By the end of the twentieth century a wave has washed over the world. That wave is called globalization. It is a wave both economic and cultural and it goes ahead and introduces itself without rules in countries and regions. Globalization tells us about emergent markets noisily falling down. It shows economic advances, concentration of wealth and expansion of poverty. Globalization transversally splits society, generating illusions and disillusions. Globalization leads to deep uncertainty.

Thus, globalization and uncertainty are part of the reality of the world we live in and it has a direct influence in our cities—those artificial spaces where each society represents itself, trying to turn them into trustees of their individual and collective desires.

The governments of the cities, poles or node centers of different nations, regional or continental areas emerge as first instance juridical-institutional referents to consolidate Latin American democratic systems and to promote the political socialization of its inhabitants.

We are at an historic time when the risk of de facto governments and military coups, that prevented every possibility of constitutional governments, are over. Economic and cultural globalization stands up as a new risk for keeping equity in the development of social policies, participatory democracy and protection of Human Rights in the cities.

The globalization process that characterizes global economy at the end of the last millennium, with a strong accent in concentration of wealth and high degree in technology brought poverty and marginality to our region.

There has been an increase in the precariousness of working conditions, unemployment and corruption. Deterioration of institutional life and weakening of representative democracy without any mobility to switch to other participatory mechanisms have had a great impact on the social and economic spheres of our cities. The result is absolutely devastating.

The structural poverty sectors had not substantially changed their previous situation of scarce or null participation in the distribution of wealth. Still, they are suffering deeper marginality: higher infant mortality rates, teenage pregnancy, lower performance and even desertion from primary schools, alcoholism, etc. In addition some other scourges also increased, such as domestic violence, children delinquency, citizens’ insecurity, addictions, environmental destruction, children’s work, etc., characteristic of extreme poverty processes.

To these we must add the advent of thousands of new poor people. These are unemployed workers who have lost their jobs and their social security, without any alternative or any social services to assist them.
These sectors that previously enjoyed the condition of citizens, that identified themselves with a
trade union, that could see possibilities of development and could dream with a future, today
have abandoned the institutions or were abandoned by them.

The results of the policy of adjustment are very well known and in Latin America. We speak
about the “lost decade” when we try to characterize the reach of our increasing marginal
condition from the most outstanding global economic activities.

Especially the cities’ local authorities—strongly affected by economic recession and by the
social deficit generated by the neo-liberal model—had to assume the challenge of starting some
governmental alternatives that put into practice the values of equal opportunities, equity and
citizens’ participation in decision making. That is, working in democratic processes of rolling out
social practices like training schools of politization for all.

Following Group of Rio questioning I asked myself:
   How much poverty can liberty bear?
   How can the reality of poverty be overcome?
   How can the continuum of inequality inside society be avoided?
   How can we guarantee that every citizen’s fundamental rights will be protected?

Local governments, more than ever, are facing supra structural conflicts that are sometimes out
of their sphere of control. In fact, a great number of problematics are out of the competence and
responsibility of local administrations.

Nevertheless, people demand solutions to the municipal representatives and the demands go to
the most immediate authorities, the closest and most reliable, with whom they share everyday
life in cities full of contradictions.

In a state of social exclusion there is insecurity not only for the excluded but also for society as a
whole. The local authorities know this very well. This is the time when working towards political
socialization, democratization of policy mechanisms and promotion of Human Rights becomes a
political-social imperative.

Facing this reality there are two alternatives: following the habitual bureaucratic features of
public offices (“this is not possible”, “it is beyond our control”, “it belongs to other political
governance sphere”, etc) or, assuming the challenge of developing another kind of local policy.
The latter would involve, above all, broadening cities’ executive and guarantor role of public
liberties in the cities’ jurisdiction as well as coordinating diverse practises for a “better
democracy for all”.

Re-structuring the municipal government taking into account this new sphere of competence is a
demand today: a time when the construction of a just, free and solidarious society is a permanent
aspiration.
Local authorities must strategically design programs that fulfill these aims, bearing in mind the needs for the future and the tools that model the city that is needed here and now—Certainly not an easy task.

The city, the municipality, is the place where life goes on. It is also the place where human development must be achieved in conditions of equal opportunities for everyone.

It is about gathering to the municipal dimension of collective work the valuable contribution of the community and solidarity organizations, of the spontaneous actions of neighbors, of their needs and thoughts.

Moreover, the state is a part of the solution and it has an irreplaceable responsibility in reconciling public and private interests and in the creation of suitable conditions to develop the initiatives and efforts of the whole population towards a social benefit for all.

Political interventions of the local government in a city with equal opportunities definitely presuppose thinking about the social in the same strategic framework as democratic education, economical reform and juridical protection. Thus, it proposes a new model of development in which educational-social reform and economic reform enhance each other and are strengthened in the same logic of efficiency and equity.

Thus the limitation of considering society as object of assistance policies is overcome. This was one of the contradictions of the old pattern in which great growth was achieved without eliminating poverty and with systematic violation of the population’s fundamental rights.

In neo-liberal public policies it is usual to find binary descriptions of problems: economic development versus structural poverty and unemployment; cultural development versus urban violence; opening to a globalized world of increasing goods and services versus marginality, exclusion, and illiteracy; production of knowledge and technology versus illiteracy; and construction of concrete concepts of citizenship and rights versus anomie, disaffiliation process, breaking of containment bonds, primary socialization in a world of violence and exploitation.

It is, no doubt, a challenge that largely exceeds the possibilities of local governments. Since all these differences have a common source in macro-economy variables and in exclusion policies that are supported by creating big world wide poverty areas and through permanent violation of the rights of the citizens.

From this perspective, we recognize real democratic policies when cities seek inclusion to favor the integration of its inhabitants. For example, assistance actions can facilitate each other so as to produce multiple and different impacts to awake consciousness and to help organization and management ability by the population.

It must be a political goal to consider citizens as active subjects of decision making processes and not objects of social services and parties programmatic speeches. And it is the responsibility and commitment of local governments to guarantee the fulfillment of these rights in the urban scope, developing specific public policies that secure the application of protection systems, as
established by national constitutions and international agreements signed by national governments.

Nevertheless, it is true that Latin America has not had many opportunities to have “peace for thinking, quietness for speaking, place for creating, room for having ideas” (from Juan Cruz, journalist of “El País”, Madrid). Saturated with distrust and fear by decades of institutional instability, dictatorships, censorship, violence and polarized political antagonisms, there are still many scars and even open wounds in Latin America social body caused by these lacerations.

“Visible expressions of an exhausted authoritarian and corporate order have fallen down. Nevertheless, some features belonging to the political practice predominant before remained undamaged” (Natalio Botana, “El Siglo de la Libertad y el Miedo).

The incompetence of the political power to reconstruct the past with parameters of truth and justice has given politics a decadent sense, displacing it from the real power of decision which has gone to the hands of concentrated economic groups.

The democratization process of Latin American societies harassed by chronic crisis will be, no doubt, very long and characterized by comings and goings of growth and set backs similar to those of the global financial crisis that affects public policies and governmental decisions.

This situation echoes in the real practice of fundamental rights in the cities and in the democratization strategies that municipal governments can develop. The cities are forced to face urgent decisions according the application of unmerciful adjustment policies in agreement with the global institution of financial credit. The political decision from local governments taking into account dynamic programs that can support definite actions is quite important here. I think that these actions must be:

- **Progressive**, that is to say evolutionary, going slow and deep into society
- **Systematic**, coherent with a political project
- **Global**, comprising society as a whole
- **Participatory**, allowing every citizen to be a leading protagonist subject
- **Innovative**, allowing transformations in the structures and in people

In most Latin American countries democratic way of government has been recovered. But, are we really living a democratization process? Can we seriously think in new policies strengthening political socialization and participation of the inhabitants?

There are certain elements in reality that prevent immediate changes towards true exercise of participatory democratic process, objective reality and subjective dispositions.

- The great **external debt** that conditions all new economic reformulation that the national governments may want to make at this new constitutional instance.
- The **centralization of power** produces disagreements between democratic institutions and the participatory demands on the part of the population.
The bureaucratization and trans-nationalization of the state have transformed our states into democratic shells that naturally turn into authoritarian because they have been emptied of key decisions.

The great number of social demands without any circulating mechanism in the middle of financial and economic crisis generate frustrations that lead to confidence crisis in the democratic system.

Taking this descriptive picture into account it will be understood that it is very difficult to introduce the democratization process as a wedge that can give birth to great changes in the medium or long term.

The reality of Latin America is that of underdevelopment, of social injustice, of bad quality of life for millions of people, of dependence in relation to the centers of power, and of cultural alienation. The democratization process must change this reality and must develop active participation of all the community, as well as the opportunity of living in human conditions.

With local governments’ commitment to this democratization process which they are part of they turn into political institutions of extraordinary importance since they are the real spheres where true education for democracy has more possibilities to be carried out.

This assumes the need to overcome authoritarian ways of leadership and the acceptance of ideas of autonomy, responsibility and dialogue. These premises imply the responsibility, on the part of the State of securing education, understanding it as the integral development of the individual for her/his inclusion in society through the construction of a social consciousness open to change and participation.

The municipal system, due to its proximity to the citizens, is the most open and transparent. Its decisions and administration are more evident, easily generating public opinion. It is, thus, “school of early and lifelong political socialization”.

This “school” must be also be understood as the sphere where the policies of Human Rights protection are developed and generalized as habitual ways of living in society and as a legitimate juridical system when defense of the citizens is at stake.

Global society is not a democratic society and the super-powers, USA and Europe are not guided by the criteria of equal citizens and participatory democracy: we are not “citizens of the world” in Latin America as in other regions of the world.

But the cities must contribute to a democratic world process consolidating their historical practice of being, from their origin, the framework democratic living together. This would contribute to citizens’ resistance to the supposed inevitability of a world based on negotiating from naked power and the power of weapons.

The city is, then, both a framework and an educating agent that:

- Facing the tendency to concentration of power, practices public opinion and freedom.
- Facing the tendency to exclusion practices inclusion.
Facing the tendency to unequal distribution of possibilities defends equality for all.
Facing the tendency to individualism develops new practices of solidarity and cooperation.
Facing neo-liberal democracy adds participation as a key to promote true representation.

“Democratic training” in the city’s field is essential for building future citizens, conscious of their rights, responsible for their duties and sensible to everyone’s problems that are also theirs, to the extent that they have been educated by an open and transforming society.

From this perspective, Latin American municipalities acquire a particular educative, social and political commitment. It implies putting into practice programmes with the objectives of participation, solidarity, cooperation and individual / collective responsibility as basic foundations for a democratic process.

The municipal projects linked to policies and mechanisms of affirmation of political socialization and participation in the cities must be organized as true learning proposals. They must generate active participation, reflection, and permanent re-elaboration of contents and methods. They must always take into account the different needs and characteristics of the groups and the constant verification with the needs of reality.

From my perspective, a city project towards participatory democracy and political socialization must fulfill the following basic conditions:

- They must be a collective experience, in an environment of horizontal group relationship.
- They must be an experience to solve problems and not merely to get information.
- They must be based on democratic relations among the participants that represent or anticipate democratic relations in society.
- They must consider the dialectic micro-macro in the diagnosis, prognosis and actions in order to face any public policy in the city.

How can we achieve policies and mechanisms with these characteristics?
- By de-centralizing political conduction and de-bureaucratizing juridical management
- By endorsing the participation of all members of society
- By demanding each one’s responsibilities in their specific functions
- By promoting changes of attitudes aimed to solidarity and cooperation
- By establishing integration as an every day practice
- By promoting co-management with the community, non-governmental organizations, and all those institutions and enterprises that work with the aim of improving general welfare.

I firmly support the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that “all humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights”.

*But society makes them unequal.* Society quickly differentiates them. That is why it is a political imperative to MAKE THEM EQUAL as members of a community and based in a common decision of a political nature that endorses equal rights to everyone. And to make them equal means to have all rights and to be part of decision making in their needs, hopes and shaping future.
So this is something that we have to gain every day in our region, struggling against obstacles and against global super structure. Local authorities have to help through participatory democratic policies in changing this reality making “original rights” for all possible. Hanna Arendt talks about “rebuilding equality again and again” as a democratic continuum in our governments.

The institutions that facilitate and energize a process of these characteristics are also those that represent the local government, committed in a dynamics of broad political participation, democratic agreement, and stable, responsible and transparent government. This is the first step in a process of democratic education and concrete political socialization of cities’ inhabitants.

Let’s begin the discussion.

Bibliography:


Author Contact: T.E. FAX 54-341-4-802275
E mail: ce_americalat@rosario.gov.ar
oficina_ce@yahoo.com.ar
Introduction
It is ironic that in these days of globalisation western culture is so focused on individualism. Transglobal companies control the business, international organisations shape national economies and local governance and intercontinental media empires instantly bring us distant disasters, local wars and the latest craze. Never before has the world been so connected and never before has the human family been so fragmented. Poverty, violence and crime combine with drug use, gambling, alcoholism and suicide to give us modern society (Clark, 1997, pp. 11-13). This society is not in some third world country we only vaguely acknowledge, but here in the west, and not just in some ethnic ghetto we drive through only when necessary with our doors locked, but everywhere, at every level of society and in every city in every nation. Western society has a sickness, but it is not only our society that has it. The nature of globalisation means that we manage to introduce our sickness to emerging nations as well. The kind of sickness we have is insidious. The shiny trappings of capitalism carry it with the designer label ‘freedom and democracy’ (Shannon, 1995, p. 189).

Finally this sickness needs to be fed and we feed it our environment, we sacrifice our mother, Earth, to feed the sickness, which, in the end will take humankind to the brink of extinction. Deforestation, intensive farming, salinity, industrial poisoning of the land and drastic reduction in fish stocks are only some of our efforts. The human family and the world are sick and this situation is not sustainable (Gang, 1998, p. 280).

Overview of the western paradigm
This paradigm has evolved over 400 years of mechanisation and scientific discovery. Shaped by the quest for knowledge and then underpinned by what Edwin Chargaff (cited in Sloan, 1983, p. 30) calls “the devils doctrine”; that is ‘what we can do we must do’. This philosophy has given us treatments for cancer, the ‘bionic ear’, computers, and microwave ovens and for those who were fortunate enough to be born white - longer life expectancy. However it has also brought us global warfare and terrorism, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, cloning, genetic manipulation of plants and animals and degradation of the natural world as well as significantly contributing to the lack of community in our society. Oliver et al. (2002, p. 25) say:

History suggests that humans tend to construct increasingly complex technological and social organisational systems which finally get “out of control”...we seem unable to limit the excesses and abuses of this technical power.

The great catchword of western society is ‘democracy’ but western politics seems to be shaped by the desires of the ‘big end of town’ and the 15-second sound bite. Reactionary policies are created in response to hysterical media attention, xenophobia or paranoia but always with an eye on the bottom-line. These actions corrupt the core ideal of democracy; that is ‘government by the people and for the people’. This corruption spawns increasingly draconian laws, which do nothing to reduce crime or rehabilitate criminals. Politicians increasing the standardised testing that children are forced to go through so they, their teachers and their schools can be measured against pre-determined standards without improving literacy levels or the chances of getting a meaningful job. The poor and needy are judged against each other to ascertain which are the truly needy and are deemed needy enough to qualify for social security. On one hand governments seek to crush economically or militarily any country that has the temerity to strengthen their defenses by engaging in programs the dominant societies deem to be high-risk. Despite the facts that these dominant societies and their allies continue to produce, test, sell and employ ridiculously high-powered weaponry. On the other they bribe emerging nations to either produce commodities that the west particularly wants; or to not produce commodities that will challenge the western countries markets. Finally institutions conduct research to find which particular technological advancement can be used to fix the problems caused by the last technological advancement often at the expense of Indigenous peoples and the environment.

**The eternal flaw**

Within this paradigm there are two main flaws. Firstly all governments and institutions continually reinforce the structures that support it. Secondly it is ultimately unsustainable.

Governments and institutions find themselves in a kind of managerial ‘Groundhog Day’; in that any actions they take in response to the issues of the day are dictated by the paradigm they inherit, the same paradigm which created the issues in the first place. This is exasperated by the techno-reliance of our culture, which enforces the doctrine that any problem can be fixed with a technological answer. Later these answers are shown to detrimentally affect, the marginalised, the environment or the bottom-line and thus the circle remains unbroken. Unfortunately rather than being a circle which ultimately maintains itself this paradigm is a never-ending spiral into chaos. Oliver et al. (2002, p. 45) again say:

...modern people cannot respond to basic errors of cultural imbalance or even begin to redress them without first reconsidering and reframing certain critical categories, metaphors and assumptions which define the modern system itself.

The single aspect that causes this catastrophic flaw in the paradigm is the failure to acknowledge wholeness (Orr, 1997, p. 15). Gerber (2001, p. 7) reminds us that ‘awakening to wholeness may be the single most important event in anyone’s life’.

**An ecology of wholeness**

Indigenous communities have long recognised that underpinning relationships connect all life on earth. This is summed up in the expression *Mitakuye Oyasin* - all our relations (Chief Arvol Looking Horse, 2001, pp. 4-9 and Cajete, 1994, p. 164). This expression includes everything that shares our world.
Eastern philosophies too recognise the profoundity of wholeness. Taoists note that health and longevity are cultivated by harmonious living. That is both *internally* (how we look after ourselves) and *externally* (how we interact with the world around us). Krishnamurti (1994, p. 13) says, “It is the separation in relationship that corrupts.” Although speaking of love he is suggesting that taking something out of its whole context will give the experience another meaning. This idea is also reinforced in Buddhism. Dorje, (2001, p. 41) says that Buddhist practitioners “take inspiration with the complete naturalness from countless details of everyday existence.” That is taking inspiration from wholeness.

Taking wholeness into a more modern cosmology, Koestler (1967, p. 33) coined the term “holon”. A holon is an entity that is *itself a whole* and *simultaneously a part of some other whole*. Koestler also gave us the concept of the holarchy; that is the nested structure of holons or a *natural hierarchy*, (Wilbur, 1996, p. 17 & 24). This natural hierarchy can be seen throughout nature, as well as at the microcosmic level, (ibid. p. 18). This concept is not unlike the Alfred North Whitehead’s “actual entities” (1929, p. 18 & 22). One example of this cosmology is, the *individual*, though a whole being in their own right, is a part of the structure known as *family*. The family is part of the structure known as *community*. The community is part of the structure known as *civilisation*, wider society or the human race and that structure is part of the *Earth* (Bopp and Bopp, 2001, p. 33 and Gallegos Nava, 2001, p. 29). Human beings inhabit a complex environment of multiple ‘nested structures’, so any individual also forms part of progressively larger and more complex structures like three-dimensional ripples on a pond. These structures are *constructs of relationships*.

In the example above, one could read the term communities as *communities of place*, however, the modern life has allowed the notion of community to become a much broader concept than merely community of place and this concept fits here equally well. Community comes from two words, *common* and *unity*, so a *community*, is - to share ‘common oneness with other people’ (Bopp and Bopp, 2001, p. 12). Common oneness generates patterns of behaviours, or norms and mores. However these patterns are shaped by the dominant paradigm, and the current model does not support common oneness. Any paradigm is human construct therefore human beings with common oneness can reshape the paradigm they will inhabit in the future.

**Wholeness as a catalyst for transformation**

Acknowledging *wholeness* is rooted in the notion of mindfulness. That is seeing the world and ourselves for what really *is*. Seeing without prejudice but with equanimity. Once we experience mindfulness we are aware of the true situation without distraction and only then can we move forward. Gerber (2001, p. 7) says:

> As society comes to recognise how many problems and how much misery is associated with fragmentation and disconnection, wholeness will be seen as the only antidote.

**Four elements of wholeness**

In my view there are four elements to wholeness though, in reality any delineation is an irrelevant deconstruction. However, this attempt to explain the concept is more of an ecology.
The first element is **living in the moment**. Living in the moment is the practice of being fully in our bodies and fully aware in every situation. This awareness is more than just seeing what is in front of us it is *feeling* the *experience* and the effects it has like seeing the ripples in a pond.

Living in the moment relates to when one is totally absorbed in the ‘here and now’. For most people modern life is full of distractions. At any given moment one’s brain is being pounded with thoughts of events that have happened, things that need to be done, interruptions, work, family, TV, telephone, must remember..., didn’t do... , etc. In this environment it is impossible to truly experience a moment, a feeling, a relationship or an emotion. In short, we are not truly experiencing life in all its glory. So living in the moment starts with bringing our full attention to what we are doing.

The second element is **acknowledging and appreciating the interconnectedness of things**. If one can appreciate the notion of wholeness and the different levels of wholeness, mentioned earlier, then one is acknowledging interconnectedness.

This element has two symbiotic parts **acknowledging interconnectedness** and **appreciating interconnectedness**. In line with the dominant paradigm the oxymoronic concept of acknowledging selective interconnectedness is on the rise. That is taking an extract of life and relating it to another such as the link between fossil fuels and ozone depletion. Acknowledging interconnectedness is much *wider* and *deeper* than this. The second part of this element is appreciating interconnectedness. That is a deep understanding that there are systems and patterns that weave their way through universe and we are just a minute part of that. Acknowledging and appreciating the interconnectedness of things relates to understanding that every action we take or do not take affects everything else in the web of life.

The third element is **experiencing *Awe* at in our interactions with the web of life**. That is *feeling* the omnipresence of the web of life and being moved by it. *Awe* is about acknowledging the mystery of life and not assuming we can or should understand everything around us.

Just as a child wonders at the colours of a kaleidoscope human kind should wonder at the kaleidoscope of cosmos — This is *Awe*. Hart (2001, pp. 1-2) also relates *Awe* to wisdom claiming both are an extension of wonder. He says:

> We come to wonder, and in turn to awe and wisdom, though our vulnerability and openness. As we open up questions, a space is created, the wisdom space. The wisdom space opens to reveal a clearer view that is experienced not as a solution to a limited problem, as when the intelligence solves a problem (although this is important), but involves being in rapport with the mystery.

Experiencing *Awe* at the boundless wonders that surround us leads us in to an authentic and mutual relationship with the cosmos.

Finally the fourth element is **undertaking activities that nourish the soul**. I believe that nourishing the soul requires engagement of the mind, body and spirit. Rooted as we are in this self-destructive paradigm nourishing the soul is no easy task for most of us.
Jack Miller (1996, p.5) said “Soul is not an entity or thing, but an animating energy or process.” And later (pp. 5-6) “In the soul lie our deepest feelings and longings. When we realise these longings and are able to manifest and work them we begin to feel deeply fulfilled.” It is his assertion that by acknowledging these deep emotional feelings and longings and allowing them to come to the surface we are able to feel whole. Shinoda Bolen (1999, p. 3) reminds us that experiences that nourish the soul are individual and not a ‘one size fits all – off the shelf’ commodity. Thomas Moore (1999, pp. 4-5) said:

When you’re in the realm of soul, you’re always in the realm of mystery and that’s so difficult for modern people to get because we automatically think that life is a problem that needs to be resolved.

And (p. 4)

…soul involves a going down rather than a going up – not only going deep but also often it means becoming more ordinary, more humble, more part of the earth, and less pointed towards the empty sky, where one imagines new worlds, future worlds and all of that.

Moore is saying that to nourish the soul is not to look for some deity for enlightenment but to look in, on ourselves, to understand ourselves and our connection with the universe. Undertaking activities that nourish the soul is a concept that many members of modern society cannot conceive of. They feel alone and helpless.

The role of education in the transformation to the wholeness paradigm

So a dominant paradigm is supported by the structures of government and the industrial establishment including the gamut of education options; and conversely those education options are shaped by the dominant paradigm. How then can we even begin to revision our futures?

Education is by its very nature transformative. However when the paradigm the education is situated within is flawed that transformation can only be detrimental to the learner. Despite this duality of education, it is this relationship provides an opportunity for a ‘fifth column’; an opportunity to reshape the educational system and therefore the dominant paradigm from within by moving from fragmented education to wholeness education.

Wholeness education incorporates the four elements mentioned earlier. It is rooted in the aesthetic and the deep spirituality, which comes from our connection with eachother and the natural world. Wholeness education provides opportunities for learning through:

- development of the whole person
- development of relationships with other people and the environment
- realisation that each of us has multiple potentialities
- realisation of the cause and effect of our actions
- self discovery and cooperation
- daily opportunities to explore the many facets of our life and existence throughout our lives.

A key component of wholeness education is reflection. Brookfield (1995, pp. 26-27) said:

Critical reflection is inherently ideological. It is also morally grounded. It springs from a concern to create the conditions under which people can learn to love one another; and it alerts
them to the forces that prevent this. Being anchored in values of justice, fairness and compassion, critical reflection finds its political representation in the democratic process.

Burns (1995, p. 237) said:

Individuals need to reflect on experience in order to learn from it. The essence of learning from experience is to be found in the relationship between the learner and the context. The vital process is noticing, being aware of what has happened and taking action.

This allows relationships to be authentic, secure in the knowledge that all will be treated with dignity and that every opinion, idea, thought and experience is valid to the individual and to the group and should be shared.

**Relationship building through wholeness education**

Humans have been communal beings for millennia, deep relationships with the whole environment including other people, plants and animals, weather and seasonal change provided practical and spiritual connections and thence knowledge, which allowed society to flourish, (Cajete, p. 29 & p. 42). Latterly our relationships with the outside world have become almost adversarial and relationships with our fellow humans distrustful and marginalised at the expense of individualism.

Wholeness education is an exercise in relationship building and reflection. The learner discovers connections in their environment. They reflect on these connections and the effects their own actions have in light of the interconnectedness of things. They see the connections between those relationships and other actions and events in their lives. The learner shares these discoveries and reflections with others and their colleagues do the same. Learning occurs in the community creating a sense of place and deep connection to the environment. Crowell (2002, p. 19) reminds us that “living our lives in harmony with Nature also means to live in harmony with our true nature”. The sharing of knowledge and experiences increases social capital. Skills and knowledge are no longer things to be kept to oneself but to be shared for the benefit of the community. VA Sukhomlinsky (1979-80, pp. 358-359) said:

A person is being truly educated only when they pass their knowledge, experience and mastery onto someone else. One only begins to sense one’s creative powers and abilities when one enters into moral relations with another person, becomes concerned about increasing their spiritual wealth.

The smallest snapshot of the world can provide numerous connections from which the deepest lessons of life can be learned. The difference with current educative practices can be explained by the analogy of the picture painted on glass and the hologram. If we shatter both, reduce them to fragments and pick a piece of each at random. The piece from the picture is just a fraction of the whole possibly recognisable, possibly not but without more information is useless. This is current education practice, reduction to attempt to simplify concepts that are judged to ‘big’ to understand in their entirety. When we look at the piece from the hologram we can see the entire image, the snapshot of the whole world all the actions, reactions events and non-events as my old
lecturer Peter Hancock used to say, “The whole world turns up here.” This is wholeness education.

**Wholeness as a catalyst for healing**

Once we can view the world through the prism of *wholeness*, we see it with balance. The antithesis of balance is conflict. The whole of our world is in conflict hence the sickness I mentioned earlier. Conflict stems from fear of the *Other*. When we do not view the world with balance then something is always a threat and that threat needs to be countered by a greater force, be it military, legal, theological, monetary or philosophical. For example those that fight their oppressors *become the fight* themselves and thence are not in balance. Those that campaign for better conditions for the poor *become those neglected, victimised poor* and thence are not in balance, and those that campaign for the environment *become the ravaged land* and thence are not in balance. By this I mean those I have spoken of, take their cause to their heart with single-minded focus, which does not allow them to see the whole, to see the balance. The paradigm we inhabit has transformed everyone into an unbalanced shell of the person they should be.

So wholeness allows us to exist in equanimity with the universe but how do we facilitate the change from disparate, scared individuals into thriving communities which can work together to transform their situation and thence the whole of society? We need to heal our communities and ourselves. The catalysts for this healing, according to Bopp and Bopp, (2001, pp. 35-36) are vision, imagination, learning and participation. Healing needs to be rooted in the new paradigm of *wholeness*.

Below is a comparison of the four catalysts of healing and their effects when rooted in both current and new paradigms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catalyst</th>
<th>Current mechanistic/scientific paradigm</th>
<th>New holistic paradigm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Perception that science and/or technology can arrest the decline or solve the problem and provide a new techno-utopia. The vision of the future is of technology aiding human development in a seamless way and our scientists and industry leaders have the ‘know-how’ to lead us into the future.</td>
<td>Vision based on a paradigm rooted in wholeness allows us to revision our futures in a world where the affects of our actions and inactions are understood with regard to the other inhabitants of our universe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagination</td>
<td>Over a hundred years of future-looking fictional literature allows us to imagine a peaceful technology driven future where the human race is supreme in the universe. We imagine we can control our destinies by force and force of will.</td>
<td>When we accept the true nature of the web of life and we acknowledge live in balance within it our imaginations are inspired by every single entity that shares the web with us. We can imagine a vibrant, viable existence for all of them and we can shed the masks of oppression that have shaped us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Learning is shaped by the future needs of industry based on the industrial requirements of the present reduced to smallest possible unit. Standardised testing and benchmarking reinforce the educational paradigm progressively negating the aesthetic arts, the notion of</td>
<td>Learning that is rooted in a paradigm of wholeness also shapes our futures but those futures will be in tune with the rhythms of the web of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Virtuous learning, at the root of wholeness education, experienced in the classroom of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
freethinking and the power of so-called non-formal learning. Universities and other higher education establishments conspire to support this paradigm by giving less and less kudos to lifelong experience and vocational experience and qualifications compared with formal academic qualifications. They encourage research much of which never sees the light of day or seeks to quantify human and environmental behaviour thus providing meaningless data which ignores the web of life and thence the real picture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Thatcher famously said “There is no such thing as society anymore” reinforcing the 80s idea of individualism. The last 20 years have reinforced this attitude in the western world. Work practices ensure we are working longer hours in non-traditional work patterns, housing developments provide little in the way of communal space which ultimately means we often never even see our neighbours let alone engage them in conversation. Knee-jerk legislation means it is harder for ordinary folk who want to serve the community in voluntary capacities find there are many more hoops to jump through or their knowledge and skills are no longer deemed suitable. Finally people are willing to hand over large amounts of cash to organisations like Greenpeace, World vision etc but wouldn’t dream of actually getting out there, working with others in the community for the good of all but they feel they have ‘done their bit’. In short there is an ever-reducing involvement in meaningful community initiatives and in community itself. Individuals are increasingly too wrapped up in the pressure of their own lives to participate in their community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| The wholeness paradigm emphasises community learning and community decision making. The acquiring and sharing of knowledge nourishes the soul and increases the social capital in the community. All members of the community feel valued and valuable. They take the time to come together, share in the issues that affect the community. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Healing as the cornerstone for democracy and justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As I alluded to earlier, healing is a educative process and human beings are learning beings (Bopp and Bopp, 2001, p. 92). Healing is not something that can be determined by governments working from the top down. Healing must be community-based. Healing comes from communities being able to see an alternative future for themselves (Bopp and Bopp, 2001, p. 8). This future can only be attained when the whole community has a voice in the actions that affect their lives and someone must speak for those that cannot speak for themselves such as the plant, animals, land and water and those that are yet to be born. Miller, R (2002, p. 53) notes:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Everyone’s voice is valuable, because every person’s experience represents some measure of Truth and until we listen, until we afford compassion and respect to dimensions of human experience outside accepted norms, we cannot know what measure this might be.

Conclusion

There is a crisis in the world today. This crisis affects everybody and everything. Bopp and Bopp (2001, p. 5) say “We are the environmental crisis, the debt crisis, the crisis in spirit and the crisis in confidence in our leaders and our economy.” They mean all the members of the community make decisions that shape the direction society takes. This direction can be affected by inaction or action of the community members. However for sustainable change to occur the decisions the community make need to be shaped by a new paradigm. The community must have the imagination to think outside their old paradigm to try new things, to learn from those who have adapted to the changing world for the last 40,000 years. They must learn from everything they experience, they must reflect on that and share it with the community.

Healing is a participatory process, healing cannot be given and taken like a prescription from a chemist it must be experienced. Community members must experience the changes they instigate they must feel the rhythms and connections of the web of life and act accordingly. When we pull against the natural rhythms there is imbalance, with imbalance comes power over something or someone else. When power enters the web of life we are already back on the downward spiral to injustice. Vasily Sukhomlinsky (1987, p. 116) said:

I firmly believe that the human personality is inexhaustible: each may become a creator, leaving behind a trace upon the earth…There should not be any nobodies – specks of dust cast upon the wind. Each one must shine, just as billions upon billions of galaxies shine in the heavens.

All civilisations, cultures, norms and mores are human constructs and as such humans can revision the future. Revisioning the future is everyone’s responsibility and by having a vision rooted in wholeness we can ensure that there are no nobodies and that everybody can be a creator.

Master Hsing Yun reminds us that everything we experience emerges, continues, transforms and vanishes when he says (2001, p.8 & p. 9):

The Buddha once said, “All phenomena are impermanent. “ We have to understand that impermanence implies change. Good will change to bad, and bad will change to good. If good causes and conditions are present, we can be sure that the final result will be good even if we might encounter certain difficulties.

We can ensure good causes and conditions are present if we view our existence through the prism of wholeness.
References


Brookfield, S, 1995, Becoming a critically reflective teacher, What it means to be a critically reflective teacher, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco

Burns, R. 1995, The Adult Learner at Work, Andragogy and Pedagogy & Theoretical perspectives on Adult Learning, Business and professional publishing, Sydney


Chief Arvol Looking Horse, 2001, White Buffalo Teachings, Dreamkeepers Press, Williamsburg, Massachusetts


Krishnamurti, J. in (Skitt, D. (ed.)), 2000, To Be Human, Shambala Publications Inc., Boston


Sukhomlinsky, V.A, 1979-80, Pavlyshskaia sredniaia shkola [Pavlysh School], Izbrannye proizvedeniia v piati tomakh [Collected Works in Five Volumes], Kiev, Radianska shkola, Vol. 4

Sukhomlinsky, V. A., 1987, Pis’ma k synu, [Letters to my son], 2nd edition, Moscow, Prosveschenie,


Wilbur, K. 2000, A Brief History of Everything, Shambhala Publications Inc. Boston, Massachusetts
Introduction

This paper serves to weave together several troubling features of today’s Canadian democracy – elements such as recent policy directions, polling data that reveals surging distrust of our politicians, the growing gap between rich and poor with a companion hollowing out of the middle class, the erosion of civic virtues, and the social identity of our political leadership – and emerges with an assertion of the growing disjuncture of our political leadership with majority society. Many solutions already populate the literature – this author seeks to add one more, namely pedagogy for the privileged. The field of adult education has begun to articulate such pedagogy that aims for the transformation of the privileged towards an understanding of their privilege and the building of companion commitment to the common good, or in other words, to build one’s civic virtues. The paper concludes with findings from my research in this area and profiles both the hopes and skepticism of such an initiative.

The Democratic Deficit of our Political Leadership

The companion fields of participatory democracy and citizenship learning inform this study, where an array of theorists reflect on centuries of practice in how to build a democracy that works for everyone. While a variety of democracy projects have met with success, there are ongoing dilemmas that relate to issues of power – and how dominance and marginalization serve to unbalance and distort the effects of these projects. Our experiences of democracy have been far from inclusive. While most espouse the significance of the Athenian polis – with its 20% involvement rate – the experiences of old excluded vast numbers of the population, namely women and slaves. Continuing through the ages, democracies continued to exclude large populations, such as Jews, non-land owners, lower castes, people of colour and immigrants. In Canada’s recent history, some women received the vote in 1918 but it took until 1963 and the Universal Right to Vote legislation for it to be guaranteed to all women. Aboriginal Canadians achieved the vote in 1960.

The significance of these broad class exclusions is one of power and privilege – that certain holders of power were able to create and sustain a political system that reflected only certain voices and over-represented their interests. While today formal restrictions on participation apply only to non-citizens and the incarcerated, the issue of power and privilege is far from over. From a feminist lens, Jones (1998) assesses that gender issues within citizenship debates has been to “try to fit women’s behavior into the empty spaces of political science scholarship…[leaving] unchallenged the adequacy of the traditional categories of political analysis” (p.231). Women’s issues have been locked out, pressing from the outside wanting to be heard in the corridors of power, and being left to bear the brunt of insensitive and inappropriate legislation, including divorce settlement policies, violence against women funding decisions, and labour force segregation.
Despite the commonly held belief that women have achieved equality with men, the political arena reveals this to be merely a myth. In mid-2003, women make up only 22% of Federal members of parliament, 17% of Ontario’s members of provincial parliament and 30% of Toronto’s city councilors. Only 12% of mayors across Ontario are women (Heineck, 2003). For racialized women, we witness even slower progress. In the 1970s, our first black and aboriginal women are elected to a legislature (Rosemary Brown and Eleanor Millard, respectively). It takes another two decades for them to make it to cabinet, with Zanana Akande taking that position in Ontario (Sawer & Trimble, 2003).

Despite appearances that the problem is one of political representation, enhanced participation by women and other minorities is not the preferred path of action. Jones (1998) espouses that the problem needs not to be resolved through drawing women into participation. This is echoed by Rebick (2000) who notes: “Feminists often talk about how a critical mass of women is necessary to transform the political process and make it more attuned to the concerns of women. But my experience tells me that unless the political structures are changed, any women we manage to elect will be sucked up into the power elite and begin behaving very much like their male colleagues” (p.74). Returning to Jones, she recognizes that the fault lies in a system of citizenship that has explicitly and implicitly privileged men (p.221) and continues to “privilege elite men’s behaviors and norms” (p.222). We must look for solutions that will address the power holders in society, for gains made by the bottom are at grave risk of cooptation and dismantling, as the failure to yield power at the top occurs despite the “veneer of public legitimacy” (Abers, 2000:10). For this reason, dialogue groups such as those used by Shulman and others are likely to generate change in governing relations. As concluded by Rebick (2000:86), “real active citizenship would have to involve real decision-making power. It cannot just be an add-on to a bureaucratic, hierarchical system. It has to change the system.”

While Young (1990) advocates for bringing marginalized voices to the table through guaranteed representation in various political bodies, it is embedded in her set of recommended reforms called “differentiated citizenship” that also includes public funding for lobby groups (representing marginalized interests) and veto rights for marginalized groups on policies that directly affect them. Young’s platform is a response to the excessive power that is held by those with political influence and decision-making power. While such an initiative holds potential for reform, it frames the solution of the powerful needing to be counter-balanced by power being given to marginalized groups. What is missing is an avenue to deal with the power of the elites and their inappropriate entitlements. Jones argues for the need to conduct thorough research to properly understand how social identities serve to “structure the space of politics and pattern alliances within and between certain groups” (p.233). It is anticipated that such research would provide evidence of the excessive links among elite groups and comparatively few across identity divides, particularly those of race and class.

Given that the authority to hire and appoint has been in the hands of privileged white men for so long, it can thus be asserted that the problem is not with the emancipatory status of marginalized groups, but rather with the status quo of the privileged. Jones (1998) identified this barrier as the “need to eradicate the psychological barriers to women’s full inclusion in public life” (p.229).

---

1 I have chosen to focus on political inequality for this paper. Obviously, inequality exists at other levels – namely economic, social and cultural. Each render the problem of the democratic deficit more pressing.
While the context of these comments are the barriers that women hold within themselves, they are more significantly located within men (and other privileged groups such as whites and upper classes).

This emerging perspective on privilege forms the base for this paper, and other works by this author. The barriers to social justice, equality and equity are more firmly rooted in the social and psychological identity of the privileged than they are in the marginalized groups, and their failure to seize power. Furthermore, this dynamic is contributing to the serious destabilizing impact on our representative democracy. It is not, as asserted by Pateman (1970), a natural outcome of “fragile” democratic systems (with the fault thus being the structure of the systems themselves) but rather a distortion induced by class conflict and other forms of conflict that distort and even preclude effective democracy.

**The Trust Deficit**

Consider the landscape today. Trust in government has been shrinking over the last 35 years (since such polling began). The EKOS survey, *Canadian and American National Election Studies* uncovered the answer to the following question: “How much do you trust the government in Ottawa to do what is right?” The answer was resoundingly poor – falling from a high of 57% (answering “just about always/most of the time”) in 1968 to a level of just 27% in May 2002. And the ever-popular Ipsos-Reid *Canada Trust Survey* was repeated in 2003, revealing that the trust Canadians place in the federal politicians ranks last of a list of 26 professions – even car salespeople rank one position higher at 25th. Local politicians score no better, as they take the 24th spot. Those who score higher include pharmacists (1st), doctors (2nd), teachers (4th), the police (5th), charitable organizations (9th), religious institutions (14th), lawyers (18th), journalists (19th), trade unions (21st) and CEOs (22nd). Emerging is a growing crisis in the reputation of our political leadership.

Further evidence of this dramatic change is revealed in the EKOS survey, as it articulates the shrinking importance of the public interest. The following question was posed: “When the federal government makes decision, whose interests do you think are given the greatest importance?” From 1998 to 2002, the public interest shrank from 18% of the population to 16%, while the combined importance of “the interest of politicians and their friends” and “the interest of big business” rose from 60% to 67% in just 4 years.

In evidence is growing distrust in politicians and rising evidence of concern with the interests of big business. In tandem, these trends displace the importance of the public interest.

**Evidence of Power Shifts**

What has caused this transition? Many attribute it to the organized campaign of right-wing corporate leaders to withdraw their support for the welfare state, and launch an offensive on government policy and civic attitudes that would result in greater stability and profits for their livelihoods. This campaign began in the 1970s with the Trilateral Commission (in 1973) that

---

2 This survey also inquired about the behaviors and attitudes that are most valued components of trust. These include honesty, integrity and reliability.
profiled raising expectations in labour as a function of “an excess of democracy.” That gathering continued to build social and economic power over the next 25 years. The following are considered its landmarks: the creation of neo-conservative economic thinking (Milton Friedman and the Chicago School as its prime catalysts), conservative think tanks (the Fraser Institute in 1969 and the C.D. Howe Institute in 1974), corporate lobby groups (the Business Council on National Issues in 1977) and culminating in the election of major conservative politicians (Mulroney in 1984, following Thatcher and Reagan in 1979 and 80, respectively). Conservative policy outcomes shortly followed and, by the turn of the century, the social safety net had been shredded.

But these were not even a fraction of its accomplishments. The most significant achievements have been in the manner in which neo-liberal ideology has entrenched public consciousness, with companion attitudes of rugged individualism, a laissez-faire attitude towards those in need, rising significance of deficit reduction and balanced budgets (regardless of the point within an economic cycle), hostility against all forms of affirmative action programs, and even hostility against government itself.

Yet it can be asserted that there are embedded inconsistencies within the public on many of these issues. Despite the earlier support for tax cuts, the public is mightily sure that it does not want tax cuts at the expense of health care, education or, even, supports for the poor. In Ontario in 2003, we rejected the Conservative party’s mantra of tax cuts, as the outcomes of social spending cuts were felt well into the middle class. Yet, this legacy has taken its toll on our perspectives of governance. This is best evidenced in the earlier data that shows rapid deterioration of trust in our politicians and faith in our governments to act in the public interest. It is imperative that we not be detracted by the complaints of an apathetic public.\(^3\) This is asserted despite the profile that leading scholars Kymlicka and Norman (1994) give to declining voter turnout as the cause of the democratic deficit. The query raised in their research: “How should the state generate responsibility?” needs to be reframed as: “How can we expect responsible citizenship when our political leadership is failing to exhibit high moral and ethical standards?”

We can and must keep our lens focused on the political leadership for it is evoking the declining public trust of which low voter turnout is only a symptom.

### Erosion of Civic Virtues

The crisis can best be conceptualized as an absence of civic virtues within our political leadership\(^4\). Civic virtues, when joined with learning about how to participate in the democratic structures (also called status learning), form the foundation for citizenship learning that is addressed within the literature. The various forms of status learning, such as the rights and responsibilities that citizens hold, the constitution, laws and policies that exist today and the full slate of geographic, political and historical facts of the nation will not be addressed within this paper. It is the civic virtues side of the learning that is directly relevant to the behavior and

\(^3\) Even this concept has been de-legitimized by Burt (2002:238) as having been derived from Milbraith’s concept of “apathetics” as ill-founded and insufficiently supported by the research.

\(^4\) Political leadership is the chosen term for this paper as it denotes both our elected officials and those senior bureaucrats, including policy advisors who make up the political decision-makers in Canada.
attitudes of our political leadership. This paper is also not about civic learning as applied to the average citizen (which most of the civic virtues literature addresses) and it is not about the role that schools play in such learning (as, at this juncture in time, we need to educate those already holding leadership positions – and it is too late to use schools to address their learning needs).

Civic learning typically encompasses the values and behaviors expected from good citizens. While the range of such behaviors runs from obedience to critical engagement (Schugurensky, 2003), the specific values addressed in this paper center on those virtues that are connected to these three features:

a. Transcending one’s narrow self-interest and broadening concerns to the common good.
b. Becoming aware of power issues and how they are evidenced throughout society, with a particular focus on one’s own role and complicity in upholding systems of dominance. This concept is sometimes referred to as “critical thinking.”

c. That specific values form the benchmarks for the good citizen. Typically these include empathy for others, tolerance of difference, commitment to inclusive democracies, and courage to act in concert with these values. Acting on these values becomes the responsibility of citizenship.

Civic Learning & Civic Virtues – Connecting to the Literature

Starting with Aristotle, the value of civic behavior that was altruistic was deemed critical for a healthy democracy. This has continued as a theme in citizenship learning. Generally speaking, however, democracy theorists have focused their attention on how to catalyze the political involvement of its majority population (Pateman, 1970; Kymlicka and Norman, 1994) but it is in fact a hollow aim when our political leadership are, as posited by Hobgood (2000:14), “moral pygmies.”

Heater (2002) highlights that the history of civic education has been a site for the debates and power clashes between conservatives and liberals (or, right and left). This is illustrated in the shifting priorities of rights and responsibilities, as well as the role that public and private interests take in the citizenship debates. Citing the European Union’s new work on civic learning, we find that in this context a broad commitment to the common good is emerging. Canada also reflects this commitment, including several common good types of values such as “care for…the environment” and “respect the rights and freedoms of others.” It concludes with: “to eliminate discrimination and injustice,” adding impetus to this call for building civic virtues so as to facilitate investment in the common good.

Regarding the debates on rights and responsibilities, and their connection to left and right politics, it is necessary to recognize that democracy’s failure to provide for the human rights of all its citizens (namely basic needs such as safety, security, education, health care, adequate work

---

5 The author’s understanding of critical thinking is connected to critical theory – whereby we consider issues of power and dominance and the effect of power asymmetries on the current situation. I do not intend for critical thinking to be understood in its more limited meaning – that of the ability to see the links between different issues and layers of analysis.

6 Such values are identified and expanded upon by Westheimer (1999) in his denotation of the “justice-oriented citizen” (p.7).
and fair treatment – and others formulated within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). It is this failure that generates additional impetus for remedy of the democratic deficit in our political leadership.

**Understanding the Socialization of the Privileged – Theory and Evidence**

As a decision-making body, today’s political leaders have mostly shown themselves to be seriously out-of-step with the majority of the population. To explore the causes of this destabilizing dynamic, we need to turn to theory drawn from the study of privilege. Hobgood (2000) asserts that there is a natural process in play for the privileged whereby their separation (socially and economically) from majority population leads to an ignorance that stems from their lack of contact with the lived realities of the average and more vulnerable citizens. This ignorance, in time, leads to an arrogance that stems from assuming that the world works for the majority in much the same way that it works for the privileged.

Asserting this to be a natural process of alienation, Hobgood thus calls on us to problematize the world of privilege. It is they who are out-of-touch and suffering the effects of social exclusion (Curry-Stevens, 2004), not the majority world that lies below them. The gravely serious arrogance that is bred unfolds as follows: the privileged person looks at the lived reality of the less privileged and assumes that the world works for others the way it works for themselves.7 The reality is, in fact, contrary to this logic. They assume that if they lived their lives as poor, blue-collar, racialized, immigrant or as woman, that they would achieve mostly the same accomplishments as they have as white, male and upper class. What they do not realize is that nothing would be the same. Most of them would not have gotten off the starting plate. As encapsulated by Hatfield (2002), when discussing George Bush Junior, “He’s one of those guys who was born on third base and thinks he hit a triple” (p.53).

Such beliefs infuse the privileged with arrogance and lead them to policy decisions that belie the seriousness of their isolation. Recall the following, and consider whose interests are addressed and whose are deemed irrelevant:

- When, in Ontario, welfare rates are cut by 21.6%.
- When, nationally, income tax brackets are cut from 10 to 3, with the top levels coming down and the bottom going up.
- When, nationally, the prohibition of workfare is abolished allowing provinces to introduce work in exchange for welfare benefits.
- When, in British Columbia, people are about to be thrown off welfare permanently for needing it too much.
- When, nationally, the national social and cooperative housing program is abolished.

---

7 In most situations, I label myself as privileged and the analysis that I apply to the privileged I apply to “us” or “me.” I do not do so in this paper as it is focusing on the political leadership of Canada, of which I am not a member. I do, however, want the reader to understand that Hobgood’s analysis is one that I find concurrent with my own experience of privilege. It is not a framework that I am applying on “them,” but rather one that I apply to myself as well.
When, in Ontario, minimum wage rates are frozen for the entire two-term duration of the Conservative rule.

When, in Ontario, the regulation of hours of care (of a minimum of 2½ hours per day) for our aging parents in nursing homes was abolished.

When, in Ontario, seven people died from drinking tainted water, leading many to not trust the water supply coming from our taps, a problem stemming from the privatization schemes being seen across the country.

When, in Toronto, the actions of councilors embarrass the nation – as former Mayor Mel Lastman makes racist statements and allege African cannibalism, and later to be seen as only one part of a larger hotbed of intolerance and white racial arrogance among more councilors.

When, in Toronto and elsewhere in Canada, top level bureaucrats and some politicians are implicated in corruption scandals that had served to, at the very least, generate travel and entertainment activities as “gifted” by corporations.

Stanford (1999) profiles the disjuncture between the federal government’s policy landscape and the common good, accomplishing this through identification of the pro-business policy changes that were implemented between 1980 and 1997. Details of the pro-business agenda cover the macroeconomic environment (such as the abandonment of full employment strategies), the role of government in the economy (such as deregulation, privatization and downsizing), international trade (such as NAFTA), taxes (such as lowering corporate tax rate from 36% to 28%) and labour relations (such as the erosion of unemployment coverage from 85% to 40% of eligible workers).

Features of this pro-business landscape are its profound impact on economic inequality. All measure of market incomes (what we earn from the labour market) show that Canadians are a much more deeply divided country over the last two decades (Curry-Stevens, 2004 and 2001; Yalnizyan 1998) regardless of whether we are measuring Canadian families or individuals, whether we are measuring them through deciles or quintiles (10% or 20% slices of the population) and whether we are measuring their population distribution within certain income groups. The most pressing data can be summarized as follows: the gap between the rich and the poor has gone from double digits in the 1980s to triple digits by the turn of the century, meaning that the richest earn at least a ten-fold more in income than the poorest over the last generation. There are significantly more struggling poor and companion erosion of the middle class, with those earning between $30,000 and $60,000 shrinking by 21% from 1980 to 2001 (Curry-Stevens (2004). While this evidence indicators of rising inequality has been attributed to a failure of the market to deliver on promises of decent jobs at decent wages (except for those at the top of the income ladder where it has performed very well), it can also be understood as an indicator of the failure of the pro-business agenda that our political leadership has embraced. It is not a far reach to the next assertion – that it is the shrinking importance of civic virtues as embodied in our political leadership that has precipitated this failure.

**The Role of Those Governed**

To a large extent, our electorate mostly continues to support such attacks on our social fabric, and to vote against their class interests. As McLaren (2003) quotes Gore Vidal, “the genius of
our system is that ordinary people go out and vote against their class interests. The way our
ruling class stays out of sight is one of the greatest stunts in the political history of any country”
(p.79). Rebick (2000) faults the left with this disjuncture: “Unless the left comes up with better
proposals than simply reinstating the social programs we have lost, the overwhelming public
presence of the right will once again pressure government to do what’s wrong” (p.6). She further
reflects: “As a leader, Harris [former Premier of Ontario] appeals to the worst in people. It’s an
‘us-against-them’ mind-set: hard-working, taxpaying citizens against welfare bums…the
polarization is deep… the cleavages are between those with power and those without” (p.6).

Any apparent disjunction between these authors can be resolved through an understanding of
hegemony – the process whereby the marginalized and exploited agree to their domination,
achieved through a set of cultural norms and values that leaves the unsuccessful blaming
themselves for their lack of achievement rather than the elites who continue to exploit them
(Gramsci, 1971). This lack of agency of the less privileged is not cited to elicit blame but rather
to point us toward the urgency of reducing the isolation of our political leadership.

So while the issue is fundamentally about power imbalances, the lower classes are relatively
willing supporters of the class structure, which is an essential (even if subconscious) element of
ruling relations. A large body of literature on this topic exists within citizenship learning – as the
“hidden curriculum” is manifested throughout our school systems.

Social Exclusion of the Political Leadership

Such policies reflect the isolation of the privileged from majority population as well as the
growing emphasis that corporate and self-interests hold in their priorities. This is the time to
question, as many are doing since corporate CEO Paul Martin become head of the country,
whether business savvy equals good political leadership. Evidence of his isolation from majority
society is seen with his pressing ahead with large tax cuts for corporations – while espousing the
difficulty he is having in finding sufficient dollars for health care highlights the dilemma of
unacknowledged privilege. Olive (2003) surfaces evidence of this troubling alliance between our
Prime Minister and the corporate world: “With decisions of national import weighing upon him,
Martin nonetheless finds the time to continue hitting up corporations and other deep-pocketed
donors at a furious pace, with the goal of swelling the party coffers before corporate political
donations are outlawed in January. So much for the spirit of the legislation.” Hobgood further
addresses this disjuncture: “We8 become further isolated when others see us as moral pygmies
because, in order to deny preferential treatment, we resist fundamental questions of politics and
ethics” (p.14).

Flyvbjerg’s Treatment of Habermas and Foucault

Power analysis is similarly at root of Flyvbjerg (1998) as he profiles the contributions of
Habermas and Foucault in their perspectives on democratic participation. Their materials relate
more directly to the participation of the average or marginalized citizen rather than that of the
political leadership but the material is directly relevant to these privileged political elite. Foucault

8 “We” in Hobgood’s language, refers to the privileged.
addresses the issue of power more directly than Habermas – and in Flyvbjerg’s assessment, Habermas simply falls down in his failure to remedy his theory with a recognition of the power imbalance in political activity. In a well-recognized quote from Foucault, “power is always present,” leading Flyvbjerg to assert, “it is therefore meaningless… to operate with a concept of communication in which power is absent” (p.194).

Yet before we discard Habermas’s attempts to create a universal theory for decision-making, let us review his contributions. Within his five preconditions for successful deliberation, Habermas recognizes the need for equalizing the power of the participants:

- No affected party is to be excluded by the process.
- The participants must be willing and able to empathize with each other’s validity claims.
- Equal possibility to present and critique the validity claims.
- Existing power differences must be neutralized.
- There must be transparency of process (Flyvbjerg, 1998:188)

Habermas, in his articulation of the ideal speech situation, is typically assessed to be too disjointed from a realistic understanding of the depth and breadth of power issues. Certainly it is hard to imagine that these conditions could ever be met, when one understands the pervasiveness of power issues. Yet, when we view his conditions through a lens that is concerned with the privilege of our political leadership, we can understand how privilege distorts the possibility of coming to agreement. What if these distortions could be modified? For all its idealism and visionary sophistication, Habermas’ theory could be realized through pedagogy for the privileged – for if the privileged could build an analysis of their own subject position, and could problematize their privilege, as it applies to the depth and breath of the issues at hand, and reorient their interests towards the common good, they could come to the table as equals.

Habermas offers up a framework for placing adversaries at the table to resolve differences. Habermas holds forth the values around such participation, once transformation has occurred.

Thus indicated, the real problem is not that the lower classes (and immigrants, the racialized and the women) are apathetic but that the politicians and bureaucrats have become isolated from the average person. The problem, essentially, is one of privilege. Where does this lead us? It compels us to examine the elites and the vehicles through which their power could be reined in, and to have their excessive alliance to other elites and to corporate power replaced with alliance to the common good and to public interest. Recognizing that we can’t undo whiteness, place of birth, gender or a heritage of income security and access to the corridors of power, we can examine our available tools to facilitate their integration into mainstream society. This is where pedagogy for the privilege offers considerable hope, as it is intentionally a pedagogy that aims for the transformation of the privileged, so that they can work for the common good.

**The Ethical Dilemma**

As one reviews this body of writing, a nagging doubt will likely surface as to the premise that there is something wrong with these privileged individuals that the educator can fix. Hopefully, the arguments convince the reader that the common good has been sacrificed by the
compromised abilities and virtues of our political leadership. While there is nothing defective in these individuals, it is worthy to note that they have undergone a socialization process common to privilege – these are not malicious nor bad people. It is the nature of the socialization of their privilege that has rendered them isolated, ignorant and arrogant (Hobgood, 2000).

Criticism can stem from the remedy – one of re-molding the values of our political leadership so they can better act for the common good. This can be construed as “indoctrination” (Heater, 1999:165). Schugurensky (2000) also treats this subject in a similar context, that of popular educators who claim to have a critical consciousness while that of the learner is, by extension, a naïve consciousness, needing development.

My research has uncovered similar tensions among educators engaged in pedagogy for the privileged. They encounter some discomfort within themselves as they feel the arrogance that is bred by having a better or more comprehensive, worldview. Pedagogically, this ethical dilemma has been softened when they have decided to offer up their analysis (or critical thinking) as an invitation and an option to understand the world – rather than a dictum. In my own practice, I invite participants to try on another way of looking at the world, and to suspend their disbelief, and they will be free to choose to ignore or integrate these offerings at the close of the sessions. I further premise that they are being asked to consider how their social identity has shaped their life’s achievements, as well as the way they walk through the world. It is suggested that their experience has more to do with their social identity than they had likely been previously willing to consider.

This strategy of inviting the learners to an alternate analysis is similar to strategies used by other educators. It is the primary avenue through which educators reconcile the ethical dilemma of “indoctrinating” the learner to a better way of seeing the world.

---

9 While it is asserted that the problem of privilege extends to our political leadership, it is noted that there are exceptions to the standard. One way of explaining the exceptions is simply that they are exceptions to the standard. The socialization process does create this embodied privilege, acting in narrow self-interest and highly vulnerable to the interests of other elites, most problematically the corporate elite. Some that are born privileged do buck this trend – as either children whose parents consistently raise them with alternate values or as adults who have intentionally sought non-mainstream experiences, such as service experiences, international solidarity or solidarity with marginalized populations. Such experiences would serve as protective factors against the more mainstream socialization.

10 I have chosen to frame this a strategy although it is actually more reflective of a desire for integrity on behalf of the educators. The most reflective educators are voicing an awareness of the shortcomings of even their own critical analysis. Observed is its inability to provide decent direction to marginalized groups striving for change – as it generates a strong sense of helplessness as individual agency seems insufficient to create change. Similarly, it provides little direction for how to create new democracies and better direction for how groups can build collective power for resistance.
Solutions – Pedagogy for the Privileged & Companion Policies

There are four key elements to rebuilding the trust of our political leadership and their capacity to act for the common good. The first is pedagogy for the privileged and the following three are the companion policies that strengthen the possibility for its success. They are:

1. Pedagogy for the Privileged – educational program that serves to bring awareness to the unexamined privilege housed in our political leaders. Such examination will evoke a transformation of understanding and a commitment to a new worldview, one that is congruent with civic virtues and trustworthy leadership.\(^{11}\)

2. Getting Money Out of Politics – In order to free up our political leadership from the excessive influence of corporate elite interests, we must get rid of corporate donations to political campaigns as well as evoking greater controls over the lobbying activity of well-financed corporations.\(^{12}\)

3. Special Initiatives to ensure attention and power for marginalized groups – required until we have faith in the conversion of our political leadership. These initiatives need to include those raised by Young (1990) including funding for the lobby groups of the marginalized and special initiatives that would require power to be allocated to such groups or such processes that included these groups.

4. Transparency and Accountability of those holding public office – As a remedy for the absence of trust in our officials, we need to ensure that their decisions and the reasons behind them are a matter of public knowledge. As noted by Gaventa and Valderrama (1999), accountability to the citizenry is a critical element of building effective democracies. Through avenues such as report cards or accountability sessions (Moore Lappe and DuBois, 1994), we can promote direct dialogue between officials and citizens and build the expectation that officials are accountable to the electorate. The dismally low expectation of elected officials being held accountable only during elections needs to be raised.

The first necessary companion component in renewing the civic virtues in our political leadership is to de-link corporate donations from political campaigns and also undo the excessive influence of corporate lobbyists in political decisions.\(^{13}\) The “clean campaign” initiative of former Prime Minister Chretien (and referenced above) will assist this goal. Without such

---

\(^{11}\) Of note, only one article was uncovered in the literature that spoke of educating and sensitizing our political leadership. This was Gaventa and Valderrama (1999) and their suggestions were limited to training them to listen to their electorate, and become invested in participatory approaches. The potential for transformative education was not considered.

\(^{12}\) The lobbying activities of NGOs is not deemed to be a distortion of the democratic process as it typically brings forward issues of the marginalized or the environment, which actually may serve as a healthy counterbalance the existing excessive influence of corporations. Right wing lobby groups such as the Canadian Council of National Executives or the think tanks such as the Fraser Institute serve to do not serve this function, as they advocate for policy reform that is outside of the interests of the common good (even though they may wrap it up in such packaging). Surging economic polarity provides evidence of their existing “effectiveness” on the policy landscape and how its overall impact is outside that of the common good.

\(^{13}\) For excellent ideas, visit the Democracy Watch website which has a lengthy history of building pragmatic solutions to lobbying legislation.
initiatives it will remain impossible to build the civic virtues of our political leaders as their interests are unduly influenced by the self-interest of corporations. It is interesting to note that the logo for Toronto mayor, David Miller’s campaign is a broom. This not so subtle innuendo of the “dirtiness” of city hall points to the need to clean up at all levels of government.

One of the questions that emerge is whether change, instituted from the top, is a promising vehicle for change (as opposed to grassroots-generated change). Abers (2000) asserts that, while counter-intuitive, top-down change has been responsible for the successful participatory budget process in Porto Alegre, Brazil. While it is an immensely grassroots-embedded form of change, the initiative was rooted in the Workers Party which began it as an experiment and now involves 18% of the population. The process has been vulnerable to three significant and pervasive difficulties – namely cooptation, inequality and implementation (Abers, 2000). It is possible, indeed likely, that pedagogy of the privilege could reduce the severity of each barrier, particularly cooptation and inequality, thus providing support for participatory democracy initiatives that are currently vulnerable to these realities.

**Pedagogy for the Privileged**

“Privilege and oppression do not simply co-exist side by side. Rather, the suffering and unearned disadvantage of subordinate groups are the foundation for the privileges of dominant groups” (Hobgood, 2000:16)

Pedagogy for the privileged is an emerging form of adult education that is aimed at the transformation of individuals with privileged identities (white, upper class and/or male) into allies for the promotion of social justice. In linking this pedagogy to the field of citizenship learning, pedagogy for the privileged will build awareness to one’s own privilege – bringing to light the ways in which one’s achievements are more tied to one’s identity (such as birthplace, heritage, inheritance, race, etc.) than to one’s merit than most privileged people have previously been aware. It will also bring to light the ways in which privilege operates in everyday life.

Educators engaged in this practice structure workshops for privileged learners to catalyze and assist with this transformation. Their function is to disrupt the existing worldview (through a variety of approaches), assist the learner to work through the emotional and cognitive tasks that stem from this disruption (and in doing so aid the reconfiguration of a new worldview) and inspire agency and confidence in the learner to take action based on his/her new worldview.

The logic follows that as one builds this personal awareness and ties this learning to understanding systems of domination and oppression, such awareness places one at odds with the status quo. Drawing from Hobgood (2000), and McLaren (2003), this transformation serves to replace an adherence to liberal political theory (that understands inequality as a function of “personal choices or abilities or the effects of random good or bad luck”) with one of critical theory (that profiles the asymmetries of power and privilege as foundational to inequality). This emerging disjuncture causes what is called “cognitive dissonance” when ones existing worldview no longer is compatible with the emerging awareness. This cognitive dissonance or “disorienting dilemma” (Mezirow, 2000) serves as a stimulus to shift one’s worldview to one
that is compatible with understanding power and privilege and one’s own role in perpetuating systems of domination.

**Research Overview**

My dissertation research has focused on this topic, interviewing of 10 educators who have been engaged in this type of practice for more than 10 years. They each have fascinating perspectives on the prognosis for this pedagogy as a significant force for individual and social change. Accordingly, their perspectives will be summarized in the remainder of this chapter – to help the readers to assess the viability of such an avenue for social change. As a source of information, these educators have been able to reflect on the learning experiences of thousands of privileged learners, who have been through such educational practices, and to assess their learning achievements. While privileged learners themselves would be another source of good information, their experiences are beyond the scope of this study.

It is important to note that pedagogy for the privileged is a relative newborn in the field of adult education. It emerged embedded in the fields of social justice education (from the mid-1990s) and whiteness studies (from the late 1990s), and only recently achieved its real birthing with a publication from Goodman (2001). Educators have, however, been doing such work for more than a decade. Transitioning away from workshops on oppression (such as those based in popular education and anti-oppression pedagogy), educators have been developing both theories and practices for focusing on privilege and systems of domination. This dissertation research marks the first time that such educators have been formally studied with the intention of collecting their tacit knowledge and transforming it into more formal knowledge.

**Findings – Prognosis for Pedagogy for the Privileged**

Despite the powerful arguments raised earlier for educating our political leadership to become aware of their own privilege, it appears that the educators’ success in the practice of such transformation is not conclusive. While there are strong supporters, there continues skepticism. In terms of a breakdown of supporters and skeptics, there is a strong bias towards support (with 7 of 10 strongly encouraging such practice) and the skeptics are not entrenched in opposition – they mostly doubt the viability of voluntary and committed change. They are concerned about the wisdom of placing expectations for change in the voluntary actions (expressions of their civic virtues) in the hands of the privileged. Theoretically, we understand that if the privileged become aware of the existence of, for example, racism, then they would elect not to engage in racism and to commit themselves to building racial equality. The problem stems from the voluntary nature of this process. They can always choose not to take action, and in fact, most educators have gone through a process of reflexivity to uncover that their own voluntary change process has yielded limited change. While there may be great changes in their own lives, they have not been effective in generating change in the institutions in which they live and work.

**Details from the Skeptics**

To remedy this shortfall, the skeptics advocate the parallel process of outside pressure for change. To minimize the likelihood of choosing inaction, the privileged should experience
pressure from independent groups – who press for greater social justice. In doing so, we raise the possibility for lasting change. The urgency with which change is needed is too pressing to simply rely on voluntary actions of the newly aware. Such a perspective grants additional impetus for the recommended companion policies of transparency and full funding for lobby groups that represent the causes of the marginalized. While we would love to place utmost trust that their new awareness would stimulate action, our democratic deficit is in too grave a situation to continue to leave it to voluntary action. Accordingly, we can embrace Young’s (1990) “differentiated citizenship” and advocate for full funding of lobby groups that represent the marginalized in Canadian society.

Returning to the research findings, these three skeptics were also concerned with the transformative potential of pedagogy for the privileged. They are unsure if the newly aware are actually transformed and if there is permanence in the changes experienced. These concerns are essentially:

a. Whether the privileged can truly be transformed

Privileged learners do not fundamentally change their social identity, and as a result, they cannot step out of their subjectivities. Additionally, society will keep bestowing them with power according to their privilege, making it difficult to adhere to their commitments.

b. Whether the aware can again become unaware, and the process can reverse

Most educators believe that change in awareness is permanent, and that the process is similar to the blinders being taken off a horse. Noting that the blinders are in place to keep the horse single-minded and safe, the image is powerfully applied to the pedagogy for the privilege. Once off, blinders cannot typically be put back on. A few educators noted that backsliding could occur, especially in two conditions: where limited supports exist and where there are high costs of change. Without supports for change, the old worldview can exert a strong pull. When considerable risks for change exist, it may be safer to live in denial than with the consequences of change. In this situation, denial serves as a self-protective device to keep one’s discomfort at tolerable levels.

Non-skeptics also surface an issue that potentially strengthens the arguments of the skeptics. Most educators have noticed that they are less successful with the more resistant learners. While those with the utmost resistance will be deterred from joining such educational projects, much resistance surfaces in the midst of educational processes. The corollary is also experienced – learners who most successfully move through these programs may have already been predisposed for the transformation. The net effect is that we may be doing our best work with learners who may have gone through a transformation without our intervention, and perhaps did not need us. And we are least successful with the most resistant learners – those who are in greatest need of the work. We thus need to deeply consider how best to motivate learners, especially the more resistant ones where our success has been more limited. It is imperative that we build this knowledge base. As solace, the experience of all educators reveals that they have the ability to move most learners through differing levels of resistance – with success largely dictated by the depth and breadth of the other issues on the table.
These arguments are persuasive, leading us to understand that the nature of the change process comes with no guarantee. While the skeptics are guardedly optimistic, they do proffer indicators of how to strengthen its viability. These have been translated into policy recommendations listed in the “solutions and companion policies” section.

**Details from the Advocates**

Perhaps the reader is now left somewhat dubious about the transformative potential of pedagogy for the privileged. To rebalance our skepticism, we now turn to its advocates. The advocates voice tremendous hope in this pedagogy, with its strongest allies voicing its possibility for a new theory of social change that responds to the current context of most of the population being implicated in systems of dominance, yet also not true beneficiaries of such systems. Specifically, we are responsible for considerable complicity in oppression (where the oppressed also serve as agents of dominance when, for example, comparing northern and southern dwellers). As well, increasingly, many of us have a non-traditional composite identity as both oppressed and privileged (for example, mixed-race identities or middle class yet highly income vulnerable). Both of these factors serve to add such complexity to our social relations as to render traditional social change theories (such as those of Marx, Freire and Gramsci) as “unhelpful” (quoting from a research participant).

Accordingly, transformative pedagogy of this nature offers insight as to avenues for creating social change that recognizes our need to involve and engage the privileged. Without such pedagogy, the privileged fail to be implicated in the problems suffered through oppression. As they continue in their ignorance, the only avenue for change that exists for the marginalized is through seizing power – likely in the form of violence. As noted by one educator, “violence thus becomes the only form of reconciliation.” This generates great hopefulness for a pedagogy for the privileged – where we can see a flash of optimism whereby future conflicts can be resolved differently as the privileged come to understand their roles in upholding dominance and oppression.

All educators noted that there is a shortfall in both the literature and the common sense of educators on how to do this practice well. Selecting the best educators for the job may prove difficult, not because of their skills but because of the novelty of the field and the relative shortfall of wisdom for the task. It does remain a possibility that the educators collected each hold pieces to the puzzle, and that together a composite picture of the pedagogy can be drawn. When this thesis process draws to a close, we will have greater knowledge before us to engage in this task. Note that within this premise lies a tension – one that straddles the urgency to get moving and the need for patience to consolidate our skills in the area.

**Closing Comments and Bold Solutions**

We have before us the opportunity, through pedagogy for the privileged, to assist privileged learners through a transformative process that will catalyze their awareness of their privilege, and in doing so, will start to take down the walls of arrogance, isolation and exclusion. This will bring them to a place of empathy for the other, of an awareness of their power and a
corresponding capacity to make decisions with greater compassion, understanding and self-awareness.

It is time for bold solutions. The state of our democracy is so vulnerable to the asymmetries of power at work in the disconnect of our political leadership from its electorate, and more broadly, from all of its residents. When Kymlicka and Norman (1994:368) note that “a striking feature of the current debate is the timidity with which authors apply their theories of citizenship to questions of public policy,” it strikes a deep cord within me. It is time to “imagine democracy”\(^\text{14}\) and take bold initiatives to reverse the deep slide of the trustworthiness of our political leadership. Similar to the mandatory public service of most European countries, it is time for our political leadership to build their civic virtues through mandatory educational programs.

**Sources:**


Flyvbjerg, Brent (1998) Empowering Civil Society: Habermas, Foucault and the question of conflict. In M. Douglas and Friedman (Eds.) Cities for Citizens. Sussex: Wiley (pp.185-211)


\(^{14}\) Drawn from the title of Rebick (2000).
Introduction
In its 55-year history, Pakistan has repetitively had ten years of democracy followed by ten years of dictatorship. Because democracy and dictatorship require citizens to play different roles, this checkered history has resulted in ambiguous understandings of what it means to be a citizen. It has become evident that for democracy to take root democratic citizenship education is essential. Any effective educational intervention regarding democratic citizenship must be preceded by an understanding of the current conceptions of citizenship held by Pakistanis. It is with this intention that a survey was conducted in five major cities of Pakistan. The purpose of this study is to inform curriculum development, teacher education and school improvement initiatives aimed at promoting culturally relevant and appropriate intervention to educate students for democratic citizenship.

This paper presents a brief background of the socio-political history of Pakistan, the methodology and discussion of the finding of the survey conducted to identify Pakistani’s conceptions of citizenship. The paper will also assess the national and global implications of these findings.

The Historical Context
In providing the historical context I have chosen to share some of the key tensions facing Pakistani society while also tracing their historical roots.

Pakistan was born in the aftermath of World War II when the colonial empires were collapsing and struggles for freedom of the colonized were becoming more urgent. In the Indian sub-continent, the struggle for freedom took an unexpected turn when Muslims of India, unable to receive adequate assurance from the Hindu majority that living together was possible, decided to fight for a separate country where Muslims could live in accordance with Islam.

When Pakistan came into being, it had to choose its political system. It could have chosen monarchy, a legacy of the Mughals and its colonial past. Having demanded and won freedom for Muslims to live in accordance with Islam, it could have chosen theocracy. The political leaders, however, chose democracy. Quaid-I-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on August 11, 1947, addressing members of the first constituent assembly, said:

We are starting with the fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one state…Now I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you would find in due course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the state…You may belong to any
religion, caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the state (quoted in Rashid, 1985, p. 81).

The death of Jinnah in 1948, resulted in the redefinition of the goals he had striven for. A struggle began between those who envisioned Pakistan as a secular, democratic state and those who believed it should be an Islamic, theocratic state. These tensions about the identity of Pakistan – Secular or Islamic, the form of government and the role of citizens have persisted throughout the history of Pakistan.

The idea of creating Pakistan resonated among the Muslims living in Muslim minority provinces in India and spread to the Muslim majority areas of East Bengal, Punjab and Sindh so that they acceded to Pakistan at the time of independence. The Baloch and Pathan areas were reluctant to join because of the absence of an agreed upon political framework (Kazi, 1991). In some ways, the Muslim majority areas were already self-governing, independence meant giving up traditional power (based on tribe, kinship, land) to those on whom legal power was conferred. They agreed to do this because Pakistan was to be a federation in which political power would not be centralized but would devolve to the provinces. Instead of attaining provincial autonomy in 1955, the provinces were amalgamated into “one unit” in an attempt to promote unity and eliminate ethnic differences. Popular unrest and pressure for autonomy by the provinces led to the abolition of the one unit in 1968. Failure of successive governments to grant provincial autonomy or ensure the socioeconomic, political and cultural well-being of ethnic nationalities resulted in the loss of East Pakistan in 1971. Since then the granting of some degree of provincial autonomy and development of a Pakistani identity has reduced ethnic conflicts however, they arise again when socio economic or political interests are threatened.

Pakistan’s political history has been consistently unstable and uncannily repetitive with approximately ten years of civilian rule followed by ten years of military rule. In 1947 when Pakistan came into being there were many pressing issues. In order to address them quickly and efficiently, Jinnah chose to rule in the viceregal tradition. Following Jinnah viceregalism was sustained and personality politics took precedence over institution building. The death of Jinnah in 1948 and assassination of the Prime Minister in 1951 gave way to a succession of political crises. These crises led to the office of the Governor General becoming all powerful and the dissolution of the first constituent assembly. “Pakistan’s dominant personalities concluded that the Pakistani nation wanted strong leaders, not weak democracy.” (Ziring, 1997, p. 169) After seven governments within ten years, Khan Sahib, a parliamentarian claimed, “We are unfit for democracy” and called for a “revolutionary council” of “ten best men” to rule the country (Ibid p.206).

In 1958 Martial Law was imposed. Ten years later, amidst celebrations to mark the ‘decade of development’, the people launched protests and strikes demanding an end to military rule and holding of general elections.

The general elections of 1970 were won by The Awami League. Reluctance by the military to allow the Awami League to form the government led to massive protests throughout East Pakistan and finally to its succession and the creation of Bangladesh. After this humiliating defeat the military transferred power to Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Bhutto tried to merge Islam,
socialist ideas and liberal democratic values. Within a few years, however, Bhutto’s commitment to his party’s ideals of social justice succumbed to the creation of a personality culture. On completion of his term in office, general elections were held in 1977. These elections were followed by claims of rigging and protests from the opposition demanding fresh elections. The government’s inability to control the situation led to a military coup by General Zia-ul-Haq. Zia began the conversion of Pakistan into an Islamic state. He formed a Majlis-i-Shura (consultative assembly) of selected people to legislate. In 1983 pressure from the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) led to non-party elections. Zia lifted Martial law but did not end military rule. Pressure for a transition to real democracy led to dismissal of his chosen Prime Minister, and the assemblies. Thereafter, he declared the Shuriah (Islamic legal code) as the Supreme Law of the land. The political climate further deteriorated and Zia was forced to call elections.

From 1988-1999 four elections were held. Governments alternated between Benazir Bhutto (PPP) and Nawaz Sharif (IJI). All these governments attempted to consolidate their power ignoring the multiple socio-economic and political problems facing Pakistan. The last government’s attempt to wrest power from the military led to a military coup in 1999.

Thus, today even after 55 years of its existence there is indecisiveness regarding the nature of government – democratic, autocratic or theocratic.

The tension of “tradition versus modernity” can best be expressed in regard to gender. Pakistan is one of the few countries in the world in which the number of men is greater than that of women in the population – 100 men to 93 women. The total literacy rate is 45 percent, whereas the literacy rate for women is only 32.6 percent (Government of Pakistan 1998a, p.111). The low literacy rate for women will likely continue to stay relatively low, given the ratio of two boys’ schools to each girls’ school (Warwick and Reimers, 1995). Progressive Islamic movements and progressive Muslim scholars in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries recognized the discrepancy between Quranic reforms which had greatly improved women’s status in the seventh century, and women’s social status in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They called for a reinterpretation and reformulation of Islam in the light of contemporary sociopolitical contexts. For example, according to Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) polygamy had been permitted in the Prophet’s time as a concession to prevailing social conditions. He noted that the true intent of the Qur’an (4:3 and 4:129) was monogamy, because another wife was permissible only when equal justice and impartiality was guaranteed, which he concluded was impossible (Esposito, 1991). These ideas led to emancipation movements among upper and middle class women and to the passing of laws, such as the Muslim Family Law Ordinance (1961), which brought reforms in areas such as marriage, divorce and inheritance. Thus, legislation was enacted to eliminate child marriages, restrict polygamy, curtail a man’s (and increase a woman’s) rights to divorce. However, in 1977, the Islamization policy of General Zia-ul-Haq sought to reverse gains in women’s rights and to reinforce traditional and regressive attitudes and customs towards women through a fundamentalist interpretation of the Qur’an and Shari’ah. Today women are once again actively challenging attitudes, customs and laws that reduce their status and are seeking legislation that will give them equality.

**Literature Review: Conceptions of Citizenship**
A review of the literature on citizenship indicates that citizenship is an evolving, polysemous and contested concept. Most writers (Turner, 1986, Resnick 1990, Clarke, 1994) argue that conceptions of citizenship began with the Greeks where all free men shared in the decision-making and operation of common affairs. Turner (1986) argues that a key event in the development of modern conceptions was the French Revolution especially the Declaration of the Rights of Man that was based on the principles of equality, social fraternity and national sovereignty. This gave rise to new understanding of the individual relationship to each other and the state (Sears 1997). As a result of these new understandings the rights of citizenship (Marshall, 1992/1949) was extended to more people. Today some of those rights are still unequally distributed and in some cases while legally having rights citizens are unable to exercise them.

Citizenship does not have a generally accepted meaning. Political and social institutions in societies are based on different traditions and take many forms. The way people define citizenship depends on how “each person, each culture, through usage, constructs and expresses his or its conception of political and social life, freedom and relations with others.” (Audigier, 2000, p. 15). Moreover, the conception of “citizenship” is open to change based on new visions of society and to new forms of social and political life based on these visions.

Citizenship is a contested concept. Women are challenging the present construction of citizenship. They claim that citizenship is defined in opposition to the sphere of work relegated to them. Citizenship as it is presently defined relies on the notion of the free, autonomous being who acts in the political/public sphere and receives social entitlements based on individual citizenship. There is a vast literature that focuses on women’s exclusion from the civic public realm, which is both normatively masculine and relies on an opposition between the public and private dimensions of life (Freedman, 2002). Leech (1994) shows that there is a gulf between guaranteed full citizenship and the actual lived experiences of citizenship for women.

Despite the evolutionary, polysemous and contested nature of the term ‘citizenship’, there are some common core elements. Citizenship is always about the relationship between an individual and a political community in which the individual is provided with certain rights and has to fulfill certain responsibilities (Bottery, 2003). In a democracy the first right of citizens is to establish the law and the first duty to respect the law and where those chosen to exercise power are under the control and supervision of all citizens (Audigier, 2000).

So far I have defined citizenship in relation to the political sphere. It is a long time since citizenship was confined to the political sphere Marshall (1992/1949) pointed to the importance and complementary nature of the economic and social rights of citizenship if political rights and freedoms guaranteed to all are to be realized. It is important also to extend the definition of the ‘political’ to the private sphere (a primary site of power relations and gendered inequality) and to see the interdependence of the two spheres (Freedman, 2002), as well as to “informal, associational” levels to include women.

Different understandings of the nature of citizenship and the role of citizens within the state have given rise to different conceptions of citizenship (see Resnick, 1990, Sears 1997). In earlier work
(Dean, 2000) I have referred to the artistocratic, liberal democratic, Marxist and Islamic conceptions of citizenship. Within each of these conceptions exist a complex range of opinions from elitist to populist (Woyach, 1991); protectionist to participatory (Senate Standing Committee, 1989 & 1991); and liberal democracy to social democracy (Janoski, 1998).

Empirical research on citizenship indicates different conceptions within and between different countries. Theiss-Morse (1993) found four conceptions of citizenship among adults in the United States - representative democracy, political enthusiast, pursued interest and indifferent. Conover, Crewe & Searing (1991) found that adults in the United States saw the citizen as someone with both rights and responsibilities. British adults, on the other hand, emphasized identity in the community. Ichilov and Nave (1981) reported that Israeli youth conceptualized citizenship in relation to the political sphere rather than as a commitment to a broader community. Carrington and Short (2000) show that whilst UK children think of citizenship in terms of being born in the UK and being able to speak English, US children identified citizenship in terms of its formal, juridical components.

**Methodology**

In order to obtain the perspectives of a cross-section of the Pakistani population, a survey was designed. The survey questionnaire was developed in two phases. The first phase entailed the development of a structured interview schedule on notions of citizenship derived from the literature. This was used to interview thirty respondents in Karachi to identify key options for the survey questionnaire, and the questionnaire was drafted accordingly. The second phase of its development entailed the pilot testing of the questionnaire. Here, twenty respondents were selected and two different interviewers administered the survey separately in order to validate each question. These were validated using statistical techniques such as the Kappa Statistic and Bland Altman methods. The questionnaire was then modified accordingly and finalized. The survey asked questions to identify conceptions of citizenship, gauge citizens’ understanding of their rights and responsibilities, and find out how these are actualized or lived. They were also asked to identify to what extent and how citizens can be better prepared to extend their rights and fulfill their responsibilities. The questionnaire was then used to conduct the study.

A representative sample size of 1000 respondents with an error of 0.4% from varying localities in the five major cities of Pakistan was drawn. In Pakistan, cities are demarcated into blocks and thus the Federal Bureau of Statistics randomly identified 100 blocks for the survey. The Bureau proportionately distributed the blocks according to population based on the 1998 Census report (adjusted for consequent population growth) between the five major cities of Pakistan – Karachi, Lahore, Quetta, Peshawar, and Islamabad. Within each city, the blocks were allotted to represent the different socio-economic classes. Within each block, 10 households were selected using multistage sampling. Initially, one house was randomly selected and then systematic sampling was used to target the remaining houses by approaching every fifth house. If the survey could not be conducted in the selected house, the next house was approached and so on until a qualified and willing respondent between 15 and 70 years of age was found. One respondent from each household was selected by assigning every member a serial number. If a household had more than one eligible member present, the respondent was randomly selected using the serial numbers and the random function key on a calculator. Respondents were given an explanation of the nature of the survey and the approximate time needed to ensure informed consent.
Discussion of Findings

The findings of the survey indicate four conceptions of citizenship. The first is a conception of citizenship based on national identity. The second is a view of citizenship focusing on religious identity and affiliation. The third views citizenship as patriotism and the fourth views citizenship as entailing responsibilities without rights.

![What does it mean to be a Pakistani Citizen?](image)

**Pakistani Identity**

The word identity is defined as “who or what somebody is”. According to Manuel Castells (1997) the search for identity, individual or collective, is a search for meaning. He maintains that all identities are constructed. The real issue however is how, from what, by whom and for what purpose is the identity constructed. He argues that identities only become identities in the true sense if individuals or groups internalize them and construct their meanings around this internalization.

A nation is usually defined as a historically evolved community of people sharing a common history, culture and language, living in a particular territory (Oxford University Press, 1998). Many states are not nation-states but multi-nations states.

National identity then is the identity which members of a state construct and use to differentiate themselves from members of other states. National identity is formed so that members of the state despite obvious differences may share an identity and act in the interest of all members of the society.
The survey results indicated the predominant conception of citizenship is of identification with Pakistan and to the culture within it. 67.2% of the respondents when asked what does it mean to be a Pakistani citizen replied, “To be born in Pakistan”, or “To live in Pakistan.” Explaining further some of these respondents noted that this meant having “a Pakistani identity card and a passport”. A smaller group of respondents noted that people entitled to call themselves citizens of Pakistan must share a common culture: speak Urdu, believe and practice Islam and do things in similar way. One respondent stated, “Those who live in Pakistan speak one language and share one culture”. Another, “Those who live in Pakistan speak one language and call it their homeland have one culture. Their way of doing things is similar. They live in Pakistani style.” Yet another explained, “Those who live in Pakistan, speak Urdu and practice Islam are citizens of Pakistan.”

For the first group of citizens’ identity is bound to the place where they live. They see national identity as a ‘given’ based on geographical location. The peace where they are born determines who they are and what they will become. They have not conceptualized a more abstract national identity based on shared language, religion and culture, and different from nationals of other nations.

Pakistan was carved out of the Indian sub-continent. Pakistan had no history but the ethnic nationalities that composed Pakistan had long histories (Kazi, 1991). Pakistan had been created, there was now need to create Pakistanis out of the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious population. In Pakistan, efforts to build Pakistanis have taken the form of linguistic, religious and educational standardization (Tilly, 1975 quoted in Oommen 1997, p. 136). Efforts for this began with the attempt in 1948 to make Urdu, the language spoken by Muslim in the minority provinces in India, the national language. This resulted in resistance from East Pakistanis who demanded coequal status for Bangla. The economic, cultural and political oppression by the West Pakistani ruling classes over East Pakistan led to the development of their ethnic identity in resistance to this domination. In 1971 East Pakistan seceded from the rest of Pakistan to become Bangladesh. Within West Pakistan there were movements for autonomy and independence threatening the sovereignty of Pakistan. The succession movements were suppressed and efforts to develop a new Pakistani Identity were doubled. The government started mass consciousness raising of national identity with the aid of patriotic songs and celebration of national days and religious festivals. It also decided to make conscious use of education as the state’s ideological apparatus, setting up a body to prepare a national curriculum and control textbook writing and publishing.

An analysis of social studies texts reveals that national identity is developed from the early years and continues throughout school and college life. Students learn that “[t]he people of Pakistan have their own national identity” – which means their own country, own flag, own national anthem, own religion and share the same history, eat the same food, speak the same language (Oxford University Press[OUP], Bk. 3, p. 19). The national language, the texts claim, serve to unify Pakistanis into one nation whose “way of thinking and values are alike.” The text acknowledges “slight difference[s] in the customs, traditions and ways of living in our provinces ‘but stresses’ a common culture is gradually emerging… [and] common understanding and national identity is becoming stronger” (Sindh Text Book Board, book 9 & 10, pp 156-157). In the attempt to establish a national identity, the texts turn to Islam. They state that the people are
“closely bound together through the common bond of Islam” (STBB, book 9&10, p.158). The texts always refer to Prophet Muhammad as “Our Holy Prophet” and to Islam as “Our state religion.”

The use of Islam in the construction of a national identity has led to the construction of a Muslim identity where allegiance is to the Muslim nation rather than to Pakistan.

Pakistanis as Muslim

For 10% percent of the survey population being a Pakistani citizen was synonymous with being a Muslim. They stated, “Pakistan means Lailah Illalah (There is no God but God and Muhammad is his Prophet). Pakistan was created on the basis of the two-nation theory. It is a Muslim country. Therefore, to be a Pakistani means to be a Muslim. “Those who follow the religion of Islam are Pakistani citizens”; “Those who follow Islam and live their lives in accordance with Islam”. These respondents believed that the rights and responsibilities of citizens are enshrined in the Quran. Over the last few years the responsibilities they have carried out as citizens are to pray, fast, earn “halal rozi” provide religious education and to pay zakat and ushr (religious tax). To the questions why is it important to fulfill your responsibilities they replied, “Because it is the teaching of Islam …”; “It is obligatory being a Muslim”; and “It is necessary in Islam”.

Why is there such a strong Muslim Identity? Pakistan was created on the basis of the ‘two-nation theory’ that is, Muslims and Hindus residing in India were two separate nations. Since Pakistan came into being on the basis of Muslim nationalism, Islam has been the legitimizing identity for the state of Pakistan. However, it was not until the loss of East Pakistan that the dominant institutions of society started using it to extend and rationalize their domination. In 1973 Pakistan was renamed the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Friday was made the public holiday and alcohol was banned. The resurgence of Islam in the world and the geo-political situation on Pakistan’s borders vis-à-vis the overthrow of the Shah in Iran, the installation of the Islamic government of Ayotuallah Khomeni, the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet forces and the use of Islam to fight communism in the late 70s influenced internal policies. The coup and subsequent martial law government of General Zia-ul-Haq implemented an Islamisation policy that Islamisied all institutions of society.

In order to socialize children into this worldview the government prescribed the content of education and controlled the media. The Urdu curriculum for class IV and V requires that “a feeling be created among students that they are members of a Muslim nation. Therefore in accordance with the Islamic tradition, they have to be truthful, honest, patriotic and life sacrificing mujahids (Government of Pakistan, 1995, p. 48). Students of class II in a lesson on “Our Country” students learn, “Our country is Pakistan. Pakistan is an Islamic country. Here Muslims live. Muslims believe in the Unity of Allah. They do good deeds.” (Punjab Textbook Board, Lahore, 2003, p.36). The just developed National Early childhood curriculum (2002) has as an objective “To nurture in children a sense of Islamic Identity and pride in being Pakistani” (Government of Pakistan, 2002, p. 4).
Like education control and censorship of the media ensures that content and images are in conformity with this worldview. Transmission begins and ends with verses from the Quran and transmission is stopped during the Azaan (the call for prayer). Religious programmes make up a large part of the programmes aired and programmes are censored for content and images not in keeping with Islamic belief and values.

The “Patriotic citizen”

18.1% of the respondents felt that to be a Pakistani citizen is to be a patriotic citizen. This was expressed as, “Pakistanis are those who love Pakistan” or “Those who are faithful to Pakistan”. For many this love for Pakistan was focused not on active participation in developing Pakistan and making it a better place but on a passive willingness to sacrifice one’s life for the nation. Respondents stated, “To be patriotic and willing to sacrifice for it” or “Those who are willing to sacrifice their lives for the sovereignty of Pakistan”.

A key component in developing this love for Pakistan has been the use of education and the media. I will discuss education first and then the role of the media. One of the aims of education is “To foster an unflinching love for Pakistan, to understand the factors responsible for its birth, to feel proud of being Pakistani” (Government of Pakistan 1973). Since Islamization curricula objectives include Jehad and Shahadat. An objective states “Must be aware of the blessings of Jihad, and must create yearning for Jehad in his heart” (Government of Pakistan, 2002, p. 34). All Pakistani schools attempt to develop patriotic citizens through the use of curricula (language, the social studies and Islamiat) and co-curricula activities. In all schools, the day begins with the singing of the national anthem and raising of the flag. Schools are encouraged to instill in children a love for Pakistan through celebrating national days and religious festivals. Most schools follow the national curriculum translated into textbooks which are the sole source of information in the classroom. As analysis of social studies texts indicate that they teach students that the “obligation of each citizen is to be loyal to the country”; to “detest from working against the national interests”; and to be “ready to sacrifice his life and property for national defense” (STBB, Bk. 6, pp. 106-107). Patriotism is not to be confined to the state but must extend to the government as well. Students are taught that anyone who questions the government on issues of national importance is a “paid agent, enemies of the country and people of doubtful character” and as responsible citizens it is “our duty to see that no rumours…. are spread.” Should they be spread students are warned “[n]ever [to] believe anything spread against the country, government or the nation” (STBB, Bk. 5, pp. 56-67).

Like education the media is also used to develop an unthinking love for Pakistan. Both print and news media are government controlled and messages similar to those in the textbooks are conveyed through them. Love for Pakistan is created by the use of flags, patriotic songs and the celebration of national anniversaries and religious festivals.

Citizenship responsibilities without rights

7.1% of the survey population responding to the question regarding what it means to be a Pakistani citizen stated, “Those who obey the law” or “Those who fulfill all their responsibilities”. Often these two were combined, “Those who obey the law and do their duties”. Other respondents mentioned the responsibility to vote. A respondent stated, “A good citizen is
one who fulfills his responsibilities, not just fulfill but understands his responsibilities. One responsibility is to vote. One needs to think of to whom and why you are giving your vote”.

When asked what responsibilities they had carried out over the last few years, 32.5% of respondents’ responsibilities had to do with looking after and providing for their family; 26.4% mentioned paying taxes; 20.9% voting in elections (local, provincial, national); 16.8% did not carry out any responsibilities; and 16.6% helped others in the community.

One of the reasons for the emphasis on duties is religious and cultural beliefs and tradition. Children have to perform duties for their parents, students for their teachers, men for women, citizens to the state and all have duties towards Allah. “The Quran provides a set of injunctions and exhortations where women are to be protected, and economically cared for by men but also admonished and perished if they are disobedient” (Esack, 2002, p. 180). It also reminds adults that when they were young their parents cared for them and therefore they owe their parents eternal obligation of gratitude compassion and care. Therefore not fulfilling expected duties are likely to have negative consequences not only in this life but in the hereafter.

And do good unto your parents. Should one of them, or both, attain to old age in your care, never say “Uge” unto them or scold them, but always speak to them with reverent speech, and spread over them humbly your wings of tenderness and say “O My Sustainer! Bestow your grace upon them, even as they cherished me and raised me as a child.” (17.23).

The Quran is also explicitly states that there are two alternatives for each in the Hereafter, jannat (Paradise) or jahannam (Hell), and at various places spell out the deeds which will earn one a place in the one or the other. Besides personal sins social and economic exploitation will earn a person consignment to hell and “who does [whatever s/he can] of good deeds and is a believer, shall enter paradise “(4.124, 40.40)” (Esack, 2002).

In order to socialize children into the religion and culture the education provided in schools focuses on teaching students their duties. Two of the aims of social studies education is “To understand the duties and responsibilities of home, school, community and the government” and to acquire “knowledge of the duties towards Allah, the Almighty and knowledge of the duties towards fellow human-being” (Government of Pakistan, 1973, pp. 3-4). To realize these aims social studies texts discuss the right and duties of citizens. A few rights that accrue to citizens in Pakistan are mentioned, but each controlled by limitations that are so stringent that one wonders if citizens actually have rights. For example, “Every citizen has the right to enjoy freedom of speech and writing…No one has the right to express such views as may lead to commotion or…which is against the country or which may lead to a civil riot” (STBB, Bk. 6. p.104). The duties of citizens are emphasized. For example, in the class 9 Pakistan Studies book in a section on rights and duties, no rights are mentioned but a whole page is given over to listing the duties of a citizen. The citizens are expected to perform their duties honestly and sincerely. It is our duty to be loyal and faithful to our country and we should be prepared to offer any kind of sacrifice for the sake of our country and nation. It is the duty of every citizen to respect the rights of his fellow countrymen…. performance of national duty also includes collective acts such as cleaning the streets of the locality…. It is our duty to pay the various taxes levied by the
government. Payment of license fees for Radio, Television, Scooter, Car etc. should not be avoided (STBB, Book 9. P. 228-229).

Furthermore, education and the media have substantially contributed to this conception by recalling the sacrifices made for the creation of Pakistan. Citizens are encouraged to express gratitude for the opportunity to live in an independent country rather than ungratefulness in demanding one’s rights.

**Implications for Creating a Democratic Society**
The research reveals that the present conceptions of citizenship are not conducive to creating and sustaining a democratic society. Citizenship education, media presentations and the political culture will have to help citizens reconceptualize citizenship to facilitate the development of a democratic society.

From her birth Pakistan has struggled to create a national identity by stressing cultural homogeneity and attempting to erase difference and diversity. This has alienated minority ethnic, lingual and religious communities. 97% of Pakistanis are Muslims. It is not surprising that the Muslim way of life gained currency and was reflected in national signs and symbols. However, the Islamisation of the state from the 70s has resulted in national identity becoming synonymous with Muslim identity. This has created an environment for religious minorities in which “(1) they become second-class citizens with lesser rights and privileges, (2) their patriotism becomes suspect, and (3) their contribution to society is ignored” (Nayyar, 2002). The result of a denial of national identity to religious minorities has alienated them and forced many to leave the nation and seek to become citizens of another nation.

The attempt to create a Muslim identity has also resulted in deep divides between the two major Muslim sects - Sunni and Shia. Sunnis who form the majority of Muslims in Pakistan have sought to make their interpretation of Islam the official interpretation and to demand for the declaration of Pakistan as a Sunni state. This has resulted in the sectarianism. Muslim nationalism has also led Pakistanis to identify more with Muslims in other countries reducing and undermining their allegiance to Pakistan. In the recent past support of Muslims in Pakistan for their fellow religious brethren in Afghanistan and Kashmir has brought Pakistan to the brink of war threatening its sovereignty.

Nations make efforts to develop a national identity so that members of the state, despite being different, share an identity and act in the interest of all. Pakistan wants to create a democratic society, she must develop a sense of belonging among her citizens by emphasizing unity in diversity and treating all equitably. It will then be able to demand and receive contributions to development and prosperity from all its citizens.

Besides nationalism, the state through the use of education and the media has promoted an unthinking patriotism. Any perceived threat to Pakistan and Islam by outside forces results in an exaggerated reaction. People come out on the street to protest and often end up destroying public property. Torney et. al. (1975) found that “a nationalist orientation and the use of patriotic rituals such as flag raising ceremonies have, if anything a counter productive effect on civic education (Torney, Oppenhein and Farmen, 1975, p.19). She found students had a lower level of
knowledge and less support for democratic values, but often higher interest in political participation”. Pratt (1988) argues that an uncritical love for one’s country “too often leads to narrow minded xenophobia” (p.8) and he suggests educating for “a thinking loyalty” to one’s country.

Citizens as the result show carry out different responsibilities. Many participate in voting in elections which is the basic level of participation in democratic society. This basic commitment offers possibilities for creation of a democratic society. It is the foundations from which citizens can be motivated to see themselves as active participants in society, governing themselves through ongoing participation in decision-making about matters that affect them, keeping a check on government and holding government accountable to them.

Citizens also mentioned that they helped others in their community. This is very important because being of service to others in one’s community facilitates living and working in harmony with others. Some citizens, however, claimed that they did not fulfill any responsibilities. This may be because while being loyal and dutiful to the state, the state did not meet their expectations. These expectations are generally for a modicum of social rights (education, health and employment opportunities). Pakistan has fallen short in providing these rights and citizens have had to provide for themselves. As a result there is reduced citizenship allegiance, as citizens come to question why they should be loyal and do their duties to the state, when the state shows little responsibility towards them. Furthermore, some Pakistanis have ceased to identify themselves with Pakistan choosing “the market option of 'exit' rather than the citizen option of 'voice' in order to achieve their personal aims” (Bottery, 2000, p. 111).

Along with these provisions, democratic citizenship education is also required. The education system plays a very influential role in the development of democratic citizenship, but that influence in mediated by other systems – family, the media and the political culture. Citizenship education is the product of learning from all these systems. Therefore, the role of all these systems will have to be redefined to prepare citizens to create and sustain a democratic Pakistani society. The education system would have to differ greatly from the present one. It would necessitate schools becoming democratic in both organization and practice. It would require a new curriculum and classroom practices whose aim is not for students to preserve tradition and culture but whose primary purpose is to stimulate students passions, imaginations, and intellects so that they will be moved to challenge the social, political and economic forces that weigh so heavily upon their lives and … be educated to display civic courage, i.e., the willingness to act as if they were living in a democratic society. (Giroux, 1983, p. 210)

References


Citizens’ Dissent in Canada: Adequacy of Police Training Designs in Dealing with Public Protest

Luis Alberto D’Elia
Educational Policy Studies, University Of Alberta

Introduction

No doubts, the discourse on security has reached high levels in the aftermath of the appalling loss of human life resulting from the September 11 attacks in the United States of America. Indeed, after 9/11 in Canada there were immediate calls “for tighter border controls, tighter immigration standards and greater police powers to increase security…” (Law Commission of Canada [LCC], 2003a). At the same time, issues of legitimacy, authority, accountability, equality, access and inclusion in different security governance arrangements have been debated (LCC, 2003b). Nevertheless, in the different security arrangements, our public police officers use discretionary powers to enforce the new security legislation. In turn, officers’ discretion is much influenced by their training and education (Sewell, 1985; Inspector B. Boden 1, personal communication, April 2002; C. Braiden 2, personal communication, Jan 14, 2003).

Considering that in the context of the great narrative of security the police use educationally-influenced discretionary powers in enforcing the new security law, my question zeroes in the education of security personnel. More specifically, I query about the appropriateness of our Canadian public police educational program designs to prepare officers in responding to their protesting public in the context of the new security framework. Or in simple terms, I question How prepared are our police officers to police public demonstrations?

The paradox here is that, while police officers are mandated to keep the peace, to protect the human rights of their citizens and to enforce the law of the State, many Western States have taken legislative steps and law enforcement policies, which, in many cases, have undermined basic human rights in those countries (Amnesty International [AI] 2002b; AI Canada [AIC] 2003; Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2002). Furthermore, historically, the use of security legislation and security—especially in cases where there has been a ‘war’ against political opponents—has led to human rights violations (AI; AIC; HRW). How are police officers to respond to these conflicting situations? How prepared are they to respond without violating basic rights of their citizens?

Personal reasons for engaging in this study. As a survivor of police and military brutality in my country of origin, Argentina, I have a special interest and a long-term commitment to contribute to the study of police education and to help prevent human rights violations by security forces.

My Proposal

In searching for responses to the questions presented above, I propose to look critically at program design aspects of particular Canadian police education and training that are important in shaping the police conduct in managing protesting crowds. I also look at possible improvements

---

1 Bernward Boden is a senior police officer and multicultural educator from the German Cologne Police
2 Chirs Braiden is a former Canadian police superintendent and current Canadian and international police trainer and consultant
to the design of a specific police professional development program to make it more appropriate in preparing officers for policing public protest. The long-term goal is to contribute to new and creative models of the police-community relationship dynamics.

My personal influence in the research. I intend to include in this work my own experience in working with police in human rights collaboration projects and in participating in protesting groups. For this reason, I am determined to examine my own assumptions and to document my eventual process of change (Mertens, 1998).

Methodology

Broad Plan. My plan is to analyze my own qualitative data compiled recently in Canada and in Europe and to provide enough context to encourage discussion on the issue and to draw some conclusions and recommendations.

Type and location of data collection. The data collected was based on my own notes taken from semi-structured interviews and personal conversations with various police officers, trainers and a civilian advisor, as well as from written communications with some of them. I did “member check” and about one year after the data was collected, I visited the program again and discussed my study’s conclusions with the (new) planner.

I interviewed a total of five police officers (trainers and/or planners), informally discussed and corresponded with another officer and with one civilian police trainer over a period of three months. In one case (German police) I job-shadowed a trainer for most of the workday as he facilitated educational projects in the field, followed by a two-hour debriefing on the experience.

Security Discourse And Police Responses
The Security Context And Police Power

After September 11, 2001 the new security legislation in Canada gives its police power new powers (AI, 2002b; AIC, 2003; Mitrovica, 2003). As a result of those new powers, police are in the position, for example, to deny people access to certain areas and restrict freedom of movement at large intergovernmental meetings (such as international summits, e.g., APEC in Vancouver, Quebec’s Summit of the Americas and the G8 meeting in Kananaskis). However, as demonstrated in the policing of some of these meetings, police have used some of their discretionary powers in making crucial decisions that have had social implications. The political (governmental) interference with police professional operations in addition to the police judgments based on own perceptions about demonstrators (Alberta Indymedia, 2002; CBC, 2001; RCMP & Calgary Police Service, 2002) translate into particular police actions as in the case of the 2001’ Québec City’s Summit of the Americas (CBC). At that intergovernmental meeting there were confirmed reports of the police’s excessive use of tear gas on peaceful protesters, the use of plastic bullets in unjustified situations where safety was not a concern, abuses of the rights of the detainees and other (AI, 2001a). By contrast, the reported police respect of peaceful demonstrators in Calgary around the G8 meeting, speaks about the capacity of police to act more professionally in relating to protesting crowds and upholding the demonstrators’ rights to peaceful protest. Ad hoc decisions made by police field supervisors at those demonstrations (Inspector M. Reily, personal communication, June 15, 2002) must have

3 “Police” in this paper refers to public law enforcement officers
4 Mike Reily from the RCMP
been influenced by complex elements but certainly shaped by the officers’ training and education (C. Roberts\(^5\), personal communication, March 14 & 15, 2002).

Canadian police training and education in general differ significantly from other non-North American police programs (i.e., police from Western Europe). In the particular Canadian case critiqued by the author, the difference will have an impact in the way the trained police officers interact with the community and consequently with political demonstrators and dissenters. In a qualitative study done in January-April, 2002, I analyzed a Canadian police-training program and compared it to recognized program planning models and contrasted it to researched European police models (D’Elia, 2002).

**THE CANADIAN PROGRAM**

In Canada, public police training and education take different forms but a number of those police programs share common teaching and program-planning approaches. Furthermore, in the cases familiar to the author, including the case under study, those programs appear to be guided by a traditional, classical and structuralist theory of education (Wotherspoon, 1998) and the planning approach follows hierarchical, rigid, less-democratic models than designs surveyed by the author in Europe (D’Elia, 2002).

Considering the importance of education on behavior of police and on their use of discretionary powers it is worth examining some of the assumptions made in specific examples of Canadian police training and educational program planning.

*The Ax Police program.* The Canadian police program studied was the Ax Police Service’s Training Standards (TS)\(^6\). This program provides a link between education and training in an effort to give a consistent, high quality and measurable training program for the Ax Police Services (AXPS).

In another paper (D’Elia, 2002) I have attempted to make a thorough description of the AxPS TS program, its context and players, its partnership through the University of X, its objectives, the way needs are assessed, and the process by which the program is developed, implemented and evaluated. In that research paper I concluded that the TS police professional development program followed closely Knowles’ program planning model\(^7\). Moreover, it did not followed Caffarella’s model\(^8\).

Since the TS program appears to be a case where the program is mandated and the audience prescribed (Cervero & Wilson, 1994), there is little room for the planner to make changes in the program. In fact, considering that the planner is internal to the organization and in a hierarchical dependency, the power relationships that this planner will develop will reflect this condition.

*The question of interests and answerability.* Notwithstanding hierarchical power relationships, the decisions made by the planner and some players will be based on consensus (Cervero & Wilson, 1994) reached on prearranged choices. Given this highly structured planning

---

\(^5\) Colin Roberts is a UN and international police trainer from London Metropolitan Police

\(^6\) pseudonyms used

\(^7\) Knowles’ model of program planning has a linear and sequential design. In spite of Knowles’ understanding of adult learners’ nature, his model does not take into consideration the reality of the context where the planning process occurs (institutional constrains, socio-cultural and political realities, stakeholders’ interests and power relationships) (Cervero & Wilson, 1994; Knowles, 1980 & 1984).

\(^8\) Caffarella’s model. The Caffarella’s model of program planning, on the other hand, is a circular, non-linear design. According to Caffarella, her model is interactive because “it has no ending or beginning” and it considers the globality of the planning process (Caffarella 2002, p.21).
context it is extremely important to ask “to whom is the adult educator-planner ethically and politically answerable?” (p.5). Given that the AxPS is a para-military, hierarchical organization, decisions made at a lower rank are going to be greatly dependent on approval from the higher ranks. Consequently, in the context of the internal training programs of the AxPS, the planners are answerable ultimately to the Chief. On another - lower level - the training planner is responsible to some of the main stakeholders, but still in relation to the Chief since ultimate decisions on training (e.g., funding) are made at this management level.

**Planning and Decision-Making**

Who makes the decisions on implementation of programs under Human Resources Division (HRD) and how are those decisions made? The HRD has a Training Consulting Board (TCB)\(^9\) made up of different people from within the AxPS organization. This body makes decisions regarding internal training. Its decisions are reached by *consensus*. (Cervero et al, 1994). However the Chief makes final decisions with the assistance of Deputy-Chiefs, specifically through funding allocations and control of the HR Division.

*Funding and decisions.* In an earlier paper (D’Elia 2002) I analyzed budgetary issues around AxPS TS program planning and implementation. I concluded that the HRD Manager made decisions based on the budget *already allocated* by the Chief to HR.

**On Program Evaluation and Constraints**

*Evaluation.* The course evaluation process consists of a pre-service evaluation and an academic evaluation of program (the University of X evaluates the courses taken by the TS instructors) as well as end-of-program evaluations by participants (see D’Elia, 2002).

*Possible constraints to goals.* From the interviews with the planner it was clear that he largest constraints that the HRD finds in achieving the set goals are finances (limited budget) and the police officers’ own perceptions of the TS program (little acceptance of the role of the university in assisting police training instructors).

*Organizational constrains and community needs.* The planner’s perception regarding the relationships among the legitimate interests of the stakeholders in internal training is that those relationships are hierarchical. Consequently, the only strategy available to the planner to deal with conflict is by networking within the hierarchy (Cervero & Wilson, 1994). However, given the importance placed on community needs in the training goals; Is there a process to assess them? Who decides on that assessment process? In the TS, the assessment process is limited to the program participants (students and instructors) and some internal stakeholders (i.e., the TCB and the Chief) and the assessment decisions are made hierarchically. It is crucial here to understand the need of a genuine need assessment process that incorporates the concerns of the community. This process seems absent in the AxPS TS program.

Moreover, given that an important need for police behavioral change may be identified in the *public complaints* against the police; Is the AxPS collecting data for needs assessment from this and other sources where the community’s concerns can be found? Unfortunately, this does not seem to be the case in the TS program. This is decisive since social and political dissenters’ complaints, for example, will be a valuable information for police officers who want to improve in their relationship with the protestors. The AxPS internal training program could use potential feedback from community stakeholders to get valuable data on needs for the program.

Furthermore, sources of needs may include the Chief’s reports on public complaints, the Ax Police Commission’s and the Government Oversight Body’s\(^{10}\) recommendations as well as

---

\(^{9}\) pseudonym used

\(^{10}\) pseudonyms used
critical court reports. Other sources informing needs could include published complaints by community and professional associations and organizations such as immigration, mental health, cultural, inner city agencies organizations, the L. L. Lawyers Association\(^1\), Amnesty International Canada and others.

*How community needs inform the program?* The planner’s perception is that some of these sources may have an influence in the determination of needs, but the process is not formalized. Besides biannual AxPS public surveys on public perception of police and reports from the officers' supervisors, there is no formal process to link those sources of needs to training.

*Some inferences.* The information gathered through the interviews with the Ax Police planner points out to two important factors that affect the ability of the Ax Police program to deliver its promised benefits: 1) the constraints of the power asymmetries between educators and the police hierarchy that impact the design and implementation of the program, and 2) the program planning model chosen that further limits the ability of the program to respond to its ultimate intended aim - which is to respond to community needs (Geocities, 2002). Both factors are intimately related. The Ax planner can improve the program design through the adoption of a more realistic and democratic planning model, but the institutional constraints such as the power concentration in the management structures will necessarily limit the democratic capacity of the planning model (D’Elia, 2002). The hierarchical way of planning will impact the programs that prepare the officers in the use of their discretionary powers. Police officers can use those discretionary powers guided not only by an understanding and commitment to service their community (the public) but also by their supervisors’ prescribed occupational agenda and the police management’ political interests. The latter influence on the police behaviour is congruent with Willem de Lint (1998) findings on the impact of occupational norms and market on Canadian police training and consequent police behaviour. Alternatives planning such as the approaches described by various proposals such as the (North American) Cervero and Wilson’s (1994 & 1996) and Caffarella’s (2002) and the (European) Kolb-based proposal (Raschick & Maypole, 1998) will drive the educational process to respond to community needs acknowledging the inherent institutional political interests and constraints.

**Theoretical Frameworks Of Planning Approaches**

*Contrasting views of planning and their assumptions.* Cervero & Wilson (1994) summarize important known views in program planning into three categories: Classical, Naturalistic and Critical. The Classical viewpoint ("comprehensive rationality") assumes that the problems posed in the planning process are well defined, and that an array of alternatives and complete information about the context are available. At the same time, this view assumes that knowledge is acquired through linear, sequential processes and that there are unlimited time, skill and resources at disposal of the planner. Knowles’ model, as described above, appears to fit this description.

The Naturalistic viewpoint ("bounded" by constraints of the situations), recognizes that the problems to be addressed in the planning process are ill-defined, that knowledge is acquired in a muddled, nonlinear fashion, and that the planners do not necessarily have all the information.

\(^{11}\) pseudonym used
about the alternatives and their consequences, and that there are limited time, skill, and resources in the process of designing a program.

The Critical viewpoint, lastly, also considers most of the Naturalistic’s assumptions but includes crucial ones that are very relevant to our analysis: programs being planned are determined by structural forces, especially the dominant ideologies and interests of social, cultural, and political institutions. At the same time, competing interests in the planning process are embedded in the situational context (Cervero & Wilson, 1994). Given the fact that police is a public/state institution that at the same time is (or supposed to be) committed to the community, it follows that a responsible police planner has to look at those contextual factors that affect the planning process and that may preclude the interests of the community to which the police has to serve.

*On naïve and astute planners.* If the police planners are to pay attention to the institution’s structural constraints and to the context in which the various stakeholders’ interests compete, they will also have to consider whether they are being entangled in an unbalanced representation of individuals’ or institution’s interests when designing, implementing and evaluating police programs (Cervero & Wilson, 1994).

**Problems with the Ax Police Program Design**

After analyzing the context in which the particular Ax Police program is planned and implemented and after reflecting on crucial aspects of interests and power amongst players, it is evident that, in spite of the good intentions of the police managers, the Ax Police program is likely to fall short of accomplishing the servicing goals promised by the institution. Furthermore, the educational strategies used by the AxPS are not the most adequate for developing human rights, community-based policing that will respect the right to dissent even under political pressure and the influence of the security discourse.

**European Programs**

*Contrast with some European police educational programs strategies.* Both constraining aspects of the Ax Police program acquire a different twist in some European countries. The results of the interviews and follow-up communications conducted with the European planners, trainers and advisor, showed the use of a consistent model of program planning that distributes power to stakeholders, a preoccupation for democratizing the educational process and educational accountability system that appears to respond to the different European intergovernmental bodies requiring certain police standards from each country (Appendices D, E, & F) (AI, 1998; Council of Europe [CoE], 2002; Ireland National Police Service, 2000; UNHCHR, 1997).

For example, the German planner’s subscription to the democratic values advocated by a planning model based on Kolb’s theory of adult learning, compels him to distribute his power among stakeholders. This situation is similar in the cases of the interviewed German, Irish, Dutch and UK London Metropolitan police program planners (Appendices D & F)(D’Elia, 2002). The interesting finding in those cases is that the model appears to counter-balance the power allocated to those planners. To illustrate this point, at the time of my interviews in Germany a high ranking educational planner of the German K police was coordinating a
comprehensive public consultation process in order to enhance program planning (G.G.\textsuperscript{12}, personal communication, March 25, 2002). Different from the public surveys conducted by the AxPS, the German consultation is integrated into the educational program, clearly informing the planning process for that police and providing a voice to the community on its concerns on the education of the German officers for dealing with the public (including public demonstrations).

Another example is the Dutch police programs where the officers go through the long and continuous cycles of experimentation, reflection, critical analysis and evaluation and the participants provide positive feedback for the needs assessment, objectives, methodology and other aspects of the program (Vijlbrie\textsuperscript{13}, personal communication, March 16, 2002). This feedback, in my view, more effectively distributes power in the planning process, making the model used by the Dutch more democratic than Knowles' model used by the Ax Police, and consequently more influenced by those (officers) who are in closer proximity with the public (Knowles, 1984).

In the other European cases, similar planning model give the planners, the instructors and the students opportunity to evaluate their own education and to take on the responsibility to assess their growth in reference to high ethical standards set by the European Union police regulating bodies (CoE, 2002; F. Vijlbrief, personal communication, March 15, 2002). Self-evaluation and assessment on how officers perform compared to set professional ethical and human rights standards agreed on by many countries is crucial in the education of policing dissent. In fact, the police officers that are trying to follow human rights standards beyond their domestic ones must have an extra incentive to protect the rights of the dissenter (AI, 1998).

\section*{Conclusion}

In the context of the great narrative of security after September 11, 2001 and the new powers given to police officers who, nevertheless, use discretion to enact those powers, it is paramount to look at police educational programs since police discretion is informed by the officers’ education. Furthermore, it is of the interest of Canadian citizens in general and public protestors in particular, that our police acquire an education that will influence the officers positively in ensuring the full respect of the citizens’ rights. How appropriate are our Canadian police educational program designs in preparing officers to respond to their protesting public in the context of the new security framework? And how prepared are our police officers to police public demonstrations?

In this paper I attempted to answer those questions on a particular Canadian police program-planning case. I concluded that the particular Canadian police professional-development training program has institutional and planning constraints that limit its ability to deliver the community servicing goals promised by the institution. This program design, furthermore, does little to promote the need of the modern police to understand and uphold the rights of peaceful dissenter. When security discourse appears to undermine basic rights to dissent, our police should educate themselves more on those rights and on the defense of their citizens.

In fact the police institution (the Ax Police Service) where the program was studied can benefit by democratizing its police educational system and by adopting an alternative, more experiential, democratic, inclusive, contextually responsive, and politically aware method of educational planning. Alternative North American and European program planning models and

\textsuperscript{12} Pseudonym used
\textsuperscript{13} Frans Vijlbrie is a police trainer in the Dutch police
proposals have been discussed in this paper. At the same time, if the improvement in the planning process is to be effective, important power asymmetries among the institutional players have to be addressed. Positive actions like the ones discussed in this paper will give the Ax Police Service planners and trainers more realistic opportunities to commit law enforcers to community needs and to uphold the right of the community to dissent without fear of police. This, in turn, will strengthen the citizens’ participation in the democratic processes that are highly cherished by Canadians.

References


Municipal Participatory Budget: Women Participation and Learning in Villa El Salvador, Peru

Monica Escobar

This paper examines, with specific reference to women, the practice of citizen participation in Villa El Salvador (VES), a large municipal district of Lima. It was in 1999 that VES, as one of the first municipalities in Peru, established a ten year Integrated Plan of Development (PD) and the annual Participatory Budget (PB) encouraging the active participation of all citizens. Many efforts were undertaken to ensure the participation of people in local government decision-making particularly in development planning and budget administration tasks that traditionally have been in the hands of technicians and politicians.

The special interest of this research is to take a closer look at the opportunities and barriers presented to women in the development of their community within the context of the municipal government’s participatory strategy. Since the priorities set in development plans and budgets reflect and define the balance of power in society (Bundler et al, 1998) it is quite relevant to identify from a gender perspective the dynamics involved in these two designated areas of citizen participation (Kabeer, 1996; Moser, 1995). What is argued here is that an effective strategy needs to go beyond symbolic gestures and giving lip service to citizen participation. It must provide, especially to traditionally marginalized groups a real opportunity and essential tools to be able to participate freely, responsibly and effectively in decisions related to the common good and ensure that their interests and priorities are considered as well.

The study’s methodology. The study is guided by the following question: How and under what circumstances do women of VES participate when the community’s local government initiates a participatory strategy in 1999 to elaborate a plan of development up to 2010 together with a participatory budget? The field work was carried out between January and July 2003. It focused principally on 3 sectors, each one with an average of 35,000 residents, two of which had a successful and the third a limited experience with the PB. Participatory observation was used in neighborhood, sector and community-wide meetings on the PB, and other related events. Sixty women leaders and participating women residents were surveyed on their perceptions about new knowledge, attitudes and behaviors acquired as a result of their participation. In addition, semi-structured interviews were held with 30 women and 10 men who carried leadership roles at different levels of the community organization, local authorities and institutions of civil society.

The place and its actors. Villa El Salvador (VES) with its level of poverty and ethnic composition exemplifies the condition of the great majority of urban municipalities of Peru.1 Consequently, its experience can be a useful reference. The community emerges in 1971, when a group of homeless people invade a desert like region along the Pacific coast South of Lima. The great majority of the early settlers are Quechua speaking people originating from the Andean region. A smaller number are aboriginals from the large Amazon jungle and some migrants from

---

1 90.2% of Peru’s municipal districts are poor (Lopez, 1997)
the agricultural valleys situated along the coast. Their ethnic background and social class place them at the lower end of the Peruvian social hierarchy. Discrimination of this sector of the population is even more pronounced in the urbanized provincial region of Lima, which following the Spanish conquest served for two centuries as the imperial center for all of South America and where a western-oriented male culture has been a dominant force ever since. The peasant women of the Andes – an important part of VES ethnic composition - find themselves at the opposite extreme of privilege, placed even lower in the social hierarchy than peasant men (Ugarteche, 1999; la Cadena, 1991).

In economic terms, 73.3% of the 370,000 inhabitants of VES (compared to 53.3% of Lima’s total population) are classified as poor with a monthly family income of $230 US. At this low income it is impossible to meet a family’s basic consumption needs in the globalized market economy of Lima. Consequently, one or more needs are not being met. The situation is significantly worse for the 15.6% of the large group of poor who live in extreme conditions of poverty with less than $150 US/ month/ family or $5 day/ family. Poverty in Peru weighs most heavily on women (51.14% of the population of VES) who by tradition are expected to attend to the family’s food and health needs. A strong growth of women’s survival organizations has been taking place in VES since the early 1980s to meet particularly family nutrition needs. The most important are community kitchens and the program of glass of milk.

Villa El Salvador was founded in 1971 as a relocation site for migrant settlers designated by the military government. There was no infrastructure when families arrived. The only contribution from the government was in land and in some technical assistance to develop their first physical and economic plan. The slogan “we do it all because we have nothing” carried by early settlers reflects their self managing attitude translated into a collective effort to erect and build an urban community. The state model of development promoted by the military government together with the mutual aid and collective tradition of the settlers—most of whom were ex campesinos—leads residents of VES to participate in community building projects with their unskilled manual labor. And the community leaders, who at first depended on the technical advice of state agents, little by little learned the art of urban management. Thus since then, participation and planning form part of the culture of VES. Its long successful history of participation has been recognized worldwide.

2 Lima, which in 1940 had only 400,000 inhabitants mostly of creole background, today is a major metropolis of 8 million people divided into 42 municipal districts of which VES is one (Jurgen Golte, 2001).
3 Ugarteche, in his attempt to map the geography of poverty in Peru, shows how first the men abandon the Andean region in search for work leaving their wives and children behind in poverty. Some 20 years later the women join the rural-urban migration movement turning into becoming urban poor. See also Marisol de la Cadena, Julio 1991.
5 See also el estudio de Apoyo Opinión y Mercado S.A., 2003.
7 Given its achievements, thanks to its community organizational efforts and community work, VES received international attention becoming a candidate to the Nobel price of Peace, was host to a visit from Pope John Paul II and declared City Messenger of Peace , among others.
The women of VES, since the beginning, have played a major part in the organized efforts of the community. They have been the ones who were left principally with the task of building their homes and raising their children while their husband’s went off to Lima in search for work. Lack of public transportation and paved roads kept many of the men away from their community and homes for days. Thus, it was mostly women who attended the meetings at which they searched for solutions to their most urgent needs. It trained them also in the art of solving problems facing the barrio through collective means of participation. Regardless, their activities were considered to be part of the domain of women and did not qualify them for leadership positions in the neighborhood organization.

As VES takes on municipal status in 1983 the community leadership (Cuaves) lost its “self-managing responsibilities”. The new municipal authorities are elected from among leaders of the local population who from now on are engaged in the formal political sphere and called upon to exercise highly specialized forms of management. This new more formalized and impersonal system of governance enhanced sentiments of distrust felt among the residents toward the municipal government. A compromise was worked out between the municipality and neighborhood organization that affirms that “Communal law is municipal law”. Thus, the practice of community self-management had to give way to a new form of collaboration in which arrangement the neighborhood organization (Cuaves) henceforth shares equal power with the municipality. But it is the latter which decides on the annual budget and which ultimately also decides on the development of the district. This debilitated and eventually led to the disappearance of the neighborhood organization in some sectors of VES.

On the other hand, in the midst of a deepening economic crisis of the 1980s, women’s organizations began to emerge in great numbers (the community kitchens and glass of milk committees stand out as the most important among them). However, what should be noted here is that these organizations carried little weight in the affairs of local government since they were characterized as a feminine expression of women’s involvement in public space and regarded merely as an extension of women’s traditional role as mothers responsible for the health and welfare of their families. At this time emerges also the Women’s Federation (Fepomuves) which seeks to coordinate the different groups of women with the objective of improving their condition as women. Its agenda being both social and political goes well beyond the particular interest of each group. Being recognized as a district level organization, the municipality has given Femopuves a consultative role equal to the neighborhood organization (Cuaves). Nevertheless, Cuaves has made no efforts to create any mechanisms to integrate Fepomuves or

---

7 See Blondet 1991, “Las Mujeres y el Poder” for a history of participation of women in VES.
8 The document VES: Hablan los dirigentes” provides an interesting insight into this period. It presents the reflections of 3 founding members of VES: A. Aragón, O. Mucha, A. Rojas as well as M. Azcueta. They identified a number of leaders from different levels of community who collaborated with them. Only one woman was mentioned, Gregoria Brito.
9 Other organizations include solidarity banks (grameen banks), associations of micro businesses, of animal breeders and marketing associations of diverse products.
10 As individuals women prepare and sell meals, provide services such as cleaning houses, washing clothes, caring for and nursing people in need, sew, weave, knit, produce art and craft and manage shops or small businesses from their homes. Yet most of these women’s activities are so much linked to the domestic unit that their productive tasks remain invisible.
any of the women’s organizations into its operation. It is quite evident that women’s organized community participation is relegated to and maintains until the present a subordinated position.

**Women invisibility and presence in the Participatory Budget.** In order for the community not to lose its strong tradition in participation it is not enough to deal with question of what and how the relationship ought to be between the organized community and municipality. The question of how women can participate politically in the urban space has to be addressed as well. This question took on particular significance when a new alternative in state-community relations opened up in VES in 1999 with the introduction of new participatory mechanisms. The elaboration of a 10 year development plan (DP) provided an important conceptual framework for participatory budget (PB) facilitating the process of decision-making. With the ten year plan in place and the processing of the annual PB, the community experiences a new vitality. In July of 1999 no less than 200 workshops took place. People were encouraged to provide the necessary feedback to correct and re-focus the development initiatives implemented by the municipal council.

However, the municipal authorities were not clear about the barriers minority groups were experiencing in participation and have made no special efforts to encourage and particularly accommodate women in the formulation of the DP, nor in the PB. The local authorities consider any policy that favors a gender focus to be counterproductive to the notion of equal treatment that all citizens of the district should receive. The mayor Martin Pumar (1998-2002) in an interview with the author expressed it in the following terms:

> Should more power be given to women? I don’t believe in that. I believe that women have to earn their right. Because women are the weaker sex does not mean they should be given a special hand (…) Gender does not mean receiving special favors from the male, it means respect between equals. Women can not continue claiming to be beneficiaries; they have to earn their place as well.

In framing women as the weaker sex, the mayor and other male leaders interviewed view the principal problem to be the women themselves and not the structures and societal behaviors that discriminate against them. Equality for women must be earned by them, it is said, without taking into account the objective circumstances that have created the gap between genders. With this municipal perspective women run the risk of continuing to be the silent majority at decision levels, as has been the case ever since the early beginnings of VES. In the general call for participation it is not enough to talk of equality one should also consider the principle of equity. It means that one should also determine what are the living conditions of both men and women that may inhibit their participation and acknowledge that some have a greater voice in defining policies while others carry less voice or have no voice at all. In such cases it is in the interest of the municipality to seriously look at what factors constitute barriers to women participation and to propose ways to overcome it.

In spite of the lack of a municipal gender strategy, the call for people’s participation opened up some new possibilities for the women of VES. The women’s federation (Fepomuves) decided to address the question of the invisibility of women’s interests and needs in the community assessment and elaboration of a vision of the future. It organized a meeting trying to formulate a clear gender content. While it was not able to achieve this, the fact that the event was attended by a huge number of women and not only by those affiliated with Fepomuves- persuaded municipal
authorities of the need to correct the omission of gender in the 10 year plan. In turn, the organizers of the large women’s meeting took note of the importance of keeping the issue up front on the community’s agenda and decided to set up a round table on the gender theme which had its first meeting in May of 2001. Its major objective is to see the gender factor to become an integral part of development proposals elaborated between the local population and the Municipality.

The DP comprises a vision of the future and five general objectives of development that were submitted for citizen consultation with 50,000 voters participating. It reads as follows:

VES is a district of producers, leader, organized and generator of wealth. It is a modern and healthy city of men and women of all generations who hold human values and have equal opportunities, training (…) and a role to play and who participate democratically in the management of its development.

In this vision of the future city women are mentioned explicitly for the first time as equals with men in the building of VES. The community made a dramatic and important turn, mostly due to the organized effort undertaken by the women. This new formulation of the city vision sets aside the traditional use of language that is neutral to the issue of gender, neutrality that carried the implicit premise that in community affairs it is the man who is to be the actor of development. The next step is to undertake actions that will recognize that both genders are limited in different ways as potential participants and beneficiaries of the development process. It needs to be understood that they have different and frequently contrasting needs, interests and priorities.

Current decisions taken regarding the PB all related to community infrastructure projects reflecting men’s interests and priorities. The principal difficulty lies in the VES tradition that community affairs pertain to male leadership and gaining access to leadership which has for all intents and purposes remained closed to women. Nevertheless, an interesting development did take place in sector 3 where a woman was elected in 2002-2003 as a maximum leader and headed the PB in her sector (35 thousand residents). Interviews held with leaders of women’s organizations suggest that the PB has various limitations.

First, community infrastructure projects as the main focus of the PB leave aside problems many women seek solutions to such as security issues, family violence, work opportunities, literacy and teenage pregnancy among others. Secondly, most meetings are held after 8 pm which may be a good hour for men. However, for women a better time is during the afternoon, being at least partially relieved from their domestic tasks at that point, and because it is safer to walk the streets in full day light. Thirdly, since most of domestic responsibilities and tasks are still left generally to the woman there is little opportunity for her to inform herself on issues related to her city district. Neither is there the time to engage in all the necessary coordinating activities that are part of a leader’s role. Hence, women at large leave much of city affairs in the hands of men, and most often not of their own choosing but because of prevailing cultural norms and behaviors.

11 Unpublished document of DESCO
12 The strategic objectives in the city vision were prioritized as follows: 1) a healthy, clean and green city (63% votes). 2) VES as an educated community (41%). 3) a district of producers and generator of wealth (35%). 4) a leader and with solidarity (25%), and 5) a democratic community (21%).
13 A questionnaire applied during those interviews contained a scale from 1-5 seeking responses about any learning acquired from their participation as citizens, before and after with 5 representing the maximum learning. They identified that most of their learning came from experiences prior to the introduction of PB.
If we had a shared family arrangement with our partners I could say, OK today you take charge of the house and I am going to take a coffee with my neighbor so we can talk about the difficulties of our organization (…) If the meal is already prepared, OK I could even take time to read municipal or related documents and inform myself. But, at what time am I finished? At 11 or 12 at night. So when can I read? I don’t have the time to inform myself (Berta).

The dynamics prevalent within the Peruvian family find their expression also in assembly meetings and the governing committee of the PB. Marta who is the maximum leader of sector 3 and the only woman functioning at this level in community leadership informed this researcher how difficult it is to preside over a committee made up of men. They openly show their lack of confidence in her competence, and their jealousies for being placed under her.

When I was elected as my sector’s representative I could touch and experience at close hand a marked machismo…. First some male leaders didn’t want to acknowledge that my list had won, and I was elected with a big majority. They say that the voting had been done incorrectly. From my first assembly meeting on they interrupted me for the smallest thing to point out I am wrong…. My assistant secretary did not wish to work under my direction, proposing that we have a joint direction, unwilling to subject himself to the hierarchical nature of the leadership structure. This sort of thing I had to live with. Just the same, I have been able to move forward but I have learned also that the practice of machismo is still well and alive in its many forms.

Marta identified also various types of learnings with the focus linked to municipal government. She now knows how municipal administration functions. She learned how to coordinate her actions with those of the municipality, overcoming her former antagonistic views. She understands how important it is to educate young people to assume leadership responsibilities, provide them with the opportunities to become involved and that one has to develop proposals instead of only making claims or passively accept whatever comes down from the municipality. Her learning goes way beyond what most of the other women leaders have learned from their involvement with the survival organizations (such as the glass of milk program and community kitchens).

The question the municipal participatory process has to deal with is how all those women leaders who have been active in survival organizations can link their group interests to the PB or vice versa. Their involvement in collective arrangements—in order to deal with their family survival needs—is framed as an extension of their domestic space to which traditionally they have been relegated. Paradoxically, while retaining a marginal role in the neighborhood organization (Cuaves) their link to the neighborhood is much closer than that of the men leaders because of their daily life activities in the barrio and in the social networks they have woven. This position in the neighborhood is a good base for women to join with neighbors to think in terms of proposals regarding problems that concern them, which would more likely result in having their views included in the process of the PB. However, their lack of action ‘as citizens’ will probably continue as long as they are short of knowledge about possibilities of participating in communal space.

In short, leadership of the neighborhood and that of the survival organizations divides the reality of this community into separate parts, and the municipality in its policies has so far not really taken into account the asymmetry existing between the genders.14

---

14 Regardless of the absence of a gender policy, some interesting proposals are being presented to the community of VES by some women leaders, particularly from the neighborhood organization and Fepomuvues.
Recommendations. Some suggestions are offered to overcome this situation based on insights that emerged from research interviews, focus groups and particularly from those women who are elaborating alternative ways while working as community leaders.

1. A minimum quota of women participants to be established by the municipality to the governing council of each sector of VES.
2. Gender related training of community leaders and state authorities acting at local levels.
3. Introduction of an indicator to measure any changes in the gender gap related to selection criteria of projects and evaluate those changes on a continuing basis.
4. Consideration in the PB of other needs beyond the building of infrastructures, and which incorporates into the diagnosis of district problems a gender focus.
5. Setting up a women’s office within the municipality with a permanent budget.

Bibliography


Campfens, Hubert (1987). The marginal urban sector: survival and development initiatives in Lima, Peru. Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto


Author Contact: escobarmo2003@yahoo.ca
Introduction

"The purpose of knowledge is effective action in the world. Research and action, even though analytically distinguishable, are inextricably intertwined in practice”

(Reason & Torbert 2001: 6)

Transformative Co-operative inquiry is a participatory strategy for human inquiry which involves two or more people researching an area of inquiry through their own experience of it. The focus of such an inquiry is on the transformation of practical skills as the outcome of the process (Goetzman n.d.). In this paper I describe, reflect on and draw practical lessons from my experience as a participant and initiator of a cooperative inquiry group or as the group preferred to term it a ‘cooperative research’ conducted with community development workers in Pakistan. The process was both challenging and at times emotionally taxing given the context in which the group functioned, yet despite obstacles the process was able to facilitate the creation of an enabling environment of trust and sharing for participants of the group to develop their own capacity as community development workers and to create a potential space for critical thinking and empowerment in the long run. This in itself reflects the potential cooperative inquiry has as a tool for transformation in the given context.

Setting the Context

Scarce resources, increasing national debt, and the inadequacy of social development programs have forced Pakistan into a state of increasing poverty and donor dependency. This has resulted in increasing citizen vulnerability and leaving the field open for multinationals and transnational to spread their tentacles into our local markets under the guise of ‘globalization’ (read neo-colonialism) based on the premise that ‘free’ trade, economic liberalism and structural adjustment policies are ‘good for the country’s health’.

Exacerbating this situation is the general paucity of indigenous research and critique on the global 'development' discourse, due partly to the dearth of indigenous scholarship within the country, and related closely to the condition of higher education. According to Pervaiz the

---

1 The group felt the term ‘Inquiry’ has negative connotations and associated it with the term ‘police inquiry’ which is generally extremely brutal in Pakistan.

2 For the purpose of this paper transformative learning is defined as a deep, structural shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans; interlocking structures of class, race, gender; our body awareness our vision of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy (OISE Transformative Learning website)”
conventional western educational model import is present in its most convoluted form within many academic institutions particularly those providing social science education in Pakistan today. The state which has singular control of national educational institutions has collaborated in developing distorted educational goals and practices that reflect the values of successive corrupt, authoritarian, and bureaucratic leadership (Pervaiz, 2003). As a result these institutions promote controlled environments which stifle the concept of merit, critical thinking, freedom of inquiry, creativity and dissent and foster isolation of local scholars and organizations who are engaged in evolving critiques on the system; thus producing a mass of individuals deprived of the ability to think critically and the opportunity to question the powers that be.

Community Development in Pakistan is not a primary choice in terms of an occupation for most community development workers (Dossa, 2002). Those who do end-up choosing it as an occupation primarily come from a social sciences background and are the product of the present state sponsored educational system (ibid.). Many are in search of an alternative and feel disempowered in terms of their ability to facilitate change, with the end result being that unless they have the opportunity and freedom to critically reflect on, and become conscious of the systems functioning and are moved towards action, there is a continual danger of their sustaining and perpetuating the same dysfunctional trends they are a product of within the communities they work with.

As a teacher, a researcher, and community development practitioner working in an academic environment in the so called ‘developing world’ I constantly find myself frustrated and at times overwhelmed by the evolving interconnected dysfunctional systems that I encounter each day. Reflecting on Freire works, I subscribe to his belief that ‘authentic development’ is the process of learning, characterized by the twin elements of action and reflection, where the oppressed confront and overcome the culture of domination and create meaningful alternatives for their own future (Freire 1970, trans. 1997). Liberation of the individual and the community comes through self-sustaining efforts, growth in individual awareness, and community consciousness which evolve out of a process of learning. (ibid.) I further agree with Freire that personal and social transformation are inextricably linked “the more critically aware learners become the more they are able to transform society and subsequently their own reality” (Taylor 1998). Hence ‘transformation’ is a “social process whereby (through) the very act of transformation, society is transformed” (ibid. 18).

However, the central question that I am constantly stymied by is how does one bring Freire’s emancipatory model of transformative learning from theory to practice? How does one in the context of Pakistan develop “self-reflexive, critical awareness in action” (Reason 1998 a.: 262)? This dilemma was the initial starting point for my initiative to explore cooperative inquiry to initiate critical thinking, skill development and foster an environment for community development workers to build their self-confidence and feel empowered.

**Cooperative Inquiry**

Cooperative inquiry brings together both research and action using a series of cycles (Heron 1997) in which participants move between experience and reflecting together on an area of their choosing and moves away from doing research ‘on people’ to doing research ‘with’ people (Heron & Reason 2001).

In this form of research the traditional exclusive roles of the researcher and the research subject are blurred in terms of both initiative and control. Hence both
design, manage, and draw conclusions from the inquiry, and they undergo the experience and the action that is being explored (Heron a.: n.d.).

The Vision of Human Inquiry

According to Taylor one of the most significant aspects of transformative learning is a person’s worldview (Taylor 1998). In opposition to the acquisitional vision of knowledge and research conventionally adopted, cooperative inquiry is based on a participatory worldview. Reason and Torbert state that participation is also an ecological imperative as human beings are part of the planet’s ‘life processes’ (Reason and Torbert 2001). A ‘participatory worldview’ proposes that the purpose of inquiry is to find “ways to live our values and purposes in practice” (Reason 1998a). Or as Reason and Bradbury put it to “liberate the human body, mind and spirit in the search for a better, freer world” (Reason and Bradbury 2001) and to develop “practical skills to change the world” (ibid.).

Reason believes that the purpose of inquiry is not only relief from oppression but to move towards something ‘greater’ a greater vision which will create a more direct link between intellectual knowledge and personal action. He characterizes this process as ‘flourishing’ (Reason 1998a) For Reason, the purpose of human inquiry is the enhancement of human flourishing - the flourishing of persons as self-directing and sense making agents located in communities of learning (Reason 1998b). Reason views flourishing as practical knowing: knowing how to choose and act-hierarchically, co-operatively, autonomously 3—to enhance personal and social fulfillment and that of the eco-networks of which we are part” (Reason 1998b: 431).

Stages of an Inquiry

Co-operative inquiry can be seen as cycling through four phases of reflection and action. The process begins with the formation of a group by an initiator. The first stage is that of group Reflection, in which the group agrees on the focus of their inquiry (i.e. the topic and type of inquiry), they devise a plan and agree on a set of procedures for gathering and recording data from this experience. This is followed by an action phase (Stage II). Stage III involves full immersion in the action phase with great openness to experience. This is followed by Stage IV (The second reflection phase), where after an agreed upon period in Stage II and III, the co-researchers re-assemble to share the experiential data from these phases and to consider their original ideas in the light of it. As a result they may develop or reframe these ideas; or reject them and pose a new question or questions, they may choose a new cycle of action, they may

3 According to Reason institutions need to enhance human association by an appropriate balance of the principles of hierarchy, collaboration and autonomy: deciding for others, with others and for oneself. Authentic hierarchy being the appropriate direction by those with greater vision, skill and experience- and is always concerned with transforming relationships so that those in relatively subordinate positions move towards greater skills in collaborative and antonymous action (Torbert 1991). Collaboration roots the individual within a community of peers, offering basic support and creative and corrective feedback of other views and possibilities (Randal & Southgate, 1980). Autonomy expresses the self-creating and self transfiguring potential of persons (Heron, 1992)” (Reason 1998: 420).
choose to focus on the same or on different aspects of the overall inquiry—they may also change the process or the action in the light of this experience (Heron 1996).

It should however be noted that the actual process is not as straightforward as the model suggests. There are usually mini-cycles within major cycles; some cycles will emphasize one phase more than others; and some practitioners have advocated a more emergent process of inquiry which is less structured into phases (Reason 1998: 265).

Time Line
Co-operative inquiry often engages in some six to ten cycles of action and reflection. These can take place over a short workshop or may extend to over a year or more, depending on the type of questions being explored (Reason & Heron: n.d.).

Initiating a Co-operative Inquiry

Despite the multiple contexts in which co-operative inquiry has taken place all information published to date has been from the so called 'North'. However Reason suggests that it

… is also a process through which a group of disempowered people may join together to explore their world, although initially such a group may be more dependent on an initiating facilitator (Reason 1998a.: 285).

Reason goes on to propose an integrated model for participatory inquiry (in his case he includes a combination of Co-operative Inquiry, Participatory Action Research and Action Science/Action Inquiry.) He suggests that a PAR group would be strengthened if the animators meet together as a co-operative inquiry group to reflect on their practice and use Action Inquiry (transforming individual theories in use by explicit reflection on action) in an integrated manner. Hence broadening the scope of co-operative inquiry to address a larger more global context (Reason 1998a: 273).

Keeping Reason’s model in mind my resolve to attempt forming a cooperative inquiry group strengthened. I believe that if social change within the vision of a participatory worldview is to occur and learning communities are to develop, the prevalent culture of dependency and silence needs to be challenged and dismantled. In order to do so an alternative vision based on a participatory worldview is essential and I propose that co-operative inquiry can provide for a strategy to take this task forward in the local context given certain prerequisites and facilitate a process of transformative learning,

The ‘Cooperative Research Group’ was initiated with the initial participation of eight community development workers and functioned for a period of five months. Amongst the group members with whom I initiated the inquiry most were primarily associated with a rural community development project funded by a multinational oil and gas company in collaboration with the institution the community development workers were employed by. Although individuals within the group were committed to the vision of community development through community empowerment, the primary motivation for the multinational funding the project
protecting the corporation's commercial interests by appeasing the local community to ensure that its operations were carried out uninterrupted, and that local protests, strikes, and disturbances against the company averted. This included appeasing influential landlords and spiritual leaders by making them the principal beneficiaries of the project (under the table payoffs not withstanding). Hence the project was viewed by the multinational as a security investment rather than a community development one. For the multinational any efforts towards community mobilization were perceived as potential threat in relation to its security concerns. As a result, community development workers by association were seen by the local communities as representatives of the multinational making their task even more difficult leading them (community development workers) to express frustration and despair (Zaidi & Dossa 2002).

In its initial stage the primary focus of the group was on exploring the use of theatre as a strategy for community development. The first group action initiated was participation in a theatre workshop facilitated by an external practitioner. This was followed by a group reflection session. The reflection session highlighted the fact that the workshop was helpful, however the participants felt they needed a stronger conceptual background in order for them to be able to apply the skills acquired in the workshop. A decision was made by the group through consensus, to search for material preferably in Urdu, which could fill this gap. Material was identified and circulated. However two months into the process, four members of the group chose to leave citing insufficient external support for their participation as their reason for withdrawing. This setback required that remained of the group to sit back and take stock of the direction in which the group would like to advance. Through consensus a decision was made to focus the efforts of the group toward practical skill development of all co-researchers in conjunction with fulfilling the objectives of the community development project they were currently employed under.

A need identification exercise was conducted with various committees in terms of their capacity development needs. It was decided through group dialogue that the process could be achieved through a series of participatory workshops that would utilize some of the theatre skills the group had developed. This involved the development of workshop modules on priority areas such as basic management, planning, and designing local community development projects. Most group members had never designed workshops before, hence this proved to be a skill development exercise. During the process of designing the workshops, the group was informed that the institution had decided to make a transition out of the project due to evident differences of opinion between the institution and the multinational. A new NGO was to take over the role of the institution. This provided the group with a limited time period to implement its capacity building strategy. During this period, the group met frequently to plan and reflect on its actions, learning from each others' experiences in the field, and modifying the workshop modules to suit the needs of the committees. The process concluded as the new NGO was identified by the multinational. A concluding reflection session was held as the new NGO took over the project, symbolizing the end of the process.

**From Theory to Practice: Lessons Learned**

Despite the inquiry process being effective as a strategy for reflective practice, skill development and building self confidence, as a first times initiator and having no documented precedent of the application of this inquiry strategy with Development Workers in the 'Developing World' (within the context described in the previous section) proved to be one of the most challenging experiences that I have encountered making it a test of endurance, inner
strength and will power. The process has highlighted the following elements which served to influence the co-operative inquiry process within its context, and which Reason may not have taken into consideration when suggesting it be applied to the context of community development workers. These include the user friendliness of material, relevance of the theoretical context of the research methodology to research participants, culturally embedded concepts of power and status, adjusting to a new learning environment, the internalization of the research process by research participants, the extended role of the initiator in guiding and sustaining the process, and the question of limiting participation of those involved in the action phase of the process.

User-Friendly Material?

Reason and Heron state that cooperative inquiry can be applied by 'ordinary people' (Reason & Heron 1995: 130) to explore an area of their interest. However on reviewing the literature published by both Reason & Heron on the topic with a view to initiating an inquiry process I found it to be targeted more towards 'northern academic audience'. As a result when I shared the information the group found it difficult and tedious to grasp in its printed form. However in defense of those who write about their experiences in co-operative inquiry I must state that these were easier to read, as were the short internet accessible bulleted definitions (Heron, n.d. d.).

However the inaccessibility of the material then becomes a barrier that may exclude people who do not come form this background from applying cooperative inquiry for transformation. In addition the user-friendliness of material raises implications for the methodology itself. How much information needs to be translated? Does this depend on the context of the group? If a group is not familiar with western concepts of knowledge creation do they need to be orientated in this? Will the group be able to effectively reflect without this information? Does the lack of user friendly material reflect the reason for the limited awareness and use of the methodology in the 'South' in which case does this question the democratic premise of de-institutionalizing knowledge and providing opportunities for marginalized peoples conducting their own research? Perhaps the next phase in the evolution of co-operative inquiry is the wider dissemination of information about the methodology explained in a more accessible form!

Relevance of the Theoretical Context

Prior to initiating the process of inquiry I was also conscious of the fact that most participants were unfamiliar with western theoretical concepts and paradigms. In fact during the introductory session one of my co-researchers stated "we are practical people – we are not interested in theory. If this method will help to improve our skills then I am interested". For them the association was "learning from experience to improve practical skills". Their ideas do relate to Reason's and Heron's, but came through the process itself, and not through an understanding of the 'participatory worldview', or additional theory.

In addition I have come to the conclusion that in certain contexts, the process of co-operative inquiry may be more important than all the theoretical concepts attached to it, especially in the case of community workers; and that while contextualizing co-operative inquiry, it may be necessary in the true spirit of participation, to let go of some of its theoretical constructs if participants do not see the information to be relevant.
Context of the Research Process: the Interconnectedness of Systems

To provide for a conducive learning environment and for transformation to be facilitated “enough time and freedom from threat must be provided to allow difference in patterns to emerge” (Mackeracher, 1996: 5). Based on my experience in using co-operative inquiry, I believe that the context in which it is used influences the process, and the participant's involvement in the process. Being aware of and sensitive to the complexity of the contexts of the participants (which include the organizational and project environment, culturally prescribed behavior, beliefs, customs, ascribed power and status) is another important finding of this research.

As is evident from the previous section, the context in a way was central to shaping the focus, and process itself. Although Reason and Heron believe that the group is responsible for the choice of the research topic, in practice it is more a balancing act between the group’s interests, needs, and the research context. The external context also influenced the mood of the group, which again influenced the process itself. For example frustration and demoralization of the group due to the actions of the multinational in the field, the transition out of the project and the fear of not being employed, also seeped into the group despite it being an external factor to the research. The methods suggested by Reason and Heron for focusing on the research are much more difficult to apply in such situations.

In terms of the cultural context, relations between co-researchers are also related to culturally acceptable behavior, gender relations, social status and positions of power. These not only influence the level of communication within the group, but the level of trust. In terms of the literature I have read on co-operative inquiry, most co-researchers do not indicate the effect of such cultural impositions.

Internalization of the Research Process & The Issue of 'Legitimacy'

According to Mackeracher “learners from a culture which is not Euro-American may have no experience with the idea that they have no choice in what or how things are learned” (Mackeracher, 1996: 55). In addition participants may not have internalized the process due to the rote learning model engrained by the school system. The question then remains is it feasible to conduct a cooperative inquiry with participants who still need to transition? Is a preliminary focused workshop on alternative methods of learning useful prior to initiating the inquiry or should the process be inbuilt as part of the group capacity building and phase this in as a gradual process providing participants space to develop skills and change learning patterns.

In reference to the Co-operative Research Group, I believe that the majority of my co-researchers are still in doubt regarding whether the process they were involved in was 'legitimate' research. They acknowledged that the process was transformative, in the sense that it did lead to an improvement in their skills in terms of facilitation, and workshop module development, as well as sensitized them to participatory methodologies and their use. Yet the research element of the process still remains ambiguous to them.

I believe that this is due primarily to the fact that this was their first experience with any form of participatory research, and that there was no evidence of similar methodologies being used in their surroundings. Had an authority figure initiated the process, I believe that this would have countered their doubts significantly. Conducting research on oneself seemed to add to the confusion "can I do research on myself?" Is that research? What about research subjects?"
However, translation of the material from published English documents supporting co-operative inquiry, and the knowledge that it is an academic western practice seemed to lend a degree of legitimacy to the process for my co-researchers.

Had there been support and acknowledgement from the academics of the institution, as opposed to disinterest on their part, perhaps this may have added to the 'legitimacy' of the research, however this was not the case. Hence the issue runs deeper than the research group itself – a change in the mindset of people in positions of power needs to occur in terms of moving away from the positivist paradigm towards alternative forms of research, not just limited to qualitative research, but also a fundamental shift in seeing human beings as research objects. It requires a change in the thought processes and openness to alternative forms of knowledge construction. The process of internalization in terms of the ‘validity’ of participatory research is essential at all levels so that there is support for the use of such processes. Bringing a change in the context in terms of a shift in mindset and thought processes appears to be a long-term process.

Role of the Initiator

Although Reason perceives that an initiator may have to play a stronger role in the initial stages of a co-operative inquiry with community development workers, in actual fact, based on the experience of this research, the role of the initiator is central to the facilitation of the entire process.

It is perhaps only over extended periods of time (which I believe in my research context could be two years), when the process of co-operative inquiry has been accepted by the institution, and internalized by the group, that the initiator’s role begins to minimize. For an inquiry in this context to lead to transformation, it requires of the initiator to first internalize the process of participatory research, and accept that the process as valid. Understanding the process requires being familiar with western theoretical concepts, being able to understand and simplify the literature on co-operative inquiry, and being able to envision moving away from the positivist mindset. Internal conviction or belief in the research process is not only important to perform the role of initiator, but for confidence in the methodology to be translated into action. If the initiator does not have relative confidence in the process, it is doubtful that the rest of the inquiry group members will genuinely trust the process either—which makes for shaky ground to initiate an inquiry.

In addition to confidence in, and knowledge of, the process, I believe that it is also important for the initiator to be in a relative position of power to counter the external forces that may sabotage the research process. My experience as an initiator, and the comments of my co-researchers, made it abundantly clear that my background and status were central to the continuation of the process. To quote one of my co-researchers, "were you not part of the group we would never have come this far. We would not have been able to sustain this process on our own, because we do not have the power to do so." This comment also indicates that input in terms of group empowerment by the initiator is also important to the process.

In addition, in relation to my experience with group dynamics, a facilitator must be able to learn to facilitate different behavioral variations. However the question then arises as to whether it is possible to develop such an orientation for a lay facilitator or must the facilitator for such a group be trained prior to initiation or is it necessary for the initiator to be the facilitator?
Can someone from within the group facilitate if it the inquiry is internally initiated? Will a conservative orientation to learning on the part of the initiator hamper the process? On the other hand good facilitation skills are an essential part of a community development workers toolkit – if participants do not have such skill this provides stronger indications of there being deeper problems in the educational/training and recruitment system in itself.

**Setting Limitations to Participation in the Action Phase?**

According to Heron, when the action phase of an Inquiry includes people other than the co-researchers, the people involved should be informed of the methodology and should also have an input in the research process (Heron 1996). However, my co-researchers believed that it would not be possible to explain the process to the community members they conducted the workshops with in their action phase; nor did they believe the community members would be interested in the process. Although we did elicit feedback after each session from the participants of the workshop regarding our actions, therefore including their participation at a basic level, it would have been financially and logistically impossible to bring all the stakeholders together to reflect on the process of co-operative inquiry. The question remains if it is logistically and financially impossible for those involved in the action phase (aside from the co-researchers themselves) to be consulted and involved in the inquiry process, were the measures taken by the group of incorporating community feedback to improve the workshops sufficient?

**Conclusion**

According to Taylor, the criteria for choosing a strategy to foster transformative learning involves being able to create an environment where “significant learning involves the transformation of meaning structures through an ongoing process of critical reflection, discourse and acting on one’s beliefs” (Taylor 1998: 12). In the case of the “Cooperative Research Group” this criteria according to the participants was fulfilled to a large extent. To quote some of the participants during the reflection sessions

"Wow what we designed really worked" "I have realized that we have made a difference” “I never saw it this way!"

In addition according to Mackeracher getting adults involved in clarifying and identifying their own learning needs is considered one of the most important aspects of learning (Mackeracher 1996). Participants of the group reflected;

“*We were able to choose what we needed to learn and we followed through on it by our own efforts as a group – I wish someone had done this with us before.*”

“*I am always interested in learning new things and taking any opportunity that I can get to learn. I have learnt a lot in the last few months, and we were able to choose what we wanted to learn and work on this together.*”

These statements demonstrate that Cooperative Inquiry provides, or can provide a supportive environment to facilitate learner identified needs. In addition solutions come from the
group and are not prescribed by a so called 'expert' which is in congruence with good practice for group learning (Mackeracher 1996).

However as stated earlier the circumstances in which the process took place gave a rather bitter sweet feeling towards the end of the inquiry. To quote from participant’s concluding reflections;

*I loved facilitating the workshops, as it has given me a sense of confidence that I can do this, and that I am good at it. However once we began to transition out of the project my (mood meter) line begins to fall. I am very attached to the communities I have spent such a long time building a rapport with them. At the same time I too am worried about finding a job as I have a family to support.*

On reflecting over the research process, for someone outside the group, the five month inquiry process may appear to be fraught with difficulties, yet what I see is potential. I believe that were the process to have continued over a period of time, despite numerous contextual limitations, the implications could have been quite phenomenal, resulting perhaps in an alternative model to 'development' project conceptualization, implementation, and outcomes and leading to a process of empowerment.

I believe that if 'development' projects and programs in Pakistan were to adopt this strategy for their team's self-directed capacity building, the impact of this process could be felt at multiple levels.

At the individual level, critical thinking and reflection may lead to an ongoing process of conscientization. Critical personal reflection is an extremely difficult task because it makes one vulnerable. However, if conducted in a supportive environment, it allows one to acknowledge and learn from one's own actions, which is an essential quality if a person is involved in the process of social change.

At the group level, learning from each other's experiences may lead to a synergistic environment, and an improvement in technical skills. It can also result in stronger communication and understanding between co-researchers. As the group directs this process, it is based on addressing their needs and not those of external actors. The process can also be used to supplement formal training that group members may have received.

At the Project/Program Level, and at the organizational level, the creation of supportive learning environment can lead to the creation of positive energy and an improved quality of services provided by the organization to various stakeholders particularly communities targeted by projects and programs. It can also lead to an internal questioning of methods and strategies used within the organization.

Sustained and widespread use of this process through indigenous knowledge generation may even impact National and Global discourse on 'development' through a widespread questioning of 'development' practices by multiple groups who live and work in the field as opposed to armchair theorists.

On a broader level the process could lead to a general acknowledgement of human worth, better quality of 'development' and 'development research', and the development of an indigenous human resource base. It could also lead to challenging barriers constructed by the notions of 'who can and cannot conduct research', perceptions on research and what constitutes research in Pakistan, and most importantly as it uses local internal resources, it is cost effective.
In conclusion, with the increasing crisis facing most 'developing' countries like Pakistan there is a need to create an indigenous dialogue on the development discourse, and to move towards a more participatory form of implementation of ongoing 'development' projects and programs. In addition Pakistanis need to develop their own scholarship and document knowledge generated. In the age of globalization, the heightened awareness of insecurity and vulnerability require people to acknowledge their own knowledge and self worth. At the ground level community development workers perform the primary role of change agents. Therefore it is essential that they are not only provided with the tools they need to bring about this change, but also that they believe in their utility. With a shortage of resources, and a need to create a space for dialogue, Co-operative inquiry, may provide a participatory forum for transformation where activists and community development workers can learn from each others experiences, and experiment with processes that may add to both practical skills, and to the ongoing discourse on 'development'. The process is to a degree self-directed hence it has the potential to hold more meaning for the participants of the process as each has a personal stake in it. In addition, the process challenges the norms of research as conducted by academia, and therefore has the potential for initiating a revolutionary movement in the field of research in the country.

Reference


Heron, John & Reason, Peter. “Participative Knowing and an Extended Epistemology.” Adapted from ‘A Participative Inquiry Paradigm.’ Qualitative Inquiry, Vol. 3

OISETransformative Learning Centre Website. [http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/~tlcentre/](http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/~tlcentre/)


Emerging Strategies for Addressing International Child Labour: Combining an Educational and Empowerment Approach

Lowell Ewert and Richard Carothers

Conrad Grebel University College affiliated with the University of Waterloo and Partners in Technology Exchange

Part 1: The Context

Definitions:

Before it is possible to accurately describe the nature of the problem of child labour and responses to it, it is first necessary to define several key terms that have a specific meaning and which cannot be used interchangeably without causing a great deal of confusion. These key terms are:

Child Labour: The meaning of the term “child labour” differs from what one might normally expect if one simply relies on colloquial usage. Contrary to what a literal reading would assume, it does not refer to all work that children do. International law as well as the domestic laws of nations assumes that some forms of work are not only not harmful to children, but rather to the contrary are even very beneficial. As the most comprehensive ILO publication dealing with the issue of child labour has stated:

Children’s participation in certain types of light work, such as helping parents care for the home and family for short periods in the day, or teenagers working for a few hours before or after school or during holidays to earn pocket money, is considered to be part of growing up for boys and girls and a means of acquiring basic survival and practical skills. This increases their self-worth and confidence and enables them to contribute to the well-being both of themselves and their families. But this is not child labour.1

Instead, the definition of child labour is far more restrictive and points to the underlying objective for banning it. The ILO has defined it to be “work carried out to the detriment and endangerment of the child, in violation of international law and national legislation.”2 According to this definition, children who are underage, but who work in an otherwise safe environment in a context that does not interfere with their schooling, are still engaged in prohibited child labour. This definition assumes that childhood has a function and purpose and that child labour is something that prevents children from accomplishing these childhood objectives because a law is

---

1 Haspels, Nelien and Jankanish, Michele, editors, Action Against Child Labour, published by the International Labour Office, Geneva, pg. 4, (2000), hereinafter referred to as “Action Against Child Labour.” This publication has been referred to as the “Holy Book” of child labour by some ILO officials due to its comprehensive coverage of the subject and guidance regarding how the international community ought to respond to it.

2 Action Against Child Labour, note 1, pg. 4.
violated. It assumes that children deserve the opportunity to prepare for their eventual life in community as adults. And lastly, it assumes that some law has been adopted, either domestically or internationally, to protect such children from these employment practices.

**Economic activity.** The term “economic activity,” when applied to children, acknowledges that they are often engaged in various employment for which payment is given. This kind of employment could be either legal or illegal, both exploitative and non-exploitative, as long as some form of payment is given.

**Working children or child work.** The terms “working children” or “child work” are often used in distinction to the term “child labour” to describe children who work in circumstances that are not harmful, exploitative, or excessive and which do not prevent them from pursuing routine educational opportunities. It assumes that children can do the kinds of things that children should be doing during childhood and work to some extent at the same time. It further assumes that the kind of work that these children are involved in is not “seriously” illegal under either domestic or international law.

The distinction made by these definitions between “child labour” and “working children,” while helpful to distinguish between “good” and “bad” labour, is not universally accepted. The International Save the Children Alliance for example, has criticized this dichotomy as being too simplistic and have opted to call all work by children “child work” and then to distinguish categories of work according to the harm that is caused the child worker.3 This view would affirm that there is a category of work where basic child rights are not violated and where work in fact allows a child to have their rights more fulfilled than if they did work, a second category where child rights are currently being violated but which could be enjoyed if changes to working conditions were made, and a third category of work in which the violations of rights are so severe that the only remedy is to immediately remove the child from the situation.

**Worst forms of Child Labour.** In contrast to other definitional challenges, there is almost universal agreement on what constitutes the “worst forms of child labour” as these were specifically enumerated by the ILO in Convention 182 in 1999. This convention, discussed in more detail in Part 2 of this paper, calls on all member states to take “immediate and effective measures to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour.” The prohibited “Worst Forms” are then defined to include slavery or slavery-like practices, sexual exploitation, use of children in drug production or trafficking and a the general category of work which is harmful to health, safety or morals of children.4

There can be no justification for children working in these prohibited classes of activity and member governments have a duty to ensure that these employment categories are closed to

---

3 “Save the Children’s Position on Children and Work,” January 2003, available on the Save the Children Alliance website. This document will be hereinafter referred to as “Save the Children Alliance.”
children. Additionally, if children are found to be working in these kinds of jobs, they are to be removed. There is therefore an underlying assumption that these kinds of work are always harmful to children and that these business sectors can never be “redeemed” enough through development of better working hours, wages or conditions to justify employment of children. As such, the “worst forms” approach is more narrowly defined than is the concept of child labour generally, as the applicability of the “worst forms” approach is not predicated on age.

Why child labour is a problem.

There are many reasons why the world community ought to be concerned about the problem of child labour. First, there are moral considerations. It is inconceivable that the people of conscience should rest easily when the most vulnerable in society, typically children, are exploited. Our humanity requires that our care and concern reach out to them to enable them to have the same opportunities and privileges as others. Fundamental human rights are for all persons - not just for a few.

Second, children who work excessively, who usually come from very poor families, and who are therefore unable to go to school, are typically far less able to escape poverty than their counterparts who have educational opportunities. As such, the seemingly endless cycle of poverty and despair is renewed for another generation.

Third, there are a whole series of additional impacts of child labour that the ILO has compiled that illustrate the practical results of harmful work. These are:

- Working children suffer significant growth deficits compared to children in school: they grow up shorter and lighter, and their body size continues to be smaller even in adulthood.
- Both anecdotal evidence and statistical surveys indicate that far too many working children are exposed to hazardous conditions which expose them to chemical and biological hazards...
- Large numbers of working children work under conditions which expose them to substances with long latency periods - for example, asbestos - which increases the risk of contracting chronic occupational diseases such as asbestosis or lung cancer in young adulthood....
- In rural areas, more children are believed to die of exposure to pesticides than from the most common childhood diseases put together, according to a study on occupational health in developing countries.
- Children in certain occupations are especially vulnerable to particular types of abuse. For example, many studies confirm that child domestic workers are victims of verbal and sexual abuse, beatings or punishment.\(^5\)

The extent of the problem of child labour internationally

\(^5\) Child Labour: Targeting the Intolerable, published by the International Labour Office, Geneva pg. 3 - 4, (1996). Footnotes documenting the various sources used by the ILO to make these claims have been omitted.
It is very difficult to estimate the scale and scope of the number of children who work as most employers who hire children do so out of the realm of public scrutiny. Although many nations have labour laws prohibiting children from working in various jobs, employers do not disclose the number of children they employ because to do so would expose them to civil or criminal penalties. These employers also typically do not offer usual benefits requiring the public compilation of statistics to these underage employees and hence there is virtually no alternative “back door” way to find accurate data describing its scale and scope.

Due to the lack of credible sources of data, governments are unable to accurately estimate the number of children who work even if it had the political will to do so. Compounding the challenge of accurate externally verifiable statistics, is that governments who are aware of substantial incidences of child labour within their own country may be unwilling to acknowledge it because to do so would trigger sanctions or other kinds of world wide condemnation. Hence, even governments that may possess the moral desire to address the problem of child labour may fear the political consequences of beginning to do so. Herein lies one of the most intractable dilemmas. The problem of child labour cannot be dealt with unless nations are willing to openly discuss it - but if they openly acknowledge it, they open themselves up to penalties because of their honesty. Consequently, there is an incentive for nations to continue to deny the problem.

Despite the challenges of developing a clear picture of the extent of child labour, the ILO has estimated that there are approximately “352 million children aged 5 - 17 are currently engaged in economic activity” and “some 106 million are engaged in types of work acceptable for children who have reached the minimum age for employment ... or in light work” and “the remaining 246 million children are involved in child labour which the ILO says should be abolished.”6 This work that the ILO says should be abolished includes that specified in ILO 182 “Worst Forms of Child Labour” plus work that violates minimum wage standards in the host country. Other reports have estimated that at least 120 million of children between the ages of 5 and 14 are working full time7 which leaves little time for anything other than work.

Causes of child labour:

There is a common public assumption that the root cause of child labour is raw greed - that employers primarily seek a compliant work force that will work for less wages, make few demands for health, safety or better working conditions, and not be of such independent mind so as to challenge authority. Parents on the other hand, according to this perspective, are seen to be willing to sacrifice their children to these kinds of predatory employers in order to be able to live better economically. Children thus become expendable workers on whose backs a more lavish lifestyle for the rest of the family is carried. While there are indeed examples of greed motivated child labour on both the supply and demand side of the equation, the facts generally

---

do not support this disturbing view of the root causes of child labour - especially as it pertains to the supply of working children.

Instead, parents worldwide generally want what is in the best interests of their children. The literature on child labour seems to indicate that parents will seek out what is in the best interests of their children - if they can reasonably do so. Parents who are able, typically want to see their children succeed in school and be able to pursue vocational choices that are safe and good for them. Parents allow or send their children off to work when educational opportunities are substandard or non-existent, when the families are trapped in poverty, and at times because child labour may fit within some notions of traditional practice.8

For example, when schools fail to provide young students with the kind of educational opportunities that give them hope for a better future, there is little incentive for children to want to continue attending. Schools of this nature become a waste of time for children. When schools are not safe, children fear attendance and prefer to stay home where they will not be subject to violence. When schools are not available, what alternatives do children have but to seek other means, such as employment, to benefit themselves?

Additionally, parents who are poor may feel that they have little choice but to allow or even encourage their children to engage in unsafe or harmful employment because of economic necessity. “Indeed, poverty emerges as the most compelling reason why children work.”9 While allowing children to be put at risk may seem to the outsider be a short-term gain for a long term loss, the practical reality is that many of the poor do not think they have an option. Given alternatives, parents will usually make choices that are likely to benefit their children in the long-term. What this means is that parents of working children are likely to be committed allies to the cause of eliminating unsafe child labour, or labour that interferes with schooling, if the underlying causes of poverty and poor educational opportunities are addressed.

In summary, one can deduce that a legislative solution to child labour (outlawing certain practices and then imposing penalties for violations) is unlikely to be effective in solving the problem of child labour because a prohibitory approach does not address the key reasons for it. Rather, the number of children who are employed in the workforce cannot be realistically reduced until issues of poverty, of poor educational opportunities for children and meaningful economic employment opportunities for adult caretakers of children are found. The complexity of the solution to the problem of child labour cannot therefore be underestimated. As such, only solutions that address these multiple causes that exacerbate the incidence of children who work will be effective. The PPIC-Work project described later in this paper attempts to address the multiple causes of child labour while simultaneously educating and empowering children to claim their rights that international law envisages. While a comprehensive approach of this kind can at times seem to be overwhelming, it is the only kind of response that has any hope of creating solutions that will be effective in the long-term.

---

8 Basic Information, part of the series of monographs entitled “SCREAM” (Supporting Children’s Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media), pg. 17, hereinafter referred to as “Basic Information,” published by the International Labour Organization, 2002.

9 Basic Information, note 8, pg. 17.
The nature of the child labour problem in Egypt.

Although there are no accurate sources of data describing the extent of the current problem of child labour in Egypt, awareness of child labour is one that has clearly “come out of the closet” in recent years and is on the agenda of very diverse actors such as civil society organizations, human rights groups, businesses and business associations, Egyptian government agencies and international organizations. More openness exists today to discuss this issue than at any time in recent memory. In contrast to the experience of the authors as recent as 5 years ago when the fact that there was child labour was denied by official sources, today officials are quite willing to discuss it and potential solutions that will minimize it. Civil society organizations that raise the issue are not seen necessarily as political trouble makers but as rather as potential sources for a solution.

Government and quasi-government agencies who as recently as a year ago indicated hesitation to make national data pertaining to child labour publicly available, have committed recently to undertake research to develop credible data and make it available to those who are attempting to positively respond to the problem. In addition, government officials have indicated privately the need for the government to work in partnership with civil society, rather than as adversaries, to effectively respond to the problem of child labour. Complicating this openness is a very real fear that it may trigger formal trade sanctions or informal boycotts of Egyptian goods by child rights and social justice advocates. There is a hope that if the nation makes an honest attempt to address child labour, in partnership with civil society, that it will be given the time and necessary resources to implement solutions that address poverty and substandard educational opportunities. This is an untested hope which if it backfires, could worsen the condition of working children thereby driving the problem underground once again.

What available studies have shown is that Egypt fits the international profile for underlying causes of child labour. A review of various studies carried out in Egypt from 1969 to 1989 has shown that child labour results primarily from two causal factors. These are:

- failure of the primary educational system resulting in children dropping out of school and looking for another way of learning a productive skill or trade for the future;
- low economic status of the child’s family where the additional income derived through the child’s work contributes significantly to the families survival.10

Part 2: The Law Pertaining to Child Labour

Numerous different domestic and international legal standards have been promulgated to protect children in work and from work. Although this patchwork of legal protections is at best confusing and at worst inconsistent, it is most often difficult to rationally reconcile into one

---

unified and consistent and enforceable body of law. Part of the reason for this confusion is that different law generating bodies that have no direct structural relationship to each other (for example, member states of the UN, members of the ILO, state parliamentary bodies) have enacted these different standards. Each such body has different motives for creating laws to protect children who work and promulgate rules based on their own differing interpretation of children, of work, and of kinds of work that is or is not acceptable.

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights.** The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948,\(^1\) was the first effort to promulgate an international standard that every government would be obligated to follow. Because nations were afraid of giving up their sovereignty and their corresponding freedom to treat persons under their control in any way they saw fit, the Declaration was designed to be just that - a Declaration - and not a legally binding treaty.\(^2\) Those who voted in favor of the Declaration hoped that it would be a legitimate statement of outrage against the horrors of World War II committed by others but that it would not require any changes in how they governed their own people. Therefore, the colonial powers and nations that practiced deliberate discrimination, could vote in favor of a Declaration that had no enforceable mechanism even though their internal national practice directly contradicted the various articles of the Declaration.

However, in a way that only a historical perspective can illustrate, the Declaration became an inspiration to peoples of the world about how every human being, including children, ought to be treated. An entire human rights movement that has profoundly changed the relationship of individuals to the state grew out of the philosophical foundation provided by the Declaration resulting in an impact that no one anticipated. As one human rights scholar has stated, the Universal Declaration has become the “greatest ethical and normative achievement of the United Nations, and perhaps even the international community as a whole in the course of the past fifty years.”\(^3\)

The universality of the Declaration can best be illustrated by the fact that twenty eight of the Declaration’s articles begin with the words “everyone, all or no one” thereby making no distinction between male or female, young or old, or differences based on ability. As such, children were for the first time in international law affirmed to be co-equal with adults in terms of rights to be accorded to them. Additionally, the Declaration marked the first time that children were so explicitly singled out for special protection (Article 25 which specifies that “Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance.”) As such, the

---

\(^1\) Brownlie, Ian, editor, the Universal Declaration is reprinted in *Basic Documents on Human Rights: Third Edition*, pg. 21, 1992.


Declaration established an ethical norm that elevated children from being objects of law to being subjects of law. In addition, Article 27 of the Declaration specifically guaranteed the right to education for everyone. As will be seen later, other international agreements subsequently added to these foundational principles in forms that were legally binding on member states.

**Convention on the Rights of the Child.** The most universal and widely ratified understanding pertaining to child labour is contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which was adopted in 1989. Language in the preamble of the Convention, while non-binding, clearly sets the tone for understanding the primary objectives of the treaty. The Preamble recognizes the inherent dignity of all persons, including children, and emphasizes the goal to allow children to grow and develop in a way that prepares them to be good world citizens. To accomplish this long-term objective, children, by virtue of their particular vulnerability, are entitled to special protection and care.

Without being specific, article 32 of the CRC requires all state parties to adopt “legislative, administrative, social and educational measures” designed to protect children from “economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.” Furthermore, signatory states are required to establish minimum ages for child employment, “appropriate” standards governing conditions of employment and sanctions if such provisions are violated. The vagueness of this article has two practical implications.

First, this article is open to very broad interpretation. As such, virtually every nation that even addresses the issue of child labour can claim to be in conformance with article 32. Second, the lack of specificity allows child rights activists to flesh out and define these vague terms. For example, the language of article 32 which attempts to prohibit economic activity that is “exploitation” of children, that is “hazardous,” that is “harmful,” or establish “appropriate” working conditions and hours are words that can be made specific by hard research and advocacy not requiring legislative changes. In other words, activists can define words like “appropriate” or “harmful” by identifying the emerging world consensus on how children should be treated, or by research that documents the impact of certain kinds of work on children. The bottom line is that article 32 provides a standard that can change as a better understanding of child labour issue emerges. Article 32 is therefore an evolving standard, not a static one.

**Minimum Age Convention - ILO 138.** In response to concerns within the international community about the growing awareness of child labour, the General Conference of the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted Convention 138 in 1973 which sets minimum age standards for employment. This convention binds member states to prohibit children from doing “light work” under the age of 12 in all circumstances and hazardous work under the age of 18 (with some exceptions). The definition of work that is subject to this regulation is again subject to interpretation. “Light” work for children is defined by Article 7 to be that which is:

14 Brownlie, Ian, editor, reprinted in Basic Documents on Human Rights: Third Edition, pg. 182, 1992. This Convention is the most widely accepted human rights treaty having been ratified by every nation in the world except the United States and Somalia.
15 Worst Forms of Child Labour, note 4, pg. 124.
• not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and
• not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received.

Hazardous work is never explicitly defined in Article 3 of ILO Convention 138 other than in the general language that it is work “… which by its nature of the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of young persons…” Again, we see that the meaning of the prohibitory language is open for debate and disagreement about what is and is not forbidden. The central theme, however, in Convention 138 is age. A determination of whether work is appropriate or not is based not so much on working conditions generally, but on a child’s age. Hazardous work can be done by those who are chronologically 18 years old or older irrespective of the physical characteristics of the employee. Although this age-based distinction in employment is fairly easy to verify, it does not fit with the experience of children who are ready for levels of difficulty of work at ages that are not consistent from child to child.

**Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention - ILO 182.** In contrast to the age centred approach to child labour specified by ILO Convention 138, Convention 182 which was adopted in 1999 calls on all member states to eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour “as a matter of urgency.” The worst forms are defined in Article 3 to comprise:

- all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and force or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- work which, by its nature of the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

In contrast to ILO Convention 138, Convention 182 is aimed only at eliminating labour practices that harm children in some way. Its prohibitions are not age based - but harm based in outlook. Read by itself, Convention 182 would appear to allow children to engage in non-harmful work at any age as long as such employment did not interfere with the overall development objective for children enabling them to become productive members of society.

**Emerging Consensus.**

Working children themselves will often define their work in diverse ways that may include unpaid as well as paid activities, work within the household (particularly important for working girls) and work outside the home, and may be something that is dignified and positive or negative and exploitative. Because Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child only

---

16 Worst Forms of Child Labour, note 4, pg 121.
prohibits work harmful to the health, physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social well being of children, or work which interferes with a child’s education, the international Save the Children Alliance has suggested that in effect there are three categories of children’s work:17

- “work where the harm to the child is extreme, and where rights violations are impossible to prevent, requiring urgent removal from work .... ;
- work where rights are violated, but where it is possible to prevent violations through improving working conditions or assisting children to find better alternatives to harmful work;
- work where rights are not violated and may contribute to the fulfilment of rights. Work which contributes to the fulfilment of rights can be encouraged” 18

While there is still some debate as to whether children (anyone below the age of 18 years) should be banned from the workplace, the Save the Children approach does appear to be reflective of a growing consensus that the best interests of children as set out in the CRC are not served by banning work altogether. The classifications of children’s work as stated by Save the Children are consistent with the position mentioned under the recent ILO Convention 18219 that seeks to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. The Save the Children position also allows for children to move from harmful work to alternate, acceptable work. The ability of children to chose to work is being taken further by some working children’s groups who are now advocating that children have a “right to work”. While the right of children to work is not specified in the CRC, children do have a right to participate in matters that affect them. Article 12 of the CRC states that:

“States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.”20

Providing working children within an opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their lives through their work will require that children are able to take part in discussion of both their present circumstances and possible alternatives. For this process to unfold children will have to have the ability to take part in discussions as individuals and in groups of their peers; they will have to able to be able to understand key concepts related to their work and the possible alternatives and they will need to take part in shaping, implementing, monitoring and evaluating interventions that are intended for their benefit. A rights approach, described in the next section, will have the effect of helping children become full partners with adults in identifying and resolving problems and in becoming better able to act in their own interest in future.

17 Save the Children Alliance, note 3.
18 Save the Children Alliance, note 3.
19 Convention 182 of the ILO, 1999 seeks to ban children from the worst forms of children’s work that includes: all forms of slavery or practices like slavery; the procurement of a child for purposes of sexual exploitation; the use, procurement or offering of a child for illicit purposes; and work which by its nature is likely to harm the health, safety, morals, of children.
20 Article 12, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989
Part 3: An Educational and Empowerment Approach to Child Labour

Employment creation through micro and small enterprise development is recognized as an effective mechanism for reducing poverty among marginalized population groups. While such programs can provide both economic and social benefits for many of the poor, it is also possible and perhaps an inevitable consequence that these programs often contribute to growth in the numbers of children who are drawn in to the work place. In some instances this may result in increased levels of exploitative child labour. The PPIC-Work project 21 (Promoting and Protecting the Interests of Children who Work) is currently being implemented in Egypt and draws on previous experience in the promotion of micro and small enterprises but now incorporates a rights-based approach with working children and seeks to improve working conditions and learning opportunities for children who work.

Micro and Small Enterprise Development in Upper Egypt and Children’s Work

Egypt has adopted a job creation strategy that gives priority to the promotion of micro and small enterprises as part of its economic and social reform program to improve the quality of life of low income and poor families. To achieve this objective, Egypt has set as a goal for itself to create between 500,000 and 800,000 new jobs each year over the next decade. Most of this growth will come in the micro and small enterprise sectors. As this process of employment creation unfolds and brings improved incomes for many new workers an unintended consequence will be the increasing number of children (both girls and boys) who are drawn into the work place. A survey carried out among one hundred newly established small enterprises in the poorer areas of southern Egypt revealed that about half of the businesses employed children in various capacities. As a way out of poverty, these children had chosen to work to support themselves and their families. In addition to earning income, over 90% of the children were attending school while they worked and in some instances were seeking learning opportunities through their work (developing business and technical skills in bakeries, textile production, metal work, vehicle repair and other trades).

In making the choice to work, the children had the expectation that their own lives and additionally the lives of their families and siblings would improve. While such improvements may follow in some but probably not all cases, it is clear that the underlying causes that result in children working in Egypt will not disappear quickly and it will take time for Egyptian society to evolve to a more prosperous level. In the short to mid term it will neither be practical nor possible to ban children from the work place without drastically exacerbating the level of poverty and it is becoming increasingly clear that it is not in the best interests of children to attempt to do so.

A Rights-based Approach

21The PPIC-Work project is being implemented in Egypt through a joint venture between PTE (Partners in Technology Exchange) and MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates) with financial support through CIDA (the Canadian International Development Agency) and in collaboration with Egyptian NGO’s and government agencies.
There is a great deal of confusion in development literature about what is meant by a “rights-based approach” to development. According to a recent literature search, only one book and several manuals describing a rights-based approach to development exist worldwide. The approaches described in these manuscripts generally recommend the same pattern, that is, to identify pertinent articles excerpted from international human rights law and then to ensure that development interventions are consistent with such articles. The strength of this approach is that it challenges development practitioners to ensure that their practices are as consistent as possible with human rights principles which are increasingly becoming universally accepted. The shortcoming of this approach is that many human rights articles are so vague as to lack meaning. It is difficult, for example, to evaluate when the “right to education” is fully realized. Is it realized only when education is totally free? Available at a certain minimum of tuition? To what level of education? At what quality? To enable students to study any subject? Or just to enrol in studying certain basic courses?

A more realistic and pragmatic approach that is more easily implementable is to emphasize the underlying core values of rights - rather than attempt to utilize a black letter law perspective for each provision. What this means is that rights-based development interventions would emphasize four core values rather than attempt to understand the myriad of varying human rights provisions, not all of which are fully consistent. The four core values that infuses every human rights instrument and which is emphasized repeatedly in different ways, using different words are the non-negotiable principles of that every person is entitled to be treated with dignity, that every person has a right to participate politically in the life of their community and nation, to hold those in power over them accountable, and to work for change non-violently. These four guiding principles can be incorporated into any development intervention, at any time, all the time. What is unusual about the PPIC-Work project has been the decision by project staff to utilize this approach with children who work, thereby allowing and enabling these children to guide project goals, objectives and outcomes. While this approach may seem to be common sense, what is surprising is how uncommon it is for children to be allowed to shape development projects that are ostensibly implemented for their benefit.

**Learning and Work**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ILO Convention 138 and the CRC recognizes that children have a right to education with an initial emphasis on free and accessible primary education that deserves a high priority. While these provisions assume a child’s right to a state supported educational system, it is also being increasingly recognized by child development specialist and educators that much of children’s learning takes place outside the formal educational system and institutions and that the work place can be a place of significant learning.

Children who work may or may not continue to attend school. In many instances working children who continue to attend school are able to do so only because the income that they earn allows their family to afford the cost of their schooling. Younger siblings may also benefit. In other instances children may work because they have dropped out of school and are seeking

---

22 Human Rights, the Foundation of Civil Society, note 12, pg. 104 - 105.
23 Article 28, Convention of the Rights of the Child, 1989
alternate ways of learning a skill for their future livelihood. Carothers (2001)\(^{24}\) points out that certain types of work (specifically trade type workshops such as: woodwork, metal work, plumbing, mechanics, etc.) provide apprenticeship learning experiences generally for male children who have left primary school between the third and fifth classes. The PPIC-W project - will, for a selected number of small enterprise activities, identify the types of positive learning opportunities that exist within present businesses and determine how these can be improved and extended (where possible) to other types of enterprises and enterprise support activities.

A recent publication by Myers\(^{25}\) points out that work and education for children can be mutually supportive albeit in certain circumstances. Myers states that,

"It has long been held that people learn best when they learn skills in the context in which the information is used. Work-based education, a special variant of this concept, can provide a focus for academic learning and significantly influence young people's intellectual development", and that;

"Educators and policy makers should adopt a more flexible outlook that envisions human development as an integration of learning and (work) experience…".

At the same time it is important to note that not all work contributes to useful learning:

"Different kinds of work and working conditions affect children's education in different ways. Some so hinder children's participation in school or other educational programs that they should be discouraged as inappropriate for children. Others (types of work) have little effect, either positive or negative, on children's learning activities. But there are positive examples of work. "Some work stimulates initiative and teaches valuable life skills while other work stultifies mental development and reduces human potential. In some cases, such as in apprenticeships, mutually reinforcing work and education together promote children's development and can be actively encouraged as beneficial.

There are a series of ways in which work and education can be combined:

- Learning with work (schooling scheduled so that work can take place during school holiday or break periods),
- Learning from work, (programs that lead working children to reflect upon their experience in work, draw lessons from it, and then use their insights to advance their own protection and best interests)
- Learning for work, (exemplified by vocational education in the form of schools or classes dedicated to teaching children a trade, organized as a full-time instructional activity with basic literacy and numeracy as prerequisites),

\(^{24}\) Carothers, R., Children and Work within the context of Programs that Support Small Enterprise Development and the Creation of Livelihoods, IDRC, Study Report, 2001

• Learning through work, (any type of apprenticeship arrangement, where children or youth perform work activities under the guidance of a more knowledgeable person).

The PPIC-W project is now beginning to support learning through work by developing and implementing learning tools and approaches for use within the workshop setting and by involving workshop owners, working children themselves and their families. In addition there will also be efforts made to support learning with work through linkages with formal and non-formal educational programs. One program of particular interest that is being examined is an enterprise-based training approach that has been developed and successfully implemented in Egypt26. This program supports learning through work and while the emphasis to date has been on training youth and young adults, PPIC-Work will determine the extent possible for this experience to be adapted and applied with working children.

Private Sector Development and Working Children

Private sector development programs such as those associated with the PPIC-Work project provide a variety of business development services and either direct or indirect access to credit. The introduction of a children’s rights-based approach within this type of program opens up several possibilities for improving the working conditions and learning opportunities with working children. This is particularly interesting for those types of businesses and workplaces in the middle category set out by Save the Children i.e. those where rights are presently violated but where improvements can be made so that these rights are not violated. It should be noted, that PPIC-Work assumes that businesses that violate children’s rights as set out in ILO 182 “Worst Forms of Child Labour” would not be supported or promoted through micro and small enterprise support programs. Micro and small enterprise (M/SME) support agencies establish supporting relationships with business owners and are often involved in providing advice on how work places can be improved and made more profitable. It is this context that the PPIC-Work project is introducing interventions that will improve the working conditions and learning opportunities for working children through a business support program while at the same time continuing to improve the viability and success of the businesses themselves. Agencies that provide support to micro and small enterprises (M/SME’s) are frequently self financing through revenues that are generated through lending programs and fee for service technical assistance. As such these agencies are able to continue programs that have the potential of promoting and protecting the interests of working children over the long term.

Initial Findings from the PPIC-Work Project

PPIC-Work project has begun to develop and implement a rights-based approach in a iterative manner. Field work is initially taking place in the Aswan governorate of Upper (southern)

---

26 CEOSS (the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Service) in Egypt has developed over 20 enterprise-based training programs that provide youth and young adults with viable and recognized skills and future careers, these programs are now are recognized by the Egyptian Ministry of Industry.
Egypt where the M/SME support agency EACID\textsuperscript{27} has its original base of operations. During a situational analysis carried out with working children, their families, and business owners (in many but not all instances the children work within businesses owned and operated by close family members) conversations with working children began to identify ways for the project to assist in improving the working conditions and learning opportunities. The initial group of children was drawn from businesses that were either clients of the EACID program or were considered to be potential future clients. Business were also selected to include working girls and boys as in several instances there were strong gender differentiations in the types of work done by children. It was originally expected that a group of about 30 working children would be formed to take part in the situational analysis and subsequent discussions but the group has expanded to over 100 children due to the strong interest from children and business owners / family members and further expansion is expected.

The group of working children has already become active in assisting the PPIC-Work project to identify ways through which working conditions and learning opportunities could be improved. Four of the five interventions currently being implemented are a direct result of discussions with the children’s group and in some instances represent quite different types of interventions than were originally anticipated by the project team.

The first intervention to improve the working conditions of children was identified by girls and boys who were involved in street vending (including the sale of fruits and vegetables, prepared food and clothing). Problems sometimes arose when the children made arithmetic errors in handling money and this was interpreted by customers as dishonesty. Some customers responded by rebuking the children verbally and even physically. The children’s group identified their own weak skills in literacy and numeracy as being problematic and requested the PPIC-Work project assist them in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills as a way of improving their working relationships with customers. EACID has since established a literacy program with the assistance of another Egyptian NGO that has had more than 20 years of experience in the development of innovative literacy programming that uses techniques developed by Paulo Freire. The literacy program is now in place with classes located close to children’s homes (of particular concern for girls and their families) and is being funded through the revenues that are generated by EACID’s lending program. There is now the possibility (depending on demand) of providing such programs to the present and future groups of working children over the long term. It is also significant that the costs for the literacy program are being covered by the business owners who employ children as these costs are included within the interest charges of the business support program. It has been possible to establish this type of intervention at the level of the business support institution (EACID) where the incremental costs of operating the literacy program are relatively small. It would be unlikely that such a program could be sustained through the efforts of the working children or business owners on their own.

\textsuperscript{27} The Egyptian Association for Community Initiatives and Development (EACID) currently supports about 2000 entreprenneurs (mainly low income women) through the provision of credit and business advisory services. EACID has been self financing for almost 4 years and its programs meet international best practice standards.
As the PPIC-Work project has begun to implement programs with working children it has become evident that the introduction of a rights-based approach requires that support be provided for working children so that they are able to develop new knowledge and skills that will allow them to participate in discussions with the project team and eventually to work and develop with each other. The second intervention is now focused on the development of new capabilities for working children are identified in three areas:

- the establishment of group processes where children become able to respond both collectively and individually to issues that concern them and are able to learn how to listen to the viewpoints of others, develop consensus, understand and analyze information, come to collective decisions, articulate shared views and positions, set priorities, communicate with others, and develop networks and linkages with other working children’s groups;
- the development of common understandings of key concepts related to work including: health, safety, hazards and risks, gender and work, entrepreneurship;
- the understanding of children’s rights and how these relate to work and other aspects of children’s lives, and the articulation of issues and concerns related to work, the analysis of problems and constraints, and the development of solutions and action plans.

The approach towards building children’s capabilities will continue to evolve over time but is expected to empower children so that they are better able to understand their rights and act in their own interest when their rights are infringed. These actions are likely to extend beyond the PPIC-Work project.

The third intervention results from discussions with the children engaged in street vending and is now examining a series of issues that relate the introduction of written pricing, the use of carts and other simple technologies, and problems related to possible licencing and regulation of this type of work. PPIC-Work is currently helping the working children’s group in Aswan to learn from the street food vendors association in a neighbouring governorate (a separate group of working children) that has developed a system with local authorities to establish and apply a set of standards for street vending. The PPIC-Work project has his supporting the children’s networking and child to child learning.

The fourth intervention area (part of the original project design) has resulted in the development of new loan products that will be available to both men and women business owners where children work. The loans will be provided to business owners to help them improve the working conditions of working children as well as helping improve the productivity and profitability of the business. Loans will also be available to families within the EACID program who have problems in covering short term school expenses. EACID has trained its loan officers on children’s rights (part of the training of the adult loan officers was carried out by members of the working children’s group) and the promotion and monitoring of the new loans. Discussions have also begun with business owners in the loan program to determine whether a code of conduct could be agreed that would set initial standards for the work of children. Modeled on the Global Compact Initiative the discussions are expected to lead to an on-going dialogue among owners.

---

28 The Global Compact is an initiative of the Secretary General of the UN and seeks to encourage the adoption of standards of ethical corporate behaviour include the elimination of the
working children and EACID staff that would see a voluntary set of standards initially agreed and then improved over time.

The fifth intervention arises from discussions with some of the working girls who had indicated an interest in computer based learning and computer training. In earlier discussions the girls as well as the boys had both indicated that their preferred type of work would include the learning of modern, technical skills. While it is common to find boys working in technical trades such as woodworking, metal work, and auto mechanics, it is less common to find girls working in situations where they are able to learn significant new skills that would allow them to pursue a career. This limitation for the girls is represent to some extent a type of work place hazard where girls are steered away from work that leads to learning for a career and instead encourages girls to earn and save for their marriage but nothing further. In combining learning and work the girls have indicated that rather than pursing the type of technical apprenticeships of the boys they would be interested in developing computer skills and in using computers both as a means of further learning as well as a culturally acceptable form of future career. PPIC-Work is now investing the development of computer-based learning software and related learning materials and programs. It is expect that these opportunities will be introduced and tested initially with working girls and then expanded to include working boys.

Next Steps

The PPIC-Work project will continue its efforts of partnering with working girls and boys in attempting to establish a rights-based program that will both improve working conditions and learning opportunities and contribute to the empowerment of working children. While more time will be necessary before conclusions can be finalized it does appear that there will be a variety of interventions that will be possible for improving the workplaces of children through business support programs. It has also become evident that children can effectively participate in programs such as the PPIC-Work project in helping define the types of programming interventions that should be undertaken and it is expected that more substantial involvement of the children will follow as new knowledge and skills are developed with the working children and further experience is gained by the project team. The concerns of working girls and boys will require continued attention to the aspects of gender both within the workplace and within the norms of the broader society in which the children live.

Author Contacts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lowell Ewert</th>
<th>Director of Peace and Conflict Studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conrad Grebel University College affiliated with the University of Waterloo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ph: 519.885.0220, ext. 380</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:lmewert@uwaterloo.ca">lmewert@uwaterloo.ca</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Richard Carothers |
| President, Partners in Technology Exchange |
| P.O. Box 176 St Agatha, Ontario, N0B 2L0 |
| ph: 519.746.8196 |
| richard.carothers@sympathico.ca |

exploitation of children through work. The global compact sets out nine principles that are to be implemented on a voluntary basis and are expected to set progressively higher standards over time.
Learning How to Live: Transforming Students into Active Citizens

Erica Fuller Shindler

The Awakening

In a 1978 recorded speech, noted author and activist Dick Gregory argued that American colleges and universities are designed to teach students “how to make a living,” rather than “how to live.”¹ This assessment is as true today in the United States as it was a quarter century ago. The majority of students in the introductory courses I teach are not attending college to seek knowledge, actively learn, or evolve into participatory citizens ready to change the world. To the contrary, an overwhelming majority of students taking Black Studies 100² (B/ST 100) at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) are in college to conform to societal expectations, and make more money. Assuming this is true in other disciplines, it could be argued that institutions of higher learning are educating less, and merely preparing students to become marketable laborers for corporate America.

Conforming to capital demands, Western institutions of higher learning have shifted away from their primary function. People like Fred Newman brought attention to this diversion, calling for a return to the original purpose of colleges and universities: to prepare its graduates “for a life of involved and committed citizenship.” In fact, the “need to resolve complex problems intelligently places an ever greater demand on higher education – a demand for graduates who have a profound understanding of what it means to be a citizen; graduates capable of an interest larger than self-interest; graduates capable of helping this country to be not simply a strong competitor but a responsible and effective leader in a complicated world.”³ Whereas early 19th century colleges and universities operated “to provide an institutional framework for the conversations that comprise the public sphere and to train people to take part in them,”⁴ market forces are the framework from which people are trained in the 21st century. Today’s undergraduate students are socialized to follow the herds through troughs of pre-packaged “marketised”⁵ curriculum, with the primary intention of simplifying a complicated world into narrow conversations focused on how to earn a living. Further, with greater focus on academic specialization, conceptual understandings are often isolated unto themselves, fragmented and compartmentalized, rather than related, connected, and applied to day-to-day living. This shift towards servicing the needs of a capitalist marketplace will undoubtedly breed college educated

² Black Studies 100 focuses on organizational methods and techniques for writing compositional and expository prose, advanced grammar, critical reading techniques, and research for term papers. It is designed for first year students, especially bi-dialectical and ESL students.
⁵ Stephen Rowland identifies “marketization” as on of several pejorative terms used by lecturers to describe the stark contrast between their educational values and the values of today’s students. A prominent theme in the interviews conducted by Rowland is the general perception that students are more likely to concede to the lure of globalization or Americanisation or, as on South African lecturer stated, ‘the coca cola society,” rather than concepts of democracy and social change.
generations that suffer from apolitical, apathetic, consumer conformity, as oppose to socially responsible, civic leaders in our communities.

I had the privilege of learning within environments that operated as communities. As an undergraduate, I went to Mills College when it was still school for women. As a single mother on welfare, I would not have graduated were it not for the woman who stepped into help. The support continued into graduate school. The Africana Studies & Research Center at Cornell University was somewhat unique from other departments in that student involvement in community affairs was expected. Professors left their doors open whenever they were in, and joined you for birthday celebrations. Every Wednesday night, students and faculty would gather together to view and discuss CNN, considering how current events will affect our community. I was also a member of Delta Sigma Theta, a sorority dedicated to community service and sisterhood. Through the initiation process, I learned what was required of me as an individual in order support the needs of my line 6 sisters. This communal support was imperative to my learning as a student, however, I was in for a rude awakening my first semester as a teacher in the Black Studies Department at CSULB.

I quickly learned that the majority student does not operate like a member of a community. In the classroom, the average student is a carrier of the ‘Me phi me’ 7 disease: I don’t care about you, it’s all about me. I come to my class, I take my notes, I do my reading, I study for my test, I recite my answers, and I get my grade. If I go along with this system I am rewarded and get my degree, go get my job, my car, my house, my wife, my kids, my dog, and my white picket fence that will separate me and my things from the rest of the community. The problem does not lie with the individual – he has been taught to think this way. People are socially constructed to believe that productive citizenship is based on material acquisition, rather than communal participation and contribution. The construction begins in the school systems: the me phi me philosophy has been impregnated into the foundations of schools and reared by our consumer driven society. Quite simply, educators are birthing a nation of economic pragmatists misguided into believing the illusion that productive citizenry is predicated on employability and financial stability, rather than civic duty and social responsibility.

Richard M. Battistoni clarifies social responsibility as: “a model of the relationship between rights-bearing citizens and the many communities to which they belong. To be a citizen is not merely to have rights but to take responsibility, to see ourselves and our interests as flourishing only as our communities flourish.” 8 Using this definition, it is the individual who is responsible for the community. Today, however, there is considerable pressure on students to disassociate themselves from their respective communities, especially if it has been historically perceived as a disenfranchised culture. 9 W.E.B. DuBois argues that it is the responsibility of the

---

6 Historically, Black sororities and fraternities identify the initiation process as “being on line” in reference to the standard meeting arrangement for initiates which is to line up, shoulder to shoulder, symbolizing one united front.

7 A phrase that plays on Greek fraternity and sorority organizational names (ie. Delta Sigma Theta, Phi Beta Sigma, Omega Psi Phi, etc.) describing a person who rejects organized membership in favor of an exclusively individualized identity.


9 Heaney, Tom “Issues in Freirean Pedagogy” Heaney defines culture “in its broadest, anthropological sense as including all that is humanly fabricated, endowed, designed, articulated, conceived, or directed. Culture includes products which are humanly produced, both material (buildings, artifacts, factories, slum housing) and immaterial (ideology, value systems, mores,) as well as materially derived products such as social class and the socio/political order. The key aim of liberatory education is to regain dominion over the creation and use of culture.” Thresholds in Education, http://www.nl.edu/ace/Resources/Documents/FreireIssues.html. 1995.
talented few who do make it into higher education to return to the community to uplift the whole. But even DuBois considered the more “crucial question to be asked concerning college-bred Negroes, is: Do they earn a living?” Here again, the primary function of higher education is to instruct the student how to make a living, appropriate for the 20th century scholars, however, I argue the more relevant question is: do they know how to live? In all fairness, DuBois did state clearly that educational systems must not only teach him to earn a living, but also “strengthen the Negroe’s character, [and] increase his knowledge.” Yet, it is my contention that contemporary education has in fact replaced genuine character with materialistic values and aesthetics, and limited knowledge to highly competitive, individualized growth rather than collective empowerment.

This condition is especially disheartening to witness among African-American student populations. Blacks fought for and won their right to participate in American society and should ideally be the most active citizens. Centuries of historic isolation, media representation and present day materialism have had crippling efforts, creating a “culture of silence.”

“The ‘culture of silence’ is a characteristic which Paulo Freire attributes to oppressed people in colonized countries, with significant parallels in highly developed countries. Alienated and oppressed people are not heard by the dominant members of their society. The dominant members prescribe the words to be spoken by the oppressed through control of the schools and other institutions, thereby effectively silencing the people. This imposed silence does not signify an absence of response, but rather a response which lacks a critical quality. Oppressed people internalize negative images of themselves (images created and imposed by the oppressor) and feel incapable of self-governance. Dialogue and self-government are impossible under such conditions.”

African-Americans are particularly vulnerable to institutions that seek to conform and assimilate. Many black students are expected to prove their worth as a people in a society that has systematically devalued their contributions and dehumanized their existence. Predominate media images compound this pressure by portraying Blacks as uneducated, morally corrupt menaces to society. More often than not, the black college student is working over-time time trying to prove wrong these socially constructed notions, readily conforming to an apolitical apathy and western aesthetics. Rather than engage in political struggles, many take the road of least resistance in exchange for a pass into the competitive marketplace.

As a new faculty, I was disheartened by this reality. A larger worry weighed heavy on me – is the role of education to serve as capitalist benefactor, simply existing as a prerequisite stepping stone for higher earning potential? If so, how am I to engage my students in the material if they are merely sleep waking through my course because it is required to earn a degree? How can I get students to care about anything in our contemporary society if their exclusive concern is getting a job? Who is teaching them how to live once start making a living? This questioning led me to seek an alternative pedagogy, one that would steer students away from me phi me conditioning. I wondered: What if an individual’s success was predicated on the success of his classroom community? I decided to test the inquiry immediately. The next day, in the middle of fall semester, 2001, I switched my delivery so dramatically the students woke up and took careful note: “From this day forward, you are all on line. We’re going on a journey. Let the initiation begin.”

11 Heaney, Tom. “Issues in Freirean Pedagogy.”
The Deprogramming Process

During my initiation process back in college, I remember thinking “we’re never going to learn all this material by the deadline.” I wanted to drop, certain there was no way our line could get organized, especially if so-and-so kept showing up late. “I could be doing other things with my time,” I mumbled while waiting. Luckily she showed, apologetic but excited about something. “I’ve got an idea,” she announced. Her idea worked to help improve our communication, which in turn effected our organization, leading to our eventual crossing to join the ranks of sisterhood. Because of each of our individual contributions our community succeeded. It was my background experience that helped us memorize the greek alphabet. It was Orvi’s willingness to exhibit patience and acceptance when the rest of us were shaking our head in disagreement. It was Jamie’s leadership that brought us back to focus on our common goals. Ultimately, we relied on each other’s individual intelligence and talent to lift the line through its struggle. I employ this same ideology in my classroom community, using three simple understandings: 1) You are all linked together, 2) there are no weak links, 3) if one fails, we all fail.

Fortunately, teaching in the field of Black studies grants me the liberty to connect this ideology to the subject material. Putting my students “on line” is a figurative analogy, better imagined metaphorically. I begin my first class with a brief narrative. “Imagine you have been captured and herded onto a slave ship. You don’t know where you are headed, nor how long the journey will take. You do realize that you will struggle to stay alive, and that your survival depends on whether or not the person rowing next to you not only pulls his share of the load, but doesn’t decide to jump overboard. Remember you are a slave shackled to the body next to you. If he jumps, you’re going over too.” Then I ask the most important question: “What is this journey going to require of you?” The discussion that follows consistently reveals a list of character requirements including trust, responsibility, reliability, respect, accountability, compassion, forgiveness, commitment to duty, acceptance, patience. Not coincidently, these same skills are needed to actively participate in a democratic society.

As the idea of community begins to settle into the students’ imagination, I expressed the first principles essential for operating an effective community: 1) communication, 2) organization, 3) leadership, and 4) common goals. Again, these four elements run parallel with what is required for community organizations seeking revolutionary change in their society. After community is explained conceptually, I put theory into practice immediately so students can see how the concept works in action. For example, in the standard classroom, a student can drop the course and not only will few notice, but few will even care. The classic attitude is often callous and apathetic: “Oh well, that’s one less person I have to compete against.” In a community system, however, we care about each other. If someone does not show up to class for two weeks, we want to know why to be certain everything is okay with that member of our community. Conceptually, if one person is absent, none of us are present. If she is late to class, we are all late. Accordingly, we want to find out what is going on with each other so we can be excused, but more importantly, so we can help. Being part of a community assists in the retention of freshman students in particular, helping to ease transition into the often isolating and intimidating college environment. For example, last semester we coordinated a carpool to help folks get to class on time. In another case, one of our students was in a serious car accident and

---

12 These are the top ten character strengths consistently mentioned semester after semester. (2001-2003)
the class community was at his side in the hospital, pulling him through and keeping him updated so he would not fall behind in class. Would this have been possible without a community classroom? Possibly, however, the individual experience would have been void of two very important elements in social development – compassion and cooperation, both considerably lacking in our educational systems, and society at large.

**Knowledge Assessment**

I may have students caring a bit more about each other’s welfare, however, the question most educators are concerned with is: how are students being graded? The standard classroom tests students using individual means of assessment. The student comes into the classroom, is given an exam sheet, sits down by herself and regurgitates information onto her sheet within a restricted time frame, careful to protect her answers from cheating eyes (which somehow suggests exclusive rights to knowledge.) This is true, assuming she knows the answers; if she does not, she can not look to someone to get help. Not knowing the answer is punished with a lower grade and it is up to the individual to go back and re-learn the material on her own. This is highly isolating, often frustrating and almost always intimidating, creating unnecessary outcomes including major stress and anxiety, neither of which has been proven effective conditions for knowledge acquisition. What it does teach, however, is that in order to work in this free society, one must condition herself to survive high stress and anxiety, and withstand undue pressure to be right, or else! Were it that Blacks did not already have experience managing this sort of conditioning, such learning might prove valuable in strengthening character. My hunch is that this pedagogical approach does more to push Black students over an already precarious socio-psychological edge, and possibly correlates with lower retention rates of Black students.

Community pedagogy is based on cooperation rather than competition. Student comprehension of subject material and critical thinking skills are tested in oral examinations, as oppose to individual written tests. The exams encourage the sharing of information as opposed to hiding it from each other competitively. If one person in the community does not know the answer to the posed question, he can pass the prompt to someone else in the community. If the question is answered satisfactorily, the class is credited, whether the first student was able to answer it or not. Ultimately, he will discover the answer in the end; instead of leaving it blank on a test sheet, he is able to hear the answer out loud during the oral exam. What I have discovered, however, is that there are a limited number of students who do not know the answer because each student has a stake in the final outcome. Accordingly, students are more motivated to know the material. The actions of one affect the whole, so each student works to do his part since few want to be held accountable for the community missing an answer. Even if an individual does not know the answer, I return to him with a new question. This process is repeated, giving the student three opportunities to show what he knows. If he is still unable to offer a contribution, his efforts (or lack thereof) are recorded accordingly, for in the end I must provide each individual student with his own individual grade. He must still complete four written essays on his own (though he can exchange each for peer review a week prior to due date.) He is given an individual grade for the exams, and individual absences and tardies are recorded. Because CSULB does not use award plus/minus grading, it is left to my judgment to determine what grade to give borderline students. This is how the community grade can help. For example, if a student has earned a C+ for his individual work, and the community grade is a B, I award the higher grade. This by no means grants better grades to undeserving students. Participating in this
sort of class requires more time and effort than the standard classroom and thus the student should be awarded accordingly. If, however, the student’s contribution to the community was lacking, he has demonstrated his individuality apart from the community and is therefore stuck with his individual grade.

**Knowledge Acquisition and Application**

In B/ST 100, the class must complete a research paper together. Instead of each student writing a five page essay, each student writes 1-2 pages that will be integrated into one paper. Initially, this may appear to be less work for the individual. The community, however, must later coordinate themselves into sub-groups, assigned to complete each component of the paper. One community (self-identified as “The Talented Tenth) titled their class paper *Uprising: How to Free African-American Communities.* Because the basis of this community relies on consensual governance\(^\text{13}\) the community had to come to an agreement on what issues would be included in the paper. In the end, it was agreed that their research be divided into six sections: education, economics, criminal justice, family, media, and religion/spirituality. Each section included both qualitative and quantitative considerations, the historic context of each system, its present status, and solutions that might improve conditions. After everyone supplied their individual contributions, the community got back together to make sure each individual component was integrated into a whole, cohesive unit. For the individual, this would be an impossible task. As a group, however, the project became more manageable and a breadth of knowledge can be acquired in a timely fashion.

Again, each student has a stake in the final grade, so they all reviewed the paper, checking for content, organization, reasoning and conventions. As a result, the less proficient writers in the community benefit from the peer feedback and the more proficient writers are able to sharpen their skills in editing and complex composition. The final paper is a more carefully constructed, better reasoned paper with fewer common errors that can be tedious and monotonous when correcting on an individual basis.

The ultimate nature of this large assignment was anchored in what John Dewey considered the moral mission of progressive education. “We must take the [student] as a member of society in the broadest sense, and demand for and from the schools whatever is necessary for him intelligently to recognize all his social realities and take his part in sustaining them.”\(^\text{14}\) The research paper was necessary for students to recognize issues with Black communities, but without application of that knowledge, what change can be expected to sustain community progress? As it is, there are too many people in our society who know plenty about a problem, but do little to solve it. This is where community service learning enters the classroom.

Service Learning is “a teaching method that: allows students to see and experience the relationship between theory and practice; integrates and enhances both community service and academic instruction; engages students in responsible and challenging community service, and

---

\(^{13}\) Heaney identifies consensual governance as a requirement for participatory democracy. “Decision-making by consensus requires the discussion of issues until all are in agreement – this is in contrast to decision-making by voting in which rule by the majority is imposed on those who dissent. Decision-making by consensus is time consuming and difficult. At times, consensus represents the willingness of a minority ‘not to oppose’ a decision, but the ultimate benefit of this model is that no one is excluded by a decision.” \(^\text{13}\)

emphasizes active learning in different environments.” Frank Newman and Ernest Boyer articulate their support for the integration of liberal learning and application of knowledge: “If there is a crisis in education in the United States today, it is less that test scores have declined than it is that we have failed to provide the education for citizenship that is still the most significant responsibility of the nation’s schools and colleges.” 

“The problem of our schools are inextricably tied to this larger problem – the feeling on the part of many of our youth that they are isolated, unconnected to the larger world outside their classroom…who [see] little, if any, connection between what they [are] doing and learning in school and the communities in which they live.”

During Fall 2002, B/ST 100 participated in this learning process. Depending on schedules, students were placed with either BLAST (an after school tutoring program,) or the City of Long Beach. Students placed with BLAST were able to work one-on-one with a middle school student, helping with homework, listening, sharing, supporting, and serving as a mentor. The character strengths required to function in the classroom community – responsibility, reliability, patience – are put into practice immediately in the larger community. Students who worked with the City of Long Beach conducted research on racial profiling experiences in the city of Long Beach. They were required to meet regularly with city officials, interview people in the community, evaluate statistical data, and prepare a professional report for review. Accountability, commitment to duty, compassion (especially during interviews) were all part of this assignment. Both placements working experience in the community, but more importantly, they were able to critically consider the world in which they live and recognize how their contribution can make a difference.

Conclusion

It is the educator’s responsibility to challenge students to become critically conscious. According to Heaney, critical consciousness is: “a level of consciousness characterized by depth in the interpretation of problems, through testing one’s own findings with openness to revision, attempting to avoid distortion when perceiving problems and preconceived notions when analyzing them, receptivity to the new without rejecting the old because it is old. In striving toward critical consciousness, the individual rejects passivity, practicing dialogue rather than polemics, and using permeable, interrogative, restless and dialogical forms of life. Critical consciousness is brought about not through individual or intellectual effort, but through collective struggle and praxis.” This is particularly significant to the instruction of students from disenfranchised communities, as it effectively reclaims responsibility for transforming their own communities. Further, the experience puts students in touch with themselves, they come to know their character strengths and the areas where they may need to improve. Student interest becomes less about “me” exclusively, and instead evolves into self-growth.

Transformative student development can be accomplished by coupling conventional teaching methodologies with more inclusive, participatory instruction. Community-based

---

18 Heaney, Tom “Issues in Freirean Pedagogy.”
pedagogy is not only inclusive, its nature demands full student participation, strengthens character development, and exercises attributes that can be applied both in the workforce and in the greater community, ultimately enabling students to lead active civic lives. This highly effective teaching strategy was designed for Black Studies 100, Language Skills and Composition to encourage students to work together to master the subject matter, rather than compete against one another. Instead of alienating and intimidating students with comparative assessments between superior and inferior performance, the classroom environment is transformed into a “mutually supportive, non-competitive grouping,”19 whereby each individual is a community citizen and thus held accountable for her contribution to the community grade.

Ideally, participation in a community classroom exposes students to a practical alternative to standard conformity. Further, this pedagogy exceeds expectations set in standard classroom settings, practicing skills necessary to effectively work with others, honor and respect differences, master time management, practice self-sufficiency while fully contributing individual abilities for the benefit of the whole community. With this kind of learning environment, it is possible to birth a sizeable number of future citizens who consider community activism as a more evolved way of living, leading by one basic rule: if one of us is enslaved, none of us can live free.

Pedagogy of The Earth And Culture Of Sustainability

Moacir Gadotti (*)
Director, Paulo Freire Institute

For the first time in the history of humanity we run the risk of destroying all planetary life. This possibility is not due to the impact of nuclear weapons, but due to the way in which we produce and reproduce our existence. We may call this possibility the era of extermination. We have moved from the production mode into the destruction mode; from this moment hence we will have to live constantly confronted with the permanent challenge of reconstructing the planet. We have perhaps a little over 50 years to decide whether we wish to reach the end of the millennium.

On the other hand, we live in a thriving era of information, of economic globalization—and for a few—of virtual reality, the Internet, disappearing boundaries between nations, distance education, virtual offices, robotics and automated systems of production and entertainment. We are living in a cyberspace of ongoing education. New information and communication technologies are the hallmark of the twentieth century. Marx affirmed that a change in the means of production transforms the mode of production as well as the social relations of production. This occurred with the invention of writing, the alphabet, the press, the television, and is now happening with the Internet. The spectacular development of information technology, be it related to its sources or to its dissemination capacity, is generating a true revolution that has an impact not only on production and work, but especially on education and training.

The following scenario is in place: globalization brought about by the onset of the technological revolution, characterized by both the international nature of production and by the expansion of financial flows; regionalization characterized by the formation of economic blocks;

(*) Moacir Gadotti is a senior lecturer at the University of São Paulo, Director of the Paulo Freire Institute, and author of several books: Education against Education (Paz e Terra, 1979: French and Portuguese), Invitation to Reading Paulo Freire’s Works (Scipione, 1988: Portuguese, Spanish, English, Japanese, and Italian), History of Pedagogical Ideas (Atica, 1993: Portuguese and Spanish), Pedagogy in Praxis (Cortez, 1994: Portuguese, Spanish, and English), Current Perspectives on Education (Artes Médicas, 2000), and Pedagogy of the Earth (Peirópolis, 2000), among others. This article is the outcome of a series of debates that have taken place during various gatherings and conferences, particularly the Continental Conference of the Americas, held in Cuiabá (MT), Brazil in December 1998, and the First International Meeting of The Earth Charter in the Perspective of Education, organized by the Paulo Institute, with the support of the Earth Council and UNESCO, and held in São Paulo August 23-26, 1999, and the First Forum on Ecopedagogy, held at the Faculty of Psychology and Education of the University of Porto, Portugal, March 24-26, 2000. The author has been involved with these issues since 1992, when he represented the ICEA (International Community Education Association) at Rio-92 (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development), known as “The Earth Summit,” where the Agenda 21 was drawn up and approved. At the Global Forum-92, held during this same period, he co-coordinated with Moema Viezer, Fábio Cascino, Nilo Diniz, and Marcos Sorrentino, the “International Symposium on Environmental Education” where the “Treaty on Environmental Education for Sustainable Societies and Global Responsibility” was drawn up. This text captures certain concepts dealt with in the book Pedagogy of the Earth published by Editora Peirópolis of São Paulo.
fragmentation that divides the ‘globalizers’ and the ‘globalized’, center and periphery, those who die of hunger and those who die from excessive food consumption, regional rivalries, political, ethnic, and religious confrontations, and terrorism.

The term “sustainability” may not be quite appropriate in expressing the topic that will ensue, so we will attempt to assign a new meaning to this concept. In effect, “sustainable” is a term that in association with development has become greatly outdated. While some view it as a mere label, for others it has become the very expression absurd logic: development and sustainability are logically incompatible. For us “sustainable” is more than just a qualifier of development. It goes beyond the preservation of natural resources and the feasibility of a development that is non-aggressive towards the environment. It implies a balance between the human being with himself, the planet, and furthermore, with the entire universe. The sustainability we defend refers to the very sense of who we are, where we came from, and where we are going, as sensory beings and givers of meaning to everything that surrounds us.

This topic should dominate the educational debates of the forthcoming decades. What are we currently studying in schools? Are we not constructing a science and a culture that will bring about the degradation of the planet and of humankind? The category of sustainability should be linked to that of planetarity. The Earth as a new paradigm. Complexity, universality, and transdisciplinarity are themes associated with the topic of planetarity. What implications does this world vision have for education? It espouses a planetary citizenry, a planetary civilization, and a planetary conscience. As such, a culture of sustainability is also a culture of planetarity, that is, a culture that diverges from the principle that Earth is constituted by one single community of inhabitants, human beings, who are citizens of one single nation.

1. Sustainable Society

We intend to launch a debate concerning a Pedagogy of the Earth, that is comprised of ecopedagogy and sustainable education. This debate has its inception with the birth of the concept of “sustainable development”, used for the very first time by the UN in 1979, to indicate that development could well be an integral process that should not only include economic dimensions but also cultural, ethnic, political, social, and environmental dimensions. This idea was disseminated worldwide through the reports prepared by the Worldwatch Institute in the eighties, particularly by the one titled “Our Common Future,” published in 1987 by the United Nations Commission on the Environment and Development. Many criticisms have subsequently been made to this concept, often because of its reductionist use and its trivialization, despite appearing to be “politically correct” and “morally noble.” There are other expressions that have common conceptual foundations and are complementary, such as: “human development,” “sustainable human development,” and “productive transformation with equity.” The expression “human development” has the advantage point of situating the human being at the center of development. The concept of human development, whose central dimensions are “equity” and “participation,” is a concept still evolving, and which opposes the neo-liberal notion of development. It conceives of a developed society as an equitable society, to be achieved through the participation of its people.
Like the concept of sustainable development, the concept of human development is very broad and, at times, even ambiguous. In the past few years, the United Nations began using the term “human development” as a quality of life indicator based on indices of health, longevity, psychological maturity, education, a clean environment, community spirit, and creative entertainment, which are also the indicators for a sustainable society, that is, a society that is capable of satisfying the needs of today’s generations without compromising the capacity and the opportunities of future generations.

The critiques of the concept of sustainable development and of the very idea of sustainability originate from the fact that environmentalism treats societal issues separately from environmental issues. The conservation movement arose as an elitist attempt from the rich countries to reserve large natural areas for the purposes of leisure and admiration. The Amazon, for example. In the face of these criticisms, the success of the ecological struggle today depends a good deal on the capacity of ecologists to convince the majority of the population, the poorest stratum, that it is not sufficient to clean the rivers, unpollute the air, and reforest the devastated fields in order for us to live on a better planet in a distant future. It is about concurrently providing a solution to the environmental problems as well as to the social problems. Ecology’s issues do not only affect the environment, but also impact nature’s most complex being – the human being.

The concept of “development” is not a neutral one. It has a very precise context within a progressive ideology rooted in notions of history, economics, society, and the human being himself. For many years, development was utilized by a colonizing vision, in which the world’s countries were divided into “developed,” “developing,” and “underdeveloped”… and these categories were assigned by measuring the standard of industrialization and consumption of each country. This perspective assumed that all societies should be guided by a sole means to achieve welfare and happiness, through the accumulation of material assets. Goals for development were imposed by the neo-colonialist economic policies of the so-called “developed” countries, in many cases resulting in a vast increment of misery, violence, and unemployment. Together with this economic model, with its at times criminal adjustments, were transplanted ethical values and political ideals that led to the destruction of peoples and nations. It is not surprising, therefore, that many people have reservations when one speaks about sustainable development. The development movement has created a “planet in agony.” Today we are conscience of an imminent calamity that will occur unless we translate our awareness into action and remove this predatory vision from development. If we hope to save the Earth, development must be conceived it in a more anthropological and less economic-centric form.

It seems clear that there is an incompatibility of principles between sustainability and capitalism. This fundamental contradiction moreover appears in the midst of all debates about the Earth Charter, which may render it nonviable. These terms are not irreconcilable in themselves, metaphysically. They are irreconcilable in the current context of capitalistic globalization. The concept of sustainable development is unthinkable and inapplicable in this context. The failure of Agenda 21 serves as evidence. In this context, “sustainable development” is as irreconcilable as the “productive transformation with equity” defended by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). How can growth and equity coexist, a sustainable growth in an economy that is reined by profit, by unlimited...
accumulation, by the exploitation of labor, and not by the needs of the people? Taken to its ultimate consequences, the utopia or the “sustainable development” project, puts in doubt not only unlimited economic growth, which is nature’s predator, but also the capitalist mode of production. This only makes sense within an economy of solidarity, an economy driven by “compassion” and not by profit. The question that we pose today is about the co-existence between market and solidarity: can a solidarity market economy exist or is a market economy, necessarily, an economy without solidarity?

In the last decades, the grave social and environmental problems and critiques about the current development model have generated a greater ecological awareness within society. Although this awareness has yet to give rise to significant changes in the economic model or in the course of governmental policies, several concrete experiences suggest that a growing sustainable society is on its way. One example is, the Conference on Human Settlements Habitat II, organized by United Nations in Istanbul, Turkey in 1997. At this Conference, specific examples were presented for combating the “urban crisis,” namely, violence, unemployment, lack of housing, transportation, sanitation, which contribute to the degradation of the environment and the quality of life. These experiences point to the birth of a sustainable city. Economic and social sustainability policies are gradually being created, and this constitutes a real hope that we will be able to, in time, confront “our global challenges.”

2. Sustainable Education

The sense of belonging to the universe does not begin as an adult, nor does this sense rise from a rational action. From infancy, we feel tied to something that is much greater than ourselves. As children we feel deeply linked to the universe and we regard it with a mixture of respect and astonishment. Throughout our whole lives we try to find answers to questions such as, who are we, where did we come from and where are we going, in short, what is the meaning of our existence. It is an incessant search that never ends. Education may have an important role in this process if it poses fundamental philosophical issues, and if it begins to work alongside understanding, in our capacity to become fascinated with the universe.

Today we are conscience that the purpose of our lives is not separate from that of our planet. Confronted by the degradation of our life on this planet, we have reached a true crossroad between a Technozoic path, which places all faith in the capacity of technology to pull us out of the crisis without changing our polluting and consumer-driven lifestyle, and an Ecozoic path, founded on a new healthy relationship with the planet, recognizing that we are a part of the natural world, living in harmony with the universe, characterized by current ecological concerns. We have to make choices. These will define the future that we will have. I do not believe that the above paths are complete opposites. Technology and humanism are not contradictory. But, it is clear, there are excesses in our lifestyle with regards to pollution and consumption that are not due to technology but rather due to an economic model. Our economic model has to be re-evaluated. And this is one of the roles of sustainable or ecological education.

Sustainable development, viewed through a critical perspective, has an excellent educational component: the preservation of the environment depends upon an ecological conscience and the formation of this conscience depends upon education. This is where the Pedagogy of the Earth
—or eco-pedagogy—comes into play. This pedagogy promotes learning the “meaning of things from daily life,” as stated by Francisco Gutiérrez and Cruz Prado in their book *Eco-Pedagogy and Planetary Citizenship* (1998). We find the meaning of life’s path, and discover new paths by hiking it and experiencing its context; not merely by observing the it. This is therefore, both a democratic pedagogy and one of solidarity. The research by Francisco Gutiérrez and Cruz Prado’s on eco-pedagogy originated from the preoccupation with the meaning of everyday life.

Education is linked to the time or space where the relationship between human beings and their environment is realized. This relation occurs on the level of feeling much more than on a conscience level. The relationship between man and nature happens on a subconscious level, and for this reason there is a need for an eco-training in order to bring it to the conscious level. This eco-training requires an eco-pedagogy. As underscored by Gastón Pineau (1992), a series of references are associated with this issue: the Bachelardian inspiration, the studies of the imaginary, approaches to transversality, transdisciplinarity, and interculturality, constructivism and the pedagogy of alternation.

We need an eco-pedagogy and an eco-training today, we need a Pedagogy of the Earth, simply because in the absence of such a pedagogy for the re-education of man, particularly the Western man, a prisoner of a Christian predatory culture, we will no longer be able to speak about the Earth as a home, or, as a haven, for the “animal known as man,” as Freire puts it. Without a sustainable education, Earth will continue to be considered only as the space that provides our sustenance and of our technical-technological dominance, the object of our research, essays, and at times, of our contemplation. But it shall not be the space of life, the space of our shelter, of “care” (Boff, 1999).

We do not learn to love the Earth by reading books about the earth or books about integral ecology. Our own experience is what counts. Planting a tree or a plant and watching it grow, walking through the streets or venturing into the forest, listening to the birds chirping on sunny mornings, observing how the wind moves the plants, feeling the warm sands of our beaches, or gazing at the stars on a dark night. When admiring the wonders of nature there are many opportunities of enchantment and of touching moments. It is logical that pollution and environmental degradation exist to remind us that we have the power to destroy such wonders and to incite our ecological conscience and move us to take action. To caress a plant, gaze in awe at a sunset, smell the perfume of a pitanga (Surinam cherry) leaf, or the guava leaf, an orange tree or a cypress, or eucalyptus tree... are various ways of living and permanently relating with this generous planet and of sharing our lives with all those who inhabit or form a part of it. Life does have a meaning, but it only exists within a relationship. As the Brazilian poet Carlos Drummond de Andrade once said, “I am a man dissolved in nature. I am blooming in every oak tree.”

Drummond could only express this here on Earth. If he were on another planet of the solar system he would not be able to say the same. Only the Earth is amicable towards humankind. Despite the fact that the other planets came from the same cosmic dust, they are hostile to man. Will there be other planets outside our solar system that harbour life, perhaps intelligent life? It is highly probably if we consider that the matter from which the universe originated is the same.
But for now, we only have one planet that is without doubt our friend. We have to learn to love it.

How does the principle of sustainability translate in the context of education? It translates by asking questions such as: To what extent is there meaning in what we do? To what extent do our actions contribute to people’s quality of life and happiness? Sustainability is a principle that recharts the course of education, especially its curriculum, goals and objectives. It is within the context of the evolution of ecology that the term “ecopedagogy” is born and still crawls, a term initially called “pedagogy of sustainable development”, whose meaning today now surpasses this significance. Eco-pedagogy is being developed as a pedagogical movement and as a curricular approach.

Like ecology, eco-pedagogy can be construed as a social and political movement. As any new movement in evolution, it is complex and may take different directions, sometimes contradictory. The term may be understood differently as are the expressions “sustainable development” and “environment.” There is a capitalist view of sustainable development and the environment which, by being anti-ecological, should be considered a “trap,” as Leonardo Boff has been arguing all along.

Eco-pedagogy also implies the reorientation of curricula in order to incorporate certain principles that it upholds. These principles should, for instance, serve as guidelines in the preparation of the content and the elaboration of textbooks. Jean Piaget taught us that curricula should contemplate what is significant for the student. We know this to be correct, but incomplete. Curricular content must be meaningful for the student, and it will only be meaningful if this content is significant for the health of the planet, in a broader context.

In this sense, eco-pedagogy is not just another kind of pedagogy. It only acquires meaning as an alternative global project, where concern is not merely about the preservation of nature (Natural Ecology), nor on the impact of human societies on natural environments (Social Ecology), but rather on a new model of sustainable civilization from the ecological standpoint (Integral Ecology), which implies a change in economic, social, and cultural structures. Consequently, it is linked with a utopian project: modifying the human, social, and environmental relationships that we have today. This is where the deep meaning of eco-pedagogy lies, or of a Pedagogy of the Earth, as we call it.

Eco-pedagogy does not oppose environmental education. To the contrary, for eco-pedagogy environmental education is a conjecture. Eco-pedagogy encompasses it and offers strategies, proposals and means for its concrete realization. It was precisely during the Global Forum-92, where environmental education was well discussed, that people started recognizing the importance of a sustainable development pedagogy or eco-pedagogy. Nowadays, however, eco-pedagogy has evolved into a movement and perspective of education even greater than a pedagogy of sustainable development. It is intended more for a sustainable education, for an eco-education, which has a much broader meaning than environmental education. Sustainable education does not focus only on having a healthy relationship with the environment, but with a more in-depth meaning of what we make out of our existence, beginning with our daily lives.

3 –Planetary awareness, planetary citizenship, planetary civilization
Globalization, propelled mainly by technology, seems to increasingly determine our lives. The decisions about what transpires in our day-to-day living seem to escape our grasp, since these decisions are made very distantly from ourselves, compromising our roles as subjects of history. However, this is not correct. As a phenomenon and a process, globalization has become irreversible, but not this type of globalization — this model of globalization we call “globalist” — to which we are subordinate today: the capitalist globalization. Its more immediate effects are unemployment, the deepening of the differences between the few who have a lot and the many who have little, the loss of power and autonomy of many States and Nations. We must therefore distinguish between the countries that are commanding globalization — the globalizers (wealthy nations) — from the countries that suffer globalization, the globalized countries (poor nations).

Within this complex phenomenon, it is possible to distinguish economic globalization, staged by transnational corporations, from the globalization of citizenship. Both utilize the same technological basis, but with opposite logics. The first, subjecting States and Nations, is headed by the capitalist interest; the second globalization — the “other” globalization, as it is expressed by Milton Santos (2000) is carried out through the organization of Civil Society. Globalized Civil Society is the reaction that both Civil Society as a whole and the NGOs, in particular, are giving today to capitalist globalization. In this respect, the Global Forum -92 1 constituted one of the most significant events of the latter part of the twentieth century: it gave a greater impetus to the globalization of citizenship. Today the debate surrounding the Earth Charter is becoming an important factor in building this planetary citizenship. Today, any pedagogy conceived outside of the framework of the new globalization and the ecological movement, has serious conceptualization problems.

“Foreigner I will never be. I am now a citizen of the world,” are lyrics sung by Brazilian singer Milton Nascimento. If the children of our schools could comprehend the profound meaning of the words in this song, they would be doubtlessly starting a true pedagogical and curricular revolution. How can I feel like a foreigner in any territory if I belong to one single territory, the Earth? If I am one of the Earth’s inhabitants, than there is no place on this Earth that should be foreign territory. If I am a citizen of the world, I have no boundaries. Cultural, racial, geographic and all other differences weaken in face of my sense of belonging to Humanity.

The concept of planetary citizenry (world) is based on a unifying vision of the planet and of a global society. This becomes evident in various expressions such as, “our common humanity,” “unity in diversity,” “our common future,” “our common nation,” “planetary citizenry.” Planetary Citizenry is an expression adopted to express a set of principles, values, attitudes and behaviours that demonstrate a new perception of Earth as a single community. Frequently linked to “sustainable development,” it has a much broader meaning than its relationship with economics. It deals with an ethical point of reference that cannot be disassociated from planetary civilization or from ecology. The Earth is “Gaia,” a living super organism in evolution, and what is done to her shall reflect upon all of her children.

The culture of sustainability presumes a pedagogy of sustainability that becomes aware of the great task at hand of providing the training of a planetary citizenship. This process is already on course. Education for planetary citizenry is starting through numerous experiences that, although many of them local, direct us toward a type of education that aims at making us feel like members of the Earth and beyond to experience a cosmic citizenship. The challenges are enormous, both for the educators and for those responsible for the educational systems. Nonetheless, certain signs are becoming evident within the society itself, which point to a growing search not only for spiritual and self-help issues, but for a more profound scientific knowledge of the universe.

Educating a planetary citizenship goes beyond a mere educational philosophy, or the enunciation of its principles. The education for a planetary citizenry would imply a revision of our curricula, a reorientation of our world vision on education as a space for the insertion of the individual, not in a local community, but rather in a community that is both local and global at the same time. Education, then, would not be as Émile Durheim explained the transmission of culture “from one generation to the next,” but rather the grand journey of each individual in his own universe and in the universe that surrounds him.

Today’s type of globalization is much closer to the phenomenon of a universal market, which is just one type of internationalization. And even this internationalization which is based on the market can be viewed as a cooperative globalization or as a competitive globalization without solidarity. Between the absolutism of states and the invisible hand of the market, there can exist (and does exist) a new market economy (there are markets and markets!) where cooperation and solidarity prevail, instead of ruthless competitiveness, a solidarity market, the true economy of sustainability. In view of the above, we need to build the “other globalization” (Milton Santos)2, a globalization founded on the principle of solidarity.

Globalization in itself is not problematic since it constitutes an unprecedented process of advancement in the history of humankind. What is problematic is competitive globalization, where the market interests are put above human interests, where the interests of nations are subordinated to the corporate interests of the large transnational companies. Thus, we are able to distinguish a competitive globalization from a possible cooperative and solidarity globalization which we sometimes call the process of “planetarization.” The former is controlled by market laws, and the latter bases itself on ethical values and human spirituality. The Earth Charter, as a universal code of ethics, should address this latter type of globalization not only through a proclamation of what the States could do, but especially because of the impact that its principles could have on the daily lives of the planetary citizens.

Where does the ecological movement situate itself in this topic? It is important to observe as Alicia Barcena did in the preface of Francisco Gutiérrez’s book, that the formation of an environmental citizenry is a strategic component in the process of democracy building. For her, an environmental citizenship is truly a planetary one, because in the ecological movement, the

---

local and the global elements come together as one. The clearing of the Amazon jungle is not just a local issue: it is an aggression against planetary citizenship. The ecological movement deserves recognition for bringing the issue of planetarization to the forefront. It was a pioneer in the dissemination of the citizenship concept, in the context of globalization, as well as in the practice of a global citizenship, and consequently today global citizenship and the ecological movement form a part of one single field of social action, the same field of aspirations and sensibilities. However, planetary citizenship cannot only be environmental in nature because there are already global agencies with environmental policies that support capitalist globalization. It is one thing is to be “a citizen of the World” and quite another to be “a capitalist of the World.” The construction of a planetary citizenry still has a long way to go within capitalist globalization.

A planetary citizenship should have as its objectives to overcome inequality, the eradication of bloody economic differences and the integration of the cultural diversity of humankind, that is, a culture of justipeace. One cannot speak of planetary or global citizenry without exercising an effective citizenship at the local and national levels. A planetary citizenry is, in essence, an integral citizenship; as such, it is an active and full citizenship, not only as far as social, political, cultural, and institutional rights are concerned, but also in economic-financial aspects as well. It also implies the existence of a planetary democracy. Therefore, contrary to what neo-liberals uphold, we are very far from an effective planetary citizenry. It still remains as a human project, inaccessible if just limited to technological development. It needs to be part of the project of humanity itself, and it will not be a mere consequence or byproduct of technology or of economic globalization.

4 – The Eco-Pedagogy Movement

This journey through the millennium is characterized by the unprecedented technological progress and also by an enormous political immaturity: while the Internet places us in the center of the Information Era, the human government continues being very poor, generating poverty, deterioration and endless wars. Five hundred (500) transnational companies control 25% of the world’s economic activity, and 80% of all technological innovations. Capitalistic economic globalization has weakened the National States, imposing restrictions to their autonomy, subordinating them to the economic logic of transnational companies. Gigantic foreign debts burden some nations and prevent the introduction of equalizing social policies. Transnational companies work for 10% of the world population situated in the wealthiest nations, generating a tremendous exclusion. This is the actual scenario of the journey – a scenario even more problematic due to the lack of alternatives.

The classical paradigms are exhausting their possibilities of adequately responding to this new context. They cannot manage to explain this journey, much less, travel in it. There is a crisis of intelligibility, and many false prophets and charlatans offering magical solutions. A new spirituality has arisen and the marketing evangelists are taking advantage of it. The response given by the bureaucratic and authoritarian state is as deficient as the neo-liberalism of the market god. Neo-liberalism proposes more power to the transnational companies, while statesmen propose more power to the State. In the midst of all this is the common citizen who is neither a businessman nor the State. The solution seems to lie beyond these two classical
models, but definitely not in an alleged “third path” that only intends to give an overlife to capitalism by sophisticating political domination, economic exploration, and provoking a massive social exclusion. The solution seems to originate today from strengthening the control of the citizen over the State and the Market, having Civil Society strengthen its capacity of governing itself and taking control of development, what Jurgen Habermas (1984) calls the “public citizen sphere”. This is where the important role of education comes into play; the training for active citizenship.

We may envision that a sustainable community lives in harmony with its environment, it does not harm other communities — neither today’s, nor tomorrow’s. And it should encompass both an ecological and ethical-political commitment, nourished by a pedagogy or a science of education and a defined social practice. In this sense, eco-pedagogy, inserted into this socio-historical movement, forms citizens capable of choosing the indicators of quality of their future, and becomes a totally new and extremely democratic pedagogy.

The Movement for eco-pedagogy gained momentum particularly from the First International Symposium of the Carta de Terra or Earth Charter on the Perspective of Education, sponsored by the Paulo Friere Institute, with the support of the Earth Council and UNESCO, held August 23-26, 1999 in São Paulo, and that of the First International Forum on Eco-Pedagogy, held March 24-26, 2000 at the Faculty of Psychology and Education of the University of Porto, Portugal. From these two gatherings the guiding principles contained in the “Eco-Pedagogy Charter” were conceived. Below are a few of these principles:

- The planet as a single community.
- Earth is the mother, a living organism in evolution.
- A new conscience that knows what is sustainable, appropriate and that makes sense for our existence.
- Tenderness towards our home, planet Earth.
- Socio-cosmic justice: The Earth is a great beggar, the greatest of all beggars.
- A biophile pedagogy (promoter of life): get involved, communicate, share, have an interrogative approach, relate, become motivated.
- A concept of knowledge that admits that it is only integral as long as it is shared.
- To walk with a purpose in everyday life.
- An intuitive and communicative rationality: emotional, not instrumental.
- Re-educating the way we look at things, the heart, the feelings.
- Culture of justepeace and of sustainability.

The Classical pedagogies were anthropocentric. Oppositely, eco-pedagogy begins from a planetary consciousness (gender, species, kingdoms, formal, informal, and non-formal education...). Let us broaden our outlook from an anthropocentric vision towards a planetary consciousness, and a new ethical and social reference: the planetary civilization.

The Eco-pedagogy movement emerged in the bosom of the Earth Charter initiative, and it supports the discussion process of the Earth Charter, indicating an appropriate methodology, that is more than a methodology of simple governmental “proclamations,” or of a formal declaration, but rather it is the translation of a lived process and a critical participation of the “demand,” as Francisco Gutiérrez puts it.
5 – Earth as a paradigm

Gaia equals life. Many people understand that it is illegitimate to envision the Earth as a living organism. The Earth does not have this quality. We view life only through the perception of our own lives and of the life of animals and plants. It is a fact that we do not have the distance that astronauts have when in space, but we can have the same distance astronauts have in terms of time, even more dilated than our own lifetime. The “Gaia hypothesis,” which conceives Earth as a complex living and evolving super organism, finds its support in its billion year history. The first cell appeared over 4 billion years ago. From there onwards, life’s evolutionary process never ceased to become more and more complex, forming interdependent ecosystems within the macro-system of the Earth, which is in turn a micro-system of the Universe. We will only be able to perceive the Earth as a living being when we distance ourselves from it in terms of both time and space.

In order to envision ourselves as members of the immense cosmos, in order to commit to new values based on solidarity, affection, transcendence and spirituality, in order to supercede the logic of competition and capitalist accumulation, we must trudge through an arduous path. No change is easy. It will never come as a result of prayers, nor from our pure wish of changing the world. As Paulo Freire taught us, changing the world is urgent, difficult, and necessary. But in order to do so, we need to know the world, read the world, understand the world, not only scientifically but emotionally, and above all, become involved in it, organizationally.

Rationalism should be condemned, but without condemning the use of reason. For it is the rationalist logic that lead us to pillaging nature, and death in the name of progress. Reason has lead us to discover planetarity. The poetic and touching assertion of the astronauts that the Earth is blue was only possible after millions of years of rational control over the laws of nature. We must therefore condemn rationalization, without condemning rationality. When landing on the Moon the first time, astronaut Neil Armstrong claimed, “This is a small step for man and a great step for mankind.” This was possible through an extraordinary collective human endeavour that took into consideration all the technical, scientific and technological knowledge accumulated over the ages by humankind. This was not an insignificant achievement. If we are able to form networks within networks in the entangled world of planetary communications through the Internet, this was only possible thanks to the use of our imagination, intuition, emotion, as well as reason, and the gigantic human suffering needed to discover how we could live better in this planet. It is true that we have done it erroneously at times. We consider ourselves to be “superior beings” because of our rationality and we exploit nature in a careless disrespectful manner. We do not relate to Earth or to living things with emotion, affection or sensitivity. In this respect, we are just crawling, but we are learning.

We are presently witnessing the birth of planetary citizen. We have yet to imagine all the implications of this unique event. At this point in time, we feel, perceive, and get emotional about this fact, but we cannot adapt our minds and our lifestyles to this spectacular occurrence in the history of humanity. We realize like Edgar Morin (1993) has, that it is necessary to ecologize everything, and upon doing so, we try living in our planet whose inhabitants discovered planetarization. What can we do right now? We can question ourselves profoundly
about the paradigms that have guided us so far, and attempt to live under a new paradigm that views the Earth as one single community. Then we can continue walking together, so that we may be able to still get “there” on time.

BIBLIOGRAFIA


Contemporary spheres for the teaching education: Freire's principles

Margarita Victoria Gomez

Net-education, Paulo Freire Institute, Brazil.
Valley of the Green River University, Three Hearts, UNINCOR, Brazil.

Introduction

The IT culture, or cyberculture, which is generated through ever present information, as well as interactive and interconnected documents, and reciprocal and asynchronous telecommunication, is built and updated between groups, and distinguished by not having a fixed center or directive.

By not being neutral in cyberspace, the interconnections refer to cultural differences, which are updated through every exchange which generate correlating webs—in the Freirean sense—and by being reorganized and updated with specific purposes, they lead us to think of this act as something universally new, since it incorporates all of the contents connected to their semantic loads.

It is also worth noting that this dynamic reality that is rich in symbolic links coexists with the reality of some 15 million illiterate people, 13% of the Brazilian population, according to the data of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). On a world-wide level, however, over 875 million people are not ability to read or write, of which a high percentage are women.

This illiteracy situation has worsened with the introduction of information technology, which enlarges the distance from the education/preparation of people, creating the so-called "digital divide". In this sense the UN has recently called for "digital education" and for "technological balance". Through this call an attempt is being made to use information technology as an instrument of civil, economic and social progress through a more equal sharing of technology.

We are being challenged to respond to this call with a proposal of literacy as the right to express the word, and not as a gift to be donated by rich countries that seem to think that they have to "eradicate" illiteracy as if it were a weed that has to be eradicated at the roots.

What can be done, however, to invert those problems that arise by favoring education of adolescents and adults that have been, and continue to be, deprived of the possibility of education? In order to develop the preparation of educators by making them work in favor of the excluded population, beginning with teaching to read and write as an undeniable right of all human kind, all possible resources were used for an alternative proposal for Education, with personal presence or utilizing online methods, through which diverse social levels, educators and learners could be reached during this educational process.

In view of this situation, the preparation of educators of adolescents and adults, with specific educational strategies, is being taken over through governmental or private agreements by several institutions that are traditional in this area. However, there are those who consider it

---

1 PhD in Education, São Paulo University, Brazil. margarita@paulofreire.org, mvgomez@usp.br
insufficient in front of the growing demand and the Brazilian reality. For this reason, one of the purposes of the online Education of Educators for Adolescents and Adults would be to help overcome the illiteracy situation in Brazil or in countries with similar conditions, contributing with a public policy of teaching to read and write that includes more complex ways of reading and writing. The concern with this work of preparing the educator through long distance education is not limited to the educator for adolescents and adults; it involves all educators and learners.

**Teaching to read and write versus teaching digital reading and writing? (Literacy versus digital literacy?)**

Would Paulo Freire, as a dialogical educator, be concerned with digital reading and writing education? Would he have taught his Method in the IT and "knowledge" era? Of one thing we can be certain: Paulo Freire loved to write letters: "Cartas a Guinée Bissau", "Quatro cartas aos animadores e às animadoras culturais", "Professora sim, tia não: Cartas para quem ousa ensinar", "Cartas a Cristina, "Carta aos amigos Cipriano, Elói, José e Neidoson", "Pedagogia da indignação: cartas pedagógicas e outros escritos". All of these letters are unfinished, as for Freire writing represented a political act where he was committed to his knowledge, his ethics, and his lovingness.

What would Paulo Freire do with e-mail? In one of his works he refers to his experience with the internet. He said that the social production of the language and technological instruments that "reduce" space and time, as well as with those where human beings interact better in the world announce what technology could be.

A short time ago, my grandson Alejandro Dowbor called me, telling me that on his Internet connected computer "fell" a message of a German scholar asking for my address. He answered and added the number of my fax. Fifteen minutes later I was already speaking with the German teacher. Thanks to technology. If my mother, who died in 1978, would have come back to Earth and heard my dialogue with Alejandro, she would never have understood anything.(1)

Paulo Freire (1994b:155) has already raised the question of technology for the reading and writing education of adults from the first cultural circles held in Pernambuco:

These were circles formed within beneficial societies, soccer clubs, district associations, and in churches. The educators were in charge of preparing the creation of a circle, visiting the congregation club or the parochial church or the district association and talking about the idea of a pedagogical work. Once the proposal was accepted, a large promotion effort was done in the area, using popular resources (...). When two or three circles had been created, the educators made a thematic survey among the participants, which was studied by us, in a team, at the home office of the action group. Once the themes had been "treated", they were organized in a program to be discussed with the participants of the circle (...). We prepared the material for the discussions, taking into consideration the available resources (...). I wonder what we could have done with the technological resources available today...

Questions like these allow us to think and develop an educational proposal in a digital web in order to prepare educators for teaching adolescents and adults in Latin America, based on the
central idea of Freire's popular education principles. While saying this it must not be forgotten, as already mentioned, the enormous differences that not only the exclusion of basic education but also the technology are causing.

This awareness comes from the responsiveness and demystification of access and usage of technology, in order to understand education as a process that begins and has to be developed through the entire life of the individual and his group. It implies a progressive incorporation of more sophisticated communication elements that are generated by a more complex reading and writing culture and behavior.

In the same way that reading and writing represented a technological and therefore cultural progress – magnified and generalized by the print media – digital education is also based on a technological and cultural action. The generalized usage of the computer network and the culture that was created around it originates relationships of an immense social, economic and political impact on both local and global levels.

Digital education or literacy, within the context of Freire's education, refers to both the recognition of basic knowledge and the learning of information technology skills, such as the operation of network connected computers and the critical understanding of reality. Thus, independent from the education or basic preparation of a person, a critical understanding of the knowledge embedded in the digital world is indispensable.

The skill of using, understanding and transforming information in multiple formats within an extensive range of digital texts presented by computers allows us to approach the concept of digital literacy. This concept goes far beyond the simple ability to read. It implies providing a meaning to the act of reading giving signification and understanding this is to give a meaning. It becomes an act of reading and writing, of knowledge of what is seen on the screen, of what is heard in the sound files, of what is perceived in the simulations and animations, of what is build along with others in the search of useful texts for daily activities.

If we consider that the production of reading and writing is a social and historical process, the contemporary person will carry out this practice creating new abilities: abilities which are necessary for obtaining and expressing knowledge vocally or by writing. One needs this knowledge for the understanding of texts and a creative usage of the computer and networks. Therefore some universal concepts and practices of the digital world, which show a certain homogeneity, favor, from the cultural point of view, the integration of local groups among themselves and with the virtual educational community. Certain operative systems, where the utilized symbols and icons and the manner of interchanging texts are almost standardized, may serve as an example.

It is also important to mention that the cultural values of a virtual educative community raise from the collective production of reading and writing by correctly using electronic mail, and principally from the cultural repertoire that allows the asking of questions to others, and to participate with opinions and studies in discussion / decision groups in the internet. This proceeding provides identity to a group and in a certain way it helps to construct subjectivity.
A process of inter and transculturation is admitted to the new knowledge through allowing the socialization of an accumulation of experiences and maintaining some universal values. The production of knowledge in the sphere of internet is constructed through several visions of the world, cultures and disciplines that exceed a specific scientific reference.

To think of the transcultural construction of knowledge in the range of the internet means to assume intercultural education as a possibility in this new territory, as it allows a specific dimension of the subject, its educative achievements and paths, which, on the other hand, grant a certain identity and subjectivity. This also implies thinking of the construction of knowledge within the socio-historical web of the cultural processes in Freire's intercultural education, during the search for an emancipating education of the human being some potentials of transculturation on the communication level, dialogue, where some alteration of the participant and others can be found.

Thus, within the virtual sphere, the preparation proposal of educators for adolescents and adults, as well as for general educators, takes advantage of the theoretical and practical nature of these dimensions, investigating the universe of students and teachers as a fundamental field of theoretical construction, which allows them to search for other realities and to obtain new theoretical constructions, or of reading and writing.

The dimension of socialization of knowledge is based on thinking "of a literacy where humans, since they are not its patient [of the system], its object, are allowed to develop impatience, or vivaciousness, the characteristic of the states of search, creativeness, demand."(2)

And in the internet sphere, this could only be possible if the citizen were able to use and understand the processes of creating messages and forwarding them, in other words, to declare his/her word, "to write to the world". Once this can be achieved, the practices of digital literacy would provide the maximum benefit to the individual and the community of adolescents and adults.

By considering the gnostic question, where the attempt is made to understand the creative process of knowledge within the digital sphere in its multidimensional aspect, it has to be established what knowing means in this context, what we can get to know and in what it implies to know what is known. And all this without neglecting the particular relation subject/object, i.e., who knows and what is known, and through which real/virtual actions of the subject, and which are the actions on the tridimensional objects that allow one to know.

This getting to know is "interweaved" to a fundamentally ethical question, which is the democratization of access to the internet and the permanence of the educators within the creative knowledge process. Thus, it turns out to be impossible to deny the methodological dimension of digital literacy within the context of education as being a political, gnostic and aesthetical act, which considers the subject in multiple relationships and in a multitude of dimensions. And by considering these elements, the pedagogical planning assumes the necessary autonomy for working with people.
Freire's educational proposal within the virtual space

In both the National Plan for Literacy of MEC – Ministry of Education and Culture, Brazil, 1963, and in the MOVA_SP, Brazil – Literacy Movement for Adolescents and Adults of the City of São Paulo, 1989, led by Paulo Freire, there were two principles which were fundamental for the processes to succeed: the indispensable political goodwill allowing this unprecedented viability that is critical literacy to take place, and the beginning of the process being based on the "content" and knowledge of the students to be taught, a "content" and knowledge donated and shared during the act of learning.

Once this is established, the digital literacy hereto referred will be committed to those principles. But would it be possible to work with the Paulo Freire Method in a virtual space? In spite of the fact that there is no answer to this question, we must consider the principles of higher education and the fundamental aspects of the Method in this new cultural sphere, which are potentially liberating from human relationships through dialogic usage of the new information and communication techniques.

Some of the principles and elements of Freire's pedagogy are especially highlighted in order to deliberate just how these meetings in virtual space could become educational.

a) The Culture circle would be the learning space and also the methodology. A teacher instigating dialogue and inviting the students to participate in the current debate should coordinate it; this culture circle could include up to twenty-five students. The goal would be to get the participants' word and texts to circulate, and to attain the theme that gives origin to the text that will be queried later on. During the debate the intention is to disclose, and investigate; to expose situations, practices, dynamics and experiences that allow the collective construction of the knowledge of the debated situation. The Circle indicates a stop "in motion" for the cogitation and the action, it has not only a mirror effect.

b) With the Paulo Freire Method everybody learns and teaches: as this is a proposal where the object is to share the teaching and learning, the communication and the dialogue are of fundamental importance in the relationship established in the Internet. By allowing the interpenetration of the basic elements of trust, humility, respect, lovingness, and hope, they allow a certain autonomy in the process of teaching / learning. The emphasis of this process lies in that what we learn in relation to and mediated by the world, and we can say that entering the internet implies a meeting with the others, but more than that, with oneself, by questioning our autonomy for both learning and teaching. There is no holder of wisdom, but a learning community where everybody learns / teaches and where together they get to increase knowledge. The characteristics of the online courses provide a distinctive relationship between teaching and learning, constituting what Moacir Gadotti recognized as a "learning society".

c) The relationship educator / learner: is established on respect, ethics and the acknowledgement of each other's knowledge. In this relationship the task of the educator and the learner will be to perform the authorship of the reading and the writing within the means of communication. The "reading of the world" offers strategies for critical discovery,
encoding/decoding, and exploring the text previously written and saved in the computer memory, (which allows evaluating the teaching ability of the educator in this century). The responsibility of the teacher will be that of mediating between the learner and the computer, i.e. the entire complex information network, "setting queries for the learners on the content that mediates them"(3), while maintaining the critical debate in order to avoid to creating amateurs on the web.

d) **The political character of the teaching act:** understanding today, in a global context, that power cannot be owned, but that power is wielded, making us aware of the multiple interpenetrations undergone by the educative web. On the other hand, it is this web that will allow educators to exercise the power of liberating themselves from their own practices, as long as it is generated from accomplished activities and assumed conflicts/problems, thus constituting the true practice of civic behavior.

We can say that the computer network offers the possibility of a solidarious conjugation between students, community and "school" for an educational movement, and this connection allows us to visualize the political character of the educational meetings in the internet sphere. Thus, what makes a network powerful is the intention, the vision, the position taken by those who produce within the web. The Paulo Freire Institute, for example, having an objective of transformation and dialogic relationship, is able to take advantage of this technology and can further an educational practice distinguished by its emancipating dimension.

It sounds like a utopia, but despite the fact that everything happens very fast nowadays, and that the world is becoming smaller, those who hold information also form a small group in this "capitalismo mixuruca" [insignificant capitalism], as Paulo Freire used to say. And as alternative minorities are becoming constantly larger, there may be a greater possibility in web of solidarity, also in the digital world.

This principle of political character implies the preparation of the reading and writing teacher / educator for the critical usage of more sophisticated communication elements. Within the Freire context, the teaching abilities are reading and writing, as well as knowing how to face the complex daily tasks in conjunction with the human communication, using for this the writing, dialogue and communication in telematic networks. It is understood that the work favors conceptual literacy and policy, as long as it serves to disclose, to take apart and to recreate complex acts of reading and writing based on an odd feeling about what is obvious.

e) **The educator, a Being of relationships and the dialogue aspect of the educational act** are elements that cannot be separated: the dialogue is "the meeting of humans that have been mediated by the world in order to give the world a name."(4) According to Freire, humans are a "being of relationships", "connective", which distinguishes his process of dialogic education. From the anthropological point of view, we can say that education is "communication, it is dialogue, and it is not the transfer of knowledge, but a meeting of interlocutor subjects searching the significance of meanings."(5)

From this prospective, of intending "to be more", the action of the educator searches for the **unprecedented viable thing**. The concept of the "unprecedented viable" was marked by Paulo
Freire, "it is actually an unprecedented thing, however not clearly known or experienced, but felt, and when it becomes something "distinguishably perceived" by those who think in an utopic way, they then know that the issue is no longer a dream, that it can become a reality."(6) When we realize that in truth there are possibilities to build alternatives that we did not perceive until this moment, which have not appeared yet but are viable, in other words, that there are concrete conditions to do them, they have to be accomplished. This is an ethical and political question, if we want to build a critical education. Thus, the actions in virtual space become relevant as soon as, in this unprecedented viable accomplishment, the subjects are allowed "to be more" and therefore develop the level of awareness of reality. Paulo Freire would say that the real subject is the one who wants to be, and this concept of the "unprecedented viable" gets us also closer to the virtuality.

The inclusion in virtuality is presented as a movement of "becoming someone else" and expresses a search for homogenization. The dialectic of the real/current in a different dimension, expressing the being and staying in the new world invented by culture.

The process of understanding this reality may be enriched with the three moments proposed by Paulo Freire: a) A semi-intransitive consciousness, which is characterized by being centralized around the vegetative forms of life, where the subjects "adhere" to the objective reality, being "submerged" in it, dependent and submitted to it. This hinders their critical approach to reality; b) A naive transitive consciousness, where the subject makes a simple interpretation of the problems, widening her/his ability of interpreting reality, and breaks the silence in relation to her/his context. She/he is aware of the phenomena, but does not know how to keep a certain distance in order to analyze them, and her/his spoken word is manipulated by others; and c) The critical transitive consciousness through which the subject is enabled to understand certain reasons that explain the way humans "are beings" in the world. Through this awareness she/he understands that reality is a process under constant construction, and therefore reality is not something stated once and for all, nor can it be defined according to the categories of those who hold socioeconomic power. The educator – learner, the social subjects with their actions and projects, contribute with creative thinking in this process, based on the epistemological curiosity that is restless, dialogic and creative.

This process of "being now" and the permanent "occurrence" introduce another concept in this educational proposal that is education as a possibility: this concept is supported by a general utopia conceived as an anticipation of a better society than we have today, of mutual respect, autonomy and solidarity. The difference to a utilitarian education aimed at total quality, efficiency, effectiveness per se, and a good deal in business as basis. Within this coexistence, the cooperation, sharing, communication, the dialectic relationship, cultural assets, information, technique, diversity, autonomy, solidarity, freedom and human consciousness are distinguished in Freire's proposal of a solidarious education web.

We understand that social relations occur through the correlation of power, which are in permanent motion, while the subject is under a construction process. Thus, the fact of knowing that we are unfinished and under permanent development establishes that we are always becoming something, or that we are under continuous movement, that which turns into something new. The communication, the dialogue and the meeting occur between the subjects
that arrive with their questions more than with their certainties, and this delineates a cultural, present/virtual space, so that education, in this sense of possibility, can happen.

The fact that we know that we are unfinished, that our humanity is undergoing a permanent construction process, jeopardizes the severity and the lovingness of the educational act and moves us towards an education as art. Therefore the playfulness, the epistemological curiosity in working border situations, the simulations, the multiple languages, the history, the diversity and the graphic/formal harmony in the presentation of the digitized information is present in liberating education.

The up-to-dateness of the Paulo Freire Method, within the context of his pedagogical proposal for virtual space, offers elements and concepts, devices that allow thinking of them within the information and communication era as being a gnostic and anthropological process. The investigations done by a group of educational communicators in Latin America have also shown that the studies on education and communication in this region are weaved around Paulo Freire's pedagogy.

The dimension of the Method and the strategies used for the development of the project of preparing the educators through the internet allows for reading of the world from the web, obtaining the theme or the generating context forming the theme and the query, while the difference, otherness and updating of these educators make the transforming action of the practice itself possible.

Recognizing the moments of the Method, as they were imagined for the virtual sphere, may be of help for this cogitation:

1. Reading of the world within an actual and virtual web: "The reading of the world precedes the reading of the word, and that is the reason why the posterior reading of the second cannot dispense the continuity of the reading of the first."(7). The available strategies of reading the world from a web, within the internet context, are based on communication and dialogue, as the daily life of each learner has been recognized through a manner of speaking, writing and in the diversity of texts that circulate in the web. The real/virtual acquires potentials that interpenetrate in order to give way to the "real" that we know.

2. Thematic investigation in the web of literacy teachers: educators declare themselves responsible for mediating between the learner and the web weaved by subjects, information, knowledge, skills, and orienting within the virtual space so that the practice in presence will be effective. The scheme of the text that was produced through this interactivity will be socialized in the web, allowing the creation of a hypertext space based on the theme, text, and the generating web of educators and learners.

3. Forming the theme in the web: carried out by the educators / learners themselves, the theme is related to literacy, and is formed by daily situations; during its query process, a consciousness-raising can occur, arising from the same wish to produce changes in their reality.
4. **Query in the web**: intends to get over that first moment of awareness where the subjects find themselves adhered to the reality of this border-situation. Knowing that the preparation of literacy teachers still has to be developed and perceiving that the digital literacy makes the situation worse, results in putting their anguishes and problems in the web, but also their knowledge and skills. A demystification process and a new construction are necessary.

5. **Difference, otherness and updating in the web of literacy teachers**: the recognition of the social differences between educators, of the vocabulary universe, the border-situation, the observation of the real/virtual space and the reading they perform involves a syntax language and semantics, linguistic and semiotic elements that reveal aspects of the education culture of the educators, which is significant when updated to distinguished experiences of each participant. Also when the web allows admitting the otherness, generating a friendly reception to the other dialoguer.

6. **Co-participation of the subjects in the preparation of Educators**: the vision of the Brazilian Paulo Freire Institute is that a proposal for the preparation of Educators within a socioconstructivist prospective would prepare the learners of literacy for the critical exercise of their civic behavior, be it in favor of their integration or reintegration in the job market or for their participation in professional updating programs that are offered by several governmental institutions and by the civil society. This preparation includes basically the following goals: a) reading and writing based on a dialogical and consciousness-raising methodology; b) developing a pedagogical practice that allow the educators to offer to students the acquisition of reading, writing, calculation and complex manners of reading and writing in a digital universe; c) developing the sensitivity and creativity for other languages; d) cogitation about elements of the educational practice that allow the development of the critical and auxiliary consciousness in the preparation of a new ethic in the relationship of human beings, among themselves and with respect to nature.

In this sense it is important to develop the content through dialogical learning strategies and a continuous evaluation process. Thus, it can be attained that the relationship educator-learner would allow a pedagogical dialectic practice between theory-praxis and a permanent movement of action-cogitation-action on the performed work. But presently the use of information technology and distinguished ways of knowing have to be made available to learners/educators, allowing them to work with multiple languages and technologies that meet critically the requirements of the modern world, thus contributing with the complete preparation of the human being.

It may be important to recall some words from Paulo Freire, heard in some conference, which can be found in the site of the Paulo Freire Institute ([www.paulofreire.org](http://www.paulofreire.org)). Reading is not to stroll through the words, reading is having the deep and aesthetical conviction of what is being read. If this country would take the exercise of reading seriously, of the word being associated to reading the world, with all its aesthetical implications of "beautifullness" and liberty to create, then to teach reading and writing, with such a prospective, would be part of pedagogy, of democracy.
Understanding this process of reading/writing in terms of contents to be developed, it can be considered as: a) Reference for the reading of the World; b) Theme and generating context; c) Concepts of traditional and on web Education; d) The Paulo Freire Method and its up-to-dateness in the digital context; e) Contributions of the Linguistics and semiotics to the literacy teaching through the internet; f) working with projects and generating contexts in a socioconstructivist prospective.

Paulo Freire's methodological principles that sustain this proposal of preparation in the web include meetings in presence and at distance, each one with a distinguished treatment. Today we can see that the online mode shows a wide response in the social, economic and political life, and therefore it is necessary to understand and critically update the conditions of life, of work of the educators. Giving a new meaning to the educational practice, the new elements, strategies and resources of the electronics and the telecommunication would allow that the educational space could be dimensioned in a new way. Thus, through the liberating education in the web, the proposal is that the orienting teacher, in addition to presenting queries to the learners, also motivates them to take a position and participate as active subjects in the process of knowledge.

Some tools and specific strategies of the online universe that were made available through the internet and by a course generating program, such as: chats, forum, use of e-mail, videoconference, notebook and web-page may contribute significantly with this process, as long as these are used in a correct and critical way. They also can serve as spaces for the construction of new identities and subjectivity.

We confirm here that for both, the moments in presence and the virtual moments, the dialogue with the participants, the participation in workshops – real and virtual – as well as the socialization of the activities to a collective work are fundamental. The proposed activities for the evaluation should not only compromise the interactivity, but also the development in processes through the dialogue between educator and learner, related to both the operating manner and the cogitation on practice. The evaluation implies a permanent follow-up of all the elements that, directly or indirectly, may be of influence in the development of the educational and pedagogical work. For this purpose, intra and extra school factors will be considered, as well as institutional and non-institutional factors, and the evaluation of students and teachers. During the activities, the learner may elaborate her/his project with the orientation of the educator, within the interdisciplinary possibility, handing it over at the end of the meetings as an integration work.

At this point the question of the traditional educational structure related to place, time schedule and environment of online education comes up. These have to be negotiated, taking into consideration the activities of the participants, the time zone and the activity of the institution, which is the home office for the activities. There is also to be considered that the legislation and ministerial dispositions are inflexible for these preparation courses online and are not exceedingly committed to the progress of the teacher and his group in this type of course.
In case of existing official institutional agreements, the participation can be certified by educational institutions that are not concerned with the bureaucracy of the act, but with the adequate processing in the practice of the literacy teacher.

**Contemporary spheres for the preparation of teachers**

The software *First Class Collaborative Classroom*, version Fc5.506 (Spanish), Fc5.611 (Portuguese) and Fc5.623 Fc6.011 (English)- FCCC of the Metalink company, has been utilized as a platform for the creation of courses in the Virtual Campus of CLACSO (Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciências Sociais). In 1999/2000 the Paulo Freire Institute performed works in conjunction with CLACSO and offered a course for educators in Latin America, with the support of the Work Group on Education and Society. At this occasion, 50 scholarships were offered to teachers of Latin America that showed interest in participating in the online course: "Crossing Borders: initiation to the work of Paulo Freire".

CLACSO's Intranet and the methodology proposed by the teachers of the Paulo Freire Institute represented a democratic progress of the internet usage, because it made it possible for educators from over ten countries to study and investigate on the web, which is Freire's educational proposal, constituting a true educational community.

The course was developed in Spanish and Portuguese, and was oriented by a dialogical methodology, taking advantage of the contribution devices of the Virtual Campus. The material (bibliography and programs) were sent to each participant in a kit in CD-ROM.¹

The Virtual Campus exists within a registered domain of a server (CLACSO or IPF). Through software, it operates with the concept client/server, with the HyperText Transference Protocol (HTTP) for web applications and with HyperText Markup Language (HTML), which is the most utilized language for homepages. The Virtual Campus is the real space where an educational institution is located in the virtual sphere (CLACSO or IPF, for instance), conferring its own identity through pages published in the internet. The access is granted with the identification and the password of the user, as the domain has a determined memory capacity for operation.

The organization of a Virtual Campus may be oriented to do the same as it is done in a traditional institution, or yet it can take advantage of the space, utilizing a new organizational culture through meetings, relationships, subscription, space, class times, etc.

Through the Virtual Campus the educators can connect at the same time, in an easy and effective way; only a few orientations are necessary for the installation and the usage of FirstClass, as its interface is graphic and intuitive, and utilizes Windows and Macintosh operational systems (multiplatform). The user-friendly aspects of the program favors the teacher-student relationship, the individual / collective work, and allows the sharing of knowledge and skills through conference rooms, e-mail, files and a permanent forum. The access of the participants is done by e-mail, through a navigator of the internet, allowing a complete visualization of the conferences, messages, and agendas. For the telework, the program offers options with specific icons, such as: favorites, selection of message types, agenda / diary,
notification of messages, fax/e-mail, webradio, videoconferences and connection time (log) to the campus.

For the first course, specific rooms have been created for each meeting: "Freire's proposal", "Paulo Freire Method", Pedagogical Praxis", "Education Legacy", Freire's Coffee Shop" (an informal meeting room), and "Freire's Coordination", this one only for teachers and administrators, in which administrative information circulated with the coordination between teachers of the Paulo Freire Institute, allowing that all the messages with observations and comments reach the students at the same time.

The created Freire community is still growing in the virtual sphere. In 2002 the courses on Paulo Freire resulted in the production of a book in the web: "Lessons of Paulo Freire crossing borders: completing experiences", with works written by Latin-American educators through the internet. This book was launched at the World Social Forum. It is the result of a collective work carried out by educators and researchers from various countries, includes texts in Portuguese / Spanish and is part of the bibliography of the current course.

One can say that the current Virtual Campus of the Paulo Freire Institute, which was developed in a Teleduc program, arises with a dialogical proposal for education that presently extends to this free platform/software: teleduc.institutopaulofreire.org.br/

**Preparation of educators through the internet**

In this methodological proposal the preparation of educators in the web intends to improve the professional performance, allowing the creation/elaboration of specific texts and the socialization of relevant information, without withdrawing them from their activities. The information functions in favor of the literacy teaching practice and of the educational institutions, as long as updated and critical learning spheres are created. In this digital sphere, the educators reorientate critically their daily activities, giving them a new meaning.

Education through the Web is a relatively new phenomenon in Latin-America. In most of the cases, the usage of the Web continues to support a traditional model of education, or a neo-behaviorism. In order to avoid perpetuating this concept, perpetrating the error of reinforcing old educational models through the internet, it is intended to articulate education and civic behavior.

Unfolding Freire's pedagogy, the proposal for education through the web establishes the following goals:
I – amplifying the opportunities for education with "social quality";
II – generating a dialogue and critical cogitation space on the educational practice, attempting a new theoretical construction of this practice;
III – furthering alternative experiences of teaching/learning through the IT telecommunication;
IV – inciting a new look at the multi, inter and transculturation that is present in the different educational practices, which should lead to a solidary construction of knowledge;
V – propitiating means that contribute to the constitution of a new sociability, of social practices based on ethics, solidarity, collaboration, dialogue and otherness.
Conclusion: Education related to a new organization of knowledge

We are involved in a culture that organizes the knowledge based on the IT usage, requiring a new atlas that situates humans in the globalized world and allow them to circulate. Michel Authier and Pierre Levy(8) understand that this particular organization rests upon the possibility of a dynamic representation and administration of knowledge. The philosophy of implication, "Cosmopedia" as they called it, involves us in the mobile form of an image that is materialized through relative positions, proximity, colors and light. Through the navigation and in the immanent level of knowledge, people construct their object of knowledge and involve themselves in it, in order to confer existence to it. Opposed to the fixed image of the text in the encyclopedia, the Cosmopedia allows a variety of expressions in the virtual reality, taking advantage of the plurality of enunciation of discourse that arise in the internet.

Paulo Freire said: first we do, then we give it a name. In these first years of the new century we begin to walk through this rift of information with all the risks involved.

We recognize in the internet the great narrative of this century, a space of knowledge where the educators, at an immanent level, reconstitute the beings, the signs and the things, finding again a dynamic relation of mutual participation. According to this principle, the universe has the form of a labyrinth, from where the mirror and the retracing do not readily allow the exit for this world to be noticed, however, it is our mission to discover it. Jorge Luis Borges suggested that the reality is not only appearance, but also feeling and imagination and that the world is not chaos, but a labyrinth, a cosmos that conceals itself, and we have the task to discover it.(9) In this cultural universe the greatest oddity for the master/teacher is to maintain his epistemological curiosity integrated into a collective work, being aware of the forces that had put him near to exclusion, challenging him to fall out when his protagonism is no longer creative and original. This makes the process perverse and generates new paradox situations.

These pedagogical experiences in the virtual space forward to a dimension of the relationship educator-learner. The external memory and the internal feeling acquire a new value. The quickness, the transparence, the swiftness, and the capacity for circulation, transformation and reposition of information are some of the elements that incorporate into the vocabulary and cultural repertoire. The "simple" doing by liberating the own memory has turned the educators dependent on the web, but free to think for themselves in relation to the Other. A new educational culture is being generated in relation to the surrounding technology, perhaps a new language and culture, where semantic and semiotic, linguistic and non-linguistic elements coexist. Activities such as selecting, classifying, interpreting, inserting, responding, reproducing, copying, pasting, representing, creating, digitizing, synthesize, encapsulating, drawing, hiding, visualizing, saving, deleting, simulating, globalizing, plastic money, magnetic card, password, login, encryption and writing in cryptography integrate this cultural universe that implies this gnostic dimension.

In the reinventing of culture there are few certainties, but educators can free themselves from ostracism by exploring and exposing themselves in cyberspace, setting their production in
motion and relating it to the themes of common concern, reintegrating it into a basis of knowledge that is permanently updated.

As with Paulo Freire, we continue to be radical in being concerned with teaching with the materials of our time, and even then we are called obsolete, as he was, when we propose to educate to a point where technology does not present problem, i.e., to educate for human solidarity. The prospective is the preparation of educators for adolescents and adults that are beyond technology and that, despite knowing it, put it under discussion.

Therefore we can state that long distance education through the internet from Freire's prospective is supported by the principles of popular education, that is: critical proximity to reality, radicalism (there is no neutral education), announcement, political organization, text-context relation, dialogical methodology without disowning the culture of silence that operates in the internet and this what it generates.

In this perspective, the literacy and the internet are not incompatible, nor do they disturb or obstruct the preparation for the performance of skills of a more complex reading and writing in the digital sphere, by understanding the latter as a place, object and strategy of knowledge. We understand that the anthropological dimension of the occurrence takes us through paths we never had suspected, where we remain eternal hikers searching for ourselves, the other and the world. And in this respectful opening to others and in the virtual space, where we recognize that there is no individual "I think", but as a collective act there is a "we think", which is one of the fundamental principles of this proposal that has its accomplishment in a "web" that connects already lived experiences with others that are being lived now.

Equal to our Master, we understand that education takes place in locations other than the "school". Today we can conceive that Freire's proposal contributes to a better understanding of education in the digital sphere, as long as it is considered as a device to learn well, as well as a knowledge sphere of new relationships, identities and subjectivity.

Notes

4 FREIRE, P. Pedagogia do oprimido, p.107
5 Idem ant. p. 67: 69.
6 FREIRE, P. Pedagogia da esperança. 1992, pág.207

Bibliography


GOMEZ, Margarita V. *Releitura de Paulo Freire para uma teoria da informática na educação*. In:


Introduction and overview

The actions of people, especially during the modern period, a period which is now reaching its limits, has had a profound effect on human society all over the world and on the earth. The result is a crisis of unprecedented dimensions. This paper suggests that the developing concept of peace needs to be seen in this context. We also need to understand that the universe, and we, as humans as an aspect of it, is evolving.

This is the context for peace education. The many dimensions of this complex activity include understanding and ameliorating the negative effects of our particular historical moment; recognizing the many forms of violence that exist: direct, structural and cultural, and particularly the violence inherent in the deep culture; appreciating the emergent cultures of peace; and working to enhance the capacities, values and attitudes that make have been undermined so that we can become more fully human.

Our current moment

Our particular moment in history is situated at the limits of the modern period. Our moment is a crisis point of unprecedented magnitude, a period of time in which human activity has endangered the survival of our own species and of all present and possibly future life on earth.

The problems of our age are evident in the problems that confront us, issues like widespread war and armed conflict, including the spectre of nuclear war, environmental degradation, resource depletion and a range of social problems.

These problems are rooted in the particular assumptions, worldview and social practices of the period of history we now call modernity. Modernity, the social organization and way of being of our culture, and modernism, its worldview, are aspects of what can be described as the modern paradigm.

Taking a broad view, modernism is looked at in its social context as the way things developed, but not as the only possible way. As we reach the limits of modernity, other paradigms of the past and of the possible future are emerging. This paper examines the limits and possibilities of modern thinking and puts it into the context of pre-modern, modern and creative and deconstructive aspects of post-modernism.

Peace and peacelessness: evolving terms
Peace is an evolving concept. At earlier points in human history, peace was seen simply as the lack of war, although in some faith traditions, notably in the East, it was conceptualized as inner peace. Over the past few decades, however, a greater awareness has developed of the dimensions of peacelessness. Poverty and inequity of resources, threats to the environment, lack of human rights, racism and sexism are all being understood as elements of a lack of peace. These issues have been the focus of social movements, concerned scientists and others for some decades. More recently, they have been understood as aspects of what has been called the global problématique- an interconnected, interlocking set of problems that will have to be worked on together in an integrated way. The question of peace and peacelessness needs to be examined in the context of a global civilization, a context that has two aspects: the historical-developmental and the ecological.

Today we understand violence as not just the direct, overt violence of war, armed conflict and physical violence; rather it is everything that prevents human beings from reaching their full potential. It is the violence inherent in structures and institutions, as well as the underlying cultural violence of our way of thinking and doing things. This type of violence is the most difficult to see, but probably the most foundational since it provides legitimation for the other types of violence. An even deeper form of violence is the violence of the deep culture, of the paradigms or worldviews that we take so much for granted that we are unaware of them.

**The evolving universe**

As the modern age reaches its limits, we are discovering and reclaiming what has been lost, including a sense of the earth as alive and the universe as a purposeful and evolving. Our current historical moment offers unprecedented opportunities for transformation, and the presentation will invite the participants to a dialogue about our place in an evolving universe. Key concepts include a metaphysics based on consciousness, the notion of our future as a common global one, and the reunion of fact and value. Our collaborative task is to be developed as a dynamic process involving the reclamation of what is valuable in our past, an honouring of the important aspects of the modern project, and a creative interplay between the deconstructive and constructive aspects of post-modernism— and beyond.

A vital aspect of our task is the reclamation and writing of a new story, a story with many authors including the earth itself.

**The many dimensions of peace education**

Peace education is not a static or circumscribed activity. As our understanding of peace expands, and as our consciousness of where we are and what is to be done develops, so, too, does our understanding of peace education.

One aspect is *education about peace*. This includes both learning about the many forms of peacelessness that characterize our particular historical moment and recognizing the many forms of violence that exist: direct, structural and cultural, and particularly the violence inherent in the deep culture. A key notion to be explored is the violence inherent in modern systems of
education. It also involves learning about the dynamic concept of peace and appreciating the emergent cultures of peace.

Peace education also involves *education for peace*. Critiquing and countering the modern notion of objectivity, peace education is embraced as an engaged task. We do not simply study about violence; we can work to find its causes, act to prevent it and to ameliorate its effects. Education for peace also includes working to enhance the capacities, values and attitudes that make us more peaceful and more effective as peace practitioners.

Finally, peace education is *education through peace*. We need to move beyond equating education with modern schooling, and to recover and create other aspects of what it could be. This includes arts based education, an emphasis on story-telling, developing a different kind of school and learning culture that enhances other human capacities. It is also education that respects and hears the voices that have been silenced—voices of indigenous peoples and those from non-Western cultures, voices of women, and our own inner voices. In the context of our moment, peace education is doing what we need to allow us to become more fully human in all our dimensions.