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Peace education theory

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During this past century there has been growth in social concern about horrific forms of violence, like ecocide, genocide, modern warfare, ethnic hatred, racism, sexual abuse and domestic violence, and a corresponding growth in the field of peace education where educators, from early child care to adult, use their professional skills to warn fellow citizens about imminent dangers and advise them about paths to peace. This paper traces the evolution of peace education theory from its roots in international concerns about the dangers of war to modern theories based on reducing the threats of interpersonal and environmental violence. This paper reviews ways that peace education has become diversified and examines theoretical assumptions behind five different ways in which it is being carried out at the beginning of the twenty-first century: international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education.

Peace education theory

Originally a study of the causes of war and its prevention, peace education since has evolved into studying violence in all its manifestations and educating to counteract the war system for the creation of a peace system—a peace system on both the structural and international level (Ardizzone, 2003, p. 430).

In response to wholesale carnage during the twentieth century with nuclear bombs, genocide, holocausts and environmental damage, progressive educators have developed a body of peace education theory that provides information about the destructiveness of violent conflicts and strategies for peace. Peace educators point out problems of violence and instruct their pupils about strategies that can address those problems, hence empowering them to redress the circumstances that can lead to violent conflict. In schools and community settings they impart to their students the values of planetary stewardship, global citizenship and humane relations.

This paper will examine the theoretical roots of this new educational reform that seeks to address different forms of violence that appear both within and outside schools.¹ A theory is a set of principles or beliefs that guide practice. Peace education

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has a dynamic relationship with peace practice. Various theories about peace education have arisen as peace movement activists have struggled to address different forms of violence at global, ecological, community and personal levels. This paper will first present five postulates of peace education that help define this growing field and then examine some of the assumptions that underlie five different types of peace education: international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education. These different types of peace education have a family resemblance. They have in common the attempt to explain different forms of violence and provide information about alternatives to violence. However, the content covered in peace education classes varies according to the contexts in which those activities are practiced. This paper will examine the historical roots and goals of different approaches to peace education and describe assumptions behind various educational strategies to achieve peace.

Postulates of modern peace education

‘Peace education’, as used in this paper, refers to teachers teaching about peace: what it is, why it does not exist and how to achieve it. This includes teaching about the challenges of achieving peace, developing non-violent skills and promoting peaceful attitudes. Peace education has five main postulates:

1. it explains the roots of violence;
2. it teaches alternatives to violence;
3. it adjusts to cover different forms of violence;
4. peace itself is a process that varies according to context;
5. conflict is omnipresent.

Postulate one has the role of a clarion call to warn about the hazards of violence. Under this postulate, students in peace education classes learn about the ‘other’ in order to deconstruct enemy images. Postulate two presents different peace strategies that can be used to address the problems of violence pointed out in postulate one. Peace educators teach peace processes such as negotiation, reconciliation, non-violent struggle and the use of treaties and laws that can be used to reduce levels of violence. Postulate three explains the dynamic nature of peace education as it shifts its emphasis according to the type of violence it is addressing. Postulate four embeds peace education theory and practice within specific cultural norms. Postulate five states that peace educators cannot eliminate conflict but they can provide students with valuable skills in managing conflict.

Postulates one and two create a unifying mission for peace education, while postulates three and four diversify topics covered by peace educators. For example, peace educators in the USA at the beginning of the twentieth century presented in their classrooms the danger of modern warfare and argued for international institutions like the League of Nations. At the end of the twentieth century peace educators were teaching lessons in violence prevention to help children avoid the risks of drug abuse, sexual harassment and domestic and civil violence. Peace education varies as it is

practiced in different countries because people have different understandings of peace:

Whereas the content of traditional subjects is well defined (i.e. pupils in every part of the world identify the subject from its content), the content of peace education is of a wider scope and is less defined. Even though their objectives may be similar, each society will set up a different form of peace education that is dependent on the issues at large, conditions, and culture, as well as the views and creativity of the educators (Bar-Tal, 2002, pp. 34–35).

‘Peace’ has different meanings within different cultures, as well as different connotations for the spheres in which peaceful processes are applied (Groff, 2002). For example, there is a difference between inner and outer peace. Inner peace concerns a state of being and thinking about others, e.g. holding them in reverence, while outer peace processes apply to the natural environment, the culture, international relations, civic communities, families and individuals. Within each one of these spheres it can have different meanings. Within the international sphere it can be construed as a peace treaty, a ceasefire or a balance of power. Sociologists study cultural norms that legitimize non-violence and condemn violence. Intercultural peace implies interfaith dialogue, multicultural communication and so forth. Peace within civic society depends upon full employment, affordable housing, ready access to health care, quality educational opportunities and fair legal proceedings. Psychologists concerned with interpersonal conflict provide awareness of positive interpersonal communication skills used to resolve differences. Environmentalists point to sustainable practices used by native cultures for thousands of years.

Postulate five reminds us of the complex role conflicts have in our lives. They exist at both the personal and social levels. In fact, sociologists have pointed out that conflicts are a necessary ingredient in social change (Simmel, 1956). Some social theorists, like Dahrendorf (1959), believe that conflict resolution is a myth because social conflicts are inherent in the very nature of social organization and structure. Peace educators can point out both the value and risks of conflict. Unattended conflicts can become conflagrations, as happened in Rwanda in 1994, whereas conflicts that are managed non-violently can be the source of growth and positive change, as in the case of Gandhi’s salt march in India in 1948.

A rich diversity

Peace education takes different shapes as peace educators attempt to address different forms of violence in different social contexts. Because of their concern about the devastating effects of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, teachers in Japan in the 1950s led a campaign for peace education, where it is known as ‘A-bomb education’. In countries of the South where high levels of poverty cause violence, peace education is often referred to as ‘development education’, where students learn about different strategies to address problems of structural violence. In Ireland peace education is referred to as ‘education for mutual understanding’ as Catholics and Protestants use educational strategies to undo centuries of enmity

(Smith & Robinson, 1992). Likewise, in South Korea peace education is referred to as 'reunification education' (Synott, 2002).

To some extent peace education has these different names because of controversy surrounding the word 'peace'. Because the concept 'peace' implies a withdrawal from the world into a space of peace and quiet, peace education is not attractive to social activists who want to confront structural inequalities. Others are critical of peace education because they think that human societies are somewhat as Thomas Hobbes described them in *Leviathan* (Hobbes, 1662), with selfish creatures waging a war against all, and seek a strong monarch or state authority to impose order upon human behavior that would otherwise be rapacious and aggressive. They see the need for peace through strength and do not want to support peace education that has been equated with capitulation and referred to by its detractors as 'appeasement education' (Boyston, 1983).

On another level, some supporters of peace education prefer to refer to it as 'conflict resolution education'. They find that teaching alternative dispute resolution tactics to resolve conflicts is more acceptable than teaching strategies for peace that might threaten national policies and/or the privileges granted by unjust social institutions. Because of this conflict, resolution education has been more widely adopted in schools than peace education. Some people do not like the name 'peace education' because they see it relegated to ways of reducing the threat of war and not referring to interpersonal and cultural conflicts. 'Peace', through its use in religious teaching, has many connotations that make it a controversial term for some educators who might be attracted to the content and teaching techniques included in peace education. These reservations about 'peace education' have helped create various forms of peace education, each with its own problems of violence and different strategies for peace. At the beginning of the twenty-first century controversies surrounding the word 'peace' in conjunction with concerns about a multitude of different forms of violence have led to five separate types of peace education: international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education. Each branch of this peace education family has different theoretical assumptions about the problems of violence it addresses, different peace strategies it recommends and different goals it hopes to achieve.

International education

Peace education grew out of a concern about modern warfare. Europeans and Americans at the beginning of the twentieth century formed peace societies and lobbied their governments against the sabre rattling that eventually led to World War I. In 1912 a School Peace League in the USA had chapters in nearly every state that were 'promoting through the schools ... the interests of international justice and fraternity' (Scanlon, 1959, p. 214).

In the period between the First and Second World Wars, social studies teachers started teaching international relations so that their students would not want to wage

war against foreigners. This type of peace education is based upon the work of the seventeenth century Moravian peace educator Comenius (1969), who saw that the road to peace was through universally shared knowledge. This assumes that education is the key to peace, i.e. an understanding of others and shared values will overcome hostilities that lead to conflict. Here the emphasis is upon teaching about different cultures to develop in the minds of citizens an outlook of tolerance that would contribute to peaceful behavior. Many educators during this period were convinced that schools had encouraged and enabled war by indoctrinating youth in nationalism at the expense of truth. Peace educators contributed to a progressive education reform where schools were seen as a means to promote social progress by educating students to solve problems.

The horrors of World War II created a new interest in 'education for world citizenship'. Fifty years ago Read (1949) argued for the marriage of art and peace education to help provide images that would motivate people to promote peace. Somewhat like his contemporary Montessori, he argued that humans could use their creative capacities to escape the pitfalls of destructive violence.

During the 1960s and 1970s academics concerned about the war in Vietnam conducted teach-ins on university campuses, and at some colleges these turned into peace studies programs that had a unique international focus upon imperialism. In the 1980s the threat of nuclear war stimulated educators all around the world to warn of impending devastation. Concern about nuclear annihilation led to the creation of peace studies courses on college campuses and the proliferation of curricula devoted to teaching peaceful conflict resolution skills at the primary and secondary level of schooling throughout the industrialized North. Betty Reardon, a pioneer of this wave of peace education, has argued that the general purpose of peace education is 'to provide the development of an authentic planetary consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens and to transform the present human condition by changing the social structures and the patterns of thought that have created it' (Reardon, 1988, p. x).

Heater (1984) pointed out how important it is for peace studies students to understand the international interstate system that so often leads to wars over territories. Global peace educators provide an understanding of how nation states construct security for their citizens. This type of peace education is also known as world order studies (Diaz *et al.*, 1999). At the beginning of the twenty-first century it includes helping students understand the positive and negative aspects of globalization, which has led to the erosion of power of national governments. There are three types of globalization: economic (particularly transnational corporations and the creation of a consumer-dominated global middle class), public order (governments working together on common problems such as health and environmental problems) and popular (campaigns by grassroots organizations such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace and Medecins sans Frontieres). The reality is that globalization is taking place and cannot be reversed. The question peace educators should be asking is: how can we bring together all the parties to make sure that globalization benefits more people?

International education is a diverse field. Some researchers within this field look towards the creation of a federal world state with laws and courts that can adjudicate conflicts between nations, so that they don't go to war to settle their disagreements (Suter, 1995). Others look to alternative ways to structure the global economy, so that debt does not further impoverish developing nations struggling with difficult conditions of structural violence (Moshirian, 1995). Educators involved in global peace education efforts teach about how global institutions can provide collective security.

This approach to peace has received considerable support from the United Nations system that has provided mandates and supported peace education efforts throughout the world. One example is the 1975 UNESCO Statement of Purposes for Worldwide Educational Policy, to include:

an international dimension at all levels of education: understanding and respect for all peoples, their cultures, values, and ways of life; furthermore awareness of the interdependence between peoples and nations' abilities to communicate across cultures; and last, but not least, to enable the individual to acquire a critical understanding of problems at the national and international level (Deutsch UNESCO Kommission, 1975, p. 8).

Teachers following these guidelines try to stimulate in their students' minds a global identity and awareness of problems around the planet; they hope their students will think of themselves as compassionate global citizens who identify with people throughout the world struggling for peace.

In peace education classes teachers evaluate the worth of peace through strength approaches to resolving conflicts where governments devote considerable resources to armed forces to protect national interests and provide security for citizens. This approach to peace relies upon force to stop violence or promote national interests. International peace educators teach how laws and institutions, like the United Nations, can and have helped avoid the horrors of war.

At the end of the last millennium wars had shifted from interstate to intrastate, with the vast majority of killing occurring between rival ethnic groups fighting for control of contested areas. In these conflicts issues of human rights become intertwined with governmental policies based upon peace through strength. Are political leaders who use military force to repress terrorists protecting the rights of minorities? How can multilateral peace agreements be reached that would avoid the necessity of armed intervention, e.g. in the internal wars in Columbia, and resolve the claims of multiple parties in a conflict?

Human rights education

Interest in human rights comes from attempts during the twentieth century to establish international organizations, like the International Criminal Court, that would address civil, domestic, cultural and ethnic forms of violence, trying to heal some of the wounds of citizens who have been raised in violent cultures. This aspect of peace education has a literal and broad interpretation. Peace educators falling within this tradition are guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (December 1948),

which provides a statement of values to be pursued in order to achieve economic, social and political justice.

Various statements of human rights derive from concepts of natural law, a higher set of laws that are universally applicable and supersede governmental laws. Narrowly construed, the study of human rights is the study of treaties, global institutions and domestic and international courts. This approach to peace is somewhat based upon the work of the eighteenth-century philosopher Immanuel Kant, who in his book *Perpetual peace* (Kant, 1970) established the liberal notion that humans could moderate civil violence by constructing legal systems with checks and balances based upon courts, trials and jails. This approach to peace is known as 'peace through justice' and rests on the notion that humans have rational minds capable of creating laws that treat people fairly. People being persecuted by their governments for political beliefs can appeal to provisions of international law to gain support for their cause. Abuse of rights and the struggle to eliminate that abuse lie at the heart of many violent conflicts. Human rights institutions champion rights against discrimination based upon gender, disability and sexual orientation.

Human rights education can be broadly construed in ways that honor the basic dignity of all people. Hence, this aspect of peace education has for a goal multicultural understanding aimed at reducing stereotypes and hostilities between groups. As Reardon (1997, p. 27) commented, 'Cross-cultural ignorance and the hostilities it helps maintain and exacerbate argue strongly for multicultural education as an essential element of education for peace'. In peace camps in the Middle East with Israeli and Palestinian children, and other places where people are attempting to transform ethnic, religious and racial hatred, this kind of education hopes to eliminate adversarial mindsets by challenging stereotypes to break down enemy images and by changing perceptions of and ways of relating to the other group (Salomon, 2002).

These approaches to peace education are concerned with the tendency to label others as enemies and to oppose or exclude them. Here conflict is identity based, where people hate others who belong to groups different than theirs, perceived as 'the enemy'. Peace educators in these contexts attempt to replace enemy images with understandings of common heritage and break through a process of numbing and denial about atrocities committed in intractable conflicts (Feuerverger, 2001). They hope to reduce ethnic religious hatred by bringing members of conflicting groups together in a dialogue that searches for common understandings. The goal is to accept others, respect the inherent humanity that resides in all humans and adopt a disposition to care for others who belong to different social groups.

The study of human rights abuses in places like China, Myanmar and Rwanda helps students develop an international perspective on the problems of violence. International non-governmental organizations (INGOs) help protect the rights of people being oppressed by states and build communities of solidarity across various peace movements (Boulding, 2000). They also intercede in the midst of violent conflict to support the rights of oppressed peoples (Curle, 1990). Peace educators can teach about these struggles in remote parts of the world as well as get students to focus on the rights of minority groups within their own school communities. In the last

decades of the twentieth century concern about underdevelopment in countries in the South led to a variety of peace education approaches examining structural factors that inhibited the protection of human rights, led to inequitable economic development and destroyed the integrity of the environment.

Development education

Peace research as a serious field of intellectual inquiry began in the 1960s under the leadership of the Norwegian Johan Galtung (1969), one of the founders of the International Peace Research Association. Galtung made an important distinction between *negative* peace and *positive* peace. *Negative* peace by averting war or stopping violence implies the absence of direct, personal violence. *Positive* peace is a condition where non-violence, ecological sustainability and social justice remove the causes of violence. Positive peace requires both the adoption of a set of beliefs by individuals and the presence of social institutions that provide for an equitable distribution of resources and peaceful resolution of conflicts. Galtung also pointed out how structural violence, the inequitable denial of resources, causes violence. He expanded the field of peace studies beyond the study of the interstate system that leads to war to the study of cultural violence, human rights and development.

At the same time, a Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire (1970), developed an educational methodology to help people address the sources of their own oppression. He stated that humans need to understand how to overcome oppressive conditions in order to be fully free. This process of understanding or *conscientization*, leads to studying various forms of structural violence, developing non-violent alternatives to implement those alternatives and taking action to develop social institutions that would reduce the devastation of violence. Although not known as a peace educator *per se*, Freire celebrated the human capacity for love that could help humans achieve freedom in a just and democratic society. He saw that the right kind of education could liberate people from structural violence.

Peace educators use development studies to provide their students with insights into the various aspects of structural violence, focusing on social institutions with their hierarchies and propensities for dominance and oppression. Students in peace education classes learn about the plight of the poor and construct developmental strategies to address problems of structural violence. The goal is to build peaceful communities by promoting an active democratic citizenry interested in equitably sharing the world's resources. This form of peace education teaches peace building strategies that use non-violence to improve human communities (Pilusek, 1998).

Development educators are concerned about the rush to modernity and its impact upon human communities. Rather than promoting top-down development strategies imposed by corporate elites who see ordinary people as ignorant, peace educators promote poor people's involvement in planning, implementing and controlling development schemes. They would like to see resources controlled equitably rather than monopolized by elites (Toh & Floresca-Cawagas, 1996). Peace educators promote a vision of positive peace that motivates people to struggle against injustice. This

approach to peace education is controversial because it rests upon concepts of social justice.

Peace educators question dominant patterns of development that have preoccupied the West for the past millennium. They decry the poverty and misery produced by an advanced capitalist economic order where an elite minority benefits from the suffering of a vast majority of people on this planet. They see that the path to peace comes from getting people mobilized into movements to protect human rights and the environment. Inspired by Dr Martin Luther King Jr, Mohandas Gandhi and thousands of other non-violent activists who have used non-violence to resolve major conflicts during the twentieth century, they seek a long-term solution to social conditions that cause violence.

Environmental education

Historically, peace educators, concerned about the dangers of war, have ignored the environmental crisis. With the rise of global warming, rapid species extinction and the adverse effects of pollution, they are starting to realize that it is not sufficient just to talk about military security, as in protecting the citizens of a country from a foreign threat, but it is also necessary to promote a concept of peace based upon ecological security, where humans are protected and nourished by natural processes (Mische, 1989).

Bowers (1993) has raised a devastating critique of western notions of progress that assume that the natural environment is an infinite resource that humans can use to their enjoyment without regard to the consequences of environmental despoliation. Scientific growth based upon rational modes of problem solving has created a damaged Earth that is losing many of its creatures to extinction. Instead of an anthropocentric culture, with autonomous individuals at the center of the universe, teachers concerned about problems of violence caused by the destruction of natural systems promote a way of life that acknowledges the important values of traditional (native) cultures that encourage humans to revere rather than despoil the natural world. Environmental peace educators give more emphasis to ecologically sound folk practices rather than unlimited consumer cultures based upon exploitation of natural resources.

The goals of environmental peace education include teaching environmental understanding so that a peace literate person can become aware of the planet's plight, its social and ecological problems, and has a commitment to do something about them. 'Environmental Literacy is more than the ability to read about the environment. It also involves developing a sense of the spirit of place ... This feeling of place distinguishes each site and makes a place special and memorable' (Golley, 1998, p. ix). Hence, students in environmental education develop feelings of care and concern for the well-being of the natural world.

Peace educators concerned about environmental destruction teach about conservation, appropriate technology and environmental literacy (Orr, 1992). They emphasize the role of treaties like the Law of the Sea Treaty or the Kyoto Accord that

attempt to preserve environmental resources. Many claim that the solution lies in sustainable development, which has been defined by Ahearn (1994, p. 121) as:

A process of social change in which policies and practices are established to meet human needs, both material (physical necessities) and nonmaterial (e.g. access to a clean environment, political and spiritual freedom, meaningful work, and good health). Social change, within this context, must not occur at the expense of the resource base upon which societies are dependent.

Study of the environment leads to holistic thinking about how natural and human systems interrelate. Such studies can contribute to an ecological world outlook that contains basic knowledge of the environment, develops strong personal convictions about protecting natural resources and provides dynamic experiences conserving natural resources. Peace educators also emphasize preserving the habitat in which students are located, explaining the importance of bio-regionalism, where people within a particular region exist within the strengths of that region.

Conflict resolution education

At the beginning of the new millennium conflict resolution education is one of the fastest growing school reforms in the West. Conflict resolution educators provide basic communications skills necessary for survival in a postmodern world. This approach to peace education is based partially upon the work of Maria Montessori (1974), who stressed that the whole school should reflect the nurturing characteristics of a healthy family. In the period between the two world wars, Dr Montessori traveled throughout Europe urging teachers to abandon authoritarian pedagogies, replacing them with a structured curriculum from which pupils could choose what to study. She reasoned that children who did not automatically follow authoritarian teachers would not necessarily follow despotic rulers urging them to war. Montessori saw that the construction of peace depends upon an education that would free the child's spirit, promote love of others and remove the climate of compulsory restriction. She set up a school in a slum in Italy where teachers were encouraged to use their capacity for love to help students prosper in the midst of extreme poverty. In contrast to other peace educators who emphasized what should be taught in peace education classes, Dr Montessori stressed that a teacher's method or pedagogy could contribute to building a peaceful world.

In-school conflict resolution education began during the Vietnam period. In 1974 the Quaker Project on Community Conflict in New York published *The friendly classroom for a small planet* (Prutzman *et al.*, 1988), a curriculum for teachers of young children who wanted to enable students to develop a sense of self-worth, build community and acquire the skills of creative conflict resolution. Since that time, the curriculum has gone through 25 editions and been translated into seven different languages. It is being used extensively in schools in El Salvador, as well as in many other countries. The preface from the first edition sums up its philosophy and states the goals of many modern peace education programs in primary schools:

Our particular program has three main goals in the classroom: (1) to promote growth toward a community in which children are capable and desirous of open communication; (2) to help children gain insights into the nature of human feelings and share their own feelings; and (3) to explore with children the unique personal ways in which they can respond to problems and begin to prevent or solve conflicts (Pruzman *et al.*, 1988, p. vii).

This curriculum attempts to deal with the roots of conflict as they exist within the psyches of young children by teaching them to be open, sharing and cooperative.

Conflict resolution education can help individuals understand conflict dynamics and empower them to use communication skills to manage peaceful relationships. Here the focus is upon interpersonal relations and systems that help disputing parties resolve their differences with the help of a third party. Approximately 10% of schools in the USA have some sort of peer mediation program (Sandy, 2001). Conflict resolution educators teach children human relations skills such as anger management, impulse control, emotional awareness, empathy development, assertiveness and problem solving. Research studies conducted on conflict resolution education in the USA show that it can have a positive impact on school climate (Johnson & Johnson, 1996) and achievement (Bickmore, 2001). Studies have reported a decrease in aggressiveness, violence, drop-out rates, student suspensions and victimized behavior (Jones & Kmitta, 2000). Conflict resolution education results include improved academic performance, increased cooperation and positive attitudes towards school (Bodine & Crawford, 1999).

A recent variation of this approach to peace education is violence prevention education, whose goal is to get youth to understand that anger is a normal emotion that can be handled positively. To counter hostile behaviors learned in the broader culture, peace educators teach anger management techniques that help students avoid fights in school and resolve angry disputes in their immediate lives. Cultural images of violence in the mass media are both disturbing and intriguing to young people, many of whom live in homes that are violent. They have a particularly negative impact upon communities of color (Cortes, 2000).

Strong research connects the viewing of violence on television and higher rates of aggressive and violent behavior (Bok, 1998). Violent behavior patterns are learned in families that practice corporal punishment and are neglectful of children. Peace educators use violence prevention programs to teach students how to manage their anger and how to assert themselves to avoid becoming bullies or victims. A designer of such programs, Prothrow-Stith (1991, p. 176), described them thus: 'The point of the violence prevention course is to provide these young people with alternatives to fighting'.

Conflict resolution education concerns the aspects of violence that school personnel feel they have some control over, i.e. the behavior of their pupils. The emphasis in this type of peace education is upon creating a safe school. Teaching students to be peacemakers involves creating a cooperative context that encourages disputants to reach mutually acceptable compromises and not dominate each other. Children need formal training in anger management, social perspective taking, decision-making, social problem solving, peer negotiation, conflict management, valuing diversity,

social resistance skills, active listening and effective communication in order to play these roles in school. Conflict resolution education provides students with peacemaking skills that they can use to manage their interpersonal conflicts but does not necessarily address the various kinds of civil, cultural, environmental and global violence that take place outside schools.

Conclusions

These different approaches to peace education, international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education, are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they can complement each other, so that a teacher concerned about the destruction of the Amazon rain forest could teach about the rights of the indigenous people living there and the problems of structural poverty that require people to cut down trees in order to make a living. That teacher could also point to the role of INGOs in bringing awareness of these problems to the minds of political leaders and their constituents.

This discussion of peace education theory has mostly focused on content, how different understandings about the problems of violence lead to different theories about how to achieve peace. In addition to providing knowledge about different strategies to achieve peace, peace educators promote a pedagogy based upon modeling peaceful democratic classroom practices. They share a hope that through education people can develop certain thoughts and dispositions that will lead to peaceful behavior. Key aspects of this disposition include kindness, critical thinking and cooperation (Harris & Morrison, 2003). Developing such virtues is an important part of peace education. However, it is not the complete picture. The struggle to achieve peace takes place at both the individual and social levels. In contrast to conservatives, who see the origins of the problems of violence lying in the individual, peace educators see that the root problems of violence lying in broader social forces and institutions that must be addressed in order to achieve peace:

Violence in schools mirrors the violence in society and is exacerbated by the availability of guns, urban and rural poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, suburban anomie, and the media's celebration of violence. Each of these must be addressed if people want to end violence (Burstyn, 2001, p. 225).

Although peace education is mostly an individual strategy (changing one individual at a time), many of the non-violent strategies that are espoused in peace education classes are themselves collective, e.g. convincing people around the world to support institutions like the United Nations that promote alternatives to armed conflict. Peace education theory has to account for efforts to achieve peace at both the micro and macro levels.

The path to civilization requires more than the acquisition of material goods. Advanced industrial nations may provide riches to the privileged few, but that standard of living is based upon a history of conquest and a practice of destruction. The effects of this destruction are being felt throughout this world, where societies are grappling with deep-rooted conflicts, in poor countries like Sri Lanka, torn by ethnic

strife, and in wealthy countries like Germany, dealing with racial hatred. Perhaps citizens in these countries are so violent because they do not know about the various theories of peace that have been developed within the growing field of peace education with its many branches. Schools that teach a history based upon military conquest are not providing students with sophisticated knowledge of peace keeping, peace making and peace building strategies (Berlowitz, 1994).

Educators whose priorities are preparing students for high stake tests in a capitalist, competitive economic order are largely ignoring peace education theories and peace practice. Throughout this past century peace educators have created academic content, practical skills and peaceful pedagogies that could help the citizens of the world produce peace. Curricula are highly contested. Peace educators face forces of nationalism that support highly militarized societies. Even though it is hard for teachers in their classes to struggle against meritocratic forces and to promote a view of a society where everybody's needs are met, peace education has found a niche in some schools because of the practical approach peace educators offer to the problems of violence in schools (Harris, 1996; DiGulio, 2001). As schools become more violent and incidents of school shootings around the world focus attention on problems of school violence, educators are adopting various aspects of conflict resolution education to deal with problems of violence in schools (Casella, 2001).

Based upon the work of Rogers (1942), the popular psychology movement of 'new age' healing has encouraged people to examine deep-seated psychic phenomena that contribute to violent behavior. This movement has influenced peace educators whose goal is to heal wounds that create pools of rage in the psyche. School personnel dealing with aggressive children are using peace education techniques to help young people resolve some of the stresses caused by violence in their lives so that they can focus on academic content in schools (Obiakor *et al.*, 1997). Peace educators are promoting the teaching of affective skills (Cohen, 1994) so that children will be more cooperative and developing resilience skills in young people so that they avoid drugs, sex and violence in interpersonal relations (Brown *et al.*, 2001).

Aside from the addition of environmental education, conflict resolution and peer mediation programs in some schools, most of these complex learnings are not included in school curricula whose goals are to prepare the young to advance in a technological society. Ignorance of these peace processes is contributing to rampant violence in this world. Hopefully, people who study these different aspects of peace will start to realize how complex it is to construct a peaceful society and will start teaching peace education at all school levels, just like mathematics is taught at every level. Knowledge of peace processes is required for civilization to advance.

Notes on contributor

Ian Harris is Chairman of the Department of Educational Policy and Community Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and President of the International Peace Research Association Foundation. He is the author of several books, including *Peace education* (with Mary Lee Morrison) (McFarland Inc., 2003) and *Messages men hear* (Taylor & Francis, 1998).

Note

1. The theories discussed in this paper come mostly but not entirely from North America and Europe. Other parts of the world and diverse cultures have important insights.

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