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PEACE EDUCATION AND PAULO FREIRE'S METHOD: TOWARDS THE DEMOCRATISATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Abstract

This article explores the application of Paulo Freire's methodological concerns in a contemporary, educational, non-revolutionary setting. It is focused on a Peace Educators' Workshop that meets three times annually to explore peace education in secondary schools in the United States. This treatment of Freire was developed for a day-long workshop after peace educators expressed an interest in the meaning of – and participation in – democratic processes in schools. The privileges of military recruiters in public schools emerged as an initial generative theme, and led to further insights about uncovering educational contradictions and constructing codifications as two key steps in a social change process.

Introduction

How do educators teach about peace in a cultural milieu that treats the subject as overtly partisan and even unpatriotic? This has become a central question

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framing the secondary-level Peace Educator Workshop (sponsored by World Citizen¹) that I co-facilitate. 'Peace' and even 'democracy' have become highly politicised terms – perhaps militarised terms – in the rhetoric of the 'war on terror'. How then might an educator (especially in a public school system, but also in the culture of some private schools) teach about principles of and participation in democracy and the goal and process of peace?

The Peace Educators in our workshop expressed concerns about using overtly peace-oriented language and lesson plans in what can be hostile school and community environments. Concerns have been expressed about perceived limits to promoting a 'negative peace' that goes beyond the absence of war, to 'positive peace' as the promotion of justice for all. In addition, educators wanted to explore participatory democracy rooted in the daily experience of students, rather than just representative democracy that is typically on display only during major elections. Peace educators also worry about the absence of any such concerns in their students, noting apathy towards politics and disinclination or disempowerment towards meaningful participation.

Our conversation turned towards what Paulo Freire would describe as 'conscientisation' (*conscientização* in Portuguese). Because only some of the educators were familiar with his name, and few with his ideas, Freire became a logical next focus for our workshop process. This presented an opportunity to translate Freire's method from his revolutionary context and literacy work in the Southern Hemisphere, to our non-revolutionary even post-literate² culture in the United States.

What follows is an attempt to transfer Freire's method to the specific, contemporary context of our Peace Educators' Workshop. Freire's method is typically framed as promoting revolutionary change through political movements via literacy campaigns. Our goal was to retain the essence of both his means and ends as situated in a community committed to positive social change under the rubric of promoting peace through education.

Freire's method: an outline

The outline below (Figure 1) is appropriated from Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1990, 102–18), with some attention to the articulation of his method in *Educating for Critical Consciousness* (2005, 37–49). As I have merged the two descriptions of methodology, I have renumbered some of the steps that are described in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as 'stages' and in *Education for Critical Consciousness* as 'phases'. My intention is to maintain the order of his process while allowing the two different descriptions to form a more nuanced whole. This outline formed the framework for the Peace Educators' Workshop and the structure for this article. Elements of the outline

Outline of Paulo Freire's method

- Step 1: Investigators:
- a. Make preliminary acquaintance through secondary sources
 - b. Establish first-hand contact to uncover constructed codes
 - c. Expect interviews to reveal longings, frustrations, disbeliefs, hopes and desire to participate
- Step 2: Evaluation with local assistants
- a. Uncover principal and secondary contradictions
 - i. epochal or national-level contradictions
 - ii. local or particular contradictions
 - b. Determine awareness of contradictions
 - c. Articulating limit-situations
 - d. Proposing untested feasibilities
- Step 3: Codification
- a. Development of codifications from contradictions
 - b. Prepare didactic materials
 - i. Utilise familiar situations and felt needs
 - ii. Do not render them too overt or propagandistic
 - iii. Organise as a thematic fan
 - iv. Include other related or subsumed contradictions
- Step 4: Decoding
- a. Thematic investigation circles
 - b. Re-present to the people their own thematics in systematized & amplified form
 - c. Begin with theme of 'culture' (distinguish what is natural and constructed)
 - d. Break down into other themes (thematic fan) i.e.: politics, economy, religion, labour, gender, ethnicity, etc.
- Step 5: Systematic interdisciplinary study
- a. List implicit and explicit themes
 - b. Classify according to the social sciences
 - c. Break down the theme according to discipline with input from other disciplines
 - d. Compose brief essays with bibliographic suggestions
- Step 6: Intervention
- a. Post-literacy stage
 - b. Defending democracy
 - c. Democratisation of culture

Figure 1

will be treated in greater or lesser depth and detail reflecting the extent of transfer and application to the workshop process. A note will be made of when the workshop process deviates significantly from the outline as it was practised in Freire's work and as described in the texts referenced.

Step 1: Investigators

In this case, my co-facilitator and I assumed the role of investigators through our past workshops, albeit without the intentionality implicit in Freire's description of this stage. Instead of actively uncovering constructed codes in the group, we reflected on the content of our workshops over the space of two years and the feedback we received informally at the end of each session and formally through written evaluations. Preliminary acquaintance through secondary sources was not necessary in this case and first-hand contact to uncover constructed codes was a matter of reflection versus investigation. Our past workshops were based on a variation of a learning-circle model. For the purposes of this article, open discussions in that context take the place of interviews that 'reveal longings, frustrations, disbeliefs, hopes and desire to participate' (Freire 2005, 43). In fact the workshop has been variously described by participants as a retreat, a forum, and even a support group, and has raised both intellectual and affective responses to the opportunities and obstacles inherent in peace education. The results of Step 1 will be described in the next section.

Step 2: Evaluation with local assistants

Uncovering contradictions is the essential element of Step 2. The peace educators in our workshop have had no problem identifying contradictions in their schools and in American culture; gaps and tensions between principle and practice. However, Freire's primary and secondary contradictions have been more difficult to separate. If Freire's contention still holds true – that domination is the essential or 'epochal' theme of our time – then a primary contradiction for peace educators might be tensions between violence and non-violence. Workshop discussions reflect this theme on many levels. Internationally, US rhetoric centres on promoting democracy and peace while at the same time supporting autocratic regimes and employing military intervention as conflict resolution. Nationally, increased military spending and decreased funding for education reflect violence as a dominant fiscal priority. Our teachers see these themes reflected in the way students use violence to resolve conflict in school, from bullying during lunchtime to bringing weapons to school. Violence is also prevalent in our language and popular entertainment (i.e. music, television and video games). One of our educators came to the workshop initially because he was disturbed by his reputation as the 'war teacher', and realised that his American history textbook was structured

primarily around wars and the periods between wars. Such violence in an affluent country founded on life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is an omnipresent contradiction for educators and functions on many levels in and out of their schools.

Peace educators are perhaps more aware of these contradictions than other teachers, primarily as a result of their active and critical reflection on their school environment and the subjects they teach. Analytical and reflective time during Peace Educator Workshops helped to form a discerning community willing to compare and clarify these themes. Sustained engagement over months – and now years – has led educators to address contradictions in school curricula and outside the classroom as well. However, even as we become aware of these contradictions, we are sometimes slow to perceive what Freire describes as *limit-situations* that keep us from connecting seemingly isolated contradictions to broad themes and societal patterns.

Freire quotes Álvaro Vieira Pinto to describe limit-situations not as: ‘the impassable boundaries where possibilities end, but the real boundaries where possibilities begin’ (Freire 1990, 89). Limit-situations are perceived limits that – once recognised as constructed rather than natural or determined – can be acted upon and deconstructed or transformed. For example, peace educators felt alone in their faculty and schools because of perceived and real isolation from other teachers who shared their interests. An invitation to a workshop helped them recognise this limit-situation and act on it by inviting another educator from their own school, then meeting educators from different institutions. Just as surpassing the limit-situation of pedagogical isolation may lead peace educators to connect with each other, so too does surpassing any limit-situation allow a teacher or learner to make connections between isolated situations and larger systems.

Freire noted that limit-situations can be particularly difficult to acknowledge and transform for people in the economic and cultural middle class. The very poor Brazilian peasants and other groups he worked with in the lower economic classes had little to lose from deconstructing the systems of domination that were laid bare in Freire’s method. But the middle class, whether in Brazil, the United States or elsewhere, is entwined in the system as both dominating and dominated. He states: ‘a dominated consciousness which has not yet perceived a limit-situation in its totality apprehends only its epiphenomena and transfers to the latter the inhibiting force which is the property of the limit-situation’ (Freire 1990, 94). In an attempt to untangle Freire’s sometimes convoluted prose, I’ve detailed a potential generative theme for our Peace Educators’ Workshop in Figure 2, correlating the particular description of the theme with Freire’s terminology in the preceding quote.

**Military recruiting in US high schools
(under No Child Left Behind legislation³)**

- The totality of the limit-situation might be construed as the increasing militarisation of the United States (a national-level theme in Freire's schema).
- The epiphenomena of the total limit-situation – US militarisation – might be perceived in a more particular situation, i.e. a military recruiter receiving privileged access to high schools in ways that no other recruiter does (corporate, non-profit or volunteer).
- That contradiction as apprehended by a dominated consciousness (one who does not yet see the totality of the limit-situation) assigns the limiting force of the total limit-situation (militarisation) to the particular situation (privileging military recruiting).
- In other words, without a critical understanding of the national-level theme of militarisation, the attention and resistance of students and teachers are focused on the particular limit-situation of access by military recruiters to high schools.
- Therefore the full reality remains unacknowledged and the particular instance remains isolated from the totality, meaning that both strategy and tactics remain focused on the situation at hand, a characteristic rather than a cause.

Figure 2

If the example above helps to clarify limit-situations, Freire himself offers a key insight for our translation of limit-situations to a contemporary US context:

Individuals of the middle class often demonstrate this type of behavior, although in a different way than the peasant. Their fear of freedom leads them to erect defense mechanisms and rationalizations which conceal the fundamental, emphasize the fortuitous, and deny concrete reality. In the face of a problem whose analysis would lead to the uncomfortable perception of a limit-situation, their tendency is to remain on the periphery of the discussion and resist any attempt to reach the heart of the question. They are even annoyed when someone points out a fundamental proposition which explains the fortuitous or secondary matters to which they had been assigning primary importance. (Freire 1999, 94)

While he may be cynical about the critical capacity of the middle class, Freire names a recognisable tendency in people whose comfort and security would be threatened by a change in the status quo, or who have no particular motivation to change their situation. Peace educators who challenge cultural norms in the USA such as 'patriotism' can be perceived as threatening to middle-class parents who may be complacent with the current state of affairs.

And if individuals and groups do not perceive *any* particular limit-situations in lives marked by relative comfort and complacency, they will not be easily disposed to a process of conscientisation.

Before moving on from limit-situations, I will pose a caveat to Freire's method that may highlight over-confidence in his process. He states: 'The fact that individuals in a certain area do not perceive a generative theme, or perceive it in a distorted way, may only reveal a limit-situation of oppression in which men [*sic*] are still submerged' (Freire 1990, 94). In addition to the gendered text, Freire seems to take for granted that the perception of the process facilitator is necessarily correct and that of other individuals necessarily lacking or distorted. Instead, it may be that the facilitator has constructed a theme that does not accurately reflect the particularity of the situation and its connection to larger themes. Individuals who do not perceive the theme may be too oppressed to see it, or may be insightful enough to recognise a facilitator's mistake, as in the case of our Peace Educators' Workshop (see 'Implications', below). In the same way, individuals who perceive a distorted theme might be reflecting their oppression in the distortion, or might be correcting a distortion made by the facilitator. The more particular a theme, the more attention this distinction ought to receive. Yet even at the national or epochal level, the facilitator ought to be receptive to critique by participants and local resources in a dialogical investigation.

Once limit-situations have been acknowledged, the possibilities beyond this particular artificial boundary can be explored. Freire names this next step *proposing untested feasibilities* – 'that which lies beyond limit-situations' (1990, 92). After identifying the limit-situation of privileging military recruiting in high schools, a facilitator might prompt the group for ideas that address the issue (untested feasibilities, in other words, possible actions that haven't been tried yet). Tactics used to address the privileging of military recruiters might include untested feasibilities and examples from other schools (feasibilities that have been tested elsewhere but remain untested in their own setting) such as:

- inviting 'peaceful' recruiters (e.g. Veterans for Peace⁴) to recruit or display information next to military recruiters
- limiting recruiters to isolated hallways or appointments in the school career centre
- alerting the families of students that they may choose 'opt-out' provisions in the No Child Left Behind clause (see Appendix 2)
- refusing recruiters based on school non-discrimination policies (specifically the US military policy of 'don't ask, don't tell' for gay and lesbian soldiers).

Proposing these untested feasibilities at this stage allows the facilitator to probe for other limit-situations within a theme and determine awareness of related contradictions. Because themes both 'contain and are contained in limit-situations', Freire describes these themes as 'generative' because 'they contain the possibility of unfolding into again as many themes, which in their turn call for new tasks to be fulfilled' (1999, 92).

Step 3: Codification

The next step in Freire's process is to develop *codifications* from the contradictions uncovered in the investigative and evaluative stages (steps 1 and 2). He describes them as 'typical existential situations of the group ... These representations function as challenges, as coded situation problems containing elements to be decoded by the group with the collaboration of the coordinator' (2005, 45). Codifications are constructed symbols most often described by Freire as sketches or photographs (1990, 106), but sometimes as an oral description of a scene. These constructions follow several requirements set forth in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Having considered several possible contradictions that came out of past workshop discussions, I focused on privileging military recruiter access in schools to illustrate Freire's codification requirements (1990, 106–8).

When preparing didactic materials to mediate critical analysis, the coordinator should first utilise familiar situations and felt needs. Because the investigator has become familiar with the settings of the group, pictures will reflect common surroundings and activities. Our representation of the military recruiter (see Figures 3 and 4 below) includes tables, background displays and other aspects of a recruiter's set-up common to high-school hallways or cafeterias in the United State. Second, the sketch or photograph should not be too overt or propagandistic in its representation. The military recruiter should not be represented as an enormous, dominating figure while portraying the student as small and victimised. The scenario should be immediately construed as a normal occurrence without editorial embellishments. Even so, the depiction should include other related or subsumed contradictions so that it encompasses more than just a single theme. In our example, the age, race and gender of both the recruiter and the high-school student ought to be considered as appropriate to the group's familiar high-school setting, and reflecting the contradictions that emerged from the coordinator's investigation. Depictions of the recruiters marketing materials and the reaction of students passing by might also be included. A series, rather than single depiction, might vary some of the aforementioned factors to draw out divergent reactions based on age, race or gender.

All of these considerations create potential sub-themes that will be developed by the group into what Freire describes as a 'thematic fan' (1990, 107). Opening into other themes, the sketch or picture externalises the



Figure 3



Figure 4

perceptions of the group and allows for comparison and contrast of different perceptions in order to perceive a larger totality of the shared experience. If the didactic materials are familiar enough and rich enough in their depiction, the group may raise contradictions and themes beyond the intention of the facilitator to further develop the group's critical consciousness.

Step 4: Decoding

The group is divided into thematic investigation circles with attention to the number in each group to allow all participants to engage in the process. Freire recommends no more than 20 participants (1990, 110). The coordinator uses the didactic materials (sketches or drawings) to re-present to the participants their own thematics from the earlier investigation, but in a systematised and amplified form. Like any photograph or sketch, the didactic materials filter out ancillary data to focus and clarify the themes uncovered by the investigative step.

As the group begins to discuss the photograph or sketch, the coordinator must listen but also challenge the group, 'posing as problems both the codified existential situation and their own answers' (Freire 1990, 110). The point of these discussions is provide a 'cathartic force' allowing participants to 'externalize a series of sentiments and opinions about themselves, the world, and others, that perhaps they would not express under different circumstances' (Freire 1990, 111). The discussion about the military recruiter might first raise issues about the motivations of the student or the humanity of the person in uniform. But as the discussion develops, and the thematic fan opens, more particular issues might be externalised and voiced such as school anti-discrimination policies, federal interference in local school districts, economic opportunities for high-school students, or even a military veteran's ambivalence about the scenario.

From this discussion, the group should be able to break down distinct themes in the scenario such as politics, economics, religion, labour, gender, ethnicity, etc. Freire doesn't advocate a particular process to articulate themes. In our Peace Educators' Workshop, we took notes of the conversation on a flipchart in order to categorise comments. These emergent themes were utilised in an appropriation of a later step in the method.

Two deviations from Freire's method should be noted here. Contemporary US culture makes some of his particular examples difficult to translate exactly. For instance, he suggests that facilitators start with the theme of 'culture' to distinguish what is natural and constructed. We might translate by equating natural with 'given' and constructed with 'artificial' in the sense of artefact – that which is made versus given. To use Hurricane Katrina as an example: a hurricane is a natural, given situation (putting aside the issue of global climate

change for the moment) while levees are a cultural or artificial problem. Whereas Hurricane Katrina is a very accessible metaphor in the urban United States, our contemporary disengagement from the natural world might make Freire's examples such as farming or pottery difficult to transfer or irrelevant.

Most troubling for those who have sought to translate his method is Freire's emphasis on literacy. Where his method has been employed in developing countries, literacy has the potential to empower participation in political and economic areas. His Brazilian examples focus on breaking down Portuguese – a syllabic language – in a way that has no easy corollary in English. In primarily literate cultures such as the United States, obstacles to political consciousness might be addressed and overcome directly in the codification process, rather than being mediated by literacy, especially as critical analysis articulates categorical connections between themes. Instead of literacy serving as the conduit for politicisation, dialogue of a democratic character that uncovers power dynamics may be most promising catalyst for contemporary manifestations of thematic investigation circles.

Step 5: Systematic interdisciplinary study

In this step, Freire's process begins to move beyond the original thematic investigation circle to compose broader cultural circles. These circles will use and adapt the themes from the original as a means to encourage conscientisation and politicisation (addressed in Step 6: Intervention). In Step 5, themes raised in the thematic investigation circles are listed, classified, broken down and reconstructed in essays with bibliographic references.

In our thematic treatment of military recruiters, we might begin by listing implicit and explicit themes from our workshop. Here the facilitator has a dialogical responsibility in the workshop to record the themes explicitly identified, and to articulate implicit themes that might have been talked around without being addressed directly. This is of course another point of interpretation by the facilitator that should be treated carefully and with respect for the work of the group lest the facilitator's agenda weigh too heavily on the results. In referring to the facilitator's role as dialogical, Freire contends that these additional 'hinged themes' may either 'facilitate the connection between two themes ... filling a possible gap between the two, or they may illustrate the relations between the general program content and the view of the world held by the people' (1990, 114).

In our military recruiter example, the list of themes might include militarisation, gender and sexual identity in the military, patriotism, the costs of war, school policy and governance, access and opportunity for graduating high-school students, etc. Each of these can then be 'classified according to the social sciences' (1990, 113). This is not to isolate and categorise them so as to render

them too abstract, but rather to elaborate on the themes, draw interdisciplinary connections and implications, and relate them to theoretical sources that may enrich and deepen understanding of the themes. Militarisation could be addressed by social scientific disciplines of history, sociology, psychology, economics, peace studies, women's studies, cultural studies, etc. An interdisciplinary team from these fields may then break down the theme so as to find its 'fundamental nuclei which, comprising learning units and establishing a sequence, give a general view of the theme' (1990, 113). Then learning units are constructed and essays written (with bibliographic suggestions), to create a curriculum for Freire's 'cultural circles'.

Step 6: Intervention

Cultural circles are Freire's vision for promoting and defending democracy. They are intended to evoke a critical consciousness best described by the following quotation from *Education for Critical Consciousness*:

As an active educational method helps a person to become consciously aware of his context and his condition as a human being as Subject, it will become an instrument of choice. At that point he will become politicized. When an ex-illiterate of Angicos, speaking before [Brazilian] President João Goulart and the presidential staff, declared he was no longer part of the *mass*, but one of the *people*, he had done more than utter a mere phrase; he had made a conscious option. He had chosen decisional participation, which belongs to the people, and had renounced the emotional resignation of the masses. He had become political. (2005, 47)

Politicisation is encouraging democratic participation in a citizenry of subjects rather than objects; of people filled with hope and empowered to act, rather than the masses who wait for elected elites to decide for them. Cultural circles – marked by critical dialogical discussion – might address: government and corporate propaganda; stereotypes presented by the media; legislated privilege and discrimination; or even national, state and district educational standards and assessments. In addition to military recruiting, cultural circles in high-school classrooms (or faculties) might address campus culture, district funding priorities or school governance; all rooted in the particular experiences of students and teachers expressed through generative themes, and discussed by critically conscious subjects in active, democratic participation.

Workshop results and implications

The workshop outlined in Appendix 1 followed the process described above with one important distinction which resulted in an unforeseen consequence. We attempted to both describe and carry out Freire's methodology in the course of a single seven-hour workshop. Rather than beginning in Step 2 by articulating limit situations and proposing untested feasibilities, we described the process of uncovering 'longings, frustrations, disbeliefs, hopes and desire to participate' in Step 1. Opening a space to raise new longings and frustrations produced a broad list of deeply felt needs, and military recruiting was not at the top of the list. It remained a concern, but when I explained that we had structured the workshop around this previously expressed need, the energy in the room dissipated. Because we opened the workshop by describing initial steps, rather than beginning with the investigation we had already completed, my proposed generative theme about military recruiters dispersed the energy that the group truly felt around newly raised issues of culture and race in schools.

It was clear that creating such an open space in which to be heard led to great excitement. It was equally clear that when their issues were not explored in deference to a previously devised plan the educators lost enthusiasm for the project. We interrupted the planned activities briefly to explore the sudden change of interest. We found that these educators experience a similar dynamic regularly: permission to voice their deepest needs and convictions only to be overruled by the plans and expectations of others. As a group, we decided to proceed with the planned workshop, but we returned to the topic of voice and decision-making in a later session utilising Open Space Technology⁵ to explore the intersection of race and class in schools.

Trying to model the whole of Freire's process in seven hours was daunting and should have been extended. Because of time constraints, very little time was devoted to articulating limit-situations. Many of the barriers to addressing military recruiting in the schools held potential for strategic work and educational opportunities, but trying to address process and content concurrently led to inadequate time for both. In addition, by doubling the length of the workshop to a second day, practical application should have been a greater priority through group articulation limit-situations and proposals of untested feasibilities. The book *Army of None* (Allison and Solnit 2007), offers counter-recruitment strategies and tactics for school campuses. The suggestions made in the text may be controversial to educators and administrators, students and parents. But if presented in a spirit of educational inquiry and reflection action, a debate on the consequences of recruitment and counter-recruitment could promote the kind of decision-making and intervention that Freire calls the 'democratization of culture'.

Conclusion

One of Freire's illiterate teachers said eloquently, 'The democratization of culture ... has to start from what we are and what we do as people, not from what some people think and want for us' (Freire 2000, 75). Democratisation is the recognition that culture is a human construction that is changeable, that we may adapt it towards the service of humanity, rather than adapting humanity to culture. The democratisation of culture is rooted in our participation as subjects, individually and collectively.

Freire was not allowed to fully implement his plan for cultural circles. He was exiled from Brazil under charges that he sought to subvert democracy. In the impassioned conclusion to *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Freire answers that charge and begs critical questions for our peace educators:

One subverts democracy (even though one does this in the name of democracy) by making it irrational; by making it rigid in order 'to defend against totalitarian rigidity'; by making it hateful, when it can only develop in the context of love and respect for persons; by closing it, when it only lives in openness; by nourishing it with fear when it must be courageous; by making it an instrument of the powerful in the oppression of the weak; by militarizing it against the people; by alienating a nation in the name of democracy. One defends ... democracy which does not fear the people, which suppresses privilege, which can plan without becoming rigid, which defends itself without hate, which is nourished by a critical spirit rather than irrationality. (49)

What would democracy look like in an educational system that is primarily authoritarian at the national, state and district level, or even in the classroom itself? How will peace educators employ or adapt Freire's method to defend democracy in high-school classrooms? Will our schools empower students to democratise culture as subjects, as one of the people? Or will students be trained to assimilate to culture, remain one of the masses, and thereby subvert democracy?

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Notes

- 1 World Citizen is a non-profit organization committed to promoting peace in education through the dedication of peace sites, peace educator workshops and an annual Nobel Peace Prize Festival. See www.peacesites.org for more information.
- 2 I am using the phrase 'post-literate culture' to describe the educated masses in the United States (and perhaps other affluent countries) who are able to read and write, but who get most of their cultural input from auditory and visual media. To this end, auditory refers to various forms: radio, podcasts and satellite transmissions. Visual media obviously includes television and recorded media (i.e. DVDs), but also a great deal of print and internet data that is primarily visual. While one might 'read' a newspaper, magazine or web page, I would suggest that most of the US population in fact reads the captions associated with photographs; scans pictures for content and context; and glances at charts, graphs or illustrations rather than reading an entire article or web page from start to finish. This is a different way to apprehend cultural data and has implications for the meaning of literacy beyond what will be explored here.
- 3 In the No Child Left Behind legislation of 2001, a short clause buried deep in the text gives the US military unrestricted access to recruit in high schools and access to students' personal information for recruiting purposes. There is an apparent contradiction – or at least confusion – between unrestricted access by the military (Section 9528, subsection (A)(1)) and access equal to that of an employer (Section 9528, subsection (A)(3)) – see Appendix 2. Employers would generally not be given access to students' personal information but it is mandated for military recruiters, and this has become a 'contradiction' for peace educators in the Freirian sense of the word.

- 4 Veterans For Peace, www.vetsforpeace.org (description taken from the Veterans For Peace web site): ‘Veterans For Peace is a national organization founded in 1985. It is structured around a national office in Saint Louis, MO and comprises of [*sic*] members across the country organized in chapters or as at-large members. There is an annual convention in August for members from across the nation. Members receive periodic VFP publications. The organization includes men and women veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, other conflicts and peacetime veterans. Our collective experience tells us that wars are easy to start and hard to stop and those hurt are often the innocent. Thus, other means of problem solving are necessary. Veterans For Peace is an official Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) represented at the UN. Whether or not you wish to participate in chapter activities, please consider becoming a Veteran For Peace member. As an organization, we are what our members make us. You can be part of that effort. Help us put an end to war. We draw on our personal experiences and perspectives gained as veterans to raise public awareness of the true costs and consequences of militarism and war – and to seek peaceful, effective alternatives.’
- 5 Open Space Technology is a means of facilitating a gathering, conference or retreat. Participants develop the agenda based on common interests and agreed-upon parameters, and then facilitate breakout sessions. The convener leads the process, but the content and outcomes are determined by the participants.

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Spanish Abstract

EDUCACIÓN PARA LA PAZ Y EL MÉTODO DE PAULO FREIRE: HACIA LA DEMOCRATIZACIÓN DE LA ENSEÑANZA Y EL APRENDIZAJE

Mike Klein

Este trabajo explora la aplicación de las preocupaciones metodológicas de Paulo Freire en un escenario contemporáneo, educativo y no revolucionario. Se centra en un Taller de Educadores para la Paz que se reúne tres veces al año y explora la educación para la Paz en los centros de enseñanza secundaria de los Estados Unidos. Este tratamiento de Freire fue desarrollado para un taller de un día de duración luego de que los educadores para la paz expresaran interés en el significado, y en participar, del proceso democrático en los centros educativos. Los privilegios de los reclutadores militares en centros de enseñanza públicos surgieron como un tema generativo inicial, y llevaron a más elementos sobre el descubrimiento de contradicciones educativas y la construcción de codificaciones como dos pasos clave en un proceso de cambio social.

Appendix 1

*World Citizen Peace Educators' Workshop – Secondary Level –
17 February 2006*

- 7:00 Continental breakfast
- 7:30 Introductions – Signs of Hope
'Where do you see hope for peace in the world?'
- 8:00 Introduce Paulo Freire
Learning the process by doing
- 8:15 Investigation (Step 1)
Question: What concerns you most in your school or our world?

Evaluation (Step 2)
Contradiction: How is that different than it's supposed to be?
- 9:00 Codification (Step 3)
Generative theme: Military recruiting in high schools
Codification: symbolic representation of that theme
- 9:45 Break
- 10:00 Decodification (Step 4)
Thematic fan – branching out from one theme to sub-themes
- 10:30 Interdisciplinary Study (Step 5)
Connecting disciplines to reconstruct the theme
- 11:15 Growing communities for peace – peace educators' bookstore
- 11:30 Lunch and networking
- 12:30 Intervention (Step 6)
Questions about Freire's process
Resources and ideas for action
- 1:00 Planning and application by school team or with other schools
- 1:30 Closing/evaluations/ideas for next workshop

Appendix 2

Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Military Recruitment

SEC. 9528. ARMED FORCES RECRUITER ACCESS TO STUDENTS AND STUDENT RECRUITING INFORMATION.

(a) POLICY—

(1) ACCESS TO STUDENT RECRUITING INFORMATION— Notwithstanding section 444(a)(5)(B) of the General Education Provisions Act and except as provided in paragraph (2), each local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act shall provide, on a request made by military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone listings.

(2) CONSENT— A secondary school student or the parent of the student may request that the student's name, address, and telephone listing described in paragraph (1) not be released without prior written parental consent, and the local educational agency or private school shall notify parents of the option to make a request and shall comply with any request.

(3) SAME ACCESS TO STUDENT— Each local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act shall provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to post secondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students.

(b) NOTIFICATION— The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall, not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, notify principals, school administrators, and other educators about the requirements of this section.

(c) EXCEPTION— The requirements of this section do not apply to a private secondary school that maintains a religious objection to service in the Armed Forces if the objection is verifiable through the corporate or other organizational documents or materials of that school.

(d) SPECIAL RULE— A local educational agency prohibited by Connecticut State law (either explicitly by statute or through statutory interpretation by the State Supreme Court or State Attorney General) from providing military recruiters with information or access as required by this section shall have until May 31, 2002, to comply with that requirement.



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