

Author: Hans Svennevig, Subject Leader PGCE Citizenship UCL Institute of Education, Council Member/Trustee and Co-Editor Teaching Citizenship Journal

Title: Our Responsibilities for Peace Education for the Next Generation

Photo on File:

Pull-Out Quote 1: I am going to do something different at the start... I am going to ask you the reader for your time.

DESIGNER: Put this pull out quote in the centre spread of the article if possible over page 1 & 2.

DESIGNER: No other pull-out quotes for this peace to draw the reader in.

Introduction:

In this piece Hans shares with Teaching Citizenship Journal a write-up and slight modification of a conference keynote that he presented on 21st May as part of the 'The Possibilities of Peace Education: Evidence and Opportunities' QCEA online conference from Brussels, Belgium. Hans considers how we all need to think differently about how we frame peace for the next generation, some of the resources and techniques to use to develop skills and knowledge in this area. Hans considers peace education as part of citizenship education and discusses how this is being included in teacher education. Most of all Hans asks a moment of your time.

Article:

I am going to do something a little different at the start of this article. I am going to ask you the reader for your time. This is a bold move, as we all are short of time and we want to read and get through things as quickly as possible. I ask that if you are reading this, and have no time, come back to it later. I do not ask this lightly – you may indeed read the whole piece and feel that I have missed something out – I am sure I have. But I ask this of you so that you can explore the elements of peace education that I tried to present to the conference delegates when this was originally presented. I thank you for allowing me the indulgence of your time.

As you cannot immediately ask me any questions (you are welcome to write to me) I want to pose some questions to you. I would like you to spend some time – maybe a minute or so to consider and reflect on each question before moving on to the next. The power of silence in our busy and chaotic lives brings with it a form of inner reflection, inner peace.

(DESIGNER = BOX for Questions in middle of text)

In peace education, how can we teach young people about:

Drone warfare?

The impact of COVID on structural inequalities?

The consequences on warfare due to the climate emergency?

Increased militarisation and securitisation in nation states in Asia, Europe and the Americas?

Escalating conflict in places like Palestine/Israel, Northern Ireland and Myanmar?

Continued turmoil in nations such as Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Mozambique and Cameroon?

The continuing global arms race, including the increased proliferation of nuclear weapons?

Countering violent extremism?

Social injustices?

Violent knife/gun crime in the streets?

Divisive messaging leading to increases in 'othering'?

The large displacement of people around the world and their treatment?

(DESIGNER = Box ends.)

Thank you reader for thinking through these questions and giving them some real pause and reflection. When considering these very hard hitting questions, you may have started to think about all the problems and complications in the world, the challenges we all face in our various nations related to authoritarian governments, the creeping securitisation of the state, the limiting of freedoms and so on. To me when I wrote those questions and thought about my role at UCL, Senate House, kept coming to mind. Senate House was the inspiration for the Ministry of Truth in George Orwell's 1984. It speaks to me of the doom and gloom of what might happen, and often creepingly seems to be happening, or the consequence in doing nothing.

When thinking about those questions that I presented before and thinking about our responsibilities we may feel that the urgency compels us to talk and consider what will happen if we don't do something, *anything*. It may compel us to consider the very big problems, which in turn may make us and others to feel very small and hopeless and focus on the worrying thoughts, and that these are all really too overwhelming to do much about. That we are in fact hopeless to make a difference.

The Norwegian sociologist and founder of peace and conflict studies Johan Galtung says "the view that one cannot meaningfully work for both absence of personal violence and for social justice can also be seen as essentially pessimistic as some sort of intellectual and moral capitulationism" (1969: 186). The next generation has enough doom to experience by watching the news, yes they need to be informed but they are often more informed than we, through their connections to social media – and an education many of us never had.

I pose that our responsibility to them is to provide hope in a world of hopelessness to provide the skills that the next generation can use to make an impact, to consider and understand the world around them, to be accepting and encouraging, kind and compassionate, to build transformative relationships with the big questions, to consider notions of peace education in all subjects and themes, and to be empowered through their agency to build a better tomorrow with small steps. To build empathy and to lead the way. As you develop teaching materials for big questions like those that I have posed think about how to reframe the discussions. Think about your responsibilities, the glaring obvious are the problems we face – let's talk more about the solutions and provide an opportunity for hope, for learning about what can and often is being done.

It is our role to reframe how we engage with young people, and how we talk to them, the expectations we have of them as citizens of our communities, the skills they possess to help us to be better. This is how we can start working toward notions of as Galtung said the two types of peace, negative (absence of personal violence) and positive peace (absence of structural violence). It is our responsibility to do so.

In my own work at UCL Institute of Education I have the privilege and opportunity to educate the next generation of citizenship teachers with strong citizenship subject knowledge and citizenship pedagogic skills. As well as the various curriculum requirements of the PGCE, and principles of social justice, human rights and democracy I've worked to intersect peace education into the curriculum to ensure that these new teachers are appropriately trained to teach such elements effectively. As we know Citizenship education is often contested in the UK and England as much as it is throughout other nations and so at the IOE we enable citizenship teachers to have a full breadth of the notion of citizenship education in England as first conceptualised by Crick and added to over time by various changes in the national curriculum, as well as the rich work of individuals and groups such as Ajegbo, Starkey, Jerome, Kerr, Osler, Hantzopoulous, Bajaj, Hess, ACT, Young Citizens, the Politics Project, Parliament Education Service the list goes on and on.

As Professor Hugh Starkey notes citizenship education is about 'learning to live together' and this is a key element of peace education. Citizenship education in the English context is about our rights as democratic active citizens and it is about exploring these rights in the classroom, peace education and positive peace is clearly an essential component of these. We work to develop student teachers knowledge of the curriculum, but also the skills that they will come to develop in their own students – to participate and lead active citizenship, transformative peace education, sustainability education, human rights, and political democratic organising. At the Institute of Education we are also working with colleagues to increase peace education more widely among students and staff wherever they may be found.

I ask you to look back at those questions that we reflected upon earlier again. How can you as a citizenship educator or as a non-specialist educator of any other subject specialism reframe the answers? To empower and enrich our students no matter their age? How can you give actionable hope to the next generation?

So let's think about how we pose the answers, how we share and frame the discussion, how we can pose these with positive local, national and international actions that have led to change, that have led to peaceful resistance and campaigning for human rights and peace perspectives, that have led to the skills and knowledge that we can bring about to resolve these complex themes. I ask you to ponder how can we bridge negative and positive peace, inner, interpersonal and wider world peace?

I suggest that we can start to do this through empathy. Through celebrating and recognising difference. Through educational resources such as Fly Kites not Drones inspired by Afghan Peace Volunteers, or resources from CND Peace Education, or QPSWs Razor Wire and Olive Branches or celebrating the success of the ban on nuclear weapons (a huge success). We can consider these notions of peace when using resources from ACT on the deliberative classroom or building resilience project or the range of ideas and materials in Teaching Citizenship Journal for example on Protest Songs or Critical Media Literacy. We can build peace when we consider the role of Race, LGBTQ+ rights and decolonising the curriculum through schools and university reading lists to incorporate wider voices. We can use resources from the Peace Education Network such as Teach Peace Primary or the soon to come Teach Peace Secondary. Resources from The Black Curriculum, Diversity Role Models, CitizensUK, Protection Approaches, The Refugee Council, the Peoples History Museum, The

Migration Museum. We can utilise the voices of film makers like Leon Oldstrong and films such as <https://www.fairtrademovie.co.uk/> or social influencers that tear down the walls of othering to explore what unites us, food, travel near and far. We can use the voices of students themselves like pupil power set up by Aliyah York or the work of the Hamilton Academy #OurVoiceYourChoice students. Why is peace education part of citizenship education? Because for citizenship educators the list of possibilities to improve the lives of our young people, and give them the skills to live and make hopeful change in a complicated world are endless.

Let us also think about our own everyday language and how we can work to change that, to be hopeful and inspiring, recognising the hard work needed but enabling us all to work towards tangible small, medium and long term impacts. Let's think about resources and skills that we can use promote inclusive opportunities. Let's talk about how movements build and grow over time and how small steps lead to positive action. Let's empower young people to know that small things can and do make a difference. That they **REALLY** do make a difference. Just look at the Friday climate strikes and the attention we now have on that issue if you don't believe me. Let's empower agency, that is our responsibility to the next generation. We owe it to them to give them the skills to make change, and then helping them to make the change.

As I draw to the end of this article I thank you the reader for that time you gave me at the start, and I hope that what I have written about has given you a few ideas, has made you feel a bit more hopeful about how things are, and have reminded you that you can and ARE galvanising young people to lead us forward. You might feel that I am being overly positive, I too am human and see how things are all around, but with the privilege that I clearly have I need to do all I can to work towards hope.

I just want to remind you of what all of this is about, it's about our universal human rights wherever or whoever we are. It's about our rights to peace. And let's not forget the enormous hope and hard work that went into creating the Universal Declaration of Human rights after war and how countless young and old people have benefitted throughout the years through that work. We must continue our responsibilities to the next generation to enable them to continue that work, to strengthen it. As QCEA's 2018 report indicates we need to move away from just good intentions we need to continue to raise awareness and build secure peace education learning opportunities that everyone can access regardless of background, identity or citizenship status... as we are all citizens, and so we need to make sure that these places of peace education are conflict-sensitive.

There is work to do – but let's be proud and hopeful of that work to inspire others and enable the next generation to lead. Because none of us are free, and safe from incivility or structural violence until we all are, that we as individuals only have dignity when we all have dignity.

When I developed this for conference these resources inspired me:

DESIGNER: Another box.

Watch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59IUqc0JSSQ> #OurVoiceYourChoice students from Hamilton Academy Leicester talking about the power of citizenship education

Listen:

<https://freshedpodcast.com/hantzopoulos-bajaj/> Maria Hantzopoulos & Monisha Bajaj; Education for Peace and Human Rights

Amit Puni's Podcast on Citizenship education: <https://citizenshippodcast.podbean.com/>

Read:

-Violence, Peace and Peace Research; Galtung: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/422690>

-Educating for Peace and Human Rights; Hantzopoulos & Bajaj: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/educating-for-peace-and-human-rights-9781350129719/> Anna Liddle writes a great review for this edition of the journal.

-Children's Rights Education in Diverse Classrooms: Pedagogy, Principles and Practice; Starkey & Jerome: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/childrens-rights-education-in-diverse-classrooms-9781350062825/> I have written a review in this journal.

-The Prevent Duty in Education, Impact, Enactment and Implications; Buscher & Jerome: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-3-030-45559-0>

-Lessons from Lockdown; Breslin: <http://www.breslinpublicpolicy.com/transform-education-dot-org-dot-uk/>

QCEAs 2018 Report: <http://www.qcea.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Annual-Report-2018.pdf>

Engage:

Association for Citizenship Teaching: <https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/> includes journals. The

Building Resilience Project: <https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/act-building-resilience-project>

The Deliberative Classroom Project: <https://bit.ly/3tTi5lb>

Young Citizens: <https://www.youngcitizens.org/>

Peace Education Network Organisations: <https://peace-education.org.uk/about-us> includes Teach Peace Resource & range of resources from different organisations.

Do:

Spend moments of time to engage with practical ideas of small, medium and long term change that young people can do to inspire themselves and others and have meaningful real impact & therefore bring hope! We all need time to be creative and to replenish our minds – carve out the time for you to do that.