, and losses.
With illness and age echoes of cries yelling
discomfort peek through.
Again the kindness of people offers comfort.

I have lived in a world harboring
hatred, injustice, and violence.
I have cried out against this.

Now the challenges of this world in which I am a part
sometimes feel hopeless.

Extinction of the bear that had inspired my Teddy,
Recurring pandemics, endless war, the bitter hunger
of children
and the destruction of a viable habitat.

No matter the odds what remains for me is to cry out
as part of a wave to save the gift of life.



May Peace Prevail On Earth

I TOO DREAM

ROBERT SPENCER KNOTTS

I wrote "I Too Dream" in the summer of 2020 as my response to a justly famous poem by Langston Hughes, "I Dream A World." In his lovely work, Hughes imagines a utopian society for humankind. He begins with these lines:

"I dream a world where man
No other man will scorn,
Where love will bless the earth
And peace its paths adorn"

My vision is very different. I do not believe in utopia, not in any form outside the human imagination. To me, this concept presented as humanity's attainable future ignores the fundamental nature of our minds – and fixes our attention on goals that frustrate more realistic attempts to improve as a species. My poem, "I Too Dream," offers a reimagining of Hughes' fantasy, looking toward a still distant but I believe achievable moral evolution. I hope you may enjoy it.

RSK

I too dream a world
but unlike worlds most
dreamed before.

Mine is a world
pocked by bickering and war,
snarling people
and barking mobs.
Oh yes, I dream of human beings
foaming yet with angers
and fizzing still with fears
bred by the familiar misunderstandings
among careless flung words.

All beings as themselves
so human,
then as now.

But all with one thing imagined
more for those living
in my vivid world anew.

Because my dreaming dreams of
future skirmish-wars defused,
our old hatreds resolving
in a new confidence of knowledge
that wedges aside the ancients
of myth and superstition
lingering indifferently
from millennia elapsed.
I dream of bicker noises
overtaken by song,
the transcendent hymn
of our humanity
crescendoing in a joyful ode
whenever the voices of dissonance
again rise to a din.

Oh yes, dissonance shall surely sound again
and often again in that world I dream,
disharmony intrinsic to a cosmos atonal,
a natural music playing ever out of key
in the chaos of clash and clatter
written into nature's grand score.

We are organisms
fashioned of conflict.
Crossed purposes of interests and
crosscurrents of histories
will move us then as now,
the panting passions of our peoples
still puffed up and selfish centered.

We cannot be more than we are made.
But we need not be less.

Yes when I dream of human beings
being as the human finally fulfilled,
every member of our envisioned species
then understands that existence without
conflict has always been fantasy,
a conjuring of Utopia unattainable
amid a universe propelled
ever by the myriad colliding
streams of necessity.

Nature's legacy to human beings
is conflict, oh yes,
but conflict resolved by reason
is humanity's gift to nature.

In this world I dream about
judgment will nearly
balance out emotion,
the angers and fears of this moment
dissolving soon in the wisdom
of the next.

We cannot be more than we are made.
But we need not be less.

As an infant develops to a child
who ages to an adult
who may evolve to a
human being wondering and wise,
so humanity still toddles
toward our maturity,
wobbling step by
faltered step in
the long long childhood.

I dream this child standing
one day a young adult
proud and imperfect,
oftentime curious with uncertainty,
straining to discern the confusing paths
forward before advancing
forcefully in bold stride.

PATH OF PEACE

BROOKE D. TRACY

I found in harrowed wanderings a path where heroes lie
The pain which brings one here was evident in nature's sigh

Moss which covered trees so old and wise whisper still,

Peace to they who lie awake, peace for they who die

I felt unworthy to step by the souls who kept their peace
Each slow turn hissed, Love, oh love, over the deceased
And as the call guided my steps o'er the peaceful hill
I felt the land and spirits cry, of which I was the least

Release, release, the bones and song arose from valleys low
While I heard soft melodies, I let my burdens go
Up into the Heavens where my heart beheld a thrill
For loved ones made sweet music where there is no angry foe

Yet here on earth so unbeknownst to bombs and guns ablaze
The song still rose, entreating they who dare to disobey
Come in and gather, still they bid, to young and old who will
To all that dare to offer hands to aid and not to raze

With heavy breath, I gazed behind, the path so dark and narrow

The branches swayed and murmured then, *Let peace shoot like the arrow*
Down below the choirs called; their hymns I would fulfill

In goodwill march for peace, drawing life from bones and marrow

When the melody doth rise from both my soul and theirs
I shall meet the Heavens and bring music to mine heirs
'Tis the age-old question yet, to kill or grant freewill
But oh, the path of heroes' peaceful song still floods the air

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CO-CHAIRS

Greetings, PJSA!

We write this just a few weeks after some of us were able to see each other in person for the first time in two years, such a treat! Although most of us are Zoom fatigued, it is great to have that as an option for those who could not travel to Milwaukee.

The conference was, as usual, wonderful and inspiring. On behalf of the Board, we thank Lynn Woehrle, who was the Conference Chair, and her entire team at University of Milwaukee as well as the Wisconsin Institute for Peace and Conflict Studie. We also extend our gratitude to Executive Director Michael Loadenthal, who is always such an integral part of the conference and of PJSA in general. We are also very grateful for the PJSA members who brought students to the conference! Next year's conference, hosted at the University of Mount Union, promises to be another vibrant opportunity for scholars, activists and students to meet and collaborate.

The Board had a very useful meeting. We are pleased to announce that membership has been increasing and thank Board members Dean Johnson and Jeremy Rinker for their efforts. And of course, we thank all of YOU, our members, for supporting PJSA. We are also encouraging everyone to look into institutional memberships if your campus is not yet one. Questions about that can be directed to Jeremy Rinker.

The shift to virtual meetings and events due to the global pandemic has been trying for us all, but one positive note is that it prompted PJSA to offer some additional programming throughout the year. We collaborated to sponsor a one-day forum on the death penalty featuring Sister Helen Prejean as the keynote speaker, and we will again be partnering for dating and domestic violence awareness events in February. We will also be sponsoring several virtual panels in late March focused on the legacy of slavery, so stay tuned to the listserv and PJSA's social media for those details. If you have ideas for other collaborations, please do not hesitate to reach out to either of us.

We are excited to launch our podcast soon and also remind members that any feedback on the journals can be directed to Publications Chair Matt Johnson at mwjohanson19@gmail.com. Further, feedback on this magazine can be directed to Laura Finley (lfinley@barry.edu) as guest editor and to Wim Laven (wimlaven@gmail.com) as editor.

Here's to a brighter and more peaceful 2022!

Laura Finley and Jennie Barron
Co-Chairs, PJSA Board of Directors

SADAKO SASAKI'S LIFE EXPERIENCE AS A PEDAGOGICAL RESOURCE TO DEVELOP EMPATHY IN THE PELT CLASS.

VANESSA POLASTRI

It was the year 2011 and I was a teacher of English at San Marcos Primary school, a house of studies that is located in the suburbs of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Exactly ten years ago I told Sadako Sasaki's story to my 6th-form students within an institutional project of articulation between that last grade and Secondary Education level, which they were getting closer to. With the Spanish language teacher they read a version of the story entitled "Mil Grullas" (One thousand paper cranes) by Elsa Bornemann, a well known national children's literature author, and with the Art teacher they learnt to make the origami cranes.

I'll move on to describe how I structured my lesson then:

Pre-Reading: Match the terms with their meaning.

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1- Hiroshima ___ | a- Massive destruction
weapon |
| 2- Atomic bomb ___ | b- Sacred bird in Japan |
| 3- Leukemia ___ | c- Japanese city |
| 4- Crane ___ | d- Living in harmony and
respect |
| 5- Peace ___ | e-Type of cancer |

While Reading: All these sentences are wrong. Correct them with information from the text.

- 1) This is a fictional story.
 - 2) Sadako Sasaki lived in the United States.
 - 3) The smoke from the atomic bomb explosion caused an illness in Sadako.
 - 4) When she was in the hospital she finished folding all the paper cranes.
 - 5) In Japan it is said that when you make one thousand paper cranes, you can make a trip.
 - 6) Sadako's family and friends planted a tree to remember her.
 - 7) On the day of the departed spirits people leave roses at the statue in Hiroshima Peace Park.
 - 8) People pray for health in the plaque.
-

Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes

This is the true story of a girl, Sadako Sasaki, who lived in Hiroshima at the time of the atomic bombing by the United States. She had leukemia from the radiation and spent her time in a nursing home creating origami (folded paper) cranes in hope of making a thousand of them. She was inspired to do so by the Japanese saying that one who created a thousand origami cranes would then be granted a wish. Her wish was simply to live. However, she managed to fold only 644 cranes before she became too weak to fold any more, and died shortly after. Her friends and family helped finish her dream by folding the rest of the cranes, which were buried with Sadako. They also built a statue of Sadako holding a giant golden origami crane in Hiroshima Peace Park.

Now, every year on Obon Day, which is a holiday in Japan to remember the departed spirits of one's ancestors, thousands of people leave paper cranes near the statue. On the statue there is a plaque: "This is our cry. This is our prayer. Peace on Earth."

Bornemann's literary text was based on Sadako's life. However, the tale was smoothed. I preferred to resort to these biographical facts which, though harsh, faced my students with the cruelty of war and the desire for a peaceful world.

Last year, in the middle of the chaos the Coronavirus pandemic brought about, a Music teacher from the same Primary school I used to work at, Andrea Cruz, contacted me to translate some children stories of her authorship she was recording and uploading to her YouTube channel. Her tales are aimed at dealing with Comprehensive Sexuality Education which implies gender equality, breaking gender stereotypes of beauty and role, understanding our own feelings, as well as those of others, building empathy and being respectful. Believe it or not, I reencountered Sadako through Andrea's words and recorded my version in English, "Paper Dreams", for any teacher who would like to use it as a class resource.

Available at: Story: "Papers Dreams" (CSE)

Sadako's moving story has truly marked me. I hope she encourages peace and conviviality in all of us, as teachers in our classrooms and as responsible citizens wherever we live.

Post-Reading: Complete the conclusion of the text with...

TRADITION – DIFFERENCES – SOLVE – SYMBOL – WAR – CRANES – KILLS
– PEACE

_____ (1) only hurts and _____ (2) . It does not _____
(3) any conflict. Intercultural _____ (4) should be appreciated, not
suppressed. Making one thousand paper _____ (5) is a Japanese
_____ (6) but it has become a world _____ (7) of
_____ (8).

IDENTITY AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN ARGENTINA'S HISTORY

BERNARDINA MEZA

"Identity and its Importance in Argentina's History". A Pedagogical Sequence to Foster Reflection upon the Importance of our Identity as a Human Right at the Tertiary Level.

From March until November 2021, I worked as an assistant teacher for the subject "Discursive Practices for Written Communication I" at the English Teacher Training College N° 41, a state-run institution in the suburbs of Buenos Aires, Argentina. This year in Argentina, tertiary level lessons were delivered virtually via Zoom due to the pandemic. As a consequence, every teaching sequence was thought to be developed online and the use of apps as well as multimodal material was fundamental. As an assistant teacher, I was in charge of creating a special unit for the beginning of the course. The first thing I thought of was the concept of "Identity" and how important this concept is for us Argentinians. Lessons began in March, and as a coincidence, March is a particular month for us Argentinians, especially the 24th of March as it is "The Day of Remembrance for Truth and Justice". Every year, on that special day, we devoted a moment to raise our students' awareness of the importance of our identity and the value of our "Abuelas de plaza de Mayo" and their peaceful fight. "Identity and its importance in

Argentina's History" was the name chosen for this unit.

You will find the pedagogical sequence developed below:

Warm up:

- 1- Follow this link to "Mentimeter" app and write the first two words that come to your mind when you listen to/ read the word "IDENTITY". All the words appeared automatically on the screen so that everyone can see them.
- 2- Find the definition of "Identity" in a dictionary.
- 3- Introduce yourself in three sentences. (The idea behind this activity was to create a chain of introductions to recognize our similarities and differences.)
- 4- IDENTITY: HOW IS THIS CONCEPT RELATED TO ARGENTINA'S HISTORY? You are going to provide an answer to this question but first, go to twitter, instagram or any social networks you use and search #identidad #abuelasdifusión, what have you found there?

Reading:

1- Read the following article and highlight its main points:

Article: "I'm a child of Argentina's 'disappeared'" by Tone Sutterud, The Guardian – 2014

After Reading:

1- After reading the article, watch this Youtube video. Write down any new piece of information.

Video: Institucional Abuelas 2016 - English subtitles

2- Create a mind map, sketch or visual text which includes the main points in both article and video. Upload it on the padlet.

Final Steps:

1- We are going on a virtual art gallery tour. This virtual exhibition is called "Nietos/as". "Nietos/as" was created by the photographer Alejandro Reynoso and the journalist Maria Eugenia Ludueña. You can find it in the Palacio Sarmiento, first floor "Pasaje de la identidad". Click [this link](#) and go on a virtual tour.

In the third slide, you will find 42 portraits of 42 "Nietos/as". You will select just one of them, imagine... What would he/she tell us about his/her story? What can you see in him/her?

2- Describe them considering the following:

- What is this person like? What are his/ her qualities?
- What do I like about this person?
- What do I feel towards this person?
- Why did I choose this person?

3- Paste the selected photograph in your portfolios and include the description. Go to your classmate's portfolios and write in comments, what would you add to their descriptions?

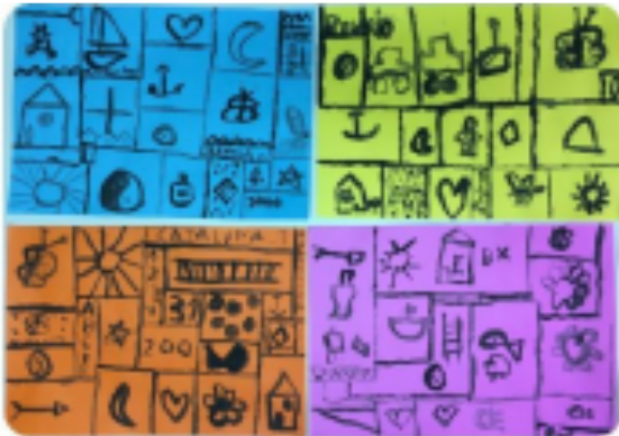
4- Visit the [art exhibition](#) "Ausencias" from Gustavo Germano. Select a photograph and narrate the story behind it.

6- Paste the selected photograph and its story in our virtual museum.

TEACHING PEACE THROUGH ART

SOLEDAD MARTINEZ

In 2017 I launched a yearly school project called "Traveling through art." Each unit was focused on a country and on two or three artists from that country who would become the inspiration for the students' artworks. That year we "travelled" from South America to North America. Students enjoyed it greatly and learned a lot from all the artists and techniques we explored during that school year.



Artwork inspired by the art of Oswaldo Guayasamin (Ecuador)



Artworks inspired by the art of Joaquin Torres Garcia (Uruguay)

In 2018, we continued our journey in Europe. We observed, compared and discussed famous and unknown artists.



Exploring the art of Edgar Degas (France)



Artworks inspired by the art of Edgar Degas (France)

In 2019, encouraged by my own students who were really excited about continuing our exploration on more exotic lands, I decided we would visit Africa. I must confess I had no previous knowledge about African artists, but perhaps this was the reason why this experience turned out to be incredibly rich, both for my students and for me.

Research on African art / artists

I used internet and social media for my personal research. I am very curious myself, and I managed to contact some artists on Instagram or via email. When I started receiving their answers, I became even more engaged with the project.

In Argentina there are not many African descendants or inhabitants, and therefore the first time I showed my students a video of African artists, they were very surprised. I realised then that my journey would be focused on raising awareness about cultural diversity and on developing empathy and critical thinking, which I consider to be the seeds of peace.



ADINKRA SYMBOLS (Ghana, Africa)

Ghana: Adinkra symbols

Even though the whole yearly project was truly interesting and unforgettable, I will focus here on the unit of Ghana. During my research I had discovered the traditional Adrinkra symbols which represent values, proverbs and wisdom. When I started observing each of them, I realised they represent human values and anyone on Earth could feel related to them.

In class we observed their shapes, discussed their meanings and each kid said which was their

favourite symbol. They created their own designs with black tempera on coloured paper, even separating the symbols with the typical lines of the Adinkra designs (painted with a tool that resembles a comb).

The second week, we worked on the adinkra stamps. Ghana artists traditionally create handmade stamps by carving the symbols on pumpkin/squash and they use them to print on fabric. That fabric is then transformed into clothes, scarves and tunics they wear for special occasions.



Traditional adinkra scarves (Ghana, Africa)

At home I made my own set of Adinkra stamps, carving the symbols on pumpkin.

In class, I showed my students some real videos of the process of creating the stamps and the ink for printing. Then I showed them the stamps I had made and we prepared the materials for printing: we would print our favourite symbols on banners.

Some kids picked the FRIENDSHIP symbol, some picked the UNITY one, or the PEACE symbol. (I had carved almost 20 different symbols). I divided the class into pairs and they all helped each other to print and hang their banners.

We worked on the adinkra symbols for four weeks, drawing, painting, printing, and even playing in the garden with those symbols (they started incorporating these symbols into their outdoors tick-tack-toes).

While we were working on the symbols, I was exchanging messages with Raphael Adjetei Adjey Mayne, an artist from Ghana who lives in Germany and who incorporates the adinkra symbols in his contemporary mixed media artworks. I told him what we were doing, and he became very interested in our exploration. He explained how he uses the symbols in his artworks and in some T-shirt designs.



Artwork by Raphael Adjetei Mayne

Each time I received a message from him, I would tell the kids, who were really excited about this special communication. They said they wanted to ask him questions in English, so I filmed each of

them and sent Raphael their questions. He made a video for them with a beautiful message, encouraging them to continue making art and to continue expressing through art, sending them his best wishes from the other side of the world.

Surprise

At the end of the year, after “visiting” many other countries and learning about other African artists, we celebrated our Art Exhibit, an event where we hang the artworks, invite the families, give away some certificates and watch a video I usually prepare with photos of everything we’ve done during the school year. This time, I had a great surprise for my kids: Raphael’s video. When the kids saw Raphael speaking to them on the screen, they couldn’t believe it! They thought he had travelled to Argentina! They were so happy!

Conclusion

Art provides us with a sense of trust and openness that helps us to be flexible, to be ready to solve problems, to be open to the unexpected. Art helps us to connect with our inner feelings, and with the feelings of the ones who surround us. It helps us to feel part of a community. With this project, we were able to experience this in the literal sense, because not only did we learn about great artists and their art techniques, but we also felt how values like friendship, peace, unity, patience, and tolerance affect us and connect us no matter where we live. I’m sure that if we develop this invisible connection, peace will grow.



T-shirt designs inspired by the art of Raphael Adjetei Mayne



My students and I at the 2019 Art Exhibit. (The English Place, Tandil, Argentina.)