What are Peace Studies and Peace Education?
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1. Peace Studies

Peace studies is a broad, interdisciplinary activity, which includes research, reflection, and dialogue concerning the causes of war, conflict, and violence and the orientation necessary to establish peace, conflict resolution, and nonviolence. Scholars, researchers, or students from nearly any discipline can participate in the systematic and careful study of peace issues.

A major institute devoted to peace studies describes the goal of peace studies ("peace") in the following way:

> Within peace studies, "peace" is defined not just as the absence of war (negative peace), but also the presence of the conditions for a just and sustainable peace, including access to food and clean drinking water, education for women and children, security from physical harm, and other inviolable human rights **(positive peace)**. This idea is rooted in the understanding that a "just peace" is the only sustainable kind of peace; an approach that seeks merely to "stop the guns" while ignoring the denial of human rights and unjust social and political conditions will not work in the long run. http://kroc.nd.edu/about-us/what-peace-studies

There is a fundamental distinction, therefore, between "negative" and "positive" peace. Although there are exceptions, the discipline as a whole one could say is oriented around the quest to understand the conditions and possibilities of positive peace. How can we make our world a decent place for everyone to live—not just my nation or community but everyone, including future generations. Peace studies, therefore, can and does include the study of justice (its conditions and requirements for persons worldwide), of democracy and freedom (as these are understood as fundamental to peace), of economic conditions and systems (in relation to issues like structural violence, vast disparities in wealth, and exploitation), and of sustainable environmental conditions and practices (which are, of course, fundamental to any lasting peace).

This does not mean that all reflection is or must be done on a global level, for peace studies raises questions about the relationships of men and women, of racial and cultural interactions, of ideological conflicts, about relationships in businesses, communities, or families, about the uses of science and technology, about definitions of violence or nonviolence, about the paradigms around which we organize our lives, and about the visions of alternative possibilities embodied in art and literature, etc. One might argue, therefore, that peace studies as an activity involves moving to a new self-critical and broadly human level of thought and consciousness in which we comprehend why it is so important to research, reflect on, and discuss these issues.

Peace studies as an interdisciplinary field also appears concomitant with a worldwide encounter with a plethora of potentially lethal global problems or crises. We realize today that we had better begin thinking globally, and that we had better begin thinking in terms of peace rather than war, because civilization is threatened from a number of angles in ways that it never was before the 20th century. We are aware today of population explosion, on-going climate collapse, diminishing natural resources (like fresh water, arable land, and rain-forests), worldwide pollution from both toxic and non-toxic wastes, and the threat of massive, globally devastating wars.

People have realized, in consequence of these planetary developments, that we need to begin thinking about peace in a sustained and substantial way. This is what peace studies as an interdisciplinary field attempts to do. Each investigation opens up related issues and leads to fundamental reflections. For example, the investigation of the resort to violence in a particular war or situation leads to the question of whether there are causes that transcend this particular war or whether there is a pattern here that is approximated in other wars or situations of violence.

Reflection on the causes of war inevitably raises the issue of structural violence (unjust social and economic structures linked with extreme poverty and deprivation) and the issue of imperialism (dominant nations acting aggressively within the world system to promote their perceived national intersts). This in turn leads us to ask why soldiers are willing to fight a kill strangers at the command of their governments, and hence to questions of socialization, biology, psychology, etc. On the broadest level we might ask about global paradigms or planetary systems that foster war and violence for structural and systemic reasons.

Within the peace studies movement there have tended to be two broad sorts of approaches to questions of violence, war, and peace. One emphasizes the human individual and his or her consciousness and the paradigms by which he or she might be operating. Change toward peaceful behavior is often emphasized through education, conscious raising, dialogue, counseling, mediation, conflict resolution, meditation, or some other ways of influencing individual behavior in the direction of more peaceful relationships.

The second approach emphasizes the role of systems, structures, and socially or culturally embedded paradigms which may promote wars, imperialism, economic exploitation, aggressive behavior, structural forms of violence, poverty, environmental degradation, etc. Scholars and thinkers in this area study national or global economic, political, or cultural systems with a view to discerning the relationship between such systems and war, violence, exploitation, environmental destruction, etc. They also study alternatives to prevailing systems and the means by which system-transformations might take place. There may be tension between these two approaches, the first seeing the systems approach as ignoring human subjectivity and responsibility and treating persons as robotic products of a system and the second seeing the first approach as ignoring fundamental structures that condition and strongly influence human behavior.

In the Introduction her book *Peace: Meanings, Politics, Strategies*, editor Linda Rennie Forcey writes concerning this debate:

> The attempt to think about the peace process examining individual behavior and responsibility without reference to political and social collectivity is to neglect the realities of our historical situation. To stress the system to the point of eliminating individual behavior and responsibility may well mire us in cyclic determinism. Peace studies cannot afford an either/or approach. It is in the process of thinking and talking together about the meanings we give to peace, and the ways in which our politics affect our thinking about peace that we will find our own voices for strategies for peace. (1988: 13)

The study of the paradigms by which people think and act (which are often deeply imbedded unconscious ways of thought and behavior) can cut either way and can perhaps serve as a bridge between these two general aspects of peace studies. Many forms of meditation, for example, or transformative practices (such as the Buddhist eight-fold path) can be understood to be transformative of the paradigms by which people operate. Conscious-raising through dialogue and education can also be understood this way. Hence, people as individuals can learn to understand the paradigms that have

influenced their thought and behavior, and through various methods, and change this paradigms leading to more peaceful, harmonious, and understanding behavior.

But systems-thinkers also know that paradigms are also embodied in historically conditioned economic, political, and cultural structures, and that the structures within which people think and live are strongly influential on the way they see the world and act within it. Well-known peace educator Better Reardon, in her essay "A Paradigm of Peace" includes both of these aspects of the paradigm concept in an understanding of what she calls "organic peace." She recognizes both "structural violence" worldwide, requiring that we transform the world's "war-system" into a planetary "peace-system," but she also recognizes the need for a transformation of human consciousness with respect to the images, concepts, metaphors, and patterns by which we think and act (1988: 20-22).

The older "war-system" by which much of the world lives and acts, Reardon asserts, is the product of a "linear thinking" that we have inherited from an outmoded past. She refers to the new "organic" paradigm under the heading of James Lovelock's "Gaia hypothesis that the Earth itself is a living system" (Ibid. 22). In my own writings I have similarly emphasized the breakthroughs of the 20th century sciences into a scientific paradigm shift of major proportions—the shift from a mechanical, atomistic, and "fragmented" model of the universe to an organic, holistic, and interactional model.

Even though we understand that scientific revolutions can be superseded, it looks very much like scientists are coming very close to the fundamental structures of things, both in the life-sciences such as biology and ecology and in the cosmological sciences such as astrophysics and quantum physics. Similarly, in psychology and sociology newer models tend to be interactive and holistic, revealing the inseparability of our individuality and the community environment within which every person lives, and revealing a holistic paradigm that reflects the personal, the community, all humanity, the biosphere of our planet, all the way to quantum physics and astrophysics and hence the universe itself (see Martin 2008: Chaps. 2-3; E.E. Harris 1991).

Reardon calls the development of this new paradigm "seeking a wholeness that is the authentic meaning of integrity" (1988: 23). It means the realization and actualization of a *unity in diversity* in which we understand our fundamental sameness and connectedness with all other human beings and the ways in which the older paradigm fragments, distorts, and alienates people and groups from one another. Peace studies promotes, Reardon writes, "cross-cultural education, conflict studies, world order modeling, human rights education, environmental studies" and the several other themes identified above—all of which can contribute to the development and actualization of a new "organic" paradigm for human life.

We need to move, therefore, from a paradigm developed centuries ago that includes the world's war-system, the world's economic system, and the world's system of sovereign nation-states to a holistic paradigm in which conflict is handled by nonviolent means (courts, mediation, social justice developments, tolerance of diversity, etc.), in which economics is designed to promote the well-being of all (and not the few at the expense of the many), and in which nation-states no longer refuse to recognize any law above themselves and their perceived, competitive "national interests." Under the global holistic paradigm the common good of the whole becomes fundamental and is understood not to be in irreconcilable conflict with the deepest private good of the individual. This common good manifests itself in the need to eliminate war, to protect the global environment, to restore essential resources to the Earth, to protect the human rights and dignity of everyone equally, and to solve all problems that are beyond the scope of both nations and localized communities.

This, as I understand it, is the fundamental thrust and goal of peace studies. If we are going to survive much longer on this planet, we need to develop a planetary paradigm of positive peace, and not merely spend our efforts in pursuit of limited forms of negative peace. This is why the study of peace is so fundamental and imperative in our day. It takes the power of our skills and educations from diverse backgrounds, points of view, and disciplines, and brings them to bear on the most fundamental issues of our day: what does it mean to be a human being, and how are we going to learn to live successfully together on this planet, with everybody's needs satisfied, and with both a biosphere and a civilization fit for future generations to inherit?

2. Peace Education

Peace education is necessarily a part of peace studies. Researchers, thinkers, and concerned citizens are always involved in educating others in one way or another. For professional educators, the process may be more systematic and self-conscious, since pedagogy itself is something that requires reflection and training. In this section I have identified eight aspects of peace education, many of which, I believe, are widely agreed upon by those who write about peace pedagogy. These are written in a linear fashion, but in practice there is often a dynamic interplay of these eight aspects of peace education.

First, peace education must be directed *toward understanding facts and perspectives that are often screened out* or distorted by the dominant media. In nearly any society, there will be dominant media that embody the dominant paradigm of the society, which is almost always a paradigm that reflects the war-system prominent in the world as a whole. Students must be educated to understand that everything is not up-front on the surface as the dominant media would have us believe. Certain things are selected from a vast plethora of facts to be reported, and what is reported is contextualized in a certain way according to the perspective of the dominant media. Students and teachers must develop what Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1989) calls a "critical consciousness," a consciousness that sees through, and is able to critique the dominant paradigm as expressed through dominant institutions.

Second, teachers and students should engage in *consciousness-raising* regarding their own paradigm assumptions as well as the paradigm assumptions of society (perpetuated by the dominant media). What do I think about human nature? What do I assume about other nations? What are my assumptions about Moslems or Hindus? What are my assumptions about my own nation and its goodness or superiority? Why do I assume these things? Was it my culture and its dominant paradigm that led to my beliefs about these things? Effective learning begins with good questions, and good questions are nearly always critical questions attempting to get behind the surface appearance to what is really going on.

Third, teachers and students need to undertake *critical evaluation of the present dominant paradigms* and the systems that embody them. What are the systems of society and the assumptions they embody? How is this manifested in their operation? How do these systems see themselves and what would be more critical and rational ways to view them?   This, like the other items enumerated here, is also about "education for critical consciousness," for this consciousness is central to the very possibility of an effective study of peace. To really think in terms of possible alternatives, we must be willing and able to critically evaluate (and dialogue about) the basic assumptions of our society, culture, and nation.

Fourth, we must be *imagining alternatives with a view to the lethal global problems* we face on the Earth and how we can address them. How could we think differently with respect to our system and our actions? How should we think differently? What would the likely consequences of different ways of thinking about the kind of actions we undertake? Activating the imagination, and the willingness to think outside the box, are fundamental to peace education. Elucidating the consequences and possibilities of these alternatives to the point where they begin to cohere as genuine alternatives or peace paradigms, we begin to experience connections and associations. We begin to see how perspectives outside the box can cohere and make practical, alternative sense. We begin to identify the ways in which these alternatives might be actualized in the world.

Fifth, learning to "*be the change we want to see in the world*" takes place through meditation, reflection, dialogue, effective learning, or other transformative methods. It is not enough to see critically the possibility of alternatives but fail to identify correct and powerful alternatives and live from these new ways of thinking. We enter into a process of self-transformation through continual life-long learning, seriousness of purpose, reflective thought, and transformative practices (like meditation). We do not have to wait, however, for some ideal future personal enlightenment in which we are then ready to teach and transmit the alternative way of being in the world to others.

If the alternative is valid, coherent, and right, then we should become a teacher of others, a midwife bringing out of them their own versions of an effective alternative peace-paradigm. Our own process of becoming the change we want to be in the world is inseparable from the process of interacting with and educating others concerning this same process of change. As Sigmund Freud expressed this: "The individual takes part in the course of the development of mankind at the same time as he pursues his own path in life" (in I.M. Harris 1988: 139).

Sixth, more and more during this process we will be going forth into the world *as transformative world citizens* speaking, writing, thinking, and acting in terms of an embodied peace-paradigm. Such persons are often leaders or inspirers of others on the path of peace. There is an analogue, I believe, with the way James Fowler describes the highest stage of "faith" in his book *Stages of Faith*. Such persons:

> have become incarnators and actualizers of the spirit of an inclusive and fulfilled human community. They are "contagious" in the sense that they create zones of liberation from the social, political, economic and ideological shackles we place and endure on human futurity. Living with felt participation in a power that unifies and transforms the world, Universalizers are often experienced as subversive of the structures (including religious structures) by which we sustain our individual and corporate survival, security and significance….Their community is universal in extent. Particularities are cherished because they are vessels of the universal, and thereby valuable apart from any utilitarian considerations. Life is both loved and held to loosely. Such persons are ready for fellowship with persons at any of the other stages and from any other faith tradition…. (1981: 200-201)

Seventh, in the field of education this means molding our methods and pedagogical approaches to conform with *the model of organic learning and doing* that forms both the means and ends of a genuine peace paradigm. Betty Reardon, in the above named essay, is very good concerning this. She writes that "integration of diversity in a mutually enhancing relationship is a fundamental process for maintaining life and for achieving peace" (1988: 23). Education must help students see things holistically, integrating their imaginations and self-realizations in an ever-growing process of self-transformation which is simultaneously a contribution to world-transformation. Education is (and should be) about life itself, learning to love, affirm, and nurture life, which is the opposite of violence and war.

In a workshop that Reardon gave at Radford University in February of 1999, she summarized peace education in terms of what she called the "four 'I's": inquiry, interpretation, integration, and imagination. These correspond fairly well to the process described here in terms of eight aspects of peace education. *Inquiry* requires that we look at the facts and the assumptions by which they are selected and interpreted. We learn in this way to *interpret* the paradigm assumptions of ourselves, our society, and world society. Critical evaluation of these paradigms forms an essential part of this interpretive process.

Soon we begin to *integrate* our learning and our critical insights into our lives and thought. We learn to become the change we want to see in the world. This requires not only assimilation of inquiry and interpretation with the process of integration but the activation of *imagination*. Imagination is a very much neglected aspect of much educational practice. Yet it is the key to becoming a transforming force through one's own life and a key to actualizing a peace paradigm for humanity and future generations. We must be able to deeply imagine alternatives and the possibilities for their actualization. It may be that those who claim to be "realists" asserting that there are no viable alternatives to a world of power politics and war are victims of a lack of imagination.

Therefore, let me identify *activating the imagination* as the *eighth,* and final aspect of peace education. Real peace thinking and real peace teaching cultivate the imagination (just as the arts and the humanities have traditionally cultivated the imagination). Peace education assumes we want to leave a better world for our children, and this requires that we are able to seriously imagine alternatives. Can we challenge our students to be lifelong learners who embody the capacity for critical thought, values, and the vision to become active global citizens within a democracy and a world leading toward a better future for humankind? It is not enough to be good citizens of some locality. Both our global crises, and global paradigm-shift to holism, demand that we become global citizens, identifying imaginatively, emotionally, and intellectually with all humanity.

Good teaching inspires the imagination (just as it cultivates careful questioning and critical thinking) as showing the possibility of other states of reality. An inspired imagination activates transformative citizenship and prepares students to contribute creatively throughout their lifetimes to their society and the world. It allows us to identify compassionately with others, and gives us genuine insight into the diversity and dignity of the many cultural worlds thriving around our planet. An inspired imagination enables us to construct real alternatives to the nightmare of war and suffering that has hitherto characterized human history. It also contributes to the necessary paradigm-shift from a worldwide war-system to a world peace-system, the essential parameters of which are the dynamic interrelation of unity and diversity. Activating this imaginative capacity lives at the very heart and soul of peace education.

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