

Education Letter

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Peace Education

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Rosa Bruno-Jofré, *Queen's University*

Pace education is not a new theme in education. It may be less controversial today than it was during the Cold War, when peace education was often characterized as detrimental to western security and as favoring Moscow's political interest. The emphasis was on disarmament and the implications for peace education. There are both a substantial body of scholarship and an organizational history for peace education; the latter involves churches, teachers' organizations, non-governmental organizations, unions, political parties, and women's organizations.

Approaches and the philosophical perspectives have changed over time. In the sixties, seventies and eighties, the emphasis was on nuclear issues, tolerance, development education, a critique of patriarchy, and citizens' empowerment to have a say in the issues of the time. Peace education has always been related to a form of civic education in one way or another, and was often theorized and practiced through critical pedagogy. The discourses of peace education in the schools contained complex contradictions as they continue to do today. The message of peace, and its cultivation as a civic virtue, have coexisted with the notion of war heroes, competitive approaches, an ethos of aggressive individualism and consumerism, mixed political messages and political sentiments which

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My Planet in the Throes of Dying,
Heather O'Reilly, Artist

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Resources of Interest

<http://www.upeace.org>

University for Peace, Costa Rica

<http://www.peaceresearch.ca>

Peace Research Journal

“Although there are outstanding examples of peace education programs, difficult political and social issues are seldom addressed, leaving little room to discuss ethical dilemmas of war, torture, and the complex issues of security. Peace education is not a concept devoid of practical import and it is closely linked to citizenship education.”

REFERENCES

1 . Rebecca Priegert Coulter, Invited introduction. “Why We Teach History: a contesting View,” Encounters/Encuentros/Rencontres on Education 3 (2003): 1.

2 . Ibid.

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are not justified on moral or even historical political grounds.

Contemporary discourses on peace education have been enriched by focusing on the environment, the earth and nature. There has also been a movement towards more cosmopolitan educational perspectives and elaborated views on values and virtues informing citizenship in a discourse where communitarian critics exchange views with more liberally-inclined philosophers. As well, the current discourses entail placing whiteness at the centre of anti-racism, integrating gender issues, rethinking diversity, and developing an ethical self. Furthermore, the acknowledgement of Aboriginal differentiated rights and a concern with human rights and social justice have become prominent. However, all of these issues are not always integrated.

Although there are outstanding examples of peace education programs, difficult political and social issues are seldom addressed, leaving little room to discuss ethical dilemmas of war, torture, and the complex issues of security; peace education is not a concept devoid of practical import and it is closely linked to citizenship education.

An interesting example available to teachers was the creation in 2003 of the network “Historians against the War” initiated at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association. Aware of tainted information, the network aimed to provide “accurate scholarly rebuttals to the mendacious historical distortions of the Bush administration” and to create “a virtual speakers bureau.”¹ As Rebecca Coulter pointed out, the historian’s task here is to help fellow citizens assess the historical claims made by politicians, journalists, and social scientists as well as to promote a critically-conscious understanding of our shared history in the world. She also saw the pedagogical possibilities provided by this initiative.²

In spite of successes and moving experiences like the one involving schools in Sierra Leone described in this *Letter*, there are still issues that need to be addressed or examined further. The concept of peace education is broad, and mostly untheorized; it is often used in an ahistorical sense, without roots in concrete social and political reality, particularly when dealing with political issues. The approaches tend, by and large, not to be grounded in a model of the public that contemplates a deliberative process that could lead beyond a debate to reciprocal understanding. Pedagogically, this process of reciprocal understanding needs to integrate the notion of difference and plurality. This is not an easy task because the relationship of democracy and difference that attracted the attention of political philosophers has not been translated into pedagogical proposals embraced by teachers. The difficulty we as educators face, is not only the plurality of publics in a highly differentiated society, but the need to exercise value judgements in terms of what is desirable or even possible. In other words, we may have to deal with substantive moral disagreements when teaching peace education in a plural context and find ways to point toward a process of resolution. In my experience, different forms of

violence against women sanctioned by some cultures and political regimes constitute a good example. The new life in Canada for some of these women does not lead to a better life. Teaching peace education embraces the personal and the public and its articulation demands critical inquiry, but also a normative approach leading into action in the political arena, or in the quiet frightened life of one of our students. The teaching of peace education in its broad spectrum, the questioning of violence, and the placing of peace in the global and regional context represents a challenge to educators and students as well. It demands a long and difficult journey that we should undertake as a moral imperative to fulfill our human condition.



Sketches courtesy of Jeanette Kim, BEd '09 who obtained them from children in Sierra Leone as examples of their interpretation of peace. The collection was part of her Global Education through International Collaboration course at the Faculty of Education. More details are available at: http://oacsudbury.ca/Files/documents/Peace_Portraits/

Progressive Change in Afghanistan

HON. FLORA MACDONALD, *PC, CC, O.Ont, ONS*

I was first attracted to Afghanistan because of a family connection. My father's eldest brother had left his studies at Dalhousie University to go to Scotland and join the Imperial Black Watch Regiment which was sent to participate in the Boer War in South Africa. Intending to return to his studies at the end of that conflict, my uncle was persuaded to stay with the Regiment and its next posting was the Khyber Pass in India, leading to the gates of Afghanistan. He wrote regularly to his family back in Cape Breton, detailing his keen observations of Afghanistan, its people and their tribal setup. I was fascinated by those letters, and even today they provide me with a relatively modern blueprint of that part of India (now Pakistan) and Afghanistan.

Working with CARE Canada and Future Generations International in a voluntary capacity, I had my first opportunity to visit Afghanistan in the spring of 2002 while the Taliban were still the officially recognized government. Their ouster from their strongholds of Kandahar and Helmand in September of that year by international forces – American, Dutch, and Canadian – made it possible for a number of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) to move into Afghanistan to begin the long effort of helping to reconstruct that devastated country. Future Generations International, which I was chairing at the time, was one of the first NGOs to take on that challenge, and we did so by focusing on establishing a system of local governance. Our chosen site was the seventy-two villages in the Bamyan Valley – the native home of our country director for the region – Abdullah Barat. Abdullah had come to Canada as a refugee, had become a landed immigrant and was in the process of obtaining Canadian citizenship. When I first met him he was in charge of ten pizza parlours in the Ottawa area and doing very well financially, but it didn't take much persuasion to get him to agree to return to the Bamyan Valley and take on a leadership role with the people in that valley. In his first village meeting he sketched out a plan for an election of a local council or shura for the village. The suggestion was accepted willingly and a work plan was quickly drawn up. The work plan was based on three inputs – what the villagers could do for themselves, what outside (international) organizations could do to further the goal of development, and what service the government of Afghanistan could offer. Other nearby villages were intrigued by this new and more co-ordinated method of developing work plans which included obtaining critical water and food supplies, building schools, arranging for the participation of students (including girls) and teachers, establishing a health clinic with periodic visits from medical staff, and later acquiring solar panels to light their small, dark, mud-brick huts. Soon other villages were following the example of the creation of that first shura in the Shahidan Valley of Bamyan Province. Today each of the seventy-two villages in the Shahidan Valley has its own elected Shura. Of striking interest is that just a year ago, Bamyan-town, the capital of the province, elected its Shura and for the

Resources of Interest

Peace Education

by Ian Harris
(Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co.,
1988), Classroom Connections
www.classroomconnections.ca

http://care.ca/main/index.php?en&_home

CARE is a global force dedicated to defending dignity and fighting poverty by empowering the world's most vulnerable and greatest resource for change : women and children.

first time in the history of Afghanistan, it elected a woman as its leader. As well, the Governor of Bamyan Province is the only female governor in the thirty-four provinces of Afghanistan. With that kind of leadership there has been a notable increase in the attention paid to health programs for women and girls.

When I return to Afghanistan in May of this year, it will be my eleventh trip to that country. This range of visits has given me the opportunity to size up the progress that is being made, at least in this one province, Bamyan. It now stands as a model for other areas.

It also allows me to utilize my ability to photograph some of the beauty of Afghanistan beyond that of the four relatively known cities – Kabul, Kandahar, Herat and Mazar-e Sharif – which are connected by a ring road. Within the boundaries of that ring road, in central rural Afghanistan, sixty percent (60%) of the population of Afghanistan live in their traditional villages. Long-neglected, they are now engaged in work plans which open to them new structures for their societies, new outlets for their imagination and legendary qualities of determination and hard work. They can do much for themselves – provided they are guaranteed security and stability



Photo: Flora MacDonald

“Other nearby villages were intrigued by this new and more co-ordinated method of developing work plans which included obtaining critical water and food supplies, building schools, arranging for the participation of students (including girls) and teachers, establishing a health clinic with periodic visits from medical staff, and later acquiring solar panels to light their small, dark, mud-brick huts.”

Peace Lessons from the Children of Sierra Leone

CAROLYN VAN GURP, *Teaching Excellence Fellow, Faculty of Education, Queen's University*

"It is hard to believe how quickly this year has passed. I've shared your letter with my students and shown them the photos of the Mabarr school kids reading their letters. They were so excited to see a small part of themselves integrated with your students. We have put together our last letter to this group of students and I know each of my students will never forget this experience. I also want to thank you for this opportunity. I've enjoyed it immensely and have learned as much as my students." - Twinning Program teacher Angela Egyed, St. Gregory's School, Carleton Place, Ontario.

What do children in Sierra Leone, designated the "least-developed country" in the world and recovering from a horrendous war fought largely by conscripted child combatants, have to teach Canadian children about peace? Plenty, according to the teachers and students who have been participating in a peace education school twinning project over the past two years.

This project emerged from initial contact between students in Canada and students in five primary schools in rural Sierra Leone. This is where Carolyn van Gulp, Peaceful Schools International volunteer teacher and Queen's University Faculty of Education Teaching Excellence Fellow, is based. The twinning project connects students and teachers in twelve, rural Sierra Leonean communities with North American schools, enabling each group to discover commonalities and means of addressing local and global issues.

We loved writing and learning about your culture. In our classroom we have talked all year and done activities with peace. We loved all of your ideas and we think because of you we know what peace is, what it looks like, and how it feels!! Thank you for making us more empathetic and teaching us!

Paz, your friends and Westwood Intermediate (writing to Class Four at Moria School, Sierra Leone)



Refurbishing Maso School - photo by Carolyn Van Gulp



Mathombo - photo by Carolyn Van Gorp

The time has long passed, if ever it existed, when in order to help students understand their world and develop skills needed to address global issues, teachers and schools could simply rely on receiving and teaching a prescribed curriculum developed at a place and time removed from local experience or students' interests. Given the current fragile state of our world, teachers and school communities need to work together to find ways to help students learn about our world, their place in it, and how they can contribute to a just, sustainable future. "School Twinning for a Small Planet" is a project that aims to assist schools to do just that.

This project enables students to discover their commonalities, despite vastly differing contexts. It also encourages students to investigate and act on age-appropriate issues of peace and sustainability.

The idea for this project came from initial connections made between Peaceful Schools International member schools in Canada and schools in Sierra Leone that were interested in learning from and supporting each other through twinning. After a year of communication between several schools, a package of eight "investigation topics" for use by all schools involved in partnering or twinning was compiled and distributed with the support of the Queen's University Faculty of Education Teaching Excellence Fellowship Program. The topics

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We believe that the Canadian students are very friendly. They like Africa and we too like them. By sitting and sharing ideas, we gain a lot from they and they gain from us.

Mapaki Junior Secondary
Student Alpha Conteh
(Sierra Leone)

Resources of Interest

peacefulschoolsinternational.org

A network of dedicated, locally-based Regional Coordinators provides support to schools that have declared a commitment to creating and maintaining a culture of peace.

<http://cvangurp2.blogspot.com/>

Centre for Development and Peace
Education and Peaceful Schools
International volunteer

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selected came primarily from questions raised by students in the initial phase of the project.

The eight investigation topics are designed to enable students in twinning or partner schools to get to know each other, understand issues that affect us all, and take action on these issues. The topics are of wide interest to students; are applicable and adaptable to students of all ages; address key current issues facing communities world-wide; and relate to learning outcomes or objectives in multiple subject areas. Investigation topics can be used singly or sequentially. Ideally, but not necessarily, students in both partner schools will engage in the same activities and share results.

Teachers involved in this program are encouraged to contribute to its continued evolution through sharing comments, experiences, suggestions and resources to help refine, develop, and improve it. Over the next few months, teachers in North America and in Sierra Leone will have the opportunity to meet together (virtually via the Internet) through participation in a design experiment research project organized by a bi-national peace education research team.

Teachers or schools interested in learning more about or getting involved in this project should contact Peaceful Schools International at info@peacefulschoolsinternational.org.

Our world and the future of our youth are at stake. Through working together for peace in our hearts, homes, schools, communities, and world, we can contribute to a brighter future for our students and world.



Makonkorie Class Four - photo by Carolyn Van Gurp



... and get ready to perform - photo by Carolyn Van Gorp

"This project has been such a wonderful experience. The first day I went into my classroom in Peel, I was excited to see how excited they were. I found that the children were captivated from the start and started asking me questions that really put me on the spot! Questions that really showed me that they were interested. Once I started to show them samples of artwork I found that seeing the faces behind the drawings really impacted them. They were even more interested and had even more questions. It was from those first drawings that the children were able to see that peace means different things to different people." - Queen's University teacher candidate Jeanette Kim

It's very good to exchange ideas about how the students live in Canada and how we live in Sierra Leone. Our country is just recovering from war so when we are communicating with children in Canada we learn a lot from them by sharing experience. They ask us how we make peace. Here when anyone has problems they go to the chief to solve problems. But as for the Canadian people, I've heard that they don't have a chief.

So whenever you do wrong to your companion, the two will have conflict that will lead to serious problem. It's very important to communicate and we learn a lot from them.

Mapaki Junior Secondary
Student Alpha Conteh Abdul
Karim Turay (Sierra Leone)

Peace Café: A Project in Peace Education and the Community Spirit

ROBERT GERALD PORTER, *Ontario Coordinator, Canadian Centres for Teaching Peace, Hamilton, ON*

Resource of Interest

To learn more about Peace Cafés, CCTP, and the annual Conferences on Peace Education in Canada please visit <http://www.peacecafe.ca/>

Education is more than teaching; it is but one aspect, a part often mistaken as the whole. If one were to reduce this word *education* down to its ultimate root, a curious word emerges: *educe*, meaning “to draw out from.” I appreciate this word when discussing the meaning of *peace education*; it becomes an intense spiritual and visual metaphor. Peace education is a process to draw out peace – from others to ourselves, and from ourselves to others.

For over two years now, my work with Canadian Centres for Teaching Peace (CCTP) has been focused on the development of *Peace Cafés* – public community spaces working towards a culture of peace and nonviolence within the communities they are contained within. Numerous discussions at CCTP’s annual peace education conferences noted the challenges present in evolving school curricula. These discussions led to new ideas for multi-faceted approaches to peace education – including the thought of creating an Institute for Peace Education – which, after a large amount of creative discussion and exploration, metamorphosed into the more decentralized and community-based Peace Café concept.

It is not apparent to everyone at first how cafés can contribute to the health and education of a community and that is an aspect of what is quite exciting about Peace Cafés as a concept. Once one explores how peace education functions in a community context, places such as Peace Cafés are arguably akin to vital organs within the community body, much like a school, library, government, or emergency services.

The quick description I use for a Peace Café is that which has some or all of the following: a space for dialogue, fair trade/local/ethical food and drink, public events, a library of peace, leadership, and social justice resources, an available array of workshops and courses in group and personal development, and available consultants (Peace Café guides) to assist groups and individuals.

So where does the *peace* of Peace Café come from? I often come to speak of peace as a process, mirroring Gandhi’s notion that peace is the journey following a rainbow, not a (utopian) pot of gold. If one applies this distinction as an axiom in a formal education system, peace is the coursework, not the exam; it is the writing, not the essay; and it is drawn from the student in learning, not granted by the instructor in evaluating.

This means of course, that peace education (as with any worthy education) does not and cannot cease at graduation. It must concern itself with a whole life journey, a continuous process that is frequently reflective, engaging with others’ experiences, and helping to draw out – *educe* – peace from communities.

Communities exist to share something common with one another: physical proximity, beliefs, heritage, interests, and many other identifiers. They have a way of being capable



Students' Art Gallery at Hotel Dieu Hospital, Kingston, ON

of so much more than the mere sum of all individuals contained within, often exponentially; this is ostensibly why human beings continually see value in creating them. Communities have their own spirit, a life of their own, they live and die by their (in)ability to maintain a sense of sharing, solidarity, and security.

Educing peace from that community spirit requires an approach not unlike what peace education is to the individual – it requires continuous, active stimulus, and recognition that the mere process is as vital as breathing is to our bodies. With peace being a process and not an end goal, educating peace is something that should be infinitely perpetual. For this, much like a living being, it requires physical space and an ability to acquire and accumulate knowledge and resources. It demands something like a Peace Café.

Why a café, though? Public community space is seemingly at a premium in Canada today. In the last one hundred years, our societies have increasingly been moving indoors, into private (and corporate) spaces, and away from communal public spaces. The history of the café in Western society has gone through a particular process: the community discussions once held “around the fire” came indoors to be around tables in public houses and cafés, the former transitioning into the paradoxically *privately* owned “pubs” and the latter becoming one of the last refuges for public informal gathering and discussion.

It is true that few cafés can be truly identified as *public*, as most are businesses based on monetary profit first and foremost. One would think this would mean we’re seeing the end of truly public spaces for informal gathering and interaction; however, there is something curiously compatible between the business model of a café and the need for public spaces in communities.

The café relies primarily on a customer who usually meets others within the café space, and due to this generally free and open space, will pay for a pleasant drink, and perhaps a snack or small meal. It is my own pet theory that the rise of popularity of cafés in recent years despite, their oft-criticized premium prices, is due to an overwhelming need for individuals in communities to have public conversation space. In short, one could postulate that a plurality of consumers do not mind paying more of their money, if they can also get a comfortable place to sit, and talk. Building peace and community might come about without anyone necessarily realizing it. Cafés can represent an elegant symbiosis between public interest and business, fitting comfortably into the mandate of peace education.

The Peace Café project is developing and active in many communities in Canada and is intended in many ways to be an informal peace school project, a supplement and complement to formal school systems. As we *educate* peace from our communities, that peace can only spread further into our institutions. For schools, this incursion of peace can translate to increasing public support for curricula changes that include peace education as an essential component; for our civilization, this can only mean a transition to sustainable cultures of peace.

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Walking the Talk of Peace Education

REBECCA STROUD STASEL, *Bayridge Secondary School, Kingston, ON*

Mohandas Gandhi led the Indian people from British colonial rule using a model of passive non-resistance. Today, Gandhi continues to inspire many with his call for peace. 'Be the change you wish to see', 'if we are to achieve real peace in this world, we must begin with the children' and 'an eye for an eye leaves the whole world blind' are three of Gandhi's aphorisms. There is no doubt in my mind that if people were to heed the ideas behind these thoughts of Gandhi, making peace would follow. The problem is that we are not all the same nor do we act alike. Life's adversity affects people differently. Gandhi's unfortunate death illustrates this well; he was assassinated by one of his followers.

As educators we grapple with many social issues not the least of which is *how to teach for peace*? What can the school do to support peace education? I would like to suggest four components of peace education that might serve to guide us. The first is to teach from a perspective of hope. The second is to approach peace from a grassroots level. The third is to model what we teach by living it in and out of the classroom. The fourth is to look inward at our own assumptions about conflict. Not coincidentally, these components of peace education reflect the essence of Gandhi's principles quoted above.

First: Hope. 'An eye for an eye' *does* make the world blind, because dealing with injustice is more complex than that. In teaching for peace, we must position ourselves from a perspective of hope and not fear or a desire for revenge. Hope allows healing; revenge does not. When we *believe* that something is possible, it improves our chances of success. As a teacher, I have great reason to hope: students these days have more awareness about racial issues and are more environmentally conscious. They also seem to be less homophobic. Are we *there* yet? Absolutely not, but when I see students taking initiatives to address problems of marginalization, I believe that some progress has been made. We are *not* all the same, but this is no reason to be fearful. We can learn from one another if we listen. When I look at the Ministry guidelines, I see little emphasis on listening skills; nevertheless they are implied. The more we engage in dialogue, from local levels to global levels,

Resources of Interest

Canadian Centers for Teaching Peace. (1998). UNESCO Culture of Peace Program [Online]. Available: <http://www.peace.ca/unesco.htm>

S.H. Toh (1997). Education for peace: Towards a millennium of well-being [Online]. Available: <http://www.peace.ca/educationforpeace.htm> (18 pages)



the more we are able to approximate understanding, appreciation, compassion, tolerance and hope. All of these words are loaded and come with their own issues. In spite of this, we owe it to ourselves and to the youth to open dialogues with the hope that these will lead in the right direction when it comes to peace.

Second: Grassroots Action. Social justice activism must be carried out on many levels. The first step is to practice it locally at the grassroots level. This is partly because the ripple effect should not be underestimated. Small changes can lead to great ones. However, my main concern with the large-scale projects is that the ethos changes as projects get bigger. We must be aware of the risks in constructing an objectified *other* when jumping on the bandwagon of large projects. If we assume an *Us/saviour - Them/victim* perspective, we do not teach peace, but rather support hierarchic positions that negate peace. In the end, it is not our job to think for, speak for or act for groups of people for whom we feel need our help. There are ways to help, but the ways should be determined by sovereign recipients who are subjects in their process. Grassroots level activism works well this way, because agendas are set by the stakeholders and not by those offering help.

‘We must begin with the children’, because they are the future. They also are impressionable; children who are brought up to discriminate will solidify this learning throughout adulthood. Grassroots activism works well in classrooms and school clubs because students often have great passion for social justice as well as open minds, and can make meaningful connections with people and create reciprocal relationships based on trust, hope and a mutual interest in understanding one another. Finally, teachers who can tap into their students’ wealth of wisdom, hopes, and world view know that they are experts at creative problem solving although they may not be aware of this.

Third: Modelling. Educators who teach for peace must model desired behaviours. We must ‘be the change we want to see’. If all we do is talk about it then our words are empty. ‘Being the change’ is a tall order. If we want a cleaner environment, for example, we must carry over from our own lives to our classrooms, practices that model greener choices. If we want to see an end to wars, we model peacefulness with our spouses, our students, our colleagues and our neighbours. We speak out against behaviour that promotes fighting, but we must support this stance by calling for greater corporate and public policy transparency.

Finally: Looking Inward. We need to look inward to raise our awareness about our personal assumptions about privilege, oppression and of resistance so that we may model the behaviour that we actually believe in. This is what *being* the change we wish to see entails. As teachers, we have an incredible privilege and access to young minds. We should not use this influence in a manipulative way, but there is nothing wrong with behaving in a manner that reflects our beliefs. This is very different from imposing our beliefs upon others. Finally, we should expect the hard questions rather than avoiding them. When someone challenges us, we could avoid the conflict, we could rationalize, or we could embrace this as a moment for dialogue. It is not important that we always get our point across; we must also listen. If we are not open-minded to learning from our students, then our careers are over.

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Students' Art Gallery at Hotel Dieu Hospital, Kingston, ON

Book Review:

Climate Wars

Gwynne Dyer

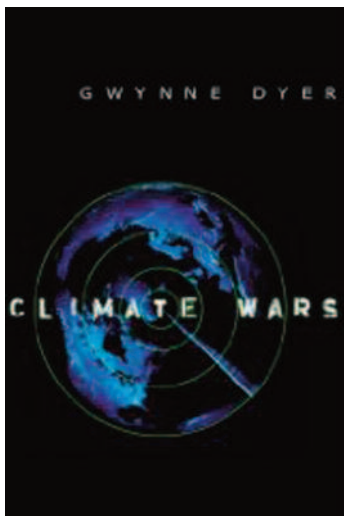
Toronto: Random House of Canada, 2008.

IZABELLA SWAREN, *first year humanities student, McMaster University, Hamilton, ON*
& KARNE KOZOLANKA, *LaSalle Secondary School, Kingston, ON*

It was refreshing to read a book that was simple yet effective. Dyer opens with a scenario set in the year 2045. From the very first sentence it is both shocking and thought provoking: "Since the final collapse of the European Union in 2036..." Dyer captured our attention and held it – giving us much to ponder. His use of the third person, as if he were in the room having a conversation with the reader, makes his arguments personally appealing. The book is pessimistic but at the same time hopeful. Just as you feel like moving to Mars he lifts you up and reminds you that there is something that can be done. Written with a clear voice and fine edge, *Climate Wars* both informs and instructs as Dyer makes a compelling argument for acting swiftly.

As populations expand and the watering hole gets smaller, societies under pressure for feeding and taking care of themselves start eyeing their neighbours. According to Dyer, "the carrying capacity of existing food production technologies has been reached and is diminishing as the availability and effectiveness of fossil fuel-based technologies is reduced" (p.56). Dyer organizes the book following four main argumentative lines that can be summarized as follows: climate change is coming a whole lot faster than we thought it was; changing light bulbs won't do it - decarbonization will; it is unrealistic to believe that we'll make the deadlines; and finally, global cooperation will be sabotaged as a result. The argument sounds like an eviction notice for human habitation. Dyer examines possible future geo-political scenarios taking into account the bio-fuels scam, the possibilities of geo-engineering, carbon capture sequester mythologies, and bio-mass and other alternative energy production realities.

Dyer has consulted broadly with established authoritative voices such as British geophysicist James Lovelock and the founder of the Global Commons Institute, Aubrey Meyer whose research and writing form major backdrops to the eco-justice theme that emerges from Dyer's analysis. Meyer calls his formula for addressing climate change the "fundamental principle of Contraction and Convergence" (p. 175). In simple terms, the formula counts everyone as equals when it comes to total emissions under the overall limits that could save us. Meyer points out that the day is over of seeking Kyoto-styled proportional cuts to greenhouse gas emissions that privilege developed over developing economies. Instead what are needed are deals based first on contraction of total carbon emissions and then convergence of per capita emissions. It works something like this: total allowable emissions are divided up worldwide based on population. All countries agree and work towards a due date. Poor countries grow while developed countries contract by using less energy. Because developing countries use less they have emission credits they can sell to developed countries. Poor



countries get richer and in time, countries converge at sustainable levels. This straightforward solution would halt any more damage than we have already caused by living beyond our means. We are told however, that “the climate change nut is a hard one to crack” principally because the benefits of doing so are for the most part located elsewhere. David Keith of the University of Calgary, cited by Dyer, explains that we have two choices: mitigation or adaptation. Mitigation, or overall carbon reduction is expensive, generated over the long-term, and for the most part does not occur locally. Adaptation on the other hand refers to less-than-effective, short-term, local solutions such as recycling and the like. The problem of course is that there is more incentive to spend political capital where the effects are more visible, and that tends to be local and short-term. To do other otherwise requires political courage.

We approached this review having as background an appreciation of George Monbiot (2006) and Ursula Franklin (1996, 2006) both of whom have something to say about peace, security and climate change issues. Where Monbiot addresses the science of climate change and ends with a number of strategic solutions, Franklin’s (1996) critique is from a historical peace perspective suggesting that we are in the midst of a “market-driven war on the common good” (p. 15). *Climate Wars* is in line with Monbiot’s and Franklin’s work. It directly addresses the strategic and political consequences of climate change which are rooted in an unjust ordering of the economic, human and political components that make peace possible.

Dyer speculates and advances possibilities that resonate with the attack on the common good arguments advanced by Monbiot and Franklin. From the perspective of a secondary school teacher, there appears to be little political will or courageous leadership encouraging mitigating approaches to climate change. There are of course, institutionalized examples of adaptation. The most visible in Ontario schools is the Eco-Schools Initiative which principally addresses waste management and conservation issues. But, according to Dyer’s authoritative informants, our adaptive capacity has been exceeded.

So, here we are in places where the urgency is barely recognised. We appear to be trapped in a world view that reflects a post-war industrial attitude rather than the era of climate change we find ourselves in. Given the grim details expressed in the book we ask ourselves the following questions: How might citizens and teachers in schools act? Might direct carbon reduction involve a critique and analysis of our personal choices when it comes to the ordering of economic, human and political components that make the presence of social justice and peace possible? How often for example, should we invoke the term “common good” in our classrooms?

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Queen's Education Letter

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The Faculty of Education, Queen's University, Canadian Commission for UNESCO, St. Lawrence College, and the City of Kingston are sponsoring the "Canadian Gifts for a Culture of Peace" conference, June 18-19, 2009 in Kingston, Ontario. Guest speaker John E. Trent will give the keynote lecture entitled "Reforming the UN as a Path to Peace" in the Memorial Room, Kingston City Hall at 7 pm on June 18. Also featured will be *Inclinations*, composed by Jordan Pal of the National Arts Centre's Young Composers Programme, and performed by a string ensemble. On June 19 at the Faculty of Education, Duncan McArthur Hall, a full day of presentations of "Gifts for a Culture of Peace" will take place. Full details are available at:

<http://educ.queensu.ca/project/presents2009/home.html>



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