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AUTHOR Lawson, Max

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ABSTRACT

This paper is concerned with placing conflict resolution and nonviolent alternatives firmly at the center of peace education. A brief review of theoretical tendencies in peace education in Australia is offered, and how this is consonant with, and different from, what is actually taught in Australian schools. Some discussion also is given about the teaching of conflict resolution and nonviolent alternatives in schools in various Australian states. It could be argued that the practice of peace education in Australian schools in some ways has gone ahead of theory. Five emphases of peace education as set out in a 1984 account (Rachel Sharp) are: (1) peace through strength; (2) conflict mediation and resolution; (3) personal peace: (4) world order; and (5) the abolition of power relationships. The paper suggests that Australian educational authorities are now turning to peace education as violence in Australia is on an increasing spiral. Backlash against the Aboriginal population of Australia is described as the result of a misunderstanding of Australian High Court decisions on native land rights. Anti-racist policy and multicultural education policy in Australia are seen increasingly as synonymous, rather than multiculturalism simply being seen as celebrating cultural differences in food costume, or music. Bringing together the traditions of conflict resolution and nonviolence training is a new direction for peace education. When conflict resolution is stripped of false associations such as compromise and splitting the difference, a clearer picture emerges of both the traditions of conflict resolution and nonviolence as life-affirming responses to violence. (DK)



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THE TEACHING OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND NONVIOLENCE IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS: A CONTEXT FOR PEACE EDUCATION

Max Lawson

Violence is on the increase in Australian society exacerbated by a racist backlash as the result of a controversial High Court decision regarding Aboriginal land rights.

This paper argues for the centrality of conflict resolution and nonviolent alternatives for peace education in the Australian context. concerns which have been often overshadowed by concerns about structural violence and development education on the one hand and on the other by conflict resolution being disparaged often because of being seen as too close to big business while the nonviolence tradition has been dismissed at times as belonging to the past not the present.

Varieties of peace education in Australia are recounted and further developments are discussed. Accounts of teaching about conflict resolution and nonviolence in various Australian states are given. Of particular interest are the Social Education courses (Northern Territory); Active and Informed Citizenship (Queensland); General Studies and Resources for Teaching Against Nonviolence (New South Wales).

A way forward for peace education is a closer linking of conflict resolution and the nonviolent tradition as shown in the work of the Conflict Resolution Network (Sydney) and Alternatives to Violence (USA).



THE TEACHING OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND NONVIOLENCE IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS: A CONTEXT FOR PEACE EDUCATION

Max Lawson
University of New England
Armidale, NSW, Australia

Acts of violence, like the miseries of the poor, are always with us. Racist Violence, the report of the national inquiry into racist violence in Australia (1991), runs to over five hundred pages. Controversial court cases in Australia favouring Aboriginal people have produced recently an ugly backlash. In New South Wales state schools, during first term 1993 fifty cases of serious violence, one a day for each day of the school term, are reported to the Departmental authorities. It is up to the principal's discretion to decide whether the case is serious enough to report. Presumably routine brawls and fights don't rate a mention. There has been a sickening spate of murders of gay men by senior school students or recent school leavers reported in the Sydney press. Violence in Australian schools is a reflection in part on violence in the wider Australian society: at least one family in five in Australia is directly affected by violence and 20% of the Australian population condone the resolution of conflict by violence in some circumstances (Butterworth & Fulmer, 1991, p. 107). Violence is indeed a scarlet thread running through Australian society.

In response to such a Pandora's box of horrors, utterly central to the specific objectives or goals of peace education must be an emphasis on conflict resolution and nonviolent alternatives. In Australia, such concerns, at times, have been overshadowed by structural violence issues, conflict resolution being seen as putting out bushfires which should have been fanned into major conflagrations and nonviolence has been slighted as being part of "the intellectual ghetto of pacifism."

This paper is concerned with placing conflict resolution and nonviolent alternatives firmly at the centre of peace education. A brief review of theoretical tendencies in peace education in Australia is offered and how this is consonant with, and different from, what is actually taught in Australia.



tralian schools. Some discussion is also given of the teaching of conflict resolution and nonviolent alternatives in schools in various Australian states. It could be argued that the practice of peace education in Australian schools in some ways has gone ahead of theory.

One of the first attempts to mark out the field of peace education in the Australian context was Rachel Sharp's 1984 account, "Varieties of Peace Education", which received wide currency in Australian peace studies circles, surfacing even in quasi-official documents from Departmental Curriculum offices. Sharp's account detected five emphases in peace education as follows: (1) peace education as peace through strength; (2) peace education as conflict mediation and resolution; (3) peace education as personal peace; (4) peace education as world order; (5) peace education as the abolition of power relationships. Sharp contended "inevitably when a new curriculum area begins to emerge, its boundaries will be relatively fluid. This will be even more the case where the area in question is regarded as controversial as peace education" (Sharp, 1984, p. 249). Sharp's observations are still true even if the five categories of peace education delineated above have been somewhat transformed. While Sharp is careful to say that "none of the above approaches are to be considered as mutually exclusive" this is then modified in the next breath by saying that "not all the above views are mutually compatible or share the same consequences in terms of moulding social attitudes or actions" (ibid., p. 250). Because Sharp's view of peace education is critical and challenging of power at every level and wants the eventual goal of a classless society, Sharp expects little to be achieved in schools regarding peace education and places her hope rather in non formal education, in social movements and voluntary associations.

The seeds of Sharp's discussion fell on ground already well tilled as the earliest stirrings of peace education in Australia (in its current manifestation) have always been concerned with the specific social structural peace concerns of education and reflect the unease of Australian peace educators living in a "North" country in the "South". To this day, as reflected in the most recent annual conference of the Australian Peace Education and Research Association (Hobart 1993) education officers of valuous development agencies made central contributions to the conference. By comparison, conflict resolution in Australia, in some eyes, is seen as being too readily manipulated by and assimilated to the concerns of big business, and as for nonviolence, it is seen as a museum piece, restricted to a surviving remnant of Gandhians, even in India. Meanwhile, of course, children are still being beaten up in schools. It is ironic that what peace Education has to offer, dis-



paraged for so long, is now being turned to by Australian educational authorities, as violence in Australia, at the moment, is on an increasing spiral.

There has been, for example, a considerable backlash against the Aboriginal population of Australia as a result of the Mabo case. Ten years after Eddie Mabo and four other Torres Strait Islander inhabitants of the Murray Islands began action for a declaration of native title to their traditional lands, the High Court of Australia decided in favour of the Mabo claim (3rd June 1992). There are many complex and unresolved issues arising form this High Court decision but the following facts remain:

(1) The myth of terra nullis is exploded. Australia was occupied when the British took possession (textbooks are now starting to talk about British invaders not settlers.) (2) Australian law recognizes native title. This title is inalienable. (3) Native title can exist only where indigenous people have a continuing traditional connection with land.

Apprehension is widespread through ignorance of the Mabo case decisions. Many nonAboriginal Australians feared they would lose their land whereas the Mabo decision specifically stated that native title has been extinguished where the Crown has granted freehold title over land.

Education departments have in recent years appointed anti-racist coordinators and most states have formal anti-racist policies. Adding to racism in Australia was the backlash against the large Moslem population in Australia as a result of the Labor Party Prime Minister Bob Hawke's endorsement of the United States role in the Gulf War. It is interesting to note that NSW Department of School Education appointed two Aboriginal consultants to deal with anti-racist issues at the time of the Gulf War relations.

Anti-racist policy and multicultural education policy in Australia are increasingly seen as synonymous (rather than multiculturalism simply being seen as celebrating cultural differences in food, costume, music, dance and the like). With the exception of Israel, Australia has the most ethnically diverse population in the world with some 100 ethnic groups speaking some eighty immigrant languages (Castles et al., 1988, p. 25). Today four out of every ten Australians are immigrants or the children of immigrants, half of them from non-English speaking backgrounds (Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs, 1988, p. 1). Aboriginal Australians, whose languages and culture flourished in Australia for at least 40,000 years are less than 2 percent of the population (there are about 150 Aboriginal languages extant).

What this all means, of course, is that peace education in Australia is inextricably bound up with anti-racist education and multicultural education. Just as searching for a single theory of peace education is a vain quest



(many different philosophical perspectives feeding into peace education) similarly peace education continues to reflect different emphases in different countries. Discussion of "enemy images" for example, doesn't make much sense in the Australian context – here the Australian Defence Forces high profile in international peacekeeping forces – yet coming to grips with pervasive racism, ranks very high on the Australian educational agenda.

Schools systems in Australia whether they like it or not are plunged into confronting a great number of issues concerning violence and racism. At the time of the outbreak of the Gulf War the Australian Peace Education and Research Association wrote to all State Education Ministers and received responses (from all save one department) along the following lines (Australian Peace Education and Research News Bulletin, June, 1991, pp. 3-5):

Even before the outbreak of the war in the middle of January the Ministry had decided to set up a project to ensure that timely and appropriate action was taken to minimize conflict in schools arising, as you put it, from "racism, stereotyping and ill-informed negative attitudes towards certain ethnic and religious groups." (Victoria)

The Gulf War has been an issue of world concern and this has been reflected in teachers' responses. Many of our teachers have, since school commenced this year, taken time in their classrooms to deal with background materials and to answer their students' concerns. (Western Australia)

It is heartening to see that controversial issues such as Aboriginal land rights, Australian government foreign policy, uranium mining, and logging of rainforest areas are on the agenda in Australian schools. For example, in Active and Informed Citizenship: Information for Teachers, sent to Queensland state teachers, the Fitzgerald Report [Qld. 1990] was invoked: "people of differing opinions have the right to express those opinions, and to act peacefully to bring their arguments to the attention of the wider community". (Fitzgerald headed an inquiry into police corruption in Queensland.)

Not only are controversial issues now dealt with in Australian schools in an open way that would have been rare even ten years ago but a surprising amount of work is going on in Australian schools which is peace education even if the teachers practising it are sometimes as surprised as that character of Moliere's who found out that he had been speaking prose all his life.

In response to my enquiries state department, produced accounts and curriculum documents as well as extracts form syllabuses showing involv-



ement with conflict resolution and nonviolence. The replies were not only detailed but clearly wishing to be seen as proactive in the field of conflict resolution and nonviolent alternatives as the following account illustrates (space precludes discussion of activities in all states).

The Northern Territory Department of Education gave full information. Given the Northern Territory's highly diverse population - Aboriginal Australians, Anglo-Australians and many ethnic groups - it was particularly interesting to note that Social Education is a compulsory subject for all Northern Territory secondary students (years 7-10). One of the units in this Social Education course is Conflict and Conflict Resolution. The organizing principle for the unit is "mechanisms for resolving conflict" at interpersonal, national and international levels. The unit includes sections on structural conflict and reactive violence. Because Darwin (the capital of the Northern Territory) has many refugees from East Timor and also because Indonesia has taken the unusual step of having consular representation in Darwin it is revealing to note that examples given under the structural conflict section include - "the fate of dissidents in countries with little real commitments to human rights, eg. USSR, Argentina and Indonesia". Under reactive violence are listed Fretlin in East Timor; Free Papua Movement in Irian Jaya; Kanaks in New Caledonia.

The course bristles with controversial issues and it suggests that teachers invite speakers from organizations involved in "working towards non-violent solutions to conflict" eg. "People for Nuclear Disarmament". It is then suggested that speakers be invited from organizations that "see violence as regrettable but inevitable", eg. the Returned Services League, the Armed Forces.

In its stress on the threefold layers of conflict resolution – interpersonal, national and international – the Northern Territory school course is using a framework that some Peace Studies courses use in Australian Universities (including the author's) and it is encouraging to note that all secondary students in the Northern Territory are exposed to some of this material.

Queensland, like the Northern Territory, has a long tradition of conservative government so the controversial nature or potentially controversial nature of much of the subject matter of the curriculum is quite surprising (although Queensland currently has a Labor Government).

The Queensland Department of Education has designated "Active and Informed Citizenship" as a departmental priority for 1993-97. Knowledge and understanding of democratic process, including conflict resolution is viewed as a major component of this priority. To this end an impressive



document Active and Informed Citizenship: Information For Teachers has been produced for wide distribution. The manual provides illustrations of how principles of Active and Informed Citizenship can be incorporated into various curriculum areas (samples of which are given in the appendices). "The contestable nature" of the content is frankly acknowledged and the active and informed citizenship movement keeps alive the momentum of peace education conferences in Queensland – for example the Australian Peace Education and Research Association held its annual conference in Brisbane in 1991 with Johan Galtung as a keynote speaker. (Similarly the Conflict Resolution Network based in Sydney carries on much of the concerns of peace education by its consultants being widely used in state schools as well as state teachers attending Conflict Resolution Workshops).

In Queensland schools students encounter conflict resolution in the junior secondary years (years 8-10) in their study of crizenship education, history, social education, social science, social studies and study of society. During senior schooling (years 11-12) students also experience conflict resolution learnings in their study of ancient history, geography, legal studies, modern history, political studies and the study of society.

Similar claims could be made of the curriculum areas in New South Wales schools, particularly through the compulsory Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, a designated key learning area for years 7-10. Two initiatives in New South Wales schools deserve particular attention: the teaching of General Studies and the production of Resources for Teaching Against Violence produced by the New South Wales Department of School Education.

General Studies counts as a one unit elective for the Higher School Certificate. It is a popular elective with some eighteen thousand students taking it, approximately a quarter of the students sitting for the final secondary examination. There are ten topics in the general studies course many of which particularly bear on peace education concerns: for example, science, technology and society; prejudice and discrimination; conflict and conflict resolution. (A breakdown of the issues treated in the conflict resolution topic and a sample page of programming suggestions from the Support Document for General Studies (115 pages) is included in the appendices.)

Although much of general studies is controversial even more so is the Resources For Teaching Against Violence. The resource material has three sections. While managing aggressive and disruptive student behaviour and affects of domestic violence (the first two sections) cover much familiar ground firmly rooted in conflict resolution literature, the third division



dealing with violence against homosexual men and women (homophobia) breaks new ground in the Australian context. This section includes a set of 6 modules addressing issues of homosexuality, discrimination and violence. It includes lesson plans, handouts and overhead masters and is suitable for years 9-12. These materials are very extensive.

Two hundred and fifty kits have been given to education resource centres, student welfare counsellors and regional guidance officers. It is envisaged that all of the state's 480 secondary schools will receive a kit of the materials. The HIV/AIDS Education Curriculum Adviser, Kevill Gardner who helped produce the alternatives to violence materials for the New South Wales Department of School Education is now working on a video, *Mates*, .o be released, it is hoped, on World Aids Day (1st December). Again the video will reflect a welding together of the emphases of conflict resolution and alternatives to violence.

This brief survey of some of the activities in selected Australian states shows a surprising amount of activity in the peace education area, even if the term as such is rarely used at the school level. Obviously much of the impetus comes from increased violence in schools which is now the subject of all-political party inquiring commissioned by the House of Representatives of the Australian parliament, which is seeking submissions on alternatives to violence.

Alternatives to Violence is actually the name of an organization founded in 1975 with ties to the Quakers. It began when an inmate group at Green Haven prison (U.S.A.) was working with young gangs and teenagers at risk but they were having difficulty communicating their message about the consequences of violence. They sought help from the Quakers to conduct a workshop for them. Over the years Alternatives to Violence have produced basic and advanced manuals as well as a training for trainers manual. (For details see Alternatives to Violence Project, 3049 East Genesee Street, Room 204, Syracuse, New York 13224.) Much of the material and processes are standard conflict resolution fare but strongly linked to nonviolence themes – a most fruitful combination. (At the Quaker Meeting House in Sydney the first Alternatives to Violence workshop was co-led by a member of the Conflict Resolution Network (Sydney) as well as a New York trained Alternatives to Violence worker.)

This is of symbolic importance for peace education: bringing together the traditions of conflict resolution and nonviolence training (which often lead separatives lives) is a step forward. It may well be a new impetus and direction for peace education generally.



The connections are not often made because conflict resolution and monviolence are often not understood separately, let alone as a combined entity. Witness the substitutes for Gandhi's Satyagraha – passive resistance, nonviolent resistance, nonviolent direct action, nonviolent action, and most recently active nonviolence (Shepard, 1987, p. viii).

Active nonviolence dispels the notion of submissiveness, letting others take advantage of one, supine passivity. Similarly, when conflict resolution is stripped of false associations such as compromise and splitting the difference, a clearer picture emerges of both the traditions of conflict resolution and nonviolence as life-affirming responses to violence, the very heart of peace education.

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APPENDIX

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	ACTIVE AND INFORMED CITIZENSHIP ISSUES IN STUDIES PROGRAMS	S IN STUDIES PROGRAMS
A&IC key elements	Studies programs by national curriculum areas	onal curriculum areas
	Studies of Society and Environment	Health and Physical Education
Values democratic processes social justice ecological sustainability	Does the program focus on: developing ethical and cooperative personal values, recognition of minority groups and the need to change discriminatory practices, building empathy with people from many cultures, concern for the welfare, rights and dignity of all, regard for the quality of life for present and future generations,	Are students encouraged to develop their own goals, skills and processes relating to health? Are cultural, gender and socio-economic factors considered when addressing health related behaviours? Does the program focus on developing sustainable healthy futures?
Knowledge democratic rights and responsibilities historical perspectives cultural diversity inter-relatedness	and respect for the well-being of all living creatures? Are students made aware of: their fundamental democratic freedoms and civil liberties, the struggle by many groups for those freedoms and liberties, how various social systems affect peoples' citizenship rights and responsibilities, and how our current ideas about citizenship have chanced over the wars?	Are students encouraged to take a critical approach to factors which impinge on health? (eg. government decisions, patterns of working, employment, education, media, housing, poverty, gender relations, sexuality and sexual harassment)
Cognitive Processes active in vestigative learning critical and creative thinking decision—making and problem solving	What systematic opportunities are provided for students to learn to be active, critical investigators and creative problem solvers concerning important social and environmental issues?	Are students taught skills in management and problem solving in relation to health goals? Do students solve problems within the context of their own environment?
Action Skills personal inter-personal community participation	Do students experience real-life learning opportunities to develop cooperative behaviour and conflict resolution skills? Does the program provide opportunities for students to actively engage in community problem solving on social and environmental issues?	Are students encouraged to take action to influence health related laws, policies, regulations, services and products? Are students taught to be assertive in resisting pressures to behave in a way which is not consistent with their health goals? (eg. peer pressure)

From Active and Informed Citizenship: Information For Teachers. Studies Directorate, Department of Education, Queensland, 1993.



ACTIVE AND INFORMED CITIZENSHIP ISSUES IN STUDIES PROGRAMS continued

ACTIVE AND INFORMED CITIZENSHIP ISSUES IN STUDIES PROGRAMS continued A&IC key elements Studies programs by national curriculum areas	Science	Values Does the program examine ethical positions of development issues such as the program examine ethical positions of development in socially just and ecologically social justice Does the program value enabling technology for people with disabilities? Do all students have opportunities to develop competence in the range of technological learning available in the school? How ecologically sound are the ecological sustainability involvement in scientific courses of study?	Knowledge Are students informed about; the debate concuring Does the program acknowledge the important contribution . democratic rights and responsibilities scientific research and its ethical implications, the bistory of Aboriginal technologies and Torres Strait Islander . historical perspectives developments on natural systems? people view the world, and the effect of scientific consequences of technologies being applied to or identified . inter-relatedness with different groups according to culture, gender cic	Are students encouraged to be active and investigative activities processes active investigative resources eg. learning and creative investigative specific modifications for students with physical impairments. Are students assisted to develop critical and creative investigating scientific and environmental issues? Are problem solving students encouraged to critically examine western' scientific thought and understand that there are other Dreaming.	Action Skills Are students engaged in a range of learning styles participation in community problem community participation are solving? Are students and task? Are students able to appropriate to the context and task? Are students able to appropriate to the context and task? Are students able to the context and task? Are students and task? Are students able to the context and task? Are students and task? Are students able to the context and task? Are students are students are students and task? Are students are students are students are students.
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From Active and Informed Citizenship: Information For Teachers, Studies Directorate, Department of Education. Queensland, 1993.



General Studies, Syllabus Years 11-12, NSW.

8 Conflict and Conflict Resolution

This topic focuses on problems of conflict at the individual, group, national and global levels and means of achieving peace.

Issues relevant to this topic include:

- sources of conflict at all levels such as competition for power, status and resources, conflicting ideologies, imperialism and colonialism;
- types of conflict among nations such as international wars, wars of foreign intervention;
- types of conflict within nations: violent rebellions, revolutions, coups and attempted coups, civil wars, structural violence, violations of human rights, and non-violent demonstrations including civil disobedience and strikes;
- · the relationship between conflict and social change;
- moral and other issues arising from the causes, conduct and consequences of violent conflict;
- · the arms trade, stockpiling of arms and disarmament;
- · role and methods of peace movements in promoting international peace;
- attempts to minimise conflict by government and non-government institutions such as the United Nations, its agencies and Annesty International;
- · means of achieving resolution of conflict at all levels.



Programming suggestions for Topic 8: Conflict and Conflict Resolution

OBJECTIVES OBJECTIVES OUTCOMES 1. Definitions 2. Conflict (i) Violent, destructive (ii) Non-violent, creative (ii) Non-violent, creative (ii) Non-violent, creative (iv) Violent, destructive (iv) Non-violent, creative	TEACHING METHODS LEARNING STRATEGIES	Discussion (15 mins) H. Cornelius & S. Faite, Everyone How may conflict be creative? Is peace more than the absence of simon & Schuster 1989), pp11- 12, 27-36	Discussion (10 mins) • Everyone Can Win, pp.12-14 How can these five stages be applied to a local conflict? To a recent war?	Generate a blackboard summary of Hall & L Scott, Global Issues, Camples of local, national or international conflicts caused by each of these sources. Radical Peace Atlas, pp.60-62 R Hall & L Scott, Global Issues, (Milton, Qld, Jacaranda, 1987) pp330-334 F Hutchinson & L Waddell, People, Problems and Planet Earth, 1980, pp. 60-62 R Hall & L Scott, Global Issues, (Milton, Qld, Jacaranda, 1987) pp360-334 F Hutchinson & L Waddell, People, Problems and Planet Earth, 1980, pp. 60-62 R
15 51	CONTENT	ent, destructive 1-violent, creative	How conflicts arise Discomfort - Incidents - Misunderstandings - Tensions - Crisis	r power/status/prestige r tesources/territory/markets slogies - political/religious, to extend al gender conflict

Support Document - General Studies 1 Unit Years 11-12. Board of Studies NSW 1992.



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