

Peace Education Curriculum For Salvadoran Elementary School-aged Children

Christy Darr
cjd47@georgetown.edu
Georgetown University, College
Psychology Major
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Advisor: Dr Jennifer Woolard, Ph.D.
Jlw47@georgetown.edu

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Abstract

This thesis is concerned with creating the philosophical and theoretical foundations for a peace education curriculum to be implemented in El Salvador in the fall of 2010. First, the history and current day characteristics of El Salvador are explored in order to create a context for the curriculum. Next, peace pedagogy itself is examined, drawing in large part from Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed and taking special interest in both the form and content of a peace education classroom. Finally, the foundational elements of the curriculum are proposed. The form elements of the proposed curriculum are class structure, unit themes, and setting. The content elements proposed include studying peacemakers, and using art, drama based on Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed, and English as a second language as praxis points for peace education. Finally, a conflict transformation model, based upon the Problem Solving Peace Train developed by MJ and Jerry Park of Little Friends for Peace, is proposed.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Inspiration for the Project	6
Context: El Salvador	10
El Salvador’s civil war (1980-1992).....	10
Historical context.....	10
Political unrest: the beginning of the civil war.....	12
The dirty war.....	13
The role of the Church.....	14
US involvement.....	19
The end of the violence.....	21
El Salvador today.....	22
Political parties.....	23
Second-generation war trauma.....	25
Culture of hope.....	29
Peace Pedagogy	32
Peace Pedagogy	34
Form.....	35
Content.....	37
The Curriculum.....	39
Class Structure	39

Unit Themes..... 42

Setting..... 43

Peacemakers..... 44

Art as a praxis for peace 45

Drama as a praxis for peace 47

English as a second language as a praxis for peace 49

Conflict transformation model..... 52

Concluding Thoughts..... 56

References..... 58

Appendix A: Maps..... 63

Appendix B : The Peace Train..... 65

Inspiration for the Project

Why do I want to write a peace education curriculum for my thesis? Why for El Salvador? To use a term from my philosophy class last semester, it is my existential imperative; I must and no one can do it but me. My life, experience, thoughts, desires, knowledge, and, most of all, love put me in a unique position to create this program.

In the spring of 2009, I studied abroad in El Salvador through Santa Clara University's program *Casa de la Solidaridad*, House of Solidarity. Through this program, I lived in community with 26 other American students in three houses. I attended classes three days a week at the University of Central America (UCA). I spent two days a week in a "praxis" site, a low income Salvadoran community with two other students in my program. Both in the application materials and in the orientation upon arriving, we as students were told that we were not being sent into the communities to serve but also to learn from the Salvadorans, to enter into true reciprocal relationships, a reciprocity which would be impossible if we were in the mindset of serving—which implies that we were in a superior position than our Salvadoran community members. Thus, the time we spent in Salvadoran communities is intentionally referred to as "praxis" which means reflection in action (Freire, 1993). The word "praxis" is meant to emphasize the contributions each of us has to offer, both Salvadorans and students. As American students, we were challenged to get to know the Salvadoran reality and the Salvadoran people, leaving our preconceptions and any band-aid solution we might have had at the door.

My praxis site was Calle Real, comunidad Dolores Medina, an urban community that was formed in the mid 1980s by families forced to relocate from the countryside as a result of the civil war. The people who live in this community are materially poor, like the majority of the country. Upon walking into the houses, it is obvious which families have a family member

working in the US sending back money and which do not – 22.3% of families in El Salvador receive remittances (Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, 2009). The houses are small and close to each other. The streets between them are not for cars, but for pedestrians. Often a group of young people can be found playing soccer on the street in the mid afternoon or evening.

Because of a scarcity of human and material capital, children are only in school for hours a day, either in the morning or the late afternoon. Thus children spend a lot of time around the community and one of my major roles in the community was to teach English to children when they were not in school. I taught one group of children in the morning and one group in the afternoon. In reality, though the English teaching component was secondary: teaching and learning English was the reason we met, but my focus (under the direction of the co-directors of the program and my site coordinator) was on creating a safe space for the youth – a space where they could be free to express themselves and be children, a space where we could talk about our emotions and play. In fact, my favorite days of class were the days we studied emotion in English. We learned the words “happy,” “sad,” “mad,” “tired,” and “confused” to name a few. For each, we drew an emoticon representation, and we would make a face and voice to match. Together, we yelled “I AM ANGRY;” we yawned, “I am tired;” we laughed, “I am happy;” and we cried, “I am sad.” Along the same theme, I asked them to draw pictures of times they had felt various emotions.

For the rest of the semester, in class or outside of class, they would come over to me and say, in English, “I am ____,” to which I would respond “Y por qué, dime porque estás ____?” (“and why, tell me, why are you ---?). Then we would have a conversation about the reason they were feeling the way they were feeling. Several times my students would tell me “I am ANGRY” and when I asked them why, they would respond that it was because of me, because I

had not given them a star for class that day, or that they had wanted to do this activity instead of that one. We would talk through it. I would apologize for making them upset and explain why I had done what I had done. This studying of emotions became the starting place for the legitimization of self-expression as well as an opportunity for conflict resolution, which they initiated by sharing their emotions. It is from this unit on emotions that my vision for this curriculum stems. I want to use teaching English as a “praxis” to peace – peace within oneself and with others. At the same time, I do not want English to become associated as the language of peace, so I am also including other praxis points, such as art and theater. Peace is something that is holistic and multicultural. This will be reflected in the structure of the class.

For me, El Salvador was a place of great learning and discovery about myself and about my country, the United States. From the Salvadorans, and more particularly from the recent martyrs, I learned that in life the good and the bad, the happy and the sad, the joyful and the horrific cannot be divorced from one another. Rather they live side by side. I am implicated in the reality of El Salvador. I am implicated by the actions my country took during the civil war, causing it to last years longer, costing the lives of thousands more people. I am implicated because I am a human being, just as they are, and just as you are. We are all in this together. Solidarity.

In order to create this curriculum, first the Salvadoran context must be explored and understood so that the curriculum developed is appropriate and context specific. Next, the theories and philosophies of peace pedagogy will be examined and applied to the Salvadoran context. Finally, the foundational philosophies and practices of my curriculum will be developed, taking into account both the Salvadoran context, peace pedagogy, and my own

experience teaching in El Salvador and working with the organization Little Friends for Peace in an afterschool program in Washington, D.C.

Context: El Salvador

El Salvador's civil war (1980-1992)

Historical context.

The recent civil war in El Salvador, which began in 1980 and lasted until 1992, has deep historical roots that continue to influence daily lived realities in the country. Beginning in 1821, indigo (along with staple grains) was the main cash crop in El Salvador (Lopez, 2008). Then, a synthetic substitute for indigo was developed in Europe in 1856 and the market crashed (Lopez, 2008). In reaction, the powerful elite, known as *Los Catorce* ("The Fourteen Families") turned to coffee crops to fill the gap left by the failed indigo industry (Lamperti, 2006). The name *Los Catorce* implies that there is one wealthy powerful family in each department of the fourteen departments in El Salvador. Although it is not quite that extreme, it is the reality that, out of the 5 million people in El Salvador, only a few thousand make up the oligarchy (LeoGrande, 1998). Due to soil and weather conditions, coffee grows best in the mountainous volcanic regions, thus the wealthy elite, through the government, acquired vast amounts of land suitable for coffee *fincas*, forcing the lower class to move to the plains (Lamperti, 2006). According to Menjivar (1980), 40% of communal land was appropriated by *cafetaleros* (coffee *finsa* owners) (Lopez, 2008). According to Fuentes (2002), in the case of cooperatives, 73% of the land passed into the hands of 5.68% of the new coffee elite and, by 1895, the majority of the deputies in the senate were *cafetaleros* (Lopez, 2008). The government was controlled by the wealthy land owners in the legislature, soon to be partnered with the military which took control in 1932 (Lopez, 2008).

By 1970, cotton and sugar had been introduced and comprised about 30% of El Salvador's exports (Peterson, 1997). Cotton and sugar can only be grown in the flat land; thus again, the wealthy elite-controlled government took the land from the natives and *campesinos* (peasant,

country person, literally one who lives in the *campo* or countryside) (Peterson, 1997; Lamperti, 2006). In the late 1970s, the oligarchy owned 60% of the nation's farmland, the entire banking industry, and most of the nation's industry in general (LeoGrande, 1998). Meanwhile, 60.6% of the population owned land that was too little to support their family while another 26.1% of the population was completely landless (LeoGrande, 1998).

In order to support their families, *campesinos* would hire themselves out to coffee *fincas*. However, these *fincas* only needed a substantial amount of workers for three months of the year, at harvest time. Thus, before the 1970s, entire towns were be deserted as whole families left in search of work on a *finca* (Lopez-Vigil, 1990). Often, they returned home leaner than before, but continued to go year after year because they had no other option (Lopez-Vigil, 1990). One *campesino*, under the pseudonym of Don Lito, said they lived "like dogs, poor dogs" (Lopez-Vigil, 1990, p. 6). A fellow student in my program, Julia Gabbert (personal communication, 28 November 2009), had the opportunity to accompany some Salvadorans in harvesting coffee, as part of the accompaniment she learned about the conditions of coffee picking:

A coffee picker works everyday for three months from November through January waking up early, picking coffee on a "dueño's" [owner/boss] *finca* getting as much coffee as they can. They take the coffee back down the mountain, another two hour hike wearing flip-flops and a 100lb to 150lb sack of beans on their back. The whole family takes part in this including 8 year old kids. Once they get to the bottom, they must "escoger" [literally "to find"] or sort the "madura" [mature] red ones from the green ones that are not yet ripe and bitter. This takes until about 5pm, and the truck comes to take their beans, for which they get about \$40 every two weeks. And this is their life. We learned that the coffee goes to the Nestle Corporation which has a history of not being the friendliest to their workers or the third world countries who rely on them. Also, these *fincas* are full of fertilizers and pesticides that can do some serious damage to the workers health with extended exposure.

It ended up that we were not able to experience this to the fullest because the coffee season was coming to an end, but the worker season had not. What we did was called "pepinar", or picking up the coffee beans off the ground that had fallen from the bushes. So we went to a nearby area instead of all the way up and worked for 3 hours searching

for whatever beans we could scrounge up. This work is much more time consuming but money is money and 10 lbs will get you a dollar. So after 3 hours of work, and combining 6 peoples' efforts, we were able to almost make a whole 80 cents! It's basically like we were living a sweatshop, and I will never buy non-fair-trade coffee again.

Coffee picking involves the whole family. It is hard work for very little money, yet this was the life that was relegated to a majority of people, struggling for sustenance.

In 1932, in several towns in the department of Sonsonate, to the west of the capitol, self proclaimed Communist, Farabundo Martí led a peasant uprising against the oligarchy (Lopez, 2008) In response, Dictator General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez ordered their massacre, resulting in somewhere between 10,000 to 30,000 dead (LeoGrande, 1998; Lopez, 2002). This became known as *La Matanza* (The Massacre), and set the precedent for government reaction to any “subversive” behavior. From 1932 onward, the military ruled El Salvador, guarding the oligarchy and maintaining the established order through force (LeoGrande, 1998).

Political unrest: the beginning of the civil war.

On October 15, 1979, a group of young officers, along with some civilians, staged a coup (Berryman, 1994). As I learned in my history class with Gene Palumbo, an American journalist who moved to El Salvador during the civil war and who is respected throughout the country, not enough “house cleaning” was done; although the head of state, President Carlos Humberto Romero, was removed from power, many upper level officers retained their positions. A *junta* (literal translation “together) of five people, both officers and respected civilians, were placed in control. However, the officers reconsolidated their power so that the new government was powerless, a mere figure head, while the oppression grew worse (G. Palumbo, History of El Salvador’s civil war class lecture, 16 January 2009). As a result, the *junta* resigned in protest

and a new *junta*, again merely symbolic as the military retained control, was put into place (G. Palumbo, History of El Salvador's civil war class lecture, 16 January 2009).

The dirty war.

To the oligarchy, the uprisings in the late 1970s and early 1980s were reminiscent of the 1932 “La Matanza” uprising and the belief persisted that the only effective way to deal with civil unrest was bloody suppression (LeoGrande, 1998). This belief dominated the military strategy throughout the civil war. As guerrillas could not be easily identified, the military (with US aid) resorted to zone purges, using the 1932 massacre as proof of the effectiveness of the “kill the seed mentality” (Danner, 1993). The military would compile a list of names of subversives in a zone who would then be collected and killed (Danner, 1993). Deeper in the *campo* (the countryside) and farther away from the city, everyone was considered a guerrilla supporter and so everyone was at risk (Danner, 1993). Descriptions of guerrillas would be circulated, such as there is a guerrilla who is a young female wearing jeans and tennis shoes. The next day there would be a pile of bodies of young women wearing jeans and tennis shoes (G. Palumbo, History of El Salvador's civil war class lecture, 27 February 2009). The countryside became a dangerous place to live, and therefore many people fled to the city, hoping to find safety. Lupita, one of the cooks at *Casa de la Solidaridad*, and Juana, one of the women from Calle Real, were two such people.

Massacres were not uncommon. On December 10, 1981, the US-trained Atlcatl battalion entered El Mozote, a small town in the department of Morazán (*Figure 1*, Appendix A) (Berryman 1994). Marcos Díaz, a wealthy and influential business man had been informed earlier by an officer that the army would be in Morazón near El Mozote, but that if civilians in El Mozote stayed in their homes, they would be safe (Danner, 1993). This assurance of safety

prompted an influx of *campesinos* from surrounding areas seeking refuge. Upon their entry into El Mozote, the battalion called everyone from their homes and made them lay down in the dust (Danner, 1993). Although the people of El Mozote had been careful not to support the guerrillas or the army, it was their very lack of loyalty to a side that turned out to be dangerous: “if you are not with us, you are against us” seemed to be the way of thinking. The next day, men and women and children were separated, some interrogated and accused as collaborators, and then killed ten or twenty at a time. Girls and women were taken into the hills and raped before their murder (Danner, 1993). A list compiled later by the Human Rights office of the Archbishopric of San Salvador includes 767 civilians, men, women and children, murdered outside of a war-zone at El Mozote (Danner, 1993). Rufina Amaya was the sole survivor and, as she hid in the dirt and trees she heard her children’s screams (Danner, 1993).

The role of the Church.

In 1968, the Medellín Conference, the common name for the Second General Conference of the Latin American Episcopacy, was held in Medellín, Colombia (Nickoloff, 1996). This led to the acceptance of a new responsibility on the part of the Church to care for the poor (LeoGrande, 1998). In part, this meeting was meant to bridge the gap between the optimistic language of the Second Vatican Council and the reality of Latin America (Nickoloff, 1996). This sense of responsibility to the poor is manifested in many ways in liberation theology, particularly in the tenet of *preferential option for the poor*. Gustavo Gutiérrez (1998), who has since become known as one of the primary liberation theologians, explains what this preferential option is:

[P]reference obviously precludes any exclusivity; it simply points who ought to be the first—not the only—objects of our solidarity. From the very first the theology of

liberation has insisted on the importance of maintaining both the universality of God's love and the divine predilection for "history's last (p. 26)

What [*option*] seeks to emphasize is the free commitment of a decision. This option for the poor is not optional in the sense that a Christian need not necessarily make it, any more than the love we owe every human being, without exception, is optional. It is a matter of a deep ongoing solidarity, a voluntary daily involvement with the world of the poor...the poor themselves must make this decision as well (p. 26)

Thus, in the spirit of liberation theology, the Bishops of Latin America at Medellín made that free commitment to make the poor first in their ministry. It was a decision made in solidarity with the poor by joining in a theology that erupted from the poor (Gutiérrez, 1998). This is essential: liberation theology began with the people, in the midst of the poor; it is a theology born out of lives of hardship, struggle and faith. To illuminate this, Boff (1998) states that liberation theology is like a tree, with the roots as the people, grown into the trunk of the pastoral workers, leafing into the theologians. The strength of this metaphor is the unity of the three: three parts, one tree. It symbolizes that the theologians theologize with the same "sap" as the pastoral workers care, as the people live. The theologians cannot write without being in direct contact with the poor. It is a theology that has its base in its people: a tree can survive without its leaves, but not without its roots. As Boff (1998) explains: "this theological current is intimately bound up with the people's very existence—with their faith and with their struggle" (p. 9). This perception of the poor as essential was in direct opposition to the message promulgated by the government in which the people were unimportant and expendable.

Throughout the early to mid-1900s, the *campesinos* were only familiar with parts of the Bible, those that justified oppression of the poor by offering the hope of heaven after death (Sr. M. O'Neil, SC., Liberation Theology class, 30 January 2009). After Medellín, priests began to pastor the poor. The people were introduced to Exodus, the story of God's liberation of the Israelite slaves from Egypt and guidance to the promised land (Sr. M. O'Neil, SC., Liberation

Theology class, 30 January 2009). With this new ministry, the Church began to organize peasants in Christian Base Communities (LeoGrande, 1998). The *campesinos* began applying what they learned in the Church politically, challenging the current oppressive structure. Lay people, peasants, became aware of their own sense of dignity and began to make economic demands on their landlords (LeoGrande, 1998). The Church, likewise, in its responsibility to the poor did more than minister to them, they taught them organizational skills, which the poor then applied to the rest of their lives. The Church also became an advocate for the poor, criticizing governmental policies and advocating for change (LeoGrande, 1998). Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero became one of the most outspoken on behalf of the poor (LeoGrande, 1998).

In 1977, Oscar Arnulfo Romero was named archbishop (Lopez-Vigil, 2000). At the time, this appointment was controversial as Arturo Rivera y Damas had been the recommended candidate by the previous Archbishop, Luis Chávez (Lopez-Vigil, 2000). Romero, on the other hand, was supported by the wealthy in El Salvador: he was conservative and was close friends with President Molina as well as many of the families in the oligarchy (Lopez-Vigil, 2000). He was a safe choice. However, as Archbishop of San Salvador, Romero began to spend more time with the *campesinos*; Romero was transformed as he was exposed to the realities of the majority of the Salvadorans, the poor (Lopez-Vigil, 2000). Another transformative event for Romero, in addition to new contact with the lives of the poor, in March of 1977, only months after Romero's appointment as Archbishop, Father Rutilio Grande, Romero's dear friend, was killed (LeoGrande, 1998). President Colonel Molina informed him of Rutilio's assassination and promised a government investigation, which never happened (Lopez-Vigil, 2000). Romero responded, in a letter to Molina, writing "The Church will not participate in any official act of the government until the government has done everything possible to shine the light of justice

upon this outrageous sacrilege that has caused consternation in the entire Church and a new wave of repudiation throughout the country against such violence” (Lopez-Vigil, 2000, p. 106). No investigation ever took place and Romero stayed true to his word. Transformed by reality, he became the voice for the voiceless. His homilies at mass on Sunday were the most reliable news of what was actually going on in the country. As liberation theology took its root from the people, so the people become the foundation for Romero and his ministry. He called out to each side, the military and the guerrillas, discouraging any violent activity while urging transformation and peace, in advocacy for the poor. “We ought to be clear from the start,” he told the University of Louvain, Belgium, on February 2, 1980, “that the Christian faith and the activity of the church have always had sociopolitical repercussions...The Church exists to act in solidarity with the hopes and joys, the anxieties and sorrows, of men and women. Like Jesus, the Church was sent ‘to bring good news to the poor, to heal the contrite of heart to seek and to save what was lost’” (1990b, p. 293). In one of his last homilies, he said “I implore you, I beg you, I order you in the name of God: Stop the repression!” (Berryman, 1994, p.65).

Romero spoke the truth in a time when the truth was a death sentence. He took the side of the poor when the poor were being massacred. On March 16, 1980, (Wright, 1994), he said

Nothing is as important to the church as human life, especially the lives of the poor and the oppressed. Jesus said that whatever is done to the poor is done to him. This blood shed, these deaths, are beyond all politics. They touch the very heart of God (epigraph).

Romero refused body guards, although the most prominent political personages had small battalions of them, in solidarity with his people (Peterson, 1997). He said “It would be sad if in a country where people are being assassinated so horribly, we didn’t count priests among the victims as well. They are a testimony of a church that is incarnated in the people” (Peterson, 1993, p. 62). Likewise, in response to threats on his life, he said “I should tell you that as a

Christian I do not believe in death without resurrection. If they kill me, I will rise again in the Salvadoran people” (Peterson, 1993, 144). On March 24, 1980, Romero was shot while giving a memorial mass for the mother of Jorge Pinto, the editor of *El Independiente* and a dear friend (Hennelly, 1990). In his homily that night, he preached on death and resurrection, saying, “May this body immolated and this blood sacrificed for humans nourish us also, so that we may give our body and our blood to suffering and to pain—like Christ, not for self, but to bring about justice and peace for our people” (1990a, p. 306) Years later, Juana (personal communication, 22 April 2009), a Salvadoran who lives in Calle Real, the community in which I spent two days a week, told me “Romero was a father to us.” He has risen again; he is present in the Salvadorans.

As the violence increased, it was only the religious who had a modicum of security. Bodies were seen daily on roadsides and only the religious could bury them (Didian, 1983). Otherwise, burying a body meant associating oneself with a subversive, which would be self-imposing a death sentence. Sister Margaret O’Neil, SC. (Liberation Theology class lecture, 6 February 2009), told a story of a townsperson alerting her that there was a fresh head in one of the parks of Suchitoto. From the word “fresh,” she gathered she would need a towel and garbage bags and upon her arrival at the park, she saw a recently decapitated head on one of the fence posts. Father Paul Schindler, a priest who worked with the four American church women, said that clergy at this time had one of three options: to say nothing of the violence and through silence support the government and keep their pulpit, to leave the country, or to speak out and risk assassination (History of El Salvador’s civil war guest lecturer, 6 February 2009). Like Romero, the four church women, Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Dorothy Kazel and Jean Donovan who were murdered in December of 1980, as well as the six Jesuits (Segundo Montes, Ignacio Martin Baro, Juan Ramon Moreno, Amando Lopez, Joaquin Lopez y Lopez, and Ignacio Ellacuria) who

worked and lived at the University of Central America (UCA) and were killed November 16, 1989, chose solidarity with the poor at risk of their lives (Berryman, 1994; Peterson, 1993).

They are a source of hope and inspiration to the Salvadorans, present even today.

US involvement.

It would be incomplete and untruthful if the US's involvement in El Salvador in the 1980s was not addressed. In the 1980s, the US was involved in a multitude of ways in the conflicts in Central America. Among those who know the role the US played, it is commonly said that because of US "aid," the war was harsher and lasted much longer than it would have otherwise (J. Lamperti, guest lecturer, Jan 30 2009). The US itself was in the midst of the Cold War, and was sensitive to anything that might be a Communist threat. The goal was to stop the further spread of Communism to this continent (LeoGrande, 1998). In El Salvador in 1980, the guerrillas received several weapons shipments from Cuba; the US was alarmed at the prospect of Communism in "our own backyard" (LeoGrande, 1998). Furthermore, the uprising recalled the 1932 insurrection, led by Farabundo Martí, a self proclaimed communist. More troubling still for US policy makers, was the fact that the political party that had emerged on the left, a combination of five parties which included the Communist party, named itself after Martí: Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front: FMLN). This spurred the US into action, on the side of the military government, despite the fact that the guerillas had approached the entire global community (not just the Eastern Block) for aid against the repressive military government (LeoGrande, 1998). After 1980, there were no more weapon shipments from Cuba, yet, accusations of aid from Cuba (and therefore the USSR) continued throughout the decade (LeoGrande, 1998). Furthermore, the US had committed itself to the government of El Salvador and thus was invested in a government "win." The US viewed

negotiations with guerillas as akin to negotiating with Communists while the Salvadoran government viewed such negotiations akin to negotiating with terrorists; neither wanted to recognize them as a legitimate political body (LeoGrande, 1998). According to LeoGrande (1998), the US policies regarding Central America in the 1980s were more shaped by the desire to “exorcise the ghosts of Vietnam” than in reaction to actual events in Central America (p. 590).

American support to the Salvadoran government included \$6 billion dollars in aid during the twelve year war, the majority of which was direct military support and economic support to carry out the war (Wright, 1994). Furthermore, American military advisors were provided to the Salvadoran military to aid in day to day prosecution of the war (Wright, 1994). Because there were never to be more than 55 American military advisors in El Salvador at any given time, a base was set up in Honduras, just across the border so advisors could be helicoptered in and out at ease, in order to abide by the letter, though not the spirit, of the regulation (Didian, 1983). Finally, special battalions were trained by the US, one of these was the Atlcatl Battalion, which was responsible for the massacre at El Mozote in 1981 (LeoGrande, 1998; Danner, 1993), as well as the murder of the 6 Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter at the University of Central America (UCA) in 1989 (LeoGrande, 1998).

The massacres perpetrated particularly by Atlcatl Battalion, as well as the bodies found daily on the streets at the hands of the death squads, elicited condemnation in the US and internationally. Ironically, the Reagan and Carter administrations focused on human rights and spurred the international community not to tolerate abuses (LeoGrande, 1998). Throughout the war, the US government demanded proof that progress with respect to human rights was being made as a condition to keep the money spigot flowing. However, the certifications of progress in human rights were more for show than anything else: the Salvadoran government would rename

institutions rather than propagate actual reforms (LeoGrande, 1998). For example, seven months after the El Mozote massacre, President Reagan certified that sufficient progress was being made in human rights, land reform, and institution of democratic processes to qualify the Salvadoran military for continuing aid (Didian, 1983). Salvadoran President Duarte personally denied that El Mozote had occurred, decrying it as a guerrilla trick meant to deprive the government of US funding (Danner, 1993). U.S. Embassy officials claimed there was no evidence of a massacre at El Mozote and questioned the credentials of Raymond Bonner of the *New York Times* and Anna Guillermprieto of the *Washington Post*, who reported the story (Berryman, 1994).

The end of the violence.

In 1992 the Peace Accords were signed and February 1, 1992 was the first day of the ceasefire, after over a decade of warfare. In celebration, in the Plaza of the Martyrs of San Salvador, 200,000 people came together and sang “Ode to Joy” in celebration (Wright, 1994). An international Truth Commission was created by the United Nations to investigate all war crimes and human rights abuses. In their report on March 15, 1993, they found that 85% of the human rights violations were perpetrated by the Salvadoran government and 5% were perpetrated by the guerillas (Wright, 1994). The government’s response was immediate. Within days, President Alfredo Cristiani of the ARENA party and the right-ruled legislative assembly denied all charges and then issued amnesty for all war crime (Wright, 1994). No trials were held (Wright, 1994). Archbishop Rivera y Damas, Romero’s successor, and the Jesuits were in extreme opposition to the amnesty, contending that truth and justice were needed for reconciliation and peace (Wright, 1994).

El Salvador today

The world we live in is filled with violence; it is both directly physically violent as well as structurally violent. In El Salvador, the violence of the civil war in the 1980s maintains a presence in many homes—in the memories of lost loved ones, homes, and way of life. These previous pages of history and of stories are important in order to offer the historical background of the El Salvador, but also because, in many ways, the aftermath of the civil war and the social structures that led up to it are still in place. One woman in Calle Real told me of her family being forced to flee from their home in the countryside in order to save their lives. She told me of fleeing, pregnant, with a cow as the only remnant of their possessions from their old lives that they could take with them. She lives in an urban community now and she misses the countryside and the farm from which she was forced to flee (J. Emelda, personal communication, 22 April 2009). Structurally, the majority of the population lives in poverty, with 37.2% of people living below the national poverty line in 2006 and 20.5% living on less than \$2 a day (Human Development Reports, 2009). An important part of income for many Salvadorans is remittances sent back from family members in the United States. In 2007, \$3,711 million were sent in remittances to El Salvador (Human Development Report, 2009)

Likewise, it is the same people who are the wealthiest that have the best opportunities to be educated. Three quarters of adults over the age of 25 have a low education attainment level (Human Development Reports, 2009). In this bleak picture of loss and oppression seen in the war and the continued structural violence, it is important not to let these facts and these statistics become the whole picture. Tensions and unjust structures do remain, but so, more than anything, does the hope that Salvadoran people exhibited during the war. It is not a hope dependent upon

life being easy, but a hope in life, a hope in “el pueblo unido, jamás será vencido” (the people united will never be defeated).

Political parties.

In many ways tensions between the right and the left (the government and the guerrillas) have been transferred to political parties. The right came to be represented by ARENA (Alianza Republicana Nacionalista or National Republican Alliance) and was founded by D’Aubuisson, the man around whom the Death Squads were formed during the civil war (Berryman, 1994). The left came to be represented by FMLN (named after Farabundo Martí, the leader of the peasant uprising in 1932) which began as a coalition of five opposition parties during the 1980s (LeoGrande, 1998). At the polls, voters mark an X over the symbol for ARENA or for the FMLN to indicate the party for which they are voting. The implications for this are twofold; first voters vote for a party rather than a candidate; second, this pictorial voting system reflects the reality of a very low literacy rate in the country. Thus, propaganda on lamp posts and along highways commonly show the symbol of either party with a giant X over it, pictorially sending the message “Vote for ARENA” or “Vote for FMLN.” The elections of 2009 were the first since the war in which the FMLN candidate, Mauricio Funes, was elected; ARENA had been in power for 20 years and 4 elections—two of which were fraudulent (Whitfield, 1994)

This change in power, absent of violence, has had repercussions throughout the country, on nearly every level, and has affected everything from children’s lives to public policy. Even children are absolutely loyal to their (parents’) party and are derogatory towards those people who support the other party. An example of this party fidelity was displayed to me the morning after the elections, among my five students aged between 9 and 14 years. Four of them were of the left (FMLN) and one from the right (ARENA). The four would burst out in their party’s

song throughout the morning, while 9 year old Vera who supported the right stared carefully at the floor, retreating farther and farther into herself. Biting comments were made about the right. Shy and withdrawn on a normal day, on this morning Vera looked as though she wished she could disappear, yet still held fast to supporting her parents' party. On the one hand, there were four girls in my class giddy with victory which spilled over into celebration and also judgment upon the "loser." On the other hand, there was a girl who was further isolated with each jubilant or derogatory remark. It seemed an impossible gap to bridge. Interrupting the planned lesson for that day, I turned instead to the issue of respect. We talked about the need to respect everyone and that all people are people and need to be treated as such, no matter their political affiliation. They listened as I spoke, and responded, but their bias was still clear and could not be changed in the course of one morning during one conversation. Seeing that little 9 year old Vera was still distressed, I asked if I could come visit her during lunch time. She immediately brightened, her humanity recognized and thus, in this recognition, restored: she is a person first and foremost, and the fact that she is a person who supports a certain political party is second to that.

At a policy level, the effects of the new party in power have been tremendous. In his acceptance speech, Funes dedicated his term to Archbishop Romero, a commitment that has been shown to be more than just words. On November 7, 2009, BBC Mundo reported Funes' intentions to reopen the investigation of the assassination of Romero, recognizing the recommendations of the Comisión Interamericana Derechos Humanos (CIDH; Inter-American Commission of Human Rights) (Chirinos). This is an incredible move: an opening up of the past, which the previous government had declared closed and to be forgotten; a chance for the truth to spoken and recognized; the end of a booming silence.

Furthermore, in what has been the largest crisis since he came to power, Funes was quick to take action in the face of the hurricanes that devastated El Salvador in early November 2009. He called for the country's National Assembly to release \$150 million of aid money and criticized the previous government for failing to put in place preventative measures which could have lessened some of the most devastating effects of the flooding "It is not to lament that I am here, but rather to make very clear to all the families, to all of the fathers and mothers, the grandparents, the boys and girls, that this time their government is not going to leave them alone in the face of misfortune,"¹ he declared in a presidential message on November 9 (BBC). Though a divide exists between the right and the left, Funes is working to be a president of the people, to redress wrongs of the past.

Second-generation war trauma.

The damage caused by war does not end with the signing of Peace Accords. Even after direct violence stops, people must deal with the loss of family and friends, of homes, of old dreams for the future. In addition to this loss, and particularly in the case of El Salvador's civil war, many have experienced trauma, whose effects likewise do not end with the end of the direct violence. Research has been done on the impact of war trauma on post-war lives; the studies cited here were studies of Angolan adolescents exposed to war and of Holocaust survivors and their children. This research may also be applicable to Salvadoran youth.

Many of the Salvadorans who are parents today were adolescents or young adults during the war. In their research on Holocaust survivors, McIntyre and Ventura (2003), found that adolescents with more exposure to war more frequently struggled with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as adults than adolescents with less exposure. It is reasonable to conclude that

¹ "No es para lamentarme que estoy aquí, sino para dejar bien claro a todas las familias, a todos los padres y las madres, los abuelos, los niños y las niñas, que esta vez su gobierno no les va a dejar solos ante la desgracia",

youth in El Salvador would experience a similar connection between exposure to war violence and PTSD. It is these youth who are now parents and raising the next generation of Salvadoran youth. Thus, an understanding of the impact of second generation trauma is important to understand the context and experience of today's youth.

This research raises two questions: 1) how long-term are the effects of PTSD? 2) what is the influence of parental PTSD on their children? In a study which compared Israeli grandmothers with and without Holocaust experience, Sagi-Schwartz et al (2003) found that while first generation Holocaust survivors still felt its effects even more than fifty years later (showing more unresolved loss, anxiety and traumatic stress than the comparison group), the daughters in both groups were comparable. They did not vary in their attachment representations towards their parents nor their own infants, and the daughters of Holocaust survivors did not exhibit anxiety or traumatic stress (Sagi-Schwartz et al, 2003). This suggests that while survivors may experience manifestations of PTSD throughout their life, it may not have an impact on mutual attachment with their children. Likewise, this study suggests that anxiety symptoms may not be transmitted across generations. Sagi-Schwartz et al (2003) suggests that Victor Frankl's idea of man's search for meaning may be a protective force, in that by orienting toward future goals instead of fixating on the past, the traumatized survivors experience healing. This healing and future orientation would be beneficial for the children of the survivors. Likewise, Scharf (2007) found that mothers with Holocaust background showed higher levels of psychological distress; however, it was not in clinical ranges and thus could be an indicator of resiliency.

While Sagi-Schwartz et al (2003) did not find that trauma affected the second generation through attachment relationships, Scharf (2007) found that "in line with synergic (multiplicative)

models of risk, adolescents in families where both parents were Holocaust survivors perceived their mothers as less accepting and less encouraging independence, and reported less positive self-perceptions than their counterparts” (p. 603). Thus, Scharf found that parental PTSD did have an impact on the children. Children whose mother and father had survived the Holocaust reported that their mothers were “less accepting” and “less encouraging of independence.” The latter especially makes sense in light of trauma the mother underwent: she may not encourage independence in an attempt to protect her child. Likewise, children with two Holocaust survivor parents had “less positive self-perceptions,” which could be a manifestation of intergenerational trauma.

On the other hand, several clinical studies have found long term-effects of PTSD in parents and their children. Abrams (1999) suggests that trauma can be transmitted to the next generation through stories or lessons learned from experience; for example, a survivor may teach her children that the “world is dangerous place.” In the other direction, Wiseman, Metzler, and Barber (2006) point out that a “double wall of silence” may be established, in which the parents do not talk about their experience and children do not ask (as cited in Bar-On, 1996). This silence may be the result of the parents’ double desire to both move on and also to protect their children’s normal development (Wiseman et al, 2006). In this study, this double wall of silence led to repressed anger and intense feelings of guilt on the part of the survivor’s children. One of the participants in this study described a situation when he was young and wanted an electric drill. Normally, his parents were acquiescent to his desires, however in this case his mother responded no, saying “I do not want a drill in the house, I do not want this noise in the house.” (p. 180). Surprised, he insisted, but his mother held firm. It was not until about two years later that he discovered that during the Holocaust she participated in forced labor drilling all day. In the telling of the story, years later, this man appeared to feel guilty for insisting on getting what

he wanted and not noticing his mother's response, as though he felt he should have known, although he had never been told. Throughout the interviews conducted by Wiseman et al, now grown children of Holocaust survivors shared stories of repressed anger at their parents' hyper-vigilance, often associated with the wish to assert themselves and to be understood.

Clearly, research on trauma and its long-term affects on both the first and second generations is complicated and these complexities are evident in its inconsistent findings. These inconsistencies, as Sagi-Schwartz et al (2003) point out, tend to vary based on the study design: clinical observations generally indicate long term negative effects, including trans-generational transmission, whereas more controlled studies indicate some continued survivor trauma but little trans-generational transmission, except when the second generation is confronted with life threatening situations (Sagi-Schwartz et al, 2003). As exposure to a life threatening event is the qualifying diagnostic criteria for PTSD, it makes sense that the second generation may be significantly more reactive than others exposed to a life threatening situation, because of their familial history. This makes it clear that the survivor's experience of trauma does have at least a small impact on his/her family, be it through verbal stories or lessons learned, or nonverbal behaviors, which can result in a changed reaction to life threatening situations or feelings of repressed anger or guilt.

In El Salvador, it is highly likely that this whole range of effects also exist: from children's changed reaction to life threatening events, to parents' verbal/nonverbal teaching that the world is not a safe place, to children's repressed anger and feelings of guilt towards their parents. However, the findings indicating resiliency, particularly Frankl's model emphasizing future goals as opposed to past obsession rings true in the Salvadoran context. "Seguir adelante," meaning "to continue onward," is a common phrase. Whenever the difficulties of the

past or uncertainties of the future came up in my interview with Juana, she would say “Sigo adelante.” Despite her own personal hardships and losses in the war, she also said that she had never been without hope, that there could not be life without hope. As a whole, it is this hope, in the context of a memory of suffering and oppression and so made that much more remarkable, that characterizes the people of El Salvador. This hope, this continuing onward, is an important part of the legacy for the next generation.

Culture of hope.

The most powerful part of my time in El Salvador was the two days a week I spent in Calle Real, Comunidad Dolores Medina. This is a community of 43 families displaced from the *campo* (farmland; countryside) by the twelve year civil war in the 1980s and early 1990s. In my classes, I learned about the historic roots of the civil war and discussed the current political climate in terms of the civil war. I was told that despite the hardship and inequities, Salvadorans were a people of hope. It was during my time in Calle Real that I saw and experienced it.

Talking with one of the women, Juana, (personal communication, 22 April 2009) about her faith, she told me:

My faith will never come to an end. My faith and hope go together because hope is quite important. I never say, “No, through what has happened, difficult trials,” it is easy to think of the worst things, but then I would only conform to that. I have faith and when I say, “this I cannot endure,” I kneel and I pray to God that he would draw me forward and the Lord helps me and the Lord blesses me. Because relatively, now I feel that to have two children who are not mine is a blessing from God, and I, tired and worn out, but I never say that I won’t continue forward. Faith and hope are things that must be together throughout life. Even for you, you must have faith and hope in continuing forward, truly. It’s not only about living life in the way that is already known, because life is a university where one never stops learning. [I have hope in] continuing forward, it is not to say, “I am old, I will come this far but no further, no.”²

² Mi fe jamás se va acabar. Mi fe y la esperanza van juntos porque la esperanza es bien importante. Nunca digo “no, en que te pasando por duras pruebas digo esto no es nada pienso en lo peor y yo solo me conforma. Tengo fe y cuando digo ya no voy a aguantar, me hincó le pidió

This is a woman whose father and brother died during the war. This is a woman who was forced to leave her home in the *campo* to seek safety from the war violence in the capital. This is a woman who, despite her limited economic resources, has taken in and raised for the past seven years two children abandoned by their parents. “I don’t have enough money for them,” she told me, “but I have enough love.”

Her faith and hope, the faith and hope of the Salvadoran people, is not in a life that is easy or in a life in which there is no suffering. It is, however, a faith with the belief that life is not about conforming to those “worst things;” it is the faith that God is present and will draw one onward; it is the faith that the journey of life, of continuing onward, is good and worthwhile. Scott Wright (1994) noted something similar, stating, “the Salvadoran people have a profound capacity to maintain hope and joy, to struggle for life and to celebrate, to thank God for yet another day on this earth” (p. xxvii). Wright continues on to question how can it be possible to believe in a God that allows so much suffering, concluding, “I had not sufficiently drawn near to their suffering, to their cross, to believe. In these past ten years I have found that only by drawing near to suffering, by trying to bear the same cross as those who suffer, can we discover the real meaning of faith” (p. xxvii).

This embrace of suffering is perhaps part of the foundation of the Salvadoran people’s strong hope and faith because they are not divorced from nor dependent upon the absence of

a Señor que me saca adelante y el Señor me ayuda y el Señor me bendice por que relativamente ahorita yo siento que tener unos hijos que no son mios es una bendición de Dios y yo casada fundida pero nunca digo no no que sigo adelante, la fe y la es algo que tiene que junta para toda la vida. Hasta para usted, usted tiene que tener fe y esperanza de seguir adelante, verdad. No solo vivir la vida en lo que es que saber la vivir, por que la vida es una universidad donde nunca se deja de aprender...[Tengo fe] de seguir adelante, no de decir “estoy viejita y hasta aquí, no más,” no.

suffering, which would collapse at the first sign of bitter hardship. This embrace of suffering and its result was something that struck me over and over again throughout my time there. I noted:

One of the things I've been most blown away by here has been the Salvadorans ability to suffer, to feel pain, and at the same time have such joy, hope and faith. Suffering here isn't something you just get through, trap in a box, stuff in the back of your closet, and move on in life. They come back to it and they share it. I keep thinking of one of my first days here and we were visiting all of the praxis sites. The last one we went to on this day was Mariona, where there is a woman named Oti. She was secretary to Archbishop Romero and also worked with Sister Silvia. Sister Silvia ended up working in hospital caring for the guerrillas until the military came and killed everyone in the hospital, including Sister Silvia. So she's telling us this story, about her life, working with Romero, about Silvia and there comes a part when she just starts crying and needs her friend Lolo to finish the story. Can you imagine going back to that pain, to share it, to still cry and be unable to finish a story after more than 20 years yet still tell it? There is something in that ability to come back to and to share hardship ... particularly viewing suffering as transformational as part of life as ... something not to be forgotten .. and this leads to sharing, to being real with others, to being able to say that I am not perfect, I'm real and I hurt ... and to know in response that that hurt and imperfection will be accepted and carried together. What a way to live! (Darr, 2009, February 25).

A life lived in this manner gives hope even as it may lead to death. It is the hope of the martyrs.

As Wright notes, "they teach us a deeper sense of what it means to live –to be able to give up your life for others, to have this capacity and this love to give up your life in a struggle so that all people may have life" (1994, p. xxvi).

SIGA ADELANTE

Peace Pedagogy

Teaching about peace, in peace, for peace (Newton, 2004))

The violence that is in the world extends past the direct physical violence that is easy to see and name. Johan Galtung (1990) identifies three types of violence: direct, structural, and cultural. Clearly, each of these forms of violence are present in El Salvador. Direct violence is the most obvious: it is physical fighting. In the form of the civil war, it is still an influence today. It also takes the form of gangs. In October of 2009, Calle Real, the praxis site at which I worked during my time in El Salvador, stopped being a Praxis site as the neighborhood surrounding it had become too violent due to gang activity.

Structural violence is more subtle: it is the social structures in place that oppress certain groups of people (Galtung, 1990). In El Salvador, it includes the fact that minority of the population holds the majority of the available resources. Thus the rich few have access to better education, food, water, employment. As discussed in the history of El Salvador, at points this oppression has led to direct violence, as in the 1932 peasant up-rising against the upper class, immediately followed by the government massacre of all protestors, called “La Matanza,” The Massacre (Lopez, 2008). The unequal distribution of resources continues.

Cultural violence is any cultural norm which legitimizes or justifies structural violence (Galtung, 1990). Cultural violence includes machismo, evident in gender roles and in the language. Young girls are called “*embra*,” which is the female word for an animal while young boys and youth are called “*baron*,” which is an informal word for a human male. Likewise, the article “*la*” (the) is commonly added before a female’s name, *La Christy* (the Christy), for example, and thus objectifying women. This grammatical practice is not done with the names of men or boys. *Pena*, or timidity or shyness to the point of fearfulness of being known, is part of

what it means to be a woman. Young boys may have *pena* about speaking in groups, but grow out of it as they mature, while young girls with *pena* grow into women with *pena*.

With these permeating examples of violence, further violence is perpetuated. In order for peace to prevail, people, particularly children, must be exposed to examples of peace and, through these examples, be offered alternatives to violence (Harris, 1988). Yet, just as there are several types of violence, Galtung (1969), says, there are also several types of peace. The first is negative peace; it is a peace defined by the absence of direct violence. In this type of peace, which could perhaps also accurately considered the aforementioned ceasefire of the civil war, the structural and cultural violence still exists. Positive peace, on the other hand, is an act of creation. It is not static, but rather an active, dynamic force working to correct the wrongs of structural and cultural violence. Sister Peggy O'Neil said that it is no longer enough just to take people down off of their crosses: work must be done to stop crucifying people in the first place (Liberation Theology class lecture, 12 March 2009). It is this work, both the taking down from crosses and the ending of crucifixion, that is the work of positive peace.

This curriculum is an attempt to be one example of this active, dynamic, creative peace. Yet, it is important to remember that it is just one example. There is a history of peace and of peace education in El Salvador in the Christian base communities and in the example of Romero and in the example of the UCA martyrs. It is because of this history of peace and the culture of hope which already exists in El Salvador that this program could mean anything. This program thus joins a movement and a history of peace that pre-exists and extends the conversation and work for peace in a specific way to the next generation. It is meant to be and is very personal. One of the strengths of peace pedagogy is its focus on individuals and on the creation of a

partnership between teacher and student, in which both human beings enter together into dialogue, on a journey, in which both are teachers and both are learners.

Peace education is concerned with the creation and sustainability of a better world (Newton, 2004). Yet, the schools are not teaching about Romero – 15 and 16 year olds in the Youth Group for Peace and Solidarity in Calle Real know only what their parents have told them of Romero. There is need for a space filled with dialogue and education for the new generation. This process has already begun, but this generation, the children in elementary school, need to be introduced to the dialogue for it to continue.

Peace Pedagogy

Peace education creates an alternative to violence (Harris, 1988). According to Bajaj (2008), peace education provides learners in any setting the skills and values to work towards comprehensive peace. Learners develop a sense of possibility that enables them to become agents of social change, to inspire critical optimism aimed to promote solidarity and to diminish distance between social groups, and to cultivate hope and critical understanding. It is, in essence, the Jesuit ideal of *cura personalis*: education of the whole person. Too often, education ignores the interconnectedness and interrelationships among people (Reardon, 1988). Peace education seeks to develop a transformation of attitudes, sharing of knowledge, and teaching of skills in order to lead to transformation rather than reproduction (“Teacher as learner”). In this process, the emphasis is on process rather than product (Newton, 2004), it is on learning how to think rather than what to think (Freire, 1993). The teacher invites students into a dialogue, on a journey they will share together, rather than the teacher being presented as the font of knowledge and the students as vessels to be filled. All are learners and all are teachers.

Form.

As mentioned above, the emphasis of peace education is on process rather than product and thus many have argued that the form of peace education is more important than the content (Galtung, 2008). Everyone has heard the phrase “actions speak louder than words” and this is modeled in peace education. Modeling of peace, the provision of an example, is important in a world where violent examples abound. Bartlett (2008), reflecting on Paolo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, provides some basic core tenants regarding the form of peace education: problem-posing education, dialogue and critical consciousness, co-construction of knowledge, and democratic student-teacher relationships. Through these methods, the modeling of peace is evident.

Problem posing education offers alternative basic assumptions made about education. The traditional model of education is based on banking theory and practice, which posits that students are empty vessels meant to be filled with knowledge by teachers (Freire, 1993). Students are passive: they are meant to merely record, memorize, and repeat the narrative told to them by their teacher (Freire, 1993). It is important that teachers and students, in this model, are kept as opposites: teachers teach and students memorize. There is no room for role reversal. In contrast to this uni-directional mode of education, problem-posing education posits a two way street between teachers and students. Education at its best is a change in consciousness. This change cannot be described in a causal relationship: teachers do not cause students to change, rather they plant the seeds (Harris, 181). In the problem posing model, teachers present information which the students consider and offer their own reactions and thoughts while the teacher then reconsiders her original considerations (Freire, 1993). Rather than a class comprised of a teacher and students it is a class comprised of a teacher-student and student-

teachers (Freire, 1993). In this model, students are not viewed as empty vessels awaiting knowledge, but rather as individuals with their own knowledge and experience to bring to the table. Andrew Garcés, professor of the course *Sustaining Social Activism*, provided a wonderful example of these two different educational models. On the first day of class, he handed each student a cup, which he then proceeded to fill with water from several pitchers. This, he told us, is how some teachers approach teaching, but he knew that we each had come in with our own “water” and that what we as students brought to the class room, in our own knowledge and experience, was just as important to the learning process as the expertise he, as our teacher, brought. So, for the second part of the activity, he had us each pour the water we had in our own cups into each others’ cups. Learning is a community endeavor.

In the problem-posing educational model, dialogue and development of critical consciousness is essential. This dialogue between teacher and student exemplifies communication in response to the recognition that both parties are human, with something unique to bring to the educational table (Freire 1993). When students are part of this dialogue, they are challenged to have something to say, and to have reactions and reflections to the material presented by the teacher rather than a passive acceptance of it. With such a dialogical base, reality becomes something dynamic, to be reflected upon and challenged rather than a static unchangeable entity.

Thus, through this dialogue and rising critical consciousness, a co-construction of knowledge takes place. New challenges lead to new understandings which then lead again to new challenges and thus to a student commitment to and engagement in the world (Freire 1993). It is a journey that can only happen in solidarity, the essential “I” identity of both teacher and student engage in reciprocal growth and development.

In order for any of this to take place, there must be the foundation of a democratic student-teacher relationship. In this type of relationship teacher and students are both teachers and students: all are teachers and all are learners (Freire, 1993). The teacher is not to be an autocratic, authoritarian figure but rather a partner in the journey of, about and for peace. Now, this is not to deny that a teacher may be an expert in a field or subject, but as the goal is not reproduction (the spitting back of knowledge) but transformation, it is important that the student be part of the learning process.

Content.

Freire continues to say that education is constantly remade in *praxis* (reflection in action). Thus, education in this model is always in process and is always being formed and informed by the reality in which it exists because only in relationship with reality is knowledge meaningful. Thus, it is important to begin where the students are—based in their realities and respectful of what they already know (Bartlett, 2008). If transformation is one of the overall goals in peace education, then such a starting base is clearly important. Lila Watson, a Brisbane-based Aboriginal educator, said “If you have come to help me you are wasting your time, if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together” (Casa de la Solidaridad, 2009). This, again, is the idea of mutuality that is seminal in peace education. Freire’s advice to begin with the students’ realities, with respect for the students’ realities, acknowledges that they, too, are entering into the conversation with ideas, experience, and knowledge. The teacher is not the savior but the fellow worker. In this way, the value and human dignity of each student is recognized and upheld.

Because, in this model, education is tailored to the needs and experiences of its students, the content of subjects explored in peace education classes varies greatly. Common themes

include development, conflict, peace, and the future (Haavelsrud, 2008). Ian Harris (1988, 17-20) provides some basic foundational thoughts for the basis of content in a peace education class.

1. Provide dynamic vision of peace to counteract violent images of culture
2. Address people's fears
3. Information about cause, nature, and consequence of the arms race
4. Study major causes of war, violence, and injustice
5. Promote respect for different cultures
6. Strive to recreate society as it should be
7. Teach skills and strategies to achieve individual and social change
8. Learn about problems of human rights and justice
9. Develop a process where individuals overcome personal violent tendencies and learn to empathize with others
10. Redress problems created in a violent world consumed with violent behavior

These base recommendations deal with individuals and individual relationships and problem solving strategies, including issues of violence on the national and global level, combined with an emphasis on skill development. The content of a course should accurately reflect individual and global realities, but it should do so with hope by providing not only knowledge of violence and injustice, but skills and tools for problem solving and conflict resolution. As Harris (1988) later says, in regards of young children, peace educators can best meet students' needs not by focusing on the horrors of violence, but through including concrete skills such as means to "resolve disputes in the broader context of values, skills, and classroom practices" (p. 147). As this curriculum is for elementary school- aged children, content will be focused on: 1) peace within oneself, through the development of self expression, self respect, self confidence, and individual skill development; and 2) on peace with others in their community and globally, through the development of respect and problem solving strategies, by means of art projects, drama games, English, and circle activities.

The Curriculum

Class Structure

Thought question / journal of the day	5 min, while everyone enters
Circle time	
- check- ins	10 min
- peace pledge	
- introduce peace maker	5 min
- review schedule for day	
- review “Words of the Day”	5 min
English lesson	25 min
Break	10 min
Transition: drama game	5 min
Circle time	
-Circle Activity	15 min
- Peace maker	10 min
Project work time	20 min (last 5 min clean up)
Ending circle	
- Affirmations	5 – 10 min
 Total time	 2 hours

As has already been discussed, in peace pedagogy, the form of the class may be even more important than the content of the class. It has been found that familiar routines lead to a sense of security (de los Angeles-Bautista, 2005). These class periods are meant to be a safe place for the children to come with all of themselves and all of their experiences and knowledge, thus the form of the class needs be consistent so as to become familiar.

Betty Reardon (1988) suggests that “reflection” is a key component of peace education. Likewise, Freire says that peace education must begin in the student’s reality and respect the student’s knowledge. Thus, by starting the class with time for students to reflect a question about their experiences in their reality, the class will always formally start with the students.

Then, we will move into our first circle time (one of our first activities will be to create sit-upons so everyone has their own place in the circle). As peace is something that starts inside

each of us but necessitates relationships with others, after the individual journal reflecting time, we will do check-ins in which each student will be invited to share part of their reflection. Then together, we will recite a peace pledge. It is important that we remind ourselves each day what we are about – it is not something secret but rather universally known by the students.

Having professed our pledge to peace, we will go over the plan for the day. During my time teaching at Calle Real last semester, I learned that when everyone knew what was on the schedule, we are all able to be much more focused. Likewise, the predictability of the sequence of class activities can lead the students to a greater sense of control (de los Angeles-Bautista, 2005) and therefore investment.

As a transition to the day's English lesson, we will review our "Words of the Day."³ The vocabulary associated with the English lesson will be related to whatever theme we are currently studying. This will conclude the first part of class, taking about 50 minutes total,⁴ to be followed by a 10 minute break. This will be time for students to get a drink of water, use the bathroom and just run around.

In order to transition back into the second part of the class, a drama game is scheduled. This will allow students to still be moving and to use the energy stirred up as they ran around and played, but it will focus that energy and serve as a transition from free time back into class time.

These drama activities will be drawn from Augusto Boal's *Theater for the Oppressed*.

³ This is also something I introduced in my class in El Salvador last semester. At the end of each English lesson, I would give the students 5 key words from the lesson to memorize. From that lesson forward, those words could only be used in English in class. Months later, talking on the phone with students, they will say things like "Estoy *happy*," and happy was once one our words for the day. So, at the end of each English lesson, as a class we will draw a picture to illustrate each Word for the Day. These pictures will be used to review all Words for the Day at the beginning of each class.

⁴ In my experience teaching last semester, 45 – 50 minutes tended to be the maximum time my students (9 to 10 years old) could engage in a lesson.

The circle activity after the break is meant to meet a similar function as the journal reflection: these circle activities will be a chance for students to reflect together on their real life experiences, illustrating certain peace concepts. For this circle time, I intend to use the book *Teaching Children to Care: 80 circle time activities for primary grades* by Dorothy Dixon. Activities range from themes such as self esteem to empathy to caring behavior. I intend to use these activities as a starting place where students, together, think about and share their own experience and knowledge. From this starting place, we will move into a discussion on the theme of the current unit, ending the circle time with a story or activity about that day's peace maker. Thus, we will begin with each student's reality (including my own), put that reality into a larger picture, and end with the example of a peace maker. Our first circle activity will be "Making our club rules," in which the class will work together to create guidelines for our class times. By creating the rules together, we all become equal stakeholders in the class. The class foundation is one that we will have created together, setting the stage for us to continue to build together: the stage is set for democratic teacher-student relationships. From the very beginning, the children will experience their voice being heard and they will see very concrete results as we use their rules to guide our class.

Ending the circle time, as a class we will review what we have talked about that day so far. We will then break off to work on the unit project⁵ for about 20 minutes.

We will end the day in circle time. This circle time will be an opportunity for them to affirm each other: going around the circle each student will be asked to say one peaceful thing they saw during class that day. This send-off will be a concrete way to practice together in class a way to spread peace to each other.

⁵ Each unit will also include either an art or drama project for the students to apply their experiences and class discussions.

Unit Themes

There is an understanding that, for there to be peace, it must begin internally. There is a song by Gill Vince, which I learned in elementary school, called *Peace on Earth* which reflects this idea:

Let peace begin with me
 Let this be the moment now.
 With every step I take
 Let this be my solemn vow.
 To take each moment
 And live each moment
 With peace eternally.
 Let there be peace on earth,
 And let it begin with me.

Let there be peace on earth
 And let it begin with me.
 Let there be peace on earth
 The peace that was meant to be.
 With God as our father
 Brothers all are we.
 Let me walk with my brother
 In perfect harmony.

Peace must begin somewhere, and so it begins within individuals and then is manifested in relationships. It is a common journey that people are meant to take together, but no one can make that journey for someone else. MJ and Jerry Park, co-founders and co-directors of the non-profit organization Little Friends for Peace, emphasized the importance of teaching kids to find peace within themselves (personal communication, 29 October 2009). Likewise, many books offering activities for peace education begin with activities focused on affirming the individual child (Brunson et al, 2002; Dixon, 1981; Wichert, 1989). This focus is again reflective of the need, stated Freire, to being with each child's individual experience of reality. So a peace education curriculum begins by affirming the reality of his or her own person. So, the first unit will be called "Who am I?" The second unit will address "Who are my neighbors?" Just as the

first unit was concerned with the discovery and personhood of each individual child, this unit will be about the discovery of personhood of the other, including the “other” students in the class, the “other” in the local community, and the “other” in the global community. Within both of these units, we will practice identifying conflict and discuss causes of conflict and learn ways to resolve various types of conflict

Setting

Setting is very important; it sets the atmosphere. Susanne Wichert (1989) points out several things to keep in mind in the creation of the physical space for a peaceful class. She says that the ideal physical setting would

- Allow children to function with the maximum degree of independence.
- Allow all persons in it to function at a low-stress level.
- Be as comfortable as possible for a variety of uses.

Thus, my plan for our class space includes several stations as well as a large open space in the middle. First, there will be a small book case, which will be home for our English story books, “language master” name tags (see section *English as a second language as a praxis for peace*) and each student’s journal. Next to the book case, will be the stack of sit-upons. Thus, when students come to class, they can immediately get their journal and sit upon and begin their journal reflection time. The sit-upons will remain in the circle as home base throughout class and then be returned to their stack as part of clean up. Another corner will be the art corner, home to construction paper, glue, markers, and crayons as well as seeds or other things from nature that might be fun to use in an art project. In short, this will be home to the material used in unit art projects. On one wall, will be pictures (with their labels) of past “Words of the Day” to function as a visual reminder of all the words we have learned. Pictures of peacemakers we

have studied will also be on the wall. Finally, a third wall will be devoted to student art projects. Last of all, there will be a white board, on which the daily schedule will be posted.

This space is meant to be affirming of the children, their work, and what they are learning. Familiar English words and pictures of peace makers they have studied are a visual representation of their achievements and their art display is a testament to their creativity. The journals and art supplies are readily available so they can get their supplies as they need them, heightening their degree of independence. As we will be using sit-upons, the room will have a lot of open space, making it easy to use the open areas of the room for art projects or for circle activities and English lessons.

Peacemakers

As Freire (1993) has said, it is important to have examples of peace. So, studying the work of peace makers is one way in which this curriculum provides these examples. Through studying peace makers, the work we are doing and discussions we are having in class are connected to the world at large. Through the lives of peace makers, the importance of peace in day-to-day life becomes evident. Peace makers will include Salvadorans, such Archbishop Oscar Romero, as well as peace makers from other parts of the world. This variety of peace makers, from inside and outside of the country, has several purposes. To begin, it emphasizes the necessity of world wide efforts for peace: it is a movement that is not only bigger than our class, but it is bigger than El Salvador as well. Finally, by studying the work of peace makers in other countries, it can function to illuminate events and calls to peace within El Salvador. Sometimes it is easier to learn about violence and the call back to peace in other countries, and then apply it to one's own home, than it is to learn directly about hardship and struggles in one's own home (A. Wisler, personal communication, 23 October 2009).

Art as a praxis for peace

Art in many ways is a natural partner for peace education. It is another way in which to engage students and their reality. Art is necessarily self-reflective and thus is an active way to begin with the student and with the student's life experience. Two forms of art will be used as praxis sites for peace in this curriculum: the visual arts and the performing arts (drama). Aniece Novak, a teacher and printmaker, says "Art is a universal language through which we can discover each other" (Brunson, Conte, & Masar, 2002, p. 6). It is this discovery of the other, which is particularly powerful when this discovery happens as a community, that is the heart of peace education. Art is an ideal medium for self discovery and awareness as well. Aniece Novak begins her art class by giving her children a free reign: they are provided with media and a free theme (Brunson, Conte, & Masar, 2002). Through their art, she gets to know them. Through their art, children express what is going on in their lives, and sometimes express a cry for help (Brunson, Conte, & Masar, 2002).

One key characteristic of art, which lends itself greatly to peace education, is the importance of process. One plans, prepares, practices and performs (or creates), evaluates, regroups and then plans again (Brunson et al, 2002). So, art is not only a wonderful, creative, mode of self expression and discovery of the other, but it also engages students in a process, through which they learn positive motivation, self-discipline, confidence, perseverance, self respect, self-efficacy, and positive peer associations (Brunson et al, 2002). As the classroom becomes a safe space, students can learn, particularly through art, to express themselves in ways in which they otherwise would not have been able (Brunson et al, 2002).

Besides the creation of a work of art or a dramatic production, the critique is another praxis point within art to foster peace education. Many use Liz Lerman's five step model to lead students in a critique in a safe and trust-building process:

1. Expression of any and all positive feedback
2. Artist asks audience a question
3. Audience asks artist a question
4. Audience members with opinions ask artist if she would like to hear them
5. Discussion of the subject matter. (Brunson et al, 2002, 7)

Through this critique, students are led in a process which is based on their ability to communicate about their experiences and personal perceptions of the world. For the student artist, it is a great risk (taken in the safe space of class room, in the safe medium of art) to share his or her perception of and experience with the world. According to Brice Heath's *Report on Community-Based Youth Organizations* "The glue of it all is risk in a safe place...Nobody gets hurt everyone has work to do. Members must find a way to diffuse anger and deflect aggression. They provide a meaningful combination of work and play with risk that carries people forward. Nothing is arbitrary" (Brunson et al, 2002, p. 6). This presentation within a critique fosters self expression, especially on the part of the presenting student-artist, creating space in which to speak about the things that are important to his or her reality. For the student audience, it represents the chance to practice the affirmations and peace building "I care" language that will be emphasized in class. Likewise, it is a chance for everyone to engage with, and discover the humanity of, the other. Especially for younger children, this concrete experience with the differing perception of a known peer is the necessary foundation to be able to appreciate the unknown other. This type of a critique is practice in dialogue.

The unit projects will use art as a praxis for peace. For example, the first unit project is an "All About Me Box." In the "box," students will be asked to bring items from home or that

they have found outside that represent themselves, as well as to create several art projects that are self-descriptive. These projects will begin, as Aniece Novak, with a free theme. Later in the unit, they will be asked to create something that represents times they have experienced different emotions, or depicts a favorite activity. In conjunction with the English segment on body parts, they will create a life-size cut-out of themselves, to be labeled and decorated. My hope is to have a wide range of mediums with which the children can experiment, including oil pastels and paint as well as the traditional markers, crayons, and colored pencils.

Drama as a praxis for peace

Augusto Boal's *Theater of the Oppressed* (1979) is another dynamic tool for the development of self awareness, self expression and empowerment. Boal's *Theater* was developed in part in reaction to the inherent oppressive structure of traditional theater. Much of modern day entertainment can trace its roots back to Aristotelian theater, which in many ways is characterized by its divisions: on stage there is the division between the protagonist and the chorus, sending the message that some people (i.e. the protagonist) are important and the rest (i.e. the chorus) are just part of the crowd and not as important (Boal, 1979). Likewise, a division is created between the actors and the audience: the audience is meant merely to be passive recipients of the values, ideas and action presented by the performers (Boal, 1979). Aristotle says that art imitates nature, yet Boal (1979) points out that a better translation of this word would be "re-create." Thus, the hierarchy and division on stage in Aristotelian theater is a re-creation of Aristotle's view of reality. Aristotle's proposed that "justice" is based not equality, but rather on proportionality and the "just" proportions are found in the already existing inequalities (Boal, 1979). Thus, justice becomes subjective, and is based upon who has the

superior position in existing social structures. Aristotle, then, would not believe that structural violence exists because whatever structure does exist is just because it exists.

In *Theater of the Oppressed*, Boal (1979), Boal proposes a different reality in which current structural violence does not legitimize structural violence. Rather, he re-creates reality on stage in a manner that engages reality: he breaks down the barriers between protagonist and chorus and between actors and audience and theater becomes a means to expression and discovery. It is the people (formerly the chorus or even the spectators, who become protagonist-chorus: actors with a voice). His primary goal is to transform people from passive spectators into subjects, actors, and transformers.

This emphasis on a transformation away from passivity into agency echoes Freire's call for students to be active participants in peace education classes. Thus, by utilizing some of Boal's methods, there is another praxis point from which students are invited to engage with their reality in a way that facilitates the development of self expression and engagement with others in reality.

Our transition from the ten minute break back into class will utilize Boal's acting games. For example, when we are studying emotions in English, we will do "emotion poses." This game was explained to me by Father Rick Curry, S.J., who worked with Boal. For this game, students will be asked to walk around and mill about until I shout out an emotion. Immediately, students will freeze so that their facial expression and body posture reflects that emotion (R. Curry, personal communication, 11 October, 2009). As the class continues, we will rotate who "calls" the emotions during this game.

There are several other of Boal's games which will be used either as transition or as activities as part of circle time or an English lesson. One of these is "sculpting," I will ask my

students to use their bodies to create a “sculpture.” The sculpture, for example, could be one portraying their emotions in reaction to a specific conflict. One student would be the sculptor and indicate to the others how to pose. They will then have the opportunity address each individual in the sculpture, perhaps representing different emotions or different aspects of different emotions, and to re-sculpt to show it, physical transforming the emotion (Boal, 1979). This is a physical, concrete way in which these students can express and then work through difficult emotions, such as anger.

English as a second language as a praxis for peace

English as a second language as a praxis for peace is a relatively new idea (A. Wisler, personal communication, 23 October, 2009). Peace pedagogy emphasizes the importance of student participation in the learning process. How can this be applied to language teaching when the teacher knows the language to be learned and the students truly do not have experience with that language? In this case, it seems like the teacher does, in fact, have all of the “water” and the students really are just vessels to be filled. While the teacher has experience and knowledge of the language that the students do not, students do have experience with language (their own native tongue, namely). Tapping into experience in general in language is important not only because it is the starting point of student’s reality but also because it frames the second language in terms of the importance of communication skills – skills which can then practiced in the foreign language as well as the native language. Language learning thus can become an entry point into conflict transformation, cultural diversity, and international communication (Newton, 2004). There are, according to Newton (2004, 45), many learning objectives and benefits that nicely dovetail language learning and the development of conflict transformation skills, including:

- Direct language education towards a culture of peace
- Make students aware of the advantage of nonviolently transforming conflict
- Foster curiosity, understanding, and appreciation of other cultures
- Enhance the student's ability to use the English language by challenging them intellectually
- Give students the opportunity to draw on their own experience and transmit their knowledge to others

Language skills developed in this environment foster dialogue, inclusion, and critical thinking.

(Newton, 2004).

This curriculum will have an English lesson taking twenty-five minutes of each of our classes. These 25 minutes will be comprised of grammar lessons, learning vocabulary, story time and discussion, and practice activities. To help transition the class into our English lesson, several things will occur. First, everyone will have a special name tag to be worn just during our English lesson. After we have retrieved the schedule for the day, each student will get their name tag off the book shelf, return their reflection journal and retrieve their English journal. Then our grammar lesson will begin. Specific grammar and vocabulary will be correlated with each unit. In the first unit "Who am I?" grammar lessons will include a discussion on the importance of pronouns in English (in Spanish, pronouns are often dropped and inferred from the conjugation of the verb), with a special emphasis on the "I" pronoun. As a memory tool, as a class we will make up a hand motion to mean "I."⁶ Likewise, we will learn the present tense "I" conjugation for "to be," "to have," and "to like," among other verbs requested by students as they work on their "All About Me Box." Vocabulary in this section will include body parts, self-descriptive adjectives, favorite activities, and emotions. Grammar in the second unit "Who are my neighbors?" will include the rest of the pronouns (and associated hand motions), completion of present tense conjugations of verbs learned in unit 1, and question words. Vocabulary will include family members, country names, and food.

⁶ In my class in El Salvador, we put our hand over our heart to signify "I." This was a wonderful memory device. Often, the motion served as cue so that the students were able to generate the word "I" themselves.

Once a week our activity following the grammar lesson will be a read aloud as reading is crucial to cultural and language literacy (Swaffer & Arens, 2005; Newton 2004). Swaffer and Arens (2004) suggest the *précis* as the pedagogical tool to reading and reading analysis. Neny Zabaleta (personal communication, 24 January 2009), a teacher at an international school in San Salvador uses a “story glove” to help her students create a *précis* after reading a story. I have created my own adaptation of this story glove. On this glove, the thumb represents the setting, the pointer finger represents the characters, the middle finger represents the beginning, the ring finger represents the middle and the pinky represents the end. The palm is the story’s conflict and resolution and the back of the hand is the student’s reaction or thoughts about the story. As one of our first art projects, each student will make a story glove, which they will then wear during story time as a reminder of what to be sure to listen for and remember. Then after each story, there will be story-glove worksheets for students to complete. On days we do not read a story, activities following grammar lessons will include worksheets, games, and activities to reinforce that day’s lesson.

As a final activity, as a class we will choose five Words of the Day. This will be a process in which we identify the words which occurred the most during class that day. Once the words have been picked, the students will work in groups to draw a picture illustrating the word and label it. Finally, each group will present their word and drawing to the class, and each drawing will be hung on our “Word of the Day” wall (Adapted from Freire’s language literacy method, A. Wisler, personal communication, 5 October 2009). These are words that, after they have been identified, may only be spoken in English. As a class we will decide if that extends outside of the English lesson to the rest of class. This identification of “Words of the Day” as a

class is another way in which students are involved in the process of their language learning and it ascertains that words chosen are ones that are useful to them.

As a positive reinforcement method, there will be a poster on the wall entitled “Language Master.” Names will be added to this poster as students are able to go through the complete 25 minute English session without saying a Word of the Day in Spanish. After the student’s name is added, he or she will receive a star for each subsequent day. (This is adapted from Concordia Language Villages “Language Master” activity, Hamilton, Crane & Bartochesky, 2005)

There will also be a poster entitled “Useful Expressions” on the wall. Whenever students learn a phrase or expression that they think is useful, they may write it on this poster.

Conflict transformation model

The conflict resolution model is the Problem Solving Peace Train developed by Little Friends for Peace (MJ Park & J. Park, 1995). Working with Little Friends for Peace for the past year, it is one that I am familiar with and have seen in positive action; the children, familiar with this model, often initiate themselves and ask to go to the Peace Table with another student to work out a conflict, using the cars of the Problem Solving Peace Train (see *Figure 3* in Appendix B). The whole train, as MJ says, is fueled by love.

The first car, the engine, is STOP. It is the first step necessary to go from being “peacebreakers to peacemakers” (MJ Park & J. Park, 1995, p. 27). As was discussed earlier, ending direct violence is the essential first step in the process of peace. Thus, STOP puts an end to the direct violence (be it teasing, naming calling, or pushing). In practice, each opponent goes to another room and does whatever he or she needs to do flush out their anger, such as screaming into a pillow, punching a mattress, counting to ten, calling a friend, quietly singing a favorite song, drawing or writing about their feelings (MJ Park & J. Park, 1995, 27). In the initial

introduction to the train, students will be asked to write or draw their favorite way of dealing with anger in their reflection notebooks, an activity encouraged by the Parks (1995). A hand motion reminder and phrase used by Little Friends for Peace is “Stop” (hold up right hand palm out, making a stop gesture), “I want to work it out” (hold out left hand with palm facing up).

The second car is IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM. Still in their separate STOP locations, each student will be asked to reflect on what happened, asking themselves what it was that was important enough to fight over – was it about the toy or a feeling of disrespect? Then each will write or draw in their reflection notebook what happened, how he or she felt about it, and what he or she really wants for themselves and the other person (MJ Park & J. Park, 1995, 27). An important part of this step is identifying if each student is ready to try to work it out in a manner that allows each student to win. If not, they probably need more time in STOP (MJ Park & J. Park, 1995).

The third car is GENERATE SOLUTIONS. Again, still in their STOP locations, each student write or draw three possible solutions to the problem. These solutions do not need to be censored, as negative or violent solutions can act as a catharsis and prepare the way for true problem solving (MJ Park & J. Park, 1995).

The fourth car is CHECK FEELINGS FROM EACH SOLUTION. After generating their solutions, students will be asked to go back and look over each possibility and identify how each solution would make him or herself feel and how it would make the other student feel (MJ Park & J. Park, 1995). If there are not any that would lead to both parties being happy, the student is required to think of another solution that would (MJ Park & J. Park, 1995).

The caboose is NEGOTIATE A RESOLUTION. At this point, each student will come to the Peace Table with an adult to mediate. The mediator (either myself or another staff at the Art Center for Peace) will be aware of the following “safety rules” for the Peace Table:

Focus on and attack the problem, not the opponent

Listen with an open mind

Treat your opponent’s feelings with respect

Take responsibility for your actions (MJ Park & J. Park, 1995, p. 28).

Posted above the Peace Table, in Spanish, will be rules which are concrete applications of those guidelines, adapted by the Parks from Schmidt and Friedman (1995):

NO put-Downs, Ignoring person speaking, Sneering, Blaming, Making Excuses, Bringing up Past, Getting Even, Threats....(p. 28)

This model will be present to the students in the first week of class, using poster board representations of each car. As each car is introduced, a student will be asked to come to the front of the room to hold the poster board for that car in front of the class. As one of our unit projects, we will build a Peace Train out of cardboard boxes with rope suspenders so that the students can wear each train in a Peace Train procession.

It is true that this process takes a while. However this in itself may act as a motivation for students to avoid conflict in the first place so they don’t have to STOP and leave whatever lesson or activity is taking place (MJ Park & J. Park, 1995).

If there are similar conflicts that are consistently happening, perhaps name calling or interrupting, or pushing, one of Boal’s theater games (1979) will be used as a group activity, in addition to the Peace Train for the individual conflicts themselves. In this game, several students will be asked to act out the conflict. Once the crisis has been reached and a solution is needed, the actors will stop, and the audience of other students will be asked for potential solutions. When solution is offered, the actors will immediately act it out, conforming to what the audience member proposed. Each new solution will be acted out. Then as a class we will discuss which

solution to accept. This activity may be supplemented with each actor sculpting two or three students from the audience into emotions raised in the conflict scene or one of the solutions.

Concluding Thoughts

Thank you for traveling this journey with me: we've reached the end of this document, which is in so many ways a beginning in itself. Creating this curriculum has felt like a journey to me: a journey that started long before I began writing and which will continue into the future. It is a journey in which I am discovering where my greatest desire meets the world's greatest need: the praxis point between myself and my neighbors. In many ways, the birthing reality of this project has felt surreal: is it possible that I can work with children, that I can teach and learn with them and that part of this teaching is entering into a life style of simplicity and of solidarity? Yes: this curriculum, both its creation and its coming implementation, has felt like the beginning of a vocation which has become, quite suddenly, a possibility and reality.

This sense of vocation, possibility, and reality has made the creation of the curriculum a context that is both joyful and terrifying. At times, doubting my capabilities as a teacher and as a person living in another country has made writing seem impossible as the two are inexorably linked. Fortunately, there have been several things that have grounded me, the most important being my Salvadoran friends. Perhaps the most important part of this process were phone calls and conversations with my students and my friends in Calle Real. Their continued friendship with me, presence to me, and hope in me is what has made it possible for me to write this curriculum because they remind me why I started on this journey in the first place. I started because of them, because of how they witnessed their hope in life to me while I was there, because of who they believed me to be and thus gave me the freedom to become.

In essence, my goals for this program are to create a similar space of freedom for the children with whom I am teaching and learning. If this program can be a place of freedom of expression, if it can plant the seeds of desire for peace along with practical skills in order to work

towards that peace, if it can be the first step into awareness of a larger global community, if my students begin to use the class as place to dream and bring those dreams into reality, then we will be on the road for which I had hoped. Truly, I have learned that I cannot write, teach, or learn alone: we are all in this together. Solidarity.

My working definition:

solidarity

meaning derived from experience with the Spanish "solidaridad" while living working and being in El Salvador

The knowledge that we are all in this together. This understanding crosses socio-economic, cultural, religious, and political differences. It is the recognition that each person is a created being with dignity, worth respect, just as we ourselves are. it is namaste.

It is the understanding that not only are we all in this (life living hardship joy struggle discovery) together, but that we could not do it alone; that we need each other, that we must be in it together.

This knowledge, understanding, recognition binds us together and in so doing frees us. (Darr, 2009, July 31)

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Appendix A: Maps



Figure 1. Map of El Salvador. Reprinted from “El Salvador Country Map,” by Mappery, real life maps, 2009.



Figure 2. Map of Central America. Reprinted from “About El Salvador” by El Salvador Trade, 2009.

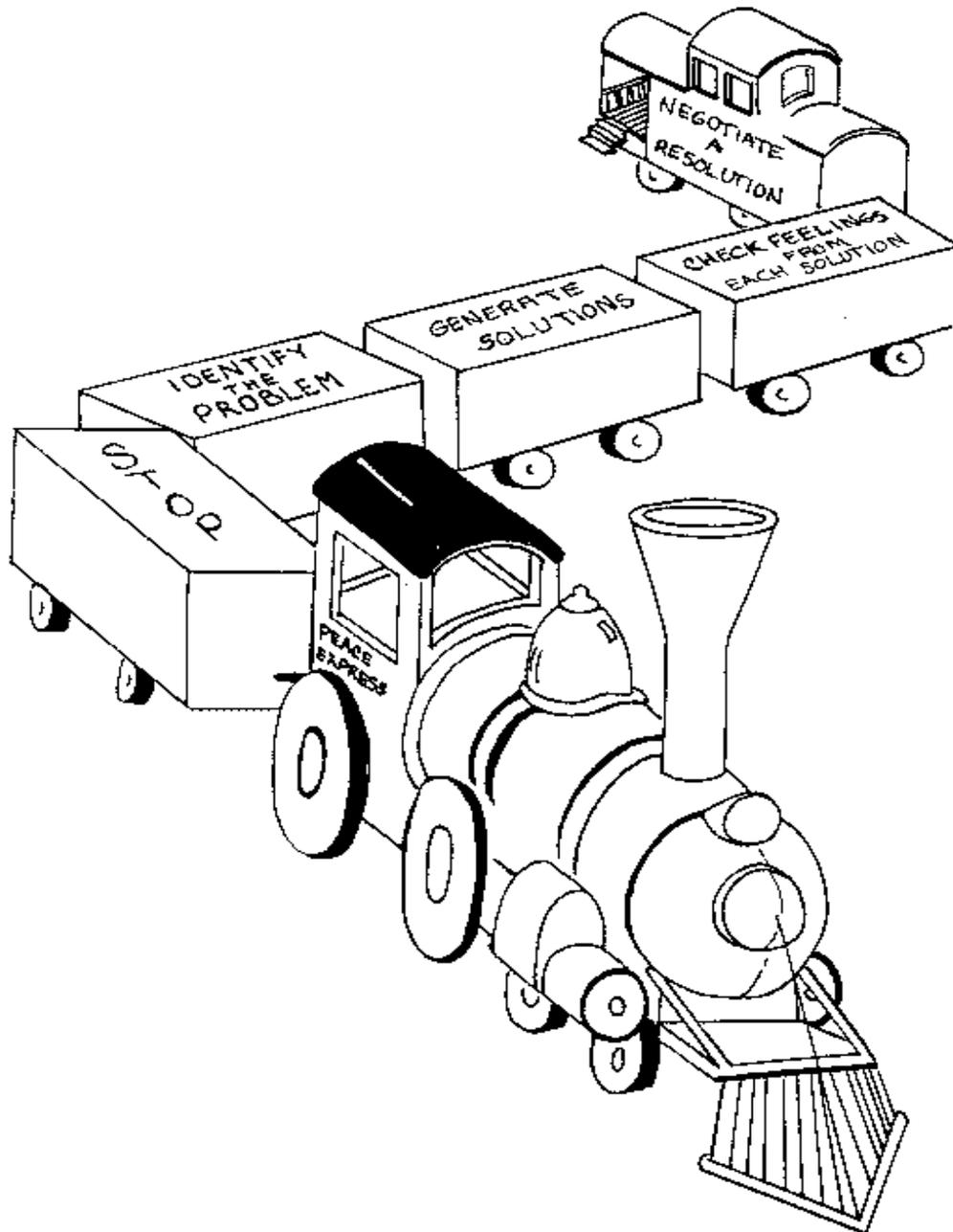
Appendix B : The Peace Train

Figure 3. Problem Solving Peace Train. Reprinted from “Family peacemaking: Playful and reflective gatherings with skillbuilding activities, family guidebook,” by MJ and Jerry Park, 1995