9 Peace Education and Political Science

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INTRODUCTION: COMPETING PARADIGMS

The term “peace education” is not one political scientists use and certainly not a concept that political science has considered very much, yet this does not mean that work in political science has nothing to say on questions of interest to the field. It can be argued that the term “peace education” itself is a barrier that makes it difficult for most political scientists to see or make significant connections between the concerns of peace education and their own work. In addition, political scientists have contributions to make to peace education that could enrich it conceptually and empirically.

It is not that political scientists have no interest in peace or peaceful relations. Rather, the differences at play here involve alternative academic paradigms and theories of how these can be best achieved, pitting those who emphasize the causal role of norms, values, and identities on the one hand against those who stress the importance of interests and institutions on the other. There are some long-standing patterns at issue here as well, such as the tendency to view applied work when they see it as offering a normative and insufficiently analytic approach. Yet at the same time, the work of many political scientists could help to expand peace education conceptually and empirically.

My emphasis in this chapter is on the competing theories that frame different understandings of how peaceful relations are best achieved among groups within the same society as well as between different societies. It argues that current approaches to peace education fail to give an adequate account of the role that institutions and practices can play in the achievement and maintenance of peace and at the same time suggests that many political scientists too quickly dismiss the role of identities in the generation and settlement of conflict. In short, both approaches are partial yet complementary in many ways. By enlarging what is considered relevant to peace education, it is suggested that core theoretical assumptions that motivate the field can be better articulated, more fully examined, and integrated in ways that link theory and practice more effectively.

If mainstream political science were to offer a critique of most existing approaches to peace education, it would probably identify three problems with the field. Understanding these concerns can offer insights into why political scientists have paid so little attention to peace education to date and how future engagement might develop. The first and most general objection is probably that peace education is primarily normative and not scientific. A second is that it is often exclusively focused on individuals and pays too little attention to collectivities, structures, and institutions. Third, it pays more attention to changing norms and values than is warranted theoretically and not enough to institutions and their practices.¹

¹ Some of these concerns are not necessarily warranted as generalizations. However, that is not my concern here.
Most political scientists, when asked what is most important in building a society in which citizens from diverse backgrounds and competing interests can live together peacefully, would argue that in such a society a large proportion of the population needs to see the society’s rules and procedures as fair or just, and in such a society its social and political institutions provide sufficient incentives to encourage citizens to behave efficaciously and peacefully as they pursue their interests. The argument is that if institutions are properly structured, they motivate citizens to do what is desirable because it is in their interest to do so and provides them a stake in society. Cross-cutting ties in a peaceful society link social and political groups in a variety of ways that promote the articulation of superordinate goals and nonpermanent coalitions and majorities. Focusing on self-interest and incentives to develop and sustain cooperative, peaceful practices, some political scientists strongly believe, produces a more stable and more effective basis for peaceful relationships than relying on moral injunctions and what is too often fleeting attitude changes.

Although political scientists have far less interest in comparative constitutions than they did several generations ago, the field still generally endorses the proposition that broad-based institutions are required for effective governance and that institutional arrangements are critical to when and how this is or is not achieved. As a result, a stereotype with more than a kernel of truth to it is that when political scientists are asked to solve a problem, they either devise a new institution to accomplish the task or design a policy that an existing institution is charged with implementing. Governance and the achievement of peace within a society in this view rest on the ability to meet the core interests of most citizens most of the time and to engender the belief that no group in society is permanently excluded.

In this chapter, I first examine political science’s disinterest in peace education as such in the context of earlier work in citizenship education that was prominent in the field several generations ago and a more recent interest in civil society and democratization. Next, I compare two very different possible approaches to peace education—the structural and the psychocultural—and emphasize ways that political science’s focus on institutions and interests is a perspective the inclusion of which could make peace education more comprehensive than it is at present. Next, I suggest ways that psychocultural concerns and identity can complement interest-focused work in peace education and are not incompatible with it. Finally, I turn to a discussion of the implications for peace education that would include work on both interest and identity from political science.

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PEACE EDUCATION

According to Salomon (2002), peace education is not just one thing but needs to be understood in terms of the context in which any program of peace education is established. For him, peace education is aimed at changing mind-sets, building skills, and focusing on substantive concerns, such as the environment, disarmament, and establishing a culture of peace. Peace education for Salomon is related to but not the same as conflict resolution, peer mediation, democratic education, civic education, and multicultural education programs. In addition, he emphasizes that programs across regions differ in the extent to which they focus on interpersonal relationships or on the relations between collectivities.

His work focuses on intractable conflicts, such as Israel–Palestine, and in these conflicts the challenge is found in deeply rooted group hostility and long-standing incompatible narratives that generate ongoing animosity between communities. In these contexts, he argues that peace education must seek to alter how the communities understand themselves and their opponents as well as address the legacy of inequality in which one side has historically been the conqueror and the other side the conquered. Peer mediation programs and other interventions that might be relevant for low-conflict regions, he argues, are hardly an apt starting point for intractable conflicts.

None of the key focal points of peace education that Salomon identifies are particularly important theoretical or empirical problems for the vast majority of political scientists, nor is the term “peace education” one that is used within the discipline. To gauge political scientists’ engagement in
peace education, I searched through all the articles that appeared in more than 100 years of the leading journal *American Political Science Review*. It revealed the scant attention paid to peace education, as I turned up no articles and only seven book reviews in which the term appeared. In several of these, peace education was simply mentioned but nothing more said about it; in others, the two words appeared together separated by a comma when the two were used in a larger list. A search of *World Politics*, a leading international relations journal since 1948, produced only one article in which peace education was mentioned, and that was in the context of East German politics. Only a search of *Political Psychology*, a journal in which both political scientists and psychologists publish, produced a good number of articles and reviews using the term “peace education.” In some cases it is a main focus of the essay. However, the vast majority of the authors of these articles were psychologists, not political scientists, and over half the articles focused on either the Israeli–Palestinian or Northern Irish conflicts, suggesting that to date familiarity with the concept is perhaps limited by discipline and region.

If, however, we broaden our search to concepts associated with the analysis of conflict, strategies for conflict mitigation, peacemaking, peace building, intergroup relations, negotiation, bargaining, and dispute settlement, we would find that political scientists have had a good deal to say about these concepts, which are at the heart of Cairns and Salomon’s description of peace education given in this book’s introduction. The point is that political science has long been interested in the roots of conflict, and any theory of conflict has significant implications for conflict mitigation (Ross, 2000a). If, for example, one believes that a conflict is rooted in unequal resource distribution, then a strategy for its mitigation rests in redistribution; if, however, a conflict is understood in terms of mutually exclusive identity claims concretized as mutually exclusive claims to control a territory or sacred site, then material resource redistribution will not settle the conflict, and instead it requires a strategy of mutual acknowledgment and transforming the narrative about what is contested into a more inclusive one so that the contesting groups no longer believe that their goals are totally at odds with each other and that a shared future is more attractive that the ongoing conflict. Before examining these approaches, however, I examine some work in political science going back 75 years that suggests ways that peace education work has some striking similarities with work that has long engaged the field.

**THE CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TRADITION**

Lack of interest in peace education in current political science is not because the discipline simply rejects the idea of an educational role or a lack of interest in applying its insights toward applied or practical problems. In fact, political science for a long time, especially in the United States, had a great interest in citizenship (or civic) education that in many ways parallels peace education with its emphasis on citizen voice and engagement in civic life. Citizenship education was unabashedly normative, and it focused on making citizens in the American melting pot knowledgeable, effective, and supportive of democratic practices. This concern led political scientists to tout the virtues of civic engagement, political participation, and democracy. Even when the field took a more scientific turn, researchers framed questions on topics such as political socialization and civic culture within a clear normative position strongly supportive of active, informed, democratic participation, and the clear although not always stated assumption that appropriate norms and behaviors were best learned early in life and that much responsibility for transmitting them rested with the schools.

In the 1930s, the American Political Science Association’s Committee on Civic Education had the major task of instructing citizens about democratic government, and in 1931 the association announced plans for a weekly radio program, *You and Your Government*. Leading scholars gave talks that were then made available from the University of Chicago Press and were explained as an effort...
“to translate scientific truth into popular language” (Reed, 1932, p. 721). The focus of this program, as with most citizenship education, was its emphasis on citizen engagement and participation in democratic institutions. The generally unstated assumption was that high participation would increase support for democracy, and in the battle with authoritarian regimes on both the left and the right, winning the hearts and minds of citizens was likely to be an effective long-term strategy for democratic survival. Furthermore, it was believed that access to political institutions and particularly participation in elections would increase citizen satisfaction, peaceful airing of grievances, and successful resolution of differences in society.

The fact that citizenship education programs emerged with the Great Depression and the rise of fascism in Europe and continued through the first decades of the Cold War is not unimportant here. It is certainly one explanation of why mainstream political science was a strong supporter of democratic institutions and articulated several prominent theories that argued how capable democracy was of settling differences within societies in peaceful ways. By the 1960s there was, however, increased pressure to adopt a more balanced and expanded view of democracy, and in the United States and elsewhere, there was support for viewing protest politics as consistent with democracy and to recognize that at times protest offered a powerful way to promote needed and significant political change (as in the cases of the civil rights movement and the anti-Vietnam War protests in the United States).

By the late 1970s, political science’s interest in citizenship education virtually disappeared, however. How and why this occurred is indeed an interesting question but not my main concern here. Part of the reason is surely related to a sharply declining interest in political socialization, as empirical studies consistently failed to find significant effects of either school curricula or methods of instruction on students’ political values and practices (Merelman, 1980). In addition, there was an increasing sense that schools were only one agent of socialization and that, in addition, the “hidden curriculum” in most schools emphasizing order and authority was squarely at odds with the democratic practices that citizenship education ostensibly sought to promote. Perhaps most important, at this time there was an increased sense in the field that long-term social-psychological dynamics were not as powerful as contextual forces and institutional practices in shaping political action.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIZATION

A more recent variation of civic education, especially prominent since the end of the Cold War, is the interest in teaching about the linkage they believe is important between civil society and democracy. Like the earlier work on civic education, a generally implicit assumption here is that democracies are more prone to be internally peaceful than the regimes they replace and that they should be especially effective at dealing with differences in ethnic and/or religious diversity by guaranteeing an effective voice and representation to all.3 To a greater or lesser degree, this emphasis on building democracy includes a concern that newly democratic societies need to develop and maintain both a citizenry and a political elite who possess the appropriate motivations and practical skills.

Political scientists have approached this challenge in at least two distinct ways. The most prominent is an emphasis on the importance of civil society in peaceful democratic societies. Civil society refers to those independent, intermediate groups and institutions between the individual and governmental authorities that possess the capacity and interest in linking people and the state. Typical civil society institutions are religious and cultural organizations, the media, unions and business groups, and political parties. As linkage organizations, they articulate citizen demands, provide space for open discussion and mobilization, and serve as voices that oppose state actions they consider illegitimate or wrong. As nonstate organizations, civic society nurtures the actors who

3 The evidence does not support these assumptions in many ways and shows, in particular, that societies making a transition to a democratic regime are often very prone to violence (Snyder, 2000) and that holding elections in already divided societies increases tension, violence, and instability.
articulate diverse interests and then compete with each other peacefully to have them met. Out of this cacophony of voices, coalition politics obliges groups to compromise and cooperate, and shifting power bases mean that policies emerge that over time provide enough for everyone to maintain support for the system and to foster the peaceful settlement of disputes when they arise.4

A second approach is more directly hands-on and involves two different strands. The first is constitutional engineering and is based on the assumption that effective democracies require institutional arrangements that provide incentives to groups and politicians to cooperate. The key to this is the ability to provide a stake in the system to the largest number possible. In societies with significant majority–minority divisions, the challenge is to avoid creating permanent majority rule and minority exclusion from power. Arrangements such as consociationalism and cross-group power sharing (Lijphart, 1977), regional autonomy, supermajority requirements, and constitutional guarantees to minorities enforced by an independent judiciary are all constitutional strategies aimed at giving minorities as well as majorities a stake in the system (Horowitz, 1991; McGarry & O’Leary, 1993).

The second strand is educational and seeks to affect two very different audiences: children and political elites. School curricula are the focus of the child-centered approach that harkens back to civic education. It is particularly interested in inculcating democratic norms and in teaching democratic practices. Political elites receive a different focus in this work. The United States (e.g., the Democracy Institute) and groups and individuals from other democracies run workshops and training sessions for newly elected officials and other aspiring political leaders that, for example, teach legislators how to manage constituency services and how to build effective legislative staffs. Party officials sometimes receive training in campaign strategies and tactics, and heads of interest groups receive training in strategies of interest articulation and coalition building.

**STRUCTURAL VERSUS PSYCHOCULTURAL APPROACHES TO PEACE EDUCATION**

I now turn to two broad contrasting theories of conflict and its management to help examine political science and peace education (Ross, 1993a). The first, what I call structural approaches, emphasizes the importance of institutions and incentives that reward certain behaviors and discourage others. In contrast, an identity or psychocultural approach pays particular attention to perceptions (in the form of worldviews) and relationships as determinants of behavior. While proponents of one approach rarely explicitly deny the relevance of the other, they do so implicitly by paying little or no attention to it. For the most part, most peace education programs are psychocultural in their orientation and either deemphasize or ignore structural considerations. If, however, these approaches were better integrated into peace education, they could make it more comprehensive and effective.

**THE CASE FOR INSTITUTIONS AND INTERESTS**

Structural theories of conflict share the premise that the organization of society and its institutions is a primary determinant of individual behavior. Structural, or interest-based, theories are found in all the social sciences, not just economics and political science. In psychology, what LeVine and Campbell (1972) called “realistic group conflict theory” is a general structural theory rooted in the proposition that conflict is about interests that result from the social organization of a society so that in societies where ties among groups are cross-cutting, conflict is likely to be far less severe than in contexts where they are reinforcing or polarizing. Many of these theories, such as microeconomics, begin with the assumption that individuals are self-interested beings and that societal and political structures provide differential incentives for particular behaviors,

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4 This is a variation of what Lowi once called “interest group liberalism,” which made generally unwarranted assumptions about access and the distribution of power in democratic societies (Lowi, 1969).
rewarding some and making others costly. Through this ability to shape action, institutions motivate individuals and groups to favor certain patterns of action and to eschew others. If we are interested in encouraging cooperative behaviors among individuals and groups, structural theories make it clear that we need to reward these behaviors while offering no incentive—or a negative one—for noncooperation.

Structural theorists expect less polarizing conflict to develop and institutions and practices to manage conflict more constructively when people are situated in contexts where the incentives for cooperative behavior are high. In its simplest form, this is an individual-level theory of behavior that yields collectively beneficial outcomes that are built on the proposition that individuals focusing on their own interests can develop outcomes that are also good for the community as a whole. The key is to get people to follow the rules and norms of institutions not because of strong normative constraints (although these might exist) but because it is in their own interests to do so.

The challenge to promoting cooperative social behaviors and peace building then emphasizes institutional design and practices that offer reasons for individuals and groups to behave and cooperate in nonviolent problem solving (Axelrod, 1985). It is built around the hypothesis that if one wants people to behave in a certain way, the most effective way to do this is to rely on their self-interest by rewarding desirable behaviors and punishing undesirable ones. This emphasis on motivated interests contrasts, of course, with moralistic appeals and exhortations and is rooted in the idea that relying on such motivations is more easily self-sustaining.

Emphasizing institutions and interests raises a number of interesting questions at the heart of much contemporary theorizing in political science. How does cooperation get started among selfish individuals? How is it sustained if and when it develops? What is to be done about individuals and groups who ostensibly accept institutionalized norms and practices but who cheat to enhance their own positions? What happens when there are cooperative outcomes that meet the needs of individuals in the short run but are at odds with the society's long-term interests? What about the conflict between within-group and between-group interests that arise when internal relationships are increasingly rewarding in ways that make in-groups more likely to be suspicious of and uncooperative with outsiders?

A related problem that some political scientists think about as affecting cooperation is that of commitment. Commitment problems occur when one side—but especially the weaker one—has significant doubts that the stronger party will actually follow the law or abide by an agreement. One way to solve commitment problems is through a third party acting as a guarantor and as an enforcer if need be. At times this means relying on the legal system. However, third-party enforcement is not always possible, so the issue of how one (or perhaps both) party to a formal or informal arrangement can continue to stick to it when one fears that the other side might not do what they promised must be addressed (Fearon & Laitin, 1996; Walter, 2002). In one study, Walter showed, for example, that successful settlement of civil wars requires both a third-party guarantor and power sharing between the government and rebel factions if an agreement that has been signed is likely to be successfully implemented.

Commitment problems can occur in any situation in which one party harbors doubts about the other party's willingness to stick to an agreement—a situation that is common in polarized societies. Axelrod's (1985) study of cooperation found that "a long shadow of the future," meaning that the parties will interact over a long period of time, is important since it removes an incentive to "take the money and run." Walter's finding that power sharing—and not just a commitment to hold elections—matters in implementing post-civil war settlements is highly relevant because it provides all parties with specific benefits that are a compelling reason to continue to cooperate with a former adversary. This means that simple majoritarian rules that are found in most democratic societies are often not appropriate in polarized contexts since high group solidarity is likely to be quickly transferred to the electoral domain, creating permanent majorities and minorities that offer the minority little reasons to support the state. Two striking examples of this are Northern Ireland from 1920 to 1974, where no Catholic ever served in the government as a minister even though
Catholics were 40% of the population throughout this period, and Israel, where since 1948 only one Israeli Arab has ever served in the Israeli cabinet even though Arabs make up a fifth of the country's population. In situations like these, constitutional arrangements are needed that ensure some significant power sharing (Horowitz, 1991).

Political scientists and economists are not the only voices that emphasize interests and incentives in generating cooperation. Psychological learning theories have long called on the mechanisms of reward and punishment and this work clearly influenced social psychologists who make a similar argument in studies such as the classic Robbers Cave experiment of Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, and Sherif (1988), which emphasizes how cooperation can emerge from contending groups when the only way that either can achieve its goals is to cooperate with the other. When superordinate goals, meaning those whose achievement requires intergroup cooperation, can be identified in high-conflict settings, engaging in cooperation to achieve them serves to modify the formerly hostile view the parties had of each other, as Sherif et al. (1988) found.

A specific application of this theory is Aronson's jigsaw classroom, one in which students from different ethnic groups worked in small groups that required cooperation among them to finish all parts of their tasks (Brown, 1986). It improved achievement, self-esteem, and liking of classmates and improves cross-group perceptions. However, as Brown notes, most of the effects are small. What it shares with Axelrod's (1985) study of cooperation is that the structure of incentives gets cooperation started and over time becomes self-reinforcing when those who cooperate are rewarded for their success.

This perspective is not without some difficulties, however. One is that it places a tremendous explanatory burden on the development of cross-cutting ties, coalition building, and the satisfaction of interests while paying scant attention to where the interests come from in the first place or to ways that people assess the extent to which their interests are actually met. Furthermore, it has relatively little to say about how people in polarized, divided societies marked by strong distrust, inequalities, and long-term conflict can build cross-group social and political ties. Finally, it fails to address identity dynamics and psychocultural processes that appear to be just as significant as institutional arrangements in peacemaking and peace building that are the focus of many peace education programs.

The power of interest explanations lies in their hypothesized connections between thought and action; their weakness, however, is that they begin with an actor's action and then identify interests that are consistent with this action. All too infrequently, there is an effort made to see if actors themselves make the same connections. There is also the almost complete absence of concern with the nature of specific interests in interest theories. To the extent that groups and individuals are seen as having invariant interests, such as the maximization of wealth or political power, this question is somewhat uninteresting. However, to the degree to which important interests vary from culture to culture, the matter of what constitutes crucial political interests for groups or individuals is worthy of serious empirical study. None of this is to deny the relevance of interests once they have been defined by actors in specific contexts, but it does mean that context-free theories of interest-based action are incomplete explanations for conflict and its management.

Psychocultural and Identity Dynamics

Psychocultural analyses of conflict are strikingly different than interest-based ones, although they rarely reject the proposition that interests matter directly; rather, these analyses emphasize that interests are not all that matter in creating and maintaining peaceful relationships among individuals, groups, and societies. This perspective raises important issues concerning how interests are defined in the first place and encourages consideration of how interests are contextually constructed and subjectively perceived rather than objective, social realities. Work in political science in this tradition emphasizes ways in which the dynamics of identity are important in understanding people's social and political worlds, how they define and perceive their interests, and their beliefs about when
specific people and groups are likely to behave in particular ways (Kaufman, 2001; Petersen, 2002; Ross, 2007).

Identities are important in conflicts for several reasons. First, they connect people to collective identities that define who is and who is not part of one's in-group. Second, identities operate like interests when they define what it is that people care the most about and will fight about in particular contexts. Yet there are also significant differences in the use of interests and identities as explanatory mechanisms for conflict and its management. Most basically, while interests are assumed to be more or less transparent (some would say given) and universal, identities are knowable only through empirical analysis of particular cultural contexts. As a result, while focusing on interests suggests that any human group would more or less behave the same way in a certain situation, an emphasis on identities often encourages us to explain variation in behavior across group contexts. Trying to transform an explanation for conflict relying on identity as a motive for action (or inaction) into an interest statement ("They had an interest in doing what they did") still begs the question of why any group understands the world in terms of any specific interest and pushes us to inquire into why this motive is important in one context but not another.

Attention to subjective identities leads some political scientists directly to the concept of interpretation and the system of meaning that shapes how and why people in any particular setting act as they do. While accepting the intersubjective and subjective character of identity, there is a need to identify the mechanisms that link it to action. An excellent way to examine this question is to examine the rich accounts found in the images of the world that people offer that point to key concerns, assumptions about how social and political relations are organized, and views about the possibilities for political action (Kaufman, 2001; Ross, 2007). These images of the world are obtainable, in part, through public and private accounts that need contextually based analyses to understand how identity issues are relevant in specific conflicts.

The psychocultural interpretations of interest here are accounts of the world that people within a culture widely share (or at least easily understand) and are acquired through individual-level psychological (and social-psychological) mechanisms that are widespread in a culture (Ross, 1993a). They inform us about how people understand themselves and others and the motives they attribute to enemies and allies that link specific worldviews to political action. Psychocultural interpretations offer plausible accounts of the world, emphasizing the motives of different actors and reinforcing those features that distinguish one's own group from others. When supported by one's social world, these plausible accounts offer psychic and social protection from the ambiguities and uncertainties of existence, reinforcing social and political bonds within groups. The power of psychocultural interpretations and the narratives they generate lies in their shared social character, not those idiosyncratic features that distinguish one person's account from another’s.

Psychocultural interpretations draw attention not just to what people do to each other but also to what one group of people thinks or feels that another group of people is doing, trying to do, or wanting to do. In a context of suspicion and uncertainty, not only actions but also presumptions about the intentions and meanings behind the actions (or inactions) play an important role. This is crucial, for in few political situations do external events provide clear explanations for what is occurring; to develop these, individuals turn to internal frameworks that then shape subsequent behavior. While participants in any dispute can often tell someone "just what the conflict is about," this precision is often illusory. However, this is beyond the point, and what is more useful is to view these "errors" as important data about the social dynamics and for us to recognize that, in many conflicts, different parties often fail to agree about what any conflict is about, when it started, or who is involved, for they operate from (but are not aware of) alternative frames of references that shape their actions. In understanding these, psychocultural interpretations are a valuable tool for revealing how participants think about and characterize their political worlds. In fact, as we listen to them, it is important

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3 Wildavsky (1987) argues that rational-choice theorists make a serious error in taking interests as given when they vary a good deal across individuals and cultures.
consider the extent to which stories from different groups or factions differ without necessarily directly contradicting each other, as each selects key events in its effort to gain supporters and to make sense of its actual experience (Scott, 1985). This can be seen vividly in stories about long-standing ethnic conflicts that contain the culturally rooted aspirations, challenges, and deepest fears of communities.

The same factors that push actors to make sense of a situation also lead to cognitive and perceptual distortion because the desire for certainty is often greater than the capacity for accuracy. Not only are disputants likely to make systematic errors in the "facts" underlying interpretations, but the homogeneous nature of most social settings and cultural amplifiers reinforces these self-serving mistakes. What is most crucial, however, about interpretations is the compelling, coherent account they offer to the parties in linking discrete events to general understandings. Central to such interpretations is the attribution of motives to parties. Once identified, the existence of such motives seemingly makes it easy to "predict" another's future actions and through one's own behavior to turn such predictions into self-fulfilling prophecies. In this sense, it is appropriate to suggest that rather than thinking about particular objective events that cause conflicts to escalate, we ought to be thinking about the interpretations of such events that are associated with escalation and those that are not.

Psychocultural interpretations reflect but also strengthen the boundary between in-groups and out-groups. The process of telling and listening to—validating if you will—narratives of past traumas and glories strengthens the link between individual and group identity and emphasizes how threats to the group are also threats to individual group members. In long-term intransigent conflict, strong threats to identity are an essential part of the conflict dynamic, and any efforts to defuse such a situation must take the stories that participants recount and the perceived threats to identity seriously. The point, after all, is not whether participants' accounts are true or false from some objective point of view but whether they are meaningful to the parties involved.

Long-term group conflict is never just about competing identities, however. It is also about clashing interests that must be taken seriously in any effort to mitigate conflict. Some identity work is not sufficiently careful about spelling out the material and experiential nature of identities and their connections to tangible, daily concerns in people's lives. Often, psychocultural theories are weak in spelling out why particular aspects of collective identity gain a heightened salience at certain times, or they are not always able to link broad-based long-term identity issues with more proximate causes of conflict. Finally, it is not always clear who, why, and how particular targets are selected over others in identity conflicts as they develop. To answer these questions, it is often necessary to blend psychocultural considerations with structural ones.

**PEACE EDUCATION IMPLICATIONS OF INTEREST AND IDENTITY THEORIES OF CONFLICT**

Because interest and identity theories are so different in how they understand conflict, it is not surprising that they lead us to very different conceptions of how to mitigate conflict and what peace education built around each approach should emphasize. As noted, however, it is important to view both of these as partial theories of conflict and its management and to recognize that effective

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6 For example, in Northern Ireland, Protestant Unionists find great meaning in the story of William of Orange and the Battle of the Boyne in 1689, while Catholic accounts really say little about King Billy or the battle. In contrast, Catholic Nationalists emphasize the meaning of the 1916 Easter Uprising, which for Protestants is far less significant than their sacred pact committing themselves to resist Irish self-rule 4 years earlier. Even when an event enters into the stories of both sides, such as the Hunger Strikes of Nationalist prisoners in 1980–1981, the metaphors and meanings associated with them can be so different that it is hard to realize that one is hearing about the same events in two different ways.

7 What is validated is the meaning of a story to participants on each side. This does not necessarily mean acceptance of such accounts as accurate. The notion of empathy is useful here. It suggests an acceptance of the account as meaningful to the recounter without necessarily requiring agreement from the listener.
peacemaking, peace building, and peace education would do well to draw on both of them rather than selecting only one or the other (Ross, 1993b).

At the same time, interests and identities are not as distinct from each other in practice as they are conceptually. This is because there are situations in which protecting an identity comes to be viewed as a vital interest—as vital as obtaining or holding on to material resources. Operationally, protecting a group's identity often leads to concrete material demands that come to represent such phenomena as honor, respect, recognition, and even their existence. If the demands are dismissed or rejected, they represent far more than simply a material loss to the group. As a result, it is empirically difficult to tease out how much the material side of the demand means and how much is about the loss of identity that failure to achieve it represents.

Peace education as it now exists focuses primarily on psychocultural issues of identity involving group identities and narratives and relying on increasing empathy and the knowledge that parties in conflict have about each other. Much of it is rooted in psychocultural theories aimed at influencing the cognitive and affective environment in which individuals and groups in conflict operate. However, the effects of such programs are often limited in a variety of ways that require going beyond what most peace education programs currently do to increase their impact. There could be an expansion of substantive concerns to greater behavioral change and stress on skill building, as Salomon (2002) suggests. One ongoing concern is how the intense work with a relatively small number of people that characterizes most peace education programs can have an impact on the wider society in which they are located—what Kelman (1995) calls the "transfer problem," which is all too infrequently addressed. To address this question, it is important to spell out the theory of change underlying peace education.

A second concern is that often the participants in peace education programs are self-selected individuals in ways that limit a program's impact in changing attitudes and behaviors in the broader population if they are drawn from a small, isolated minority. On the other hand, where participation in peace education is required, there is a concern that unless the messages are strongly reinforced in other social settings (e.g., family, peer, and community), their effects will be small. Cairns and Hewstone (2002), for example, argue that despite large expenditures on peace education and encouraging cross-group contact in Northern Ireland, there is little evidence that they had much impact on behaviors. Finally, there is the plausible hypothesis that even when attitudes (and even some behaviors) shift in one domain (e.g., school) as a result of peace education activities, they may not be generalized to other domains at all.

In sum, the exclusive reliance on educational and psychological mechanisms and the evaluation of success as changing individual attitudes and behaviors toward people in other groups may be problematic and limited for at least two reasons. The first is that they may set the bar for success too high and, second, that they may be missing something crucial, namely, that there are many significant changes at the collective, institutional level that may matter far more in the long run in terms of intergroup relationships and that are not measured because they are not identified in the theory of practice being used.

The most important challenge that peace education has taken on is enlarging identification in ways that build or strengthen connections among contending groups. The underlying theory here is that altering discourse and reframing a conflict will lead to a shift in both perceptions of the other side and day-to-day behaviors. Its main strategies for doing this operate at the individual level and take the form of workshops, training sessions, and longer-term programs that emphasize what is shared across groups, develop an appreciation of cultural differences, and humanize people on the other side. At times, however, the efforts of peace educators are stymied when events on the ground overwhelm their efforts as occurred in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict following the outbreak of violence in 2000.

One way to think about achieving some of peace education's core goals is expanding inclusive symbols and rituals that express more inclusive, shared identities that people in a conflict region share—even if these are not the only ones that they hold. Because people hold multiple identities,
symbolic and ritual expressions can link them in a variety of ways and not just along a single dimension as is typical in highly polarized societies. This is not easy, however, and in societies where almost all symbolic and ritual expressions are associated with one group or another, transforming existing or developing new symbolic landscapes can be a daunting challenge (Bryson & McCartney, 1994; Ross, 2007). Yet there are examples of where these goals have been at least partially achieved—and just because they have not fully transformed society does not mean that they are not valuable contributions (Ross, 2000b).

In South Africa, the American South, Spain, Northern Ireland, and other societies with long histories of ethnic polarization, at least partially inclusive narratives and symbolic expressions now can be found that contribute to a decrease in social and political polarization and greater cross-group interaction, social trust, and cooperation (Ross, 2007). An even more striking example can be seen in changes since 1945 in Europe, where both European and regional identities now exist side by side with national ones in ways that link people across state boundaries, weaken ethnic stereotypes, and make the chances for violent conflict less imaginable.

To complement its existing emphasis on the identity dimensions of conflict and its mitigation, peace education needs to broaden what it is trying to achieve and to take seriously the potential benefits from identifying and expanding institutional incentives for cooperation. The analysis offered here suggests that peace education work needs to foster institutional connections based on mutual interdependence that can survive even in the face of sudden short-term setbacks. Rather than concern itself exclusively with individual-level effects, peace education would do well to also consider aggregate ones. For example, while Cairns and Hewstone (2002) report that cross-group friendships and the proportion of children attending mixed schools have not increased and residential segregation has not diminished in Northern Ireland over the years, it is the case that discrimination against Catholics, income inequalities, and violence between Protestants and Catholics have decreased greatly—and not primarily because of peace education programs. Rather, government policies have had a direct effect on both of these since 1974.

The great advantage of using institutional arrangements and the incentives they can produce is that they can lead to outcomes that promote and sustain desired behaviors. Over time, these incentives provide strong motivations for individuals and groups to cooperate as well as reasons for not engaging in destructive conflict. Yet the current rubric of peace education fails to pay much attention to their importance. A concrete example that supports this argument would be White–Black relations in the United States, where rapid institutional change mandated during the civil rights period clearly preceded subsequent changes in social contact, decreases in residential segregation in middle-class areas, Black access to higher education and employment, and more positive White attitudes toward Blacks on a wide range of indicators. Did these changes end White–Black differences and animosities? Certainly not. Did they contribute to significantly diminishing them and to the reality of a Black President in 2008? Yes, they did.

This approach to conflict mitigation rejects the hypothesis that attitude or value change is the first step necessary in changing relations. Rather, it suggests that there are sometimes contexts where changing behaviors through incentives and institutions might come first and that these then induce a softening of previously hostile views of an out-group as was the case in the Robbers Cave research (Sherif et al., 1988). Relying on changing values as a first step can put individuals in vulnerable situations in their own communities when behavioral or relationship change does not follow, whereas introducing incentives up front means that the advantages of cooperation arrive more quickly and are more sustainable.

Institutional arrangements and practices that meet the real needs of all stakeholders in a conflict are important tools in building and sustaining peace and have significant advantages that need to be better appreciated in peace education work for the following reasons:

- They do not depend on value shifts or moral commitments, both of which can be fragile.
- They can be self-sustaining, as they provide rewards for continuing cooperation.
They can promote intergroup contact and understanding that weakens the emotional memories of prior conflict.
Because institutions increase predictability in daily life, they allow people to live more normal lives.
Participation in effective institutionalized cooperative practices can help develop a sense of empowerment that becomes generalized to additional domains.

Both interest and identity analyses of cooperation have something to say about how reciprocity and cooperation can be sustained once they begin so that it can survive inevitable setbacks and moments of uncertainty (Axelrod, 1985). Together, each makes a complementary contribution that reinforces the other, although we need to learn more about how they interact across contexts. For example, identity fears are often sufficiently intense so that opponents refuse to get together to consider the real differences that divide them, and bridging these becomes a necessary first step (Kelman 1999). However, once there is some communication and even the beginning of cooperation, sustaining it requires more than empathy and modified images. There must be some significant reinforcement to each side so that those who brokered these arrangements and the wider public have reason to continue to support them.

Transforming hostile large-group relationships into positive ones is a difficult challenge with many pieces. Peace education can do some of the work that creates the conditions in the wider public to accept a change and an awareness of the many steps it involves. A crucial part of this dynamic is that its effectiveness depends on the transfer of changes from the relatively small number of people involved in peace education programs to the much larger general public whose support will be critical for implementation of any significant shift in behaviors and attitudes. As a result, peace education work needs to articulate and then evaluate its theory of transfer if programs are to be effective over time. In short, how is a workshop with several dozen participants or a revised school curriculum likely to have a significant effect?

Without tangible results that meet the parties' real interests, previously established affective change is not likely to last very long, as critics of any cooperative arrangement are sure to emerge and challenge the position of those who made them in the first place. Consequently, it is important to not make a party to an agreement wait too long to see the benefits from cooperation, or else there may be no partner left sooner than one thinks. It is certainly arguable that this is what happened after the Oslo agreement, when within a few years each side viewed itself as having given up far more than it received from the interim accord.

Cooperative arrangements can be at great risk when enforcement mechanisms are weak or nonexistent and each side is unwilling or unable to abide by them because each is fearful that the other party will defect first. Because commitment problems can be significant barriers to implementing or maintaining cooperation, peace education needs to consider what it might do to make people aware of the problem and strategies for overcoming it. First, peace education must address interests and incentives even though such materialistic discourse is often not one that most people in the field are comfortable using. Second, peace education's existing emphasis on empathy must be drawn on to stress that all parties need to ask themselves what an opponent's interests and needs are to enable it to adhere to an agreement—not why it has them. Third, all parties (especially stronger ones) must learn not to be too greedy in their substantive demands since this may drive a party away from cooperation if it comes to believe that the risks and costs to them are too high to tolerate (Fearon & Laitin, 1996). Fourth, even in win-win arrangements, there are times when parties involved in them will feel vulnerable; this arises in part from a sense that they have to give up some of their maximal goals in order to achieve a "good-enough" outcome, and doing so can be very painful (Ross, 2000b).

In conclusion, what political science can most clearly contribute to peace education is the idea that because of the fragile nature of relationships between groups whose relationships have been negative in the past, it is best not to rely on goodwill or value changes alone to alter behaviors.
Instead, peace education needs to also stress that an effective move toward cooperation must be based on incentives and common interests that offer the parties the motivation to initiate and sustain cooperation because of the mutual benefits it provides.

REFERENCES


