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Peace, Justice, and Security Studies: A Curriculum Guide

SEVENTH EDITION

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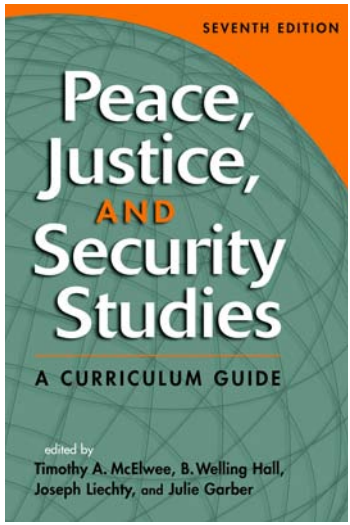

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Introduction

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EDUCATORS IN THE UNITED STATES HAVE GIVEN BIRTH TO FOUR waves of peace studies in the last sixty years. Each generation of academic study has looked and felt very different but has moved us to a deeper, richer, clearer, more relevant understanding of militarism and the war system.[1] Educators have worked hard with their students to envision a new global civil society based on nonviolence, ethical considerations, multicultural respect, tolerance, social justice, economic well-being, ecological balance, and democratic participation. Yet a great unfinished agenda still beckons, and we must employ highly effective responses to the most pressing challenges facing humanity today. To best serve our young people, we must stretch the limitations of our teaching to go far beyond the current state of peace studies.

It is important to bear in mind that peace studies derives its research, teaching base, data, and insights from a systematic body of knowledge known as peace research, now over fifty years in development, and from social movements for human transformation spanning centuries, which call into question the inevitability of war and oppression. Although movements for social change have raised profound questions for educators, peace studies cannot be as easily dismissed by critics as an outgrowth of current political activism. The best scholarship and academics have not been polemical or ideological. There are over 800 peace research institutes around the world, employing some 15,000 researchers at last count in the United Nations directory. Peace education, although informed by and helping to inform social movements, draws on empirical findings and inquiry from history, anthropology, archaeology, psychology, education, biology, economics, international relations, women's studies, literature, and philosophy, to name several. What

follows are my own impressions from twenty-five years of working inside social protest movements, as an organizer with low-income communities in US inner cities and a curriculum development specialist with hundreds of college campuses to establish peace studies programs.

The First Wave: A Legal Blueprint for World Disarmament

The first wave of peace studies came in the early 1950s in the wake of World War II. Most US courses and programs were rooted in Western perspectives on using international law, world federalism, and transnational organizations such as the United Nations to address military conflicts. At its core was the notion that the whole system of competing nation-states fighting over scarce resources could be replaced with an orderly world system based on respect for the rule of law. This is an enduring and worthy cause. The World Federalists Association had a large following at the time. Harvard University and select law schools offered courses on "World Peace Through World Law," based on the famous tome by Grenville Clark and Louis Sohn. Talk of disarmament was in the air, and actual policy proposals were being advanced, such as the McCloy-Zorin Agreement (UN Document A/4879). The possibility of a world disarmed held great promise, if only war as an instrument of foreign policy could be controlled by a benign world authority. But the greed and power of the arms industries proved too great, the ambitions, insecurities, and reach of the superpowers too immense, and the minds of the politicians too small. The dream went unfulfilled.

Even though a small number of pacifist colleges, such as Manchester College (Church of the Brethren) and Quaker schools, included perspectives on racial equality, nonviolence, and social justice, peace studies in the 1950s was in large measure a top-down, elitist, Western, white blueprint for world order. Absent were voices from the global South, feminist scholars, or mass nonviolent movements for revolutionary change. This was destined to change in subsequent decades.

The Second Wave: US Imperialism and the Radicalization of American Youth

The second wave of peace studies was born with the civil rights movement and the onset of the Vietnam War and took the form of nonviolence trainings through black colleges and churches, activists' workshops, and teach-ins on campuses. The African American struggle for freedom and equality inspired many student organizers and helped set the stage for the antiwar

movement. The first civil rights trainings were conducted in the early 1950s. The first antiwar teach-ins were held in New York's Union Square in 1964 and at the University of Michigan in 1965. Soldiers returning to colleges and universities from Vietnam bore witness to the war and testified at the Winter Soldier hearings, questioning the morality of the war, politicians, and military commanders. Many nonviolent strategies and training methods born in the civil rights movement were tried in the student antiwar movement. The hypocrisy of what the United States claimed to represent and what our race relations and foreign policies were in reality became increasingly apparent, fueling a radical awakening of youth in the United States.

Pentagon and State Department officials Richard Barnet and Marcus Raskin broke with the Kennedy administration on US policy in the Vietnam War and wrote "The Vietnam White Papers," revealing the actual numbers of Vietnamese and US fatalities. The White Papers sparked more teach-ins across the country. Students went on strike and walked out of classes in droves to protest the war and US imperialism. Their campus-based protests and rallies were frequently met with force and widespread police abuse. Students were savagely beaten, arrested, jailed, and fatally shot at Jackson State College in Mississippi and Kent State University in Ohio. Two students died and nine were wounded at Jackson State. The Center for Peaceful Change at Kent State University was erected on the site where four students were killed by the Ohio National Guard. The program endures today.

A fundamental questioning of American society began to take root. Class struggle, racial divides, and the war were being addressed directly in peace studies courses. Capitalist values, culture, and domination were called into question. Course records from the University of Wisconsin, the University of California, Columbia University, American University, and many others list books such as *The Fire Next Time* by James Baldwin, *Soul on Ice* by Eldridge Cleaver, *Up Against the Ivy Wall* by Jerry Avorn, and *The Strawberry Statement: Notes of a College Revolutionary* by James Simon Kunen in the syllabuses. Many of the classes were student-led. Complementing the antiwar movement, a new environmental consciousness also began to take root, spawning the first Earth Day in 1970. Soon the works of Norman Cousins, Avery Lovins, and Francis Moore Lappé critiquing lifestyle and values found their way into peace studies classes and programs. A fundamental rethinking of the conventional wisdom and logic of our society was being supplanted gradually by a new planetary consciousness. Students and faculty examined what we grew, ate, wore, bought, drove, built, and traded and proposed alternatives to energy policy, consumption, and care of mind, body, and health. This critical thinking would manifest itself years later as baby boomers took leadership positions in our society and insinuated these new ideas into our mainstream institutions and culture.[2]

The Third Wave: Ronald Reagan Gives Peace Studies a Big Boost

The third wave of peace studies came at the height of the Reagan administration in the 1980s. Unlike the US peace movements of the 1960s, the antinuclear protests of the 1980s were not campus-based, and yet surprisingly the campus benefited greatly. Literally thousands of courses on the nuclear threat were taught on college campuses and in high schools across the country. The impetus for this far-reaching curricular movement came ironically and unwittingly from right-wing, conservative commentators and key intellectual architects of the Reagan administration, who were publishing and speaking openly about fighting and winning a nuclear war. In the fall of 1982, in town meetings and local referenda, 73 percent of the US public surveyed voted to freeze the arms race. Concerned citizens and pillars of the US establishment, such as bishops, doctors, lawyers, and four-star generals, became alarmed at the US military buildup, the escalation of the nuclear arms race, and the corresponding rhetoric about the Soviet Union. Taking the lead from such groups as Physicians for Social Responsibility, which asked what doctors could do to prevent nuclear war, educators felt compelled to ask what they might contribute to ending war. The response was to establish groups such as Educators for Social Responsibility, Teachers for Justice and Peace, Concerned Philosophers for Peace, and United Campuses to Prevent Nuclear War.

This broader support from the mainstream—religious leaders, lawyers, and other professionals—meant that the response to peace education on campuses met with much less resistance than had the teach-ins of the Vietnam War. Momentum grew in 1982, when 400 social scientists gathered in New York City to discuss "The Role of the Academy in Addressing the Threat of Nuclear War," with high-level sponsorship from the Rockefeller Foundation and other establishment organizations.

However, surveys in 1979 and 1989 by the Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development (COPRED), under contract with the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), indicated that peace studies in the United States was limited at best, its definition was watered down, and it suffered from poor content and conceptualization.

With few exceptions, curricula basically fell into two extreme categories. The first category included those courses slanted toward strategic studies and military policy. These courses were more concerned with understanding the evolution of nuclear strategies and deterrence theory than with the underlying conditions for a disarmed world. They emphasized technical solutions over building political relationships. The basic conceptualization in these courses was dangerously misleading. The COPRED report pointed

out that unless corrected, teachers might be training and preparing "arms control" experts who are versed in weapons technology but who would fail to advance one iota the goal of disarmament.

The second category of courses was somewhat better. However, they were long on advocacy and short on providing students with concrete skills and a critical political framework for exploring questions of human security and disarmament. Students were not challenged to develop their analytical and research capabilities. Absent were both substantive criteria by which students might assess security policies and practical negotiation and conflict resolution skills.

A Critique of the Fourth Wave

Despite the deteriorating financial conditions facing many colleges and universities today, peace studies enrollments are on the rise all over the United States. Course offerings have increased. Interest among students is greater now than ever, even after they have been urged to study something more "marketable." Content and conceptualization are more rigorous. Research methods are more sophisticated. The political climate has completely shifted. Degree programs in the study of peace and nonviolence meet with none of the resistance from university administrations they met in the past. In the wake of the nation's most disastrous college shooting at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University on April 16, 2007, a Peace Studies Center has been established to commemorate the thirty-two students killed. Local residents, students, and faculty made the decision to transform the scene of the shooting into a community and campus resource for conflict resolution, academic study, reflection, meditation, and research. Only twenty-nine US undergraduate programs existed in 1981. Today, there are over 320 peace studies programs in the United States out of a total of 450 worldwide, including dozens of master's and Ph.D. programs at schools such as the University of Notre Dame, the University of Cincinnati, George Mason University, and the American University.

Conflict resolution, mediation, and negotiation studies, which developed as a separate field, are today included in most peace studies programs. As former syndicated newspaper columnist and peace educator Colman McCarthy is fond of saying, peace and nonviolence are the grand road map of where we want to go, while conflict resolution and mediation are the skills to drive the car to get there.

The fourth wave of peace studies offers a better and more balanced blend of strategic issues, normative considerations, and policy alternatives. There is greater sophistication among the faculty in using data and arguments that were formerly the sole preserve of Pentagon officials and strategic experts. I

see a critical mass of professors and graduates who recognize and can effectively counter the conventional wisdom and arguments of the foreign policy elites in any debate.

However, peace studies programs are failing to challenge the frightening, creeping new nature of warfare. We barely stand up to the status quo and are not considered a force with which to be reckoned. We are too caught up in our daily grind; we seem to be giving one great big collective yawn about Abu Ghraib, torture and prisoner abuse, Guantanamo, and the private mercenaries running the war in Iraq and Afghanistan in our name. Greater attention must be focused on the privatization of war; the new mercenaries; the role, nature, and dynamics of the military-industrial complex; and the reinforcing "iron quadrangle" of private military contractors, Congress, the White House, and the Pentagon. The system of checks and balances as the cornerstone of our republic has been gravely compromised. A glaring case of this kind of abuse of power is the Iraq War and the no-bid defense contracts awarded to Vice President Dick Cheney's business partners.[3]

Instructors must put greater stress on understanding the basic assumptions and dynamics fueling militarism and the war system, such as: What are armaments? What do they represent? Who makes armaments and for what purposes? Who buys them and for what purposes? What is deterrence? Where has it led us? At what cost? Using world military expenditures or the federal budget as illustration, the economic argument should be much more prominent.[4] There is insufficient attention to conventional arms and their role in the dynamic international political environment where conflicts are waged. Few faculty appreciate the role that conventional arms sales play in the conduct of our foreign policy and the resulting leverage we yield with regimes. Too often weapons sales are made without regard to the geopolitical and strategic conditions that can lead to war, as in the case of the Central Asian republics, Israel, the Gulf states, and many others.

Peace studies scholars are weak at integrating feminist scholarship into peace studies. Feminist critiques of the war system and military institutions, including rape, patriarchy, political violence, spirituality, economics, and alternative futures, are significant but too often underrepresented.[5] Fostering a culture of peace is at the heart of women's studies. Feminist scholars explore *power with* rather than *power over* others. Here I am speaking of the presence of cooperative social relationships and institutions in what is known as "positive peace." Such a notion flies in the face of our competitive, male-dominated institutions, values, and power relationships, yet it is what is most gravely and desperately needed. There is an enormous difference between preventing war and creating a peaceful society. Television violence, early childhood socialization, war toys, violent technologies, ecological balance, and spiritual alienation are just a few aspects of our corporate, male culture that must be critically examined. When shaping the

curriculum, more attempts should be made to draw in women's studies, the arts, humanities, ecology, early childhood education, and political psychology.

Further, the contributions of black studies are notably absent from most courses. A content analysis of the leading peace studies textbooks by a team of doctoral students at the University of Cincinnati in the late 1990s revealed a total absence of black scholars or African American perspectives, despite the clear pedagogical value of hearing primary sources. A survey and catalog of existing literature and course offerings at historically black colleges and universities is completely missing in our work. Funding should be sought and partnerships developed. Too often we lack any insight into the legitimate viewpoints of minority populations and people of color. Race is still an explosive issue in this country, despite what conservative pundits would have us think, and we have so many unresolved questions in race relations in the United States that peace studies programs should be modeling a true dialogue on race with our counterpart in black studies programs. Peace studies courses and sister-college relationships were started at one time at Spelman College, Morehouse College, the College of Atlanta, Grambling State University, and Fisk University in the 1980s with funding from the MacArthur Foundation. What became of those programs and relationships?

One reason for the drop-off in interest by scholars in sister disciplines may be that we show an insufficient understanding of the deeper, underlying causes of conflict rooted in world political and economic structures. For many reasons, faculties in other countries cover these concepts much better than their US counterparts. There is almost an aversion on the part of US faculty to dealing fundamentally with North-South questions, international debt, declining terms of trade for the global South, and a new international economic order. The World Social Forum (WSF) sums it up with the slogan "Another World Is Possible." Each year the WSF draws enormous crowds—80,000 activists in Nairobi and thousands in Atlanta, Georgia, in summer 2007 during the first US Social Forum. How can we ignore such vast social movements and what they represent? There must be a growing realization among US academics that without systemic changes in the present world political economy, we will never be able to establish or achieve a disarmed world.

The subject of internal militarization is absent in most courses, and yet it is a phenomena in Colombia, Israel, China, the United States, Russia, and Pakistan, among many other countries. An example of how militarization is used on domestic populations is the US "war on drugs." Substantial research and materials exist on the relationship between militarism and repression, enough to warrant a concentration in the curriculum, but I seldom find courses linking disarmament to human rights.

Programs should explore a new concept of human security over national security. Our students have little appreciation for what a massive shift of federal spending would mean in terms of industrial policy, increased

trade, jobs, environmental protection, renewable energy, and a better quality of life for our nation's poor. The subject of "economic conversion" has been dismissed or taken off the table since the 1980s. It is our job to place it squarely back as the centerpiece. Within two years after World War II, the United States retooled and shifted 90 percent of its military industries back to civilian use (the outbreak of the Korean War derailed the effort). So economic conversion can be done. It has been done. That being said, economic conversion should not be viewed as a central strategy to achieve disarmament. It is misleading to think that if we just dismantle war industries we could create a peaceful foreign policy. Conversion should be tied to deep reductions in military spending, new alternative energy policies, multilateral peacekeeping, alternative security arrangements, nonprovocative defense policies, and much more.

Finally, instead of reinventing the conventional options of negotiations and arms control or immediately adopting a nonviolent strategy, peace studies programs should explore a continuum of alternative defense policies. Nations can take many confidence-building initiatives and trust-enhancing steps. The literature in this area is weak at best.

A Call to Greater Militancy and Direct Action

At this monumental and tragic political moment in our history, the paradox is that our efforts to improve the status of peace education in the United States have succeeded to a large extent. Against the agony of yet another US imperial war, this time in Iraq, and the very real prospect of global, planetary ecological collapse, peace studies is on the rise and is a highly respected academic discipline. Although it is true that we are graduating thousands of young people with a different mind-set, worldview, and set of skills to improve the human condition, is it enough? Now that we have greater numbers and respectability and are no longer fighting a rearguard action just to keep our programs alive, what will we do with our newfound place in the academy? Is teaching these subjects enough? Can we be a prophetic voice for young people, a positive nonviolent force on campuses and in our communities? Is it enough simply to model just and right relationships? Is it within our power and control to help lead the United States in new and humane directions? Should we? Is that the role of an educator?

My fear is that we have become complacent, when what is needed is a much greater sense of militancy, urgency, and nonviolent direct action on our part. We have a role to play, and we are not conducting ourselves effectively. I have no doubt if we tested the limits of political respectability and truly challenged the status quo, we would meet with resistance in certain parts of the country and perhaps jeopardize our programs and tenure, but

perhaps not. Perhaps our colleagues and students are waiting for us to do something much more ambitious and daunting. We won't know until we try.

We must put forward a bold and hopeful vision of the future for our students. We cannot create a world that we cannot first envision. We must offer hope. Young people are starving for hope and a positive vision from what I have witnessed while teaching at Georgetown (2001), Columbia (2002), and Catholic Universities (2007). I saw it in their eyes. We owe them that much.

Then we must find the courage to stir up trouble for those who are benefiting from the war system. This will come at a price, but don't forget we stand on the shoulders of a lot of courageous educators who came before us in the abolitionist, civil rights, and antiwar movements.

At this stage in human evolution, much will depend on the efforts of dedicated teachers to bring forth a new generation of people who do not believe in the use of force to get their way in the world. Politicians currently have the power to make policy, but teachers are those who forge the foundation on which the future of the world will be built. This is also power, a great power that teachers must use now. We cannot leave it to the next generation of educators. Let us act not in fear, but in our deep abiding commitment to education.

Notes

1. Richard A. Falk and Samuel S. Kim, eds., *The War System: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Boulder: Westview, 1980), xvi, 659.

2. Leonard Steinhorn, *The Greater Generation: In Defense of the Baby Boom Legacy* (Macmillan Publisher, 2006).

3. See William Hartung's important works on this topic to enrich any course, including *And Weapons for All* and *How Much Are You Making on the War Today, Daddy? A Guide to War Profiteering in the Bush Administration.*

4. See "Cost of War" data from the National Priorities Project, www.nationalpriorities.org.

5. See some of the earliest works, such as *Reweaving the Web of Life* by Pam McAllister, *Star Wars and the State of Our Souls* by Patricia Mische, *Sexism and the War System* by Betty Reardon, or *Educating for Peace from a Feminist Perspective* by Brigit Brock-Utne.