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The Preparation of Pre-Service Teachers for a Culture of Dignity and Peace

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“If peace is both the destination and the journey, then what we teach and how we teach it must not be separated in our preparations for working with pupils.”¹

Introduction

Peace education is a complex concept. Although the perception of peace always has been and continues to be in the possession of the individual, each viewpoint seems to follow a similar quest – personal dignity. The search for personal safety through the inner

¹ Patrick Whitaker. "Curriculum Considerations," in *Education for Peace: Issues, Principles and Practice in the Classroom*, ed. David Hicks (London: Methuen, 1988), 32.

and outer journey for self-worth, confidence, honor, self-respect, and distinction continues in almost all individuals, communities and groups at both international and local levels. The same is equally true of our present contemporary age with its technological advancements and socio-political imbalance that set the stage for a *now* and *me*, self-indulgent generation. Understanding peace education means coming to terms with its participatory, holistic and ongoing nature.

Peace education is built on a philosophy that teaches nonviolence, compassion, equity, love, trust, cooperation, and respect for humanity and all life on our planet.² Certainly, the issues of violence and the need for peace are not new ideas. These are ongoing problems and a continual part of the human condition. Mainstream teacher education rhetoric in Ontario now turns its attention to the constraints and possibilities for strengthening the overall momentum of education through assessment of both the physical safety and the social climate of their schools. In 2006, the Education Minister of Ontario announced the newly appointed Safe Schools Action Team "...to ensure that every student is safe and feels safe at school and on school grounds."³ This paper focuses on peace education in teacher education as a viable preventative practice, essential to the improvement of safety as well as the social climate of schools.

Peace pedagogy is defined as those conceptual and theoretical frameworks related to the subject of peace, non-peace and peace education. This paper provides an overview

² Ian Harris, "Peace Education Theory," *Journal of Peace Education* 1, no. 1 (2004).

³ Ministry of Education Ontario, "Talking to Your Kids About Bullying," Ministry of Ontario, <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/whatwedo.html> (accessed July 20, 2006).

of how a particular explorative effort of peace pedagogy at one Ontario university, facilitated possibilities for development of explicit peace education curricula in teacher education. The overarching purpose is to stimulate further discussion and networking among Ministry of Education in Ontario and faculties of education by advocating how education for peace aligns with the Ministry's stated goals as well as those of the global alliance for education agenda. Both the Ministry of Education and UNESCO⁴ believe that education is a key to positive social development and change. Discourse on peace education, with its practical and social applicability to the overall health of our schools and community is important for re-imagining education, curriculum, and pedagogy in the 21st century. Our intent is not to point toward our worst fears, but to work alongside teachers and support them in their effort to promote equity, fairness, and universal peace values in their classrooms. Teachers should be encouraged to take a proactive stance to peace and not a reactionary one.

This paper is organized into five sections to provide an overview of research into pre-service teachers' perceptions of peace pedagogy and the implications for developing a peace education curriculum. The first section introduces the reader to the rationale for preparing pre-service teachers for a culture of peace and deals with the challenges inherent in finding a conceptually clear definition of peace. The second takes a closer look at the concept of implicit and explicit peace education. It highlights theoretical perspectives such as, traditional peace theory, combining the traditional theoretical

⁴ UNESCO, "Education for All Coordination," United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, <http://portal.unesco.org/education/> (accessed April 1, 2006).

distinctions, defining and assessing transformation, and understanding comprehensive peace education and worldview. Section three presents the methodology, relevant findings, and discussion. Section four provides implications of the findings for teacher education in Ontario. It underscores the need for teacher education to recognize the proclivity of teacher candidates towards partnership pedagogy, to create space for sharing experiences related to peace and safety, and calls for the exposing of peace education knowledge. We conclude by offering recommendations for teacher education practice in Ontario.

Preparation of Pre-Service Teachers for a Culture of Peace

In this contemporary age of widespread global conflicts, questions need to be asked regarding the role of schools and teachers. The impact of violence on our children and youth necessitates further investigation. Discussion is needed on the relationship between the social climate of schools and teacher candidates' perceptions of that climate. Careful examination of the social condition, along with open dialogue with all stakeholders is the first step to understanding how schools and teachers can adapt to meet a myriad of expectations. There is no 'quick fix' or 'easy button' pedagogy to change the apparent climate of schools and their ability to cope with shifting educational trends. The understated reality is that, like Ontario's four seasons, our social system continues to undergo its own unique changes. The inevitable and unyielding shift within our even greater interdependent society should move us beyond our settled and confident pedagogical past towards a new critical literacy.

Given the importance of education, we need to review our current pedagogical philosophies, perspectives, and policies. Our practices should reflect schools as spaces for critical transformation where teachers play a vital role in creating conditions for students to become caring members of society. "Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal."⁵ We cannot desensitize ourselves to the need for peace education and dignity in our schools and classrooms.

The matter of universal human rights and values is a critically important topic in our world today. The ultimate goal of peace education is "the formation of responsible, committed, and caring planetary citizens with sufficiently informed problem awareness and adequate value commitments to be contributors to a global society that honors human rights."⁶ Educators, scholars, and activists who advocate for human rights urge schools to promote awareness in their curricula from the earliest levels. Teacher education is an integral part of UNESCO's *Six Education for All Goals*⁷ as well as the United Nation's *UN Millennium Development Goals*.⁸ UNESCO and the UN aim "to provide global leadership concerning teacher training and related policy issues."⁹ These overriding

⁵ Martin Luther King, Jr., in the *Imagine Peace Network*, <http://www.imaginepeace.net/quotes.html> (accessed November 1, 2006).

⁶ Betty Reardon, *Educating for Human Dignity: Learning about Rights and Responsibilities* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 3.

⁷ UNESCO, "Six Education for All Goals," <http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php> (accessed April 1, 2006).

⁸ United Nations, "UN Millennium Development Goals," United Nations Website, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> (accessed January 5, 2006).

⁹ UNESCO, <http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php>.

global priorities set the pace for innovative peace education in the policies and practices of local teacher education.

Challenges in Defining Peace and Peace Education

Peace involves cooperation and understanding and can be described as a social construct. In terms of a conceptually clear definition of peace, it has been contextually established in the literature that there is no one consensus. Anderson maintains that although there are various definitions that appear in literature, “there is no consensus on a particularly clear definition to guide researchers in developing measurement procedures and indicators.”¹⁰ Fogarty asserts that everyone has a working idea of what peace is, but what is really known of peace?¹¹

Analysis and evaluation of the term in the English language alone would be exhaustive not to mention the various meanings in different languages. In a thesaurus search, definitions and synonyms of peace are diverse making a working definition of the term subject to individual and cultural interpretation. People of different cultures and within any given culture may agree or disagree about the meaning of the word. For example, some English synonyms of peace include “accord, amity, concord, harmony; calm, quiet, serenity, tranquility; order, stability; pacification, peacefulness.”¹² These varied meanings suggest context-dependent uses and understandings.

¹⁰ Anderson, “A Definition of Peace,” 1.

¹¹ Brian E. Fogarty, *War, Peace and the Social Order* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000).

¹² Merriam-Webster, <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary> (accessed February 12, 2006).

The noun peace is also akin to the Latin word *pacisci* which means to agree or the process of coming to an agreement.¹³ It is interesting to note that the act of concurrence or the process of forming mutual consent is historically rooted in the word peace. If the process of coming to an agreement, treaty, or compromise is one definition of peace, then attaining peace is as much about the process as it is the result. In this context, the need to find common ground supportive of a unified conceptually clear consensus becomes less significant.

Peace education can generally be defined as a “participatory holistic process that includes teaching for and about democracy and human rights, nonviolence, social and economic justice, gender equality, environmental sustainability, disarmament, traditional peace practices, international law, and human security.”¹⁴ Fountain defines peace education as:

the process of promoting knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior change that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intra-personal, interpersonal, inter-group, national or international level.¹⁵

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Hague Appeal for Peace, ¶ 1.

¹⁵ Susan Fountain, “Peace Education in UNICEF,” *UNICEF Staff Working Papers* (1999): i.

Fountain's definition moves beyond the promotion of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. It suggests that transmission of such information is a mere starting point in our endeavor to changing behaviors.

Transformation refers to a change in character or nature.¹⁶ Foley characterizes change as the result of a reflexive process distinguished by habitual and unthinking behavior. Foley further asserts that individuals evolve through personal reflection and confession.¹⁷ Freire contends that change is more than habitual unthinking behavior and reflection. He advocates that true transformation can only be attained through praxis – “participatory reflection and action.”¹⁸ Fullan and Freire concur on the principles of participatory action as an essential motivator in promoting lasting transformation. Yet, how do these change theories contribute to our current discussion of peace education? The goal of defining peace education functions as a guide to influence attitude change characterized by habitual behavior and participatory action leading to the reduction of unresolved conflict. Harris defines peace education as “teaching encounters that draw out from people their desires for peace and provide them with nonviolent alternatives for managing conflicts, as well as the skills for critical analysis of the structural arrangements that legitimate and produce injustice and inequality.”¹⁹ The issue of universal human rights and values in education begins with a definition of peace education that

¹⁶ Merriam-Webster, 2006.

¹⁷ Foley, “Critical Ethnography.”

¹⁸ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1970), 107.

¹⁹ Ian Harris, “Challenges for Peace Educators at the Beginning of the 21st Century,” *Social Alternatives* 21, no 1 (2002): 28.

distinguishes transmission of knowledge from participatory action and subsequent transformation.

Implicit and Explicit Peace Education – Theoretical Perspectives

The philosophies of peace pedagogy need to be made explicit and recognized as legitimate in an attempt to bring about concrete behavioral change in students, henceforth; the various scholarly peace concepts, theories, and discussions should be thoroughly re-visited and seriously re-considered by all educational stakeholders. Peace education is a viable way to prepare pre-service teachers in their quest to provide their students alternatives to violence, to create safer schools and classrooms, and in a greater context, to promote social cohesion.

While many agree that conflict is inevitable, some conflicts become obstacles to learning. We have dreamed of becoming teachers for as long as we can remember; spent our formative years imagining our contribution to learning. We grow up in schools observing and experiencing disciplinary issues warranting consequences ranging from the *look* to expulsion, and when we enter the field of education, we are overwhelmed with a plethora of delinquent behavioral patterns in students that deter us from our goal of becoming effective agents of change. How might theoretical frameworks of teaching and learning be affected by this fact? How is the field of teacher education capable of changing itself, or revisiting its structures so that our goals of producing socially responsible citizens are realized? It is worthwhile to examine the existing attempts at developing resources that promote education for and about peace and, thereby, facilitate pre-service teachers in their quest to become effective agents of change. Discussion of the

❖ *In Factis Pax* 1 (2) (2007): 81–119

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theoretical frameworks of peace education may also serve to reignite new interest in the value of the profession.

Traditional Peace Theory

“A theory is a set of principles or beliefs that guide practice.”²⁰ As with the evolving concept of peace, conceptualizing peace education is not easy. Its elusive concept leaves educators laden with generalizations and assumptions of what teaching peace is really all about. A worldwide, diverse, and continually changing field, peace education is developing in response to a myriad of “interrelated issues focusing on violence, war, conflict resolution, social and economic justice, and human rights.”²¹ A look at the traditional theoretical background of peace education helps us to understand its origins.

Traditional theoretical distinctions in peace education are embedded in terms of negative and positive peace.²² More specifically, peacekeeping (peace through strength) teaches strategies that discourage violence stemming from lapses in the balance of power.²³ Peace theory is also characterized by the assumption that peace education is either “(a) a knowledge-based subject that can be directly taught in the school curriculum, [or] (b) a set of skills and attitudes that can be explicitly taught in the school

²⁰ Ian Harris, “Peace Education Theory,” *Journal of Peace Education* 1 (2004): 5.

²¹ David R. Conrad, “On Peace,” *Journal of Teacher Education* 46, no. 3 (1995): 229.

²² Johan Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research,” *Journal of Peace Research* 6 (1969).

²³ Fogarty, *War, Peace and the Social Order*.

curriculum.”²⁴ Existing attempts at developing theoretical resources have uncovered meanings of peace education as presented in the work of scholars who have studied the traditional distinctions. For example, Reardon defines peace education as:

the transmission of knowledge about the requirements of, the obstacles to and the possibilities for achieving and maintaining peace, training in skills for interpreting the knowledge, and the development of reflective and participatory capacities for applying the knowledge to overcoming problems and achieving possibilities.²⁵

Key words, namely, ‘transmission of knowledge’ and ‘training in skills’, point to both the knowledge-based subject approach and the skills and attitudes approach inherent in traditional theory. Fountain defines it as:

the process of promoting knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior change that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intra-personal, interpersonal, inter-group, national or international level.²⁶

Whereas both Reardon and Fountain argue the importance of transmitting knowledge and the training in skills for interpreting that knowledge, their scholarly work is not reflective of a pedagogical approach where teachers “had typically assumed a functionalist role in

²⁴ Fountain, “Peace Education in UNICEF,” 39.

²⁵ Betty Reardon, “Educating the Educators: The Preparation of Teachers for a Culture of Peace,” *Peace Education Miniprints* 99 (1999a): 2.

²⁶ Fountain, “Peace Education in UNICEF,” i.

preparing individuals to stand in front of children in classrooms and impart acceptable knowledge.”²⁷ In this context alone, the transformative process may not be realized. Therefore, transmission of peace knowledge and skills is considered a starting point in our endeavor.

Combining the Traditional Theoretical Distinctions

Peace theory perspectives have evolved to include the promoting of egalitarian and transformative learning environments.²⁸ A focus on *applied* knowledge for “overcoming problems, and achieving possibilities,”²⁹ is the crucial goal of peace education theory. Here, the focus is turned toward peacebuilding – educating and inspiring students to become peacemakers.³⁰ There is an assumption that combining the instructional processes can lead to transformation. This is the dominant assumption currently held by scholars.³¹ In other words, the instructional processes in learning should work to promote participant change. For example, Reardon contends through her definition that effective peace education should not only be characterized by the transmission of knowledge and training of teachers in the skills to interpret that knowledge, but also as “the development of reflective and participatory capacities for

²⁷ Miller and Ramos, “Transformative Teacher Education,” 1999.

²⁸ Leonisa Ardizzone, “Towards Global Understanding: The Transformative Role of Peace Education,” *Current Issues in Comparative Education* 4, no.2 (2001).

²⁹ Reardon, *Educating the Educators*, 2.

³⁰ Harris, *Peace Education Theory*.

³¹ Fountain, *Peace Education in UNICEF*.

applying the knowledge to overcoming problems and achieving possibilities.”³² Fountain posits that peace education theory must “bring about behavior change that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence.”³³ Even more important is the hope for lasting change and sustained peace practices resulting from combining the basic principles of the two distinctive assumptions inherent in the traditional peace theory Fullan (1993) summarized the combined theoretical approaches to state:

To break the impasse, we need a new conception of teacher professionalism that integrates moral purpose and change agency; one that works simultaneously on individual and institutional development... Moral purpose without change agency is martyrdom; change without moral purpose is change for the sake of change itself.³⁴

Without change agency, threats of violence will continue to chip away at attempts for peace pedagogy. The notion of transformation is a gateway for building and maintaining peace. Nevertheless, what is the real essence of transformation? How can educators contribute to making a truly peaceful person? Ultimately, the goal of Fullan and other likeminded activists is to bridge the divide between theory and practice – more specifically, between knowing about peace and doing peace. This remains the ongoing challenge.

³² Reardon, *Educating the Educators*, 2.

³³ Fountain, *Peace Education in UNICEF*, i.

³⁴ Michael Fullan, “Why Teachers Must Become Change Agents,” *Educational Leadership* 50 (1993): 12-14.

In our review of courses offered at the designated site, we found, implicit course strands manifested in foundation courses, issues in education and religious education courses. A scanty outline at best, it ignores the unambiguous “participatory holistic process that includes teaching for and about democracy and human rights, nonviolence, social and economic justice, gender equality, environmental sustainability, disarmament, traditional peace practices, international law, and human security.”³⁵ Explicit and comprehensive peace pedagogy, including the aforementioned existing implicit strands is called for as we work together to enhance our current pedagogical landscape.

Defining and Assessing Transformation

Transformation refers to a change in character or nature³⁶. Foley characterizes change as the result of a reflexive process distinguished by habitual and unthinking behavior. Foley further asserts that individuals evolve through personal reflection and confession.³⁷ Freire contends that change is more than habitual unthinking behavior and reflection. He advocates that true transformation can only be attained through praxis – “participatory reflection and action.”³⁸ Freire believes that true change meant empowerment and true empowerment encourages participation – mutual partnership – necessary for the establishment of fair practices.

³⁵ Hague Appeal for Peace, ¶ 1.

³⁶ Merriam-Webster, 2006.

³⁷ Foley, “Critical Ethnography.”

³⁸ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 107.

Fullan and Freire agree on the principles of participatory action as an essential motivator in promoting lasting transformation. Yet, how do these change theories contribute to our current discussion of peace education? The goal of peace theory functions as a guide to affect attitude change characterized by habitual behavior and participatory action leading to the reduction of unresolved conflict. Traditional and combined theoretical distinctions have assisted in guiding practice; however, these theoretical assumptions have been difficult to assess.³⁹

How can we know that peace education works? What markers have been used to measure the impact of peace pedagogy? Lacking is evidence of quantitative indicators or empirical evidence that students who participate in peace education programs exhibit habitual peace acts with signs of lasting transformation. This is apparently not surprising to Harris who argues that we cannot know emphatically that peace pedagogy works. Harris posits that relevance should not rest on measurement of the impact of peace education, but rather, “on the effect it has on the students’ thought patterns, attitudes, behaviors, values, and knowledge stock.”⁴⁰ Pursuing students throughout their lives to determine concrete and specific outcomes may prove non-productive. Teachers can only do their part despite not seeing immediate or long-term results. Salomon puts forward this assertion: “It is difficult to evaluate the achievements of peace education because its objectives pertain mainly to the internalization of values, attitudes, skills, and patterns of

³⁹ Harris, “Peace Education Theory.”

⁴⁰ Harris, “Peace Education Evaluation,” 19.

behaviors.”⁴¹ If measurable outcomes are limited, then why study this topic any further? More documented qualitative and quantitative inquiry on this subject is necessary if we are to get to the heart of teaching for peace, and then the beneficial factors may appease those who desire proof that educating for peace works.

Comprehensive Peace Education and Worldview

Pedagogy that truly identifies with the human condition is one, which is shared, inclusive, and recognizes limitations. It is a matter of looking at the whole picture, one that is marked by ongoing change that leads to a particular result. Understanding peace education means coming to terms with its participatory, holistic and unending nature. Therefore, it is understandable that Anderson considers peace education a matter of developing measurement procedures and indicators. Fogarty describes it as a social construct. Smoker and Groff delineate the concept of peace and call it an evolving idea.⁴² Reardon defines the core of the peace education task as “the development of learning that will enable humankind to renounce the institution of war and replace it with institutions more consistent with the visions and values being articulated in the body of international standards.”⁴³ Harris identifies ten goals for effective peace education:

To appreciate the richness of the concept of peace; to address fears; to provide information about security systems; to understand violent behavior; to develop

⁴¹ Gavriel Salomon and Baruch Nevo, *Peace Education: The Concept, Principles, and Practices Around the World* (Mahwah.:Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002), 34.

⁴² Linda Groff and Paul Smoker, “Peace: An Evolving Idea: Implications for Future Generations,” *Future Generations Journal* 23 (1997).

⁴³ Betty Reardon, *Peace Education: A Review and Projection* (Malmo Sweden: Malmo University, 1999b), 31.

intercultural understanding; to provide for a future orientation; to teach peace as a process; to promote a concept of peace accompanied by social justice; to stimulate a respect for life; and to end violence.”⁴⁴

This multiplicity of approaches suggests a widespread desire for peace, on the one hand, and the complexity of doing it on the other.⁴⁵ “There is a clear need for a theoretical framework of peace that will bring together these divergent – yet interrelated – objectives and concepts and would provide the necessary framework for a comprehensive, effective peace education programme.”⁴⁶ Danesh’s Integrated Theory of Peace assumes that this framework is possible through the understandings of the principles of a shared worldview.

The Integrative Theory of Peace holds that the foundation of every culture is its worldview. A worldview is a comprehensive conception or understanding of the world from a specific standpoint. Danesh’s theory promotes a worldview that changes the framework of war principles to peace principles. The absence of a unanimous conception of peace education is not the only reason for the prevalence of violence in schools. Another reason is in the nature of education provided to students. Rethinking the current perspectives and approaches to education must move beyond content and methods to

⁴⁴ Ian Harris, “Challenges for Peace Educators,” 20.

⁴⁵ H. B. Danesh, “Towards an Integrative Theory.”

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 56.

include a framework – “conflict-oriented or peace-oriented – within which this education is provided.”⁴⁷

According to Danesh, a unity-based worldview can be achieved when pedagogical philosophies and practices no longer revolve around issues of war, conflict, and violence. Salomon adds that “the continuous war education that youngsters and adults have been receiving since the beginning of mankind” shapes and informs conflict-based perspectives of children and youth in this generation.⁴⁸ This has made peace education a difficult task. Mass media, entertainment, and the entertainment industry have educated children in the home for war and not for peace. Conflict-based perspectives are also learned “through the actual experience of school life - with its culture of otherness, conflict, competition, aggression, bullying and violence – and through concepts provided by teachers and textbooks that further validate these conflict-oriented ideas and experiences.”⁴⁹

Danesh’s four prerequisites and components of effective peace education are presented based on insights emerging from five years of research in 112 schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Prerequisite I: truly effective peace education can only take place in the context of a unity-based worldview

Prerequisite II: peace education can best take place in the context of a culture of peace

⁴⁷ Ibid., 56.

⁴⁸ Salomon, *Peace Education*, 55.

⁴⁹ Danesh, “Towards and Integrative Theory,” 57.

Prerequisite III: peace education best takes place within the context of a culture of healing

Prerequisite IV: peace education is most effective when it constitutes the framework for all educational activities.⁵⁰

The notion that peace education can best take place in the context of a *culture of peace* is noteworthy, but difficult to achieve. Vriens' research of 50 years on peace education asserts the compelling argument that "although studies of children's conceptions of war and peace are very important for the realization of a balanced peace education strategy," this goal is difficult in conflicting worldviews.⁵¹ For example, effectiveness of Vriens' Education For Peace (EFP) program was low due to three reasons: 1. the classes which received training covered only a few of the issues as extracurricular activities, 2. participating students were not psychologically ready to deal with issues as "tolerance, democracy and human rights,"⁵² 3. there was an insufficient degree of trust and confidence between participating schools, 4. the issues were seen as unrealistic and not applicable to real life experiences within the community. Peace curricula emphasizing a development of a worldview "based on peace principles within a peace-based environment" is necessary, though, contingent upon the culture itself.⁵³

⁵⁰ Ibid., 57-61.

⁵¹ Lennart Vriens, "Children, War, and Peace: A Review of Fifty Years of Research from the Perspective of a Balanced Concept of Peace Education," in *How Children Understand War and Peace*, ed. Amiram Raviv, Louis Oppenheimer, and Daniel Bar-Tal (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass), 48.

⁵² Ibid., 48.

⁵³ Danesh, "Towards an Integrative Theory," 60.

Because of the “tremendous need for children to overcome the catastrophic impact of war on all aspects of their lives and grieve their monumental losses,”⁵⁴ a *culture of healing* can be elusive. After his work in Rwanda, Staub reports the relationship between a culture of healing and a culture of peace:

Without such healing, feeling vulnerable and seeing the world as dangerous, survivors of violence may feel that they need to defend themselves from threat and danger. As they engage in what they see as self-defence, they can become perpetrators.⁵⁵

When the conflict ends, survivors of war sometimes feel that they are still in danger. The difficult task of freeing oneself from the psychological damage caused by conflict and war becomes evident when considering the challenges and psychosomatic barriers to trust and cooperation.⁵⁶

According to Danesh, if a unity-based worldview, a culture of peace, and a culture of healing are realized, peace education, as a *framework for all educational activities*, would become an expected reality. The development of peace-based curricula “demands a total reorientation and transformation of our approach to education with the ultimate aim of creating a civilization of peace, which is at once a political, social, ethical and

⁵⁴ Ibid., 46.

⁵⁵ Ervin Staub, “From Healing Past Wounds to the Development of Inclusive Caring: Contents and Processes of Peace Education,” in *Peace Education: The Concept, Principles, and Practices Around the World*, ed. Gavriel Salomon and Baruch Nevo (New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates), 83.

⁵⁶ Danesh, “Towards an Integrative Theory.”

spiritual state.”⁵⁷ Danesh’s postulated prerequisites for effective peace curricula and a unity-based worldview addresses possibilities for the reformation of cultures and social structures that are antithetical to peace.

Methodology, Findings, and Discussion

Methodology

The Bachelor of Education degree is conferred upon pre-service teachers who have completed the required eight-month program and have undergone guided teaching practicum at designated local schools. The perceptions of teacher candidates at the designated research site were critical in obtaining implications for peace education in teacher education programs. Teachers continue to be integral contributing voices standing at the frontline as well as essential contributors to educational policy and reform, therefore, democratic practices and inclusive participatory engagement was vital and welcomed throughout the research process. We specifically wanted to hear the perspectives of candidates for the Bachelor of Education degree understanding that contemporary progressive educators have accorded critical pedagogy a holistic and essential methodology in their critiques of marginalized discourse and their proposals for educational transformation.⁵⁸

59 pre-service teachers of varying ages were randomly recruited for this study.

Unstructured interviews were conducted, audio taped and transcribed. Focus group

⁵⁷ Ibid., 62.

⁵⁸ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and Henry Giroux, “*Rage and Hope: Henry Giroux*,” <http://www.perfectfit.org/CT/giroux2.html>.

discussions were conducted, video taped, and examined. Students submitted personal reflections for review. Course outlines as well as a government report⁵⁹ prepared for the Ministry of the Solicitor General in Canada focusing on school based violence prevention in Canada, were analyzed.

Data collection was a dialogic process without chronological limitations. Data analysis was ongoing and interwoven with data collection. During the initial phases of data collection, low-level inferences⁶⁰ were made in an attempt to keep as close to the data as possible without jumping to conceptual or theoretical conclusions based on limited observation. Different data sources of information were triangulated and used to build a coherent justification for themes.⁶¹ Data dealing with perceptions, definitions, attitudes, organizational culture, and educational policy were derived from the triangulated data.

With the research focusing on perceptions, descriptions, and interpretations of a cultural group, an ethnographic approach seemed most appropriate. Teacher candidates' perceptions of peace pedagogy and how these pedagogies were applied to their learning system formed the basis for examination of the group's observable and learned patterns of behavior.⁶² This study was ethnographic in "focus", "discipline origin", "data

⁵⁹ David M. Day et al., *School-Based Violence Prevention in Canada: Results of a National Survey of Policies and Programs* (Toronto: Public Safety Canada, 1995-2002).

⁶⁰ Phil F Carspecken, *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research: A Theoretical and Practical Guide* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

⁶¹ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions* (London: Sage, 1998).

⁶² Ibid.

collection”, “data analysis”, and “narrative form.”⁶³ For example, the study of the phenomenon of peace, its sociological implications; heterogeneous definitions; and multiple theoretical concepts, required triangulated data collection, extended analysis, and clear interpretation of the ideas that the participant group brought to bear on the issues. Data contributing to this exploration was generated during videotaped classroom observations where teacher candidates negotiated meanings of peace pedagogy. Meanings were explored through dialogue and negotiation in a collaborative, non-competitive, and non-exploitative manner. Teacher candidates articulated multiple definitions and implications.

Findings and Discussion

Teacher candidates who participated in the study emphatically noted that peace education in mainstream teacher education was implicit and presented primarily as electives or intermittent discussions given by professors as it ‘fit the occasion’. Within courses and programs examined at the designated research site, education for peace was tacitly manifested in courses such as, “Education Foundations”, “Issues in Education” and “Religious Education in Roman Catholic Schools”

While the course ‘Education Foundations’ was compulsory for all pre-service teachers, the topics concerning selected professional issues, including professional relationships, were not clearly spelled out and varied according to the priorities and experiences of the instructors teaching this course. The course ‘Issues in Education’

⁶³ Ibid., 65.

seemed to meet the immediate inquires of teacher candidates in that it offered space for shared experiences related to dealing with conflict and conflict related school policy. These discussions, however, were classified as spontaneously ignited, without sufficient time for collaborate resolutions. ‘Religious education in Roman Catholic schools’ offered prospective teachers the opportunity to reflect, in an adult context, upon the significance of their faith and growth for themselves and their students, and to gain a theological background. This course, while relevant to peace values, did not lend itself to a global context and was left optional for teacher candidates.

Along with the examination of the outline of study, participants put forth their own six core values pertaining to development of a comprehensive and effective peace education curriculum:

- A) Providing Conflict Resolution Strategies
- B) Promoting Peaceful Classroom Environments
- C) Modeling and Sharing Peace Values
- D) Developing Explicit Peace Curricula
- E) Promoting Global Awareness
- F) Promoting Peace through Teacher Preparation and Training

Exploration of the concepts and theories of peace education guided candidates towards a heightened awareness of the implications and potential development of peace education curricula in mainstream teacher education. Smoker and Groff’s scholarly publication, *Peace- an Evolving Idea: Implications for Future Generations* delineates the three central

concepts in peace thinking. Their peace model assists in putting the participant's six core values into perspective:

- A. War Prevention (Negative Peace)
 - 1. Peace as Absence of War
 - 2. Peace as Balance of Forces in the International System
- B. Structural Conditions for Peace (Positive Peace)
 - 3. Peace as no war and no structural violence on macro levels
 - 4. Peace as no war and no structural violence on micro levels (Community, Family, Feminist Peace)
- C. Peace Thinking that Stresses Holistic, Complex Systems (Integrated Peace)
 - 5. Intercultural Peace (peace among cultural groups)
 - 6. Holistic Gaia Peace (Peace within the human world and with the environment).
 - 7. Holistic Inner and Outer Peace (Includes all 6 types of peace and adds inner peace as essential condition).⁶⁴

In line with Smoker and Groff's peace model, teacher candidate observations reinforced the notion of movement away from violence (negative peace) to the formation of a culture of peace (positive peace). Teacher candidates felt that discussion of core values and attitudes of peace were important as it pointed to the potential focus and effectiveness of any peace curriculum. Discussion also included understanding the role of the teacher, participating and taking responsibility, and identifying classroom tensions.

With regards to the practical benefits of peace pedagogy, all pre-service teacher participants felt that teaching universal peace values along with alternatives to violence warranted explicit inclusion into educational discourse, policy and practice. They unanimously agreed that implicit peace education failed to adequately address issues of

⁶⁴ Linda Groff and Paul Smoker, "Peace: An Evolving Idea," 7-8.

the perceived current climate. Indeed, existing implicit peace education attempts were commendable, however, in this regard; the development of explicit peace pedagogy was highly recommended.

One stated role and mission of Faculties of Education in Ontario is to inform and shape a commitment to equity and social justice.⁶⁵ Teacher candidates should therefore, be provided opportunities to develop a professional sense of accountability. This includes an understanding of the social and moral responsibilities that underscore the practice of the teaching profession. Implicit strands in teacher education currently align with peace theory, however, the mission of Faculties of Education in Ontario is clear suggesting that explicit peace education in teacher education will undoubtedly strengthen the overall momentum of producing equitable societies, thereby, building human dignity.

Pre-service teachers felt that incorporation of peace education curricula would unduly limit their schedules and that of their professors. Despite variations in definitions, teacher candidates did not primarily concern themselves with how to define peace education, but negotiated the practicalities of having a peace curriculum in their teacher education program. The question of time was vital in the discussion. As the data suggested, educating for peace was not a straightforward task. Nonetheless, participants thought out several probable options for adding it to the existing curriculum. They felt that any change to the curriculum, however, would not be minimal. They also discussed

⁶⁵ Ministry of Education Ontario, “*Royal Commission on Learning Provides a Blueprint for Changing Ontario Schools*,” Ministry of Education, <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/abcs/rcom/full/>.

the possibility of having peace education workshops in lieu of changing the curriculum.

The following dialogue uncovered perceptions of peace education as it related to time management and assessment:

P:⁶⁶ “In terms of peace education, I think our issues course this year was a really good start and I know that some of us from the beginning have said that there is not enough time given to it. Fifteen minutes a week is not enough. Two hours a week is not enough. We have no time. Every time the issue of conflict was introduced, there was no time to address it or present it from individual standpoints.”

P: “Creating space to discuss these issues of conflict would be a wonderful arena for us to relieve stress. We’re not given that opportunity.”

Teacher candidates had different opinions as to how the course should be implemented and whether or not it was even a viable option considering time constraints and career focus. There was also an undisputed sense of apprehension on behalf of professors who the students felt were already grappling with the fast-paced nature of the program.

The following data exemplifies two things: 1. teacher candidates felt unprepared to resolve conflict that was out of their experience, and 2. teacher candidates felt that all stakeholders (community, parents, administration, etc.) should participate in the effort.

P: “Teachers working in schools don’t know what to do if something like that happens. A student brought a bullet to class and said that he was going to come back and shoot the teacher and two girls in the class. He was sitting at the office saying he knows who told and he was going to blow their f-cking heads off. I was only aware that there was a lock down and I wasn’t able to talk to the parents about it. I came to school everyday putting myself into danger along with the students that I’m responsible for. What happens if that kid showed up? What do I do with my kids? Do I tell them to get under their desks? Do I tell them to get in the cloakroom? What is the deal? Stay away from the window? What’s the right

⁶⁶ The letter ‘P’ represents the voices of participants. Each response has been quoted verbatim.

thing to do in that situation? What's the protocol? Who's calling the cops? What happened to that kid? What happens if someone in my class starts crying because they think that they are going to be murdered at school? But we're not supposed to talk about it at all - just keep a lid on it? So, I felt wholly unprepared and often I went to my car looking around thinking where the hell is this kid and why is he not in a detention center?"

Another participant responded by sharing his experiences related to gun violence preparedness. His response tells of his knowledge of school-based violence prevention policies. It also reveals a need for a unified framework for all educational activities.

P: "At the school we were at we practiced for the event of gun violence. Preventative measures are happening in schools and it's the teachers' responsibility, if you don't know these things, to ask. You had better find out what to do. I bet you every school has a policy and a manual that's hidden in a desk somewhere if nobody told you to look."

This participant experienced being 'informed' of safe classroom strategies during placement. While the participant was convinced that these strategies were being implemented in schools, the comment did not bring a sense of consolation to the other participants.

Although, there was a consensus that teaching for peace would be a great idea, there was also unanimity of opinion that teachers could and should not be held solely morally and socially responsible for the education of our children although their role is integral to this task. The participants felt that it would indeed take a whole community to raise a child. They also felt that having opportunities to share experiences was an important component in being prepared to teach peace. Some participants expressed that the emotion felt during the class discussion helped them consider change of attitude towards safety and peace in the classroom. The following words describe the feelings that

emerged while stories were being shared: empathy, anger, sadness, resoluteness, and questionings.

Implications for Teacher Education Practice

What do these insights about peace pedagogy mean for re-imagining teacher education in the 21st century? The following are three practical implications of the findings. They suggest that teacher education programs should:

1. Recognize the Proclivity towards Partnership Pedagogy

While some educators may enjoy the surge of power in assuming a “functionalist role,”⁶⁷ teacher candidates expressed a proclivity towards partnership pedagogy.⁶⁸ In contrast to the dominant models of pedagogy that pervade the ways schooling is structured,⁶⁹ partnership pedagogy has become the lens through which peace researchers and educators envision hope for change. “No serious reform of schools is possible without the enthusiastic participation of teachers. Teachers are the heroes of education, but they must have greater support in playing their vital and difficult roles.”⁷⁰ Past and current critical pedagogical approaches hold that students function best under conditions of support, trust, and freedom of choice.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Miller and Ramos, “Transformative Teacher Education,” 1999.

⁶⁸ Sam Intrator, *Stories of the Courage to Teach* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).

⁶⁹ Riane Eisler, *Tomorrow's Children* (Boulder: Westview, 2000).

⁷⁰ Ministry of Education, “*Royal Commission on Learning*,” ¶ 6.

⁷¹ Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1970, Michael Fullan, *The Moral Imperative of School Leadership* (California: Corwin Press, 2003) and Giroux, “*Rage and Hope*,” 1999.

2. Create Space for Sharing Experiences

If we agree that one of the goals of education is to create better citizens, educators must be committed to making the adjustments the move beyond the status quo. Creating space in the program for teacher candidates to recount experiences related to issues of peace and conflict is vital. Teacher education programs must find adequate time and create space for pre-service teachers to share applicable peace related experiences and approaches. This approach will benefit pre-service teachers in the following ways:

(a) It reduces their fears and anxieties stemming from inevitable aggressive behavior in their classrooms.

(b) It initiates the participatory and holistic process involved in building a peace education curriculum.

(c) It develops their critical thinking skills and responses as they participate in the formation of school practices.

(d) Their shared experiences are more likely to cause change in their own behavior.⁷²

(e) It can potentially make them aware of their contribution to world peace.

3. Expose Peace Education Knowledge

The marginalization of professional knowledge of peace education in teacher education limits the rich benefits of peace-related instruction.⁷³ Professors may become better prepared to teach peace when they take interest in this marginalized course content and make peace education an explicit and mandatory part of the teacher education

⁷² Jeffrey Jenson and Mark W. Fraser, *Social Policy for Children and Families: A Risk or Resilience Perspective* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2005).

⁷³ Ian Harris and Mary Lee Morrison, *Peace Education* (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2003).

curricula in Ontario. Participants expressed their feelings of inadequacy in dealing with the negative and potentially harmful ramifications inherent in conflict. Participants knew about resolving conflict within the context of their own experiences; however, not all teachers shared the same level of confidence or proficiency. The problem was magnified when considering that many educators had received little guidance in the way of peace-related instruction.⁷⁴

Recommendations

Six general recommendations emerged from the study. First, it has been established that peace pedagogy is a viable way to prepare pre-service teachers in their quest to provide their students alternatives to violence, to create safer schools and classrooms, and in a greater context, to promote social cohesion. The philosophy of peace pedagogy should be recognized as legitimate henceforth; the various peace concepts, theories, and discussions presented should be thoroughly re-visited and seriously re-considered by educational stakeholders.

Second, teacher education administration should consider the possibility that pre-service teachers are not adequately prepared to deal with potential issues, such as, violence, physical assault, verbal harassment, intimidation, threats, and bullying in their classrooms. For example, if a student threatens his/her peers, are the steps to be taken by the teacher clearly spelled out? Does the teacher have practical and emotional support

⁷⁴ Laura Finley, "The Current State of Teaching for Peace in Higher Education," *The Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution* 6 (2006), http://www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr/6_1finley.htm.

systems? Teacher candidates should not be left without clear support and direction in the event of unanticipated altercations.

Third, a comprehensive peace education curriculum should be collaboratively developed as an add-on course to existing teacher education curricula. It should be explicit, that is, its objectives and implications for practice should be clearly articulated and consistent with school policy.

Fourth, teacher education programs should recognize that the causes of school violence often lie outside the walls of the school system. Developing partnerships with internal and external personnel and organizations, who promote peace initiatives, may help to strengthen the overall effectiveness of the program. For example, a guest speaker associated with a local or provincial corrections facility may shed light on violence prevention strategies. A seasoned teacher may want to share his/her related experiences that may inspire and help give direction to teacher candidates. These supplemental programs may be assigned by the administration within the Faculty, the school boards, and by the community.

Fifth, teacher education programs should adopt the resources and materials offered by scholars and agencies who are dedicated to promoting peace education and its values. Approaches to peace pedagogy that have been tested in environments experiencing radical changes have been developed and are available for pre-service and in-service teachers. Reardon's book, *Educating for Human Dignity: Learning about*

Rights and Responsibilities,⁷⁵ is a K-12 teaching resource that provides support and direction for teachers and advances the development of human rights as a major component of education for peace.

Sixth, teacher education programs should prepare pre-service teachers in such a way that encourages them to dispel their preconceived notions about aggressive students. The notion that students who are considered a threat ought to be silenced and subject to unreasonable punishment, may further marginalize those who are already predisposed to violent behavior.

Teacher education programs must join with school boards and the community at large to find ways to maximize pro-social theories, practices, and policies. The Ministry of Education in Ontario and faculties of education would do well to further advocate this value-based endeavor considering how these goals are already at the core of their own philosophies and those of the global peace agenda.

⁷⁵ Reardon, *Educating for Human Dignity*, 1995.

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