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SPECIAL ISSUE

The Business of War and Peace, and the Potential for Education to Play a Transformative Role

Editors: Paul R. Carr, Lakehead University & Brad J. Porfilio, Lewis University

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The Architecture of War: Framing an Anti-hegemonic Peace Education

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THE ARCHITECTURE OF WAR FRAMING AN ANTI-HEGEMONIC PEACE EDUCATION

Introduction

War, conflict and militarization, when we go beyond the superficial portraits presented to mainstream society through the corporate media, are everywhere. Most people are aware of some level of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan but what about the dozens of other locations around the world mired in some level of intense or relatively masked militarized engagement? What about the complicity of all citizens through their governments' actions, for example the development, manufacturing and sale of weapons, big and small, to a range of nefarious interests? Or what

about many citizens support for some unsavory regimes and interests through our ignorance, intransigence and/or indifference? The special issue of the *Peace Studies Journal* focuses on the business of war and peace, with a particular interest in the potential for education to play a transformative role.

It is our contention that peace and peace education are, or should be, a fundamental component of the educational experience for a number of reasons. Significantly, avoiding, omitting or marginalizing peace and peace education will only subvert the notion of a robust, meaningful and critical form of democracy (Carr, 2011). Students need to be made aware of war, militarization and conflict, and, more importantly, they need to be able to gain the critical consciousness necessary to support structures, policies, and institutions capable of promoting a culture of peace. If peace is not an option in our political, economic and socio-cultural construction of society, then are we destined to forever engage in killing as a means of dialog, mediation and human endeavor (Barash, 2010)? When peace and peace education are not explicitly and implicitly interwoven in and through the curriculum, the pedagogy, the policy documents and institutional culture of schools, are we to accept that students should not become engaged in developing and finding peaceful solutions to interpersonal, national, and transnational problems (Carr & Porfilio, 2012)?

For this special issue we would like to emphasize that macro-level problems are not, nor should they be, disconnected from our local social realities (Gruenewald, 2003). We are affected by what might be considered far-away events at many levels, including the moral imperative, which asks us to consider, philosophically and in a very real and realpolitik sense, what is the meaning of life. This could also blend over to visible problems in our own societies related to violence, towards women, children, men, minorities and in many other contexts. Within a specific educational context, we might also try to understand bullying, why it exists, and what we can do about it. War and peace are not pre-determined events; rather, they are manufactured, and we can shape their construction in positive ways. Education seems to be, for us, the most powerful, accessible, logical and far-reaching experience, instrument and process to positively affect the outcome of conflict (Carr, 2011). Power must be problematized, students must learn, and be permitted, to engage in a critical manner, and the education system, in its totality, needs to re-invent itself to more openly, inclusively and expansively seek out alternative visions, experiences, and encounters aimed at stimulating peace rather than war (Carr & Porfilio, 2012).

Unravelling the Positionality of Peace Within Peace Education

There is the universal concern, as is the case with so many other concepts related to education, how should we define and conceptualize peace. Is peace possibly a Western-based hegemonic tool to soften the edges on centuries of colonial misdeeds? Who defines peace, for whom, and how? Is it possible for aggressor, and aggressive, nations magically hold the mantle of divine intervention, in the form of supposedly civilized treaties, conventions and established research centres, while concurrently maintaining a presence or underpinning to the perpetuation of gross inequalities? (Finley, 2011; Harris & Morrison, 2003). For example, why was peace not more of an option before the Rwandan genocide, or why is it not more of an option of the protracted, lethal and barbarous situation presently taking place in the Congo? Is peace to be the proverbial ‘cherry on the Sunday’ for hegemonically-inclined interests to further impose their morals, values, political systems and economic templates, or is the rampant and nefarious militarization

that so miserably characterized the *de facto* American invasion of Iraq, despite a number of junior partners being coopted to send some troops for purely *quid pro quo* promises, really about, ultimately, one day, achieving peace? (Bonn, 2010)

The connection between war and peace is stridently tethered to epistemological perspectives that are often nourished by populations that feel that they have no option. But the ‘no option’ option is very expensive in terms of human life (in Iraq, in addition to the roughly 5,000 Americans killed, there are estimates of 100,000 to one million Iraqis being eliminated, not to mention the couple of million who were displaced, and the roughly 20 US soldiers who commit suicide monthly for the past several years political considerations, and, of course, economic indicator¹. How much has the US society lost because of the Iraq war? What has it gained? It is increasingly difficult to find someone willingly to publicly state that the war was justified, or that it brought about peace. The President of Iraq was known to be a tyrant, but so are many leaders around the world, some of whom are close allies to the US. So war did political leaders in their US focus their energy and resources only Saddam Hussein's regime for over a decade? These questions and issues are not mere details; rather, they need to be embodied with a critical, engaging and deliberative peace education curriculum, pedagogy and institutional culture.

If peace education is an add-on, a superfluous side-bar or extra, one that unequivocally avoids the hard questions, and equally acknowledging that there may not be one answer to eliminate constitutive forces that cause unjust power relationships, violence, militarism, and other institutional forms of oppressions, but rather an amalgam of perspectives that help to better inform, sensitize and stimulate us to re-think conflict, then it would seem of limited value (Barash, 2010). Peace education needs to cogently and critically consider what peace is, how power is infused into the framing of peace, and the function of such a subject. In reality, like many other components within the transformative forms of curricula (i.e., democracy, anti-racism, equity), it should not be parked into one course at one grade-level. It needs to breathe life into the educational experience, and requires an openness and positionality that allows it to be meaningful. War is disdainful, it is connected to our daily lives, even if we are able to omit and isolate it, and it cause great discomfort. Yet, fully extricating it from the educational experience would only serve to further entrench us in tacit support for killing as a means to resolve conflicts.

Is peace education counter-hegemonic or more likely a seductive surrogate to hegemonic education? No one is against peace, like no one is against the environment, but why is it so contentious to actually push the boundaries of the formal system to achieve tangible outcomes? Perhaps, as Razack (2005) has postulated, it is easier for the “civilized” nations to impose their interpretation of peace and peacekeeping on the “uncivilized” nations, thereby perpetuating privilege, power and neo-imperialism that serve to justify war and conflict. How should we understand power imbalances in which some in the North seek to determine the proper orientation for the many in the South? There is such a legacy of US intervention in Latin America, for example, that is astounding that many citizens in the US embrace the dominant narrative associated with the US's foreign policy. The US projects itself as being a involved in global affairs to promote goodness, “protecting its national security,” and upholding justice, rather than a country whose foreign policy reflects the interests of larger-scale corporate leaders who use enter foreign countries to promote their ideological and economic interests.

Razack (2005) also questions the motivations for hegemonic countries to delve into the pain of others, arguing that Black and Indigenous peoples are generally excised from the equation, serving to be further victimized. Could insipid and superficial peace education serve to maintain and sustain a new version of colonialism? The need to understand the underlying genesis of conflict would, therefore, seem to be pivotal within a peace education environment. When we consider how UNESCO, within its unique mandate and presence, we need to also examine what issues are raised, by whom how the agenda is set. The US withdraws from important international UN conferences on racism, boycotts the International Court for Crimes Against Humanity (supposedly fearing that it would be brought before it), Canada opts out of the Kyoto Protocol on the Environment, the US, Canada and Australia block efforts for recognition of Aboriginal rights, and the list goes on. Egypt was supported up until the last minute by the US, Libya was substantially bombarded and overrun, Yemen and Bahrain were supported by the US to put down significant Tunisian-style uprisings, and Saudi Arabia had the full and unbridled support the US empire. How should we consider such incoherent, incongruent and nefarious double-standards. Looking at Blum's work (2010), we are better equipped to unravel the "secret" behind US foreign policy at today's historical moment:

The secret to understanding US foreign policy is that there is no secret. Principally, one must come to the realization that the United States strives to dominate the world. Once one understands that, much of the apparent confusion, contradiction, and ambiguity surrounding Washington's policies fades away.

It would seem that one way to start to deconstruct media manipulation, bias and representation, alongside flimsy, esoteric thinking about how charitable *we* are, as opposed to how out of control *they* are, would be through peace education (Carr & Porfilio, 2012).

Ultimately, the educational system is problematic, and has been acquiescent to the major political and military forces shaping group-think hegemony, striving for more docility, compliance and patriotism, all of which enables more organized chaos *over there* (Porfilio & Malott, 2008; Saltman & Gabbard, 2003). Is there a "normalizing" effect to the creation of the discourse of peace?

The United Nation, UNESCO and Formal International Peace

It is worth considering UNESCO's (n.d.) *Declaration on a Culture of Peace*, which guides governments, international organizations and civil society to promote and strengthen a culture of peace in the new millennium as follows:

Article 1: A culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behaviour and ways of life based on:

1. Respect for life, ending of violence and promotion and practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation;
2. Full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law;

3. Full Respect for and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
4. Commitment to peaceful settlement of conflicts;
5. Efforts to meet the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations;
6. Respect for and promotion of the right to development;
7. Respect for and promotion of equal rights of and opportunities for women and men;
8. Respect for and promotion of the rights of everyone to freedom of expression, opinion and information;
9. Adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations;

Article 2: Progress in the fuller development of a culture of peace comes about through values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life conducive to the promotion of peace among individuals, groups and nations;

Article 3: The fuller development of a culture of peace is integrally linked to:

10. Promoting peaceful settlement of conflicts, mutual respect and understanding and international cooperation;
11. Compliance with international obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law;
12. Promoting democracy, development and universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
13. Enabling people at all levels to develop skills of dialogue, negotiation, consensus building and peaceful resolution of differences;
14. Strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring full participation in the development process;
15. Eradicating poverty and illiteracy and reducing inequalities within and among nations;
16. Promoting sustainable economic and social development;
17. Eliminating all forms of discrimination against women through their empowerment and equal representation at all levels of decision-making;
18. Ensuring respect for and promotion and protection of the rights of children;
19. Ensuring free flow of information at all levels and enhancing access thereto;
20. Increasing transparency and accountability in governance;
21. Eliminate all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
22. Advancing understanding, tolerance and solidarity among all civilizations, peoples and cultures, including towards ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;
23. Full realization of the rights of all peoples, including those living under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, to self-determination enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and embodied in the international covenants on human rights, as well as in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples contained in GA Resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960;

Article 4: Education at all levels is one of the principal means to build a culture of peace. In this context, human rights education is of particular importance;

Article 5: Governments have an essential role in promoting and strengthening a culture of peace;

Article 6: Civil society needs to be fully engaged in fuller development of a culture of peace;

Article 7: The educative and informative role of the media contributes to the promotion of a culture of peace;

Article 8: A key role in the promotion of a culture of peace belongs to parents, teachers, politicians, journalists, religious bodies and groups, intellectuals, those engaged in scientific, philosophical and creative and artistic activities, health and humanitarian workers, social workers, managers at various levels as well as to non-governmental organizations;

Article 9: The United Nations should continue to play a critical role in the promotion and strengthening of a culture of peace worldwide,

Some might consider this manifesto to be just marginal enough, while integrating the liberal discourse admirably, to work in a counter-productive fashion in normalizing the discourse of peace as a placebo to lull people of good will into believing that we are all involved in the peace-building process. For instance, some may argue the tolerance of difference is insufficient, and counter-hegemonic efforts require an examination of how we take up difference and who benefits from this liberal peace discourse, and how. It is undoubtedly significant to understand that this very same organization is the one that produced the Geneva Convention, outlining the rules for engagement in violent conflict. War is hell, is rarely, if ever justified, and respect for rules and conventions has never seemed to slow down or prevent killing and torture, even of those completely on the margins, such as women and children.

Measuring peace is problematic and equally enmeshed within a circular process/discourse dynamic. Organizations such as Global Conflict Trends map “systemic peace” by charting global trends in armed conflict, which they define as the most prominent dimension of violence (lethal violence), interstate war, global trends, armed conflict, states experiencing warfare, refugees and displaced populations, ethnic warfare, and global trends in governance, and the annual likelihood of political instability. Even though these groups’ scholarship does help us understand the entrenched and pervasive nature of warfare across the globe, there still are limitations in the groups' intellectual work. For instance, they fail to provide a full analysis of what warfare is, how it is generated, what democracy is (beyond the right to vote), and how a focus on armed conflict conveniently displaces the gaze from colonial complicity in generating poverty as well as the ongoing colonization and occupation experienced by Indigenous people worldwide. They also fail to take inventory of the disproportionate effects of hegemonic, supposedly democratic policies on racialized and marginalized peoples within, and between states.

Human Security

Fortunately, several scholars have attempted to generate new concepts that are geared toward eradicating the curricular problem measuring peace and understanding the interrelation between violence and deprivation of all kinds. For instance, human security is a concept that is concerned with the protection of individuals and communities from both the direct threat of physical violence and the indirect threats that result from poverty and other forms of social, economic or

political inequalities, as well as natural disasters and disease. A country may not be under threat of external attack or internal conflict but still be insecure if, for example, it lacks the capacity to maintain the rule of law, if large populations are displaced by famine or decimated by disease or if its people lack the basic necessities of survival.

Human security is designed to further human rights because it scrutinized the situations that gravely threaten human rights and supports the development of systems that give people the building blocks of survival, dignity and essential freedoms: freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one's own behalf. It uses two general strategies to accomplish this: protection and empowerment. Protection shields people from direct dangers, but also seeks to develop norms, processes and institutions that maintain security. Empowerment enables people to develop their potential and become full participants in decision making. Protection and empowerment are mutually reinforcing, and both are required in most situations.

In 2003, a special UN Commission on Human Security issued *Human Security Now*, a report outlining major areas of concern for establishing and maintaining human security:

- Protecting people in violent conflict, including the proliferation of arms
- Protecting and empowering people on the move, both those migrating to improve their livelihood and those forced to flee to protect themselves from conflicts or serious human rights violations
- Protecting and empowering people in post-conflict situations, including the complex rebuilding of war-torn societies
- Promoting economic security by providing minimum living standards everywhere and enabling people to move out of poverty
- Promoting universal access to basic health care, especially addressing global infections and diseases, poverty-related threats and health problems arising from violence
- Empowering all people with universal basic education
- Clarifying the need for a global human identity while respecting the freedom of individuals to critical work diverse identities and affiliations.

Peace Education in a Neoliberal Context

Echoing Solomon (2001), to understand the role peace education actually plays in schools, scholars must recognize how the sociopolitical context impacts the shape it takes. Specifically, in the US, peace education, along with numerous forms of curricula that are capable of guiding students to have a critical understanding of their social world, is continually considered irrelevant amid educational institutions that predicated on providing the corporate elite an additional avenue to profit off of children. The elite's desire to amass wealth educational has supported a culture of militarization and commercialization through "the larger national climate of top-down reform reinforced by rewards and sanctions" (Leahy 2012, p. 137). As the corporate leaders hijack life in schools through top-down legislation, such as the Obama administration's a \$4.35 billion dollar "competitive incentive program" Race to the Top (RTTT), a testing, accounting, and competitive form of schooling reigns supreme. Many critical scholars have noted a test-driven, competitive educational environment forces educators to implement pedagogies of silence and control (Au, 2008; Kozol, 2005; Mathison & Ross, 2008; Porfilio & Malott, 2008). According to Leahy (2012, p. 137) "standard-based education initiatives that rely on high-stakes exams to measure student achievement and teacher quality have tightened the relationship

between the curriculum, classroom instruction and the test, leaving little room for deviation. More and more teachers are becoming compliant workers, as they simply push students to simply regurgitate information. They are fully aware students' poor test performances may cost them their jobs, close their schools, or nudge students to drop out of the formal schooling process

Moreover, in a high-stakes, competitive environment, school districts are frequently relying on corporate publishers to determine what facts students need to learn to successfully complete the examinations. The textbook and curricula guides produced by corporations are not committed to having students think about what forces and structures are behind causing oppression, violence, and conflict at macro and micro-levels. This would undoubtedly lead students to question how corporate involvement in their social world is perpetuating a vacuous educational experience for students and educators, is fueling world conflicts, and is perpetrating global poverty and environmental degradation.

Fortunately, there have been some educators, students, and citizens that had the ability to find fissures amid the corporate status quo to promote various forms of peace education. For instance, some educators have employed arts-based narrative inquiry and culturally relevant pedagogy to guide students to "critique, analyze, and produce ideas" that parallel to "military language and practice" (Wright, Wright, & McMillan, 2012, p. 163). Others have engaged educators and concerned community members to "build broad-based community coalitions among unions, clergy, and civil-society organizations" that are able "to contest the growing military of American youth" (Kershner & Harding, p. 228-229). Finally, there are myriad of peer-mediation programs, conflict resolution programs, and restorative justice programs that have been implemented to form schools on the values of peace and non-violence.

Considering the Applicability and the Application of Peace Education

On the one hand, the challenges of neoliberal, hegemonic, globalized education seem enormously problematic. Is formal education a place and a space where critical work and engagement can take place? What are the implications of if schools do not push toward more progressive, counter-hegemonic learning? Who wins, who loses, and why? Are educators capable of becoming political immersed in political education with a view to what Freire (1973) called conscientization? How can such important content and context related to the intricacies and epistemological complexity of war and peace be interspersed within formal schooling that favours standards, expectation, tests and a tightly prescribed curriculum?

On the other hand, to not seek some vastly reformed notion of how peace is addressed in and through schooling may lead to a further and more deleterious entrenchment of the status quo, in which students have little knowledge, engagement and interest, in general, in the higher-level machinations of war and peace, at least as endorsed and promoted within the formal educational system. The linkages to civil society need to be made, and educators, parents and others need to be involved in the educational policy process. The types of peace education that we have described above, and which is embedded within the articles in the special issues, seek to reclaim and re-identify our complicity in war and peace, and also to offer alternative visions, perspectives and thinking about the subject. Students need to know that if education is not about peace, is it then about war?

We need to also recognize that many good, concerted efforts are already taking place, locally and internationally, even if they are not covered by the mainstream media. People working together across linguistic, racial, religious, ideological and national boundaries is desirable, and can be evidenced quite widely when one veers from formal government policy statement, UN comminqués, and the formal curriculum. In sum, much can be done, and should be done, and it is our contention that formal education needs to be part of the equation of pushing the boundaries forward. This is not a solo mission but part of an overall movement to end war, conflict and violence, to problematize, whether at the drone, bombing or war engagement level, or at the local bullying, violence toward women and hate crime local level. We are hopeful that the content of this special issue will help advance our thinking around what peace education is, and how we might be able to do it in a beneficial way.

The Contents of this Special Issue

In the first essay, "*21st Century "Children's Crusade": A Curriculum of peace driven by critical literacy*," P. L. Thomas reflects upon his own lived experience as a schoolteacher examines critical scholarship, and provides historical analysis to pinpoint how traditional education in the US promotes a form of schooling that portrays war as inevitable and "the tool of the righteous United States of America." The author also provide educators concrete ideas and insights as to how to forge "peace through our public schools, where teachers and students confront the norms of war." Thomas creatively teaches us how to confront "the permanent war culture of the U.S. through the essays of Barbara Kingsolver; the music of R.E.M. and CAKE taught along with poetry by e. e. cummings, James Dickey, Kingsolver, and William Stafford addressing the horrors of war; and the career and work of Howard Zinn".

In the next essay, "Cell phones, t-shirts and coffee: Codification of commodities in Circle of Praxis pedagogy," Mike Klein illustrates how to modify a Freireian pedagogy in order to "help learners step back from their direct experiences to provide critical distance but not disengagement from their own reality to identify the dynamics of domination and the potential for liberation." The author provide an example of bringing students to critical awareness by highlighting the the "contradictions between values (i.e.: peace) and outcomes (i.e.: cell phones that fund conflict). Finally, Klein draws from John Paul Lederach's work to illustrate how common commodities, such as cell phones, t-shirts, and coffee, have the power to serve as a "liberating pedagogy."

"Images... are powerful not just because they convey meaning, but more important because they create meaning" (2005:44). Images as codifications create opportunities to describe, analyze, and shape reality: critically examining "commonsense" dynamics of power, liberating students from uncritical subordination, and promoting agency to deconstruct and reshape hegemonic systems.

In the third essay, "*Militainment and war: How long must we sing this song?*" William Reynolds pinpoints how war is impacting the fabric of the US society--from schools, politics, and mass media outlets. Next, he pinpoints the power critical media analysis has in capturing how film impacts men and women's identities vis-a-vis the "military, war and peace." Third, the author provides a critical analysis of the *Act of Valor*. He shows that critical media analysis of military film has the power to uncover or demystify the ways in which "part of the larger production of

assorted codes of behavior, and militarism in a globalized world engaged in perpetual war." Reynolds concludes his essay by capturing how examining war films contributes to peace education. It helps demystifying of the connections between Hollywood, and the military, particularly in terms of films as recruitment tools is an important aspect of questioning the replication of these existing values and attitudes."

In the next essay, "*Perpetual war(s), impossible peace: Neoliberal narratives in action in the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps*," Shannon K. McManimon, Brian D. Lozenski and Zachary A. Casey argue The Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) is dedicated to educating "future soldiers (and others) into an uncritical nationalism that serves to maintain U.S. economic, political, cultural, and military hegemony in precisely those communities most harmed by white supremacy and capitalism." Specifically, the authors focus their work on two urban context in the US-Chicago and Philadelphia. They show how numerous educational policies and practices in schools across the urban school districts are designed to garner bodies and ideological support for US imperial excursions across the globe, rather than provide any form of "citizenship training." The authors conclude their essay by arguing "that the underlying context of a militarized education damages both students and their communities and therefore should be eliminated from public education."

In the final essay, "*Developing peacemakers in the classroom: An Alternative discourse in a culture of war and violence*," Patricia Mestas Vigil, Tom Cavanagh, and Estrellita Garcia illustrates how restorative justice practices offer a way to a resolve and solve conflicts peacefully and productively. They begin the essay by arguing that educators and policymakers must examine how the achievement and discipline gaps propel a school culture that is complicit in promoting youths' (especially minoritized youths') "aggressive behavior and disciplinary infractions." Next, based upon their empirical research in New Zealand and the US, the authors provide a conceptual framework to provide further research and understanding of how restorative justice practices can promote alterative values and ideas that promote peace over violence in schools. Finally, the authors conclude the essay by suggesting how schools can create and adopt an action plan that is capable of building "the capacity of students and teachers to become peacemakers."

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Notes

ⁱ Please refer to Just Foreign Policy for the amount of deaths, casualties, and other atrocities emanating from the US's invasion of Iraq: <http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/iraq>.

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21st Century "Children's Crusade": A Curriculum of Peace Driven by Critical Literacy

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21ST CENTURY "CHILDREN'S CRUSADE": A CURRICULUM OF PEACE DRIVEN BY CRITICAL LITERACY

Abstract

The traditional public school classroom reflects and perpetuates a patriotic norm that embraces the permanent state of war as well as supporting a pro-U.S. perspective on those wars. This essay examines the need for texts that promote peace and reject the permanent state of war. As well, the discussion couches the peace-based curriculum within the need for critical pedagogy and critical literacy to drive that curriculum in order to confront the norms of schooling and society.

Introduction

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s during the rise of the political Right in the United States and the expansion of the accountability era in U.S. public education, I taught high school English in the rural South—the same high school I attended and the same traditional and conservative community of my entire life. My own journey toward a critical life as a teacher, scholar, and writer paralleled in many ways the opportunities I offered hundreds of students in my classes who were confronted there daily by ideas, texts, and possibilities that were not new to them, but ideologies they assumed were wrong because they were unlike the assumptions of the homes and their community. One of the most difficult topics to embrace critically for my students was war, particularly that literature, artists, and

intellectuals tended to express anti-war stances that contrasted strongly and directly with the pro-war patriotism and jingoism that were the norms of these students' experiences.

The messages my students received from their parents, many of their teachers, their churches, and the media had taught them that war was an inevitability of human existence; the possibility of peace was idealistic at best and completely silenced at worst. Here, I discuss confronting the permanent war culture of the U.S. through the essays of Barbara Kingsolver; the music of R.E.M. and CAKE taught along with poetry by e.e.cummings, James Dickey, Kingsolver, and William Stafford addressing the horrors of war; and the career and work of Howard Zinn. These curricular choices are then couched throughout within a call for critical pedagogy and critical literacy as necessary mechanisms for confronting the hegemony of permanent war and challenging the norms of schooling and society.

A Critical Avenue to “Physically Obstruct the War Machine”

In Chapter One of *Slaughterhouse Five*, Kurt Vonnegut (1969) recalls his own journey from being a POW during WWII to confronting that experience through writing about his captivity at, and eventual release from, Dresden—a city devastated by firebombing but an act often ignored in traditional examinations of history (Zinn, 1990). Part of his recollection includes visiting a fellow soldier from that shared horror and discovering the anger of his friend's wife, Mary O'Hare, who fears that Vonnegut has been mired so deeply in war that his book about his experiences would be *uncritical*:

Then she turned to me, let me see how angry she was, and that the anger was for me. She had been talking to herself, so what she said was a fragment of a much larger conversation: “You were just *babies* then!” she said. . . .So then I understood. It was war that made her so angry. She didn't want her babies or anybody else's babies killed in wars. And she thought wars were partly encouraged by books and movies. (pp. 18-19)

Mary is aware of the permanent war culture of the U.S., and she is deeply skeptical about Vonnegut's ability to avoid the glorification of war common in popular media; she explains to Vonnegut:

“You'll pretend you were men instead of babies, and you'll be played in the movies by Frank Sinatra and John Wayne or some of those other glamorous, war-loving, dirty old men. And war will look just wonderful, so we'll have a lot more of them. And they'll be fought by babies like the babies upstairs.”

To assuage her fear, Vonnegut promises, “‘I tell you what,’ I said, ‘I'll call it “The Children's Crusade”’” (p. 19).

Vonnegut's opening chapter of his novel, a blurring of memoir and fiction, confronts the intricate overlap among the real-life experiences of war veterans, the quest by an artist to turn those experiences into art, and the power of popular culture to perpetuate social norms *uncritically* through media such as film. This fictional confrontation exposes the often hidden cultural

assumptions that drive the mask of objectivity and claims of political neutrality running through academia and scholarship. But for critical educators, this mask is, and must be, pulled aside:

[P]roponents of critical pedagogy understand that every dimension of schooling and every form of educational practice are politically contested spaces. Shaped by history and challenged by a wide range of interest groups, educational practice is a fuzzy concept as it takes place in numerous settings, is shaped by a plethora of often-invisible forces, and can operate even in the name of democracy and justice to be totalitarian and oppressive. (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 2)

Traditional education grounded in calls for politically neutral teachers and objectivity remains “politically contested spaces,” ironically, reinforcing the hegemony of the cultural norms driving the curriculum, instruction, and assessment in those schools (such as portraying war as inevitable and the tool of the righteous United States of America). In other words, traditional education is *masked* politics wedded to the status quo while critical pedagogy seeks an unmasking that allows norms to be examined, confronted, and changed in the pursuit of social justice and individual agency.

Two decades after his success built on *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Vonnegut (1997) returned to O’Hare and their experiences in WWII:

But I still like what O’Hare and I said to German soldiers right after we were liberated: That America was going to become more socialist, was going to try harder to give everybody work to do, and to ensure that our children, at least, weren’t hungry or cold or illiterate or scared to death. (p. 122)

As educators face an intense era of education reform during the Obama administration (Carr & Porfillo, 2011), Krashen and Ohanian (2011) turned to Vonnegut in their argument concerning the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and its stance on education policy: “Make sure that no child is left unfed, all children have adequate health care and all children have access to a wide variety of reading material. Only when this is accomplished can we return to the business of what goes on in the classroom.” This connection made by Krashen and Ohanian (2011) to Vonnegut’s career spent wrestling with the U.S. culture of war highlights the powerful influence of cultural norms and informs this discussion of how pro-war norms pervade our education system. Freire (1998) addresses the critical alternative to formal education reflecting social norms, such as our war culture, without confronting them: “If education cannot do everything, there is something fundamental that it can do. In other words, if education is not the key to social transformation, neither is it simply meant to reproduce the dominant ideology” (p. 110). And a dominant ideology of the U.S. is certainly our tacit acceptance of war as well as our hero worship connected with our military (Thomas, 2010, October 16).

Further, connecting war culture with corporate interests, Hedges (2011) made this observation about permanent war ideology in the U.S., highlighted by the more recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan:

Power does not rest with the electorate. It does not reside with either of the two major political parties. It is not represented by the press. It is not arbitrated by a judiciary that protects us from predators. Power rests with corporations. And corporations gain very lucrative profits from war, even wars we have no chance of winning. All polite appeals to the formal systems of power will not end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We must physically obstruct the war machine or accept a role as its accomplice.

The corporate influence on education that has accelerated over the past decade during the three-decades-long accountability era, then, bodes poorly for education to fulfill its obligation to democracy under the weight of a war culture. As well, Hedges (2009) exposes the power of cultural mythology related to war:

It became part of the mythic nature of heroism and patriotic glory sold to the public by the Pentagon's public relations machine and Hollywood. The reality of war could not compete against the power of the illusion. The truth did not feed the fantasy of war as a ticket to glory, honor, and manhood. The truth did not promote collective self-exaltation. The illusion of war. . . worked because it was what the public wanted to believe about themselves. (p. 21)

As Vonnegut's conversation with Mary O'Hare from mid-twentieth century reveals, the media has reflected and fueled a contemporary tradition of embracing war and celebrating war. Like Mary O'Hare, I believe we are blind and numb to our permanent war culture, and like Hedges, I fear that the root of that callousness is our blinding faith in consumerism and corporate America, all of which drive the norms of schooling.

Ultimately, a critical avenue to "physically obstruct the war machine" is our education system, one that has historically failed its missions of human agency and social reconstruction since it too has been the tool of the political and corporate elite. Grounded in critical literacy and critical pedagogy, implementing literature units of study—the curriculum we offer our students—that confront war and address the possibility of peace challenges the *enculturation* of children by public education, which has chosen to be the accomplice to war Hedges warns us about.

Authoritarian Text, Teacher as Authority and Silenced Students

One of the most powerful and thus dangerous elements of war ideology pervasive in U.S. public education is embedded in the literature presented to students and that literature chosen for students perpetuates authoritative texts that silence students. The great irony in the power of that literature to reinforce assumptions about permanent war and the marginalization of peace—or even the *possibility* of peace—is that the vast majority of texts, such as novels and poetry, dealing with war offer challenges to cultural norms that are ignored or distorted by teachers and students. As well, another norm of schooling, New Criticism (Thomas, 2012), traps both teachers and students in mechanistic approaches to text that honor analysis of text craft to the exclusion of ideas or the opportunity to confront those ideas and perpetuates a faith in objectivity that masks norms as truth.

Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, for example, is commonly assigned in secondary classrooms, and while the brutality and pervasive consequences of war on everyone are dominant in the novel, traditional approaches to literature study reduce the novel to examinations of the existential hero, the Lost Generation, or Hemingway's sparse syntax and diction. New Criticism norms place meaning in calculating the techniques of the text decontextualized from history, biography, and the interplay of reader/writer/text. War, then, remains a fact of history and a fact of any student's life by default since mechanical approaches to text—such as New Criticism and its modernistic claim to “objectivity”—still dominate literary analysis in school settings. Students rarely are invited to engage in Hemingway's commentary on war as an avenue to their own awareness about war and peace. Instead, this novel and all texts are mere tools for indoctrinating students in a method for calculating authoritative meanings from a text deemed “classic” for them.

Instead of presenting Hemingway's novel as a decontextualized work of art to be dissected, we should offer the novel as one artist's challenge to his world, inviting each reader to confront that text and how that text interacts with each reader's perceptions and assumptions, as shaped by that reader's culture. Then, the promise of critical literacy opens the door to the possibility of peace against a military industrial complex. Like the hegemony of New Criticism, however, the focus on fiction helps keep students removed from the artist as critical agent and the text as a commentary on *living* as an organic and current reality.

To implement critical literacy and confront the permanent war culture of the U.S., I believe we should also confront genre and form by introducing students to units on peace and war that spring from essays—nonfiction written by contemporary writers who directly challenge and reject the norms of our war culture. The direct nature of the essay allows students to focus on the ideas and the nature of the writers' arguments, instead of spending time unraveling the message from fiction or poetry (often the only step we ask of students) before making their own assessment of the writers' claims. “Students come to school with a debilitating faith in authority, and traditional, authoritarian schooling has reinforced the authoritarian nature of texts chosen by the teacher, as an authority. Thus, students see the point of engaging with text to be their summarizing for the teacher the authoritative and singular “meaning” in that text” (Thomas, 2012).

Students are trained in formal education to decipher the theme within a novel, but rarely invited to confront that theme (and those students who are invited tend to be in classes tracked closely with privilege), to examine the credibility of that theme. With the essay, a form at its essence *persuasive*, students join a debate of ideas, and while we must insure that students represent any claims in a text accurately, students must be invited to explore their own empowerment by wrestling with the text and the ideas raised by that text. The world and lives of children and young adults are filled with both fictional and nonfictional representations of ideas so they need to be able to negotiate all sorts of genres, forms, and media, but the power of any genre, form, or medium that appears factual is significant in the lives of children. We must be aware that the messages children encounter in all types of texts will be obliquely pro-military:

In a breathless story somehow presented as a groundbreaking revelation, The New York Times recently reported that the Pentagon is—shocker!—using all sorts of media channels to market itself to the nation's children. Though the Times presents this as a brand-new development, it is nothing of the sort. The armed forces have spent the last three decades carefully constructing a child-focused Military-Entertainment Complex, which has long had the Pentagon subsidizing everything from video games to movies—most of which glorify militarism to kids. (Sirota, 2011)

The Pentagon, for example, has built an ad campaign on a popular film, *X-Men: First Class*, in order to mask the realities of war:

Obviously, the ads seek to conceal the simple truth that being a soldier is very dangerous—a truth underscored by the tens of thousands of American troops killed or wounded in our state of permanent war (or "persistent conflict," in the Pentagon's new parlance). And while the Pentagon cannot be expected to proactively advertise the hazards of military service, the new commercials are particularly deceptive coming from a military establishment that proactively hides those hazards from public view. (Sirota)

The traditional and historical approaches to text in U.S. formal schooling exposes a few key patterns that are paradoxical for a country claiming to be committed to individual freedom and democracy. As I have noted above, texts are primarily tools for presenting authoritarian claims that teachers endorse and then use to evaluate students, who are asked to restate but not challenge those claims. Further, the banking ideology embedded in textual analysis (Freire, 1993) reflects and reinforces the essentially anti-intellectual and uncritical norms of education at the center of universal public education and U.S. culture.

The American public in its culture and schooling has embraced a faith in objectivity since the early decades of the twentieth century, masking that some agent always stands behind the norms that give *objectivity* its shape and power. When students are asked to read and analyze Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, or J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, teachers have failed the students and the texts if the contextual nature of narration is ignored: Is the narrator of the text reliable? Is the author reliable? How do the reader's perceptions and assumptions shape the claims of the narration?

To remove text from the context of writer, reader, and history is to reduce all text to propaganda, to render all art to simple pronouncement. Public education for human agency and democracy must confront the norms of what texts (genres) students experience, how students are invited to examine those texts, and what counts as authoritative responses to the texts and the claims in those texts.

The Possibility of Peace—The Essays of Barbara Kingsolver

And here is where the counter-cultural essays of Barbara Kingsolver, best known for her novel *The Poisonwood Bible*, represent how to reconsider school-based curricula in order to challenge our war culture. Kingsolver's essays present students with perspectives unlike mainstream assumptions; through them, we must ask students to consider the power of *how* Kingsolver

presents her claims and then invite them to form their own conclusions among cultural norms, Kingsolver's recalcitrant perspective, and their own emerging perspectives.

The essay offers an entry point into *authoritative texts* as well as challenging the authority of a text—whether that text be an essay, an advertisement, or one of the many comic-books-turned-film franchises like X-Men or the militaristic Iron Man. Kingsolver's "In the Belly of the Beast" (*High Tide in Tucson*) presents students a multi-genre consideration (the essay includes part of Kingsolver's poem on the same topic, "In the City Ringed With Giants") of nuclear build up through the lens of classical mythology: "A more modern legend goes this way: The Titans were giant missiles with atomic warheads. The Pentagon set them in neat circles around chosen American cities, and there they kept us safe for twenty-two years" (1995, p. 207). In the essay, the reader is immediately confronted with pro-war cultural ideology versus Kingsolver's anti-war perspective. This tension builds after the essay's opening that triggers assumptions that many uncritical readers trust as facts. Kingsolver literally decided to visit the museum dedicated to the Titan warhead to confront the thing itself and to force the reader to face the larger culture of war that created the missile. The essay turns to narrative and leads the reader along with Kingsolver (1995) on a tour of the missile museum; she characterizes the tourists as "compliant children on a field trip" (p. 212), building for classrooms a perch upon which to examine the compliant nature of students, teachers, and the U.S. public in terms of how we discuss, view, and accept war.

"It was not the first or last time," Kingsolver (1995) explains, "I was floored by our great American capacity for denying objective reality in favor of defense mythology" (p. 213). And this precedes her own retelling of her memories of conducting nuclear bomb drills in school as a child—again, that we conducted the drills sent an implicit message to readers that war was a fact, something we could not avoid, something blocking the possibility of peace.

Kingsolver (1995) then juxtaposes the Titan museum with her later visit to a museum in Hiroshima—a contrast of worshipping the technology of an *object*, the bomb, with the very real human consequences of that object realized:

On that August morning, more than six thousand school-children were working or playing in the immediate vicinity of the blast. Of most of them not even shreds of clothing remain. Everyone within a kilometer of the hypo-center received more than 1,000 rads and died quickly—though for most of them it was surely not quick enough. Hundreds of thousands of others died slower deaths; many would not know they were dying until two years later, when keloid scars would begin to creep across their bodies. (p. 217)

Here, Kingsolver reminds the reader of the inevitable connection among children, school, and war. And like the government use of a superhero film to mask the horrors of war to recruit soldiers, "[w]hat they left out of the Titan Missile Museum was in plain sight in Hiroshima," she adds (p. 218). The essay builds to Kingsolver acknowledging that the U.S. remains the only country to use the atomic bomb, noting for our students the reality of our war culture despite our claims of justice and commitments to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

In order to shift classrooms away from tacit compliance with cultural norms endorsing a permanent war ideology and toward the possibility of peace, we must invite students to read critically and to consider fully contrarian perspectives. For example, we can invite students to confront these questions: What claims are being made by Kingsolver about war? How does she make these claims? How credible are her claims against cultural norms about war? What position does the reader take on Kingsolver's topics and why?

Further, "[w]hy does any person or nation," Kingsolver (2002) asks in "Life Is Precious, or It's Not" (*Small Wonder*), "including ours, persist in celebrating violence as a honorable expression of disapproval?" (p. 181). This brief essay begins with the Columbine school shooting; then, she ties her discussion of school violence to our cultural bloodlust:

Most Americans believe bloodshed is necessary for preserving our way of life, even though it means risking the occasional misfire—the civilians strafed because they happened to live too close to the terrorist, maybe, or the factory that actually made medicines but *might* have been making weapons. (p. 182)

Kingsolver offers an entry point for students to consider—Just what are Americans willing to sacrifice to protect privilege? Just what do Americans mean when they say "life is precious"?

The essay as an accessible and relatively brief form allows critical teachers to offer students a series of challenges to their assumptions and the cultural myths driving much of what they believe. Kingsolver's consideration of nuclear war linked with her examination of the Columbine school shooting can then be placed in the most recent war on terror that pervades the America of the twenty-first century with her "And Our Flag Was Still There" (*Small Wonder*). As she does in "In the Belly of the Beast" and "Life Is Precious, or It's Not," this essay places our war culture in the context of children, here her own daughter being coerced to wear red, white, and blue to school "[f]or all the people that died when the airplanes hit the buildings" (2002, p. 235). In a deft use of dialogue, Kingsolver situates her view of the 9/11 disaster by asking her daughter, "Why not wear black, then?" (p. 235).

For Kingsolver, this examination of the flag and popular views of patriotism *as perpetuated by traditional schools* confronts students with the tensions between symbols and actions. Kingsolver (2002) offers a complex and nuanced statement of a person who loves liberty and justice, but pulls aside the cultural norms and narratives that in fact threaten individual liberty and social justice—including a list of "[d]issidents innocent of any crime greater than a belief in fair treatment of our poorest and ill-treated citizens [who] have died right here on American soil for our freedom, as tragically as any soldier in any war" (p. 241).

Among her examining nuclear weapons, senseless school shootings, oppressive worshipping of the flag, and mindless marginalizing of *others* to justify our war culture, Kingsolver (2002) builds to a central question that can drive a curriculum of peace:

Where in the Bill of Rights is it written that the entitlement to bear arms—and use them—trumps any aspiration to peaceful solutions? I search my soul and find I cannot

rejoice over killing, but that does not make me any less a citizen. When I look at the flag, why must I see it backlit with the rocket's red glare? (p. 241).

A curriculum of peace depends not on the authority of a text, a teacher, or a cultural norm, but instead on empowered students confronting all aspect of authority in order to determine for themselves what credibility lies in the text and the ideas endorsed by the text. Nonfiction, such as the essays of Kingsolver examined above, are the ideal introduction to critical literacy for students since the genre tends to be more direct, the literal as opposed to the figurative of fiction and poetry, inviting students to address directly stated ideas and the perspectives of authors not masked by personas and narrators.

Once students are invited to confront texts, ideas, and cultural norms—specifically the war culture in the U.S. framed against the possibility of peace posed by Kingsolver—they should be challenged by the figurative language of poetry, where the perspective of the poet can be either directly reflected or contrasted by the persona expressed in the poem.

Of Pens and Swords through Poetry and Song

Essays presenting contrarian views of war, soldiers, violence, and patriotism engage readers and students directly, but imaginative works, such as poetry in which the writer is masked by a persona, force students to work on many levels to identify perspectives before evaluating those perspectives in order to come to their own conclusions about war, peace, and their roles in the world. Students, as part of their emerging literacy empowerment, place text within their expectations; students who have been invited to examine text critically become aware of the norms that drive those expectations—while students shackled to traditional approaches to text and authority remain trapped by those assumptions. During my nearly three decades of teaching, I have witnessed countless students impose their preconceptions on texts that express ideas unlike what they assume to be the norms of the authoritarian world around them. Students, for example, often struggled with William Stafford's "At the Un-National Monument along the Canadian Border" because they do not anticipate his manipulation of the cultural norm of honoring war in the U.S.

An ideal introductory poem to challenge students' perceptions of our war culture, in fact, is Stafford's "At the Un-National Monument along the Canadian Border":

This is the field where the battle did not happen,
 where the unknown soldier did not die.
 This is the field where grass joined hands,
 where no monument stands,
 and the only heroic thing is the sky.
 Birds fly here without any sound,
 unfolding their wings across the open.
 No people killed—or were killed—on this ground
 hallowed by neglect and an air so tame
 that people celebrate it by forgetting its name.

This poetic imagining of honoring peace instead of our traditional praising of war asks students to negotiate *negation*—“not,” “unknown soldier did not die,” “no monument,” and such—to examine both the norms of memorializing war along with soldiers and the shift to normalizing peace.

Stafford doesn't, however, simply challenge seeing war and soldiers as honorable; he also incorporates a nature motif, grass and birds, to suggest that peace is not only preferable, but also *natural*. Through critical literacy, poetry raises the complexity of students engaging their empowerment against a war culture—confronting war, what we choose to honor, heroism, killing in war. For a curriculum of peace, Stafford's poetic consideration of hallowed ground being peaceful ground asks students to bring this perspective into their lives, into reality. Yet, Stafford's poem, despite its counter-cultural perspective and complex negating diction and syntax, poses little challenge to students through the persona of the poem.

While I have experienced many high school students initially struggling with Stafford's poem, e. e. cummings's “next to of course god america i” presents a layered speaker—some unnamed person is being quoted by the poem's primary persona—and a contrasting perspective on war and soldiers. Cummings' sonnet details for the reader a quoted speaker who is a satire of traditional patriotic (or more accurately jingoistic) discourse used by politicians, or any person in authority. This speaker strings together hollow phrases that appear to inadvertently expose the speaker as foolish and his perspective as bankrupt: “what could be more beaut-/iful than these heroic happy dead/who rushed like lions to the roaring slaughter.”

The last comment by the quoted speaker is a question—“then shall the voice of liberty be mute?”—offering a discussion of patriotism/jingoism, war culture, hero worship of soldiers, and political discourse as acts of silencing. In what ways do political and corporate elites benefit from a permanent war culture, as Hedges (2009, 2011) argues? And how pervasive has our war culture been, considering that cummings wrote this poem in the 1920s and Hedges continues to consider it at the start of the second decade of the twenty-first century?

While cummings' poem helps teachers and students address political and authoritarian rhetoric of war and patriotism to perpetuate privilege—permanent war as necessary to sustaining the ruling elite—a valuable element of a move toward a curriculum and thus culture of peace is examining the perspective of the soldier, much as Vonnegut does in many of his novels, speeches, and essays. Presenting students a mix of popular songs and poetry from the soldier's perspective can open doors through imaginative works to the harsh realities of war. The soldier voice is central in two popular songs, CAKE's “I Bombed Korea” and REM's “Orange Crush,” well suited to be paired with James Dickey's “The Performance.”ⁱ

Both CAKE's “I Bombed Korea” and REM's “Orange Crush” include speakers who are soldiers—respectively a bomber pilot in the Korean War and a soldier during the Vietnam War (REM's choice of the soft drink Orange Crush alludes to Agent Orange often associated with the Vietnam War). The songs raise the value of tone through the point of view, the lyrics, and the music (including in REM's song helicopter sounds and audio from a rally). Dickey's “The

Performance” is also a first-person account of a POW recreating the execution of Donald Armstrong.

As an avenue to examining tone, CAKE’s “I Bombed Korea” blends a horrific event—bombing people the bombers cannot see (“Red flowers bursting down below us/Those people didn’t even know us”)—with incongruous images, red flowers, and a musical quality that sounds far too melodic and positive for the subject matter. The tension of this song is created by the contrasts—“I’m not a hero./I’m not a movie star” (echoing sentiments expressed by Mary O’Hare about film)—but those contrasts of distance and disconnect emphasize for students the dehumanizing and desensitizing results of war on all people involved in the act, as well as the deception of those benefitting from war, also identified by Sirota (2011): “But they won’t tell you what it’s like in hell,” explains the bomber in the song.

Parallel to “I Bombed Korea,” the tension in “Orange Crush” rises from the militaristic drumbeat and use of helicopter sounds effects along with audio from a rally. Further, a detail from pop culture, the soft drink Orange Crush, alluding to the horrors of Agent Orange draws students to the realities of young people being the bulk of the soldiers during the Vietnam War.¹ The lyrics include “spine,” “agents of the free,” and “serve your conscience overseas”—triggering considerations of power, integrity, agency, and ultimately the ethical nature of being a soldier and waging a war. Does America’s status as the most powerful military justify the use of Agent Orange—paralleling the use of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as the firebombing of Dresden? In other words, does might make right—or more directly, should might make right?

These songs bring the discussion of war to the personal level—the soldier and the loss of human life during war (the combatants and the innocent people caught in that fight). War may appear abstract and inevitable in a war culture, but the ruling elite have learned since Vietnam the importance of keeping the images of war hidden from the general public. The face of war is possibly the best avenue to embracing a culture of peace. Along with these songs, Dickey’s “The Performance” recreates the execution of a POW that, like CAKE’s song, creates tension between the tone and the topic.

A key element of Dickey’s poem is *recreation*—the juxtaposing of reality with the imagined. This connection is central to our war culture *idealizing* both war and the role of the soldier (again, consider the Pentagon framing being a soldier as a superhero). While Mary O’Hare chastises Vonnegut for the possibility of his romanticizing war, Dickey’s speaker in “The Performance” turns the dehumanizing reality of an execution into an unexpected mix of a calisthenics routine with powerful allusions to Armstrong as a Christ figure. In the fifth of eight stanzas, the reader is told of the recreation of the execution against the opening narrative that seems factual:

Yet I put my flat hand to my eyebrows
Months later, to see him again
In the sun, when I learned how he died,
And imagined him, there,
Come, judged, before his small captors. . . .

As with the songs, this poem presents the dehumanizing consequences of might makes right, here the “small captors” wielding the power of execution despite the reference to their stature as people and possibly as combatants. Also, instead of cultural hero worship, the speaker establishes the glorifying of Armstrong as a result of the speaker’s camaraderie, paralleling the relationship at the center of Vonnegut’s depending on O’Hare in his novels.

Through the songs and poems above, teachers can invite students to examine what humans should consider valuable—acts and places of war or a culture of peace. As well, teachers must ask them to confront how we should view, characterize, and even choose who fights wars. Is the hero worship of soldiers appropriate or is it a mask to perpetuate a war culture that benefits a ruling elite?

Howard Zinn—A Radical Challenge for Peace

At the center of our war culture is the claim of objectivity for teachers, for historians, and for historical texts used to teach that history. As I have noted above, the claim of objectivity is a mask for cultural norms perpetuating a status quo that benefits the elite, the privileged of a culture who profit from the war culture that rides on the backs—and to the detriment—of those without privilege. U.S. history textbooks and curriculum, for example, are essentially tools of propaganda that detail history as a series of just wars due to the righteous power of the United States.

Howard Zinn (1994)—as radical teacher, historian, and activist—explains,

When I became a teacher I could not possibly keep out of the classroom my own experiences. . . .Does not the very fact of that concealment teach something terrible—that you can separate the study of literature, history, philosophy, politics, the arts, from your own life, your deepest convictions about right and wrong?. . .In my teaching I never concealed my political views. . . .I made clear my abhorrence of any kind of *bullying*, whether by powerful nations over weaker ones, governments over their citizens, employers over employees, or by anyone, on the Right or the Left, who thinks they have a monopoly on the truth. (p. 7)

For classrooms confronting the permanent war culture, the teacher’s role is necessarily taking a stand for peace. And through that advocacy, the teacher provides students the opportunity to discover and develop their own empowerment, as Zinn adds:

I would try to be fair to other points of view, but I wanted more than “objectivity”; I wanted students to leave my class not just better informed, but more prepared to relinquish the safety of silence, more prepared to speak up, to act against injustice wherever they saw it. (p. 183)

The role of historian and teacher becomes one of agency built on expertise and ethics—instead of being a mere instrument for passing on uncritically social norms. Zinn (1994) personifies the life and profession of historian and teacher in the pursuit of peace as that contrasts with conforming to the social norms of objectivity that mask being a tacit advocate for a war culture.

Zinn's radical stance resulted in his losing his job and facing many hurdles and threats that could have all been avoided by remaining silent—which would, of course, have been a passive advocacy for the status quo, not objective as the norm claims.

Along with his life story, Zinn (1990) offers a direct deconstruction of a war culture: “There are some people who do not question war” (p. 67). I would suggest a slightly different qualification—most Americans do not question wars that we initiate or enter. His chapter, “Just and Unjust War,” acknowledges a key point that is central to the curriculum for peace I have been advocating—“artists. . . have shown a special aversion to war,” setting them against the norm of our war culture (p. 67).

The essence of Zinn's (1990) examination of war places the need for war within the interests of modern government, but explains that a rejection of war silences possibility, quoting Einstein: “One does not make war less likely by formulating rules of warfare. . . . War cannot be humanized. It can only be abolished” (p. 70). As a challenge to the permanent war culture, Zinn's discussion offers several foundational points that support the texts above and an entire curriculum devoted to peace, including the following:

- War is central to the military industrial complex that merges the interests of government and corporations. Zinn (1990) notes that by the 1940s, corporate contracts for the military were staggering—“three-fourths of the value of military contracts were handled by fifty-six large corporations” (p. 91)—building a wedge between government and the rights of union workers to strike (tension that has re-emerged in twenty-first century America under a Democrat president). A curriculum of peace must include the role of unions in the U.S. and the rights of workers against corporate America.
- Since government benefits from war, government often moves to silence or marginalize any protests against war. Students need a curriculum of peace that examines how wars have been covered by the media and manipulated by the government: How did war coverage of Vietnam differ from coverage of Desert Storm—and what role did the government play in each?
- Political discourse supporting war is punctuated with “the language of freedom, democracy, and justice” (Zinn, 1990, p. 77); see Cummings's “next to of course god america i.” A curriculum of peace asks students to address their media literacy—not just reading assigned texts to restate the authoritative meaning of that text: How do politicians and corporate America use tacit and direct techniques of persuasion that contrast their intent?
- Those who fight wars are from the working class and poor. Zinn quotes Plutarch: “The poor go to war, to fight and die for delights, riches, and superfluities of others” (p. 78). Students should consider John Irving's *A Prayer for Owen Meany*, which highlights the disproportionate number of African American and young soldiers on the front lines of the Vietnam War. A curriculum of peace confronts directly who creates and perpetuates war and who fights those wars.

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- War necessitates creating an “other” as well as ascribing to that “other” qualities that are determined to be wrong or evil, or “[i]t becomes difficult to sustain the claim that a war is just when both sides commit atrocities, unless one wants to argue that *their* atrocities are worse than *ours*” (Zinn, 1990, p. 92). Consider the Soviet Union invading Afghanistan—and the reaction to that invasion under Ronald Reagan—versus the U.S. invading Afghanistan several decades later, and Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five* and its deconstruction of the firebombing of Dresden. In a curriculum of peace, the justification of war must be examined free of patriotic or jingoistic lenses that allow all American acts of war and aggression to be endorsed by default.
 - Ultimately, the costs, financial and human, of war show, according to Zinn (1990), that choosing the power of peace over war may be a valid alternative, citing the calls for reconsidering war from Albert Camus after WWII. Students studying a curriculum of peace are invited to explore the claims for war, the justifications for war, the tolls of war, and the outcomes of war free from the propaganda within a culture of permanent war silencing such complex examinations. In the classroom, we may all look at dropping nuclear bombs on cities as an argument for taking lives in order to save lives in a way that wasn’t possible in the heat of WWII.

This argument for distinguishing between just and unjust war proves to be a practice in choosing peace, as Zinn (1990) concludes: “It remains to be seen how many people in our time will make that journey from war to nonviolent action against war. It is the great challenge of our time: How to achieve justice, with struggle, but without war” (p. 105). And this hope for the future cannot be realized in an education system driven by a culture of permanent war.

21st Century "Children's Crusade": A Curriculum of Peace Driven by Critical Literacy

Also in Chapter One of *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Vonnegut (1969) turns to the historical Children’s Crusade of 1213, “when two monks got the idea of raising armies of children in Germany and France, and selling them in North Africa as slaves. Thirty thousand children volunteered, thinking they were going to Palestine” (p. 20). We might pause to think that this horror would not be tolerated today—unless we recognize that twenty-first century schools perpetuate the permanent war culture of our society, resulting in conditions little different than the one detailed in Charles Mackay’s *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds* (the source of Vonnegut’s use of “Children’s Crusade”).

It is here that educators and the public can make a decision to seek the possibility of peace through our public schools, where teachers and students confront the norms of war through texts such as the ones I have discussed above, not to honor the authority of those texts, but to seek as Zinn has implored, a just world through peace.

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Cell Phones, T-shirts and Coffee: Codification of Commodities in Circle of Praxis Pedagogy

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CELL PHONES, T-SHIRTS AND COFFEE: CODIFICATION OF COMMODITIES IN CIRCLE OF PRACTICE PEDAGOGY

Abstract

Many commodities and consumer products are produced in regions that experience oppression, conflict, and war. These objects connect us to a global web of relationships that sustain direct and structural violence. This article presents a modification of 20th century Freireian pedagogy by examining codifications of such commodities for application in the globalized culture and capitalist political economy of the 21st century. Codifications may be employed in education to: encourage exploration of these relationships beyond our immediate experience of social phenomena, engage in critical analysis of complex issues, thoughtfully reflect on normative assumptions, and plan action for positive change. These are the four steps of a pedagogical model entitled the Circle of Praxis. This model is explained through codification of a cell phone and described more thoroughly in the codification of t-shirts. Finally, the process of developing codifications is examined through the example of coffee.

Introduction

A guest speaker on resource-based conflicts in Africa shocked my Conflict Resolution students. Julián Lazalde, Program & Advocacy Officer with Catholic Relief Services, asked students to take out their cell phones and hold them up where they could be seen. He then quoted Bishop Nicolas Djomo Lola, the President of the Catholic Episcopal Conference of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (CENCO), by stating, "There is a drop of Congolese blood in every cell

phone.” Given that each of us carried a cell phone and now held them aloft, his statement made a deep impression on us. He explained that cell phones contain Coltan, a mineral extracted from mines in the DRC for use in electronic devices, and that “non-governmental armed groups profit from these natural resources” (United Nations Security Council, 2008).

This simple but startling image provided what Paulo Freire (1970) terms a “codification”, connecting us to a global web of relationships that sustains violent conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Codifications are central to the pedagogy of Paulo Freire who spent his life in pursuit of liberatory and transformative education. He wrote, in his seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, “I consider the fundamental theme of our epoch to be domination – which implies its opposite, the theme of liberation, as the objective to be achieved” (Freire, 1970:93). Typically such codifications are representations – drawings, sketches, photos, or sometimes descriptions – that allow learners to analyze distinctions between nature and culture, between what is given and what is constructed. Codifications help learners step back from their direct experiences to provide critical distance but not disengagement from their own reality to identify the dynamics of domination and the potential for liberation.

Henry Giroux is another critical pedagogue who questions the distinction between the given and the constructed. Building on Antonio Gramsci’s theory of hegemony, Giroux refines the concept of domination by suggesting a more complex and less coercive dynamic of power in hegemonic subordination. “Hegemonic leadership refers to the struggle to win the consent of subordinated groups to the existing social order” (Giroux, 2005:163). In addition to exercising direct domination through coercive political power, hegemonic leadership also exercises indirect subordination by shaping consent through educational systems. By weaving the interests of subordinate groups into the ideology of the dominant group, the exercise of control is pedagogical in addition to political. Power is maintained through education that legitimizes domination by constructing hegemonic views as “commonsense” (Giroux, 2006:20). These common sense views are internalized as natural or given by subordinated groups.

Codifications help students analyze hegemonic subordination by identifying contradictions implicit in the hopes and concerns of a community. For example, contradictions between values (i.e.: peace) and outcomes (i.e.: cell phones that fund conflict) illuminate constructed systems so they can be de-constructed, or differently constructed. Codifications drawn from contradictions are decoded as thematic investigations. Analyses of historical, social, political, economic and other themes allow students to view their own reality critically and imagine feasible steps for social change. (For a more detailed description of codifications in the context of traditional Freireian pedagogy, see Klein, 2007 & 2012).

I will also draw from John Paul Lederach’s work on the “moral imagination” (2005) as a complement to Giroux and Freire. Like Giroux, Lederach’s contemporary language and conceptualization helps translate Freireian concepts into the present reality. Describing the way visual representations shape understanding, Lederach writes, “Images... are powerful not just because they convey meaning, but more important because they create meaning” (2005:44). Images as codifications create opportunities to describe, analyze, and shape reality: critically examining “commonsense” dynamics of power, liberating students from uncritical

subordination, and promoting agency to deconstruct and reshape hegemonic systems. Common commodities like cell phones, t-shirts, and coffee can serve as powerful images for a liberating pedagogy.

Students' initial shock moved quickly to analysis as this commodity-turned-codification generated discussions about political economy, militarism, and international relations. Cell phones illuminated our role in the conflict system. Decoding cell phones also prompted student action planning to supporting alternative commodity chains that might channel funds to civil society groups rather than armed actors. Other students questioned whether regulation or reform in the commodity chain would actually impact the conflict, or if more radical challenges to the hegemonic practices of capitalism would be necessary. Such are the debates raised in critical pedagogical approaches to education adapted from Freire's 1968 publication in Brazil. This article examines particular adaptations based on consumer commodities as codifications: highlighting our inter-connectedness, providing themes for analysis, and creating possibilities for the transformation of conflict, oppression, and war through education.

If the codification of a common cell phone can have such powerful educational impact, what other objects hold this potential? Many commodities connect us to war, conflict, and oppression through global systems of production, trade, and consumption. How might these objects serve as subjects for education's transformative role in the business of war and peace?

Circle of Praxis

“(Theoreticians) often seek empirical evidence by watching what others do, but rarely enter the swirling river of social change itself, particularly in settings of protracted conflict or deep violence. On the other hand, we have practitioners who live in that river, but only on rare occasions venture out to a place of reflection that translates their experience into proposed theory. We have few who do both” (*Lederach, 2005:123*).

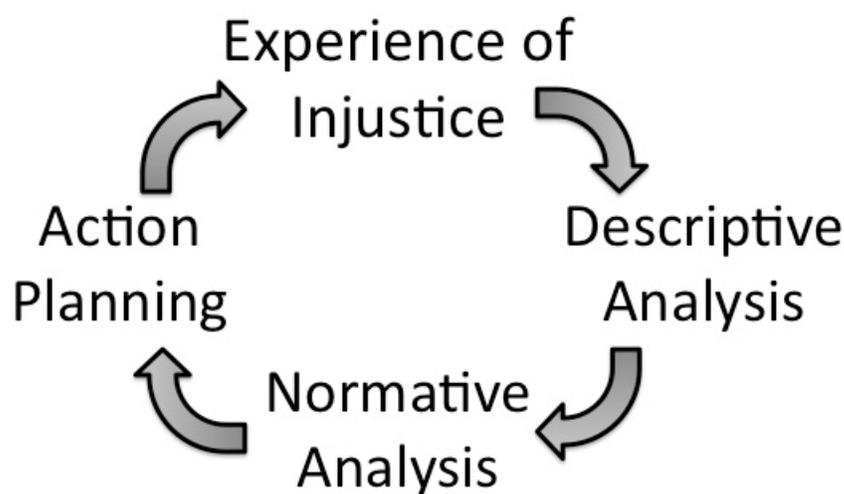
The interchange of theory and practice is another central feature of Freireian pedagogy. Codifications in college classrooms or community seminars can help bridge the divide by decoding the embedded contradictions in systems – often between values and practices - that lead to conflict. Codifications and the decoding of these images and objects may be used to: encourage exploration beyond our limited experience of social phenomena, to engage in critical analysis of complex issues, to thoughtfully reflect on normative assumptions, and to plan action for positive change. These are the steps of the Circle of Praxis (Smith, 1999:57-62). I will use the codification of a cell phone to illustrate the four steps of the Circle of Praxis. Next, I will more thoroughly describe this pedagogical model in the codification of t-shirts. Finally, I will examine the process of developing codifications through the example of coffee. My intention is to modify 20th century Freireian pedagogy for application in the globalized culture and capitalist political economy of the 21st century.

The Circle of Praxis is a simplified version of Freire's complex pedagogy, and foundational to my work as an educator in an undergraduate peace studies program, and in teacher in-service seminars. It is a summative pedagogical model based on the time-intensive, comprehensive and revolutionary methodology presented in Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) and in subsequent works (1973, 1985, 1998). Firmly rooted in this pedagogy, the Circle of Praxis is an

appropriately concise yet rigorously critical methodology for an educational institution. Using codifications in combination with this model provides a pragmatic focus for analysis and additional grounding in Freire's work.

Figure 1

Circle of Praxis



The Circle of Praxis comprises four broad steps. First, academic analysis begins in the *experience of injustice*, starting from the margins of power, and in solidarity with those most subject to oppression. Experience may be direct or vicarious through first-hand accounts, primary sources, or other media. Lederach alludes to this step when he states, "...if you want to learn something of what genuine change means you must listen carefully to the voices of people who have suffered greatly and are slow in their belief that things are in fact moving in a constructive direction" (2005, 43). In the second step, experiential data is subjected to a multi-disciplinary *descriptive analysis* through the social sciences especially history, sociology, economics and political science. In the third step, descriptive data is critically interpreted through *normative analysis* that examines differential worldviews, religious perspectives, philosophical assumptions, and constructions of meaning. In the fourth step, *action planning* develops strategies to promote justice and peace, and tactics that account for available resources, potential obstacles, ethics and consequences. This last step leads into the next experience in an iterative cycle. Lederach describes similar steps in terms of, "how we know the world, how we are in the world, and... what in the world is possible" (2005: 39). To illustrate the Circle of Praxis, I will place a commodity-based codification (cell phone) in context of each step of the model then present a more thorough case study of a t-shirt codification framed by these four steps.

Experience of Injustice

Commodity-based codifications such as the cell phone provide engagement with the systems in which we participate, but also critical distance from our own identities and normative assumptions. Because cell phones are nearly ubiquitous, they can serve as a shared experience that mediates our connection to injustice. In the Circle of Praxis the experience of injustice may be direct (lived) or indirect (mediated). Mediated experience of injustice such as documentary videos or photographs may serve as rich starting points for analysis. The poet Ezra Pound wrote, “Image is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time” (1913:200). Potentially even more complex than an image, a common commodity (i.e.: cell phone) provides a mediated but tangible connection to conflict, oppression and injustice. A well-considered commodity-based codification – one that attends to the investigations and evaluations of Freireian pedagogy – can present generative themes for analysis with as much or more impact than a documentary video or photograph because of the immediacy and accessibility of the commodity in students’ lives. The commodity can be a lived yet mediated experience of injustice, and one that will remain with them long after the class is over.

Because codifications are drawn from contradictions, the starkness of the contradiction portends the potential student investment in analyzing decoded themes to create meaning. The contradiction is glaring in a cell phone: students rely on their phones for communication, access to data, and freedom, yet their cell phones also contribute to conflict, oppression, and war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the source for essential minerals in electronic devices. Codifications help learners step back from their direct experience to provide critical distance but not disengagement from their own reality. Presenting the cell phone as a codification to students does not imply that they should move directly to action by giving up their cell phone as a facile response to the contradiction. Instead this codification allows us to examine the interdependent web of relationships - perceived through the lens of a commodity - to understand how we might describe, analyze and change the dynamics of conflict, oppression, and war through the steps of the Circle of Praxis.

It should be noted that unlike Freire’s audiences in Brazil, Chile, Guinea Bissau and Mozambique who were typically excluded or at the margins of economic and political systems, the adaptations of Freire’s pedagogy described here are intended for people who participate in the dominant, global hegemonic culture of consumptive capitalism. Even though the distinctions are many, conscientization and liberation are no less necessary in this teaching and learning environment. I am describing a pedagogy of the privileged rather than a pedagogy of the oppressed (Curry-Stevens, 2007; Allen & Rossatto, 2009; Nuremburg, 2011). Participants are differently situated in systems of domination yet still submersed in those systems, typically uncritical of hegemonic subordination.

However, teachers and learners experience injustice even in a community defined by the privileges of a dominant culture and participation in consumptive capitalism. Neither institutional context (i.e.: higher education, or private school), nor professional context (i.e.: teacher in-service workshop) should lead to the presumption that such privileges negate personal experiences of injustice aside from or in the midst of these categories. Injustices based on social,

ethnic, or national contexts and oppression based on ability, economics, or sexual orientation are not necessarily visible on the faces of those in struggle. Gender discrimination and patriarchy continue to mark our social, economic, and political systems. Given these cautions, it is essential that critical pedagogical practices acknowledge this potential diversity of experience with injustice, refrain from forcing students to name their struggles unwillingly, yet allow individuals to voice their experiences in the first step of this Circle of Praxis.

Descriptive Analysis

Once developed, codifications are decoded in thematic investigations. Analyzing social, political, economic, and historical themes helps learners decode commodity-based codifications, judge implicit values and norms, and develop action plans; the remaining steps in the circle of Praxis. Describing themes generated by decoding a commodity is most appropriately pursued through *commodity chain analysis*. Commodity chains can provide generative themes (Freire, 1973) that lead beyond their traditional role in economic analysis to inter-disciplinary analysis from social, political, economic, historical, and other critical lenses. Commodity chain analysis “has provided a haven where researchers from disparate paradigms meet and a free space for mixing and matching different theoretical traditions” (Collins, 2005:2).

The rigorous analysis of commodity chains “provide situated and contingent accounts of global political economy that are historically specific, sensitive to culture and meaning, and attentive to subaltern perspectives” (Collins, p. 1, 2005). Advocacy reports (Lezhnev & Prendergrast, 2009) and academic papers (Epstein & Yuthas, 2011) specifically describe cell phone commodity chains by detailing themes of political economy, politics, war, environment, international relations, and trade. These stand in sharp contrast to an article neglecting references to conflict minerals in the cell phone supply chain (Dedrick, Kraemer & Linden, 2010). Through descriptive analysis of tangible, commodity-based codifications students are connected to the vast but specific chain of resources and people that make commodities available, as well as the impacts of that commodity chain on global environmental, social, and economic systems.

Normative analysis

Commodity chain analysis is also known as *supply chain analysis* or *value chain analysis*. Ironically for this normative analytical step, the conventional implication of “value” in the latter phrase relates to profits rather than ethics. However some scholarship in commodity chain analysis promotes normative and moral considerations that align with the Circle of Praxis. In *Spatializing Commodity Chains* (1999), Leslie & Reimer suggest that vertically oriented supply and value (profit) components of commodity chains ought to be complemented by horizontally oriented components of gender and place (environment). Beyond these two normative lenses, other scholars suggest that ethics in general is an overlooked and essential element of commodity chain analysis (Benson, 2007; Clarke et al, 2008; Jaffee, 2004; Kleine, 2008; Winter, 2004).

This step in the Circle of Praxis is a normative approach that goes beyond the pedagogy of many traditional disciplines. It posits education not as objective or neutral, but colored by the light of social problems with problem solving as a goal. “In problem-posing education, men [sic] develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves; they come to see the world not as static reality, but as a reality in process,

in transformation” (Freire, 2005: 70-1). In addition to social problems as the subject of study and the object of change, normative analysis also promotes critical reflection on the role of education itself. Education in its many dimensions – school systems, curricula, textbooks and teachers – tends to reproduce the status quo unless a conscious choice is made to the contrary. Neglecting a decision to either reproduce or critique the status quo is itself a decision to teach the status quo as normative, thereby reinforcing it as hegemonic subordination. Because Freireian methodology critically examines the dynamics of power, and most education systems uncritically support the status quo, methods like the Circle of Praxis are generally not known to educators or used in most schools and may conflict with institutional norms.

Through a critical approach to the status quo - and promotion of alternatives and action - the Circle of Praxis challenges education’s uncritical conveyance of culture and reinforcement of established norms. If much of education has been reduced to this sort of functionalism - wherein students are socialized to accept uncritical normative assumptions - those emerging from education will only be capable of reproducing the status quo. By using normative analysis to link descriptive analysis and action planning, the Circle of Praxis encourages critically examination of the status quo. Codifications of cell phones, t-shirts, and coffee highlight normative questions about our connection to the business of oppression, conflict, and war.

Action Planning

As the last step in the circle, action planning leads us to the next experience. By understanding experiences of injustice through descriptive and normative analysis, we can transcend what Freire termed *limit situations* to plan action for change. Freire described limit situations (in the words of his colleague Alvaro Vieira Pinto) not as, “...the impassable boundaries where possibilities end, but the real boundaries where possibilities begin” (1990: 89). Limit situations are often experienced as an obstacle in action planning. However, they are only “perceived limits that - recognized as constructed rather than natural or determined - can be acted upon and deconstructed or transformed” (Klein, 2007:191). Freire described actions that transcend limit situations as “untested feasibilities”. These are akin to what Lederach describes as the “moral imagination” (2005), and what Susan Babbit describes as the, “bringing about of possibilities that are not yet imaginable in current terms” (1996:174 in Lederach, 2005:27).

Action planning transcends limit situations by imagining untested feasibilities. In other words, the Circle of Praxis calls for action planning that is imaginative, resourceful, and mindful of intended outcomes and unintended consequences. This step calls for a pause in the moment between analysis and action to consider our options. What has been tried before? What obstacles will be faced? What resources can be used? Who else cares about this action? When should this be tried? Action planning also promotes consideration of outcomes. What will be most effective? What will come next? Who will benefit most and who will suffer? This step is not only about effective planning, but also about ethical action, analogous to the step described as “self-purification” in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s *Letter from a Birmingham City Jail* (Carson, 1991).

Another consideration of action planning is the scope of action. Freire describes shortsighted action plans as addressing local or particular contradictions while ignoring larger contradictions (1970:104). Commodity-based codifications too carry the danger of action that is too limited to

promote social change. Simply discarding your cell phone as an action plan would be an example of responding to a particular contradiction with an action that is too limited in scope. Nothing about larger contradictions of conflict, oppression, and war would change based on this action. However supporting a lobbying campaign for ethical mineral sourcing by cell phone companies has potential to address both particular and global contradictions.

In the codification of a cell phone, the contention that there is “a drop of Congolese blood in each cell phone” shocked us. But the critical analysis of this abstraction moved us beyond the potentially paralyzing realization of our very tangible connection to war. In the Circle of Praxis – the experience of injustice, descriptive analysis, normative analysis and action planning - led to conscientization and empowerment in order to reconnect critically with concrete reality. The codification of the cell phone connected us to the complexities of war in central Africa. The following codification of *t-shirts* in my classroom and beyond examines in greater detail a process for using codifications to uncover oppression in the globalized economy and transform the business of war and peace.

T-shirt Case Study

Codifications can be developed from the contradictions inherent in the very clothing we wear. In my introduction to peace studies class, I ask students to examine tags on each article of clothing to determine the country of origin. When the list is compiled on the blackboard, the globalized textile industry is represented by dozens of countries. We typically follow this exercise with an indirect experience of injustice through documentary film. Most recently we’ve watched *China Blue*, a movie that investigates labor practices (and tangentially the ethics of film-making) in a Chinese blue jeans factory (Peled, 2005). Much like the cell phone codification, decoding clothing provides a descriptive analysis of economic globalization and provides a tangible basis for normative analysis. While less directly connected to war than the cell phone codification, clothing connects us to systems of domination and oppression, especially in producer countries.

Framed by the circle of Praxis, the movie *China Blue* mediated a powerful if vicarious experience of injustice. Descriptive analytical discussions highlighted the socio-economic implications of the globalized textile industry, especially for young women in producer countries. Normative analytical reflections helped students consider divergent national norms for gender, labor, or human rights and conflicting values around the concept of duty to family and country. The action-planning step followed with a discussion of fair trade clothing alternatives to conventional apparel.

In a 2010 class however, two students went beyond the classroom in their commitment to the Circle of Praxis, and many more joined them. The introduction to peace studies class ends with an action-planning step that encourages students to engage in reflective and realistic planning so that they might decide to take action. After watching *China Blue*, two women in the class – Melissa and Elizabeth - were compelled to go beyond planning to take significant action. During class I mentioned that our campus bookstore manager had an interest in fair trade clothing, but needed the assistance of student researchers to locate suppliers, explore contract options, and ensure a stable supply of clothing. He was also concerned about the marketability of an unknown brand. These two students accepted the project enthusiastically and - over the course of several

months - went far beyond the introduction to justice and peace studies action planning assignment.

After meeting with the bookstore manager, they began a descriptive analysis of fair trade apparel suppliers for collegiate bookstores. A third student named Yan Yan joined them. She had worked on fair trade campaigns during her high school years. Together they researched fair trade clothing companies and surveyed collegiate bookstores in the region. They found eight campus stores that featured a line of clothing made by Alta Gracia, an apparel producer in the Dominican Republic. Online searches revealed social justice oriented labor practices (<http://altagraciaapparel.com>), and favorable reviews from external sources (Greenhouse, 2010; Dreier, 2010).

Commodity chain analysis uncovered ethical labor practices in wages, benefits, and factory conditions at Alta Gracia production sites, collective bargaining agreements, as well as an economic ripple effect created by significantly higher “living wages” spent in the local community (Kline, 2010). Portions of the Alta Gracia commodity chain were less accessible in corporate and academic literature. Raw materials seemed to be sourced in the USA, with organic cotton and eco-friendly fibers reported in references to protecting workers’ health. Other aspects of the commodity chain – raw materials farming or production, shipping to and from production facilities, and labor conditions at the point of sale (college bookstores) remain open investigations.

In this descriptive analysis step, students used the codification of t-shirts and commodity chain analysis to develop a thematic fan that described trade, labor relations, local economic issues, and environmental issues. By surveying regional college bookstores, they also confirmed supply chain sustainability such that the bookstore could depend on sales of the commodity over time. The innovative production model developed by Alta Gracia creates a platform for a socially just apparel trade. “In peacebuilding, a platform is best understood in the idea of relational spaces, the ability to keep sets of people in creative interaction (Lederach, 2005: 85). Alta Gracia sustains creative interaction between producers, consumers and a new approach to the garment industry. To date it has met what Lederach names as essential requirements: adaptability and flexibility, “in reference to the changing environment and continuously arising issues, obstacles and difficulties” (Lederach, 2005: 85). Alta Gracia sustains a platform that promotes social justice and peace, rather than conflict, oppression and war.

It also offers an alternative to apparel industry norms. Normative analysis of the t-shirt codification helped students recognize assumed values systems in the status quo, and opportunities to problematize and challenge those norms. Conventional collegiate apparel carry college names emblazoned on the front and recognizable brand names on tags and logos. Normative in the brand name clothing industry is a value chain analysis that seeks “profitability improvement” in production facilities located in “lower labour-cost areas” (Sørensen, 2008:4). Other norms in the industry include issues of concern that are articulated by international standards regarding, “working conditions, the use of chemicals and the use of child labour” (11). Students wanted to challenge these norms in the clothing that bore their university’s name.

In addition to normative analysis of the clothing industry, students examined contradictions between norms and practices in their own educational institution. Many universities struggle with tensions between mission and market, educational vision and economic forces. For example, a university mission “to advance the common good” creates a normative assumption for social change while bureaucratic operational policies and practices tend to reinforce the status quo. Students were excited to discover that the primary normative value of Alta Gracia - paying a *living wage* – is a concept grounded in the writing of an alumnus from their university, Fr. John A. Ryan who published his dissertation under the title “A Living Wage” (1912). In addition, a recent publication coordinated in part by the university, “Vocation of the Business Leader: A Reflection” reinforces living wage principles and calls for a moral imagination that exceeds limit-situations:

If, however, a living wage is not immediately sustainable for a business, virtuous businesspeople do not stop there and simply defer to market forces. They rethink how they are doing business and how they can change their situation creatively so as to be in right relationships with their employees. (2012:22-3)

Such locally grounded normative concepts helped students imagine possibilities – untested feasibilities - beyond the institutional status quo.

Students devised an action plan based on their experience of injustice, and their descriptive and normative analyses. Action planning took the form of an evolving campaign to raise awareness about the conventional apparel industry, to bring Alta Gracia clothing to campus, and to build a sustainable campus platform for this alternative system. Their initial action step involved coordinating work with the bookstore manager. In an early conversation, he mentioned an upcoming vendor expo he planned to attend. One of the students contacted Alta Gracia to confirm its participation in the expo, and then arranged a meeting between an Alta Gracia sales representative and the bookstore manager to discuss price points, profit margin, product lines and availability. Students also sought allies for collaboration, individuals and organizations who might also care about this issue. They organized an event featuring Jim Keady, a long-time advocate “for living wages and fair working conditions for Nike's factory workers in Indonesia” (<http://educatingforjustice.org>). The event was co-sponsored by eight academic and programmatic departments on campus (a Freireian thematic fan of Justice and Peace Studies, Women’s Studies, Geography, Engineering, Theology, Sociology, Campus Ministry, and Volunteer Programs) and they filled an auditorium with students. Invitations to work with students on the Alta Gracia project were added to Jim Keady’s appeals. Eventually, after six months of organizing work, the bookstore received several Alta Gracia clothing items and created a display section featuring information about the company and its alternative commodity platform.

Recently, a significant action step led students on to a new experience and into the next iteration of the Circle of Praxis. At the Students for Justice and Peace meeting on campus, student organizers arranged a conversation via Skype with Alta Gracia workers in the Dominican Republic. With technological support and translation on both ends, students wearing Alta Gracia apparel spoke directly with workers who made that same line of clothing, perhaps the very shirts

students were wearing. Workers described the difference a living wage made for them, their families and the surrounding community. It was a moment of solidarity for students, workers, and advocates already committed to this project, and an inspiration for students who were learning about the concepts of fair trade and living wage for the first time. The long-term project of building a sustainable consumer platform on campus to complement the Alta Gracia production platform remains to be seen.

Developing Codifications

Given the examples of cell phones and t-shirts, how are codifications developed from contradictions to be pragmatic tools of praxis education in the classroom and beyond? To highlight the development process - and implications for powerful and poor codifications - I will introduce the final example, coffee. Freire (1970) outlines four principals for developing useful codifications. First, “codifications must necessarily represent situations familiar to the individuals... so that they can easily recognize the situations and their relationship to them” (106). I recently co-taught a semester seminar on coffee with the CEO of a fair trade coffee company. We expected coffee to be a familiar codification to students, however those who didn’t drink coffee reported feeling less connected initially than those who drank it regularly. After a semester of studying coffee as a codification, most students were deeply invested, however some non-coffee drinkers responded to the experience with some distance. Less attachment to the commodity rendered the codification less compelling. Codifications should relate to our experience and – in combination with the Circle of Praxis - provide a direct or indirect experience of injustice.

When reality is perceived as “dense, impenetrable, and enveloping, it is indispensable to proceed with the investigation by means of abstraction” (95). In order to transcend our limit-situations, to examine critically the reality we experience and our normative assumptions, and to plan actions that change reality, codifications “lead by abstraction to the concreteness of existential reality” (96). Coffee helped us step back – but not away - from our own experience to understand the experiences of people in coffee-producing countries. Through the abstraction of this codification, we experienced injustice indirectly but critically and re-engaged reality with insights born of analysis, and with hope founded on untested feasibilities.

Second, Freire suggests codifications must not be “overly explicit nor overly enigmatic” (107). Explicit or obvious images function as propaganda leaving only one conclusion to draw and little potential for decoding into descriptive themes; for example a graphic image of illness or death at a coffee plantation. Enigmatic images provide too little context, suggesting a “puzzle or guessing game” (107), such as a photograph of a darkened scene with an over-turned coffee grinder, or broken coffee mug. Codifications are meant to be recognizable yet stimulate critical thinking and descriptive analysis. A familiar cup of coffee was enough to draw students in, and the video *Black Gold* (Francis, 2006) mediated the experience of injustice to begin the Circle of Praxis.

Third, codifications “should be organized as a thematic fan” and decoding should “open up in the direction of other themes” (107). Because codifications allow for critical distance but not disengagement, decoding should encourage reflection on experience such that connections can be made to multiple themes while retaining a personal connection to the object or image. For

example, a seed from a native tree might be emblematic of a natural cycle, but it may not transcend a limited ecological theme. The codification should symbolize systems and power relationships that are socially constructed rather than given. The coffee bean, a seed that has been commodified over centuries, represents themes of labor, trade, colonialism, globalization, immigration, and culture, in addition to an ecological theme.

Fourth, codifications should be inclusive of contradictions relating directly to felt needs yet representing a totality. The t-shirts codification included the contradiction between inadequate wages and university mission while relating to students' felt need to promote "justice" as a totality. Coffee seminar students found that many principles of fair trade coffee aligned with principles of Catholic social thought. However they also found broad normative disagreements about the meaning of fair trade within the coffee industry, evident in divergent certification requirements, cooperative versus estate systems, and arguments over integrity of original fair trade norms and adaptations made to those norms in order to increase the platform's scale. A system of contradictions – involving democratic governance, impact on producer communities, and economic themes – are all included in the totality of *justice* behind the coffee codification. This dialectic of contradictions presents the totality such that, "Individuals who were *submerged* in reality, merely *feeling* their needs, *emerge* from reality, feeling the *causes* of their needs" (110). There is no limit to developing potential codifications for critical pedagogy, and they will be more successful as they meet Freire's four qualifications.

Implications

Cell phones, t-shirts and coffee are just three of many common commodities that connect us to war, conflict and oppression. As tangible and ubiquitous objects, they illuminate global systems of production, trade and consumption. The accessibility of such commodities not only implicates us in systems of domination and hegemonic subordination, but also provides us opportunities to analyze and impact the systems they represent. The Circle of Praxis goes beyond a critique of domination to enable an empowered analysis premised on action and the continuation of the action/reflection cycle.

Beyond peace studies, the Circle of Praxis presumes inter-disciplinary descriptive analysis that may push the boundaries of orthodoxy in fields more circumscribed than peace studies. Normative analysis is perhaps even more challenging to disciplines that claim or strive for objectivity. Regular calls are heard for objective or value-free education rather than critical normative analysis. Yet normative analysis enhances validity and academic rigor by critically attending to biases while striving to acknowledge and account for differential worldviews.

Finally, the Circle of Praxis is not a flawless pedagogy. Freireian contradictions can still be located in such intentional, critical pedagogies. Missed insights from experiences of injustice, descriptive analysis with limited representation of marginalized voices, normative analysis that neglects blind spots and biases, and action planning that leads to unintended consequences; any of these might present contradictions. In addition, one of the central dangers of education is the abstraction of social problems such that we remove ourselves from responsibility and solutions to the problem become secondary or forgotten. The Circle of Praxis and Freireian pedagogy will not prevent these problems entirely, but they can ground education in tangible situations as they

inform critical analyses and lead to action. Freire makes it clear that, “this movement of flux and reflux from the abstract to the concrete which occurs in the analysis of a coded situation leads to the supersedence of the abstraction by the critical perception of the concrete” (1970:96). Such critical perception and cyclical approach to education is what Lederach calls for in the creative tension between theory and practice (2005:123).

Conclusion

Beyond the pedagogy of Freireian codifications and the Circle of Praxis, the key question for education remains: Is the mission of education to transform reality or maintain the status quo? Richard Schaul sums up this choice in his introduction to 1990 edition of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*:

There is no such thing as a *neutral* education process. Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it [that is, education is a form of oppression], or it becomes ‘the practice of freedom’ the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (15)

An educational system marked by critical thinking, empowerment, and praxis is the practice of freedom. The Circle of Praxis connects the theoretical work of academics with the grounded work of practitioners in a cycle of mutual development that engages the classroom, the campus, and the local and global community. If we choose education as the practice of freedom, commodity-based codifications can help us experience injustice, engage in descriptive and normative analysis, and plan effective action to transform the business of war and peace.

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Militainment and War: How Long Must We Sing This Song?

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MILITAINMENT AND WAR: HOW LONG MUST WE SING THIS SONG?

Abstract

This chapter will focus on critically analyzing issues concerning the interconnections between the current milieu of militarization and peace education. The notions of perpetual war will be discussed within the framework of the current socio-political context of global militarization. This is followed by critical media analysis which demonstrates the ways in which war films contribute to the identity formation of young men and women particularly with regard to the military and military dispositions. An autobiographical section gives a concrete example of this identity formation through cultural representations of the past. The critical media analysis of the film *Act of Valor* provides a contemporary and specific example of how war films operate. Finally, the notion of Deleuzian lines of flight established by a critical media literacy concerning war films and their effect on youth identity are explicated as a pathway toward peace.

War is becoming a general phenomenon, global and interminable. (Hardt and Negri, 2004, p.3)

Doubtless the present situation is highly discouraging. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 422)

It is difficult to imagine how any democracy could not be corrupted when war becomes the foundation of politics. Any democracy that makes war and state violence the organizing principle of society cannot survive for long, at least as a democratic entity. (Giroux, 2011, pp.138-139)

Introduction: The Times

We are living in a time of cruelty, punishment and perpetual warⁱ. The entire concept of peace has changed from the absence of war to something entirely different. At the present historical moment, peacetime has come to mean a ‘low alert level’ on terrorism, hidden torture, perpetual surveillance and survival within the larger framework of wars and possible wars. We are in a type of peacetime where war has become Navy Seals executing Osama bin Laden, and drone attacks that kill quickly and quietly suspected Al Qaeda leaders such as Abu Yahya al-Lib and American citizens such as, Anwar Al-Awlaki. Drone attacks have increased, particularly in Pakistan, during the Obama administration and many innocent civilians including women and children have been killed. Of course we are still in an overt war in Afghanistan. Meanwhile the Afghanistan war is not widely discussed in the mainstream media, and, if it is, then it occupies only about 4% of all the news (Stelter, 2010). Only the sensational video game-like accomplishments of special military units or techno-killing drones is highlighted.

This worldwide war machine, which in a way ‘reissues’ from the States, displays two successive figures: first, that of fascism, which makes war an unlimited movement with no other aim than itself; but fascism is only a rough sketch, and the second, post fascist, figure is that of a war machine that takes peace as its object directly, as the peace of Terror or Survival. The war machine reforms a smooth space that now claims to control, to surround the entire earth. Total war is surpassed, toward a form of peace more terrifying still. (Deleuze & Guatarri, 1987, p. 421) And now the militarization of society has become more intense as education becomes intertwined with the military. Recruiters are allowed back into public schools and universities. In fact the presence of the military in schools is encouraged by the education community. In the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) legislation school districts are required to give student contact information to the military (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). The release of such information is required and tied to a school’s federal funds. President Obama also encouraged the presence of the military in schools.

Starting this year, no American will be forbidden from serving the country they love because of who they love. And with that change, I call on all our college campuses to open their doors to our military recruiters and ROTC. It is time to leave behind the divisive battles of the past. It is time to move forward as one nation. (Obama, 2011)

Universities are proud to proclaim they are “military friendly”ⁱ and provide special facilities for those in the military, ROTC programs and veterans. At this historical moment, the schools and universities continue to be part of the larger military, corporate, consumer, and incarceration culture.

For many young students who are not privileged, the military seems like a great deal, although in many cases recruiters issue false promises of large signing bonus, etc. For some students it is the military or incarceration, neither of which is an acceptable choice.

This is especially true for poor minority youth, who as flawed consumers and unwanted workers, are offered the narrow choices of joining the military, going to prison or are simply exiled into various dead zones in which they become socially embedded and invisible (Giroux, 2011, p. 32).

This essay will focus on four issues. 1) The notions of perpetual war will be discussed. 2) That critical media analysis can demonstrate the ways in which war films contribute to the identity formation of young men and women. 3) The critical analysis of the film *Act of Valor* will give a specific example of how war films operate. Finally, 4) the notions of war films and critical media analysis and their connections to peace will be discussed. The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate the necessity of developing a critical consciousness about militarization and perpetual war in order to construct notions of peace and peace education. Let us start with an autobiographical example of the power of militainment.

A Retrospective

Yesterday we were just children
 Playing soldiers
 Just pretending
 Dreaming dreams with happy endings
 In backyards, winning battles with our wooden swords
 But now we've stepped into the cruel world
 Where everybody stands and keeps score. (Swift, 2012)

Growing up in the early 1960s was for me an adventure in reading books, watching movies and television shows about war and the military. It was the milieu in which almost every “red-blooded” American boy found himself in the early 1960s. I had plastic soldiers of every size from every war in which America fought and set up battles and thought about strategy and tactics. These toy soldiers were produced by companies such as Britains, which continues to produce toy soldiers and the ironically entitled Marx Toy Company (1919-1978). I spent hours waging battles with those soldiers and later with my G.I. Joes. Of course G.I. Joes produced by Hasbro have become an industry unto themselves. There was even a film, *G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra* (2009) and a sequel, *G.I. Joe Retaliation* is set to be released in 2013. As I grew older the soldiers were replaced by strategy games by Avalon Hill like *Sink the Bismarck*. As the precursors to video games, my friends and I would spend hours and days playing these war games. Of course, these strategy games have now been replaced by technologically sophisticated video games on war. Games focused on World War II proliferate and are some of the industry's top sellers such as *The Medal of Honor Series* (1999-2012), *The Call of Duty Series* (2003-2012), *The Battlefield Series* (2002-2012), and *The Brothers in Arms Series* (2005-2012). There are also a plethora of games focusing on the War on Terror such as; *Operation Desert Storm* (1991) and *Fugitive Hunter: War on Terror* (2006). Another aspect of Video War Games is that they are being used for actual military training. One example is being used by the United States Marines.

A modified version of the interactive computer game *Operation Flashpoint*, with the assistance of some Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans, is training Marines preparing to deploy to Iraq. (Rhodes, 2005, p.1)

Along with films, these popular culture artifacts can and should be analysed as well to demonstrate the “importance of video games as part of the militarization of everyday life.” (Leonard, 2004, p. 1) ⁱ

My friends and I would also play soldier or as we preferred to call it combat after the television series of the same name (1962-1967). War and the military was a large part of the TV schedule in the early 1960s. In addition to *Combat* (1962-1967), there were other dramatic/action war series, *The Gallant Men* (1962-1963) and *The Rat Patrol* (1966-1968). Interestingly the networks not only had action series stepped in the military, but many of the most popular sitcoms were based on military experience. Series such as; *McHale's Navy* (1962-1966), *Gomer Pyle: U.S.M.C.* (1964-1969), *Hogan's Heroes* (1965-1971) and *F-Troop* (1965-1967) contained military characters, plots and themes. But my friends and I did not stay inside all day long, even though we were required to be home when the streetlights came on.

Battlefields existed outside as well. We would set up my parent's picnic table as an overturned half-track and battle a Saturday afternoon away. Of course in these battles we all were just wounded never fatally injured. And, the picnic table could also double as a barricade if we decided it was a Civil War battle since we were living in the time of the Centennial of the Civil War. It could also double as an overturned covered wagon, to protect us from those Apache arrows. We were all heroes of the battlefield in our safe and secure section of the suburban backyard.

Even my typical summer vacations with the family consisted of visits to Civil War Battlefields. My parents were antique dealers on the side and the battlefield visits coincided with their buying trips. I visited Gettysburg at least seven times; my uncle was a battlefield tour guide. He and I even snuck into the woods on the battlefield and were able, although I am not sure legally, to pry hundred year old bullets from the trees in which they were lodged.

I would eagerly look forward to the weekends when there might be an old 1940s war film on TV. John Wayne fighting the evils of Nazi Germany or on some island fighting the Japanese. But mostly on Saturday afternoons my friends and I would head out to the movie theatre to see the latest and greatest film about World War II and see our American soldiers win the day! I remember we went to see such films as *Battle of Britain* (1969), *Where Eagles Dare* (1968), and *The Dirty Dozen* (1967). My favorite was the epic film *The Great Escape* (1963) because I had been reading many books about prisoners escaping from German prison of war camps. I guess I had been hooked on a military orientation since I was nine or ten years old. After all most of our fathers had served in the military either in World War II or the Korean War, so it just seemed like it was what young men did. Young men went the way of the soldier.

In fact by the time I was fourteen my vision for the future was to attend one of the military academies and become an officer in the military. I also had visions of being a fighter pilot, probably one of the most romanticized personas in the military with their cool leather jackets and scarfs. But, that would all change with the War in Vietnam. Just as the movies, television shows and various war¹ toys had begun to cloud my identity with visions of military service, the presentation of the Vietnam War everyday on the news stood in stark contrast to the Hollywoodization of warfare, which blurs the line between mythic heroic fantasy and brutal reality. By the time my number was to be chosen in the draft lottery in 1971, I had left those dreams of military service behind and became a voice raised in opposition to the war. I cannot

generalize my experience to all young men or women and certainly the times have changed particularly with the ever-growing plethora of objects for purchase and the technological advances. But the militarization of our society is a continuing and ever growing issue. Popular culture is a significant part of that militarization. So, a discussion of film and its connections with the militarization of society is crucial in developing our understandings of war and peace.

The significance of films on the formation of identity is a topic that must be addressed and a critical media analysis of film is an important pedagogical step toward peace. Making students aware of their participation in the postmodern militarized consumer society and the consequent effects of that participation is crucial to developing conceptualizations of peace and perhaps, democracy. The analysis of film also as Giroux states demonstrates:

How power is mobilized through their use of images, sounds, gestures, talk and spectacles in order to create possibilities for people to be educated about how to speak, act, think, feel, desire and behave (Giroux, 2002, p. 3).

Perpetual War

A troubling characteristic of the current and continuing war on terrorism is its duration. Early in the 21st century Dick Cheney, then vice-president of the United States, called it a “never-ending war.” According to Bush administration estimates it would take as long as it takes. During the Obama administration there is continuation of war(s) whether that it manifested by increasing troop numbers in Afghanistan or the use predator drones in Libya. The war on terror and all of its manifestations (Iraq, Afghanistan Iran, Libya and so on) is perpetual. The reality of a perpetual war(s) is significant. We now are engaged in such a war.

Traditionally war has been conceived as the armed conflict between sovereign political entities, that is, during the modern period, between nation-states. To the extent that the sovereign authority of nation-states, even the most dominant nation-states, is declining and there is instead, emerging a new supra-national form of sovereignty, a global Empire, the conditions and nature of war and political violence are necessarily changing. War is becoming a general phenomenon, global and interminable. (Hardt & Negri, 2004, p. 3)

Perpetual or interminable war is connected to conceptualizations of sovereignty and exception. The Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben in his text *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (1998) explicates sovereignty and exception. Both of these concepts have application to the present moment. In simple terms, in times of war the citizens of a country are willing to grant the sovereign exceptions. Those very citizens grant Exception(s), particularly to their freedoms as citizens.

One of the theses of the present inquiry is that in our age, the state of exception comes more and more to the foreground as the fundamental political structure and ultimately becomes the rule. (Agamben, 1998, p. 20)

For example, during World War II Americans were willing to grant the exception(s) to ration gasoline, monitor their speech (“loose lips, sink ships”) and various other rights in order to assist the war effort and for their own security. It was recognized, however, that those rights would only be abrogated for the duration of the conflict. The duration was always seen as limited and as soon as the war was over, the rights would return. Fast-forward to the present. We are now in perpetual war and the exceptions have been granted. The exception(s) was codified in the Patriot Act and the suspension of *habeus corpus*. The United States government can now and at least for the next four years because of this exception, name individuals as terrorists without offering them a hearing or even legal counsel. They can detain people secretly and indefinitely without access to lawyers or a jury trial. They are able to subpoena anybody’s telephone, medical, bookstore, library or university records by simply certifying that the records are needed for an investigation of internal or international terrorism. Even the restriction on searching people’s trash is being relaxed (Savage, 2001, p.1). I suspect that Americans would have a hard time giving up these rights, making these exceptions, even for a limited time. But, at this point it will be perpetually. And it is enshrined in the United States Patriot Act¹. How is this reified in the culture and in the minds of young people?

The critical analysis of media, in this case - film, provides an avenue for pedagogy to provide a type of critical media literacy, focusing upon the reading of current Hollywood approaches to war and the consequent formation of identities and attitudes toward the military, war and peace. The film, *Act of Valor (2012)* will be critically analysed based upon three themes to demonstrate its potential to portray war and military service in the 21st century and to contribute to notions of long term military service –the way of the soldier and the way this functions to cultivate certain identities for youth. In other words, in the time of exception and perpetual war, how is Hollywood cinema complicit and critical of the ways of perpetual war and/or peace? Critical analyses of war films provide an avenue to discuss peace or create admittedly collapsible lines of flight toward conceptualizations of peace. These can be multiplicities of critique that disturb and weave through the overwhelming, complex and stifling milieu of our everyday experiences in the militarized, corporatized, bureaucratized, globalized, Hollywoodized, virtualized, and Disneyfied ‘desert of the real’ (Zizek, 2002).

We set against this fascism of power active, positive lines of flight, because these lines open up desire, desire’s machines and the organization of a social field of desire: it is not a matter of escaping “personally from oneself, but allowing something to escape, like bursting a pipe or boil. Opening up flows beneath social codes that seek to channel or block them. (Deleuze, 1995. P. 19)

In a time of perpetual war, scholars must discuss war, peace and democracy from various critical pedagogical perspectives, which create alternatives to our militarized society or the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment-Network. (Der Derian, 2000)

This book retraces my travels in virtuality, where made-for-TV wars and Hollywood war movies blur, military war games and computer video games blend, mock disasters and real accidents collide producing on screen a new configuration of virtual power. Going on

site to find the ghosts in the war machine, I map the emergence of a new virtual alliance, the *military-industrial-media-entertainment network*. (Der Derian, 2001, p. xi)

The critical media analysis of films and various other popular culture artifacts demonstrates that war and the military continue to be commodified/ objects for consumption as well. Just as after 9/11 we could purchase and demonstrate patriotism by buying American flags or GMC Suburbans, the development of a militarized identity in the 21st continues to be obtainable through the purchase of; DVDs, car magnets, video games, military toys, and so on. And investigating the influence of popular culture on militarization and its possible pedagogical consequences can possibly create lines of flight toward peace. That would be a language of possibility (Giroux, 1988).

The potency and power of the movie industry can be seen in its powerful influence upon the popular imagination and public consciousness. Unlike ordinary consumer items, film produces images, ideas and ideologies that shape both individual and national identities (Giroux, 2002, p. 6).

Militainment

The year 2003 marked the moment when the word ‘militainment’ entered the public lexicon. Princeton’s online dictionary WordNet was first to document the term, defining it as ‘entertainment with military themes in which the Department of Defense is celebrated,’ apparently a predominantly American experience. (Stahl, 2101, p.6)

The discussion of war films needs to be situated and contextualized within the current political-socio-economic context. Not only has war become a “permanent global condition.” (Hardt and Negri, 2004, p. 17), but war and the military continue to be commodified within what Baudrillard refers to as a society of *profusion* (Baudrillard, 1988, p. 30). It is a society in which objects replace our fellow human beings or avatars become us. Our daily encounters become less and less human exchanges as they morph into relationships with objects: plasma or LCD screens, iPods, iPads and iPhones.

Their daily exchange is no longer with their fellows, but rather, statistically as a function of some ascending curve, with the acquisition and manipulation of goods and messages: from the rather complex domestic organization with its dozens of technical slaves to the ‘urban estate’ with all the material machinery of communication and professional activity, and the permanent festive celebration of objects in advertising with the hundreds of daily mass media messages; from the proliferation of somewhat obsessional objects to the symbolic psychodrama which fuels the nocturnal objects that come to haunt us even in our dreams. (Poster, 1988, p. 29)

And, although there seems to be a fatalistic tendency on the part of many who engage in critical media analysis and those that wish to resist the overwhelming power of late consumer/casino capitalism there are lines of flight that can allow possibility for the tactical maneuvering within

the ever shrinking experiences of democracy and the ever expanding web of experiences of perpetual war and all the ghosts in the war machine.

And this interaction [between the Pentagon and Hollywood] seemed to be ongoing; at the beginning of 2001, there was a series of meetings between White House advisers and senior Hollywood executives with the aim of coordinating the war effort and establishing how Hollywood could help in the ‘war against terrorism’ by getting the right ideological message across not only to Americans, but also to the Hollywood public around the globe – the ultimate empirical proof that Hollywood does in fact function as an ‘ideological state apparatus’. (Zizek, 2002, p.16)

War Films and Critical Media Literacy

The critical analysis of films (popular cultural artifacts) is a central pedagogical undertaking for the 21st century. Popular cultural critique is at the heart of any sense of critical pedagogy or literacy. Twenty years ago, William Ayers in an essay entitled, *Camera Obscura: an Encounter with War at the Movies and a Personal Journey through the Flickering White Light* (1991), discussed the pedagogical importance of the critical analysis of films.

If we are true to our calling and fully present to the demands of our times, we must recognize the larger historical and social processes in our interactions with students. Things like war and movies and much more cannot really be kept from classrooms; perhaps instead they can become a conscious starting point for critically understanding the world as it is, and as it might be, but is not yet. (Ayers, 1991, p. 211)

Critical media (film) analysis develops critical thinking in students and citizens in general. Critique can become a type of powerful *public pedagogy*. (Giroux, 1999 and Luke, 1997, cited in Macedo and Steinberg, 2007, p. 3)

It is highly irresponsible in the face of saturation by the Internet and media culture to ignore these forms of socialization and education. Consequently, a critical reconstruction of education should produce pedagogies that provide media literacy and enable students, teachers and citizens to discern the nature and effects of media culture. From this perspective, media culture is a form of pedagogy that teaches proper and improper behavior, gender roles, values and knowledge of the world. Individuals are often not aware that they are being educated and positioned by media culture, as its pedagogy is frequently invisible and is absorbed unconsciously. (Macedo and Steinberg 2007, p. 4)

There exists in these war films, as in most, an interesting, what might be called a symbiosis. On the one hand, films do impact the identity formation of those that watch them and on the other hand the viewing public determines the type and content of the films made. In the case of war/military films not only the viewing public but also the United States military itself determines the type and content of the films made.

Films are not to be taken as either the epitome of the potential of critical work or the pawn of corporate marketing. They manifest both potentials. Horkheimer and Adorno confirm this in *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* (1944). Their notion was that even popular cultural productions (low brow) have the potential to create cracks in the everyday “common-sense,” taken-for-granted perceptions of everyday life or can demystify some forms of ideological blindness. They also commented, however, on a paradox, because films or any cultural production not only have the potential to critique the socio-economic milieu, but also because of their commercial nature can be and usually are co-opted to maintain the very same milieu. Capitalism is recuperative and any artifact or cultural phenomenon that manifests any resistant or critical potential is eventually co-opted/reified for the market’s benefit. Films become objects to be consumed, and DVDs to be collected. Witness the 5.00/4.00/3.00 sales bins in stores like Wal-Mart where consumers can buy DVDs for “bargain prices.”

War films exist within this duality of potential and product. In an interview with Slavoj Žižek entitled “Capitalism, Marxism and Kung-Fu Panda,” Žižek notes that the point is to wake people up, which in this context can mean awareness of the potential of critically reading films such as *Act of Valor*. When films are considered not worthy of serious study based solely upon the excessive violence and graphic sexuality or on some moral high ground, then that very movement away from critical study may be evidence of a type of what Žižek calls a “cheap moralization” (European Graduate School, 2010) that directs us away from the critical, ideological analysis of these cultural artifacts and their potential for producing awareness of our current historical context of perpetual war. Moralizing is a way of dealing with troubling systemic contexts. Žižek uses this notion of moralizing to demonstrate how it has diverted attention in the context of the economic crisis facing global capitalism. Rather than analyzing the deep recession as a systemic problem within late global capitalism, there is a tendency to reduce that analysis to the discussion of a moral collapse with personalities such as Bernie Madoff. If only we could reform these types of individuals, our troubles would fade away. Likewise only if we could get rid of evil people like Saddam Husain, Osama bin Laden and Moammar Khadafi and the Al-Qaeda network, then war would be no more. Of course, even after all of these “evil doers” have been eliminated, war continues. This redirects our attention and our critical focus. In the case of war films, the immediate rejections of this form of art based on simplistic “just say no” judgments concerning violent content for example negate the critical potential of such work. The status and function of war films is placed within a critical postmodern context of potential and problematic. Perhaps, war films occupy or can negotiate a space between potential and problematic.

The Film—Act of Valor

But from the earliest war movies a Hollywood template emerged which persists today. In war movies...ordinary men leave the girl behind; undergo a trial by combat, overcome deep fears and insecurities, bond with fellow soldiers through acts of heroic, stoic or sometimes just senseless self-sacrifice; wander into no man’s land or some commensurable moral wasteland; seek and find private redemption; all of which provide a public catharsis. The soldier’s story recycled with great success through the genres of cowboy, cop and cyborg, becomes the metaplot for Hollywood. (Der Derian, 2001, p. 166)

We can analyze the contemporary war film, *Act of Valor* (2012) within various aspects of Der Derian's template to uncover or demystify the ways in which this particular film is part of the larger production of assorted codes of behavior, and militarism in a globalized world engaged in perpetual war. By reinforcing these attitudes and dis/positions films assist in maintaining perpetual war. It is not, however, that the films only replicate they also provide traces or lines of resistance. But, without pedagogy of critical analysis neither the maintenance nor the lines are discussed. Since the primary function of this film is recruitment very little if any traces of resistance to war or the military are to be found. The terrorist enemies are also made as despicable as possible. They torture women, sell drugs, and develop weapons for suicide missions. The American SEALs honorable family men look superior by contrast.

Three thematic topics based upon the template which Der Derian (2001) provides elicit critical analysis of the film, which demonstrates the impact it can have on the formation of identity. There are, of course, a plethora of other themes that can be analyzed. And, there are so many other war films that deserve critical analysis. The first theme is that there is the combination of the importance of rigorous/sadistic training, the development of male bonding and the extraordinary heroic efforts of the elite sailors. Secondly, there is the importance to the war on terror of technological advancements and the superiority of American weaponry. These advancements are an absolute necessity to the war effort, the safety of the soldiers and the achievement of victory regardless of how that victory is defined. Thirdly, there is the path toward personal redemption as a result of the experiences of war (Der Derian, 2001). In the perpetual war on terror there is the additional dilemma of facing questions of redemption multiple times based upon the probabilities of multiple deployments to the war zones. "There are threats everywhere and the world is draped in camouflage." (Clark, McCoy & Waugh, 2012)

The film, *Act of Valor* (2012) exhibits these characteristic themes. The film traces the activities of a group of active duty, Navy SEALs through a series of missions. All of the eight members of the SEAL Team¹ are decorated sailors and have various special skills. These skills range from sniper expertise to communications. All of the members of the team have received various medals from the Silver Star to the Purple Heart. This film has the distinct component of featuring actual active duty Navy SEALs in several of the lead roles and actually used live ammunition in the engagement scenes. The SEAL team engages terrorists around the world rescuing a woman hostage being brutally tortured by South/Central American Terrorists, to preventing an attack on the United States by internationally sponsored terrorists attempting to enter the country through tunnels in Mexico. This film also confirms the tie between the United States military and Hollywood. The major impetus for the film was its use as a recruiting vehicle for the Navy SEALs and I suspect other elite armed service forces. The film was followed by a novelization *Act of Valor* (2012) and, of course, the requisite t-shirts, posters and alike.

Rear Adm. Denny Moynihan, of the Navy Office of Information in Washington, explained that every four years the Defense Department 'looks at itself and says, 'What is it that you need to be moving forward, and where do you think you are?' 'He added, "For the Navy and the SEAL community it was, 'Hey, you need 500 more SEALs' and that

launched a series of initiatives to try to attract more people. This film [*Act of Valor*] was one of those initiatives.’ (Schmitt, et al. in Anderson, 2012, p. AR16)

The recruitment aspect of this film is accentuated by all the explicated themes. One additional recruitment device is that during the frequent battle scenes there are camera angles that look exactly like scenes from the various war/shooter video games that youth are familiar with. The angle where the shooter is behind the gun and the scene is shot from the barrel of the gun. Youth would gravitate to this technique and possibly think how similar to a video game these combat engagements are. It is a “subtle” use of camera angle and video game knowledge to recruit.

Training and SEAL Brotherhood

Your father was my boss and I was his chief, but we knew about each other’s strengths and our bond as operators. There was a brotherhood between us and we depended on each other more than a family. (Clark, McCoy & Waugh, 2012)

The first area to explicate is the theme of rigorous training, solid bonding and self-sacrifice. The film and novelization of the film center on the notion that these Navy SEALs are the best of the best, an elite killing force. The training that Navy SEALs receive is intense. In the Foreword to the novelization, Tom Clancy, the renowned thriller novelist writes of the SEALs training.

BUD/S (Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL) Training is perhaps the most challenging program known to man. The dropout rate is almost 80 percent of those invited to participate, and if you’re part of that roughly 20 percent who graduate, you’ve earned yourself a place atop my list of most respected individuals on the planet. (Couch, et. al., 2012, p. ix-x)

Another manifestation of bonding in this film is evidence in that not only are the SEALs brothers in arms but they are friends with each other’s families as well. In one scene in the film the families are together for a day of surfing. The families are all together as the SEALs and their wives talk about life and former/ future missions. The group is a family. So, when the men have to leave on a mission they are leaving their sweethearts and wives behind. Roark’s wife is pregnant and that adds to the pathos of the film, as some of the voice over(s) are letters to Roark’s unborn child. The bond of families as well as military brotherhood is emphasized in the film. It is a heroic sense of bonding for generations to come.

Your grandfather gave up his life flying a B-24 during World War II. He kept his Liberator aloft just long enough for everyone to jump and then he went down with the plane. That’s the blood that courses through your veins. (Clark, McCoy & Waugh, 2012)

There is this bond that develops within the military and armed service veterans keep those bonds for years. The point is, however, that youth who view these films hear these lines and can be attracted to this patriotic, heroic spirit of the military. The depiction of this “band of brothers” can be a powerful recruitment tool. Women in the military are also portrayed in this film. They

are not the fierce few. They serve in the function of support staff. The aspect of women in war films is another avenue for critical analysis.

Superior Technology in No-Man's Land

One effective recruitment tool for our techno-savvy youth is the demonstration of advanced technology. Youth are keenly attracted to the latest techno-gear. In this film there is no shortage of military techno-hardware. The film opens with Navy SEALs doing a parachute jump from a high altitude. This type of jump is shown twice in the film. Of course, the SEALs are equipped with the latest in high altitude jump gear including oxygen masks and visors. Weapons and equipment are displayed in almost every scene there are the M4A1 assault rifle, and the M72 law rocket launcher. The SEALs are shown in traditional camouflage gear, face paint, and in frogman suits. The techno-gear includes night vision lenses, and highly reliable communication equipment for man-to-man communication as well as long distance contact. The newest military technology is also shown. The typical drone surveillance is displayed. The newer Digital Raven is used in the film, The Raven is a lightweight, hand launched unmanned aerial surveillance vehicle that provides video imaging of enemy targets. This film demonstrates the idea that Virilio (2009) discusses concerning war, wining and technology.

‘Winning’ means the status quo of the new balances of forces, not based upon explosive and delivery systems but on the instant power of sensors, interceptors and remote electronic detectors (Virilio, 2009, p.2)

This emphasis on war as video game with special sailors and high technology is another asset for the recruiters and recruitment in general.

Heroic Sacrifice

Being dangerous was sacred a badge of honor. You live your life by a code, an ethos every man does. It's your shoreline. It is what guides you. (Clark, McCoy & Waugh, 2012)

The code that made your father who he was is the same code that will make you a man he would admire and respect. (Clark, McCoy & Waugh, 2012)

In the final battle sequence in the film the SEALs are fighting terrorists in Mexico trying to keep a group of them from getting across the border into the United States wearing undetectable bomb vests. The fighting is intense and in a moment of self-sacrifice Roark throws himself on a grenade to protect his fellow SEALs. It is the ultimate brave act of self-sacrifice. This act is significant in itself. But, for the purposes of the recruitment of youth the funeral scenes following the SEALs return home maybe is just as significant. There is the movement of the flag draped coffin from the hearse to the gravesite. There are the words of the Chaplin during the funeral service. The folded American flag is presented to the pregnant widow. And, we witness Roark's comrades weeping as the service progresses. Perhaps, the most compelling aspect of the funeral service in terms of a type of romantic heroism is that each of Roark's SEAL team buddies come up to his coffin and with a single blow of their fist attach their Trident pin to the top of his coffin.

Other SEALs also follow suit, as do the pallbearers. It is the last heroic tribute and demonstration of the brotherhood that was discussed earlier.

It is not that demonstrating honor for those who gave their lives is wrong. And, the ultimate act of self-sacrifice deserves recognition. But in terms of critically analyzing this death and funeral service it is interesting what is being provided youth as they view this. That somehow a perpetual war on terrorism is in the last instance a chivalric, romantic quest and that the Navy SEALs are akin to Arthur's knights. Join and you will be among the chosen and noble few. For youth that have few choices in our times it could seem to be a great story in which to play a role. They could become a part of a select few. The dedication at the end of the film reinforces that.

Dedicated to Naval Special Warriors, who have made the ultimate sacrifice since 9/11 and to all warriors heading downrange in the future – damn few. (Clark, McCoy & Waugh, 2012)

Significance of War Films for Peace Education

War films evidence a multiplicity of themes and possibilities for critique. Analyzing these popular culture artifacts is pedagogically and politically significant. The hard connection between critical literacy and war films returns us to one of the original premises that popular culture artifacts exist within a paradox of critique and reproduction. The discourse of despair is that war films are considered by most educators as not pedagogically appropriate to class work particularly given the emphasis on the testing discrete bits of information. So the lack of a critical media reading of *Act of Valor* and other war films may very well remain within the context of replicating existing values and attitudes. Additionally, the lack of critical media analysis assist in the recruiting efforts for the United States armed forces. The demystifying of the connections between Hollywood, and the military, particularly in terms of films as recruitment tools is an important aspect of questioning the replication of these existing values and attitudes. It is only when pedagogy becomes critical and media literacy intertwines that these texts become a language of possibility for critique.

Put another way, for radical literacy to come about, the pedagogical should be made more political and the political more pedagogical. In other words, there is a dire need to develop pedagogical practices, in the first instance, which brings teachers, parents, and students together around new and more emancipatory visions of community. (Giroux in Freire and Macedo, 1987, p. 6)

This is the hope, of course, that a critical peace pedagogy/literacy can lead us all to think more deeply and critique more effectively. The lines of flight established by a critical media literacy concerning war and war films and their effect on youth identity is a pathway toward peace. In this time of perpetual war, let us study war films within the context of critical media analysis. Within the context of postmodern peace, this is a first step in peace education -- to develop critical understandings of war and peace. Presently, peace is no longer defined as the absence of war.

During the last decade, the language and ghostly shadow of war became all-embracing, not only eroding the distinctions between war and peace, but putting into play a public pedagogy in which nearly every aspect of the culture was shaped by militarized knowledge, values, and ideals. (Giroux, 2011, p. 138)

I would suggest there is no critical pedagogical recipe to develop peace education during these Orwellian times when war is peace or at any other time for that matter. The deconstruction of the phenomenon of militarization through critical media analysis can assist us in understanding our immersion in a culture of perpetual war. Since popular culture is a primary educational site for youth as well as adults focusing on the analysis of media and its representations of war, and the military is one way to confront the militarization of our society and perpetual war. This includes not only films as I have discussed here, but every aspect of our culture from films, to video games to toys. It returns me to the ways in which even the G.I. Joe toys I played with almost fifty years ago emphasized that militarization.

G.I. Joe was olive drab, M1 Rifle, canned SPAM, scar-faced, down – and – dirty. The hard plastic soldiers (petroleum-based all the way) were built to take a pounding. In the spring of 1965, in GI-Bill built suburbs from Levittown, New York, to Castro Valley, California, ten-year old boys were digging miniature foxholes and jerry rigging Dad’s old handkerchiefs to make paratroopers out of their new dolls. Hasbro had an instant hit; G.I. Joe did close to \$20 million in sales that first year. (Maddow, 2012, p.13)

This retrospective glimpse suggests that even a critical talk with youth about the toys they play with could lead to deeper understandings of the militarized culture in which they live. Of course, the artifacts we discuss with youth have changed drastically. But the discussion/dialogue with youth, not the intervention of our notions is a crucial moment of a critical peace education. Let us give that dialogue a chance and let us give critical peace education a chance.

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Perpetual War(s), Impossible Peace: Neoliberal Narratives in Action in the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps

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PERPETUAL WAR(S), IMPOSSIBLE PEACE: NEOLIBERAL NARRATIVES IN ACTION IN THE JUNIOR RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS

Abstract

The Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) is a military-run program enrolling nearly half a million students in 3600 U.S. public high schools. Marketed as citizenship training, JROTC, we argue, instead educates future soldiers (and others) into an uncritical nationalism that serves to maintain U.S. economic, political, cultural, and military hegemony in precisely those communities most harmed by white supremacy and capitalism. This article pays special attention to the ways in which neoliberalism, especially its rhetoric of choice, informs JROTC expansion and how hegemonic ideology is evidenced in the curriculum and policies of JROTC programs. We specifically focus on two U.S. school districts, Chicago and Philadelphia. In these districts, comprised mostly of low-income and students of color who are frequently characterized as needing discipline, militarized public education creates obfuscating and dangerous narratives about the military's occupation of public schools. At the same time, we recognize that JROTC participants are not naïve dupes and thus pay attention to how JROTC meets their educational needs while also arguing that the underlying context of a militarized education damages both students and their communities and therefore should be eliminated from public education.

Introduction

Keeping track of all the various wars and pseudo-wars in which the United States is currently—the fall of 2012—embroiled is difficult. While the “official war” in Iraq came to a close when the last U.S. troops left in December of 2011¹, the United States continues to be engaged in the longest war in the nation’s history, in Afghanistan. Additionally, hundreds have been killed both in Pakistan and Yemen as a part of the “War on Terror” that has characterized U.S. foreign policy since 2001, and many have died in conflicts involving U.S. military action in Libya and Somalia. According to Pentagon data, the United States has a military presence in 148 countries around the world (Department of Defense, 2010a) and over 650 military bases (Department of Defense, 2010b). Domestically, the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), a military recruiting program for high school students, is housed in over 3,600 U.S. high schools (Arnoldy & Lubold, 2008; Bartlett & Lutz, 1998; Department of Defense, 2002; Pema & Mehay, 2009).

This global presence, a violent military armed with weapons of all kinds on foreign soil and its educative equivalents spread throughout schools domestically, has become the norm for people in the United States. Pride in and defense of the U.S. military—and hence the U.S. military occupation of most of the world—is evidenced by exhortations on bumper magnets and window decals to “support the troops,” no different than declaring pride at being the parent of a JROTC cadet (as the program calls students). The notion of the United States as the “sole super power” coupled with the Bush-era doctrine of “spreading democracy” has given additional nationalistic legitimacy to armed conflicts throughout the world and to the reproduction of soldiers in the face of permanent war.

Additionally, this process has been coupled with the rise of private security firms carrying out military-style objectives without being an official part (i.e., operating without Congressional oversight) of the armed services. For instance, the company formerly known as Blackwater (now called Academi) has made over \$1 billion from operations in Afghanistan and Iraq since 2002, where its primary task was guarding U.S. diplomats (Sizemore, 2012). What we see with Academi/Blackwater is a coming together of two spheres, a comingling that was unimaginable until recently: the neoliberalization of war and military action. Neoliberalism is defined by critical geographer David Harvey (2005) as “a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade” (p. 2). Neoliberalization, then, is the historical process wherein those domains once thought of as public or in the public service become privatized and structured as private enterprises. Thus, Academi/Blackwater makes for an important case study: it represents the neoliberalization of the armed forces, the privatization of the military and military services. The linkage of war and capitalism, of military action and profit-making, has rarely ever been so explicit.

Yet we must go further in explaining our particular historical moment with regard to the U.S. military and the neoliberalization of military efforts. Critical theorists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2006) have argued that we must understand how in the historical shift in the period after World War II, military service has become far more akin to police service. Calls, at times critical,

to label the U.S. military the “police of the world” find a place in this framework, and certainly the kinds of operations being carried out by Academi/Blackwater are far more akin to police work (body-guarding, driving armored vehicles, and so on) than they are to more classical military practices of combat in the open field. At the same time, as Michelle Alexander (2010) has shown in her careful analysis of the War on Drugs and its particular impacts on African Americans, police action within the United States has become far more akin to military action. From SWAT teams to police tanks in the wake of Homeland Security measures designed to enable police departments to procure weapons and supplies to face the myriad threats in our society, from terrorists to drug dealers, and so on, we find evidence that the lines between police and military are irreparably blurred.

This process can be understood as a part of the maintenance of U.S. hegemony, both domestically and abroad. We use hegemony in the Gramscian (2008) sense to refer to “the ‘spontaneous’ consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group” (p. 12). The hegemonic force of the U.S. military, what Hardt and Negri (2006) refer to as the “ontological dimension” of war, serves as the means by which U.S. global financial interests are protected. It is further helpful to consider Louis Althusser’s (2008) conception of Repressive State Apparatuses and Ideological State Apparatuses. Althusser identifies Repressive State Apparatuses as those state-run institutions that function by violence and force, such as “the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc” (p. 17). Here again we can see a link between military and police action: both function as repressive means by which, through force, the dominant hegemony (or status quo) is maintained. These are juxtaposed with Ideological State Apparatuses, which function not by violence but through coercion and are experienced as “a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions” (p. 17). Examples of Ideological State Apparatuses include religious groups, schools and sites of education, the family, the legal system, and political parties.

To maintain hegemony, that is, for the the great masses of the population to internalize the will of the dominant and powerful, it is far more effective to use ideology and coercion than to use brute force. While clearly the many armed conflicts in which the United States is currently embroiled represent repressive functions, it is imperative that we pay close attention to both the material and ideological dimensions of Repressive State Apparatuses. For Althusser, the military constitutes the most powerful Repressive State Apparatus, and schools the most powerful Ideological State Apparatus.

Thus, JROTC (and other military programming in public schools) entangles both the most powerful repressive force in the country (perhaps the world), the U.S. military, and (one of) the most powerful ideological force(s), schools. This comingling represents perhaps the single most clear example of hegemony in process: both force and ideology, military training and a “(neo)liberal” education. And the effects of the program are striking. Between 30 and 50 percent of JROTC cadets enlist after high school (Arnoldy & Lubold, 2008). As the Department of Defense (2002) reported in a public document,

Translating this to hard recruiting numbers, in Fiscal Years (FY) 1996-2000, about 9,000 new recruits per year entered active duty after completing two years of JROTC. The proportion of JROTC graduates who enter the military following completion of high school is roughly five times greater than the proportion of non-JROTC students. Therefore, the program pays off in citizenship as well as recruiting. (p. 23)

Instilling imperialist (e.g., authoritarian and militaristic) values, referred to above as “citizenship,” through military drilling and history is often an extraordinarily effective technique of indoctrinating and inoculating those with the least power in U.S. society, as JROTC programs are intentionally concentrated in schools that serve a disproportionate number of students of color and students living in poverty (Bartlett & Lutz, 1998). JROTC, then, educates future soldiers (and others) into an uncritical nationalism, masquerading as “citizenship training,” that maintains U.S. economic, political, cultural, and military hegemony in precisely those communities most harmed by white supremacy and capitalism.

In this analysis, using a Marxist-class-based framework informed by the above outline, we look at two school districts in the United States, Chicago and Philadelphia, to demonstrate how these larger theoretical principles play out in local contexts. In these districts, two of the largest in the nation, comprised mostly of low-income and students of color who are frequently characterized as in need of discipline, militarized public education creates obfuscating and dangerous narratives about the military's occupation of public schools. In this analysis, we pay special attention to the ways in which neoliberalism, especially its rhetoric of choice, informs JROTC expansion and how hegemonic ideology, as defined above, is evidenced in the curriculum and policies of JROTC programs. It is important to note, as we seek to do in this work, that JROTC participants are not simply naïve dupes, but rather complex actors with both complimentary and conflicting experiences and viewpoints. Finally, thus, we urge the necessity of listening to the voices of public school students enrolled in JROTC in search of an educational environment that meets their needs. We argue that while JROTC meets students' needs in certain ways, the underlying context of a militarized education damages both students and their communities, and therefore should be eliminated from public education. Further, we contend that the U.S. military occupation of U.S. schools further entangles business and war rather than opening possibilities for peace.

The Military Occupation of Public Schools: Chicagoⁱ

The four and one-half minute Chicago JROTC video “A Promise to Keep” is designed to tug at the heart strings with poignant music and smiling faces. In a city whose troubled schools have been called out by the likes of Oprah Winfrey and Jonathan Kozol, a JROTC instructor talks instead of the promise of the JROTC program for struggling students: “We have a number of specific cases where the students found a home, found a sense of purpose, and found a goal. They made the transition to 'I can do it, I'm gonna do it, and here's how I'm gonna do it'” (Chicago JROTC, n.d., 1). JROTC cadets, nearly all black or Latin@—as are over 90 percent of the students in the Chicago Public Schools—echo his optimism, talking about their mothers, the colleges they will attend, the family they have found in JROTC. Nearly all are in military uniform as they laugh, joke around, and celebrate their accomplishments. In this video, we see

through their voices, actions, and facial expressions that JROTC is important to these students.

Yet these students are not making connections between themselves and students around the world who are under attack from the U.S. military or related occupations. Instead, students such as Chicago's JROTC cadets learn from a military curriculum intended both for military recruitment and for boosting ideological support for the U.S. military. If students in Chicago's JROTC programs have found a home, purpose, and goal, what of students in Afghanistan, in Somalia, in Yemen—students whose schooling and lives are negatively affected by the U.S. military whose uniforms and curriculum JROTC students don and study each day?¹ In this section, we look past the jingoism of smiling, happy JROTC cadets to examine the militarization of the Chicago Public School (CPS) system and its connections to the neoliberalization of educational reform, which characterizes public military schools as a choice for students—particularly black and brown—in need of moral discipline.

In 1999, CPS Chief Executive Officer Paul Vallas was among those to cut the ribbon opening the nation's first public school run by the military, the Chicago Military Academy-Bronzeville (Army JROTC). It is housed in the former 8th Regiment Armory, once home to the nation's first black-commanded infantry unit. That same year, William Taylor's (1999) study of JROTC stated that some CPS principals suggested making JROTC participation mandatory for CPS students in their junior and senior years of high school. Today, in Chicago, the nation's third largest school district, approximately 11,000 students are in military public school programs. Of its 106 public high schools, six are military academies (representing all four branches), one is a military academy within a school, and 37 more have JROTC programs. Additionally, twelve schools have Middle School Cadet Corps programs; while most of these are afterschool programs for seventh and eighth graders led by a JROTC instructor, one is an in-school, full-time military academy program. This proliferation of public military schools and military programs within public schools makes Chicago the “national leader in the integration of JROTC in urban education” (CPS, 2011) and the largest JROTC in the country, both in numbers of cadets and in total programs. Retired Colonel Kevin Kelley (2012), CPS Director of Military Instruction, states that “Demand has Driven Expansion” (p. 5), increasing CPS military programs from 7200 cadets just over a decade ago (in 2000).

Across the nation during the last century, the JROTC program has expanded in times of war (e.g., the late 1960s), changing military needs (e.g., the 1990s as military-run youth programming expanded), and recruiting shortfalls (e.g., the late 1990s and the mid-2000s). In the second decade of the twenty-first century, Chicago is witnessing another growth trend, namely, the expansion of military programs as neoliberal educational “reforms” dismantle the public school system. Chicago is not only first in an expanding and expansive military presence within the public schools, it was also among the first to de-localize control of its public schools. In 1995, the schools were put under mayoral control and a Chief Executive Officer (first Paul Vallas and then Arne Duncan, now U.S. Secretary of Education) replaced the role of superintendent (who had been legally required to have experience in public education). Even before Renaissance 2010, the 2004 mayoral plan to close 60-70 schools and open 100 mostly charter or contract schools, what Pauline Lipman (2012) calls “an experiment to reinvent the third largest U.S. public school system as an education market” (p. 33), the military was occupying CPS. In

Chicago, a primary weapon in this “assault on public education” (Watkins, 2012) has been the military. Of this reform, CPS high school teacher Brian Roa (2009) writes, “Chicago's plan is not a school improvement plan. It is the dismantling of a public good for the benefit of a chosen few. School militarization was accelerated as this plan was being implemented in Chicago.”

Roa taught science at Chicago's Senn High School, which also houses Rickover Naval Academy (RNA). Although located in the same building, RNA facilities are better, and the cadets receive preferential treatment (e.g., they can be on both sides of the building). Here, as elsewhere, JROTC instructors often have smaller class sizes and fewer overall students than other teachers (see, e.g., Galaviz, Palafox, Meiners, & Quinn, 2011). Such discrepancies, in the language of neoliberal educational reform (like other neoliberal policies and practices), are framed as choice—individual freedom to be guaranteed by freedom in the marketplace (here, the marketplace of schools). But choice for CPS students—91 percent students of color and 87 percent from low-income families (CPS, 2012)—is often based on economic coercion or racist and classist logic. Of the economic coercion of military schools, Roa writes, “If one's only choices are a school in desperate need of repair or a shiny new military academy, parents will often 'choose' the 'better' school.” Further, in Chicago, public schools closures are often closely linked to gentrification, which displaces working-class people of color while reopening rebranded, improved schools for middle-class students (Lipman, 2012). For low-income and students of color, the “marketplace” offers dozens of military programs—programs, however, that make students at Senn High School “feel like second-class citizens inside their own school, due to inequalities” and the unequal allocation of resources (Roa, 2009; see also Galaviz et al., 2011).

This raced and classed neoliberal logic of Chicago Public School reform fits well with JROTC's assertion that it is a program that “gets these kids firmly on the right track,” as former President George H. W. Bush (1992) said in announcing a JROTC expansion. Frequently, JROTC is cited as serving “at-risk and disadvantaged” students (e.g., Pema & Mehay, 2010). Military discipline is offered as a solution for students and for families, particularly for “aimless young people . . . this troubled and troublesome cohort of America's youths” (Price, 2007, p. 32) who “strive to achieve” and yet “are marooned in disorderly and dysfunctional schools” (Price, 2010, p. 60). Robert C. Funk (2002), a retired Marine Corps officer who established a Marine Corps JROTC program in Kansas, wrote that

JROTC provides an environment where many children without cohesive families can experience some stability and order in their lives, where clear rules, discipline, consequences, and authority figures exist. The leadership training, development, and education they experience are designed to make them better students and, eventually, more productive and better citizens. (p. 53)

Such portrayals characterize students, their families, and their schools as deficient, lacking in values such as self-discipline, motivation, and an ethic of hard work.

JROTC is thus recommended as a way to keep young men out of gangs and young women from unintentional pregnancies (Pérez, 2006; Taylor, 2009). (All the while not addressing JROTC's

valorization of violence; as JROTC cadets carry firearms for drill ceremonies, other students are suspended or expelled for real or simulated weapons.) And yet, at the same time, claims to help those “at-risk” are belied by the fact that students must “maintain acceptable standards of academic achievement and conduct” (10 US. Code 2031:b4) to stay in JROTC. Questioning CPS's expanding military programs, Lipman is among many who ask, “Why are they good schools for low-income African-American and Latino students and not good schools for affluent white kids? Are we saying that those students need a different kind of discipline, a different kind of regulation. . . ?” (Brackett, 2007) She argues that school reforms—including the proliferation of military programs such as JROTC—“concretely and symbolically 'crack down' on African American and Latino youth who are seen as largely superfluous in Chicago's restructured, informational economy and dangerous in the racialized social landscape of the city” (Lipman, 2011, p. 73).

Moreover, as with the prison system (Alexander, 2010), the costs of disciplining the bodies of low-income and students of color are often obscured. For instance, by filing Freedom of Information Act requests, Galaviz et al. (2011) found that 2007-08 CPS expenditures for JROTC neared \$13 million, of which the Department of Defense paid under \$4 million, leaving over \$9 million to be paid by CPS—or more accurately, by Chicago taxpayers. Among the reasons for this bill are facilities, textbooks, field trips, and the salaries paid to JROTC instructors (in 2009-10, averaging \$75,400 compared with \$69,000 for a CPS teacher [Galaviz et al., 2011]; see also Clark, 1999). Further, JROTC seeks opportunities to partner with businesses—such as the \$194,100 it received from business partners to “invest in student educational experiences” (Kelley, 2012, p. 29) that include national and international field trips.

But what of the sentiments expressed in, for instance, the video “A Promise to Keep”? Importantly, in addition to the economic advantages that attend newer facilities, expansive afterschool and extracurricular activities, etc., JROTC offers poor students and students of color opportunities to be framed as successful, rather than as problems or “at risk.” Indeed, students interviewed by Gina Pérez (2006) frequently stated that a primary reason for joining JROTC and one of its greatest advantages was being treated with respect:

Latina/o and African-American youth are painfully aware of how their bodies are read. Thus, wearing a military uniform is, perhaps, one way of negotiating the racialized systems of surveillance that not only operate within their neighborhoods, but also within their own schools. (p. 58)

Students, parents, and others report that JROTC gives students a sense of pride, belonging, and identity (e.g., Corbett & Coumbe, 2001; Lewis, 2008; Taylor, 1999) in an institution, the military, that has been seen as an avenue of social mobility, especially for people of color (Pérez, 2006). JROTC programs are often in schools populated by students from low-income families and/or students of color; students and their families often choose these programs. In a society where capitalism divides and neoliberalism destroys community, JROTC does fulfill needs. But at what cost—and supporting what hegemonic ideologies? And why are these specific students targeted?

Students—and their families and communities—need well-funded, repaired schools with

challenging, student-centered curriculum and well-paid, well-prepared teachers. Further, they need to feel respected and valued by their schools, teachers, and curriculum—not put under surveillance or labeled at risk. Instead, under neoliberal educational reform, deficit models, and a rhetoric of choice, CPS students are increasingly offered the military. Rather than addressing root causes of troubled schools, such as poverty, students are exhorted to become cadets, to develop, through drill and discipline, skills necessary to succeed in hierarchies such as the military.

Retired Lieutenant Colonel Rick Mills states that “the purpose of the military academy programs is to offer our cadets and parents an educational choice among many choices in Chicago public schools and to provide an educational experience that has a college prep curriculum, combined with a military curriculum” (Brackett, 2007). Herman Barnett, director of a Middle School Cadet Corps, says students “don’t look at it as getting ready for the army. They’re just doing it for entertainment and fun” (Wedekind, 2005). And the Chicago Military Academy’s commandant, retired Brigadier General Frank Bacon, said upon its opening that the school was not training soldiers: “We are using military methodology to educate these students” (McCann, 1999). The Chicago Public Schools’ Website (2011) states that JROTC offers “students a unique opportunity for personal growth” that seeks “to serve students during their school years as well as throughout their lives,” with goals such as citizenship, leadership, communication, physical fitness, positive self-motivation, and an historical perspective of military service in “a disciplined and structured learning atmosphere” (Kelley, 2012, p. 9).

This choice, this methodology, this preparation is predicated upon military values, behaviors, and ideology. For instance, while the first of CPS JROTC’s six goals is quality instruction, the fourth includes emphasizing cadets’ standards for behavior and appearance (Chicago JROTC, n.d., 3). Particularly in the public military academies, cadets (no longer students) must adhere to a military discipline code with its own set of punishments (e.g., push-ups, running laps, cleaning); in practice, those who do well in JROTC—e.g., cadets promoted to leadership roles—are the young people who most adhere to military-oriented values and behaviors, such as successful (military) uniform inspection. These values also include an unquestioned and unquestioning obedience to hierarchical authority—for instance, George Washington Carver Military Academy “administrators extol the virtues of a system that requires youth to refuse to compromise military discipline for solidarity with other youth” (Lipman, 2011, p. 84). Further, JROTC can take the place of other coursework—such as physical education requirements for first and second-year high school students (Chicago JROTC, n.d., 2) and rigorous college preparatory work. And, of course, JROTC, with its emphasis on patriotism and U.S. military heroism, does not offer an analysis of how the United States (sometimes directly and sometimes through proxy/funding) violates international law and acts unilaterally around the globe to defend its (economic and strategic) interests (for examples of history that does, see Rodriguez, 2011).

Such a “choice” of military curriculum and methodology does further disservice to students by disguising the military recruiting that occurs at schools, particularly those populated by low-income and students of color. (For instance, while based on incomplete lists, a selective high school in Chicago had seven military recruiter visits and 150 from universities; in a neighborhood school whose students were 80 percent Latino/a, the ratio was almost even: 9 military recruiter visits and 10 college [Reed, 2005].) JROTC or military academy students

obviously receive a biased view of the military, one that perpetuates myths of meritocracy while leaving out, for instance, the racial realities of the military, such as how servicemembers of color are more frequently incarcerated, court-martialed, or dishonorably discharged (Berlowitz, 2000).

All of this serves to foster ideological support for the military, an important goal for JROTC in serving “as a bridge between military and civil society in an era when these two elements tend to diverge” (Taylor, 1999, p. xiii). Indeed, the third of the six CPS JROTC goals is to “develop relationships with community and corporate partners to increase support to JROTC programs” (Chicago JROTC, n.d., 3). The need for ideological support could also, for instance, explain the aforementioned CPS cadets' trips to Norfolk Naval Station, the Army/Navy football game (most frequently held in Philadelphia), Gettysburg, Fort Knox, Washington, DC, West Point, and World War II destinations such as Beach Head War Cemetery and Normandy (Kelley, 2012, p. 25). And as the military or military action is more privatized, support for the military is as—and perhaps even more—crucial than bodies in privates' uniforms. None of this, however, is new—just a repackaging. In 1925, less than a decade after JROTC was established, New York journalist Winthrop D. Lane concluded that military training “makes for a mind-set which automatically thinks of war as the ultimate 'sanction' to be used by patriotism” and feared for consequences to academic freedom with handing over instruction to the (then) U.S. War Department (in Bartlett & Lutz, 1998, p. 119). Today, we have the same fears for public school systems such as Chicago and Philadelphia.

Dangerous Narratives in Philadelphia

As a first-year teacher in a high school in South Philadelphia nearly a decade ago, I (Brian) had my first encounter with what I would later come to understand as the military encroachment on urban public education. Two men in uniform asked if they could take a few minutes to speak to my class. Out of naivety, and perhaps some curiosity, I consented to let them take away from the limited instructional time I had with my overcrowded algebra class filled with predominantly low-income black youth. I watched as my typically rambunctious class sat quietly listening to the two men, in what seemed to be a sort of reverence for their authority. As a new teacher, I had yet to gain that reverence from them, nor did I want it. Perhaps it was the uniform, or maybe the fact that 9/11 had happened only a year before, but my students listened with interest as the two men proceeded to tell them about “the greatest opportunity of their lives.”

I listened to their selling points of seeing the world, getting money for college, and most importantly, discovering who you really were. As a budding critical educator with firm anti-war commitments, I was astonished that the recruiters were selling military service in these deceptively benevolent ways. The United States had attacked Afghanistan the year before and was setting the stage for invading Iraq, beginning a series of unjust wars in which the country is still entangled, so I knew that if my students enlisted they were extremely likely to see combat, which the recruiters did not mention. As the recruiters finished their pitch, handed out brochures, and asked for questions, my students sat silent. I finally broke the silence by asking several questions about the likelihood of seeing combat, the process of leaving the military, and the length of service before receiving money for college, to which the recruiters gave non-appreciative but honest replies. After they left, I engaged the class in a critical discussion about the U.S. military and the over-representation of poor people of color among its enlisted ranks. I

found out that several of my students had siblings serving in the Army and the Marines, some of whom were already on their way to “see the world” in Afghanistan.

The intrusion of the military, whether through recruiters in classrooms or JROTC programs housed in school buildings, has negatively impacted public education. The story of the recruiters coming to my classroom to fish for future soldiers, and the increasing promotion of pro-military perspectives through JROTC, illuminates three convenient, but dangerous narratives. The first is that military rhetoric and/or a tangible military presence can exist neutrally in educational spaces. A second dangerous narrative constructed less by recruiters but more by JROTC is that militarism equals high quality education. The final, and perhaps most dangerous narrative, is the story of military involvement without violent consequences, whether material or symbolic. Using Philadelphia as a backdrop, we will situate these narratives in a current and historical context.

Philadelphia public schools are quite different than when I taught there. As the city faces having to close over sixty schools in the next few years and possibly dissolving the district (Mezzacappa, 2012), the military influx into its schools has become dramatic. Since 2002 (when Paul Vallas became CEO),ⁱ the number of high schools housing JROTC programs has doubled (*The Notebook*, 2002; School District of Philadelphia, n.d.). It seems as though the recruiters who visited my classroom have been given a permanent residence in the form of retired military officers hired as JROTC teachers. With a quick glance at the schools that have JROTC programs (School District of Philadelphia, n.d.), what becomes apparent are not the schools on the list—all comprehensive neighborhood schools (and two military academies) located in the city’s most impoverished areas—but the schools conspicuously absent from the list. Philadelphia’s “elite” magnet high schools such as Central, Girls’ High, Masterman, and George Washington Carver apparently do not need JROTC programs. The decision to create JROTC programs in the lowest achieving and, not coincidentally, lowest resourced schools, speaks to the purpose of conflating the military with the education of poor, predominantly black and brown youth—to manage bodies through discipline as opposed to providing critical, culturally relevant educational environments.

The military relies on the myth of educational neutrality when it enters schools (which is, of course, contradicted by the specific targeting of schools populated by students of color and students living in poverty). It attempts to convince all involved that there are no ideological effects on schools offering JROTC. However, as Michael Apple (2004) suggests, schools are already contested spaces where ideology is mapped onto curriculum, pedagogy, and the physical space of schools: “the study of educational knowledge is a study in ideology, the investigation of what is considered *legitimate* knowledge . . . by specific social groups and classes, in specific institutions, at specific historical moments” (p. 43). The educational knowledge JROTC promotes must thus be historicized and situated in the context of military engagements; the military presence in public schools cannot be divorced from this context. The U.S. military is the penultimate representation of potential and actual violence that the world has ever seen (see previous data). Although the Philadelphia City Council recently passed a resolution calling for a federal reallocation of military spending to help the city’s financially gutted school system (Dugdale, 2012), the presence of JROTC in its schools creates an ideological space where hyper-militarism is legitimated and becomes part of the logic of the current historical moment. Just as

Philadelphia students are subjected to metal detectors and police patrolling the schools, the presence of JROTC represents another mechanism of social control that situates students in specific ideological terms as “those who must be controlled.”

The second narrative—the rhetoric of academic excellence, leadership, and citizenship touted by JROTC—is not new to Philadelphia, as the city has historically boasted evidence of academic success through militarized education. The Valley Forge Military Academy (VFMA), the nation’s elite private boarding school and junior college, has been a symbol in the Philadelphia area for close to a century. While VFMA does have an impressive record of academic achievement among its graduates, most of whom seem to go on to universities rather than military service, perhaps its students’ high achievement is due to average class sizes of only thirteen students and a 10:1 “cadet” to teacher ratio (Valley Forge Military Academy, 2012). And with an annual tuition of over \$30,000 for high school youth, the number of families that can afford to send their sons to VFMA, even with scholarships, is severely limited. What we see with the mimicking of VFMA rhetoric in the School District of Philadelphia is an attempt to draw upon the success of upwardly mobile youth with incredible resources and then map that onto impoverished youth with few resources. If we were to strip VFMA of all of its financial resources, all that would remain is physical discipline and military values, which is what JROTC provides to students in Philadelphia. The conflation of military education with high academic achievement serves to obfuscate the environmental and pedagogical aspects of JROTC that actually work: smaller class sizes where students receive more attention and a more supportive environment where they are not allowed to slip through the cracks. These proven educational aspects, however, are marginalized by the rhetoric and practice of militarized education, in which the military is promoted and centered and discipline and pride advanced as the singular aspects for student success within the JROTC program. What is left out of JROTC’s narrative of educational success is the idea that, absent an uncritical patriotism and embodied discipline through drills and aesthetics, a caring and nurturing educational environment can be enough to promote academic success for students.

A dangerous precedent is set when militarism and military training are equated with high quality education, especially in low-resourced schools. A central tenet of military education is a focus on the individual through leadership, citizenship, discipline, and physical and mental strength. As stated previously, the underlying assumption is that students who are not successful in school somehow lack one or more of these individual characteristics. Yet a military education celebrates or punishes the individual without situating her or him within a historical and sociocultural context. Therefore, a military education cannot critique the inequities of the broader society because the individual causes of success and failure will not stand up to the scrutiny of the conditions in which individuals exist. In the School District of Philadelphia, for instance, over 80 percent of students are from low-income families and close to 86 percent are students of color, over half African American (School District of Philadelphia, 2011). There is a huge difference between telling an adolescent whose family pays \$30,000 per year for VFMA education that he needs to improve his discipline and sending the same message to a student whose entire family has a gross income of less than \$20,000 per year. The rhetoric that individualizes these latter students has no ability to account for the discipline that is inherent in living and surviving in poverty conditions. The individualized tenets of military education amount to a reactionary

recognition of an individual's merit that can only seek to perpetuate the status quo of gross inequality.

Perhaps the most dangerous narrative associated with military education, though, is that it is absent of consequence. The daily acts of violence committed abroad by the U.S. military cannot and should not be separated from its domestic acts, particularly when they involve socializing and cultivating children's minds. If education is a political act, as Paulo Freire (1970) insists, then the politics of the military come into the classroom as soon as military personnel enter the school. Pierre Bourdieu (1997) writes, "*Illusio* is that way of *being in* the world, of being occupied by the world, which means that an agent can be affected by something very distant, even absent, if it participates in the game in which he is engaged" (p. 135). This suggests that as youth engage in the "game" of the military, they are subject to the illusions and effects of distant acts, such as prolonged occupations of sovereign lands or wars in foreign countries.

The U.S. military seems to recognize Bourdieu's notion of "illusio" as well. In 2008 the U.S. Army opened an arcade-style recruitment center—"The Army Experience Center"—in Philadelphia's largest mall, Franklin Mills. The \$13 million facility was open to adults and youth as young as thirteen. Inside were PC gaming stations and X-Boxes equipped with combat-style games. The Center's explicit purpose was to recruit young people into the military using digital gaming as a draw. As adolescents played, plainclothes military personnel walked around and talked to the gamers, answering any questions they had about the military. Using Bourdieu's lens, these youth were engaged in the literal game of warfare, which means they could be affected by it and occupied in a certain form. The deception of this type of recruitment center lies in the lack of material consequences these youth face as they are being occupied. There is a very literal parallel between the Army Experience Center and JROTC programs: the military is intentionally coaxing youth to participate in war games, whether video games in an arcade or drill ceremonies in gyms or uniform inspections in class. After large protests from parent and community groups upset at the deception of the Army trying to recruit students through the culture of gaming (see, e.g., Shut Down the Army Experience Center), the facility was closed in 2010.

As with the recruiters visiting my class, a response to military encroachment in schools must be a pedagogical commitment to expose these dangerous narratives. However, it is not enough for teachers to take up this cause; we need a collective response from parents, administrators, politicians, researchers, and anyone who recognizes the destructive totality of the U.S. military and the purposes behind its increasing claims to legitimate education. The effective shutdown of the Army Experience Center through organizing and protest demonstrates that power can still lie in the hands of people who are willing to stand for something. These minor victories, however, should not be seen as inevitable, but rather possible only through organized struggle for articulated material gains. Our effort to name JROTC as an effective mechanism for U.S. military hegemony is meant to serve as a call for mass organization against its increasing encroachment into our public schools.

Conclusion

“In point of fact, *word is a two-sided act*. It is determined equally by *whose* word it is and for *whom* it is meant” (Vološinov, 1973, p. 86).

Our critique and call for the dismantling of militarized public education programs in public schools is in no way an indictment of the thousands of youth and families who have found a home—and in some cases a path for academic success—through JROTC. In fact, we side with young people who purport to have experienced a supportive environment in JROTC. If we listen to the *words* of young people talking about JROTC, we see that what they are finding in JROTC is a family, home, and supportive environment where they feel important and respected: “It’s not like regular high schools; instead of you just wanting to leave, you wanna stay here and then they wanna kick you out ‘cuz you’re here too late” or “I started joining teams and it was really fun. And I just stayed in because of the people and, you know, the whole family feeling” (Chicago JROTC, n.d., 1). It is imperative that we analyze the discourse of youth such as this young women from Chicago as compared to their instructors and other senior military officials: “We’re here to help them through their high school career; we’re here to help ‘em become better citizens, and we’re here to give ‘em leadership opportunities” (Chicago JROTC, n.d., 1). The youth are describing generative conditions for educational growth. They are not focusing on the military rhetoric of citizenship, leadership, and discipline; rather, they are engaging in a critique of what is missing in their previous educational experiences, where too often low-income youth of color do not find support, nor a place that feels like home. Their yearning for self-worth and support in their education surfaces in their praise for JROTC. Indeed, as Pérez (2006) writes, successful JROTC programs’ “strength derives from a trusting and respectful relationship between the school commanding officer and the cadets” and from “kinship and social networks” that expand the program (p. 66). Put another way, “meaningful relationships, triggered by high expectations and supportive environments” are what young people need (Lewis, 2008, p. 323).

These youth, youth who invite their friends and family to join JROTC, are not naïve or dupes. No. They are telling us what they need in order to be full human beings. We contend that we should listen to them and provide supportive, nurturing educational environments that draw from their histories, cultures, and perspectives *without also conflating their schooling and hopes for success with militarism, imperialism, and violence*.

JROTC seeks to provide an alternative to a problematic education system that is meant to reproduce the racial and class hierarchy that benefits the few through mechanisms of gatekeeping and sorting. JROTC is an alternative, but it is the wrong alternative. Rather than creating a support system through blind patriotism, embodied discipline, and pro-war socialization, we need to implement critical, humanizing education environments that seek to satisfy students’ social and intellectual needs and make their learning relevant to their lives and communities. We need to question the logic of statements such as “Military programs manage to succeed where others fail because of their attention to a holistic approach to student education and development” (National Association of State Boards of Education, 2010, p. 4) when we know that the purpose of the military is to train and prepare for war. At the same time, rather than cultivating a militaristic hegemony, we need to encourage students to develop an in-depth

understanding of the root causes of human inequality and to have deep commitments to social justice and social transformation. JROTC inherently prevents any commitments to peace or anti-oppressive education because it must prop up and justify the imperial conquest mentality of the U.S. military and the broader goals of maintaining U.S. economic and military dominance at any human cost.

The U.S. education system needs a drastic overhaul, a move away from technical skill acquisition and outcome-based instruction. This cannot happen by adhering to neoliberal educational reforms that offer JROTC and other public military programs as a “choice” for low-income and students of color; this simply cements business and war domestically, as perpetual wars, military bases, and troops and wars-by-proxy or private corporation do abroad. Instead, at the center of our educational system should be a commitment to questioning and uncertainty. Students should take nothing for granted, which then allows everything to be adapted in educational experiences that can be truly transformative and open possibilities for true peace with justice.

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Developing Peacemakers in the Classroom: An Alternative Discourse in a Culture of War and Violence

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DEVELOPING PEACEMAKERS IN THE CLASSROOM: AN ALTERNATIVE DISCOURSE IN A CULTURE OF WAR AND VIOLENCE

Abstract

Peacemaking can be taught to teachers and students. Building these skills addresses the achievement and discipline gaps. This article is based on a qualitative research study at a large high school in the Denver Metropolitan area. The purpose of the study was to create an alternative conversation of peace in schools. Conceptually the study drew upon the field of how to use restorative justice practices in schools to create a culture of peace. Research questions explored how classrooms can be peaceful and the capacity of students and teacher built to be peacemakers. Data were collected through individual and group interviews. Findings were based on the major themes of restorative justice, detentions, and classroom management. Recommendations focused on adopting practices of restorative conversations and talking circles. By adopting and implementing the proposed action plan, schools will be able to build the capacity of students and teachers to become peacemakers.

Introduction

While each school has a unique culture, in general there is a need for schools to build the capacity of teachers and students to be peacemakers. Peacemaking is based on human rights, draws on cultural heritage, destabilizes power, builds trust, and heals hurts (Pennell, 2004). While schools vary greatly in the way they function, currently some schools are failing to take

advantage of the opportunity to use peacemaking strategies to build the capacity of students and their teachers to be peacemakers (Cavanagh, 2012). As a result these schools need alternative systems for building teacher and student capacity to address problems and conflicts in a peaceful and productive way.

No longer do teachers and administrators in these schools have to accept the status quo as the only way to respond to wrongdoing and conflict. A new discourse of peace called a culture of care, which is based on restorative justice practices, offers schools different choices (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005; Cavanagh, 2009a). These educators can choose a new discourse, that is, an alternative way of thinking, talking, and acting (Foucault, 1972).

The primary value underlying this new discourse is caring relationships. This new discourse is based on research that shows there needs to be a sense of school connectedness and caring and nurturing relationships between the teachers and the students so that there can be an increase in the students' positive experiences of schooling (Cavanagh, 2009a). Conceptually this new discourse is based on the theory of restorative justice.

Restorative justice principles are based on the ideas of building and maintaining healthy and caring relationships. If educators utilize these principles when wrongdoing and conflict occur in classrooms, relationships can be healed (Riestenberg, 2012). This peaceful and caring response to those issues focuses on healing harm to relationships between teachers and students and among students.

Social Justice Context

Before discussing the field of peacemaking further the context of this alternative discourse needs to be explained. To do that two current issues in the field of education need to be identified. The first issue is the achievement gap, and the second is the discipline gap (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). However, one gap cannot be discussed without talking about the other.

To date the emphasis on the achievement gap has focused specifically on what happens in the classroom regarding the relationships and interactions between teachers and students. However, recent research shows there is a need to also look at school systems and how they affect the actions of teachers and students in the classroom (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). It is important to do this because the two gaps are linked, and educators can no longer afford in education to think about discipline measures and teaching pedagogy as two disconnected parts of schooling.

About the link between the achievement gap and the discipline gap is important to note because often schools are set up so that achievement is the responsibility of one area of the school, handled largely by teachers, and discipline is the responsibility of another area of the school, handled largely by deans, counselors, administrators, or outside experts. Also it is critical to remember is that these two gaps are racially based (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). This idea is fundamentally important because often these gaps are blamed on such factors as poverty, socioeconomic status, or conditions embedded in the students themselves or in their home life.

It is important to note that when it comes to ethnically diverse students experiencing discipline, the disparity that creates this discipline gap is due to two things: First, the students of minoritized cultures are disciplined disproportionately, that is, more often and more severely, than their White counterparts. Second, discipline in the form of exclusion from the classroom exacerbates the cycle of failure in school by keeping students from learning (Winn & Behizadeh, 2011). Repeated exclusions from the classroom often lead to students dropping out of school early because they simply cannot keep up with the learning requirements

Referral or exclusion from the classroom has been a primary discipline tool up until the present time. The idea behind this response is that misbehavior in the classroom is interpreted as a disruption to the learning, rather than a learning opportunity (Canter & Canter, 2001). As a result of removing a student from the classroom, recent research tells us that these students are being thwarted from engaging in the opportunity to learn (Winn & Behizadeh, 2011). Therefore, educators cannot afford to focus on achievement while ignoring the effects of discipline policies.

These discipline policies, particularly related to excluding students as a way to handle discipline issues, do not take this rather obvious link between being in the classroom and achievement into consideration. To the contrary, it seems that policymakers and educators tend to rely extensively on curriculum strategies to increase achievement rather than changing their discipline policies so that students, particularly ethnically diverse students, can spend more time in the classroom learning rather than being excluded from the classroom for discipline purposes (Winn and Behizadeh, 2011). As a result of these discipline practices, these students are caught in a spiral of involvement within the discipline system.

Currently much of the conversation in educational research in the United States centers on the school-to-prison pipeline (Browne, 2003), particularly for ethnically diverse students. At the beginning of this school-to-prison pipeline, we find that the current climate in some schools promotes a culture of zero tolerance (Casella, 2003), where expulsions are required “not only for not only bringing a gun to school but also for alcohol and drug possession, writing on a desk, or talking back to a teacher” (Riestenberg, 2012, p. 21). This type of zero-tolerance policy particularly applies to young persons who are ethnically diverse.

As a result the educational outcomes for these students are suffering. More and more ethnically diverse students in the United States and New Zealand are being expelled from school and ending up in the legal system and ultimately in jails and prisons (Cavanagh, 2009b). It is clear that this discipline gap results in a denial of these students’ basic human right to an education, particularly the right to be literate (Winn and Behizadeh, 2011) .

Not only are ethnically diverse students disproportionately disciplined by in-school detentions and out-of-school stand-downs, expulsions, and suspensions, but also they are disproportionately placed into self-contained special education classrooms. All of these special placements remove these students from their regular classroom (Cavanagh, 2009b). This, in turn, contributes to the achievement gap in standardized test scores between these ethnically diverse students and their White counterparts (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010).

Background

Research in this area began while the primary author was engaging in a Fulbright Fellowship in New Zealand. The context of the original study was a rural public area school (primary and secondary) in New Zealand. The present study, which is the focus of this article, was conducted in the United States during the 2011-2012 school year. This study built upon what was learned in the original study. The context of the current study was a large high school in the Rocky Mountain area of the United States.

The original study consisted of a fresh look at the data collected as part of the Fulbright Fellowship based on the work of Zehr (2004) and Pennell (2004). Zehr posited that Western culture, including educational institutions, focuses on values that support war and violence: (a) punishment, (b) adversarial relationships, (c) monopolization of power (usually in the state), (d) problemization and professionalization, (e) prevalence of economic interests, (f) racism and privilege, and (g) imposition of the dominant culture.

In contrast, Pennell (2004), explained that peacemaking can be based on restorative justice principles, where the role of the peacemaker is to: a) build trust, (b) heal harms to relationships, (c) restore dignity of persons affected, (d) respect biculturalism/multiculturalism, (e) be aware of power differences, and (f) create safety. As a result peacemaking is based on human rights, draws on cultural heritage, destabilizes power, builds trust, and heals hurts.

Further analysis of the collected data based on the concepts outlined by Zehr (2004) and Pennell (2004) revealed that, in the educational setting where the original study was conducted, evidence was present to support each of the values Zehr outlined that support war and violence. The interpretation was that schools, or at least the subject school, tended to support and perpetuate the dominant culture of war and violence. Further, after the subject school began embracing restorative justice practices, evidence was found that supported each of the principles Pennell (2004) outlined that are the foundation of the role of a peacemaker. Further interpretation revealed that educators could adopt alternative restorative justice principles that align with the role of a peacemaker and as a result create an alternative culture of care.

The primary author spent time over five years at this New Zealand school studying how the school culture changed from a culture of control and punishment to a culture of caring before censure. The culture of punishment and control was based on policies of referrals, detentions, stand downs, suspensions, and expulsions. These policies were based on the Assertive Discipline model of Lee and Mary Canter (2001) and the mantra introduced by Bill Rogers (2003) found posted in many New Zealand schools, "Teachers right to teach and students right to learn." Within this frame of reference student behavior problems were viewed as disruptions to the learning, and students were treated as passive receptors of punishment. This focus on control and discipline has been a popular classroom management tool among many principals and teachers in the United States and in New Zealand for the past 25 years.

However, there are schools that have chosen to do things differently. In 2004 the school that was studied in New Zealand began to introduce restorative justice practices. In 2008 the primary

author went back to the New Zealand school that was the subject of the original research to capture once again the voices of the teachers regarding the cultural changes at the school (Cavanagh, 2009b). He learned that the mantra *Care before Censure* was being used to emphasize that the focus of the school transformed from punitive discipline to restorative practices. The focus then became one of listening to students and having an opportunity to talk about problem behavior rather than resorting to blame and punishment.

The four principles of *Care before Censure* learned from these teachers were:

1. Responses to poor behavior need to be individualized, appropriate to the student and the wrongdoing.
2. Poor behavior can be an indication of other problems.
3. Students may not have the language to express their emotions or concerns.
4. Misbehaviors can provide opportunities for further learning about how to behave or react (Cavanagh, 2009b).

These principles were based on the following restorative justice principles created by staff at the school:

- Everyone speaks and everyone listens.
- Using ‘I’ statements.
- The problem is the problem (rather than labeling the person as being the problem).
- Externalizing the behavior (by separating the problem from the person).
- Stating who is affected.
- Clarifying misunderstandings.
- Empathizing with others’ feelings.
- Helping to provide solutions.
- Restoring relationships (Cavanagh, 2009b).

Based on the findings from this study, a conceptual framework was developed for further research and professional development. This framework was the basis for the study that is the subject of this article. The ideas underlying this framework were:

1. Effective education for culturally diverse students should be focused on building and maintaining healthy, caring, and respectful relationships. In order for effective teachers to build trusting and respectful relationships with their students, they need to learn and understand more about their students’ language and cultural beliefs, values and preferred ways of thinking and acting.
2. Effective educators need to respond restoratively to student wrongdoing and conflict. The best way to achieve this is by moving away from a rules-based, crime and punishment approach to an approach that responds to behavior problems and adopts restorative practices instead (Cavanagh, 2009a). Effective educators need to regard student wrongdoing and conflict as an opportunity for building trusting and caring relationships that can repair harm and promote positive relationships. This process will build the capacity of students and teachers to respond to wrongdoing and conflict nonviolently.
3. Effective educators must help students and teachers build their capacity to solve problems nonviolently. As a result, students (and often their teachers) may not have the opportunity

to learn how to respond to problematic behaviors that harm relationships in ways that are positive, non-violent, and restorative of healthy relationships (Cavanagh, 2009b).

Establishing and maintaining healthy relationships between teachers and students and among students ought to be the primary work of schools so that all students, particularly minority students, will achieve academically and remain in school. Students' engagement and learning of curriculum content will be enhanced by teachers and students establishing and maintaining these positive relationships (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar & Fung, 2007). By building healthy, caring relationships students and teachers will be able to choose to respond to problems nonviolently. As a result schools will become more peaceful.

Purpose

There is an alternative conversation of peace to the current dominant one based on war and violence. This conversation focuses on the importance of relationships, specifically on building and maintaining caring relationships as the basis for creating a culture of care in schools (Cavanagh, 2009b; Noddings, 1992; Valenzuela, 1999). This alternative conversation is based on the principles and practices of restorative justice.

So how do we begin to engage in this new conversation? We need to look carefully and critically at zero-tolerance policies and practices in schools and realize that these policies are a major contributor to construction of the school-to-prison pipeline (Hart, 2000). In order to reduce and eliminate these policies, the focus needs to be on building and maintaining positive, caring relationships among students and between students and their teachers so that the students can build and maintain key relationships in the school and retain their motivation to attend school and learn along with their friends. This is the heart of what schooling is about.

Clearly the answer to the disparities in discipline policies can be found by beginning at the classroom level. A major factor at the classroom level that the research points out is that there is a lack of awareness and acceptance of cultural difference (Venezuela, 1999). There is a cultural gap between ethnically diverse students in a school and their teachers. As an example, in a current ongoing study at a high school in the Rocky Mountain region of the United States the majority of students come from a low socioeconomic community, and the majority of these students are Latino/Hispanic. However, the majority of the teachers of these students are White, affluent, females, who live in other areas of the metropolitan area surrounding the school, not the area where the students live. This difference demonstrates there is a gap between the culture that the students go home to and the culture that teachers go home to. This gap is exacerbated by the fact that many of them not only have a different culture at home, but they also speak a different language, Spanish. This is similar to some Maori students in New Zealand who go home to an environment where Maori is the primary language spoken and culture practiced. As a result, there is a mismatch between the cultural identity of the teachers and the cultural identities of their ethnically diverse students. Consequently, this cultural gap leads to even greater problems.

The theory of a culture of care in schools helps to bridge that gap. In the field of a culture of care, research shows that there needs to be a sense of school connectedness through caring and nurturing relationships between the teachers and the students so that there can be an increase in

the students' positive experiences of schooling and a movement away from zero-tolerance punishment strategies (Cavanagh, 2009a). Fundamental to creating a change in school cultures is the training that teachers receive in schools of education and the professional development training teachers receive after they have gone into the classroom. Through such training experiences teachers learn how to improve their culturally responsive relationships with ethnically diverse students by first creating a culture of care within their classrooms.

The culture of care is a theory that is based on principles of restorative justice. These principles offer an alternative way of thinking, believing, and behaving for educators who are responsible for responding to student wrongdoing and conflict (Cavanagh, 2011). The practices based on a culture of care serve as alternatives that support student motivation to attend school. Further, these practices are based on building and maintaining healthy and caring relationships so that when wrongdoing and conflict occur in school, relationships are healed. The caring response should focus on healing rather than harming relationships.

The purpose of the current study, conducted at a high school in the Rocky Mountain region of the United States, was to gain an understanding about how students and teachers might become peacemakers. For purposes of this study, peacemaking was defined in terms of Pennell's (2004) idea that restorative justice is about peacemaking and the seven elements of the role of a peacemaker.

Conceptual Framework

This study drew upon the peacemaking literature as a conceptual framework. In particular, Title's (2011) recent book captured the current conversation in the field of how to use restorative justice practices in schools to create a culture of peace. In addition, this work draws on the writings of Houston and Rubin (1995); Lederbach (1997, 1995); and Pranis, Stuart, and Wedge (2003).

Analyses of the data were based on deconstructing the data using the process of typological analysis (Hatch, 2002). The identified typologies have their roots in the seminal work of Noddings (2002) regarding the ethic of care in the classroom. Valenzuela's (1999) interpretation of what caring means in schools guided this project. This description of caring calls for teachers to embrace two kinds of caring, which form the theoretical foundation for typological coding of the data collected:

- *Authentic caring*, where educators in the participating schools care for their Latino/Hispanic students as culturally located individuals, with an emphasis on reciprocal relationships and interactions between these students and their teachers, and
- *Aesthetic caring*, where these educators care for the learning of their students, based on a commitment to ideas and practices that purportedly lead to improved Latino/Hispanic educational outcomes.

Data analysis using these typologies revealed that the context of authentic caring was primarily outside of the classroom, while aesthetic caring occurred inside the classroom. Analysis further revealed that authentic caring needed to occur in the classroom so that responses to wrongdoing and conflict could be transformed.

Methods

In this article the evidence collected and analyzed is examined in an effort to offer educators, policymakers, and all people interested in improving the educational outcomes for Latino/Hispanic students some answers to the important questions underlying this project. The central questions to be answered were:

1. How can classrooms at Hamilton High School become peaceful?
2. How can the capacity of students and their teachers be built to be peacemakers?

Data Sources

The evidence that formed the basis of this paper came from data collected in the form of individual and focus group interviews. In alignment with this project's purpose, data were collected from a purposefully selected group of Latino/Hispanic students, their parents, teachers, and administrators at their school. The student and parent focus group interviews were intended to create what Gutierrez (2008) termed "testimonios" (p. 149) in an effort to legitimate the collective voices of how these students and their parents understand themselves and their world, particularly as related to the experiences of Latino/Hispanic students at the school.

Findings

Based on analyses of the data collected, we learned an important role for schools and educators is to encourage improved attendance by helping students create and maintain healthy and caring relationships. Teachers were also encouraged to not focus on exercising control and dominance over situations in the classroom. Rather, they were encouraged to take on the role of facilitating conversations, that is, restorative conversations that bring together those persons who caused the harm and those persons harmed by the wrongdoing. In this way educators can provide a space where students can safely voice their emotions and concerns and be able to listen to the voices of others who were affected by the wrongdoing or conflict.

Restorative conversations fit well with the idea of talking circles, "a distinctive kind of space for restorative dialogue" (Greenwood, 2005). Together these processes provide effective strategies that can be used in the classroom to create a learning opportunity when conflicts and wrongdoing occur, rather than excluding the offending student from the classroom. If these restorative practices are used early on in the school day or school year when students first arrive, there will be much less time spent attending to minor incidents in the classroom such as disruptive behavior, lying, harassment, and bullying (Riestenberg, 2012). Students will likely feel safe by being free from harm and the threat of harm.

Restorative discussions or conversations are one form of restorative practice. As noted earlier, they fit well with other popular restorative practices, talking circles (Cavanagh, 2009; Pranis, 2005; Pranis, Stuart, & Wedge, 2003) and family group conferences (Burford & Hudson, 2000; Marsh & Crow, 1998). These practices empower students to learn to solve their own problems non-violently. They provide a safe place for students to express themselves and their emotions. Students who misbehave are able to repair relationships with friends and teachers harmed by their behavior. As a result, students may be better motivated to attend school because they have

learned the process of how to create and maintain healthy, caring relationships. The following themes emerged from analyses of the data collected.

Restorative Justice

The idea of restorative justice was raised by the mothers of some female Latino/Hispanic students who were suspended from school for fighting. The mothers asked that the school establish a restorative justice program for responding to issues of wrongdoing such as fighting. The principal explained, “Restorative justice had been something that had just been hanging around, but we really weren’t doing or training people in it.” So as a result of the meeting between the principal and these mothers, grant monies were applied for and received for implementing a restorative justice program at the school.

Detentions

Suspensions were an issue at the school, according to the principal, because some teachers “just want their pound of flesh, and they expect that that is going to fix the kid.” The principal discussed an example of the problems associated with detentions.

I had the whole math department; they were up in arms with me, math/social studies together. They were like, “you mean you expect us to have our own detentions?” I said, “Absolutely,” I said, “because if you don’t, you are communicating to the kids that you don’t care that much about them; that you’re not even willing to take your own time to have that extra time with them.” I said, “Absolutely, that’s an expectation.” I really don’t have a lot of heart for teachers who aren’t putting in the time, having their own detentions, making those phone calls, and going the extra mile with their kids. I struggle. It’s like I don’t think you are doing your part.

Classroom Management

The key to classroom management was explained by the principal in this way, “First of all, we have to establish relationships with kids.” How this idea of relationships relates to restorative justice was discussed.

So, are they going above and beyond to really form a good relationship with those kids instead of saying this kid, he can’t do things my way; I’m going to just keep sending him out, and I don’t know why they think people are going to get rid of kids. I tell them, “They are going to be in your classroom all year, so they’re not going anywhere. We don’t have anywhere to put them, and even if we did, we wouldn’t, and so that’s why the restorative justice -- the restorative relationship piece is so important.

In order to build the capacity of teachers and students to be peacemakers, a culture of care needs to be created. Creating a culture of care requires deliberate actions, such as are outlined in these findings, on the part of every person who belongs to the school community.

Conclusions

Implications from the study for positive social change include deliberate actions to hopefully bring about the profound change that is required to meet the needs and expectations of Latino/Hispanic students and their parents, to reduce the tensions that exist at Hamilton High School, and to focus on bringing these changes to the classroom. In order to bring these implications into reality these recommendations were made:

1. Focusing on building the capacity of teachers and their students to respond to wrongdoing and conflict in the classroom in such a way as to address the harm that results to relationships. This can best be accomplished by training teachers and students about the restorative justice practices of restorative conversations and talking circles.
2. Revising the discipline policy to support restorative justice practices as the first option for responding to wrongdoing and conflict in the classroom and discouraging the use of referrals by teachers.

These action steps are based on two fundamental restorative justice practices: restorative conversations and talking circles. Restorative conversations are a practice that is easily learned. The outline for this simple practice is contained in Figure 1.

Restorative Conversation Outline
<p>On a blank piece of paper draw a circle. Inside the circle write the responses to the following inquiry.</p> <p><i>Tell me about what is going on that causes us to be here. What were you thinking and feeling at the time? What name might we give to the problem?</i></p> <p>On the same piece of paper, write the responses to the following question outside the circle. <i>What are some of the effects that this problem is having on you and others? How do you feel about your actions now when you look back on these events now?</i></p> <p>Turn the piece of paper over and draw another circle. Inside the circle write the responses to the following inquiry.</p> <p><i>How are things different when this problem does not exist? What does it look and feel like?</i> On the same piece of paper, write the responses to the following question outside the circle.</p> <p><i>What plans can you make so this problem does not exist in the future? Who can help you with that plan? Who do you want to share this conversation with?</i></p>

Figure 1. Restorative Conversation Outline

Talking circles is another restorative practice for use in the classroom. This process can be used on one hand to build relationships and share feelings in a safe environment. On the other hand,

talking circles can be used to solve problems collectively so that both teachers and students in classrooms can respond to an issue involving wrongdoing or conflict in a peaceful way. See Figure 2 for the outline of how to facilitate a talking circle.

Talking Circle Script

Welcome

Welcome to this Talking Circle. I am the Keeper of the Circle. My Assistant is _____. Talking Circle is the name given to a process based on the philosophy of restorative justice, which is focused on healing the harm to relationships resulting from conflict or wrongdoing.

The underlying values of Talking Circles are: (1) leadership and power are shared (everyone in the circle is equal and has an equal opportunity to speak), (2) participants have direct visual contact with each other, (3) peace building is the focus, (4) interconnectedness of all participants is encouraged, (5) respect and accountability are required, (6) participation by all is necessary, and (7) inclusion and mutual responsibility for the circle are indispensable.

Ground Rules

In this Talking Circles process certain ground rules are established so a safe place can be created where people can come together, with a trained facilitator, to discuss the behavior(s) that is creating a problem, the impact of the behavior(s) and mutually agree on how to: (1) heal the harm resulting from the behavior(s), (2) restore the group, and (3) reintegrate the persons affected back into the group.

The following ground rules are used at Talking Circles, upon agreement of everyone: (1) listen when others speak (use the talking stick); (2) speak with honesty and from the heart; (3) use words that are respectful and not offensive; (4) while everyone is encouraged to speak, no one is required to speak; and (5) what is said in the circle stays in the circle (except for the written report). Does anyone want to change or add to these ground rules? Does everyone agree to these ground rules?

Open the Circle

I will now open the circle. We will begin by talking about the problem and our thoughts and feelings that resulted from the problem. The assistant keeper of the circle will keep notes of our conversation. Let's begin by passing the talking stick.

Agreement

We will now work on an agreement that is agreeable to all of us. Let's begin by having the assistant keeper of the circle summarize his or her notes, emphasizing any possible solutions to the problem that were discussed. Let's now pass the talking stick and talk about solutions to the problem. The assistant keeper of the circle will write those on the tablet.

Closing

Now that we have an agreement, let's reflect on this process.

How do you feel about the Talking Circle process?

Are you satisfied with the outcome?

Do you feel ready to call a circle and act as a keeper of a circle?

Figure 2. Talking Circle Script.

By adopting and implementing this action plan, educators that choose to adopt this plan will be able to build the capacity of students and teachers to become peacemakers. As a result referrals for infractions of discipline policies will no longer be necessary except in rare circumstances. Students and teachers will learn how to respond to wrongdoing and conflict peacefully. Ultimately, students, particularly Latino/Hispanic students, will be able to remain in the classroom and take advantage of the opportunity to learn.

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Book Review: *Peace education: How we come to love and hate war.* 2012. By Nel Noddings. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

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BOOK REVIEW: PEACE EDUCATION: HOW WE COME TO LOVE AND HATE WAR. 2012. BY NEL NODDINGS. NEW YORK, NY: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

Following World War I, the peace movement began picking up steam in the United States. Citizens viewed this war, with its incredible number of casualties and tragic outcome with such disdain that they were ready for a change in mindset. Since that time, volume upon volume have been written and published in the field of peace education. Unfortunately, all of those words and ideas still have not made their way into our schools and Nel Noddings does a thorough job investigating and explaining both the reasons why we do not see this information shared with students, as well as her larger question: “Why do we both love and hate war?”

Noddings new book, *Peace Education: How We Come to Love and Hate War* takes an in-depth look at nine factors that contribute to our fascination with war as human beings, as well as the challenge that peace education poses to our present day schools. Readers become aware, through thoughtful, engaging writing of the deeper issues that lie underneath the surface of our relationship with war. The audience for this work will easily become intrigued by the connections that she makes between seemingly innocuous celebrations such as those that take place on the Fourth of July and the warlike undertones involved. The book recognizes the vast economic and political factors that are intertwined with our feelings on war and then addresses the psychological aspects involved in these feelings. It is Noddings’ hope that educators can address these psychological factors with students in the classroom. Additionally, readers will be reminded of the struggle that advocates for peace have endured and exactly where this movement has already been.

In the opening chapter, Noddings first takes on what she calls the “centrality of war in history”; namely, the idea that history and growth as a nation often equates with war. Noddings contends that war and wartime activities are so central to our lives that we view life as ‘boring’ when there is not a substantial spectacle or conflict involved. War has become so pervasive that it is actually

the foundation for a number of different theories, as well as many studies on morality. Throughout this first chapter, the reader is reminded of the fact that an absence of war cannot necessarily be defined as peace and that citizens need to become aware of the very masculine language and ideals that permeate the landscape of our country to the point that we become ambivalent about war and its effects.

It is this ambivalence toward war that is most troubling to Noddings, and she studies that idea in every chapter that follows. These remaining chapters are equally thought-provoking and, at times, challenging. That is what makes this book so valuable and interesting – the topics that Noddings gives value to in terms of their effect on our mentality toward and about war. Some ideas seem clearly connected, such as destruction; masculinity and the warrior; patriotism; hatred and religion. However, she also studies ideas such as pacifism; women and war and existential meaning, that all shed a unique light on previously explored ideas of war and wartime behavior. Noddings threads her ideas on ambivalence in humanity throughout all of these ideas, while still making the point that all of these topics need to be explored in an honest, critical way with students if we are to make any progress in changing our mindset about war.

The lens through which Noddings examines these concepts is a central idea to this book. While her opinion about war is clear as she writes, she never attacks an idea or group in an egregious way; instead, she takes a look at the psychological thread running through all of these topics; how they apply to human beings and how they can then (hopefully) be addressed with students and other adults. For example, on her chapter that studies masculinity and the warrior, Noddings not only examines ideas of being deemed ‘unmanly’ for not enjoying war and the history of glorifying warriors, but she also considers the psychological effects that these attitudes have on men and the resulting state of inhabiting a different moral world when war is brought upon us. This alternate moral world is one that wreaks havoc on soldiers, both while they are engaged in war and for many years after returning home.

For Noddings, this idea of both loving and hating war is not about immediacy; it is about the history of these attitudes and the lasting effects that we cannot currently see. That is why, when she explores themes such as patriotism, hatred and religion, she explores both the history of where our country has been as well as where can end up if our fascination with war continues and our students are simply reproduced in the same manner of illusion as many of us have been. Noddings takes on ideas that are both difficult and controversial; admittedly, there were times throughout the reading that I struggled with what she was saying, wondering if she was taking an idea too far or connecting some behaviors in a way that was a bit of a reach. That is the extraordinary thing about this book though – opening the lines of communication for honest, respectful dialogue. We do not have to agree with everything that we read or hear in order to appreciate the message, nor do we have to attack a person for an idea that we disagree with. And that is the message inherent in this book: we need open dialogue and attempts at understanding. The chapters on pacifism, women and war, and existentialism aim at giving her readers a sense of understanding in terms of where our population has been already on this road. In the chapter on pacifism, Noddings acknowledges the vast number of organizations and literature that exist with the aim of peace education in mind and how the change has not been seen in our country as one may have hoped. She acknowledges how the word pacifism often has a negative

connotation and is often associated with a counterculture of sorts. There is also the realization that, in order for some type of peace education to really take place in schools, there may need to be a modified version of pacifism and its ideas. Noddings also goes on to recognize the contributions from women in terms of peace education dating back to the work of both Virginia Woolf and Jane Addams. However, it is the author's penultimate chapter that holds absolute beauty in terms of what people are seeking in their lives and how that all relates to our relationship with war.

In the chapter on existential meaning, she examines how human beings need a 'deep and dependable source of meaning in their lives'. The chapter studies ideas such as the meaning of everyday life; the idea that life is fundamentally boring (or is it?); and the lengths at which we will go in order to protect what we hold dear. She also discusses how freedom and reflection, while sought out by most, actually cause difficulty in the lives of others, which often leads to one giving up their autonomy and joining the military. Much of our search for meaning in life brings us to a deep exploration of big ideas and unfortunately, the inspection of these big ideas is not welcome in schools; in fact, more than being unwelcome, they are often criticized as a method for liberalizing our schools and children. Why, when ideas of what bring meaning to our lives is so central a question, do we shun this topic in schools? Noddings summarizes her thoughts on existential meaning and war beautifully towards the end of the chapter. In terms of why we seek out and support war, she tells us, "We join something bigger than ourselves, feel part of a great spectacle, allow ourselves to be controlled by outside forces . . . and escape from the trivial responsibilities of everyday life."

This insightful book on peace education culminates in Noddings making recommendations for how to introduce peace education in schools, across all subject areas. While she makes some compelling arguments and offers up excellent methods for opening the eyes of students to ideas they are often not exposed to, Noddings also recognizes that, sadly, these methods will most likely not be put in place based on a variety of factors, including standards-based learning; high stakes testing; political and religious input and basic opinions and beliefs of those who hold the power in education. Even though Noddings is simply asking for educators to give students the opportunity to think and hear factual (albeit, controversial) information, she is realistic in terms of the probable outcome of this body of work.

With the postmodern condition that we currently find ourselves in, Noddings' book arrives at an excellent time. It serves to open a forum for honest communication about topics that are often considered taboo. She offers realistic, critical, nuanced insights into how human beings relate to war, and, importantly, why. In the dialogue of peace education studies (and hopefully, in multiple areas of study), this book will prove to provide countless points of discussion and thought-provoking questions for scholars, educators and students.

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Book Review: *Social justice, peace, and environmental education: Transformative standards*. 2009. Edited by Julie Andrzejewski, Marta P. Baltodano, and Linda Symcox. New York, NY: Routledge.

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BOOK REVIEW: SOCIAL JUSTICE, PEACE, AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: TRANSFORMATIVE STANDARDS. 2009. EDITED BY JULIE ANDRZEJEWSKI, MARTA P. BALTOIANO, AND LINDA SYNCOX. NEW YORK, NY: ROUTLEDGE.

Social Justice, Peace, and Environmental Education: Transformative Standards, edited by Julie Andrzejewski, Marta Baltodano, and Linda Symcox, identifies how peace, justice, and environmental studies function in concert as mutually exclusive yet logically equivalent concepts. The work details concrete examples as to the ways in which democracy can operate for the benefit of the greater social good rather than for personal gain of power, domination, and profit when social justice, peace, and environmental education are the foci. The standards listed throughout the text make explicit the expectations as to how and in what ways K-12 instructors apply standards committed to social justice, peace, and environmental education. Most importantly, the text provides a full depiction as to how these concepts could operate to inform instructional delivery for children with a commitment to community, as they work and learn together in the school context.

To begin, the *Forward – An Eco-Pedagogy in the Pursuit of Social Justice and Peace* by Antonia Darder opens with the disparities in the quality of instruction as well as the type of content offered in different schooling contexts. Comparable to the work of Anyon (1980), the information presented in school seems disjointed and separate from the daily life experiences encountered, especially for children of color and low socio-economic status. Such oppressed students have teach-to-the-test information presented with little regard as to how the world around them operates while the children of the elite, those who are white and of upper socio-economic strata, receive content as well as state-of-the-art technology that informs their role of privilege and leadership in society.

The one unusual aspect to this text is its lack of contextualization in its opening. The *Forward* and *Chapter 1* precede the explanation of *Part I*. Thus, *Chapter 1* begins with no introduction and requires the reader to jump into the topic immediately.

In *Chapter 1: Social Justice, Peace, and Environmental Education Global and Indivisible* by Julie Andrzejewski, Marta P. Baltodano, and Linda Symcox, the authors explain, “The chapters in the book follow a general format; first presenting a synthesis of the challenges being faced within a global context and the interconnections with other issues. Second, they introduce national, international, or key organizational documents to provide positive goals. Finally, they present a set of standards or principles to encourage self-reflection, and generate practical ideas and actions by and for students, teachers, administrators, staff, and teacher educators.”

This outline from Chapter 1 reflects the tenor of the text overall. The reader is provided a road map as to how the different parts and subsequent chapters operate. Thus, the content as well as the numerous skills and strategies contained within the different standards help those studying the material to categorize the information for future use in their own classroom context.

Part I – Learning from Native Educators and Indigenous Communities: Transformative Principles and Cultural Standards Introduction includes Graham H. Smith’s *Chapter 2* in which he argues that all indigenous groups need to move beyond acknowledgement of a problem to transformative action. The activities selected must be conducted in a way that are sensitive to the communication and patterns of daily life desired of the native community and led by the same indigenous peoples. Their own traditions and ways of knowing direct the schooling experience, connecting learning for children of the culture.

Chapter 3 – Culturally Responsive Schools for Alaska Native Students: A Model for Social Justice, Peace, and Environmental Education by Ray Barnhardt lists standards intended to connect Alaskan Natives to the schooling experience. The tie to language, history, culture, and environment led to increased academic performance and improved test score results. Although not the major goal, the better performance gave a strong indicator that students’ connection to school, home, and community operated in concert with one another.

In *Part II - Transforming Education for Human Rights, Peace, All Species and the Earth – Introduction* the text shifts from the focus of specific groups of different peoples to a commitment as to how the standards of social justice, peace, and environmental education

inform teacher practices and benchmark assessments. Linda Symcox's work of *Chapter 4: From A Nation at Risk to No Child Left Behind: 25 Years of Neoliberal Reform in Education* provides a detailed history as to how the practices of the present-day came into being. She closes with the potential of what could be done to incorporate social justice, peace and environmental education. Todd Jennings follows Symcox's recommendations in *Chapter 5: Reclaiming Standards for a Progressive Agenda: Human Rights Education Standards for Teachers and Teacher Education*. Content, state standards, and dignity of human persons meet several goals. Instructional delivery is enriched in every content area when care and respect for all peoples operate as the focus.

Chapter 6: From International Resolve to Local Experience and Inquiry by David A. Greenwood, Bob O. Manteaw, and Gregory A. Smith asks students, teachers, and communities to question the existing social structure. The authors want the content, the tasks tied to schoolwork, the community life, and the view of citizenship overall to be questioned and analyzed. As the authors note, "In their relentless push to prepare youth for uncritical participation in the consumer/growth economy, schools have mainly functioned to support increasingly unsustainable relationships between people, cultures, and humans and the earth." The relationship between school, community, student, and teacher is in need of transformation and repair from its current status. *Chapter 7: Education for Peace and Nonviolence* by Julie Andrzejewski looks to the root causes of why the study of war, hatred, and violence dominate content whereas peace and justice do not. Andrzejewski opened my own eyes when she talked about the content of peace. The realization that such a concept is rarely addressed in topics such as history, science, math, and writing hit a deep chord. The role of personhood and the relationship between and among individuals presents a completely different lens as to how, as a society, the content offered does not identify peace as a concept essential to our sense of self. In *Chapter 8 – Social Responsibility and Teaching Young Children: An Education for Living in Ethical and Caring Ways* by Beth Blue Swadener and Leigh M. O'Brien, the focus shifts exclusively to children. The authors identify specific beliefs that may better achieve a peaceful world through the commitment of better education for all. Children are to be protected with opportunity to learn. Respect for childhood is valued as essential.

Julie Andrzejewski, Helena Pedersen, and Freeman Wicklund's *Chapter 9: Interspecies Education for Human, Animals, and the Earth* shifts focus from humans to the role of humans in relationship to other species. The authors' argue that community, learning, and daily human activity will be understood from a different lens entirely when people value and respect the lives of other species as much as we value our own existence. Racism, classism, and sexism share a common bond with our disrespect for the role of other species on the planet. Tying content in schools to this different worldview of speciesism is essential to creating a peaceful world in the eyes of these authors.

In *Part III: Community Struggles for Global Justice, Peace, and Environmental Education*, the introductory section presents a different framework to understand identity and diversity, particularly within the context of schooling. The struggle for social justice requires that social constructions to decisions, habits, and policies include all and not only confer privilege to a few.

Chapter 10: (Re)Imagining New Narratives of Racial, Labor, and Environmental Power for Latina/o Students by Yvette V. Lapayese notes that a space for Latino students to critically understand how they are represented in history, the economy, schools, and other social discourse occurs when they are called on to think, write, and speak against the grain; to be attentive to elite appropriations of their voices and struggles, and to reflect how consciousness may be reconstituted to effect a more socially just world order. Glen Omatsu's *Chapter 11: Liberating Minds, Hearts, and Souls – Forging an Anti-Colonial Framework to Explore the Asian American Experience* details this history. Unique to this group is the ability to redefine themselves from Oriental to a model minority. The shift from the background to the fore leads and directs the focus of their self-identities. *Chapter 12 'A Past Is Not a Heritage': Reclaiming Indigenous Principles for Global Justice and Education for Peoples of African Descent* by Nola Butler Byrd and Menan Jangu is a narration of the grotesque imbalance of respect and resources foisted upon a single race. Throughout Africa, the Americas, and many other parts of the world, peoples of African descent continue to suffer devastating effects of colonization, capitalism, racism, and poverty. African-centered pedagogy, committed to history, religion, dress, and principles of the culture, within school communities, connects meaningful content and operates as a tool to alter the path "to eradicate poverty, and create sustainable economies, peace, democracy, good governance, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, gender equality, and environmental protection."

Renee Jeanne Mar's *Chapter 13: Achieving Conceptual Equilibrium: Standards for Gender Justice in Education* positions that women and girls need safe places to live, work, and learn. Gender issues, impacting the lives of women and girls, consciously analyzed, discussed, studied and implemented within the context of formal schooling, challenge the status quo. A change of paradigm is sought in *Chapter 14: Disability Studies in Education: Guidelines and Ethical Practice for Educators* by Robin M. Smith, Deborah Gallagher, Valerie Owen, and Thomas M. Skrtic. The medical model drives the structure of learning for those with disabilities. Diagnosis and treatment direct practice. Disability studies commit to a different perspective. They advance social justice in special education and advocate for principles committed to individual growth, responsibility, self-determination, and creativity. The social construction of disability is transformed from deficit focus to preparation for skilled and capable citizenship. Darla Linville, Christopher Walsh, and David Lee Carlson's *Chapter 15: Queered Standards: Living and Working for Peace and Justice* argue that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students are silenced in schools when academic content and extracurricular activities limit or restrict entirely the knowledge, history, and experiences of these sexual orientations. Awareness to the multiplicity of sexual and gender experiences result in a change as to how to think, perceive, behave and care for everyone.

Part IV: Themes, Challenges, and Potential of SJPEE (Social Justice, Peace, and Environmental Education) Visions and Guidelines emphasizes this point: SJPEE needs to shift from exceptional or other to essential course of study within the context of the curriculum. Marta P. Baltodano's *Chapter 16: The Pursuit of Social Justice in the United States* comments that social justice is beyond the sense of care for others. Analyzing how and why government structures in a capitalist society currently operate as they do must be evaluated and studied by both teachers and students. *Chapter 17: Developing Social Justice Standards: A Multicultural Perspective* by Robert E.

Crafton looks at democracy not as a memorized set of facts or sworn allegiance without question. Instead, study of inclusiveness of diverse groups, varied perspectives, and contributions and concerns for all peoples in the U.S. society operate as tools to practice debate skills and critically analyze strategies. As Crafton states “All education is civic education, its end to produce an educated, engaged, effective citizenry. At its core is a commitment to social justice rooted in a ‘deep democracy,’ not the superficial and exclusionary reign of popular opinion, but a deep and abiding belief in the integrity of the individual person.” The struggle to question and critique in dialogue is the practice of democracy. The final section, *Chapter 18: Towards a Collective Vision for Social Justice, Peace, and Environmental Education* by Julie Andrzejewski, Marta P. Baltodano, Ray Barnhardt, and Linda Symcox, explains that a grassroots effort to shift education back to the public sphere and not to the interests of a few, with little opportunity for the voice of the many, is vital to enhance educational practice and instruction.

The strength of this text is in its explicit detail as to how and in what ways the standards inform practice. A full explanation listing the specific tasks needed to put the standards into action is concise, clear, and understandable. In turn, the standards are more than a list. They function as tools operationalizing how to inform and enrich a curriculum daily. Tozer and Butts (2011) argue that the study of school and society, rooted in the social foundations of education tradition, must be examined within a practical skill set and not simply as an academic subject dedicated only to historical terms and content. This work addresses those specific concerns. Each section details how the content of SJPEE develops teacher instruction while also meeting to specific standards. A full complement of skills and strategies to identify the needs of different cultural contexts is depicted throughout.

Most essential to this work is a strong sense of positionality. Communities and cultures, pushed into the shadows and backdrop previously, are brought forward. Their content and instructional needs take center-stage. When shifting to this perspective, the problems, issues, and resolutions markedly alter. The culture of native peoples in Alaska, for example, is not seen as an extra activity or a separate art project in the school day. Instead, the history, culture, and community inform the social studies taught, the stories read, the types of writing drafted, and the math problems examined. Thus, the work of the classroom mirrors the oral history of the community within language arts instruction and arithmetic calculations, reflecting the social experiences encountered (Gutstein, 2003) in the frame of the community, that of a tribal context.

Those of the dominant cultural groups are called upon, as Helfenbein (2008) indicates, to question assumptions and challenge unsettling beliefs. To reflect deeply on past suppositions, resulting in a change of action, is the work of this text. The editors and authors achieve two tasks. First, they detail, within a list of standards, what needs to be done to help children of minority status, whether it be sexual, racial, or economic, to connect formal instructional content to the cultural lens of the students’ lives. Second, and most importantly, those standards are explained with a degree of specificity not seen to date. The standards are operationalized to inform practice. Classroom teachers, then, instruct and assist students as they connect formal school learning to the social world of home and community.

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