CHAPTER TEN

CONFLICT, PEACEBUILDING, AND EDUCATION: RETHINKING PEDAGOGIES IN DIVIDED SOCIETIES, LATIN AMERICA, AND AROUND THE WORLD

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INTRODUCTION

Conflict—disputes, distrust, incompatible interests, not necessarily violence—is inevitable in life, but, despite what we see in news and history books, it is often addressed peacefully: “Actually, peace is not news because most people live in peace with their neighbors most of the time, and most countries live in peace with neighboring countries most of the time” (Alger, 1995, p. 128). Education alone cannot resolve (and may even legitimize) systemic issues that exacerbate destructive conflict—such as resource scarcity, concentration of power, social exclusion, or narratives of enmity and aggressive nationalism. However, education may build capacity and social relationships for democratic, inclusive, and just conflict management (transformative peacebuilding), by influencing individual and collective understandings, competencies, values, norms, opportunities, agency, and status equity.

Comparative international education as a field has always carried a concern for peace, including international understanding and amelioration of harms such as injustice and poverty (Burns, 2008). This chapter reviews international and comparative scholarship on education for democratic peacebuilding, primarily in societies suffering current or recent escalated destructive conflict (repression, gang violence, war, or division).
EDUCATION AND VIOLENT CONFLICT

Around the world, formal (school) and non-formal (outside school) education may exacerbate violence, at least as often as it teaches or practices non-violent, democratic responses to conflict. As political scientist Marc Ross (1993) found by analyzing ethnographies of high-conflict and low-conflict societies, conflicts are rooted in both tangible, socially structured interests (inequities, competing needs for resources), and intangible psycho-cultural narratives (beliefs, values, fears—what matters to people and why). This applies to education.

*Social-structurally,* education may reinforce destructive conflict—for instance by being unequally distributed, or through language or (de)segregation practices that disadvantage or limit the autonomy of certain groups (Davies, 2005). *Culturally,* education may legitimize beliefs and narratives of national, ethnic, or gender-based chauvinism and social inequity, or normalize (some or all) violence and militarism. How people experience and handle conflict depends on their location in the changing social, political, and cultural contexts that shape their learning and their options for responding.

Structural, cultural, and direct physical violence disproportionately harm people with the least social power, such as girls and marginalized groups (see Chapter Seven), thereby deepening social inequality (Leach & Dunne, 2007). For example, segregated residential schools, forced upon Aboriginal peoples in North America, deepened still-ongoing colonial oppression through physical, sexual, spiritual, and cultural violence (see Chapter Six).

Most major armed conflicts today are civil wars and insurgencies, not inter-state (Smith, 2012). Schools and teachers, because of their relationship to human rights and to nation-state employers, are often specifically targeted in terrorism and war (Novelli, 2010; Williams, 2004). Resources allocated to armaments are thereby denied to human needs or to education. Conversely, after Costa Rica abolished its army in 1948 and allocated the savings to public education and health, it became the most prosperous and peaceful country in Central America (Ware et al., 2005, p. 129). Clearly, escalated violence is a barrier to (any) education.

Violence takes many forms. Norwegian peace studies theorist Galtung (1975) refers to social structural inequity, discrimination, and exclusion—which themselves constitute (indirect) harm and may provoke direct physical violence—as “structural violence.” “Cultural violence”
(Galtung, 1990) means collective beliefs and attitudes that legitimize enmity, direct violence, and structural violence. Alternatively, institutional factors, such as support for achievement equity within schools, may help to shape the possibilities for peace by reducing structural violence (Akiba, LeTendre, Baker, & Goesling, 2003). US cultural theorist Rob Nixon (2011) uses the term “slow violence” to describe gradual or delayed massive harm, occurring through accretion or attrition, like environmental damage. Resistance to such violence, Nixon argues, involves mobilizing dramatic images and narratives that make visible the violence of formerly anonymous disasters—a kind of informal (media) education.

**DIFFERING GOALS FOR PEACE EDUCATION**

Paradoxically, though education can exacerbate destructive social conflict, educational initiatives and reforms also can be essential elements of peacebuilding. Beyond facilitating development of capacities, relationships, opportunities, access, and confidence, education can increase people’s understanding of the nature and extent of conflicts, their negative consequences, especially for weaker parties, and the possibilities for change—thereby motivating and equipping people to act, to shift power away from un-peaceful politics and social patterns. Direct, explicit forms of peace education may be most feasible during the calmer phases of conflict cycles—in long-range prevention, and in reconstruction after a peacemaking process has begun to work. However, this chapter documents viable examples of peace education, even in very difficult situations.

Peace, too, takes many forms. Thus, education for peace may have remarkably different goals, especially comparing higher- and lower-conflict contexts (Salomon, 2002; 2011). The absence of direct physical violence at a certain place and time, without resolution or transformation of the factors causing the problem, is called “negative peace” (Galtung, 1969). In contrast, “positive peace” refers to the ongoing presence of just, democratic mechanisms and social support for sustainable, ongoing redress of structural and cultural violence as well as individual disputes (ibid.).

Thus, education for constructive, democratic non-violent conflict and peacebuilding (positive peace) is not a simple matter of adding new learning activities: it means transforming school structures, policies, curriculum, and pedagogical practices.
There are three basic approaches to achieving (different kinds of) peace (Galtung, 1976). *Peacekeeping* security measures are designed to impede direct physical violence (to achieve negative peace) through control. *Peacemaking* (negotiation, mediation, and other dialogue to understand conflicts and identify mutually acceptable resolutions) also takes place after conflict emerges, but addresses its causes and solutions, not only its aggressive symptoms. *Peacebuilding* means complex long-term transformation of cultural and social systems, to develop sustainable positive peace by redressing the beliefs and practices that cause exploitation, marginalization, and dehumanization. Peacemaking and peacemaking education are necessary but not sufficient for peacebuilding, which also includes inclusion and equity.

There remains around the world a remarkable faith in (transformed) education’s capacity to help communities to reconstruct, re-humanize, and develop, even after devastating violence (Gill & Niens, 2014b). Often among the first emergency assistance for refugees and war-affected children is to establish schooling, even where there is no functioning nation-state (Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005; Waters & LeBlanc, 2005). Education provision is a key, often gender-responsive initiative intended to facilitate psycho-social wellness, to mitigate the impact as well as the likelihood of further violence (Kirk, 2011; Skovdal & Campbell, 2015). A sub-field has sprung up around education in violent contexts that are variously called emergencies, fragile states, or conflict zones (INEE, 2010; Mundy & Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Rappleye & Paulson, 2007). Another common term, *post-conflict*, confuses (continuing, unresolved) conflict with (ceased or reduced) armed violence. Some of this work demonstrates the negative impact of armed conflict on schooling, and the value of providing or resuming regular education for children displaced or disrupted by war (Shields & Paulson, 2015). This chapter addresses primarily the other causal direction: the longer-term preventative (or escalatory, or negligible) impacts that various aspects of and approaches to education can have on future violence.

Citing Ernest Gellner, International Bureau of Education scholars Tawil...
and Harley (2004) argue that a “monopoly of legitimate education in modern nation-states may be more important than the monopoly of legitimate violence” (p. 11). In other words, public education (expansion and reform) may be more relevant to building sustainable social cohesion and peace than military or policing.

A caution: nation-states do not always have a monopoly on violence, and state violence is not always “legitimate.” For instance, in parts of Latin America, high levels of violence linked to drug trafficking, gangs, and corruption, as well as some insurgencies, disproportionately harm women and poor people (Pearce, 2010; Staubhaar, 2012). Both domestically and via international “aid,” states increasingly confront violence (framed as criminality) with “securitization” practices that deny human rights and tend to multiply both the violence and its underlying grievances (also Ghali, 2014; Novelli, 2011).

Such securitization, in the form of punitive discipline regimes (repressive attempts at peacekeeping control), also is increasingly prevalent inside some school systems, in particular Mexico’s (Zurita Rivera, 2012).

The work of Brazilian socialist education scholar Paulo Freire (1970) has profoundly influenced peace and conflict educators’ pedagogies and efforts to address structural violence (Bartlett, 2008). Campaigns to empower poor people, inspired by Freire, have been mounted in Cuba and Nicaragua in Latin America, and Guinea-Bissau in Africa. These initiatives have engaged learners in “conscientization” dialogue, expressing the realities of their own oppression so that they could rise up and transform their situations (Arnove, 1999; Freire, 1978). These experiences show that it is challenging, but not impossible, to facilitate dialogue-based learning to build upon the local cultural knowledge of participants.

Like Freirean praxis, peace and conflict education explicitly intends to change the world, to make it more humane and less violent. This value-laden goal makes its implementation dependent on the social and political conditions, cultures, and levels of consensus in each environment (Bar-Tal, 2002). Yet many prominent international peace education initiatives, including those advocating the Culture of Peace (UNESCO,
2001), the subsequent initiative for Rapprochement of Cultures (UNESCO, 2014), and the Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century (Hague-Appeal, 1999), emphasize persuading individuals to develop interpersonal communication and problem-solving skills and “universal” values such as non-violence, tolerance, justice, solidarity, human rights, and environmental sustainability (Ellison, 2014; Ross, 2010; Weinstein, Freedman, & Hughson, 2007).

An influential proponent of this “culture of peace” work, U.S. educator Betty Reardon, argues that women’s actual roles in many societies constitute evidence that peaceful, nurturing behaviour occurs as naturally among humans as does aggression, and that positive peacebuilding requires people to develop love for the Other, including the Others each of us carry inside ourselves (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015).

There is little evidence that directly teaching values can reliably cause changes in behaviour. Based on a review of research on social and anti-bias learning, Clark McCauley (2002) argues that “feet first” education (enacting actual changes in behaviour) is more likely to change hearts and minds than “head first” education (teaching values and principles). For example, he shows that people have unlearned racism by engaging in desegregated situations offering institutional support for non-discrimination—“head” following “feet,” rather than the other way around. Further, too much value consensus (indoctrination) can stifle diversity and creativity. So, “for any type of critique to be of interest, both data and values have to be

“Critical and liberating dialogue, which presupposes action, must be carried on with the oppressed at whatever the stage of their struggle for liberation. The content of that dialogue can and should vary in accordance with historical conditions and the level at which the oppressed perceive reality.”

—Paulo Freire (1996, p. 26)

“A culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems, have the skills to resolve conflicts and struggle for justice non-violently, live by international standards of human rights and equity, appreciate cultural diversity, and respect the Earth and each other. Such learning can be only be achieved by systematic education for peace.”

—Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century (1999)
present” (Galtung, 2008, p. 54). Thus peace education entwines judgment (values, feelings, and deliberation about action choices) with action, lived experience, and evidence.

Sustained peacebuilding requires broad, inclusive participation over time; thus government-funded schools are important (though challenging) contexts to transform, to improve prospects for peace. Peacebuilding requires development of concrete skills, understanding, empathetic imagination (perspective recognition), and democratic agency—achieved through frequent, varied opportunities to practise handling conflict constructively, such as facilitated discussion of conflictual issues, deliberation toward collective decisions, and resolution of disputes through mediation. Temporary negative peace (cessation of direct violence) can be achieved through ceasefire and peacekeeping control. However, sustainable positive peace—presence of capacities, norms, and institutional processes for handling conflicts fairly and non-violently—depends upon ongoing education and actual practice.

EDUCATION IN DIVERSE CONFLICT ZONES

International comparison may facilitate understanding, but application of models from one social context to another can be problematic. Peacebuilding education faces different conflict contexts in the global South and in societies facing or trying to heal from escalated armed conflict, compared to the privileged and relatively peaceful global North (Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008; Salomon, 2011). Paradoxically, most peace education theory and research (including international interventions) have been imported or imposed—designed in relatively secure societies of the global North (IPEP, 2005; Sobe, 2009). When existing peace education research does study conflict zones, a preponderance examines global Northern contexts, particularly Israel, Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Bosnia, and Kosovo (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2012; McGlynn, 2009; Salomon & Cairns, 2010; Vriens, 1999). Each conflict is embedded in different cultures and histories of pain; thus peace education curricula and research may miss elements important in many conflict zones.

Non-formal peacemaking educator John Paul Lederach (1995; 2003), based on his work in armed-conflict zones, argues that top-down “prescriptive” conflict resolution training, rooted in the individualistic and rationalistic cultures of the global North, is often inappropriate in particular local conflict contexts. Alternatively, “elicitive” pedagogies are
designed to name, investigate, and build on the implicit conflict knowledge rooted in any culture’s experiences, stories, and proverbs.

Most contemporary peace education theory includes principles and strategies for addressing aspects of structural and cultural violence—that is, to achieve justice as well as harmonious relations (Bajaj, 2015; Curle, Freire, & Galtung, 1974; Gill & Niens, 2014a; Harris & Morrison, 2003). At the same time, much peace education practice (referenced above) emphasizes the interpersonal-level conflict communication skills, values, beliefs, and empathetic tolerance for the Other, sometimes accompanied by bland national citizenship narratives—avoiding the difficult political conflicts at the root of much large-scale violence.

People growing up in different social contexts presumably glean from their environments, and consequently need from formal education, different narratives, skills, understandings, and practice opportunities. Knowledges and norms taught in school may coexist uneasily, especially in high-conflict environments, with what’s learned in the family, community, religion, and popular media. Richard Merelman (1990), reviewing research in political socialization, theorizes that in highly contested regimes, children grow up embedded in visible and salient inter-group conflicts. These children may see conflict as normal and develop early understanding of how conflicts work, although they may need to learn how to re-humanize across differences and democratize social institutions. In contrast, Merelman argues, in relatively uncontested regimes (such as Canada—though groups disagree, the stability of the government is not threatened), inter-group conflicts are less visible, especially to dominant groups. In these situations, many young people would have little experience with recognizing competing worldviews, and may learn to view conflict as abnormal and dissenters or marginalized people as bad. Thus the values embedded in peace and conflict education may be more visible (contested) or more hidden (assumed), and have different ramifications for people in different social identity and risk positions.

Below are some key types of peace education programming to compare.
CONFLICTING IDENTITIES, NARRATIVES, AND HISTORY IN CURRICULUM

Unfortunately, education too often recirculates hatred of the Other across generations (Jansen, 2009). Curriculum and textbooks used on different sides of many conflicts—such as Israel/Palestine, Lebanon, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo—present completely different narratives of identity, history, and causation (Frayha, 2004; Harber, 2004). For example, Greek Cypriot teachers’ nationalistic discourse has presented Turks and Turkish Cypriots as barbarians, as does discourse about Greeks and Greek Cypriots in Turkish Cypriot classrooms—reinforcing a culture of violence and division (Hadjipavlou, 2002). Violence against lower-caste and Sinhalese or Tamil people has been legitimized in Indian and Sri Lankan schools (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000). Some Rwandan schools’ and teachers’ active or indirect support for dehumanization, and for deference to authority, helped pave the way for genocidal violence (King, 2014).

However, formal and non-formal education practices can transform antagonistic group identities toward just, democratic, non-violent coexistence.

Cultural practices that shape people’s sense of collective identity, thinking, and feeling about conflict include discourses, symbols, and narratives. History education is often hotly contested because it is where such narratives are most visible (Williams, 2014). Interviews with 250 Northern Ireland secondary students, for example, showed strong identity-group influences on students’ notions of history, although students knew about competing narratives and hoped school would help them to balance multiple perspectives (Barton & McCully, 2012). Similarly, Palestinian and Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jewish Israeli youth have developed differing notions of national identity, and different narratives about each group’s citizenship roles (Ichilov, 2005). Textbook history narratives of the 1967 war blamed Arabs for provocations and presented the Israeli nation-state as heroic (Firer, 2002). Subsequent history textbooks had “a more open and complex perspective,” but the still-predominant Zionist narrative left negligible space for meaningful cross-cultural understanding (Al-Haj, 2005). However, alternative narratives can encourage conflict transformation (Funk & Said, 2004; Ross, 2007).

Some small projects working with educators or school children do constructively address conflicting perspectives on the painful past and present (in Israel, see Netzer, 2008). In Rwanda and other societies
recovering from identity-based armed conflict, an initiative based on the Facing History and Ourselves program introduced new approaches to pedagogy and multi-perspective first-person testimonies and other historical resources, and facilitated difficult dialogue in teacher professional learning and collaborative curriculum development (Freedman, Weinstein, Murphy, & Longman, 2008). In Sri Lanka, pilot peace, human rights, national integration education projects have created alternative history curricula for various grade levels (Perera, Wijetunge, & Balasooriya, 2004). A joint commission of Japanese, Korean, and Chinese scholars created a new (unfortunately little-used) history text that openly addresses Japan’s violent imperialist incursions in East Asia: where these 50 historians could not reach agreement, their book presents three parallel narratives representing alternative views of particular events (Hayhoe, 1998; Wang, 2009). Thus history curriculum carries politically powerful perspectives that may reinforce social conflicts, but that can be supplemented or re-created to facilitate peacebuilding.

History education conflicts are especially difficult to resolve when that history includes recent human rights violation or genocide. For instance, recent national curriculum in Guatemala recognizes multiple cultural identities and Indigenous Mayan values and languages, but is contested and unevenly implemented (Herdoízo-Estévez & Lenk, 2010; Salazar Tetzagüic & Grigsgy, 2004). Some Mexican curriculum, in contrast, presents Indigenous peoples in generic heritage terms, not as participants in contemporary interculturality (Rodríguez Ledesma, 2013). Some scholars see intercultural citizenship education as assimilation, even “cultural genocide,” that substitutes surface integration for true recognition of sovereignty, culture, and harm done (Bear Nicholas, 1996). Others argue that “treaty education” and other respectful engagement with Indigenous knowledges and difficult histories can help to alleviate structural and symbolic violence (Sumida Huaman, 2011; Tupper, 2014). When historical trauma has occurred within the (conflicting) lived memories of teachers and students’ families, as in Chile’s course about the dictatorship, it is bound to evoke strong emotions: these can be educative, but also difficult to address in a fair and caring manner (Magendzo & Toledo, 2009). Yet, these scholars agree, leaving such important histories out of the curriculum is not a democratic option.

While formal education is heavily influenced by the nation-state, media culture can offer alternative openings for conflict transformation, such as sharing alternative information, creating space for dialogue,
and acknowledging harm. For example, a mass popular education effort in Australia, Sorry Day, commemorated shameful practices toward Australian Aborigines (Bond, 2005). Public events such as Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings also pedagogically encode particular “truths” to reshape the future (Nagy, 2014; Soudien, 2002). Thus education can address competing narratives surrounding complex conflict and violence.

**DIALOGUE WITH THE OTHER: INTER-GROUP CONTACT AND PREJUDICE REDUCTION**

The most widely practiced and studied form of education designed to reduce inter-group enmity is “inter-group contact” dialogue. Peacebuilding dialogue for reconciliation requires participants to acknowledge harm done, and to take initiative to alleviate that harm and rebuild non-violent relationships (Assefa, 2005). Planned inter-group contact encounters are often small, voluntary, non-formal programs that bring together individuals from adversary groups, face-to-face, for facilitated sharing, cooperative activity, and dialogue about the conflict between their groups, sometimes proceeding to deliberation to plan joint problem-solving action (Kaufman, 2005). Although such initiatives usually involve far fewer people than would public schooling reforms such as desegregation or curriculum change, contact program participants often report life-changing personal impacts. International research on such initiatives sheds light on pedagogies for peacebuilding in a range of contexts.

Often there is a remarkable amount of prejudice and misinformation to unlearn. For example, American peacebuilding scholar Mohammed Abu-Nimer, working with Israeli and Arab children in one contact program, saw children looking for each other’s tails (cited in Ware et al., 2005, p. 51). Gordon Allport’s 1954 “contact hypothesis” articulates certain conditions under which inter-group contact would be likely to reduce prejudice and increase openness to the Other’s perspectives: process and participant selection designed to equalize status between groups; close, prolonged contact; cross-group cooperation toward common goals; and institutional environments that support prejudice reduction (Tal-Or, Boninger, & Gleicher, 2002). Unfortunately these conditions are often not met (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000). Similar inter-group dialogue programming is implemented in relatively peaceful contexts, such as North America, where racism remains a problem (Dessel &
Rogge, 2008). While many such prejudice reduction initiatives are marginal efforts of short duration, undertaken without much social-institutional support for status equalization or behaviour change, a few have developed into sustained, successful efforts.

One inter-group contact initiative is Let’s Talk: students from the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, England, and Australia participated in workshops discussing contentious issues and youth referenda, and developed openness, political awareness, and less adversarial hybrid identities (Davies, 2004, pp. 137–139).

A contact program in Israel included teacher professional development, internet dialogue, and some face-to-face time between Israeli Jewish and Bedouin secondary students: pre- and post-test of participants’ attitudes toward their own and Others’ ethnic identities demonstrated small positive effects, unevenly across groups (Katz & Yablon, 2003).

Speak Your Piece was a more comprehensive program in Northern Ireland, linked to an ongoing Education for Mutual Understanding curriculum requirement. It employed youth worker facilitators, television programs, conflict resolution skill teaching, and class discussion—mostly in identity (segregated homeschool) groups, but also including some inter-group contact, directly and via computer conferencing. The teacher-researchers believed their pilot year, 1996–97, had been fairly successful in facilitating open, forthright, and inclusive dialogue on controversial issues, to “generate respect for the right to express points of view and to show sensitivity to personal biographies” (McCully, O’Doherty, & Smyth, 1999, p. 126). While some inter-group contact initiatives may affect some participants’ understandings and attitudes, by 2000 they had had negligible impact on tangible behaviour such as housing segregation, cross-group friendships, voting patterns, or willingness to participate in integrated education (Cairns & Hewstone, 2002).

In many protracted conflict situations, opportunities for constructive or sustained inter-group contact do not arise naturally, without preparation. Thus, although success is not assured, people continue to create contact dialogue and other bridge-building programs, around the world.

“Education on its own will not create world peace. Nor will a school be able to heal and control children living in violent or drug-related communities...[but] I do think schools can interrupt the processes towards more violence.”

—Lynn Davies (2004, p. 223)
PEACEBUILDING EDUCATION: ARTS, MEDIA, DISCOURSES, SHARED AND PLURAL IDENTITIES

Peace education initiatives may engage people through language, popular culture, electronic technology, and arts (Bratic, 2013; Davies, 2014; Lederach, 2005; Oxford, 2013). For instance, the Hello Peace initiative of Families Forum, an organization of Israeli Jews and Palestinians whose relatives had been killed in that conflict, encouraged people to telephone a number that connected them to a willing person on the “other side.” After over 480,000 calls (2002–04), many participants reported significant impacts on themselves, their friends and relatives, and somewhat on those indirectly exposed through media or word of mouth (Barnea & Shinar, 2005). Other well-known prejudice-reduction initiatives in various conflictual societies include the many Sesame Street–type children’s television programs (Stevenson-Krausz, 2013). One such program, for ethnic Albanian, Macedonian, Roma, and Turkish children, showed significant positive effects on children’s understandings of themselves and Others (Shochat, 2003). Beyond children’s education, such initiatives represent ongoing cross-party cooperation among the diverse adults who design the programs (Kay, 2013).

Integrated schooling transforms shared, daily inter-group experiences over sustained periods, thereby fulfilling tenets of contact theory (McGlynn, Zembylas, & Bekerman, 2013). In a system still segregated by religion and social class, by 2006 about 6 percent of Northern Irish pupils attended 57 voluntarily integrated schools, led by a Catholic or a Protestant principal. Integrated schooling is even rarer in Israel, whose separate Arabic and Jewish educational systems use different curricula and languages of instruction. The four integrated Jewish-Palestinian schools in 2006 had Jewish and Palestinian co-principals, offering bilingual as well as bicultural education. Many parents’ motivations to place their children in these integrated environments emphasized schools’ perceived academic excellence (including, for Palestinians, Hebrew language practice) more than peace (McGlynn, 2009). Interviews with government officials, and the principals of six typical Northern Irish integrated schools and the four Israeli-Palestinian schools, showed that inter-group differences were typically managed differently. The Irish integrated schools emphasized individual differences and common identity, whereas the Israeli-Palestinian schools emphasized development of mutual understanding while maintaining and affirming each distinct
ethnic identity (ibid.). Based on their comparative research, the authors argued for proactively critical pluralist, anti-racist peacebuilding education in integrated social conflict environments.

Some education for peace silences rather than confronts painful conflicts. “Single identity” approaches to peace education, in contrast to inter-group contact, emphasize de-categorization (viewing people as individuals rather than as “one of them”) and shared superordinate identities that cross-cut adversary polarizations (Church, Visser, & Johnson, 2004). These approaches are attractive to nation-states and common in formal “citizenship” education, since the superordinate identities are usually nation-states, such as “multicultural Canada” (Meyer, Bromley, & Ramirez, 2010). Teaching essentialized nationalist identities—as in Greece, Hong Kong, and Hungary—denies social diversity, leaving students unprepared to handle identity conflict (Mátrai, 2002). In contrast, contemporary German curriculum explicitly addresses the historical impact of identity conflict, Nazism, and intolerance, and teaches for inter-group solidarity (ibid.). A sometimes coexisting but less conflict-avoidant approach is to recognize multidimensional diverse (not bipolar) identities, and to include conflict resolution education that foregrounds equality demands by “have not” groups (Steiner-Khamsi, 2003).

Where authorities silence discussion of difficult conflicts (seeking stability to protect their positions), young people learn axes of dehumanization elsewhere. For example, in Quebec and France, official secularism in schools has functioned as conflict avoidance, limiting expression of cultural or religious diversity (Limage, 2003; Niens & Chastenay, 2008). Teaching any particular version of religion as the exclusive truth, as for instance in Palestinian and Pakistani schools, similarly would repress within-group diversity and dissent (Ahmad, 2004; Haidar, 2003). Despite inevitable risks in authoritarian or polarized societies, educative discussion of social and political identity and conflict questions is associated with higher engagement (in classroom and society) in many contexts (Baildon, 2014; Bickmore, 2014a; Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr, & Losito, 2010).

Formal democratic political system elements such as civic debate, constitutions and rights documents, parliaments, and courts are (imperfect) conflict management mechanisms. Thus citizen political engagement can indirectly contribute to peacemaking and/or peacebuilding. However, like many youth around the world, Mexican youth have expressed disinterest, distrust, and lack of knowledge about formal
politics, and reported participating in civic organizations or political parties less frequently than, for example, Chilean and Colombian youth (Guevara & Tirado, 2006). Majorities held the cynical (but realistic) view that politicians and big business, not ordinary citizens, held power. Most of the Mexicans surveyed, however, had engaged in “private solidarity” such as contributing aid after disasters, and about a quarter had volunteered in their communities (Reimers & Cardenas, 2010). Similarly, Canadian young people often do not express much interest in formal electoral party politics, and instead favour direct engagement to address problems of personal interest (Hughes & Sears, 2008). Yet, large-scale transitional justice for peacebuilding requires broad re-engagement, rebuilding, and transformation of unjust or unworkable social institutions (Arthur, 2011; Fisher, 2013). Are formal education systems helping to equip and engage young people in such social transformation?

LIVED CITIZENSHIP IN UN-PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES: AN EXAMPLE FROM COLOMBIA

Not all societies coping with serious escalated violence suffer identity-based “ethnic” polarization. Some Latin American countries are suffering appalling levels of armed violence, mostly not political insurgency but associated with drug trafficking and corruption. Such pervasive direct violence, and the associated securitization practices that escalate both structural and direct violence, negatively impact the lived citizenship experience, trust level, and engagement of young people (also Cox, Bascopé, Castillo, Miranda, & Bonhomme, 2014, pp. 8–10). In Mexico and Colombia, significant school violence rates are higher in non-affluent communities (Chaux, 2011; IEP, 2015; Reimers & Cardenas, 2010, p. 154). The complex implications of education in these kinds of violent conflict zones are under-studied (Matsumoto, 2015), but I present below some context and a Colombian example.

To practise even interpersonal conflict communication and problem solving requires a certain amount of autonomy and opportunity, embodied in relatively democratic and non-violent, rather than authoritarian or exclusionary, institutional and community practices. The ways schools handle authority and governance, discipline, conflict, diversity, equity, dissent, and status competition shape participants’ lived curriculum for peace/conflict citizenship (Bickmore, 2011a). Peacekeeping control and intolerance for dissent imply different citizenship roles
than dialogue, joint justice work, and shared governance. In punitive, inequitable school climates, marginalized students carry different roles than high-status students (Bickmore & MacDonald, 2010). Such implicit models and practice for handling conflict may be reinforced (or not) by explicit curricula, which tend to emphasize ethics and responsibility more than creative agency or civic action (Bickmore, 2014b; Kennelly & Llewellyn, 2011; Levinson, 2007). Such implicit peace education need not be unconscious, and may be more feasible than “explicit” peace programming, in difficult conflictual contexts (Bar-Tal, Rosen, & Nets-Zehngut, 2010).

The burgeoning movement for restorative justice practices aims to transform lived citizenship education in schools, and also usually includes some explicit teaching of interpersonal conflict communication. Restorative peacemaking initiatives replace punitive, inequitable anti-violence systems with a range of activities designed to nurture caring and inclusive relationships, learning from conflicts, and joint problem-solving (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012; Schimmel, 2012). The forms of restorative peacemaking circle and conferencing processes currently influential around the world are rooted in the Aboriginal cultures of New Zealand and North America (Pranis, Stuart, & Wedge, 2003). Peacemaking circles, more than simpler facilitated dialogue processes such as peer mediation, can accommodate multiple stakeholders and address power imbalances (Bickmore, 2012). Due to their inclusive, non-hierarchical structure, peacemaking circles can be responsive to the particular social and cultural contexts of participants. Such processes hold potential for powerful affective and cognitive learning opportunities, including support, guided practice, and constructive feedback (Bickmore, 2013; McCluskey et al., 2008; Morrison, 2007). In practice, however, only some such initiatives challenge inequitable social relations in schools (Vaandering, 2010).

What is left out of many peace, restorative justice, and citizenship education initiatives—larger-scale social conflicts, social-structural injustice, and conflicting perspectives on sensitive narratives and political tensions specific to each context—also has implications for young people’s citizenship roles. Although restorative justice and peacebuilding education theories (cited above) locate destructive conflict in community relationships that include inequities, some citizenship and peacemaking education practices at least implicitly locate the problem in (disruptive) individuals. For instance, a group of Swedish scholars
apply Foucault’s (2003) theory of “governmentality” to analyze two social-emotional learning programs:

Such citizens are themselves made responsible for the setting and realisation of goals that are in line with what a “normal” and “good” citizen consists in.... Problems such as disturbances and disorder, school difficulties, and unemployment are largely understood as the result of a set of “risk factors,” and then particularly individual deficiencies or incompetence of various kinds, rather than as a result of societal conditions, such as family circumstances, poverty, structural inequalities and social relations. (Dahlstedt, Fejes, & Schöning, 2011, p. 410)

Thus teaching interpersonal skills and values to individuals, while ignoring fundamental systemic and cultural causes of destructive conflict and violence, could divert responsibility away from social institutions and democratic governance. Such programming could constitute a form of “gentle peacekeeping” (Bickmore, 2011b), reinforcing an anti-democratic securitization agenda (Pearce, 2010). Yet clearly, individual capacities such as recognizing the anatomy of conflicts, comprehending and persuasively expressing contrasting viewpoints, and participating in non-violent collective decision-making are necessary (though not sufficient) for democratic citizenship and peacebuilding. The following Colombian example may facilitate reflection on this dilemma.

There exist in Latin America some exemplary democratic and peacemaking education initiatives (e.g., Abrego, 2010). One of the largest-scale is Escuela Nueva (see Chapter Three), founded in rural Colombia in 1975, now with affiliate projects in Mexico and elsewhere. This multi-grade comprehensive school model emphasizes democratic culture, cooperation, and joint decision-making, and has documented positive effects on students’ peaceful social interaction and democratic participation as well as academic performance (Forero-Pineda, Escobar-Rodriguez, & Molina, 2006; Pitt, 2002).

Examples of mandated interpersonal conflict resolution curriculum include two programs designed to implement the Colombian Ministry of Education’s National Program of Citizenship Competencies, established in 2004. *Aulas en Paz* (Classrooms in Peace) and *Juegos de Paz* (Peace Games), first implemented in 2006, were adapted primarily from international resources and developmental psychology principles
“borrowed” from the United States. The Aulas en Paz program focuses on reducing aggressive behaviour by teaching peaceful interaction, emotional awareness, anger management, active listening, assertive conflict communication, and creative conflict resolution, with minimal attention to bias awareness such as not bullying socially different peers (Chaux, 2007; Chaux et al., 2008). It includes implementation of 24 “citizenship” lessons and 16 lessons infused in language classes for all students (Grades 2–5) in their classrooms, and a series of special pull-out workshops for children considered especially aggressive (mixed in each group with students considered non-violent). Aulas en Paz does not encourage students to discuss sensitive social or political issues, nor to question the cultural narratives that legitimize enmity.

Juegos de Paz also avoids political controversies, but does attend to democratic decision-making; citizen participation, including service learning projects addressing problems in the community; and positive awareness of plural social identities (Diazgranados et al., 2014). Its main activities have been intensive teacher trainings followed by on-site coaching by visiting experts. So far, the (positive) evaluations of these programs mainly report reduced frequency of, or inclinations toward, aggressive interpersonal behaviour, rather than broader peacebuilding citizenship outcomes (Diazgranados & Noonan, 2015; Ramos, Nieto, & Chaux, 2007). The (optimistic) theory is that such negative peace (violence reduction) results in part from developing individuals’ conflict management competencies and, indirectly through the student-centred pedagogies, improving their relationships with peers, teachers, and (in Juegos de Paz service learning) their local communities. Chaux explains:

For sure, violent armed conflicts...will not be stopped by programs like Aulas en Paz or the National Program of Citizenship Competencies alone. However...these educational programs might be providing the competencies necessary to reduce the development of aggression caused by exposure to violence and to create peaceful relationships among children. In this way, children who could have grown up to participate in violence might contribute to the construction of a more peaceful society. (Chaux, 2009, p. 90)

Interpersonal peacemaking education, inter-group contact dialogue, and rewriting history curriculum constitute alternative approaches to making peace through education.
CONCLUSION

Education for democratic peacebuilding is conflict education (that is, it addresses conflict). There is no way to get to sustainable peace without confronting the problems underlying systemic and direct conflict and violence. To educate for sustainable peacebuilding is to facilitate broad development of processes, relationships, skills, and understandings for handling differences and problems, rather than prescribe narrowly predefined knowledge or procedures. Poor and marginalized social groups, hardest hit by direct and “slow” violence, especially need access to high-quality conflict/peace education to build (individually and collectively) such agentic democratic citizen roles, relationships, and capacities.

Every social-political-cultural system has distinct understandings, norms, and axes of inequality. Thus the cultural resources (and learning needed) to build peace, somewhat different in each context, are embedded in each community’s narratives and languages, implicit feelings as well as rational thoughts, and all kinds of learning settings. While constructive conflict resolution and peacebuilding education are possible even when violence has escalated dangerously, they are generally easiest to implement and sustain in non-emergency situations (paradoxically, when conflict might seem avoidable). Yet, the political will to implement peacebuilding education may be motivated by escalated direct violence. Comparative international study of conflict and peacebuilding education, in different kinds of conflictual settings, can generate awareness of a wide variety of experiences and insights, to offer a critical perspective on the risks and opportunities in local learning contexts.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. How have schools and classrooms in your experience (in various cultural and political settings) addressed peace, conflict, justice, and controversy? What are advantages and disadvantages of each climate and curriculum?
2. How could students’ diversities (such as national loyalties, religious affiliations, gender, feminism) be resources for developing their class’ facility and comfort with life’s inevitable conflicts, uncertainties, and issues? How might a
teacher meaningfully introduce peace and conflict topics in a homogenous classroom setting? In an escalated conflict setting?

3. Compare contrasting approaches to peace/conflict education from the chapter: What would enable or constrain the feasibility of each initiative (such as time and resource needs, institutional changes)? What might participants learn, relevant (or not) to democratic peacebuilding?

SUGGESTED AUDIO-VISUAL RESOURCES

*Oasis of Peace*, produced by Available Light Productions, in
-Inspirations, 1 (2007). Available at: search.alexanderstreet.com/preview/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cvideo_work%7C1783478

This 27-minute film shows the approaches and challenges of a bilingual-bicultural school in Israel, called *Neve Shalom-Wahat al-Salam* (Oasis of Peace), where Jewish and Palestinian children are taught together in their own languages.


In this five-minute video, staff from two Belfast schools, one Protestant and one Catholic, explain how they get their pupils to integrate and brought about a sense of community cohesion between their schools.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING


REFERENCES


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