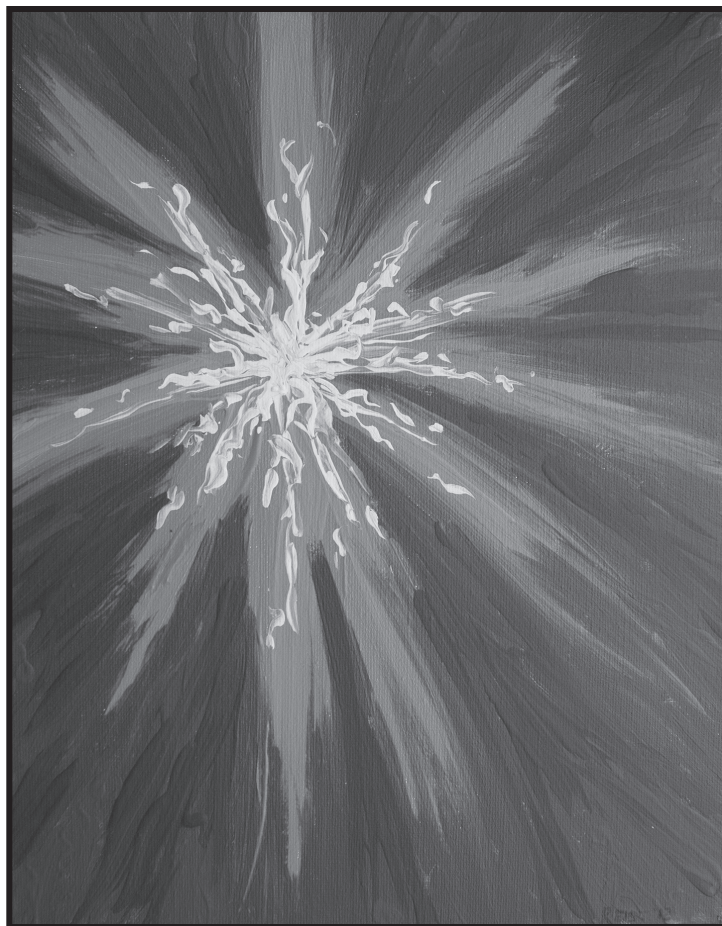




# ***The Conrad Grebel Review***

Volume 32, Number 2, Spring 2014



# ***The Conrad Grebel Review***

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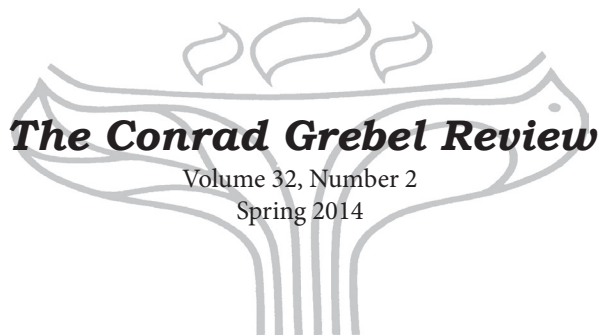
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Foreword	115
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#### TEACHING PEACE STUDIES

Guest Editors: Reina Neufeldt and Neil Funk-Unrau

Teaching Peace Studies: An Introduction <i>Reina Neufeldt and Neil Funk-Unrau</i>	116
Teaching Peace Studies from a Mennonite Perspective: Quiet in the Land Revisited <i>Randy Janzen</i>	120
Leveraging Diversity: Teaching Peace in the Public University <i>Edmund Pries</i>	132
Teaching and Learning—Violence and Healing <i>Regina Shands Stoltzfus</i>	152
Teaching Peace as if it is Everyone's Business <i>Lowell Ewert</i>	163
Towards a Pedagogy of Radical Love <i>Karen Ridd</i>	177

## Book Reviews

- James K.A. Smith. *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*. 192  
Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013. Reviewed by Irma Fast Dueck
- Gordon Mark Zerbe. *Citizenship: Paul on Peace and Politics*. 194  
Winnipeg, MB: CMU Press, 2012. Reviewed by Reta Halteman Finger
- Simon Victor Goncharenko. *Wounds That Heal: The Importance of Church Discipline within Balthasar Hubmaier's Theology*. 196  
Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012. Reviewed by Tim Foley
- Daniel S. Schipani, ed. *Multifaith Views in Spiritual Care*. 198  
Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2013. Reviewed by Doug Koop
- John Howard Yoder. *Theology of Mission: A Believers Church Perspective*. 200  
Edited by Gayle Gerber Koontz and Andy Alexis-Baker.  
Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014. Reviewed by Art McPhee
- Stanley Hauerwas. *Approaching the End: Eschatological Reflections on Church, Politics and Life*. 202  
Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013.  
Reviewed by Brandon L. Morgan
- Sian and Stuart Murray Williams. *The Power of All: Building a Multivoiced Church*. 204  
Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2012.  
Reviewed by Joni S. Sancken
- Willard M. Swartley. *Health, Healing and the Church's Mission: Biblical Perspectives and Moral Priorities*. 206  
Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012. Reviewed by Lawrence M. Yoder
- Wes Bergen. *You Are Not Going to Heaven (and why it doesn't matter)*. 208  
Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013. Reviewed by Timothy J. Geddert
- Jennifer Graber. *The Furnace of Affliction: Prisons & Religion in Antebellum America*. 210  
Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. Reviewed by James S. Logan

Ted Grimsrud. *Instead of Atonement: The Bible's Salvation Story and Our Hope for Wholeness*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013. 213  
Reviewed by Darrin W. Snyder Belousek

Mark Thiessen Nation, Anthony G. Siegrist, Daniel P. Umbrell. 215  
*Bonhoeffer the Assassin? Challenging the Myth, Recovering His Call to Peacemaking*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.  
Reviewed by Robert Dean

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## Foreword

We are pleased to present this special issue on Teaching Peace Studies, the latest in a series focusing on practical matters and classroom strategies, and the many challenges and opportunities inherent in college and university level education. We are delighted to publish these thought-provoking essays and reflections, and we heartily thank guest editors Reina Neufeldt and Neil Funk-Unrau and everyone who made a contribution. Previous issues in the series considered Teaching the Bible (Spring 2010) and Teaching History (Fall 2012), and future issues may explore such topics as the teaching of ethics.

The overall aim is to provide a stimulating cross-section of views, engender lively conversation, suggest directions for the future, and offer helpful guidance for practitioners. In this present issue, we also offer a wide range of book reviews, a call for proposals, and several calls for papers.

Jeremy M. Bergen, Editor

Stephen A. Jones, Managing Editor

Cover art by Rachel Reist, a recent graduate of the Master of Peace and Conflict Studies Program (MPACS) at Conrad Grebel University College. The original painting, says the artist, "was inspired by the MPACS program and my experience in the first two semesters. It is meant to represent the beauty of peace-work, the passion of peacemakers, and our unfailing desire to bring peace to the world even in the face of such darkness."

## **Teaching Peace Studies: An Introduction**

*Reina Neufeldt and Neil Funk-Unrau*

In the Spring of 2010, *The Conrad Grebel Review* published a special issue on “Teaching the Bible” containing a number of academic essays and personal reflections on this theme by Anabaptist or Mennonite educators. A follow-up issue, on “Teaching History” (Fall 2012), provided another opportunity to explore the distinctly Anabaptist/Mennonite intellectual and personal engagement with the academic pedagogical vocation. As guest editors of this issue of *CGR*, we are pleased to continue this occasional series by turning our attention to the theme of teaching peace (and conflict resolution) studies, another topic central to Anabaptist identity and witness to the world.

Once again, contributors were invited to reflect on specific pedagogical challenges and opportunities, on pedagogical resources or tools helpful in the classroom and, most significantly, on the impact of Anabaptist/Mennonite identities and agendas on pedagogical content and style. The end result is an issue enriched by a variety of voices and perspectives on the deeply challenging yet very rewarding vocation of translating to our students, our constituencies, and the wider community something so central to our own faith and ethics.

Each of the articles in this collection represents a distinctive voice and location within the wider framework of Anabaptist/Mennonite or secular higher education. The authors are either Anabaptist/Mennonite themselves or they teach at an Anabaptist/Mennonite institution. Each article raises its own unique questions and perspectives, but the voices together suggest an underlying harmony as well—different perspectives on some common threads woven into their approaches to peace and conflict resolution pedagogy. There are also a few places where the authors seem to agree, although the language they use suggests subtle but important differences, particularly around issues of power. A few of the underlying threads are briefly pulled to the surface here.

### **Instructor Identities and Vulnerabilities**

For each author, authentic and effective teaching begins with knowing and sharing oneself. Knowing oneself, however, is a process, and one

*The Conrad Grebel Review* 32, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 116-119.

that has unfolded over time for a number of contributors. Randy Janzen demonstrates this clearly in reflecting on his identities as a Mennonite, a Christian, and a settler, all of which shape his interaction with classes of students for whom some of these identities may seem very alien. Edmund Pries, another Mennonite teaching in a secular setting, articulates the matter of acknowledging instructor bias while attempting to teach with integrity in a diverse context. For Lowell Ewert, a background in law and human rights integrated with his Mennonite background molds the content and style of his teaching practice. Regina Shands Stoltzfus reflects on how her formation as a peace studies educator was grounded in Anabaptist theology in a black church context.

Teaching authentically from one's own position not only leads to the potential for accusations of bias, which Pries sets forth, it also leads to a deep level of vulnerability and risk-taking, as instructors must also acknowledge their positions within unequal social power relations. For Shands Stoltzfus, this is bound up in understanding what it means to be an African-American woman teaching a course on personal violence and healing to predominantly white Mennonite college students. Janzen recognizes that his Mennonite identity, with its self-perception of a history of relatively peaceful engagement with the wider Canadian society, is also inextricably bound up with a settler identity and the settler legacy of dispossession of indigenous lands and resources. Karen Ridd too recognizes the fear of vulnerability, and draws on Parker Palmer's work on confronting this fear.

Together, these authors put before us the challenge of authentically teaching peace and justice while at the same time recognizing one's own entanglements in the injustices of society, whether as victim or perpetrator, settler or colonized, possessed or dispossessed. For Ridd, the answer lies in accepting a call to love ourselves even as we love our discipline, and to love our students—something she describes as the hardest requirement of the teaching vocation.

### **Classroom as Location of Safety and Disruption**

Pries refers to the classroom as both a holy sanctuary and a crucible—as a sacred space which provides a safe haven for students and is simultaneously a site for creating cognitive disequilibrium. Whether stated in terms of

facilitating radical self-care in the midst of studying violence (Shands Stoltzfus) or loving the students while attempting to understand a world that seems to be falling apart (Ridd), the authors reflect in various voices on this journey of creating both safety and disruption.

Each author shares significant examples of specific classroom exercises that can facilitate this journey. Ewert introduces the exercise of creating a pictorial map of the course as a whole as a way to enable students to visualize their journey together through it. Shands Stoltzfus describes several community-care and self-care exercises designed to help students work through the necessarily deeply stressful content of a specific course. Pries uses questions to probe dominant assumptions. The authors often draw out details of their pedagogical approaches in order to demonstrate what occurs in the classroom and how their pedagogy is manifest in their choices and exercises.

### **Pedagogical Vocation as Transformation and Radical Love**

All the contributors demonstrate distinctive ways of articulating what they do and why they do it. Ewert provides several practical examples of presenting the broad architecture of peace to make it relevant and meaningful for students from a wide range of disciplines. For Pries, the primary goal of all teaching is student transformation, but he questions what this means in a peace studies context. Janzen begins with the sharing of identities and personal stories as the starting point of a de-colonized educational journey. For Shands Stoltzfus, the identities and stories brought into the classroom and processed together are necessary to create a new path, a new way of being in the world. Ridd summarizes the pedagogical vocation as an exercise of radical love—integrating love of student, love of material, and love of self.

### **Emergent Possibilities**

A fourth thread, intriguing by its near absence, is the limited consideration of Anabaptist/Mennonite religious beliefs. The contents of faith are not explored explicitly in most of the contributions to this issue. This is the case even though at least two of the contributors have worked in ministerial positions. There are general comments that speak of one's faith in terms of personal background or of a history of a people suffering for faith, but there



are no scriptural references here. We can speculate on why this is. It may be related to dominant ideas of what writing on peace studies means formally for an academic journal; it may relate to where these peace pedagogues are located and the specific content of their courses (Ewert's analysis suggests this might be the case); or, it might suggest a relatively unquestioned alignment of the values in the field of peace studies with Anabaptist/Mennonite values. Fruitful questions we might pursue to further understand this dynamic include these: To what degree do Anabaptist/Mennonites who teach peace studies think the values of justice and peace explored in course texts reflect or match theological content? What are the points of friction for Anabaptist/Mennonites in the discipline of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution?

Our contributors speak of many roles: mentor, guide, facilitator, destabilizer, challenger, parental-type advisor, unconditional supporter, and evaluator. Acting as an evaluator is in some tension with other roles, as Ewert and Shands Stoltzfus recognize, and this suggests a topic that could be meaningfully explored in further depth.

Through these articles we see that teaching peace studies, whether one is working in an Anabaptist/Mennonite or secular context, involves authenticity and vulnerability, support as well as disequilibrium, and a willingness to be transformed along the way. We invite you to explore the contributors' voices, engage with them, and be challenged by them; and perhaps to discover a few more underlying threads.

*Neil Funk-Unrau is Associate Professor of Conflict Resolution Studies at Menno Simons College, Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Manitoba.*

*Reina Neufeldt is Assistant Professor, Peace and Conflict Studies at Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.*

## **Teaching Peace Studies from a Mennonite Perspective: Quiet in the Land Revisited**

*Randy Janzen*

In the spring of 2013, the staff of Selkirk College (where I teach Peace Studies) embarked on a process of indigenization or de-colonization of our institution. This process began with a preliminary two-day workshop, facilitated by an indigenous woman with years of experience working within British Columbia's post-secondary education system. As the workshop began, participants were gathered into a circle. By way of introducing ourselves, we were each asked to describe our heritage. The premise of the exercise was for us as educators to better understand ourselves so that we could more fully embrace the values of indigenization: awareness of history, connection to the natural world, and embracing the values of generosity, humility, and beauty. The indigenization process, our facilitator advised, best begins with self-awareness. As a peace studies educator, I had determined that indigenizing our curriculum was both necessary and overdue. And as an educator of Mennonite heritage, I saw this exercise as initiating a process of self-reflection on teaching Peace Studies from a Mennonite perspective in the changing Canadian landscape of the 21st century.

What does it mean to teach peace studies from a Mennonite perspective? My current reality is far removed from the Mennonite prairie town where I was raised. I now live in a small city in British Columbia that has no historical or cultural ties to the Mennonite community, and I married outside the tribe. But somehow, after a decades-long career as a health care professional, I managed in my mid-forties to find my way back to the fold through plying the best trade a Mennonite could—teaching Peace Studies!

The institution I teach at is a government-run community college—also clearly disconnected from any Mennonite identity. Students in my classes usually have no understanding or opinions about Mennonites or about how this peculiar (maybe even exotic) religion might have any bearing on their education. Therefore, disclosing my Mennonite connection is something I have avoided, perhaps attributable to past experiences where

disclosure elicited only blank polite stares or, worse yet, disdain stemming from incomplete knowledge or cultural stereotypes (like most stereotypes, based partly on reality) of conservative Bible thumpers who don't dance or have fun.

At a deep level, I have questioned whether my Mennonite heritage is relevant in today's peace studies classroom, where themes of decolonization seem more relevant and timely, and possibly even antithetical to reminiscing about the history of a small group of Christian pacifists. In this particular region of British Columbia, the Mennonite presence is notably overshadowed by other traditional peace churches such as the Doukhobors and the Quakers. Doukhobors comprise a sizable proportion of the surrounding community, owing to large scale settlement in this area more than 100 years ago. Additionally, the Quakers' local presence can be seen at Argenta, a nearby community where American Quakers settled decades ago to escape militarism and materialism south of the border. Both of these communities have had a significant positive impact on the local peace scene, including the development of our college's Peace Studies program.

However, paralleling the vibrant presence of these local peace churches is the perceived absence of an Aboriginal voice, especially when it comes to issues of peace, justice, and reconciliation. An understanding of this lack of voice must begin with the historical reality that the Sinixt, an Indigenous group who have occupied this region for thousands of years, were declared extinct by the Canadian government, much to the chagrin of Sinixt members who are very much alive on both sides of the Canada-US border. A declaration of extinction pertaining to voice, identity, and power has significant ramifications, not the least of which is the Sinixt being shut out of current treaty negotiations with the federal government.

Therefore, my personal reflection in *The Conrad Grebel Review*, initiated by the indigenization workshop, begins with wondering how my Mennonite heritage may find a voice within my local context. An old axiom describes Mennonites as "Quiet in the Land." That adage speaks to our history of keeping to ourselves, intentionally separated from a dominant culture where violence and injustice seemed to prevail. Historically, Mennonite peacemaking was manifested through a lifestyle that exemplified simplicity and withdrawal from a perceived violent dominant culture, rather

than through protesting or taking a public stand on peace and justice issues. However, as I embark on the journey of de-colonizing my classes, a new meaning for the adage becomes apparent: “Quiet in the Land” might aptly refer to the idea that Mennonite history and values around peace and justice may no longer be relevant in my local landscape.

My reflection on what it means to be a Mennonite peace studies educator utilizes the “Quiet in the Land” axiom as a foil. By juxtaposing current realities and priorities of 21st-century peace education with Mennonite influences (and interspersing my personal journey into this rich tapestry!), I will analyze the notion of being Quiet in the Land using these themes: Mennonites as Peacemakers, Mennonites as Christians, the Mennonite Experience of Suffering, and Mennonites as Settlers. In my concluding remarks, I offer several ways in which this reflection may guide me to better serve my students.

### **Mennonites as Peacemakers**

In many obvious ways, for someone who has grown up in the Mennonite community, becoming a peace studies educator seems like a natural and honorable career path, like becoming a farmer or a choir director. Indeed, I marvel at the high proportion of Mennonites at peace studies conferences! But how does being Mennonite influence my teaching? To begin with, I find it helpful to reflect on how the Mennonite identity is attached to peace and justice activities in Canada. Three examples that I use in my classes come to mind.

A paramount component of any introductory peace studies course is a critical analysis of our criminal justice system, which necessarily flows into a comparison of our current retributive framework to the tenets of restorative justice. According to the dominant mainstream narrative, it was the Mennonite Central Committee of Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario in 1974 that is credited with establishing the first restorative justice program, a victim-offender mediation alternative to the court system.<sup>1</sup>

Another example is the work of Ten Thousand Villages (initiated by the Mennonite Central Committee) to raise awareness of and bring justice

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<sup>1</sup> “Restorative Justice: Promising Beginnings.” Public Safety Canada, 2002. [www.publicsafety.gc.ca/res/cor/sum/cprs200209\\_1-eng.aspx](http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/res/cor/sum/cprs200209_1-eng.aspx), accessed June 19, 2013.

to the poor around the world. Moving beyond the charity model of simply feeding the poor, Ten Thousand Villages asks why people are impoverished, and offers alternative choices based on social justice for both affluent consumers and struggling producers, challenging economic policies that favor cheap consumption at the expense of the poor. Ten Thousand Villages started from humble beginnings but is now the largest non-profit fair-trade organization in North America.<sup>2</sup> Most peace studies students are familiar with the concept of fair trade, and may be drawn to a story where traditional faith and values have been applied to a present-day issue.

A third example is Christian Peacemaker Teams, whose informal motto of “Getting in the Way” is perhaps the antithesis of the adage “Quiet in the Land.” These specially trained nonviolent activists provide protective accompaniment to human rights workers in many parts of the world, and advocate, through nonviolent resistance strategies, for people who lack power and voice. They heed the call of Christian activists like retired South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who contend that remaining neutral in situations of injustice is akin to choosing the side of the oppressor.<sup>3</sup>

The juxtaposition of the call by Christian Peacemaker Teams to “get in the way” and the historical Mennonite adage of “Quiet in the Land” reflects a greater societal schism in how peacemaking is viewed. This schism often generates lively discussions in Peace Studies classes. How does our society view those who engage in peace work from a faith background? Mohammed Abu-Nimer asserts that religion typically frames peacemaking into two camps: the harmony camp and the liberation camp.<sup>4</sup> Harmony focuses on peacemaking and reconciliation, bringing people together with the premise that God loves all the people of the earth. Biblical concepts like love, brotherhood, and peace resonate. Conversely, the liberation model, perhaps best exemplified by Latin American liberation theology, exposes the injustices that surround us, often breaks the silence, and makes members

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<sup>2</sup> Andre Mayer, “How Can You tell if Your Shirt was Made in a Sweat Shop?” Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, April 25, 2013, [www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2013/04/25/f-bangladesh-clothing-consumer-awareness.html](http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2013/04/25/f-bangladesh-clothing-consumer-awareness.html), accessed June 17, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Desmond Tutu, [www.tutufoundation-usa.org](http://www.tutufoundation-usa.org) (and other sites), accessed June 21, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Mohammed Abu-Nimer, “Interfaith Dialogue: Limitations and Possibilities in the Middle East,” presentation at Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, October 15, 2007.

of the dominant culture uncomfortable with their complicity in structural violence.

Abu-Nimer critically analyzes these two models by examining the dynamics of Middle East peace camps, where Palestinian and Israeli children come together, often for the first time, to build friendships and learn about each other's story. Outwardly, these activities emphasize harmony. However, occasionally and unintentionally, vestiges of the liberation model seep out into the open, as exemplified by a Palestinian student's question following his new awareness of Israeli affluence, access to better schools, and freedom of movement: Why do these inequalities exist? His teacher's attempt to highlight harmony—"Politics are not part of this class"<sup>5</sup>—seemed to do so at the cost of nurturing new ideas of justice or liberation.

The tension between getting in the way and being quiet in the land brings to mind a personal story. Recently I was contacted by the local media to offer an expert opinion on a community action by local peace activist: the interruption of a Remembrance Day ceremony. Before I could respond to the reporter's question, she made her own opinion known by musing how someone in the name of peace could commit such an "unpeaceful" act. "Getting in the way" is often deemed inappropriate by the mainstream. As a Mennonite peace studies educator, in which direction do I find myself leaning? Sometimes the easy way to stress "getting in the way" is to teach about stories from long ago (Gandhi) or from far away (recent protests in Egypt). "Quiet in the land" seems the easier choice when it comes to the local context. The issue always appears less black and white when you actually know the people on the other side. But this begs the question: Should peace education make students uncomfortable? Marc Rich and Aaron Cargill<sup>6</sup> convincingly demonstrate that transformational learning on topics such as race and privilege, tailored to the local context, require students to delve beyond their comfort zone. Less harmony, more liberation.

The historical reality of being quiet in the land is challenged by

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<sup>5</sup> Mohammed Abu-Nimer, "Education for Coexistence in Israel: Potential and Challenges" in *Reconciliation, Justice and Coexistence: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mohammed Abu-Nimer (New York: Lexington Books, 2001), 180-96.

<sup>6</sup> Marc Rich and Aaron Cargill, "Beyond the Breach: Transforming White Identities in the Classroom," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 7, no. 4 (2004): 351-65.

the recent Mennonite activities discussed above. It seems to me that the Mennonite legacy rightfully deserves a place in a modern peace studies education stressing nonviolent resistance over passive nonresistance. “Quiet in the land” just got a little noisy.

### **Mennonites as Christians**

The context in which I teach is decidedly secular. Most students only nominally identify with Christianity, and other religions are almost never represented in the classroom. Because secular literature on the role of religion in world affairs often focuses on extremist views, moderate religious perspectives receive little coverage, leaving only the radicals with space on the religious spectrum, and giving too much attention to extremism and fundamentalism. This, I believe, has a negative effect on students’ view of religion and reinforces secularism as a rational, balanced bulwark against radical forces.

It is in this context that I relate the following story to my students. In 2007, I joined a peace and human rights educational tour of Israel and Palestine hosted by Christian Peacemaker Teams. In making my initial plans, I hesitated to join a religious organization that was possibly thrusting more religion into an area already overwhelmed with religious tension and intolerance. However, what I experienced in the end was quite different. I discovered that being associated with a Christian organization afforded a ready-made connection to both the Israeli Jews and the Palestinian Muslims, who embraced my assumed Christianity as a source of peace, strength, and even solidarity. It was explained to me countless times by Muslim hosts that our presence, in the name of Christianity, was most welcome and was viewed as a sincere act of building interfaith bridges. These people told me that their own Muslim religion was a source of strength and inner peace in the face of oppression, and a guiding force to work for peace and justice. This was a direct contradiction to the mainstream media portrayal of the role of religion in the Middle East.

I recall riding in the back of a taxi in the West Bank. My identity and anonymity were given away by my red baseball cap with the Christian Peacemaker Team slogan emblazoned on the front. We were required to wear this accessory for recognition and protection. For the taxi driver, the

cap was an invitation to connect. “Do you know what the difference between Christianity and Islam is?” he asked. It was presented as a riddle, as if he was not really interested in my response but was looking for an invitation to share his answer. “No,” I replied, “What is the difference?” “Nothing,” he burst out. “We worship the same God. We are brothers and sisters!” The message was so different from what I would have expected before, my entire Canadian context having stressed the differences and intolerance between the two faiths. Here, in the supposed hotbed of religious extremism, I found the calming voice of interfaith reconciliation in the back of a Palestinian taxicab.

In my introductory Peace Studies course, I dedicate one three-hour class to the topic of religion and peace. I state at the outset that my goal is not to turn anyone towards or away from religion. My aim is to impress upon students that secularism is the exception, not the norm, in our world. Additionally, by studying how all major religions emphasize the same great truths (such as the Golden Rule), religion has just as much potential to bring people together as to tear them apart. The role of peacemakers, then, at the very least is to understand the pervasive role that religion plays in the lives and conflicts of people around the world. My experience is that students may be secular in orientation but very tolerant in practice, and willing to gain a deeper understanding of religion. Thus they tend to view stories of faith-based peacemaking as inspiring and relevant, and as offsetting typical dominant media stories that showcase extremism.

### **Mennonite Experience of Suffering**

My sense is that young peace studies students are not connected to personal or cultural stories of suffering, but I have no way of knowing this for certain. What would happen if I shared my Mennonite stories—and invited them to share their own stories?

It is certainly not difficult to articulate the link between Mennonites and suffering. Among my own relatives are many testimonies of murder, starvation, imprisonment, and banishment of great aunts and uncles and cousins who lived through the violence in Russia around the time of the Revolution in 1917 and during Stalin’s purges in the 1930s. Maria Wall, my father’s first cousin, is one example. As a teenager during the purges, Maria



witnessed her father's abduction by the Soviet secret police, and experienced her own deportation and that of her remaining family to the Siberian Gulag, where her sister died of starvation and where, in her own words, the dreams of her youth slowly died. She would later write the story of her life, entitled "Through the Valley of Suffering," a harrowing account of untold and unjust suffering, yet filled with hope and grace nourished by her strong Christian faith. One instance of this hope is demonstrated in a poem she wrote to her (and my father's) aunt who had been captured while trying to escape the Soviet Union during the chaos of World War Two. Maria's poem was an offering to her aunt and her family as the government re-banished them to a northern Siberian labor camp:

. . . Exiled from your dear home  
Never again to see that beautiful place  
Your weak limbs were long since tired  
And you went on with empty hands  
Instead of your house and garden you have  
A little corner in a dark wood  
In the wide, wide, ever cold North  
Where spring does not come soon  
God never left you here a single day  
He stood with you in every strife and battle  
Why grieve, when you embrace all those  
You love, now spread so far and wide?  
Was it not too good, to bear each cross  
Which he laid upon you in love?  
O poor heart, why now despair?  
This is to move you to believe.<sup>7</sup>

I had the opportunity to meet Maria some ten years ago. She had since moved to Germany after the collapse of the Soviet Union and was now living among many other Russian Mennonites whose tragic life journeys, like her own, culminated in the long-awaited peace and harmony afforded by the generous German government. Maria was clear in her interpretation of her

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<sup>7</sup> Maria Wall, "Through the Valley of Suffering," translated by Victor Doerksen (Bergneustadt, Germany: Unpublished autobiography, 1994), 72.

destiny: God provides for those who are patient and obedient. Her stories of suffering injustice were always couched in the language of forgiveness and hope. Remain quiet in the land, she would say, for God is with you. I find Maria's story deeply inspiring. I feel honored to have someone in my family who has shared her story of seeking spiritual peace in the midst of such calamity and despair.

My grandfather (Maria's uncle) came to Canada as a young married man, eager to forget the similar horrors of his final years in Russia. I never knew his stories of suffering, though I did know him as a pastor, a man whose Christian faith played out in his disciplined life and his dedication to family and church. It was only in this past year that I learned the heart-wrenching tale of his narrow escape from being shot to death in Russia—not once, but twice. During the aftermath of the Revolution, many Mennonites were rounded up and shot by firing squads, a crude form of justice for the presumed crime of being enemies of the state. In 1921, my grandfather endured a two-day forced confinement with 114 others, in a cramped cellar with no food, water, or bathroom. The confinement ended when the inmates were removed in groups of ten and summarily executed by a firing squad. My grandfather's fate was transformed when the Russian gunman recognized him as a landless laborer, not a Kulak (wealthy land owner), and spared his life.<sup>8</sup>

Just a few weeks later, the same situation occurred again. This time, my grandfather's would-be assassin recognized him as someone who had helped poor illiterate soldiers write letters to distant family members while my grandfather served in the Russian army as a medic.<sup>9</sup> I imagine my grandfather drafted into the Russian army and served in a non-combatant role because of his pacifist convictions. He used his literacy skills to assist the Russian soldiers around him. His quiet act of love and peacemaking paid off in a very tangible way. It was one of these grateful soldiers who lowered his gun, years later, and refused to shoot because of the kindness he had been shown.

Sharing with students these stories of my own could create vulnerability,

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<sup>8</sup> Phil Reimer, "Learning from my Grosspa about the Voice of God," *Canadian Mennonite*, December 17, 2012, [www.canadianmennonite.org/articles/learning-my-grosspa-about-voice-god](http://www.canadianmennonite.org/articles/learning-my-grosspa-about-voice-god), accessed June 19, 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

which, according to Marshal Rosenberg, may facilitate empathy and reduce defensiveness among conflicting parties.<sup>10</sup> According to Eileen Babbitt and Pamela Steiner, during a facilitated process to address conflict between two communities in Israel, one Jewish and one Arab, mediators noticed a breakthrough when each side recognized the other's narrative of suffering.<sup>11</sup> The disparate historical realities of the two groups merged under the theme of suffering, allowing both sides to realize their conflict was a tapestry of common fears and needs. Therefore, sharing my own cultural stories may enable students to begin to understand their own narratives of suffering and vulnerability, in ways that could assist them in connecting with people who are suffering.

### **Mennonites as Settlers**

My life story is far removed from that of my grandfather, in both time and geography. Time has a way of offering new insights to long-held interpretations of experience. My political and geographical milieu is also far different from that of my grandfather. I'm sure my grandparents never heard of the term "Turtle Island," the revered name used by many First Nations groups for the North American Continent. My grandparents' narrative was built on this foundation: be grateful for being allowed into a new peaceful country, work hard, obey the law, and honor God. As I have been afforded the privilege of a modern liberal arts education, my understanding of the immigrants' story cannot be complete without giving voice to the counter-narrative of the indigenous people on whose land my ancestors settled. In addition to the pioneer worldview of a land without people for a people without a land, the "settler" perspective usually viewed the complex issues of poverty and other social ills as just a Native problem that needed to be fixed.

Our gradual awakening to the counter-narrative invokes us to transform the question from "How do we solve the Indian problem?" to what political scientist Roger Epps asks, "How do we solve the settler problem?"<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Marshall Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life* (Encinitas, CA: Puddledancer Press, 2005).

<sup>11</sup> Eileen Babbitt and Pamela Steiner, "Combining Empathy with Problem Solving: The Tamra Model of Facilitation in Israel," in *Building Peace*, ed. Craig Zelizer and Robert A. Rubinstein (Stirling, VA: Kumarian Press, 2010), 157-78.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Paulette Regan, *Unsettling the Settler Within* (Vancouver, BC: Univ. of British

This simply posed question opens up a complex, often difficult conversation in peace studies education that may mirror the sentiment that violence and injustice are problems which typically occur in other parts of the world and which are our duty to solve. Peace studies literature is still primarily written by men of European background with little inclusion of Indigenous history or role models.<sup>13</sup>

In this situation I find little help from my Mennonite heritage. Growing up in southern Manitoba, I knew virtually nothing about my landscape that predated the arrival of the Europeans. My knowledge really only starts with the arrival of the Mennonite settlers in 1874 and the founding of the town I grew up in, Steinbach, with virtually no mention of who were on that landscape (and still are, for that matter) before they came. However, I recall while growing up that our Christian values required us to help those who were less fortunate. It was in this context that I knew of First Nations; that is, from our evangelizing communities several hours away—well-intentioned efforts to bring peace that called on people to accept Jesus Christ. In this sense, the narrative of Mennonite as peacemaker was reinforced for me at an early age as my church community engaged in these acts of evangelism. But seldom did our charitable acts go to a place that would have led to difficult conversations about Mennonites as settlers and beneficiaries of the colonial hegemony, conversations that might be necessary for authentic reconciliation.

The workshop on indigenization pushed me onto a surprising path of self-reflection and discovery. By the end it was evident that indigenization went far beyond curriculum. It had more to do with creating a culture of peace, a classroom culture in which not only Indigenous people but all people would feel validated, recognized, and safe. It seems straightforward at first glance, but this journey can be unsettling, as it means challenging Eurocentric biases and what it means to be settlers on traditional Indigenous lands that in my case (British Columbia's southern interior) have never been ceded to the Canadian government.

Specific, tangible actions can be important in initiating complex

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Columbia Press, 2011), 11.

<sup>13</sup> Marvin Berkowitz, "Eurocentric Contradictions in Peace Studies," *Peace Review* 14, no. 1 (2001): 61-65.

processes like indigenization and creating the desired classroom culture. For this year's Peace Studies classes, it has meant inviting a local Indigenous leader to offer a welcome to the class, showcasing Indigenous peacemaking practices such as a restorative justice program run by local elders, and finding more readings by Indigenous authors on such topics as healing and reconciliation.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

This fall, I began my Peace Studies class with the same indigenization activity that initiated my personal journey of self-reflection. Seated in a circle in Selkirk's new Aboriginal Gathering Place and following a blessing by a local Indigenous leader, students were invited to talk about their identity. Just as a concert violinist must know her instrument, we peacemakers must know ourselves—for we are our own instruments. Since our knowing, being, and doing is our work, we must critically reflect on what we take for granted in our knowledge and actions. The words of our facilitator resonated with my students: *You need to know who you are, as you are your greatest tool for creating peace. Peace and justice start where you are. It is coming to know who you are, and it is coming to know the land on which you live.*

Writing this reflection was itself an exercise in coming to understand who I am. This journey has encouraged me not to be afraid to talk about my Mennonite heritage, as personal stories may encourage students to reflect on their own identity. Also, I will not hesitate to initiate class discussions on religion and faith in order to make space for moderate voices. From “quiet in the land” to “getting in the way,” I now realize that my Mennonite heritage can have relevance in the current social and political landscape. I have a lot to learn—and a lot to share.

*Randy Janzen teaches Peace Studies and is Chair of the Mir Centre for Peace at Selkirk College in Castlegar, British Columbia.*

# **Leveraging Diversity: Teaching Peace in the Public University**

*Edmund Pries*

## **Introduction**

Teaching peace and conflict studies is not vastly dissimilar from other fields of teaching; many would agree that the pedagogical issues are generally the same. Indeed they are—and yet they are not. Each academic field is confronted by its own set of complex dynamics arising from the unique demands of the curriculum on instructor, student, and institution. In this basic sense, the field of peace and conflict studies is no different, and its pedagogical dynamics provide their own complexity.

The first such complex dynamic arises from the role of instructional bias within both the instructor and the course texts. The two are intimately related, because the instructor designs the course and chooses the readings and other instructional material. Students may self-select and choose the course because of a widely-known instructional bias or because of their interest in the subject matter, or for other enlightened or mundane reasons (e.g., convenient scheduling). Their own views may not necessarily, however, be aligned with the bias of the instructor. They could even possess an oppositional bias or an orientation that professes the same goal but with a substantially different perspective on the means to achieve it. For example, military personnel may enroll because conflict resolution—and peace—may be their goal, but their philosophical perspective and methodological approach might be at variance with the instructor's if the latter has a pacifist orientation.

In a public university, such openness to diverse perspectives is promoted and extends beyond the classroom crucible to the institutional orbit surrounding it. The institution will support a peace and conflict studies program, even while perhaps not fully sharing the biases of instructors, because of the university's express commitment to a multi-perspectival process of learning. That does not mean the university is free of bias. On the contrary, biases are rampant, but they are many, diverse, conflicting, and situated within healthy debate. For example, some universities with peace

and conflict studies programs also house institutes of strategic military studies that sometimes describe their research and promotional activities in language not altogether dissimilar from that employed by peace and conflict studies programs.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, in my experience there has always been a generous receptivity and much support for peace and conflict studies, at least within the university where I teach. Nowhere was this more evident than in the 2013 hosting of the Peace and Justice Studies Association Conference, where generous financial and logistical support and institutional encouragement was forthcoming from many sectors of my university, including the Laurier Centre for Military, Strategic and Disarmament Studies.<sup>2</sup>

This leads to a central question of this paper: How does an instructor with a perspectival bias (in my case, a confessionally-supported pacifist orientation, namely Mennonite) teach peace and conflict studies effectively in a university setting where diversity of perspective is assumed, nurtured, and highly valued? How are the views of students valued and respected, and how are learning outcomes and teaching effectiveness measured in the context of academic and philosophical diversity? I will argue that the diversity can be an asset that energizes effective teaching of my subject.

At the same time, I will argue for the validity of possessing a bias, since this is the issue that has created a problem of perception for peace and conflict studies, which has sometimes been declared an illegitimate discipline due to its inherent bias. Most (all?) people teaching in the field are predisposed to view peace as both goal and solution, and to see peace as the final outcome to conflict. It has been suggested that this unavoidable tendency makes it an impure academic field of research. After all, research

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<sup>1</sup> Wilfrid Laurier University has a prominent institute with this focus, the *Laurier Centre for Military, Strategic and Disarmament Studies*. In the past, much of its work has focused on military history, hence its web site URL, *canadianmilitaryhistory.ca*. More recently, the focus has begun to change into the wider category of “conflict studies.” It also oversees one of the two Canadian offices of the Canadian Landmine Foundation (the other is housed at the University of Winnipeg), a foundation which centers on supporting the 1977 Ottawa Mine Ban Treaty.

<sup>2</sup> The presentation by the keynote speaker, 1997 Nobel Laureate Jody Williams, was made possible by a substantial grant from the Laurier Centre. Every other level of the university was generous in funding the hosting of the conference of the Peace and Justice Studies Association, an organization dedicated to peace and justice as well as activism.

should be unbiased and open-ended. Interestingly, however, no one has suggested the same about medicine, which is biased in favor of health and healing, and against disease.<sup>3</sup>

Below I outline seven key pedagogical principles that I consider important for teaching peace and conflict studies. Several are borrowed from my more general “Teaching Philosophy Statement”<sup>4</sup> but apply here as well. As principles or orientations, they are not meant to be comprehensive, exhaustive, or even unique, but to advance a few approaches for the classroom gleaned from my experience. Embedded in all of these is the question articulated above: How does an instructor with a bias teach with integrity in a diverse context, and leverage that diversity for effective teaching? While every teacher is confronted with this challenge, peace studies with its inherently assumed bias sharpens the pedagogical issues.

### **A Primary Principle: Classroom as Safe Sanctuary**

The university classroom is, for me, a holy sanctuary—a sacred space—and the moments spent in it are holy moments. Some may deem it inappropriate to use religious language to describe a secular or public setting, but I choose the metaphor intentionally. The evocation of sacredness speaks to the transformational intentionality of the learning exchange between professor and students, and the potentially life-transforming impact of what they learn together in that place. Most important, it places a supreme—or ultimate—value on what happens there. Professors and students are journeying together on a pilgrimage of learning. When learning happens the way it should, the effect on both can be “magical” or, as expressed here, a dynamic holy moment.

For true learning to be possible, the classroom must be a safe haven for students; they should feel completely comfortable to explore their worldview by opening their perspectives to others in an environment where they feel safe and free to do so. They should be able to trust their instructor and their peers

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<sup>3</sup> For a thorough discussion of this issue, see Conrad Brunk, “Shaping a Vision: The Nature of Peace Studies,” in *Patterns of Conflict, Paths to Peace*, ed. Larry Fisk and John Schellenberg (Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2000), 11-33, especially 13-20.

<sup>4</sup> Edmund Pries, “Teaching Philosophy Statement” (unpublished; available from the author upon request). My teaching philosophy has ten main points, the first of which explains “the five-step arc of learning.”



to assist and support them in this quest for deeper understanding, even and especially when it requires challenging a perspective or when their questions and opinions are formulated incompletely. Most important, they must feel encouraged to disagree with their instructor or fellow students—and still feel supported. When they can do this, everyone in the sacred space is able to learn. When an idea or principle that has been properly examined and challenged is grasped and integrated into a worldview increasingly owned by the student—not carelessly borrowed—then intellectual development can take place.

The classroom can be a physical space on the campus but it need not be. It can be an on-line forum, the university pub, a distant country for a travel course, or any other place where students and instructor meet to learn. The nature and character of the space is created by the instructor, who must ensure that the “classroom” provides an environment conducive to learning and freedom of expression. Views will occasionally or even frequently conflict dramatically, but this is a necessary element for learning to take place as opinions, views, and thoughts are tested and explored, and diverse opinions are respected and encouraged.

One pedagogical device I frequently employ is classroom debates, which require students to argue a position or views they may not hold or be inclined towards. Most commonly, I divide the class into groups of five and have two groups prepare for a debate on a particular date. In a class of fifty students—or ten debate groups—this arrangement provides five topical debates. When students experience the value of intellectual exploration and investigate opposing arguments, it helps sharpen their understanding of an issue. I have also seen them change their views on an issue completely. More important, it helps the entire class to see “the other side.” Peace and conflict issues are complex, and students must seek to understand them from the perspective of those on all sides.

Additionally, I assign questions for discussion to on-line forums on the class web page (a forum permitting shy students to participate more fully). Here too there must be limits. I make it clear in a set of on-line discussion policies that attacking a classmate or assailing their character is not permitted. A spirit of mutual respect must prevail, and students are required to address the arguments, and to bolster their own arguments or

counter-arguments with solid evidence or supporting material.<sup>5</sup>

### **Creating Cognitive Disequilibrium: Classroom as Crucible**

Insistence on the classroom as a safe space does not mean it is absent of hard intellectual work or without tough challenges to preconceived ideas. Many students arrive at university with a rigid *Weltanschauung* frequently expressed in blunt terms and organized into discrete categories. This seems especially true for social and political (as well as religious) issues. Such preconceptions can be structured around simple or even simplistic notions regarding war and peace (see below). These views are not always independently owned by the students; they have not been adopted after proper study and thoughtful consideration. Instead, students often inherit these views from parents or other influential persons (e.g., high school teachers). However, in order for learning to occur and new perspectives to be considered, students must be prepared to receive, analyze, and consider a variety of ideas, including those that challenge their pre-existing belief systems. It is the instructor's responsibility to create at least a modicum of cognitive disequilibrium<sup>6</sup> for the students, in order to allow them to consider a variety of viewpoints. Learning can take place only when the intellectual status quo has been unsettled and the mind has been opened to new concepts. This does not mean that all views and opinions are not respected, but that students are encouraged to consider the diversity of ideas available, and that viewpoints are carefully challenged and alternative perspectives presented.

In my early years of teaching I described this process metaphorically and somewhat crassly as a three-fold enterprise in which an instructor required the skills of a logger, a chef, and a farmer. I would take a chainsaw and slice off the top inch of the head (metaphorically!), followed by inserting a hand-held kitchen mixer to stir up the brain cells (another method for creating cognitive disequilibrium), after which I would cultivate the brain's soil with garden tools and plant some fresh seeds. I no longer use this imagery; it is too violent and disrespectful of students, and ascribes to the instructor an overly dominant and

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<sup>5</sup> For a complete list of the principles for on-line discussion, see my personal web page: [www.wlu.ca/homepage.php?grp\\_id=2481&ct\\_id=2150&f\\_id=148](http://www.wlu.ca/homepage.php?grp_id=2481&ct_id=2150&f_id=148)

<sup>6</sup> The notion of "cognitive disequilibrium" stems from developmental psychologist and philosopher Jean Piaget (1896-1980).

manipulative role by removing the interactive, relational dimension essential to cognitive disequilibrium. Creating that disequilibrium is better framed as a dialogue with appropriate challenges designed to open students to exploring various perspectives and views.

Creating cognitive disequilibrium is particularly important for teaching peace studies, because the dominant societal and political (governmental) views on the subject are not readily oriented towards nonviolent conflict resolution. Many students come with the perspective that peace may be desired but is “unrealistic,” suffers from utopian idealism, and cannot be applied in real life or be useful for international relations. This perspective is aided by the language that is used. For example, the “realist” approach to international politics, or at least one branch of it, requires countries to keep building their military strength. Even plans for fighting a nuclear war, including a “tactical” nuclear war, are part of this approach. “Political realism” requires self-interested political leaders and nations to act in accordance with the maintenance of power. Such language creates a problem but also a ready opening for questions that can initiate cognitive disequilibrium. What is “realistic” about a position that calculates fighting a war that results in hundreds of millions dead or the end of life itself due to nuclear winter?<sup>7</sup> Instructors in peace studies have to work especially hard to shake loose broader notions that students have already absorbed, namely that peace is not for the real world. Pedagogical tools for creating cognitive disequilibrium can be useful for that purpose.

This still leaves us with the question of how to create that disequilibrium. My approach is fairly simple. I pose questions like the one in the previous paragraph, and tell stories that contest dominant assumptions and provide a counter-narrative. Challenging existing notions means alternatives must be presented convincingly. In “War: An Interpreted Study,” a third-year course partly devoted to challenging common myths about war and answering questions as to why wars are fought, why soldiers fight, and how wars are “sold” to the public, I have showed several films that tell stories providing effective alternative views to prevailing dogmas about war.<sup>8</sup> In

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<sup>7</sup> I am aware that the definition of “political realism” is not identical to that of “realistic.” However, the linguistic overlap does result in an association, whether intentional or not.

<sup>8</sup> Films used in Global Studies 340S: War: An Interpreted Study included Stanley Kubrick’s

order for students to release the logic of war and conflict they held previously, alternative material must be sufficiently convincing in both content and emotion. After all, beliefs and systems are adopted and rejected not only based on statistics and argument but on our emotional affiliation with those elements. Peace and conflict are not devoid of emotional attachment; students in this field know whether they can accept certain outcomes personally or not. This too becomes part of the learning equation.

### **Building Knowledge and Understanding: Instructional Arts**

#### *Re-imagining Existing Patterns, Traditions, Symbols, and Beliefs*

The journey from the disorientation of cognitive disequilibrium to the adoption of new ideas and perspectives requires bridges. One such transitional exercise is found in re-imagining—questioning and/or redesigning—what already exists. Some may see it more as a corollary of cognitive disequilibrium; others as the provision of new perspectives. This re-imagination can occur through concrete experiences. For example, whenever a Peace and Conflict Studies course session falls on November 11 (Remembrance Day), I hold a Remembrance Day “Service” and analysis in class in order to examine our understandings of the event and its meaning.

In a third-year course on Religion and Peace,<sup>9</sup> before we observed the moment of silence and listened to music, we evaluated questions on the appropriateness of including religious elements in the ceremony: Should they be included? Why or why not? Why were they included? Should religious personnel be present and blessing such ceremonies? Similarly, who is being remembered was also probed. Do we remember only the soldiers, or also the civilian victims? Do we remember the soldiers as heroes or as victims? Do we remember the soldiers of “the other side” also—especially if we consider all soldiers as victims of a war-mad and propagandized society? Which symbols are appropriate—the red poppy, the white poppy, the red Mennonite Central Committee button (“To Remember is to Work for Peace”)? Or all three simultaneously?

Similarly, we compared John McCrae’s “In Flanders Fields” with Wilfrid Owen’s “Dulce et Decorum Est”. The third verse of McCrae’s poem

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*Paths of Glory* (1957), Eugene Jarecki’s *Why We Fight* (2005), Errol Morris’s *The Fog of War* (2003), and Christian Carion’s *Joyeux Noel* (2005).

<sup>9</sup> Global Studies 340G: Religion and Peace.

focuses on remembrance as an act of continuing the mission of the fallen:

Take up our quarrel with the foe: / To you from failing hands  
we throw / The torch; be yours to hold it high. / If ye break faith  
with us who die / We shall not sleep, though poppies grow / In  
Flanders fields.<sup>10</sup>

The last portion of Owen's poem sees war as foisted upon unsuspecting youth with patriotic fervor:

If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood / Come gargling from  
the froth-corrupted lungs, / Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud  
/ Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,— / My friend,  
you would not tell with such high zest / To children ardent for  
some desperate glory, / The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est / Pro  
patria mori*.<sup>11</sup>

Other themes were also pursued and dissected. The point is the importance for greater understanding of getting students to reflect on what they are doing and why they are participating. Such questioning also encourages them to apply a similar interpretive analysis in other areas.

#### *Passion of the Instructor: Prerequisite for Effectiveness*

Effective instructors must possess a two-fold passion. First, they must care deeply for their students, both as a group or class and as individuals, and must desire to see them grow and develop as adults, and to attain a greater understanding of the world. Such teachers will do almost anything to help or motivate them to achieve their goals. In this respect, teachers are also mentors. What does this mean for those teaching peace and conflict studies? It reminds us that we must not only teach concepts, ideas, and theories, but seek to embed these elements in our teacher-student relationships. We have to care for the students, no matter what their perspectives. Some who have drawn closest to me over the years are those whose views on war and conflict,

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<sup>10</sup> John McCrae, "In Flanders Fields," accessed November 3, 2012, <http://www.inlandersfields.ca/poem.html>.

<sup>11</sup> Wilfrid Owen, "Dulce et Decorum est," accessed February 8, 2014, [www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/175898](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/175898). The comparative point is made by Kenneth Westhues in his 2007 blog post: <http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/~kwesthue/rememday.htm>, accessed October 27, 2012.

initially at least, differed radically from my own. Respect for a diversity of viewpoints, contexts, and student experiences is crucial when modeling a “peace” perspective.

Second, effective teachers must communicate a passion for the subject. They must be fully convinced themselves before they will persuade others of the value of their field, and they need to communicate this conviction. Not surprisingly, such teachers tend to have strong biases, as they should, which poses another question: When and how should these biases be shared? Moreover, what does it mean for someone who comes at the agenda of peace studies with the additional bias of religious convictions, as Mennonites, Quakers, and some others do? In my case, how do I handle this within a public university context (which I cherish), especially as someone who admits to the complicated embrace of these manifold convictions?

I am not hesitant to express my passionate convictions, although I do so carefully in order not to inhibit the views of my students, and I do not usually offer my thoughts before I have given them a chance to express their perspectives. Even then, I ensure they have had the opportunity to explore the issue fully, so that they can see my opinions are not negating theirs. My critiques of government policies, for example, are shared in context (e.g., regarding disarmament and militarization in a class dealing with that subject)<sup>12</sup> and are not presented as the final word, although they are given as my opinion.

My personal feelings about war and pacifism are never fully hidden, nor are they fully revealed, at least not initially. The revealing might happen later in the course if the occasion requires it; frequently it is left until the very end. In one recent case, students in a course on Religion and Peace<sup>13</sup> asked about my perspective and orientation at the beginning. I hesitated, but then briefly articulated my belief context, because in this kind of course it was legitimate to do so, especially since representatives of at least six different religions would be presenting. I also gave a more detailed explanation nearer the end of the course. Here I should emphasize that my Mennonite orientation is not unique, not only because there are many Mennonite instructors at my university, but because so many colleagues from other religious and

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<sup>12</sup> Global Studies 435: Disarming Conflict: Weapons of War and the Quest for Peace.

<sup>13</sup> Global Studies 340G: Religion and Peace.

non-religious convictions hold very similar views on war and pacifism. In this respect, being a Mennonite instructor of peace studies is not about standing on an ideological pedestal, but about working in collaboration and cooperation with others with similar—or diverse—perspectives.

My religious convictions are brought to bear in another, slightly different way. I believe that understanding the role of religion in global relations and international conflict is essential for understanding the subject matter. Any subject on global affairs that is taught without considering the role of religion provides an incomplete picture. I once made this clear to my class on global ethics,<sup>14</sup> when some students criticized reading about religious perspectives on ethical relations, and I have had to repeat the same argument in other classes. How, I asked, did they expect to work in a global context without grasping the perspectives of those they hoped to be working with? This has nothing to do with being in a secular university instead of a religious one; rather, it is about understanding the religious convictions of people in the real world.

As a result, I do not teach any course without at least one session that includes a discussion of religious perspectives on the issue. Again, I am not alone in this; several colleagues from different religious traditions and others with non-religious convictions do the same. My bias does not involve imposing my own views on others but being in a healthy dialogical learning relationship with them, especially students.

### *The Possibility of Peace: The Value of Utopian Thinking*

Utopian or idealized thinking is often characterized as unrealistic, impractical, and even useless, especially in relation to peace and conflict studies. It is for this reason that a problem-solving approach is dominant in this field. I too focus heavily on problem-solving, especially when teaching courses or seminars on disarmament treaties.<sup>15</sup> Peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding are all deeply rooted in this approach.

At the same time, however, I emphasize the value of utopian thinking for peace education. It is important for students and instructors to engage in possibility thinking, to imagine what a nonviolent outcome to conflict,

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<sup>14</sup> Global Studies 421: Ethical Encounters.

<sup>15</sup> Global Studies 435: Disarming Conflict: Weapons of War and the Quest for Peace.

a harmonious society, or a peaceful environment might look like. Utopian thinking can spur the imagination and help organize people's thoughts towards a goal. Indeed, some of the world's most successful projects and events were once considered utopian dreams. It is often the idealistic dimensions, many with a spiritual aspect (broadly interpreted) deeply embedded within them, that provide incentive and motivation towards involvement, including protest or critique, that is not offered solely by practical problem-solving. The greater motivational vision, the emotional investment, and the need to address global issues (e.g., nuclear war) and philosophical foundations that transcend specific problems all require a broader orientation that ties the individual's personal commitment to the global and even the metaphysical. This is where an instructor's passion becomes a key dimension of the teaching experience. Can he or she provide a vision—an *alternate* vision to the normative reality—that connects students to a world they wish to live in? In my experience this approach motivates engagement and action every bit as much as the problem-solving approach and perhaps even more so. Both approaches are necessary—the practical and the ideal—and peace education must provide both.

### **Towards Owned Intellectual Growth: Learning Integration**

Despite my reflexive predilection for the Socratic lecture, I believe that classroom learning should be as pedagogically diverse as possible. Learning from the writings of the ancients or contemporary analysts is critically important, but didactic theory should not be the primary form of learning. Rather, diverse forms of engagement are required to employ the multiplicity of students' learning faculties and capacities—and to recognize that not everyone learns equally well in the same way. Some students learn by actively engaging their motor skill reflexes; others through creative expression; while still others through intellectual debate; and so on. All these learning styles are well-established truisms, and utilizing a variety of pedagogical tools is promoted on most campuses. The uniqueness of peace studies provides both an expanded creative opportunity and the *necessity* to use alternative modes of engagement. Since peace studies are also in some measure aspirational in emphasis and direction—and certainly reach towards idealism—finding a creative fit that combines the ideal and the practical presents an additional opportunity that should never be ignored.



Let me provide two examples from my own teaching. The first is from a field study course (not specifically peace and conflict studies), and the second is related more directly to peace and conflict studies. In my institutional home, the Department of Global Studies, we offer students an overseas experience known as the Global Studies Experience (GSE). In the summer between their third and fourth undergraduate year, they pursue a volunteer internship in an overseas environment. Typically, they are spread all over the world. The GSE is bookended by a winter semester seminar preparing them for the experience (e.g., cross-cultural issues, etc.),<sup>16</sup> and a fall post-field placement seminar<sup>17</sup> helping them unpack their experience after their return.

Recently, I gave students several assignments prior to their departure, including the traditional standard one of journaling. A new assignment required each person to collect at least one recipe from the country they were travelling to, and to learn how to make it so that they could share it with classmates in a potluck upon their return. They also had to relate one story connecting the recipe with their experience. This worked well beyond my expectations! In our post-field placement seminar, we had two potluck meals where, in each, half the class prepared their recipe (sufficient for the whole class), explained the food, and told a story relating to it and their GSE internship. It is well known since ancient times that eating together changes the relational dynamic; in this case it opened classmates to each other and helped them share their experiences on a deep, intimate level. In the end, students collected their material along with photographs, and created a recipe and story booklet as a memento for the class. This group, with diverse worldwide experiences, bonded and learned in an engaged way I have rarely seen, and they were willing to expose and share the vulnerabilities they experienced overseas.

The second example involved engaging students in the international “Lend Your Leg” (LYL) campaign. LYL was initiated in 2011 in Colombia to draw attention to the number of active landmines still in existence (110 million; a similar amount is stockpiled), the ongoing death and injury toll (one victim every 22 minutes), the removal of remaining landmines, and to

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<sup>16</sup> Global Studies 398: Global Studies in Practice.

<sup>17</sup> Global Studies 399: Post-Field Placement.

continue global pressure for a total ban and for support of victims. April 4 is the annual International Day for Mine Awareness, and in 2012, with the endorsement and support of the UN General Secretary, the campaign went global.<sup>18</sup> That first year it also came to Wilfrid Laurier University via my third-year Global Citizenship class.<sup>19</sup>

The next year (April 4, 2013), I transferred it to my second-year class on Globalization and Cultures: The Cosmopolitan Village?<sup>20</sup> As a substitute for one of three essay questions on the final exam, students were permitted (and encouraged) to take the LYL Option. Those choosing it were required to:

- 1) sign up for a planning and preparation committee,
- 2) participate in the LYL Day's events (including a rally with guest speaker and the march), and
- 3) write a three-page essay in which they reflected on the event and their involvement, and also explained how this related to the cosmopolitan principles discussed in class.

For the planning, preparation, and participation, students could organize awareness campaigns on campus and in the community, using signs, posters, brochures, flash-mobs, and other creative approaches in order to recruit participation for the events, especially persuading people to roll up a pant leg, a key symbolic global gesture of this initiative.<sup>21</sup> Students also made dozens of protest signs for the big rally and protest march. On the day itself, they presented a guest speaker provided by Mines Action Canada, and held the rally and the march. The march wound its way through campus and through the wider community. Students were fully engaged.

While such events require grades to be attached in order to generate participation, students were not only engaged but even quite enthusiastic.

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<sup>18</sup> Video links to the Lend Your Leg movement, accessed February 8, 2014, include: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGduCYrPIAo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGduCYrPIAo); [www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/c/lendyourleg.html](http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/c/lendyourleg.html)

<sup>19</sup> Global Studies 340B: Global Citizenship.

<sup>20</sup> Full course title: Global Studies 221: Globalization and Cultures: The Cosmopolitan Village?

<sup>21</sup> Or rolling down a sock, or wearing a bandana on a bare leg for those not wearing pants. See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOVFA0ESs0c&nofeather=True](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOVFA0ESs0c&nofeather=True).

The class was in a carnival mood, but the pedagogical results were significant. Students learned not only the details of the Ottawa Treaty (the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty), but about affected countries and cultures, the consequences of military ventures, and the impact of political actions in a way that affected them more deeply than encountering a lecture or a book on such issues. They also understood cosmopolitan principles in a new way, and grappled with this question: Am I responsible for a person's suffering in another part of the world if I can do something to prevent it or alleviate it?

A change that I made for the second year of LYL was to leave the planning and organization of the event up to interested students. The only piece I offered was the exam question incentive. This paid dividends, as students gained leadership experience and felt ownership of the event. I also provided advice and guidance as needed.

I found the reflections of the students particularly interesting and inspiring—and was reminded how experiential learning can inspire classroom teaching. Students who had not been engaged with the theory of the course, or found it difficult to access, were drawn in and became enthusiastic. Suddenly principles made sense that had previously seemed distant, and connections were made that they had not made before. Students felt they could speak out on an issue about which they had known little,<sup>22</sup> and found it was something they really cared about. They also discovered they now had an outlet, however small, to express their peace and social justice ideals. Universities focus much on social critique, with the result that students can feel the darkness of the world closing in around them. They need the opportunity to express ideals of hope and positive change, even as they critique negative aspects of the global cultural and political environment. This can be transformative for learning, and it can spark creativity.<sup>23</sup>

At the time of this writing, my students are planning another LYL event for April 4, 2014. Although I have teaching assistants for this course, which will again serve as the event's home base, I reserve for myself the

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<sup>22</sup> It is easy to forget that most of today's students were not even toddlers at the time of the Ottawa Treaty banning landmines.

<sup>23</sup> Students produced a Facebook page and a website, and created interactive events to engage the university campus. One gifted student, Prince David Okebalama, produced a fine YouTube video of the event: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOVFA0ESs0c&nofeather=True](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOVFA0ESs0c&nofeather=True).

reading and grading of student reflections on their experience. I want to understand what they have learned and gauge whether it resulted in greater integration of their classroom learning. If past experience is an indication, it will not be dull, and there will be surprises!

### **Developing Alternatives: From Critical to Creative Thinking**

Critical thinking is foundational for a university arts education. Unfortunately, as important as it is, it can become mired there. Moving our pedagogy to the next step—to *creative* thinking—is essential for intellectual growth. This is particularly imperative for peace education. Conflict resolution by nature needs to generate perpetually new ideas and creative solutions out of a relational impasse. Peace education must engage the minds of students towards exploring creative solutions to problems and developing alternatives to conflict.

Perhaps the best way to illustrate this is to discuss one assignment I developed for a senior Research Specialization Option (RSO) in 2012-2013, an intensive two-semester course designed for high-achieving students.<sup>24</sup> The focus was a thorough study of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). In the first half of the second semester, the class identified gaps in IHL based on intensive study of the conventions and protocols making up the body of IHL. The 21 students were divided into five groups. Each group was assigned a gap in existing IHL from a list created earlier by the class, and was required to write a new set of laws to cover the gap. It was a four-step process that required students to:

- 1) examine existing IHL to find any applicable portions to the issue (perhaps there were pieces that already engaged the problem elsewhere);
- 2) research the theme and explain the existence of the gap;
- 3) provide case studies/examples of the problem and explain why IHL protocols should be developed to address the gap; and,

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<sup>24</sup> Global Studies 400L: International Humanitarian Law. This course, known as the Research Specialization Option (RSO), was a full-year 2-semester seminar counting as 1.5 credits (the equivalent of 3 single-semester courses).

most importantly,

- 4) write a new set of laws to address the gap in IHL—in a format similar to existing IHL conventions and protocols.

The greatest stress was on writing and articulating the new laws, which we dubbed “The Laurier Protocols.” These new laws then had to be presented to the class for analysis, critique, and emendation, so that they could be improved before submission as the completed group assignment. We utilized an “active learning classroom” giving each group access to their own computer-operated wall screen and allowing them to edit the document submitted at the front of the class.<sup>25</sup> These edits and recommendations were presented to the class and discussed.

This learning exercise proved fruitful. Students could understand and debate the problem in a comprehensive way, and they began to appreciate the difficulty of developing new laws to treat complex issues. Since they also had to provide guidelines on how these laws might be successfully implemented, they also had to address the delicacy of both national and cultural sensitivities in various global contexts. They proved to themselves and each other that they could indeed come up with potential solutions. Most important, this assignment provided an opportunity for creative thinking. Instead of just critiquing IHL and its frequent failures—something that is frequently done and that these students had themselves done in the previous semester—they now had to provide the alternatives, the solutions. They learned this was not easy. They discovered, however, that they can make a contribution—and that their ideas are as potentially well-written and valuable as those created by international law experts. The pedagogical results were clear: when provided with this opportunity, students approached it with enthusiasm.

Some students resolved to edit the completed pieces into one comprehensive work so that all class members could have a copy of “The Laurier Protocols” as a summary of their collective work. Not surprisingly, several chose to apply for law school, in part because of their experience in

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<sup>25</sup> An “active learning classroom” is arranged into round table group clusters with each group of students having access to a dedicated laptop, their own projector, screen and whiteboard. Hand-written whiteboard edits can be saved back to the computer document. Further information can be accessed here: [www.wlu.ca/homepage.php?grp\\_id=13149](http://www.wlu.ca/homepage.php?grp_id=13149).

working intensively with law and legal issues in this course. Some chose other international conflict resolution programs. One even went to work for the Canadian Red Cross as a summer intern and helped organize a conference on IHL at the University of Toronto. Overall, the learning impact of this experience was undeniable, and students continue to reference it. Why not participate in developing creative solutions? These students learned they can do so.

### **Student Transformation: In Whose Image?**

Despite academia's frequently pronounced caution about biasing a student's learning and self-discovery, I contend that the primary goal of all university teaching, and indeed of all teaching, is student transformation. It is the final step in the "arc of learning."<sup>26</sup> Learning must not only be integrated into students' thought process; ultimately and ideally it should help students redirect their lives in accordance with what they have learned. However, questions quickly arise: Should instructors attempt to (re)make a student in their own image? Should I, a pacifist teacher, attempt to transform the student into a pacifist?

These questions are not easy to answer. Peace education is by nature a mission of proselytization: we seek to convince people of the positive value of the way of peace. It is, after all, possible to reduce violence only if more people take the peaceful approach and reject war and conflict as a solution. As noted earlier, peace and conflict studies are biased in favor of peace. The issue, however, is more complex than that. We can explore it more fully if I describe three examples from my classes, which have featured a diversity of students, including a few employed by the military and many whose parents or other family members are thus employed.

Some years ago, I had a student in a course<sup>27</sup> who was a part-time member of the military while studying at university. It wasn't long before he was taking the class materials, duplicating them, and sharing them with the soldiers he was responsible for training. In his words, "No one had asked these questions." He struggled with why we actually fight, why Canada was in Afghanistan, and whether war was the most effective way to resolve differences. This young man eventually left the military with the hope of

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<sup>26</sup> Pries, "Teaching Philosophy Statement."

<sup>27</sup> Global Studies 340S: War: An Interpreted Study.

beginning a counter-recruitment operation. His reason: he was recruited in high school and had not been told what he now considered to be a fuller story.

A second student was not in the military, but his family and relatives had a long and storied military history and were still deeply involved. When he joined my class on global ethics (Global Studies 421: Ethical Encounters), his goal was to become an elite military sniper, like a relative he admired. By the end of the course, a full-year offering at that time, he decided to pursue a career in humanitarian work instead.

A third student, in a more recent class on Contemporary Global Conflicts (Global Studies 331), was enrolled as a mature student, married with children, and an active member of the Canadian Army who had served two tours of duty in Afghanistan. He was also one of the top students in the class. In the end, he chose to follow through with graduate work at a military academy and continue his career in the military.

So, which student(s) made the right decision? Did I “win two and lose one”? No. All three made the decision they believed was best for them. All three were exposed to hard questions about ethical human relations and conflict resolution. By teaching from my convictions as a pacifist, my goal was not to remake them into disciples of my convictions, although some familiar with my anti-war passion might argue that point. Rather, my goal was, is, and always should be to raise important questions, consider all perspectives, and ensure that students have sufficient information to make thoroughly informed decisions. If I merely told half of the story, I would be mirroring the same experience the first student claimed he had when he was recruited. My role is to be supportive, provide the information, and be a mentor.

As a mentor, I treat students a little as parents treat young adult children, providing counsel, supplying information, listening intently, and offering feedback. In the end, however, they should let their sons or daughters make their own decisions and be supportive. This does not mean they will not passionately give their perspective. On the contrary, loving parents will seek to present persuasive arguments. It is no different in teaching. Again, my personal perspective will quite often be both visible and available, and passionately presented. But if I am to be effective, I must respect the views of

students and be available for the mentoring relationship. It is in this ongoing relationship that the greatest teacher-student experiences are realized. As for those who continue in a military career, they may be soldiers with a different consciousness now and may take a different approach to their work. I need to trust that compassionate mentoring and guidance into various peace studies perspectives will bear fruit in multiple ways over time.

Indeed, transformation does not end with formal class instruction. Much, or even most, of the transformational process, a very individual experience, will occur over many years and decades, and will establish itself within the student's self-consciousness in a multiplicity of ways. This is surely one of the most exciting aspects of teaching: the ideas shared and the mentoring bequeathed will bear fruit and ripen in times, places, and ways instructors cannot fully anticipate or imagine. Likewise, since teaching is a dialogically engaged art, educators will continue to be influenced by encounters with their students long after the immediate classroom experience.

### **The Gift of Classroom Epiphanies**

In one noteworthy respect, teaching peace studies is no different than teaching other subjects. Teachers live for the classroom epiphanies, the “aha!” moments. Every educator knows these are the most rewarding experiences of all. One such moment appeared several years ago in my senior seminar on *Disarming Conflict: Weapons of War and the Quest for Peace* (Global Studies 435), a documents-based course focusing on disarmament treaties for all the different classes of weapons. That year, the class consisted of 24 students from Ontario and one exchange student from Japan. One of the books assigned in the first month was *The Seventh Decade* by Jonathan Schell,<sup>28</sup> who claims that the uranium in the bomb that incinerated Hiroshima “came from a mine at Great Bear Lake in the Northwest Territories”<sup>29</sup> and “it was thus literally a tiny piece of Canada, extracted by mining and then refined, whose fissioning obliterated the Japanese city.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Jonathan Schell, *The Seventh Decade: The New Shape of Nuclear Danger* (New York: Metropolitan Books—Henry Holt & Co., 2007).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*



I asked the class how they felt about a piece of our iconic Canadian Shield being used to incinerate the citizens of Hiroshima. The usually quiet Japanese exchange student spoke up: “I had always thought of Canada as a friendly and peaceful nation; now I am not sure about that any longer.” She added that she now felt conflicted about Canadians as a friendly people. You could have heard a pin drop. The silent embarrassment of her classmates spoke volumes; none of them knew what to say. It was a “holy” teaching moment in that classroom sanctuary.

In response to this incident, I assigned a two-page reflection asking students to address this question by the end of term: “*Since Canada provided a piece of its land, a piece of the Canadian Shield in the form of uranium, to blow up Hiroshima, do we have a responsibility for that horrific event? Should we apologize to Japan and its people for our role in that devastating act?*” I wanted them to grapple with the close reality of the issues they were studying and the question posed by their Japanese classmate. I did not wish to lose the teaching moment but to sharpen it by raising the question of a formal apology. What was their role as Canadians and as global citizens in respect of such issues, and what was their responsibility to their classmate?

Peace is not only *what* those of us in peace and conflict studies teach; it is really *how* we teach and provide opportunities for learning. If we can provide an open classroom learning environment, a passionate engagement with the world, as well as care and mentoring, students will find the way of peace, and we may not even always know how they got there. Furthermore, respecting their views opens the door to ongoing relationships. I have been privileged to observe students growing into active peacemakers and having a wider community impact. This is why I feel fortunate to teach peace studies in a public university; the opportunity to mentor students on the road to peace has never been more open, and they are active partners in a dynamic dialogue. The diversity of their contexts has contributed to the richness of the discourse, and has made the art of teaching peace studies a creative and rewarding experience.

*Edmund Pries is Assistant Professor in the Department of Global Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario.*

## Teaching and Learning—Violence and Healing

*Regina Shands Stoltzfus*

*A student begins to share a reflection from the assigned reading. She falteringly begins to explain how this particular chapter, in which the author describes the after-effects of a brutal sexual assault, was very close to the bone for her. The student confesses that she didn't finish reading the assignment. In fact, she doesn't know if she can stay for the discussion. The more she talks, the more her voice breaks until she dissolves into tears. Except for her sobs, the room is silent.*

*Early on a Monday morning midway through the semester, a murder/suicide occurs in a parking lot less than two miles from our campus. As the details of the tragedy unfold, the campus learns that the murder victim was one of our women students.*

*A male student expresses his frustration at the amount of time spent discussing male violence against women. His primary concern seems to be that we understand that not all men are violent, and that he, himself is not a rapist, nor is he an abuser of women and girls. He demands that we give equal time to discussions about women's violence against men and boys.*

In “Personal Violence and Healing,” the Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies (PJCS) class at Goshen College in which these events have taken place, academics, activism, and soul care come face to face. Such scenarios are not outside the real work of the class. Each calls for making in-the-moment decisions about how to move forward and think through what they mean for our learning community. The role of a professor in a PJCS classroom—particularly one like this—takes various forms. As a group facilitator, he or she must pay attention to behavior that in other classes might simply be seen as disruptive and as an obstacle to the session's learning objectives. Current events, whether far away or local, take on a different life in a classroom where

the very subject matter is violence. Here, hearing, holding, and honoring stories is a central focus, learning is collaborative, and students share in the leadership.

I taught this class for the first time in 2007. The course was developed and previously taught by Ruth Krall, a long-time professor of Religion, Nursing and Psychology, who generously shared her resources and notes with me but strongly urged me to make the class my own. In trying to do so, I am in debt to people and places that shaped me as a peace studies educator. My formation is grounded in the church that raised me, an urban congregation that taught Anabaptist theology in a primarily black church context. At Lee Heights Community Church in Cleveland, Ohio, I learned peace and justice by watching my elders commit to “being church” in an integrated context (nearly unheard of during that era) and confronting institutions that sought to diminish black life. My understanding of what it means to wage peace and foster justice is built upon a foundation of understanding and addressing structural injustices like racism and sexism. Before teaching in the college classroom, I provided peace education for the Ohio Conference of the Mennonite Church, Mennonite Conciliation Services, and Mennonite Mission Network. I also spent seven years as a pastor in the Lee Heights congregation.

### **An Overview of the Class**

Personal Violence and Healing is a 300-level seminar style class. Students who enroll in it come from a variety of disciplines. Over the course of the semester they are engaged in an intense study of an area of violence that they are interested in. Each student takes a turn leading a session by presenting their research, which they turn in as a paper at the end of the semester.

Two questions provide a foundation for the semester’s work: (1) What is the cultural permission for violence? (2) What does it mean to receive, hold, and tell a story of trauma? Sub-questions in the second question are: Who “owns” such stories? Who is allowed to tell such stories? How are they told with integrity, and with an eye toward the healing of both those traumatized and the structures that perpetuate violence?

Together we pursue these questions as we read and discuss, and students use them as a central focus for their research projects. They are

important questions to ask if one is serious about not only helping people heal from trauma and violence but stemming the flow of violence. Since personal acts of violence are often related to systems of oppression that are intricately connected to one another, dismantling such systems demands an understanding of how they came to be and what keeps holding them together. For example, to begin to grasp why sexual assaults happen most often to women, and why indigenous women experience these assaults at statistically greater rates than other women, one must become aware of a long history of social, cultural, and legislative policies permitting violence to certain bodies deemed unimportant. One must also examine cultural expectations about masculinity and what constitutes a “real man.” With this broader perspective, ending “violence against women” becomes a much more complicated process than just punishing individual men.

The questions also help distinguish between doing education with a view to stopping violence and just being voyeurs. We examine how stories of trauma have been suppressed or misused, and how they shed light on seeing rape and sexual assault as issues of power, control, and dominance (rather than as a matter of women who are slutty or men who are effeminate, and therefore are “asking for it” and can be blamed for their own victimization).

As a learning community, my students and I read about, and hear from, individuals who study trauma from a number of standpoints: people who have been violated, helpers/healers (including but not limited to medical professionals, law enforcement personnel, social workers, teachers, family members, and pastors), researchers, and perpetrators. There is an opportunity—but not a requirement—to share personal stories.

### **Resources and Processes**

During the first month of the semester, I provide the primary input, covering theoretical and theological approaches to understanding violence. Judith Herman’s *Trauma and Recovery*<sup>1</sup> is our grounding text as we build a vocabulary and begin to see how the body, mind, and spirit respond to trauma. We then set the schedule for the balance of the semester; students work through a self-care plan, sign up for a “class opener,” decide upon a

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<sup>1</sup> Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (New York: Basic Books, 1997).

topic to research, and submit a research proposal.

During the next month, we focus on another text and process it with student-led discussions. For the past two years the class has read Andrea Smith's *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*.<sup>2</sup> Smith, a Native American anti-violence activist and scholar, brilliantly documents the intersections between different kinds of systematized and state-sanctioned violence. She draws important connections between the rape and sexual assault of indigenous women and the process of colonization in North America, and helps readers understand how one system of violence upholds and enforces others. It is not a huge book, but it is a substantial read. The first year I used it, I made the mistake of trying to move through it too quickly because we had a third book to cover. I discovered that the theme of conquest demands much processing time, and after that year I deleted the third book from the syllabus.

Reading and processing Smith's book together in class is a way to acknowledge that horrific acts of violence happened, and to honor the bodies and spirits that they happened to. Students who are not indigenous to the continent are also forced to examine how the colonization process that benefits non-Natives was built and how it continues to violate the bodies of Native women and men. Students are very often dismayed that they did not know this part of American history.

The deleted third book is one I hope to come back to. *At The Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape and Resistance*<sup>3</sup> by Danielle McGuire details the history of African American women who experienced sexual assault at the hands of white men who often were not charged and rarely prosecuted. Organizing against this systematized violence that married racism and misogyny was a starting point for the activism of Rosa Parks, whose image has been sanitized into a sweet story about a woman who "just got tired" one day. Her story is one powerful example of how people educate themselves and others to address systems of injustice, do the hard work of strategizing

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<sup>2</sup> Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> Danielle McGuire, *At The Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power* (New York: Vintage, 2011).

(often over long periods of time), and then are ready to mobilize because they are organized.

The final third of the semester is devoted to the students presenting their research. They are essentially teaching the class what they have learned and leading a discussion after their presentation. During these sessions, they make connections between their projects and often share insights and resources with one another.

### **Studying Violence with Eyes and Heart Open**

Here I will outline in more detail some elements of my approach. The student described in the first vignette at the beginning of this account was motivated by a reading assignment. She had a powerful need to talk about her experience. Fortunately, by that point in the semester we had built up enough of a community to hold that moment with her. We knew how to support her and each other, and she trusted her classmates and me with her story.

Not surprisingly, Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies classes are a draw for individuals who empathize with the pain of others. In the initial meetings of this particular class, we talk about triggering and secondary trauma, and the necessity for “self-care” (see below) during the semester. Our eyes and are hearts must be open to receive and carry each other’s stories as well as the books we read and the videos we view. Although everyone is invited to share stories, no one is required to do so. We agree not to share stories outside the classroom. Even so, questions arise: Is this a safe space? What can I say here? What might I hear? What kinds of stories are appropriate for the college classroom? How do we monitor the sharing? How much is too much? The subject matter of the course can—and does, eventually—throw off even the most skilled facilitator, as will be evident in the stories that follow.

During the first session, I say that I want us to foster a place where we can learn well, be ourselves, and equip ourselves for the work of stopping and healing violence. Because we are all also engaged in unlearning the systemic violence our culture supports (racism, classism, sexism) I cannot guarantee “safe space.” The best that I and my students can do is to commit ourselves to trying to make the spaces we inhabit, in the classroom and elsewhere, safer than they would otherwise be. We can work together to make this particular

space as safe as possible.

The subject matter of the course is violence, primarily systemic, institutionalized violence—a subject that can make people uncomfortable and defensive. Often they feel helpless upon learning the pervasiveness of systemic violence. Sometimes they will defend the racism and the racists of the past, by saying it was a different time and they weren't there. Sometimes they are offended by the fact that I would even bring racism up. How do I deal with this? I have learned to name it upfront. There will undoubtedly be moments where participants will feel uncomfortable. This is not a bad thing, I say, and I observe that we will all experience it at some point during the course.

At times students of color will, curiously, even defend racist behavior. I believe that in a predominantly white, small liberal arts college, students who are “different” or part of a minority group need to protect themselves. If they don't acknowledge the racist/sexist behavior of which they have been on the receiving end, or if they downplay it, this lessens the chance for friction with peers outside the classroom. Within the context of a small campus, students will protect their social circles.

In one semester a male student challenged nearly every point I made about gender inequalities and violence against women. Eventually, as I did my planning, I began to anticipate his probable objections and to formulate a response. His main objections centered on his disbelieving the statistics and anecdotal evidence on gendered violence. Dealing with this student began to occupy my emotional energy; I was becoming less responsive to other students, and some were beginning to participate less. I contacted him outside of class and noted that he seemed to disagree or counterpoint virtually every statement I made in class. I acknowledged that I couldn't spend time arguing with him during every session, and offered to let him finish the course as a direct study. He responded by saying he didn't realize how much of my energy he was using, and agreed to tone it down. He remained in the class, and we finished the semester in fine fashion.

Studying violence together as a community requires vulnerability, and building trust is important. At the outset we share what I hope is low risk, as I ask students to say what they want to research, and why. Over the years, their research has included topics such as art therapy for sexual assault

survivors, clergy and sexual abuse, bullying and LGBT youth, and loss and grief among adoptees. I am touched by the passion and care in the students' work. When they present their findings in class, I am often impressed by the questions they ask and the support they offer each other.

I advise students that I am not a trained therapist and that our class is not a therapeutic space. Ongoing, deep distress must be tended to outside class, and I help them find the necessary support. I try to achieve a balance between facilitating our academic activities, and participating in and nurturing the necessary vulnerability. I am responsible for bringing the content: I write the syllabus, decide what we're going to read, and give grades at the end of the semester. The students produce work (discussion leadership, presentations, and papers) which I evaluate. I talk—and I listen.

The issue of sexualized violence in society is of course prominent in this course. Although experienced by boys and girls, and by men and women, rape and sexual assault are most often experienced by women and girls at the hands of boys and men.<sup>4</sup> Gender dynamics in the classroom itself also need attention, something that can produce frank discussions about the misuse of male power and the consequences of male domination in society.

Willingness to be vulnerable enhances the possibility of good teaching and learning in this type of course. Our classes to a degree seem to self-select their participants. Generally, one doesn't just stumble into such a class and expect that it's going to be an easy ride. PJCS students are the kind of students very likely to seek outside counseling. They find that studying conflict, violence, and trauma is hard work emotionally and psychologically. It may also present a personal crisis, particularly for those in the process of forming and owning their adult faith. The deep study of violence can trouble their understanding of who God is and how God operates in the world. While musings on theodicy may not be new, new questions confront students as they discover the depth and pervasiveness of violence in our culture. Anger at people who do terrible things, at God who seemingly permits these things to happen, or at ourselves for our participation, ignorance, or ineffectiveness

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<sup>4</sup> See *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia, [www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/cdc\\_nisvs\\_overview\\_insert\\_final-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/cdc_nisvs_overview_insert_final-a.pdf), and *National Violence Against Women Survey*, National Criminal Justice Reference Service, US Dept. of Justice, [www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/183781.pdf](http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/183781.pdf).



is a predictable and appropriate response.

Often, students' prior biblical and theological training does not sufficiently equip them to address violence in a way that feels sustainable. It is particularly difficult when we look at how religious systems are implicated in the very violence we seek to end, such as the slave trade, colonization, and gender hierarchies that give men the power to dominate women and children.

It can be tempting, as professors, to try to remain detached and not be vulnerable. After all, we could say, I'm the one in charge; I have to be in control. Indeed, we might have been taught that it is unprofessional to let students see our human, frail side. I disagree; I want my students to know I am human. However, as an African American woman, I also know that many of them have never had an "authority figure" that looks like me.

A conversation about "isms" (sexism, racism, classism, etc.) is a conversation about power and how it is arranged hierarchically. Those socialized within the context of a racialized society are instructed by a narrative about how power should flow, with "whiteness" as an identity constructed to determine who should govern and who should be governed. For example, in the United States there were four racial categories in the first census in 1790: free white men, free white women, all other free persons, and slaves.<sup>5</sup> The construction of "whiteness" served to identify those who could be citizens, own property, and govern—those who had power.

In teaching this class and others, one thing I must do is to claim my authority to teach. Because I teach about identity and difference, I must address the possibility and probability of dealing with students and colleagues who perceive my subject matter as not real scholarship—as something I do because I have a chip on my shoulder or have a vendetta against white people, especially white men. Being mindful about the stereotypes about black women, I work hard to maintain a balance that allows me to be approachable enough to hear student concerns and struggles yet authoritative enough to demand rigor.

### **Committing to Radical Self-Care**

Poet, essayist, and activist Audre Lorde (1934-1992) wrote a series of essays

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<sup>5</sup> [www.census.gov/history/www/through\\_the\\_decades/overview/1790.html](http://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/overview/1790.html).

about her battle with the cancer that eventually ended her life. In addition to the illness, Lorde also struggled to pay medical expenses and to continue her work as an educator and activist within institutions that seemed to be trying to silence her. Of these struggles, she wrote, “Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”<sup>6</sup> Those who would commit themselves to the enterprise of healing must be equipped to tend to their own wounds, to undertake radical acts of self-care. Self-care is part of the foundation for doing social justice work. If we are not working on our own wholeness (*shalom*), it is much harder to work for wholeness on behalf of other individuals or systems. Since structures of violence and injustice operate by dehumanizing, a necessary first step in undoing them is to recognize and interrupt patterns of dehumanization. Recognizing and tending to our own humanity is critical.

After the first semester of teaching Personal Violence and Healing, I clearly needed a self-care plan myself. There was of course the usual end-of-semester fatigue. Additionally, I had extended myself in caring for students—meeting with them outside class and being hyper-attentive in class to our process and conversations. And then, after classes ended, I was faced with reading a stack of research papers about violence and trauma. I slogged through the stack—and had the most miserable break between semesters I had ever experienced. I had neglected to listen to my own instruction! I then determined to become more attentive to self-care as a daily practice, and to bolster the self-care component of all of my classes, but especially this one.

The self-care component is designed for individuals as well as the whole group. The students’ first course assignment is a self-care worksheet that becomes a semester-long contract. They are asked to reflect upon what they have learned to do when under stress. What kinds of habits do they already have that work? How do they know that these habits work? What new habit might they be willing to commit to? Then, they are asked to try something new. In order to hold them accountable, I tell them I reserve the right to check up on them if it seems necessary. This alerts them that I am paying attention to things like body language, affect, and participation. I also check up on those who miss class. One year I had a student who was

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<sup>6</sup> Audre Lorde, *A Burst of Light* (Ann Arbor, MI: Firebrand Books, 1988), thefeministwire.com, accessed May 2, 2014.

experiencing significant stress related to events outside class and could not complete the required readings, which were themselves acting as a trigger. The student took an extension and finished the work several weeks later.

This past spring semester was the first time I required students to complete a “community care” component. Each class session began with a student sharing a reflection or leading in an exercise. The variety was amazing and served to enhance our growing sense of community. Students would often build on what we were currently reading or carry over a discussion from the last session. One student told us that when she is stressed she watches funny YouTube videos, and shared several of her favorites. Laughing together felt good. One student used cooking as an outlet, and brought in treats she had made the night before. Another student told us about her “God Jar”—a practice of writing down on a piece of paper the things that worry or pain her and giving it to God by placing it in a jar, which she then invited us to do. She collected our scraps of paper, and promised not to read them but to give them to God. Other students shared songs or led us in body movements, one simply inviting us to lay our heads on the desks for five minutes and rest in silence.

I also pay attention to our setting: where and how we sit, and rituals that set the tone for our time together. I regularly provide a variety of teas and hot water, and instead of using the overhead florescent light with its low-level buzz I bring lamps into the room. Colorful fabrics to cover the table as well as candles and flowers help make the space attractive and comfortable. For book discussions, we opt to move our chairs into a circle (this works when the class is relatively small).

### **Teaching in this Body**

I am an African American woman in an institution where most of the students and a majority of the faculty are white. Teaching about personal acts of violence that are connected to larger structures means talking about ethnocentrism, racism, and sexism (among other “isms”). This means being vulnerable in a different way, and teaching in a manner that opens me up to criticisms that I must decide if and how to address. Teaching people—especially those who find themselves in privileged positions—about these isms is hard work and must be done in a manner that is simultaneously gentle

and tough. I cannot teach this content as though it is sterile or unconnected to either my life or the students' lives, although it may be connected to us in significantly different ways. This is a place where the "bad guys out there" scenario just doesn't work. Here we can come face to face with what it means to have violence committed in our names and/or for our sakes.

As a black woman, I reflect on a fact that helps me understand this issue. I have privileges as someone who was born in the United States and holds a US passport. My citizenship gives me privileges that I did not personally earn, some of which I value very much. (I could also add the privileges that being part of the educated, middle class affords me, but I will stick to the citizenship example, because this is an identity I had no choice in or agency with.) There are acts of violence committed in my name by my government that operate to preserve my privileges. Granted, some people who utilize anti-oppression models have shifted away from talking about "privilege" to using language about "dominance" and "control," saying less about white privilege and more about white supremacy. But whatever the terminology, the reality requires thinking through. Do students learn best if such topics as privilege, dominance, control, and supremacy are addressed gingerly or if they are handled plainly and bluntly? This is where having formed a community and possessing a sense of shared agreement seem a necessary part of the pedagogical commitment.

Teaching this class and having these conversations, although some of the hardest work I have ever done, brings me a great deal of satisfaction. This work is about stories and statistics, and about examining structures and speaking to systems. It is also a work of the spirit, an activity that can have different meanings for different people in different contexts. Sometimes violence is contained within the very structures where we have learned our spirituality and our faith stories; we must reclaim them. To build a new world, peace studies educators must create new paths, new ways of understanding old stories, and new ways of being. May we commit ourselves to being teachers and learners of these new paths and new ways.

*Regina Shands Stoltzfus is Assistant Professor of Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies at Goshen College in Goshen, Indiana.*

# Teaching Peace as if it is Everyone's Business

*Lowell Ewert*

## **Introduction**

Some initial observations will put my comments into perspective. First, although I have taught peace studies courses and managed the Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) program at Conrad Grebel University College for 17 years, I have never once taught a PACS course that was substantially similar to any course I completed as an undergraduate or graduate student. My teaching has been heavily influenced by my law school studies and my international development experiences in more than a dozen countries, and my approach is rooted in my experience in working with people trapped in the daily grind of poverty, disempowering political systems, and armed conflict.

Second, I realize that the human rights lens I use poses a dilemma for some who fear it does not give prominence to the negative impact of dominant or abusive political powers. Human rights principles designed to promote positive justice presuppose a strong state that can impose its will, using force if necessary, to mandate compliance. This dilemma is one in which the “problem” is often a strong state that applies its power in a way that harms people (usually using law to justify its actions), and simultaneously the “solution” is a strong state (using law to justify its actions). The problem and the solution appear to be the same.

A law-based approach does not shy away from the state-sanctioned use of force or violence. Instead it seeks to regulate it within lawful parameters. Integrating this approach into a peace program sponsored by a Mennonite Anabaptist pacifist constituency is not without its challenges. As an example of the perceived contradiction between Mennonite approaches to peace and a rule-of-law approach, I recall being scolded by a passionate PACS supporter after my first public community presentation as a PACS faculty member for not being Mennonite enough. I had just finished delivering comments in which I argued that because the law of war can be useful to protect civilians caught in armed conflict, pacifists at a minimum should demand

that all warring parties adhere to it. I was cornered by a deeply concerned constituent of Conrad Grebel and accused of justifying war and violence, and supporting the just war tradition. “I don’t understand why Grebel hired someone like you in the first place as we are pacifists and against all wars,” she declared, missing the point of my comments.

Third, I do not believe that peace studies is a discipline for which the parameters of discourse are clear. Every sector of society contributes daily to peace in ways that most disciplines don’t critique and analyze. Engineering, computer science, chemistry, community health, or mathematics, to name just a few disciplines, can all have a profound impact on advancing the notion of peace broadly defined. Peace studies is therefore one of the most practical areas of study, as it applies to everyone, every day, no matter their occupation or academic pursuits. The daily newspaper can be the peace studies course reader, as virtually every article has a peace subtext.

As such, successful peace studies instructors can be generalists concerned about the broad architecture of peace as opposed to specialists in one narrow aspect of the peace construction business. I fall into the first category. In my teaching I emphasize educating students about a way of thinking and asking questions as being more valuable than knowledge of specific facts that they can find by a quick google search. Not all students are comfortable with this approach, and indeed a student walked out of a first class session after I said “there is no right answer, but there are better ways of thinking.” The student was concerned about not being able to perform well on the exam and earn a good grade.

I don’t recount this personal perspective to suggest that it is possible to teach peace even if one is not qualified to do so, or that a law and rights framework is inconsistent with a Mennonite pacifist approach to peace. Rather, these factors help explain how I have gone about conceptualizing, developing, and teaching peace courses in a way that has generally been well received by students. Below I will fill out the framework by identifying four key elements of my approach.

### **Framework for Teaching Peace Studies**

#### *Visualization of Peace*

In April 2007, I started on a journey that has dramatically improved

my connection with students and raised my course evaluations. I was a participant in a week-long seminar run by the University of Waterloo Centre for Teaching Excellence. We were challenged by an exercise calling on us to draw a picture that described an entire course we taught. Using words within the picture was permitted, though employing fewer words and a more illustrative picture was promoted as having more impact. "If you can draw it, you can teach it," we were told. I can't draw and have no artistic sensibility, but I managed to explain enough of what I visualized so that someone else could draw what I "saw." The impact of pictorial concept maps on me and my teaching was profound. While I had always felt that my course outlines made sense and led logically from one principle to another, visualizing the totality of a course in terms of a drawing or "concept map" worked so well that I now regularly use such drawings to let students know when we are transitioning from one module to another, and how new topics build on and complement the stages just finished.

"Where you stand determines what you see," and the visual map helps students gain a better sense of where they are standing on the path through the course materials. It also forces me keep the course focused on the end goal and to clarify how each module or principle contributes to the overall journey. Although very difficult at times to create, I have regularly used drawings as concept maps in five courses: Promoting Peace in Perilous Times; Fair Trade; Human Rights and Business; Peace-Building, Human Rights and Civil Society; and Conflict Resolution. The only reason I haven't used a concept map for all my courses is that I've been unable to conceptualize all of them in visual form. In theory, however, every course should be "draw-able."

The most successful concept map has been one I prepared for an introductory conflict resolution course. This map, shown on the following page, illustrates how people can find their way through interpersonal conflict. The words in the top left corner, where the group is standing and waiting to begin the process of going through a conflict, identify some (but not all) of the underlying core values supporting the course. This section represents more than one-third of the entire course content. Once the foundational principles are reviewed, the class then begins a comparative analysis of the most common conflict resolution principles used for interpersonal conflict



in Canada today—negotiation, mediation, various hybrids, arbitration, and resort to the formal legal system. Each successful path is shown to be a longer journey through more difficult terrain, a less traveled road with more obstacles and risks. However, the alternative to these five processes is also shown. If none of the processes is effective, the “ocean of violence” is a very likely outcome, making the return to a peaceful civil society far less likely.

Students are challenged by the map to visualize the practical reality that it is almost, but not always, quickest, easiest, most efficient, and best to take the shorter route through conflict. What was missing from the map, the students and I later discovered, was a warm cleansing shower (to be placed in the bottom left of the drawing). This addition would represent the notions of forgiveness and apology that enable people just completing the difficult journey through conflict to be refreshed and truly restored.

This very practical, and not theoretical, illustration of the course has been so successfully received that students have sometimes submitted a version of the map on exams when asked to recommend the best conflict resolution approach for resolving a hypothetical conflict. An additional unexpected benefit is that the map has assisted sessional instructors



teaching the course to offer consistent, almost interchangeable versions of it. All instructors follow the same map, even if their individual perspectives, experiences, approaches, and stories may substantially differ. The concept map has become the visual brand for the course.

### *Structural Issues Matter*

Visualizing peace in the absence of examining the structural systems that support it is unlikely to lead to sustainable long-term peace as broadly envisioned. The “hard” structural legal and normative aspect of peace must be seamlessly combined with the “soft” relational side. If it is not, neither the hard nor the soft objectives will be met. Peace will not result. The late Louis Henkin, a leading scholar of international law, has made an analogous contention about the impact of human rights on religion:

Human rights are not a complete, alternative ideology, but rights are a *floor*, necessary to make other values—including religion—flourish. Human rights not only protect religion, but have come to serve religious ethics in respects and contexts where religion itself has proved insufficient. Human rights are, at least, a supplemental “theology” for pluralistic, urban, and secular societies.<sup>1</sup>

In my teaching I attempt to illustrate and integrate the co-dependent relationship of rigid rules and flexible discretion in two ways.

First, I compare the co-dependence between hard structural and soft relational attributes of peace to the situation of a family living through a cold Canadian winter. The structural aspects of their house—its foundation, walls, doors, windows, roof, and floor—are mostly rigid and difficult to change. These aspects can be metaphorically compared to international law or national constitutional law. The interior walls, which are more movable, can be compared to provincial, state, or municipal law, usually far more adaptable in a remodeling effort. The rigid structure protects occupants of the house from the figurative wind of persecution, the hail of discrimination, the cold rain or snow of disempowerment, and the arbitrariness of having no protection from burglars or thieves. It also provides necessary boundaries

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<sup>1</sup> Louis Henkin, *The Age of Rights* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1990), 186-87.

and barriers for the residents to express their unique individuality.

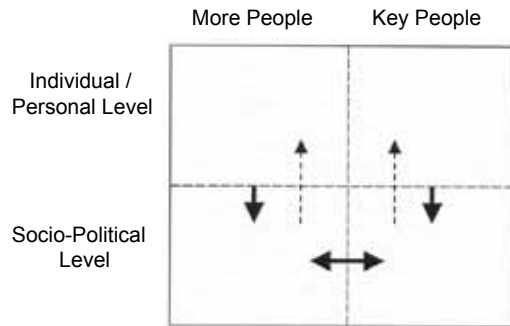
Without a house, or with a house that is severely damaged, no matter how much the occupants may appreciate or interact respectfully with each other, it will be difficult for them to form genuine community and develop their full potential when they are shivering in minus 20 degree weather, pelted with snow or frozen rain pellets, or afraid for their personal safety because there are no locked doors. Conversely, the structure of the house by itself is no guarantee that occupants will genuinely love, respect, care for, value, or want to form community with each other. Even within the best constructed house, life lacks the manifestation of dignity and peace if the soft relational attributes are absent. Genuine respect for the dignity of the person requires an affirmation of both the structural and relational aspects of peace.

This understanding of the structural (standards) and relational (peace theory) aspects of Fair Trade, business, civil society, disasters, disabilities, vocations, and much more is the key to how I can effectively teach my courses. The house analogy illustrates how structural and relational aspects, which are present in every single topic, can be understood synergistically. It also offers a compelling picture of how peace theology and peace practice can lead to a common outcome.

Second, and closely related, I examine how structures can be used to “build” peace. For this understanding, I am indebted to the findings of the Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) research project undertaken about a decade ago by the Collaborative for Development Action to answer this question: Why has so much peace work been done for so long, by so many people, with so much funding, with so little apparent impact? It was framed in response to a sense that decades of peace-related work sponsored by international and local agencies should have had more impact and more solid gains than were evident.

This project spanned a three-year period and involved discussions with more than two hundred local, national, and international agencies involved in some kind of peacemaking activity. It was the most comprehensive study of its kind. Researchers found that the various peace activities could be divided into two distinct strategies or theories, illustrated by the diagram at right, of who needs to be engaged for the achievement of peace. One group believed it was essential to engage *as many people as possible* for peace to

be viable. The other group aimed more at *a small number of key people* or groups of people: gatekeepers, political leaders, warlords. In spite of the great variety of activities, all could be mapped in a simple four-cell matrix.<sup>2</sup>



The RPP project also found that all programs typically work at either the individual/personal level or the socio/political level. Some projects or interventions would move to another cell eventually, and some were located in the boundaries between cells, but many stayed in one cell. One of the most interesting and perhaps sobering findings was that any project that begins and remains in just one quadrant will not be doing enough to effect significant change in “peace writ large,” the bigger peace beyond the immediate goals of individual programs. And the authors concluded, among other things, that a much greater effect will be realized if the work in one quadrant can be transferred to other quadrants. The size of the arrows in the diagram suggests how important it is for development practitioners to attempt make linkages between their work and that occurring in other quadrants.

A shocking revelation was that programs focused at the individual/personal level “will have no discernible effect” on peace!<sup>3</sup> That is, when peacemakers worked only at the individual/personal level, whether they

<sup>2</sup> Mary B. Anderson and Lara Olson, *Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners*, (Cambridge, MA: Collaborative for Development Action, 2003), 48.

<sup>3</sup> *Reflecting on Peace Practice: Participant Training Manual* (Cambridge, MA: Collaborative for Development Action, 2013), 11, [www.cdacollaborative.org/media/94317/rpp-i-participant-training-manual.pdf](http://www.cdacollaborative.org/media/94317/rpp-i-participant-training-manual.pdf), accessed June 8, 2014.

focused on more people or key people, their peacemaking effort had a limited long-term impact on the broader peace. This finding has profoundly influenced all my teaching, as it identifies the key to creating sustainable long-term peace. In contrast to the house analogy discussed above, describing the equilibrium that should exist between structure and relationships, the more people/key people diagram explains how to create this equilibrium.

As an illustration, consider Fair Trade, which was designed to represent a new kind of relationship between the producer and consumer. The principles and institutions of Fair Trade (socio-political) have since concretized relational and soft attributes (individual and personal) into more formal standards. If this development had not occurred, the RPP theory correctly hypothesizes that Fair Trade would eventually fade away. Instead, because it now also functions in the bottom two quadrants of the diagram, Fair Trade is growing dramatically each year, even attracting multinational proponents.

Peace studies educators can apply the same reasoning to classes on business and peace. It is nice and good for individual businesses to respect human rights (individual and personal), but the gains will likely be lost unless these singular actions are codified and solidified into a form such as the United Nations Global Compact or other standards forged by activists and civil society actors to solidify the principles (socio-political). Collectively, these standards create structure. When I look for them, I find such standards functioning at the socio-political level in almost everything I teach. As a result, the RPP diagram is at the core of all my classes, and I use it to challenge students to seek opportunities to “harden” relational processes of peace into standards that sustain peace.

### *Peace as Broadly Owned*

My approach to peace studies has given me the freedom to develop new courses that approach peace broadly. In 1998, when I developed a course on Human Rights, Peace and Business, I was aware of only two other similar courses, both offered by US law schools, on this topic. This course emphasized global corporate standards, both legal and normative, that were prodding the economic community to be more responsive to peace concerns. It predated, but has subsequently built on, the energy created by the ten UN

Global Compact principles, established in 2002 to promote global business adherence to human rights and to labor, environment and anti-corruption tenets.

A course on Fair Trade I developed in 2008 was the only term-long course on this emerging area of commerce I could find in North America at the time. While many peace studies, business, or economics courses offered a module or two on Fair Trade within an existing course, they did not devote an entire term to delving deeply into the history, practice, or detailed operational aspects of this phenomenon. A significant aspect of my course was an analysis and discussion of the standards that motivate, guide and regulate the Fair Trade industry.

I am currently developing two courses that will follow a similar approach. One is entitled *Peace is Everyone's Business*, and the other is named *Peace and Disability*. The first will explore how nearly every Faculty and discipline at the University of Waterloo can and should contribute to peace, helping students strengthen the connection between peace and their chosen profession. This course will examine how standards and norms impacting the notions of justice, rights, and suffering, as well as occupations related to accountancy,<sup>4</sup> business, health,<sup>5</sup> engineering, and disaster response all contribute to peace. As an example of how the course will be framed, it

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<sup>4</sup> Accountants contribute to peace by creating mechanisms and rules facilitating commerce and trade. Sometimes the trade that they make more possible causes harm. Often, however, good accountants, guided by good accounting practices, are an important foundation stone on which peace is built. Good accountants justly “enforce” law, ensuring that taxes are paid, minimum wage standards are followed and benefits paid, and government or other officials are not bribed. One difference (not the only one) between Nigeria or the Congo and Canada is the absence in these African countries of both a fully competent system of business accounting and the political will to enforce just rules of trade and commerce. Corruption, cheating, and fraud are endemic, siphoning off billions of dollars of resources that would otherwise transform people's lives. If peace means having the basic necessities of life met, for the people of Nigeria and the Congo it means in part having good accountants following generally accepted accounting practices. The kleptocracy of the Viktor Yanukovych regime in Ukraine is an additional example of how failed accounting practices, or timid accountants, allowed a leader to ruin a nation financially, potentially leading to violent internal or international conflict.

<sup>5</sup> Master of Public Health workers or their equivalents are often the first people targeted during a civil war, as their diagnosis of root causes can expose evil and be seen as threatening abusive powers. Good peace work requires health workers.

will examine the common toilet as one of the greatest “peace inventions” of all time.<sup>6</sup>

The second course aims to expand the disability discussion from one that focuses on health, rights, and access to services to one that employs a peace lens including reference to eugenics, ugly laws (laws discriminating against people of “unsightly or disgusting” appearance), disabilities, mercy killing, assisted suicide, autonomy, and the impact of global conflict on the disabled. This course will build on the notion articulated by Christian Blind Mission Canada, that “a person’s impairment is really not the biggest barrier they face. The attitudes and prejudices around them are much more limiting than not being able to see or hear or walk.”<sup>7</sup> Framed this way, disability is far more a peace issue than a health issue.

The point of my discussion here is to highlight an aspect of teaching peace that I find most fulfilling, namely finding how to emphasize the practical manifestation of peace. I believe I am most effective when my teaching minimizes the use of the word “peace.” This approach forces me to be less ideological and more applied. It eliminates relying on code words that often substitute for substance. It changes the discussion from whether I am “for peace” (often merely a political or theological question) to one requiring me to articulate the emphasis I place on toilets, generally accepted accounting principles, health care workers, or lending practices directed towards the business sector. This approach describes the outcome of peace in ways students can readily understand, since it relates specifically to their

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<sup>6</sup> If peace is defined to affirm the dignity of people and improve their quality of life, toilets are easily one of the most important drivers of peace. For example, over one billion people defecate in the open, making it inevitable for contamination to spread from person to person. UNICEF estimates that one gram of human feces can contain up to 10,000 viruses, 1 million bacteria, 1,000 parasite cysts, and 100 parasite eggs. One sanitation specialist has further suggested that people living without sanitation in their homes or community may ingest up to 10 grams of fecal matter per day. Also, open defecation creates enormous safety risks for women, the elderly, and the disabled. Rose George estimates that 80 percent of the world’s illnesses are caused by fecal matter (see Rose George, *The Big Necessity: The Unmentionable World of Human Waste and Why it Matters* [New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008].) Proper sanitation has increased life expectancy by an average of twenty years. By all these indicators, toilets are a crucial prerequisite for peace.

<sup>7</sup> Christian Blind Mission, [www.cbmcanda.org/ourwork.htm](http://www.cbmcanda.org/ourwork.htm), accessed December 6, 2013.

chosen vocation or avocation, and it dramatically ratchets up the relevance of my classes for those not majoring in peace studies.

*Assignments Matter*

Encouraging the application of peace to almost every aspect of life also demands allowing students the freedom to pursue assignments that build on their expression and view of peace. This freedom may result in unusual projects for which I was never prepared in graduate school to grade. For example, in a course dealing with how civil society may be impacted by the confluence of peak oil, global pandemics, global economic collapse, climate change, and natural disasters, my co-instructor and I gave students the option to pursue a skill they thought they might need in order to survive in turbulent times.

One student came to class with a salad he had picked on his way to the university that evening, complete with all sorts of edible plants that nearly everyone thought were weeds and were going to waste, which he shared with his hungry classmates. Several students made preserves, medicinal tinctures, or baked goods demonstrating sustainable simplicity. Others knitted or crocheted items of clothing. Another took the three-liter plastic bags in which milk is sold in Ontario and wove them into a mat that a person can sleep and keep dry on, as earthquake victims have done in Haiti. One student created a piece of art depicting peace, while several others created three to ten minute video reports.

A group of students wrote and produced a 45-minute theatrical play demonstrating the plight of persons seeking refugee status in Canada. It was subsequently refined and presented as a fundraiser for the Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support, playing to a sold-out audience. Another student tried to learn the skill of blacksmithing, but noted dryly when showing his final project of a metal chisel that his Old Order Mennonite mentor had encouraged him not to drop out of university. One PACS student learned how to shoot, clean, and maintain a gun. Some of the projects were extraordinary, some were abject failures, but all reflected the beautiful creative energy of a diverse community of learners.

Projects like these are hard to evaluate and grade uniformly or fairly, as there is no template for comparing alternative assignments. Which project is better, a beautiful story of how a student learned to maintain and shoot a gun, or a metal chisel very badly formed in a blacksmith's forge? How does one compare a piece of art with the traditional short research paper that was also an option? To what extent do I impose my values and give a lower grade to students who select projects that I may personally not favor (dealing with guns) as opposed to projects that may have more peace appeal (weaving plastic bags that would otherwise be thrown away into a sleeping mat)? And, finally, the question students frequently ask: What are the criteria for earning a grade of A or B?

To avoid the perception of arbitrary grading, I mark alternative assignments on the basis of three separate but closely related evaluative measures. First, students who complete hands-on assignments must bring their project to class (I made an exception for the gun project!), share what they learned, and engage the class in a discussion as to why they thought their project promoted peace in some way. Students are required to explain, logically defend, and promote their perspective. Discussions that ensue are fascinating, as they open up a door into the creative and expressive side of the brain, as distinct from focusing on the logical side as academic discourse often does. The reporting component of the overall assignment grade usually encompasses roughly one-third of the mark.

Second, students must also prepare a short companion reflective paper providing some academic content, background, and rationale for their project and the scale and scope of the issue they were attempting to address, plus a succinct summary of what they learned. This paper, comprising a third of the assignment mark, can be graded much like any other research paper. Third, the balance of the grade is admittedly subjective; it is based on my perception of how much effort the student seems to have applied to the project and how much they appear to have learned from it. A very badly formed metal chisel could therefore be given a higher mark than a well prepared salad, if there seemed to be a significant investment of time, energy, and enthusiasm in the project. A well-researched salad could, however, be awarded a better mark than a painting if the research supporting the salad was thorough.



Alternative assignments such as those described above should always be optional, as some students may lack the time, resources, physical ability, or creativity to try something new. I always give students the choice of a standard academic or alternative assignment. In other words, if a particular assignment is worth 25 percent of the total course mark, those preferring to submit a standard assignment would produce an 8 to 10 page academic paper. A concern raised by evaluating academic papers alongside alternative assignments is that students pursuing the latter almost always report a far higher investment of time than if they had authored a short research paper. They have been trained to write research papers, and most can do this well, fairly quickly, and too often at the last minute. Alternative projects usually cannot be slapped together just before a looming deadline, and often require a lot more preparatory work. For reasons of fairness, it is important to validate, somehow, the additional investment that such assignments represent.

### **Conclusion**

I don't claim that my approach to teaching peace is the best or only way to do it, but it has worked for me. It especially reflects what I experienced while working in international development for over a decade, most specifically while living in the midst of a civil war in Lebanon in the mid-1980s. The experience of being shot at, threatened, and forced to spend time in bomb shelters helped me frame a philosophy of peace that requires combining soft relational conflict resolution or transformation with the hard structural law and normative side of conflict management that uses power to coerce peace. As a result, a consistent element of all my courses is an emphasis on how law and normative structures influence peace, and how students can strengthen peace structures if they so choose. I don't understand how peace can be taught without a legal/normative foundational concept undergirding it.

A philosophical approach which assumes that responsibility for peace is shared among almost every occupation connects with the desire of students enrolled at a large secular university to find meaning in life. Engineers, scientists, computer and math specialists, and environmentalists, as well as graduates of the arts and humanities, are all integral to peace. When we look at peace in terms of how it is manifested, the connections to

peace can be made almost everywhere. Peace is not something that applies only to mediators, conflict resolution specialists, lawyers, judges, political scientists, social workers, or government officials. It is everyone's business.

*Lowell Ewert is Director of the Peace and Conflict Studies Program at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ontario.*

*Concept map on p. 166 reproduced with permission of the artist, Jeanette Ewert.*

## **Towards a Pedagogy of Radical Love**

*Karen Ridd*

In 1989, while working in El Salvador with Peace Brigades International (PBI), I was briefly detained and imprisoned. PBI carries out nonviolent accompaniment work, providing unarmed bodyguards to teachers, unionists, students, indigenous leaders, church workers, and activists in all forms in countries where repressive regimes target such people and their organizations for the humanitarian and social justice work they do. At the time I was arrested, I was in a church refugee center, trying to improve safety for the refugees and the valiant Salvadoran church workers running the center. Despite our efforts, the Salvadoran military invaded the building, scattered the refugees, arrested and detained all the staff, and took five PBI workers to the Treasury Police Jail. There I was blindfolded, handcuffed, interrogated, kept standing without food and water, and threatened with rape and mutilation.

There is a long version of this story, but here's the heart of it. I was in a torture center. I knew that's what it was; I had had Salvadoran friends tortured in that prison and I could hear torture around me. While in detention I tried to speak out against the torture but was unable to stop it. Under my blindfold I caught glimpses of people lying broken on the ground. However, when the officials were ready to release me, I refused to leave. I had been imprisoned with Marcela Rodriguez Diaz, a Colombian colleague, and in our unjust world my North American life was being valued more than hers. I refused to leave the jail without her, and was re-imprisoned, staying with her until we could both be released.

Before we were released, an astonishing thing happened. My refusal to leave had confused the guards, who challenged me: "Do you miss us? Do you want us?" with all the sexual innuendo this entailed. I was frightened and I didn't know how to answer. But I had been learning about nonviolence from the Central Americans I was accompanying, and an answer poured out from me. I said, "No, of course I don't want to be here, but you are soldiers, you know what solidarity is. You know that if a comrade is down or fallen in

battle, you wouldn't leave them, and I can't leave my comrade, not now, not here. You understand."

I don't know what response I thought I would get. After all, I was speaking to torturers. Yet, intuitively—and influenced by the Latin Americans whom I'd been supporting—I had placed the torturers in what George Lakey and Martin Luther King, Jr. before him have called a "dilemma demonstration,"<sup>1</sup> a Catch-22 where there is no "good" way out. Do the torturers agree with me and implicitly acknowledge our joint humanity? Or do they disagree and show themselves to be, even to themselves, inhumane tyrants?<sup>2</sup> They became still, silent. Then, gently, and after a long while, one said, "Yes, we know why you are here." From then on, the most amazing thing kept happening. Guards kept coming, apparently from all around the jail, looking for the two women they had heard about, the "inseparable ones," and responding with respect for love, friendship, and connection.

In that Salvadoran jail, I faced and learned many things. I learned the importance of what I call the "futile gesture": my small, hopeless act of returning to the jail for my friend, combined with the phone calls and messages PBI supporters around the world sent to the Salvadoran government on our behalf, led to our release. I learned that we do get second chances, and that a mistake—allowing myself to get separated from my colleague—can be rectified. I learned, incarnate, King's dilemma demonstration whereby you put your opponent in a no-win situation, and Mahatma Gandhi's conviction that liberating the oppressed also liberates the oppressor. But most important, I learned, embodied, the possibility and the power of connection.

The importance of connection has profoundly influenced both my understanding of how to teach and my practices in the Conflict Resolution Studies program at Menno Simons College (MSC), where I have taught for the last 15 years. Connection is crucial to any form of teaching, I would argue, but especially in peace studies, which seeks to move students and the world towards greater connection and greater compassion. In this article, I

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<sup>1</sup> George Lakey, *Powerful Peacemaking: A Strategy for a Living Revolution* (Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1987 [1973]), 103. See also Martin Luther King, Jr., "Meet the Press" television interview, n.d., in "A Force More Powerful Part 1: Nashville—We Were Warriors" ([www.aforcemorepowerful.org/films/afmp/](http://www.aforcemorepowerful.org/films/afmp/)).

<sup>2</sup> My two-thirds world, white skin privilege gave me space and options not available to all, and not available in the same way for Marcela.

will make some observations on the importance of connection—and love—for teaching both generally and specifically in reference to peace studies, and offer a few remarks on teaching within an Anabaptist institution.

### **Those Who Went Before**

Who were the teachers who inspired us? What made them great? Of course there are disconnected, cynical teachers out there, too many of them. Sometimes I too am one of them. But there are also great ones. In my case, one was Mrs. Stern, my ninth grade Language Arts and Art teacher, who as a rookie in the classroom didn't know where to set the bar. She set it too high and had 14-year-olds reading and reciting Chaucer, Milton, and Shakespeare. She didn't know these things were beyond us; she believed we could do them. And we did! I learned from her that people will rise (or fall) to expectations. In high school there was Mr. Dickens, a South African refugee to Canada, who made me feel that education mattered and had something to do with making a difference in the world. At university there was Professor Arthur Walker-Jones, who trusted us to design our own assignments and gave us the freedom to set our own goals. Three different teachers and three different styles, but they shared one attribute: they loved what they were doing and put that love into action.

### **Love the Students**

George Lakey, the noted peace educator, activist, and author, offers a simple teaching mantra: "Love the students, love the material, love yourself."<sup>3</sup> But what does "love" mean in the educational context? What does it mean to love the students? It takes an act of courage, trust, resilience, and vulnerability on the instructor's part. It can be heart-breaking, because to love is to risk. It can be exhausting; at the end of an academic year I sometimes feel utterly spent, like a marathoner just making it across the finish line, with nothing left to give. It can be challenging: if we give our hearts to our students, we will have theirs, not only this year, but next year and the year after, with the number of people wanting, needing, and deserving our time growing exponentially. And it can be very rewarding.

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<sup>3</sup> George Lakey, "Training for Social Action Trainers" workshop, Philadelphia, December 1990.

Students in peace studies programs are deeply aware that they are living in a world which is falling apart, where we remove mountain tops—literally blow them off—to get energy. This is a world where the addiction to oil leads to slate fracking and the devastation of the tar sands. All my generation had to worry about when growing up was nuclear war! Now, we have a world of melting polar ice caps, pending global economic and environmental collapse, and peak oil. The issues are overwhelming, and students drawn to peace studies realize to a large extent that the world is at risk. At the same time, they and other young people are not getting increased connection and support in our culture. Instead, they are becoming increasingly isolated, hooked into computers and videogames. The soldiers in the story with which I began this paper were also lost in detachment, prisoners in their own jail, isolated in horror. In a smaller way, students get lost in the isolation of technology and consumerism, afraid of the horrors that surround us all. It makes them easy to teach, because they are longing to be attached, cared about, and loved. I too benefit from this dynamic, since fracking, global warming, and peak oil terrify me too. The students support, motivate, and inspire me, and I'm glad to be in this world with them.

It is becoming clear that to learn at their best, students must have their hearts engaged. Gordon Neufeld, the Canadian developmental psychologist, promotes an attachment-based development model. Children need to feel a strong connection to a mature caregiver in order to thrive and grow.<sup>4</sup> At a lecture several years ago, Neufeld described a study that examined the impact of early reading on children.<sup>5</sup> Brain scans showed that reading to the children caused a significant, measurable increase in activity in the brain's language centers. Researchers subsequently concluded that children's brain development could be stimulated by reading to them from an early age. However, to their consternation, subsequent studies failed to show the same surge in brain activity. Trying to explain this difference, they realized one variable had changed: in the first study, each child was sitting on the mother's lap, whereas in the later studies they were being read to by research assistants. Neufeld concludes it was not that the children were being read to

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<sup>4</sup> See Gordon Neufeld and Gabor Mate, *Hold on to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Gordon Neufeld, public lecture, Winnipeg Art Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2005.

at a young age that made the difference. It was that they were being read to by someone who loved them and whom they loved. It was their attachment to the beloved reader that opened them to learning.

I contend that our students will do best—as learners, as people—if their hearts are engaged. It is perhaps even more crucial, in that the world desperately needs them to have engaged hearts because only then can they act in the peacemaking ways that are required. School shootings, mass attacks, war—all these ultimate acts of alienation demand detachment, a separation of self from other. Increasingly, war itself is detachment: fighting unseen foes, firing high-tech missiles from rooms in North America on targets in another continent, and employing drone strikes and robots. If detachment enables one to kill, then attachment is surely the antidote. If acts of violence require detachment from the victim and ultimately from the self, then the way out of this conundrum is through connection. What we need is for students to engage their hearts. But they will not and cannot do so unless we engage ours with theirs. This is at the core of peace education. In our courses and in our pedagogy,<sup>6</sup> we must model attachment, connection, and love, and support students to be loving in their journeys into the world.

### **Love and Peace Education**

What I am arguing is distinctly counter-cultural. Universities are bastions of intellect and rational thought. Teaching through the power of connection is probably slightly disconcerting to some administrators; it is unnerving to some students. But peace education instructors are accustomed to creating alternative cultures and upending oppressive ones. We, of all people, should know that unsettling the status quo opens opportunities, as my unsettling of the soldiers in the Salvadoran jail opened the opportunity for Marcela's freedom. We, of all people, should be able to move past a culture that tells us repeatedly *not* to love the students and warns us that getting "too close" means losing perspective and becoming biased.<sup>7</sup> Implicitly we are told—through big classes and institutional red tape—not to love. Explicitly we

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<sup>6</sup> Here, and throughout this article, I use "pedagogy" while a more accurate term would be "andragogy." Unfortunately, "andragogy" is so little known as to be problematic.

<sup>7</sup> It's an interesting reflection on our culture that we are warned about getting "too close" but don't have similar language or directives for being "not close enough."

receive directives; even elementary teachers are told, “Don’t hug.”

Several years ago, the University of Winnipeg, where Menno Simons College is located, received an explicit threat that was taken very seriously. Among other things, professors were given instructions from Security on how to respond to an intruder. Many of these instructions made sense: lock-down procedures, emergency contacts, locating exits. But one stipulation rather horrified me. We were explicitly told “not to engage with an intruder.” What else could one possibly do, if not engage? Pretend the intruder didn’t exist? Surely, engagement it is the only human way to respond and, at least for me, the only chance to affect a situation positively. Ultimately I can’t be certain how I would react in a campus crisis. I hope I would react like professor Liviu Librescu of Virginia Tech, who tried to protect his students during a shooting in 2007. Whatever I would do, I would be reacting through engagement.

Given our culture of disengagement, it is not so simple to love the students. What does it mean to try to do so? For one thing it means really knowing who the students are. According to Neufeld, attachment happens in various ways. At a surface level, it happens through “sameness.” I work this angle consciously on the first day of class. From my colleague Rick McCutcheon, I have learned to greet and shake hands with every student as they enter the room or settle cautiously into their seat. With each one, I look for some point of connection, or sameness, and I say things like: “I love that shirt! That shade of blue is one of my favorite colors, too.” Or, “Oh, you’re reading a book by Kenneth Oppel. Have you read *Silverwing*?” Or, “Jets jersey, eh? What did you think about the draft picks this summer?” It’s a great way to start, but only a superficial way of connecting, which is why it’s easy.

Much more profound is attachment through being known. Bruce Tuckman’s research on group development indicates that a group becomes a high functioning team only when it has moved past the stage of polite sameness (“Oh, look how alike we are!”) to a stage where members allow their real selves to show.<sup>8</sup> At this point the profound question is “Will these people still like me if they know how I really am?” Teachers need to really

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<sup>8</sup> See Bruce Tuckman and Mary Ann C. Jensen, “Stages of Small Group Development Revisited” (1977), [www.freewebs.com/group-management/BruceTuckman%281%29.pdf](http://www.freewebs.com/group-management/BruceTuckman%281%29.pdf), accessed October 2012.



know their students, and this means providing space—in classes, curricula, assignments, and offices—for students to be themselves. We must be ready and willing to learn, from them, who they are.

Truly knowing the students requires awareness of the complex structures of classism, racism, sexism, ableism, and heterosexism that color their lives and that privilege or de-privilege them. Consider this example. At the University of Winnipeg the number of aboriginal students is continually on the rise. Several years ago, for instance, I had 9 aboriginal students in a class of 27. Thirty-three percent—what a gift! I intentionally structured the class towards this demographic. Obviously it would have been ideal to have an aboriginal instructor (in the not-too-distant future we hope we will), but in the meantime I had a curriculum with aboriginal content, aboriginal authors of readings, a text by an aboriginal author, and aboriginal guest speakers. Still, 7 of the 9 students failed to pass the course.

It is not enough to have registration numbers. We must have classes, structures, and professors who can meet students' needs. Disturbed by losing so many students, I approached Neil Funk-Unrau, coordinator of my department. He found the same rate of failure existed in other department courses, so he contacted Julie Pelletier, chair of the Indigenous Studies program, who confirmed that the dropout rate in their department too was roughly the same as ours. Her analysis was that many students were arriving terrified, filled with the post-colonial legacy of residential schools and society's messages about their inadequacy. These students, she suggested, largely drop out when the first assignment is due, or the first exam is conducted. Force-fed self-limiting beliefs, they are afraid to hand a paper in lest it confirm what they already "know," namely that they aren't "good enough."

It is not enough to have aboriginal curricula, or even aboriginal instructors. One of Pelletier's solutions, which I've since implemented, is to have all the students on the first day write a short piece in class and hand it in, not for grades and not as an assignment. It is only for feedback, for starting to make a connection, and, most important, for getting past the fear and beginning a new pattern in handling assignments.

Instructors who want to know their students will profit by acquainting

themselves with Howard Gardner's work on "multiple intelligences"<sup>9</sup> and implementing it in the classroom. In particular, we must be aware that kinesthetic learners, those perhaps most marginalized in mainstream school systems, are entering universities and colleges in ever-increasing numbers. Again, it is not enough to have such learners gain access to the academy; we must also welcome them, and we can do that by accommodating their various learning styles.

Loving the students also means trusting them, an act that is counter-cultural in hierarchical institutions such as schools and universities. Several years ago, my department leaders asked me to teach a course in Conflict Theory and Analysis, an area that was not my bailiwick. They acknowledged it was a course that likely could not be taught in participatory ways, and that many students considered it unremittingly boring. I was discouraged, since I'm committed to a teaching philosophy that highly values engagement. I couldn't imagine teaching a whole course through lectures.<sup>10</sup> Nor could I see myself learning a wholly new course and finding ways to make all 12 weeks engaging in the short time frame I'd been given. In near desperation, I decided to trust the students. I set them the challenge of coming up with an activity each week that was participatory and would help them remember the theory. I would still teach the theory and make sure everyone understood it, but the students were responsible for helping each other engage with it. They succeeded magnificently, and this assignment is now a standard part of the curriculum.

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<sup>9</sup> See, for instance, Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, 3rd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Let me be clear here. Some people learn best through lectures, some people teach best through lectures, and all the principles I am outlining can be used by lecture-based professors. There are wonderful lecture-based professors out there, but I'm not one of them! In my earliest teaching experiences, I tried to imitate the styles of my own university professors, and failed. It was not until I returned to Canada after my experience in El Salvador that I found my own voice and style. Passionately concerned for the fate of my Salvadoran colleagues, some of whom were imprisoned and perhaps facing torture, I found myself speaking and teaching from my heart, and in the experiential ways that work best for me as a learner. I realize there are students in my classrooms who are disadvantaged by the lack of lectures, but I accept this as a limitation I have as an instructor. Fortunately, those who learn best through lectures have many fine options to choose from at the University.

**Love as a Challenge to the Academy**

Loving the students means loving the whole of them, and that takes us to controversial ground for the academy, namely the realm of spirituality. To love someone is to make space for the whole person, including the person's spirituality. This is anathema to many in academia, and often for good reasons. The legacy of colonialism and residential schools should make us deeply wary and puts us on dangerous ground. I teach at Menno Simons College, a college of Canadian Mennonite University (CMU), a "Christian University"—a term that many of my secular colleagues may see as an oxymoron like "dry wine," "jumbo shrimp," or "just war." I'm an outsider to this place in many ways; I was brought up in a firmly mainstream Protestant, but not Anabaptist, religious tradition. From my perspective, one benefit of teaching in an Anabaptist institution is the relative lack of attachment to hierarchy. Universities are, may I say, almost ridiculously hierarchical. Consider the theatrical display of robes and hats at convocations, or note the nuanced and rigid terms that speak volumes to the insider but are virtually ignored by everyone else (full professor, associate professor, adjunct professor, instructor).

Of course there are power and rank differentials among Mennonites (perhaps most notably along gender lines), but there also seems to be a kind of disdain for the hierarchical ordering of humans, a disdain that in my experience creates a less hidebound institution. The President of CMU, the Deans of MSC, the Program Coordinators—all the people who fill these roles—interact with us with a sense of the equality of our humanity and a respect for the gifts each of us brings. In practical terms, I've experienced great respect for my style of teaching, and much openness and support for the quirky or unusual things that I try. This is fortunate, because one distinct problem with teaching from a place of love is that students tend to do "too well." It's a problem I find deeply ironic; if we were doing our jobs brilliantly, wouldn't our students do brilliantly too? Every year the computer discovers that my students' marks are too high, and I must justify their success. I wonder how I'd fare in a system with a stricter hierarchy or a less generous administration.

To be clear, while I don't see a role for mandatory religion in higher education, I also don't see higher education (at least in the arts) without

a created space for potential expressions of spirituality. I've come to this perspective not because of the dictates of my Anabaptist institution, which, as noted, has been highly flexible, open, and supportive, but because of many indigenous students in my classes. They see the separating out of the spiritual world as a weird western and colonial phenomenon that has led to a dangerous detachment from the world and the environment. These students are not advocating for religious education per se, but they are declaring a need for space and support for spiritual reflection. They remind me of a southern Baptist pastor who once told me, "I try every year to become less religious and more spiritual."<sup>11</sup> For students to flourish as their whole selves without the forced self-dissection that results from—and leads to—detachment, we must find ways to accommodate their spiritual journeys even within secular universities.

What if we have large classes (although many peace educators fortunately have sensible class sizes)? How do we love the students then? We love them in the moments of contact that we do have with them. We show them—their whole selves—respect, at all times. If the North Star of our teaching philosophy is love, then our practice will follow. Professor Harry Huebner, a long-time, well-loved CMU faculty member, told me one of his favorite methods. At the beginning of the year he tells students that not only is there no "stupid question" but if they don't have a question formulated they should just speak their thoughts, and he and they will formulate a question together. We need not be afraid of not having enough time for students. If we go forward in love, we will find methods, like this one.

Lastly, we can love students by enabling them to love each other, which they will do only through connecting with each other. It is imperative that we build community in our classrooms, not just on principle but because it enhances the ability to learn. We create attachment between students by using small groups, circles, and buddy systems; attending to learning styles; making introductions and learning names; undoing the academy's "argument culture"<sup>12</sup>; valuing students' thoughts; and trusting students, and

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<sup>11</sup> "Walk Together Children" workshop, The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, Gulfport, Mississippi, July 1987.

<sup>12</sup> In this I have been influenced by the work of Deborah Tannen, especially *The Argument Culture: Stopping America's War of Words* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1999), where she

helping them trust and learn from each other. Further, as peace educators we must not fail to use the classroom as a form of mini-laboratory, a place where conflict resolution principles are not just discussed but put into living form.

### **Love the Material**

Loving the students is where I started, but it is perhaps easier to love the material. Craig Kielburger, the Canadian activist, observes that in the face of the immensity of global issues people can become bogged down and overwhelmed. There is a way forward, however. It is, he once said in a radio interview, to “find something that breaks your heart, and then put your heart into it.”<sup>13</sup> When we love our material—which we surely do, or we would not have been drawn to it as we have—then we put our hearts into it. When that happens, students will feel also feel our passion and be drawn in. In short, we cannot be afraid to be in love with what we teach and to show students that love.

Christopher Takacs and Daniel Chambliss have recently completed research<sup>14</sup> on the impact that good teaching has on enrollment, and conclude that the professor a student first encounters in any discipline acts as a gatekeeper for the discipline. If the professor is “good,” students will likely be drawn into that field of study, whereas a poor experience with a professor will push them away, not just from a department but even from the discipline. My own experience as a university student bears this out. In my first year I took courses in various disciplines, unsure of where I wanted to head. That all changed in a heartbeat, partway through the year. My English professor, Walter Swayze, read this aloud to the class:

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o’er vales and hills,

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shows how communication in universities often does not serve us well. Debate does not necessarily lead to greater truth or depth but into entrenchment and close-mindedness.

<sup>13</sup> Craig Kielburger, in a radio interview in the 1990s, confirmed by private correspondence with Tess Finlay, Coordinator of Public Relations and Publicity for Free the Children, September 2013. See Craig Kielburger, *Free the Children* (New York: Harper Collins, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> See Daniel F. Chambliss and Christopher G. Takacs, *How College Works* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2014). A summary can be found at [www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/08/12/study-finds-choice-major-most-influenced-quality-intro-professor](http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/08/12/study-finds-choice-major-most-influenced-quality-intro-professor).

When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
what wealth the show to me had brought:  
For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

As Swayze read Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud," he wept unabashedly. It was in that moment that I decided to major in English Literature, not because of this great poem but because Swayze's passion inspired me. He showed me this was a study that has meaning and value, that matters. My colleague at MSC, John Derksen, is similarly loved by students. One reason they routinely give when I ask what makes him exceptional is that he is not afraid to show his emotions in class. We teach what we teach because it is or has been our passion, because it matters to us. Peace educators are in a discipline that also matters to the world. We need to find or remember that passion and be unafraid to let it show. How else can we expect students to love what we teach if we don't love it ourselves? If we do not show them, through our honest emotion and passion, that something matters, how can we expect it to matter to them? If we must love the students because *they* matter, we must love also the material because *it* matters.

### Love Ourselves

So, we must love the students and the material. This brings us to what is perhaps the hardest requirement of all: we must love ourselves. In *The Courage to Teach*, Parker Palmer contends that "we teach who we are."<sup>15</sup> Teaching is not so much about "what" we teach or even "how" we teach, but about the "who." And who are we, when we're tired or not looking after ourselves? How

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<sup>15</sup> Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 2.

can I be violent to myself, or to the planet, and not bring some of that into the classroom? To be at my best as a teacher, which admittedly I not always am, means to live my beliefs as consistently as possible. It also means to take care of myself, to be grounded, and to be living in peace with others and, fundamentally, with myself. It also means that I be loved, spend time with those I love, and laugh—and bring laughter to a place from which it is often excluded, the university classroom. If I can laugh and enjoy myself, perhaps the students can. It's crucial that we laugh, especially in these difficult times, for it is not an easy job that we do, and peace activism is not an easy path to walk.

One of Palmer's most helpful chapters deals with how much fear instructors must confront in order to teach, especially the fear of being vulnerable, of "looking stupid" or foolish.<sup>16</sup> Courage is not, however, being fearless but continuing on in spite of fear. It is, as Ernest Hemingway said, "grace under pressure." Loving ourselves means taking self-care seriously. It means, as I needed to do many years ago, finding our own individual true voices as educators, our own styles, using love as our compass point. Loving ourselves means taking risks. This is no minor thing. If we ask students to take risks and to expand their horizons, surely it is only ethical for us to do so too. As well, it means being willing to bring into the classroom our whole self—failures and struggles as well as successes—and our vulnerability, for being vulnerable is a gift to both students and instructors.

Lastly, loving ourselves means being committed to our own growth and learning, and to finding mentors and inspirations. Shirley Sherrod, former head of the United States Department of Agriculture, has become one of those for me. "I learned a lot of lessons from my parents growing up, but one of the most important ones is what my mother taught her children after our father was killed," she has written. "She told us we mustn't try to live with hate in our hearts. . . . Life is a grindstone. But whether it grinds us down or polishes us up depends on us. We can't yield, not now, not ever."<sup>17</sup> Sherrod, by word and example, calls on us to live in love, even in the most difficult times. Her words are echoed by retired South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu when he defines the virtue of "Ubuntu":

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 35-61.

<sup>17</sup> Shirley Sherrod, "Open Letter: 'You and I Can't Yield—Not Now, Not Ever'" (2010), available at [www.naacp.org/news](http://www.naacp.org/news), accessed October 2012.

It is the essence of being human. It speaks of the fact that my humanity is caught up and is inextricably bound up in yours. I am human because I belong. It speaks about wholeness, it speaks about compassion. A person with Ubuntu is welcoming, hospitable, warm and generous, willing to share. Such people are open and available to others, willing to be vulnerable, affirming of others, do not feel threatened that others are able and good, for they have a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that they belong in a greater whole. They know that they are diminished when others are humiliated, diminished when others are oppressed, diminished when others are treated as if they were less than who they are. The quality of Ubuntu gives people resilience, enabling them to survive and emerge still human despite all efforts to dehumanize them.<sup>18</sup>

What we need in this broken world is to be polished and not ground down. What we need for the world and for peace studies students is to *be* Ubuntu!

I began this paper with a story about imprisonment, and I'll end it with one about liberation. Ministers Stan McKay and Frances Combs both tell a story of blades of grass, which I will tell in my own way here:

There is a section of highway that I know well, a piece of the "Trans-Canada" that runs through Ontario from the border with Manitoba to the town of Kenora. Years ago there was a smaller highway there, the first Trans-Canada, concrete and tarmac snaking its way through bush, past swamps and around hills. Not straight enough for modern travel, it gave way to the new highway laid down 50-plus years ago. As a child, when we'd travel that new road, it was a game to follow the old highway with our eyes. Concrete, rock-solid, invincible. Certainly stronger than the plants or blades of grass which it had subdued. But a miracle has happened there. Over the years, the concrete has bulged and broken open, revealing the strength of the plants, pulsating with

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<sup>18</sup> Tutu's definition can be found at [http://ubuntuchoirs.net/Ubuntu\\_spirit.php](http://ubuntuchoirs.net/Ubuntu_spirit.php), accessed October 2012.



life, beneath the hard surface. Plants whose vitality and energy of life gives them the strength to break open, break apart the tarmac above.

In each student, I trust that there are hidden “blades of grass” waiting patiently for their time to break forth. In the material that I teach, there too are “blades of grass,” insights, that will burst open. And I trust there are “blades of grass” in me as well, upsurging love for the students, the material, and myself.

*Karen Ridd is Instructor in International Development Studies and Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies at Menno Simons College, Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Manitoba.*

James K.A. Smith. *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013)

James Smith's *Imagining the Kingdom* has been much anticipated by those captured by the author's first volume in this series on Cultural Liturgies, *Desiring the Kingdom*, which provided a rich, stimulating reflection on Christian education and Christian formation. Geared simultaneously to the renewal of both the church and the Christian university, that book hinged on the assumption that humans are fundamentally "liturgical animals"—"desiring" creatures who can't *not* worship and who are fundamentally shaped by the worship practices they engage in, whether "secular" practices (habitual actions that take on a ritualized forms, such as shopping at the mall, running, interacting with an iPhone, going to a movie or concert) or Christian worship practices.

*Desiring the Kingdom* argued that liturgies are formative because they shape what we love, and we *are* what we love; our desires provide the impulse for action. Liturgies, secular or sacred, shape us with an "implicit social imaginary." *Imagining the Kingdom* continues in the same trajectory, providing an expanded account and more robust vision of our being-in-the-world as embodied, liturgical, habituated, imagining creatures. At the heart of Smith's critique in both volumes is the inadequate view that humans are fundamentally motivated by what they *think* and the intellectualist world of ideas; that is, the belief that people can change their lives by changing their ideas.

The author contends that "by focusing on what we think and believe, such a model misses the centrality and primacy of what we *love*, by focusing on education as the dissemination of *information*, we have missed the ways in which Christian education is really a project of *formation*" (7). While the bias towards humans as first of all thinking beings is difficult to break, Smith is tenacious in providing an account where thinking comes second to "bodily interaction with the world" (82).

The book is divided into two distinct parts. In the first part, Smith creates a theoretical well from which to draw in reconsidering how and why liturgical formation happens. Using phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty and social theorist Pierre Bourdieu, he gives an account of how human

beings primarily make meaning through bodily knowing (“kinaesthetics”) and a recognition that this bodily basis of meaning creates a disposition to be oriented by story, by the imagination (“poetics”). “It is because I ‘picture’ the world as *this* kind of ‘environment,’” Smith argues, “that I then picture ‘the good life’ in a certain way that draws me toward it and thus construe my obligations and responsibilities accordingly” (125). What we love is shaped by our actions, and our actions are shaped by imagination or *habitus*; and the way to the imagination is through the body.

In the second part Smith develops a type of Christian liturgical anthropology and an account of how worship does its work. In the author’s words, “if we are going to be agents of the coming kingdom, *acting* in ways that embody God’s desire for creation, then our imaginations need to be conscripted by God. It is not enough to convince our intellects; our imaginations need to be caught by—and caught up into—the Story of God’s restorative grace for all of creation” (157). Christian worship, based on ancient practices, and its embodied vision of the “good life” are key to this kind of spiritual formation and to the Christian imagination, for the liturgy at its best engages the entire person and shapes their *habitus* through bodily and narrative repetition.

Like Smith’s first volume, *Imagining the Kingdom* is a hybrid. Geared to scholars and pastors, to the church and the Christian university, it aims to be both accessible and scholarly. This creates perhaps one of Smith’s biggest challenges, resulting in critiques from both sides. The strangest irony of the book, which the author acknowledges, is that he uses an intellectual, rational process to convince the reader that persons are primarily formed by non-intellectual, habituated, and embodied experiences. Despite its emphasis on a “sanctified incarnation” approach, the book treads along a dangerous precipice of “ex-carnation.” Yet the author’s narrative approach has integrity.

While Smith has found a remarkably fresh new way of appealing to the embodied sensual nature of human knowledge and action, his perspective is also curiously consistent with what feminist theologians and theorists have been saying for some time but perhaps has not been heard in the same way.

*Irma Fast Dueck*, Associate Professor of Practical Theology, Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Gordon Mark Zerbe. *Citizenship: Paul on Peace and Politics*. Winnipeg: CMU Press, 2012.

It is gratifying when a scholar not only agrees with your half-formed ideas but develops them in greater depth than you ever could have. Such was the case when I read the first essay in Gordon Zerbe's book arguing that "fundamentally, Philippians is an exhortation on the 'practice of Messianic citizenship.'" Beyond the common view that Philippians is a "warm, friendly letter," he shows how it is also "deeply political and subversive" (19). Yes! For this American Mennonite, a subversive Paul communicates!

Zerbe is Professor of New Testament at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Rather than writing a book on a single topic, he compiled twelve essays on distinct topics under the overarching theme of "Paul on peace and politics." Six were previously published in various books or journals; six are new. In these essays, he roams at will over all seven of the undisputed Pauline letters: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon.

Zerbe first defines citizenship in Paul as loyalty to Jesus as a (political) Messiah that supersedes any other political association. He challenges our individualism and our traditional interpretation of Paul's language as religious "church words." Rather, Paul's usage of these same terms is more broadly political and social (2-7).

The essays fall into four parts titled Loyalty, Mutuality, Security, and Affinities. The author translates *pistis*, the Greek term we usually call "faith," as "loyalty." Rather than "believers," which may imply little more than verbal assent, faithful Jesus-people should be called by the stronger, more political term, "loyalists." Essays in the Mutuality part include topics such as unity and diversity in "Messiah's body politic," Paul's economic theory, and the relevance of Paul's "eschatological ecclesiology" for ecumenical relations. The idea that the restoration of creation (Rom. 8:18-25) and "God will be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28) implies that "God's reign will ultimately embrace all humanity" (66) is a new one for me, and I want to explore it further.

Part Three, on Security, deals with the function of military imagery in Paul's letters and his ethic of nonretaliation and peace. How violent are some of Paul's own attacks, such as "beware of the dogs" in Phil. 4:2-4? Is it

a “slandorous anti-Judaic invective or rebellious assault on empire” (171)? Zerbe here discusses criticisms of Paul by scholars who see the apostle as “inherently violent” (Joseph Marchal, 176) or “kyriarchic” (Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, 177). Though he recognizes these “evident deficiencies (relative to modern sensibilities),” Zerbe concludes that “Paul’s overall message of peace and justice is a crucial resource for continued reflection on the challenges facing our own future” (180).

Part Four, on Affinities, includes a fine essay on Paul’s view of human anthropology, where he defines Greek terms such as *soma*, *pneuma*, and *psyche*. Zerbe affirms Paul’s insistence on bodily resurrection, noting also how reserved Paul is about a conscious existence “between death and the final arrival of the reign of God” (192). Though I agree with his evaluation of Paul’s eschatology, it is quite different from the conventional comfort offered at funerals in our churches.

I found these essays provocative and exciting. They are well-documented with 59 pages of endnotes that include references to more academic books than I will read in a lifetime! Most essays are worth re-reading. Zerbe has advanced our thinking relative to current emphases in New Testament studies on the social-economic-political contexts of the texts and their authors. Placing Paul within his context in the Roman Empire can help us redefine many of our “religious” terms as also political. As Paul resists the values and practices of Rome, so “loyalists” today must challenge the values and practices of current global empires—both governments and private corporations.

*Citizenship* seems primarily directed towards academics used to an erudite vocabulary and lengthy endnotes. Its density makes for slow going, though the rewards are great. Zerbe’s last chapter on Paul among four philosophers stretched the limits of my understanding (are all those words *really* in the dictionary?). My biggest caveat, however, has to do with the lack of two essentials: an index and bibliography. One can read forward but cannot go backward to search for an author or important term. Otherwise, this is a stimulating book which I plan to reread and raid for ideas for my own writing and teaching.

*Reta Halteman Finger*, Affiliate Associate Professor of New Testament, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia

Simon Victor Goncharenko. *Wounds That Heal: The Importance of Church Discipline within Balthasar Hubmaier's Theology*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012.

The writings of Balthasar Hubmaier make for interesting reading. Formerly a colleague of Ulrich Zwingli (the reformer of Zürich), he was popular and prolific, and wrote with clarity, exegetical rigor, and wit. He was influential among those involved in the Peasants' War and gave alternative perspectives on key debates within Anabaptism on the use of violence and participation in the State. He was befriended by Conrad Grebel, baptized by Wilhelm Reublin, and active among the Swiss Anabaptists. From his baptism in 1525 to his execution in 1528 he published frequently and earned the title "Theologian of Anabaptism" because he, more than anyone else, defined the theological core of early Anabaptism.

Simon Goncharenko's slim book (150 pages) manages very well to give an accessible overview of Hubmaier's theology through the lens of church discipline. In his introduction Goncharenko identifies an important problem facing every congregation and church leader: what to do about church discipline. He observes the difficulty for congregations in North America (and I would add Europe) to implement any form of church discipline, when church members are not accustomed to pastoral confrontation and discipline by their congregations, and when they can simply leave and join another congregation, sometimes even locally, without much consequence. Goncharenko identifies church discipline as a central motif of Hubmaier's theology that he believes can help renew the church.

The author shows how central church discipline is in Hubmaier's theology and how it intertwines with other doctrines such as anthropology, soteriology, and ecclesiology. Previous studies have documented key aspects of Hubmaier's doctrine of church discipline, such as church purity, the holiness of the believer, and repentance. Goncharenko identifies a fourth theme, namely that church discipline unifies Hubmaier's theology and grounds it in praxis.

The first chapter includes a concise biographical sketch of Hubmaier, charting intellectual influences on his emerging Anabaptist theology including Erasmus and Luther, and provides a summary of his view of church

discipline. Goncharenko points out that Hubmaier's practice of church discipline was much more humane than other forms common at the time and that his intention was pastoral rather than punishment or shame. This nicely sets the scene for three chapters on doctrine. A chapter on anthropology is included because of the importance of Hubmaier's understanding of the structure of the human being (spirit, soul, and body), with the spirit (or freedom of the will) unaffected by original sin and therefore capable of being saved even if the body and soul are destroyed.

The chapter on soteriology situates Hubmaier's doctrine within the debates of the Reformation, with surveys of contemporary ideas about justification and faith. Goncharenko shows that Hubmaier's doctrine was neither Catholic nor Protestant but biblicist, informed by New Testament study, which enabled him to keep the twin poles of human responsibility and God's action in tension.

The fourth chapter links church discipline to baptism and communion and in particular with "the keys" (Matthew 16). The two keys are given by God to Christ, and at the ascension by Christ to the church. The first key (associated with baptism) is forgiveness, allowing the sinner to be received into the church and into salvation, or received back into the church after the ban. The second key (associated with communion) is fraternal admonition, exercised through communion, by which believers could be excluded from communion or be excommunicated from the church. The exercise of church discipline implements the keys and serves to encourage repentance and re-inclusion into the congregation.

I appreciated the modest length of this book, its attentiveness to Hubmaier's writing, and its accessible, non-technical style, making it suitable for group study or Sunday school use; advanced knowledge of theology or history is not required. The overview of Hubmaier's theology, focused on church discipline, is interesting and useful for further reflection in a congregational setting. It is also wonderful to have a book on an important Anabaptist from an author and pastor outside the Mennonite world (Goncharenko is Southern Baptist).

My only disappointment is that the author does not engage very much with his opening observation about the difficulty of implementing church discipline today. What are we to do when our culture shapes us to resist

sisterly and brotherly admonition, and we can leave one church and join another down the road when we are even lovingly confronted?

*Tim Foley*, Director for Europe, Mennonite Mission Network, Portadown, Northern Ireland

Daniel S. Schipani, ed. *Multifaith Views in Spiritual Care*, Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2013.

For at least the past decade, Mennonite pastoral counselor and practical theologian Daniel S. Schipani has been honing the cutting edge of the methodology and theory of delivering appropriate intercultural and interfaith spiritual care in healthcare environments. His most recent contribution, *Multifaith Views in Spiritual Care*, invites collaborators from various faith backgrounds to offer essays that aim “to foster appreciation for the uniqueness and special gifts of seven faith traditions together with a deeper understanding of commonalities and differences among them; and to encourage collaboration among spiritual care practitioners and colleagues.”

Schipani brings a hopeful approach to this project, observing that multifaith spiritual care augurs “a wonderful rainbow of blessing” (7). He is adamant that practitioners who are intentional about providing helpful spiritual care for people of other faiths will function more effectively within their own faith communities, insisting that “training in interfaith care always, without exceptions, enhances the caregivers’ general competence and professional wisdom” (7). For this volume Schipani asked each of the contributors to outline the spiritual care foundations of their tradition or worldview; to describe and analyze how it operates in healthcare settings; and to present “a profile of wisdom in spiritual care by identifying core competencies such as attitudes, knowledge, and skills that define professional excellence” (3).

Once the aboriginal, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and humanist contributors have laid out their perspectives, it falls to Schipani to



provide a way forward in order to advance the profession of spiritual care. He situates spiritual health as a “practical human science” (154) similar to mental health, and attempts a rudimentary overview of what a “healthy and mature” spirituality looks like (153). He then calls for normative guidelines for the profession and outlines core competencies for wise interfaith spiritual care—“the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary” to practice responsibly in a public environment (170). His goal is to generate and propagate a model of professional wisdom that addresses the formation of caregivers in a professionally responsible, assessible, and profoundly holistic manner.

All the contributors bring the flesh of their own tradition to the skeleton format proposed by Schipani. While there are obvious differences and a healthy diversity, there is considerable common ground. This common ground reflects the universal core of human experience that is typically expressed through religions. Schipani calls this convergence the “holy ground of human encounter” and urges readers not to explain it “only in terms of similar clinical training or professional formation” (150). Nonetheless, professional training and the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) orientation of the contributors has created a platform that helps to draw people of diverse traditions together in a common cause and to find a vocabulary with which to address the common concerns of spiritual care providers.

As in CPE, this book adopts an approach that is *both* academic *and* anecdotal, reflective *and* action-oriented, theoretical *and* practical. Such a conversation is happening primarily in the West, led by pragmatic Christians, Jews, and humanists. It also involves Western-educated practitioners of multiple other faiths. The inherent flexibility of the indigenous and Asian-based religions allows them to participate and adapt readily. If the present volume is any indication, Islam is navigating the greatest internal debate as its followers in the West seek to come to terms with the practical realities of interfaith spiritual care. The other monotheistic traditions are more prepared for the increasing cooperation and coming convergence by dint of their longer experience in secular and pluralist societies.

All the contributors agree that the primary task of the spiritual caregiver is to be present at the point of suffering. They are there as companions, not fixers. They can help, but their assistance comes in the

form of making it easier for patients to access their own resources, enabling and allowing them to process their own issues on their own terms. In order to do this work effectively, the contributors agree, spiritual caregivers must be highly aware and firmly anchored. They must know their own spiritual convictions, have a solid understanding of the frameworks of others, and must engage in a continual process of self-evaluation and consultation, repeatedly subjecting their own attitudes and actions to serious self-scrutiny and collegial examination. Only those who demonstrate an ongoing willingness to traverse the darker pathways of their own humanity can travel effectively as soul companions with others.

*Doug Koop*, freelance writer and spiritual health specialist, Winnipeg, Manitoba

John Howard Yoder. *Theology of Mission: A Believers Church Perspective*. Edited by Gayle Gerber Koontz and Andy Alexis-Baker. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014.

John Howard Yoder, who taught theology at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (now Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary) and the University of Notre Dame, is best remembered as an ethicist. However, in the 1970s, he regularly taught a course called “Theology of the Christian World Mission” that reflected another long-running interest of his. In the fall of 1983, the last time he taught it, he changed the name to “Ecclesiology in Missional Perspective,” which highlighted his recurrent theme (in concert with Emil Brunner, Johannes Blau, and the *Ad Gentes* decree of Vatican II) of “the church as missionary.”

Yoder’s course was wide-ranging, with four major sections covering God’s People in Mission (a survey of mission themes in Scripture), Church and Society (including emphasis on the missionary character of the church), Salvation and History (with lectures stretching from the Radical Reformation to people movements), and Christianity and Other Faiths. Yoder twice tape-

recorded his lectures. His plan was to transcribe them and give hard copies in advance to his students, something he had done in other courses. *Theology of Mission: A Believers Church Perspective* is essentially an edited version of those taped presentations.

Introducing the Yoder material in this volume is a fine essay by Wilbert Shenk on Yoder's contribution to mission thought and practice. Shenk recounts the roots of Yoder's interest in mission, which began while he was under assignment in Europe for Mennonite Central Committee following World War II. He describes an early Yoder article on "Discipleship as Evangelism," Yoder's pursuit of an advanced degree at the University of Basel, and his formative experience in leading a post-earthquake emergency relief and reconstruction program for three years in Muslim Algeria. But the heart of Shenk's essay centers on Yoder's incisive insights and fresh contributions to missiology.

In 1997, when I was teaching at AMBS, Yoder and I had a conversation about his old course, and he offered me a folder with his syllabi, lecture notes, and related materials. So, the chance to read in this new volume the full substance of what I had come to know in outline was appealing and—as it turns out—an enriching exercise for me. Several things stand out. The first is the contemporary ring of Yoder's lectures, remarkable considering he assembled his course more than forty years ago. Many of his themes—for instance, his grasp of the implications for mission of the rise of the global south, and his attention to migration and mission—are front line issues today. In addition, his lectures call to mind his skill at dissecting and questioning accepted positions and assertions, and his readiness to offer logical, often stretching correctives. Finally, they are reminders of the special synthesis of theology, ethics, and intuitive cultural intelligence that unfailingly characterized Yoder's reflection, a gift which served his students and the church well.

Yoder theologized on a nearly thirty missional topics during his course. In outline, they can look like a miscellany. But the substance and sum of his lectures as filled out in *Theology and Mission* demonstrate how deftly and relevantly he connected his topics to each other and to cutting-edge missiological concerns and praxis. (Yoder never wasted his students' time on esoteric or peripheral concerns.)

A final word: I would be remiss if I failed to affirm the success of the editors in bringing the artifacts of Yoder's course together into a highly readable whole that flows well and seems even to retain the oral character of the lectures. As a result, newcomers to Yoder's theologizing on mission will find the volume as pleasurable to read as they will find it challenging and thought-provoking.

*Art McPhee*, Sundo Kim Professor of Evangelism and Practical Theology, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky

Stanley Hauerwas. *Approaching the End: Eschatological Reflections on Church, Politics, and Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013.

Stanley Hauerwas's purpose in *Approaching the End* is to "show the significance of eschatology for understanding how Christians should negotiate the world" (ix). This significance is truly manifested, for Hauerwas, within the body of the witnessing church, which views creation, history, politics, and the human in light of God's purposeful ends for them. According to the author, the world can only be viewed rightly—that is, eschatologically—from the perspective of the witness of the church, whose life exemplifies the politics of peace that is God's *telos* for creation.

The book maps out these eschatological convictions in three parts. Part 1 elaborates the theological and scriptural account of creation (ch. 1), sacrifice (ch. 2), and witness (ch. 3) needed to position the church as an eschatological mode of politics. Part 2 describes the church's eschatological politics as an alternative to accommodating to the war-sacrifices of the liberal state (specifically ch. 4, 6, and 7). In Part 3, Hauerwas revisits his work on virtues (ch. 9), medicine, and disability (ch. 10-13) in order to develop a Christian account of the body in light of the eschatological resurrection, which implicitly finds liberalism's universal humanism eschatologically impoverished.

Beginning with creation, Hauerwas first indexes the doctrine to God's redemptive purposes in Christ. Following Barth, he claims that creation

is viewed rightly only through its eschatological completion in Christ's redemptive act, therefore establishing the community of eschatological witness, the church, at the center of creation as a whole (12). This supports the claim that the church is where Christ's lordship is properly displayed (27). Rejecting the false rules of kings and nations, the church witnesses to Christ's cross as the final sacrifice of the old age, and to his resurrection as the first fruits of a new creation and mode of existence. In the longest, most developed chapter, "Witness" (ch. 3), Hauerwas argues for the necessity of the church to witness to this new creation through its own apocalyptic politics, seeing martyrdom as the clearest rejection of the violences of the old age in which contemporary politics still participates.

With the theological descriptions in order, the author performs in Part 2 the political criticism of the church-world distinction for which his work is most commonly known. According to Hauerwas, the liberal state continues to live in the sacrifices of the old age that Christ's sacrifice abolished. Grounded upon the rejection of Christ's final sacrificial act and therefore his lordship over history, the nation-state surreptitiously calls citizens to a false martyrdom to national interests as the only true form of political participation. The sidelining of the church as a form of politics involves sacrificing a truly eschatological account of living in the world for an abstract humanism easily mobilized for nationalistic interest. Accepting the author's critique of liberal ideology in Part 2 allows for interpreting his return to the resources of bodily virtue, medicine, and disability in Part 3 as an effort to reconceive an acknowledgment of the human as part of Christ's body whose final end is not suffering and death but resurrection.

While some points in *Approaching the End* do reveal true novelty, many of the arguments sound recognizably anxious about the liberal state. This anxiety is most evident in Hauerwas's constant attention to war, a concern that surfaces in over half of the chapters. The determinative role that liberalism and war continue to play in his thinking creates a tension in his reflections on the church that is difficult to maintain. While Hauerwas is not necessarily wrong in his judgment against liberalism, his thesis of understanding eschatology as a way for Christians to negotiate the world often makes liberalism the primary reality they are negotiating. This raises a question of how the eschatological church looks without always being the

anxious “other” to liberalism.

This volume is somewhat ironic, then, in that while Hauerwas’s discussion of eschatology reflects a radical theological imagination, seen most clearly in “Bearing Reality” (ch. 6) and “Doing Nothing Gallantly” (ch. 12), the payoff of such insights feels postured—as solutions to problems from the same old enemies. This reduces the impact of the author’s compelling claim that “there is indeed something the church cannot do. The church cannot make the difficulty of reality less difficult” (157).

*Brandon L. Morgan*, PhD student, Religion Department, Baylor University, Waco, Texas

Sian and Stuart Murray Williams. *The Power of All: Building a Multivoiced Church*. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2012.

In *The Power of All*, Sian and Stuart Murray Williams collaboratively draw from their own experiences in ministry as well as biblical and historical material to make the case that practices associated with a “multivoiced” church will bring about the renewal and transformation necessary for enabling the church to engage its calling more effectively. Throughout the book, multivoiced practices are contrasted with practices where church members are “passive consumers instead of active participants” and leadership is exercised primarily by clergy through one-way communication (21). The multivoiced church aims to equip every member for witness and to strengthen the church by encouraging mature discipleship, reducing biblical and theological illiteracy, and sparing clergy from burn-out through shared responsibility.

Chapters on biblical foundations and historical trajectories argue that the multivoiced model is effective for churches wanting to survive and foster faithfulness in a non-Christian dominant culture. Early church communities described in the New Testament are important examples of such multivoiced communities, and the Corinthian correspondence is particularly significant. The authors note that studies of the two letters to Corinth tend to focus on restriction rather than on Paul’s “wholehearted endorsement of multivoiced

church and . . . detailed advice about how this can become more effective” (36).

Church history provides further insights. In addition to Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria, the authors discuss the 4th-century Apostolic Constitutions, which show Christian communities in transition towards monovoiced practices. They also discuss several church protest or renewal movements, many of which, including the Montanists, Waldensians, and Anabaptists, were condemned or persecuted in their time. Multivoiced church movements in the recent past and present can learn much these movements, such as the involvement of men and women in leadership, a focus on spontaneity and the Spirit’s prompting, balancing personal and communal responsibility and discernment, and the challenge of maintaining multivoiced practices as movements mature over time.

The authors discuss multivoiced practices in the arenas of worship, education, community, and discernment. Multivoiced worship invites the Spirit to move through any member of the church in diverse ways through collaborative planning, dialogue, shared leadership, a dialectic of planned and spontaneous participation, and engaging diverse learning styles. Multivoiced learning is oriented towards participants rather than information, favors dialogue over monologue, and fosters ongoing engagement over firm conclusions. Multivoiced community is characterized by settings where members engage directly with each other, offering counsel, resources, and care through sharing their lives together. Multivoiced discernment involves the whole community, including those who often find themselves on the margins such as children, older persons, new members, artists, and others.

In chapters addressing specific areas of church life, the authors address common challenges to the multivoiced church, such as unbalanced participation, predictability and routine replacing fresh initiatives, lack of adequate preparation, and little focus on the world beyond the congregation. They note that experiences of multivoiced discernment can frequently be “debilitating” (145). They address practical concerns, such as the need to re-arrange worship spaces, to equip leaders to find ways to engage with technology in ways that invite participation, and to encourage preachers to move away from monologue-style preaching. They also offer suggestions, such as reconnecting decision making with worship and other vital aspects

of congregational life, and teaching members how to engage with a group discernment process, possibly employing techniques such as “Samoan Circles,” role-reversal presentations, and “clearness” processes (148-49).

Overall, Sian and Stuart Murray Williams accomplish their aim by presenting a compelling argument for congregations to embrace practices associated with the multivoiced church. However, *The Power of All* could be improved by offering a less polarizing, more sympathetic view of what the authors call the “monovoiced” church in order to entice readers from such a tradition. Their critique of traditional monologue-style preaching would have been enhanced by engaging with or citing recent literature from the field of homiletics that could augment their suggestions. (Examples include Lucy Rose, *Sharing the Word* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997], and John McClure’s *Roundtable Pulpit* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1995] and *Otherwise Preaching* [St. Louis: Chalice, 2001].)

This book would be useful for multivoiced congregations seeking to strengthen practices, for study by small groups, Sunday school classes, or leaders at traditional congregations, and for seminary students in worship and leadership classes.

*Joni S. Sancken*, Assistant Professor of Homiletics, United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio

Willard M. Swartley. *Health, Healing and the Church’s Mission: Biblical Perspectives and Moral Priorities*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012.

This is a book about the need for health care reform in the United States and how Christians and Christian churches might contribute to that reform. It is therefore a call to US Christians to remember who they are as heirs of Jesus Christ and the church that developed over the centuries from the first century till now. In the process of sketching out this picture, Willard Swartley holds the healing disciplines and practices that characterized the ministry of Jesus and the early church together with the care of the sick, the dying, and the dead that developed in subsequent centuries. He regards these two elements—healing and health care—as the Christian tradition that



ought to inspire Christians today to work for health care reform.

The care for the sick in the ancient church developed into health care and medical practice over the following centuries. But over those same centuries the church's practice of healing ministry on the model of Jesus and the early church diminished. In fact, the rite of anointing in the Roman Catholic tradition was eventually turned on its head, such that healing was the last thing anyone expected to happen to the person being anointed. Such persons were rather expected to die, their sins forgiven as promised in James 5:15. And hope for healing was relegated to shrines, springs, and the bones of saints.

It seems to me that a crucial aspect of the discipleship Jesus taught his disciples was largely lost through the medieval period, the Renaissance, and the Reformation. Although significant recovery of healing ministry occurred in the latter third of the 20th century, a book with a title like the present one reminds me that a healthy healing ministry requires renewal in each generation. I am reminded that Jesus, after being baptized by John, began his ministry of teaching, healing, and proclaiming the arrival of the reign of God. John—now in prison—was apparently disturbed by Jesus' compassionate healing of Jews, Syrians, Romans, and other foreigners from all sorts of illnesses and disorders. In his perplexity, John sent his disciples to ask Jesus if he was "the one who is to come" or whether they should look for another. When they asked Jesus this question, he continued healing the people around him. Then he said to them, "Go tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, people are cleansed from dreaded skin diseases, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the Good News is preached to the poor. How blessed are they who have no doubts about me" (Matt. 11:2-6; Luke 7:21-23).

Not only was Jesus' own work characterized to the core by ministries of healing, he trained his disciples to do the same. According to Luke, the outer echelon of the disciples came back from their training mission reporting fruitfulness that exceeded Jesus' own expectations for them (Luke 10:17-24). Nothing is clearer from these gospel texts than that the ministry of word, prayer, touch, and anointing for healing was essential to the discipleship that Jesus taught. Furthermore, a central theme of Acts and the epistles is that the developing life and ministry of the early church continued to be marked by

works of power and ministries of healing. Cultivating healing ministry is a crucial element of how Christians and the church need to honor the call to discipleship.

Swartley does well in speaking about the challenges of health care reform, calling Christians and Christian churches to see this as a crucial part of living out the church's own health care tradition. But it will not be easy. Important books like Marcia Angell's *The Truth About the Drug Companies: How They Deceive Us and What to Do About It* (New York: Random House, 2005) and Ben Goldacre's *Bad Pharma: How Drug Companies Mislead Doctors and Harm Patients* (New York: Faber and Faber, 2013) reveal that the pharmaceutical-medical complex is broken far more seriously than the vast majority of us realize. It involves principalities and powers likely to be far more resistant to correction or reform than we might hope. *Health, Healing and the Church's Mission* provides a wealth of information to help us recall our heritage and engage this challenge.

*Lawrence M. Yoder*, Professor of Missiology emeritus, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Virginia

Wes Bergen. *You Are Not Going to Heaven (and why it doesn't matter)*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013.

This book is designed to challenge many popular views of the Bible, to distill "Good News" out of both testaments, and to stir the church to action, so that it can bring salvation to the world—truly laudable goals! Yet not only the title of the book shocks the reader. So do many of its claims. The Bible, Bergen claims, is such a diverse book it has no discernible core message. Its Old Testament portraits of God and New Testament portraits of Jesus are wildly inconsistent. Readers must say yes to some and no to others (2, 3). The Bible's authors also had choices to make. Unfortunately they often made very bad ones: "Sometimes the writers experienced God in a certain way, yet wrote something else. When this is true, we need to learn from their experiences, not from their writings" (9).

Specifically, the God of the Exodus and the God of Revelation do not exist. God did not intervene to fix things in the past and will not do so in the future. “There is a definite place in the world for comforting fantasy, but the church is not that place” (161). So we should quit expecting to go to heaven. As for Jesus, Matthew and Luke pretty much got things wrong. As they portray Jesus, his “life does not provide a true picture of how God really acts in the world” (44). These are some of the astonishing claims Bergen believes will help the contemporary church get on with the task of bringing salvation to the world.

I did not expect to benefit much from a volume built on such an unpromising foundation. Yet I found much to applaud along the way. I loved some of the author’s eye-opening over-simplifications like “The idea of God in the Old Testament is not simply the idea of God, but an offer of assistance, like putting out a sign saying, ‘Free Help!’ In the same way, the language of the Holy Spirit is God’s way of saying, ‘Yes, I really want to help’” (139). Bergen’s refreshing candor, his humble spirit, and his deep desire to motivate the church to love and serve shine through clearly.

The sections of the book that tease out the Bible’s “Good News” are filled with insight. Yes, indeed, “We’re all in this together.” Yes, the Bible teaches a deeply satisfying “contentment”; it promotes the “Genesis model” of getting along; it puts limits and warnings on militarism; it calls us to wisdom; it recognizes the whole range of human emotions; it presents God as “our refuge and strength.”

But do we really have to jettison the God of Exodus and Revelation to find this Good News? Do we really have to put large question marks over Matthew’s and Luke’s Gospels? Can we really trust the “scholarly consensus” (as if there were such a thing!) on the dating of OT writings and the radically revisionist interpretations of them that this apparently justifies? (See page 81 for examples.) Do we really solve the problem of devaluing the OT by devaluing the NT *even more*? Bergen claims: “While the Old Testament is guilty of avoiding reality, when it comes to the question of salvation, the New Testament is even more so because it often refuses to deal with the reality of the central character it proclaims” (39).

Yet despite many questionable claims, Bergen presents many inspiring and thoroughly biblical conclusions:

And so the church reaches out and tries to be part of the solution to the problems of the world. In doing this, it could proclaim a theologically sophisticated doctrine of the omni-whatever Deity. Or it could, honestly and humbly, offer what it has and what it is, while proclaiming, watching, and listening for the voice and action of God. This sounds like a fairly easy choice on the surface but has proved difficult in practice. Hopefully we will keep practicing. (119)

What a humble and honest proposal and what a challenge! But surely the church will have all the more to offer if it believes passionately in the God of the Exodus (the God who breaks the chains of oppression and sets captives free), if it follows faithfully the God of Revelation (ruling with the slain Lamb, not compromising or giving up on creation until heaven fills it), and if it models itself after Christ, as portrayed not only in John and Mark, but also in Matthew and Luke.

*Timothy J. Geddert*, Professor of New Testament, Fresno Pacific University Biblical Seminary, Fresno, California

Jennifer Graber. *The Furnace of Affliction: Prisons & Religion in Antebellum America*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

From the inception of the American republic, the scope and influence of religion in the life of public institutions have been the cause of red-hot debate. A primary locus of this debate has centered on religion's salvific aims and civic functions within the modern prison. Jennifer Graber's *The Furnace of Affliction: Prisons & Religion in Antebellum America* offers a well-researched, clearly articulated historical account of the struggle over Protestant Christianity's religio-social role in the antebellum prison, predominately as the prison developed in New York State at Newgate, Auburn, and Sing Sing.

By way of a multilayered textual approach weaving together personal narratives, news accounts, court cases, Christian theology, and political philosophy, Graber offers a nuanced historical account of the largely

Protestant vision to extend the reformatory and redemptive ethos of Christianity to prisons against the disestablishment impulses and rulings of the civil state. Protestant reformers of many theological stripes agreed that inmate reformation was the main aim of prisons. Yet in six chapters and an epilogue, Graber demonstrates that this fundamental agreement never alleviated the many interlocking disagreements about the best theological path to reformation in the context of governmental aims to secure prison order and profit, as well as lawful living and obedience to secular authorities.

Chapter 1 offers the Quaker vision of the prison as a “Garden” of redemption. This garden not only aimed to redeem the souls of inmates through a theology of the “Inner Light,” it also served the state’s vision of preventing crime and securing disciplinary order among the citizenry. Garden theology sought to secure nonviolent Christian reformation through “inmate separation and silence, Bible reading, and simple labor.” In addition, administering the prison as a garden forecasted a religious vision and model of a wider society built on “peace, security and happiness.” Ultimately this garden of reformation and order failed to realize its mission to crucify the sins of “creaturely activity” in the service of creating law-abiding citizens, who were self-supporting and honest (37-38).

Chapters 2 and 3 find the Protestant administration of prisons transforming from a garden to a scripturally justified “Furnace of Affliction.” As both inmates and state officials increasingly resisted the spiritual underpinnings of Quaker reform (42), reformatory incarceration became a site of chastisement, humiliation, suffering, and pain in the service of Calvinistic theological notions of sin and of the necessity and promise of God’s grace. The prison as furnace required giving inmates stark choices between grace and damnation, and eventually led to the reauthorizing of stricter sanctions like corporal punishment.

Indeed, as Graber correctly notes, “Religion bolstered prison discipline” and “prison discipline bolstered religion.” Although “the furnace of affliction garnered wide acceptance and praise” (74), it too ultimately failed to lead inmates through the doors of suffering to redemption. So yet again, as the author nicely documents, prison religion would need to change if it was going to assist the Protestant goal of “increas[ing] the Christian populace and ensur[ing] the government’s moral standing” (100).

Chapters 4 and 5 survey various Protestant reformers locked in heated public debate against legislative and wider social violence. While not always seeking to undo the basic theological underpinnings of the furnace of affliction, many reformers objected to the severity of the prison's "hell on earth." The text maps the terrible reality that a "program of suffering aimed at redemption" (111) and at "conversion and reformation" (112) did not cease to create a place of bodily violence and death. Beyond Protestant and secular debates over penal discipline were wider concerns about the wisdom, appropriateness, and desire that prison be a place of "spiritual transformation for the primary purpose of securing civil society" (136). The ebb and flow of such debates notwithstanding, the sobering reality, as one approaches the book's final chapter, is that throughout the antebellum period "New York prisons continued to be brutal places" (152).

Chapter 6 details the redemptive public pleas of Protestant reformers in the decade or so leading up to the Civil War. Peaceable Christians called for outreach and care for the bodily and spiritual suffering of inmates. This chapter also summarizes the often conflicting and diverging aims (documented throughout the text) of legal and religious reformers seeking "upright citizens" as distinct from "Christian converts" (158).

The epilogue focuses on the persistence of the American prison problem post-Civil War up to the present age. In the end, Graber's constructive view is that "the reformers' theology of redemptive suffering not only allowed but actually demanded . . . degrading practices" (182-83). Indeed, Graber is profoundly correct, whether speaking of the antebellum past or the contemporary present.

*James S. Logan*, Associate Professor of Religion and Associate Professor and Director of African and African American Studies, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana

Ted Grimsrud. *Instead of Atonement: The Bible's Salvation Story and Our Hope for Wholeness*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013.

The title of this new book prompts two questions: What is this "atonement" for which Ted Grimsrud believes we need a substitute? And what does he

offer instead of atonement?

By “atonement” Grimsrud refers to the “popular meaning” that “sacrificial payment makes salvation possible” such that “God’s ability to provide salvation is constrained pending the offering of an appropriate sacrifice” (3-4). Counterposed to this he offers “the salvation story I believe the Bible tells.” The upshot of “instead of atonement” is that “salvation in the Bible is not dependent . . . upon adequate sacrifices being offered (including the ultimate sacrifice of God’s Son, Jesus) as a condition for salvation” (4).

Grimsrud foregrounds his retelling of the biblical story against a contemporary backdrop: a criminal justice system based on retributive violence—which, he argues, is buttressed by an understanding of God as essentially retributive and of salvation as requiring violence. To pull the theological rug from under this unjust system, he re-reads the biblical narrative seeking a God who saves by mercy and whose justice restores wholeness rather than imposes punishment.

I generally agree with the author’s emphasis on the primacy of God’s mercy in the salvation story. That primacy, evident in Torah and Prophets and Gospels, is two-fold. First, God saves straight out of his mercy, without the need for sacrificial propitiation to satisfy some prior condition of salvation. Second, God’s act to liberate us from bondage frees us to respond to God’s mercy with our own acts to restore wholeness in relationship with God and one another.

In this regard, Grimsrud rightly highlights two matters often misunderstood concerning the relations of sacrifice to salvation and of wrath to mercy. First, sacrifice does not procure but presupposes salvation: sacrifice was to be a grateful response to God’s salvation, not a ritual means to gain salvation by satisfying God. Second, God’s wrath is not opposed to but presupposes God’s mercy: God expresses anger at our injustice and idolatry on account of his steadfast love, which we spurn by our sin—but which remains always available to heal and restore.

That said, I offer two critiques. First, Grimsrud acknowledges that the Bible does not testify univocally to God’s salvation, and he says that his project is neither to synthesize every text into a comprehensive account nor to “refute the counter-veiling [sic] evidence piece by piece” (234). Nonetheless, the reader reasonably expects at least some explanation of obvious evidence

starkly incongruous with the main thesis. Two examples: If “the primal story [of the Old Testament] serves as our main source for the biblical understanding of salvation” (29), and if in this primal story “the key saving act of God comes in the exodus” (31), then the biblical narrative reveals a violent aspect to God’s salvation. Yet Grimsrud downplays the violent means of God’s liberation—asserting simply, “the violence is peripheral” (228). Likewise, he presents the parable of sheep and goats as illustrating the “logic of mercy” in the salvation of God. He asserts that “[n]othing in this scene of judgment hints at the logic of retribution” (85)—ignoring the fact that Jesus sentences the goats to “eternal punishment” (Matt. 25:46). Grimsrud, inclined to see salvation as nonviolent (20, n. 58), selectively filters the textual evidence to suit his thesis.

Second, the author sees the “saving significance of Jesus’s death” in its revelation of resistance to salvation. Jesus’ murder by evil powers “reveals the logic of retribution as opposed to God” (94). But does *God* act through Jesus’ death to save us? While the cross enhances our understanding of salvation, it is not an accomplishment of salvation: “Jesus’s death adds nothing to the means of salvation” (77). Why deny that Jesus’ death is a saving act? Because, Grimsrud argues, “making Jesus’ crucifixion a salvific act” is linked to accepting “the logic of retribution as central to God’s work of salvation,” which “negates Jesus’s own understanding of salvation” (89). Accepting the logic of retribution might entail seeing Jesus’ death as a saving act, but the reverse need not be the case. We might reject that logic as central to the story of salvation yet understand Jesus’ death as God’s saving act. Grimsrud belatedly acknowledges this possibility, but without argument judges it of “implicitly” affirming a salvation premised on retribution (226).

Grimsrud says that he offers “an argument meant to suggest more than prove” (25). I would concur: his argument is, overall, more suggestive than persuasive, and likely convincing only to the already sympathetic reader.

*Darrin W. Snyder Belousek*, Lecturer in Philosophy and Religion, Ohio Northern University, Ada, Ohio, and Adjunct Instructor of Religion, Bluffton University, Bluffton, Ohio.



Mark Thiessen Nation, Anthony G. Siegrist, Daniel P. Umbrell. *Bonhoeffer the Assassin? Challenging the Myth, Recovering His Call to Peacemaking*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.

In this provocative and highly engaging book, Nation, Siegrist, and Umbrell argue that the legacy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer has been tainted by unfounded assumptions surrounding the nature of his involvement in the conspiracy against the Nazis. This has resulted in the common misperception that by the end of his life Bonhoeffer had departed from his earlier ethics of radical discipleship for a more “realistic” view of the world that recognized the necessity of employing violence in the name of the greater good. The authors seek to combat this myth, and to recover his call to peacemaking through reconsidering his biography (Part 1) and tracing the development of his theological ethics (Part 2).

The pivotal third chapter of the biographical section sets out specifically to disprove the myth of Bonhoeffer the assassin. Bonhoeffer, the authors assert, did not join the *Abwehr* (the German military intelligence) in order to become involved in assassination plots but because it provided a way for him as a conscientious objector to avoid military induction and to continue his theological work (76). Further, it must be recalled that Bonhoeffer was arrested on account of his role in helping fourteen Jews escape from Germany into Switzerland (86). Finally, Bonhoeffer’s execution should not be interpreted as evidence of his involvement in assassination plots but as the last gasps of a vengeful Nazi regime seeking to eliminate all its enemies (87). The authors conclude there is no evidence that Bonhoeffer either affirmed or was “involved” in the plots to kill Hitler (93).

Part 2 consists of close readings of Bonhoeffer’s treatment of theological ethics from three distinct periods in his life. His first foray into theological ethics in 1928 is characterized by a formalistic conception of God’s freedom that renders it difficult to speak of ethics at all. For the authors, this lecture represents a false start that is overcome with Bonhoeffer’s breakthrough of the early 1930s, which culminated in *Discipleship* (105). In *Discipleship*, Bonhoeffer moves beyond his earlier formalistic account of ethics by making a substantive turn to the person of Jesus Christ, resulting in a concrete ethics of radical discipleship.

The *Ethics* manuscripts that follow in the 1940s represent neither a break nor a departure from the Christological vision of *Discipleship*; rather they are “its confirmation, as it is its continuation, amendment, clarification, and culmination” (158). The close reading of the *Ethics* manuscripts that follows decisively refutes those inclined to read *Ethics* as signalling a shift towards something resembling Niebuhrian “realism”. For Bonhoeffer, to speak of “reality” apart from Jesus Christ is simply an abstraction.

While the first part of *Bonhoeffer the Assassin?* should encourage the reader to re-evaluate the extent and nature of Bonhoeffer’s involvement in the conspiracy, the authors’ biographical conclusions run up hard against the testimony of Bonhoeffer’s close friend and biographer Eberhard Bethge. Bethge depicts Bonhoeffer not only as being aware of but as offering his approval of the assassination attempts.<sup>1</sup> There is some engagement with Bethge’s testimony, but on the whole the reader is left searching for an explanation as to how Bethge could have been so confused or misled about such a fundamental detail in his friend’s life.

There is a distinct danger that the revisionary biographical conclusions of the first part of the book could prejudice readers against fully engaging with the very important theological argument advanced in the second part, which is capable of standing on its own terms. The absence of explicit discussion about Bonhoeffer’s challenging statements in *Ethics* about extraordinary situations, or borderline cases, that require transgressing of the law for the sake of its sanctification is an obvious lacuna in what is otherwise a very commendable treatment of the development of Bonhoeffer’s theological ethics.<sup>2</sup>

*Bonhoeffer the Assassin?* is both an important contribution to the field of Bonhoeffer studies and a gift to help the church in identifying and narrating the lives of the saints. It deserves to be widely read and debated.

*Robert Dean*, ThD graduate, Wycliffe College and the University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario.

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<sup>1</sup> Eberhard Bethge, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: A Biography*, rev. ed., edited by Victoria A. Barnett (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 751-52.

<sup>2</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 273, 297.

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## Mennonite Systematic Theology

David Cramer's "Mennonite Systematic Theology in Retrospect and Prospect," which appeared in the Fall 2013 volume of *The Conrad Grebel Review*, has generated considerable debate about the history, the future, and even the possibility of "Mennonite Systematic Theology." The occasion of this debate serves as the impetus for further sustained reflection on what Mennonite Systematic Theology is or may be. To that end, we invite submissions of original scholarly articles, especially those constructive in orientation, on this amorphous and contested theme. Articles may address one or more of the following issues:

- the qualifier "systematic"
- the qualifier "Mennonite"
- internal coherence and diversity
- Mennonite systematic theology and the Bible (and biblical theology)
- global perspectives
- historical perspectives
- "Mennonite theology" and "Anabaptist theology"
- Mennonite theology and ecumenism and/or the wider Christian tradition
- theology and praxis or lived faith
- theology and ecclesiology or doxology

Length: 5000-7000 words. See further submission guidelines.

**Deadline: April 1, 2015**

Submissions will undergo a peer-review process. Address inquiries and submissions to guest editors Paul Martens (Baylor University) and Malinda Berry (Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary) at [Paul\\_Martens@baylor.edu](mailto:Paul_Martens@baylor.edu).

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# CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**Mennonite/s Writing VII: Movement, Transformation, Place**  
**March 12-15, 2015**

**Fresno Pacific University, Fresno, California**

Co-sponsors: Fresno Pacific University and Hesston College

Proposals for scholarly papers, creative writing presentations, and panel discussions are invited. Electronic submissions are preferred.

**Deadline: October 1, 2014**

Details: [www.fresno.edu/mennos-writing](http://www.fresno.edu/mennos-writing).

# **CALL FOR PAPERS**

## ***The Conrad Grebel Review***

Original article submissions are invited for two special issues.

### **Revisiting Mennonite Peace Theology: A Panorama of Types**

In a 1991 publication the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Peace Office proposed ten diverse types of Mennonite peace theologies: historic nonresistance, culturally engaged pacifism, social responsibility, apolitical nonresistance, pacifism of the Messianic community, radical pacifism, realist pacifism, Canadian pacifism, liberation pacifism, and neo-sectarian pacifism. Is this typology relevant or helpful today? This special issue (or issues) will not be primarily about the 1991 document but about the substance to which it refers: the diversity of Mennonite peace theologies and future directions. Length: 5000-7500 words. Deadline: Sept. 1, 2014.

### **Economics in Anabaptist Perspective**

Contributions are welcome on a wide array of topics, and from a range of perspectives and disciplines such as anthropology, biblical studies, business, communication, development studies, economics, ethics, fine arts, history, literature, music, peace and conflict studies, philosophy, political science, sociology, and theology. Length: 5000-7500 words. Deadline: Dec. 1, 2014.

**For submission details and other information:**  
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*The Conrad Grebel Review* (CGR) is an interdisciplinary peer-reviewed journal of Christian inquiry devoted to thoughtful, sustained discussion of spirituality, theology, and culture from a broadly-based Mennonite perspective. It is published three times a year. We welcome submissions of articles, reflections, and responses. Accepted papers are subject to Chicago style and copy editing, and are submitted to authors for approval before publication.

### **Articles**

Articles are original works of scholarship engaged with relevant disciplinary literature, written in a style appealing to the educated non-specialist, and properly referenced. Length limit: 7500 words, excluding notes. Manuscripts are typically sent in blind copy to two peer-reviewers for assessment.

### **Reflections**

Reflections are thoughtful and/or provocative pieces drawing on personal expertise and experience, and may take the form of homilies, speeches, or essays. While held to the same critical standard as articles, they are generally free of scholarly apparatus. Length limit: 3000 words.

### **Responses**

Responses are replies to articles either recently published in CGR or appearing in the same issue by arrangement. Length is negotiable.

## **SUBMISSION PROCEDURE**

Send your submission electronically as a WORD attachment to: **Stephen Jones, Managing Editor, [cghedit@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:cghedit@uwaterloo.ca)**. Include your full name, brief biographical information, and institutional affiliation in the covering e-mail. CGR will acknowledge receipt immediately, and will keep you informed throughout the assessment process.

For CGR's Style Guide, Citation Format Guide, and other useful information, please consult <https://uwaterloo.ca/grebel/publications/conrad-grebel-review/submissions>.

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# ***The Conrad Grebel Review***

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## **Contents**

### TEACHING PEACE STUDIES

Guest Editors: Reina Neufeldt and Neil Funk-Unrau

Teaching Peace Studies: An Introduction

*Reina Neufeldt and Neil Funk-Unrau*

Teaching Peace Studies from a Mennonite Perspective:

Quiet in the Land Revisited

*Randy Janzen*

Leveraging Diversity: Teaching Peace in the Public University

*Edmund Pries*

Teaching and Learning—Violence and Healing

*Regina Shands Stoltzfus*

Teaching Peace as if it is Everyone's Business

*Lowell Ewert*

Towards a Pedagogy of Radical Love

*Karen Ridd*

***... and Book Reviews***