

Technical Paper No. 10
 In Search of Fearlessness Research Institute
 2000

**Unveiling the Hidden Curriculum in Conflict Resolution and
 Peace Education: Future Directions Toward a Critical
 Conflict Education and ‘Conflict’ Pedagogy**

Brief Masters Thesis Summary

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Abstract

This report offers a brief summary of a master thesis which had the purpose to study the way conflict management educators write and think about ‘conflict.’ Using a critical discourse analysis (*a la* Foucault) of 22 conflict resolution manuals for adults and children (U.S., Canadian, Australian), and using a selected sample of those most available to teachers and facilitators, the author asks the question “what is the best conflict education that is required for youth and adults to live in a world of a ‘culture of violence’ in the 21st century? The specific purpose of the study was to provide a poststructuralist critique of conflict management texts/discourses re: the conceptualizations of ‘conflict’ itself. The study found that the texts/discourses were highly ideologically biased toward consensus theory, unity and harmony, cooperation, pragmatism and a general conservative politics based in psychological individualism (and social psychology). Thus, there is a “hidden curriculum” that ends up more like propaganda than good quality elicitive education, according the author of the report. The author offers alternative discourses to ‘balance’ the dominant discourses, adding a conflict perspective, critical pedagogy perspective and post-colonial approaches to conflict that might be useful. The author recommends some theoretical foundations (and future research paths) for building an alternative he calls critical ‘conflict’ pedagogy and/or critical conflict education. (contains 1 figure, References, End Notes).

Introduction

Pedagogy- the systematic study of the methods of teaching and learning
‘Conflict’ pedagogy- the study of how best to teach and learn in the locations, times and ‘heat’ of conflict and violence

For Who? This report is intended for those non-professionals and professionals who are teaching about conflict (mainly social and interpersonal conflict) and prescribing what they believe are the best ways of handling conflict— including parents, teachers, mediators, negotiators, therapists, police, peaceworkers, managers, lawyers, judges, and social policy-planners.

Why Is This Important? Most people who teach about conflict and what to do about it do not always realize they are “teaching,” and have powerful influences on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of others. Although conflict resolution or peace education are fairly common in schools and workplaces, few leaders and facilitators have developed critical thinking of pedagogical concerns of what they value, think, and do as “teachers” of conflict and peace—rather, they tend to focus their attention on training skills, content comprehension and effectiveness to “resolve” (or “prevent”) disputes in hope of ending violence. To undermine the vicious cycle of violence in our world, a ‘conflict’ pedagogy is required, which unfortunately, is poorly developed at this point in time.

I have chosen the title for this report, *Unveiling the Hidden Curriculum...* to capture the essence of this research, without so much academic jargon. This summary focuses on what I believe are some of the most important points raised in the masters thesis—and to write out thoughts that have come later, which are not in the more formal masters thesis. The full argumentation and supportive data are generally not presented in this report. For those who wish to read the fine details of the study, they may refer to the very complex, dense, and rather philosophical 240 pp. thesis itself.²

This report results from a sociological education research study I conducted in 1998-99 for the requirements of an MA thesis in Adult Education at UBC. The official title of the thesis is “Toward a ‘Conflict’ Pedagogy: A Critical Discourse Analysis of ‘Conflict’ in Conflict Management Education.” This research asked questions about how ‘conflict’³ itself is being conceptualized and defined? (It was assumed, that how we define ‘conflict’ strongly influences how we teach and practice conflict and peace). What biases are involved in those conceptualizations of ‘conflict’? Who are the people dominating the field of conflict resolution and peace education who perpetuate the dominant ideas? Why? Who benefits, in terms of political power, from such ideas and conflict knowledges that are being taught? Do we really understand ‘conflict’ itself very well? Do conflict and peace practitioners and theorists know how to “teach” well, and facilitate learning—especially, do they know how to teach and learn in the ‘heat’ of the battles of conflict and violence (i.e., do they have a uniquely developed ‘conflict’ pedagogy)?

To get at these questions, I took a sample of 22 easily accessible and standard conflict management training manuals/handbooks for both adults and youth. These were mostly American, with a few from Canada and Australia, written mostly in the late 1980s-90s. I examined the texts only and recorded the way ‘conflict’ was written about. The strong conforming ideas and ways of conceptualizing ‘conflict’ amongst all these writers is disturbing to me, especially in that all are heavily biased in favor of using certain ideas (theories) about ‘conflict’ and its role in societies—while, ignoring other very important historical traditions of social thought and critical pedagogy which contribute, respectively, to well-rounded *conflict knowledge* and well-founded pedagogical approaches to teaching/learning when ‘conflict’ is a central topic and reality of learning sites.

Bickmore (1984)⁴ in her book (sponsored by the Quakers) *Alternatives to Violence: A Manual for Teaching Peacemaking to Youth and Adults*, stood out from the 22 manuals surveyed, as having a unique beginning tone and approach toward a ‘conflict’ pedagogy and critical conflict education (CCE). Bickmore wrote,

... we will teach far more by the way we [as teachers/facilitators] act (process) than by what we say (content). The objective of this course is not to ‘make’ anyone here non-violent, but rather to show you some options you may not have known about.... We encourage skepticism and questions (p. 1)

She included films on Hiroshima-Nagasaki and comments for the classes to hear that “The United States is the only country in the world to have used nuclear weapons.... The United States is a [self-proclaimed world leader of] democracy...” (p. 3). Her curriculum is very aware of its own pedagogy and is not merely training technique skills for dispute resolution, nor is it indoctrinating students into conformist ideas and behaviors that make a ‘good’ citizen who will not challenge the authorities of social order. She cites a speech by Martin Luther King for the group in another session, and then spends a few lessons on conflict education processes and actions that teach different ways of dealing with violence and social conflict (she talks about racism, sexism, classism). Her manual brings out teachings of conflict resolution skills and practices of non-violence that a citizen has the right to practice in opposition to the state or other authorities who practice injustice. The manual goes on to teaching about street political theatre, picketing, strikes, boycotts, civil disobedience, demonstrations and petitioning. In short, her curriculum does not individualize and de-politicize theory and practices of social conflict, as do the 22 manuals surveyed. She included social activist perspectives as part of conflict knowledge. This brief overview of Bickmore’s manual gives the reader a small degree of insight into what gets put in, and what gets left out of conflict or peace education manuals and programs. The decision-making about what is “in” and what is “out” is very political and controls the knowledge students are exposed to. The attitude of skepticism and critique that is encouraged in the first page of Bickmore’s manual was not found in any of the 22 manuals surveyed. My concern is not that manuals are biased and that not everything can be discussed in a short course or program—rather, I am critical that authors of these manuals and teachers of these programs often do not let the students ‘beware’ of the biased curricular choices made about conflict knowledge and pedagogy, and the rationale for the chosen inclusions and exclusions.

Because all the authors of these 22 manuals do not acknowledge this bias of conflict knowledge (or discourse), I believe this creates an unnecessary and dangerous *hidden curriculum*⁵ in these manuals, which, when used uncritically by “teachers” or “facilitators,” could lead to propagandist⁶ tendencies rather than good quality critical conflict education theory and practices. The fact that my study showed a lack of systematic critiques of conflict resolution and peace education, generally, did not help calm my cautiousness. I’ve concluded that CME text discourse in these manuals appears to repeat a symbolic violence of knowledge, feeding the very cycle of violence which these manuals attempt to undermine. My concern is further raised by the rapidly growing

field of conflict resolution/management, in which its ‘guru leaders’ have claimed “... conflict is a growth industry” (Fisher & Ury, 1983, p. xi). Since the Industrial Revolution, if we have learned one thing about the energetic industrious and capitalist mind of the professional classes, managers and rich elites, it is that “technologies” (be they industrial or social⁷) have both an up-side of betterment for humanity and a downside of destruction of the quality of life. My research is dedicated to ensuring a critical ‘balanced’ perspective is maintained in the study of the downside—which, too often is commonly overlooked⁸ in the zealous enthusiasm for *conflict as a growth industry*. However, beyond criticism, ‘conflict’ pedagogy offers constructive alternatives and ways to check unfettered growth of social technologies in sites of teaching and learning.

The **main purpose** of this thesis summary is to give a quick overview of what my research is about, what I found, and what I think ought to be done about what I found. More importantly, I want this report to raise critical questions and practical concerns about commonly held ideas which inform the foundation of the theory and practices of conflict resolution and peace education—or, what I prefer to lump together under the term conflict management education (CME).⁹ My study shows there are “hidden” ideas in the curriculum of CME, which need to be unveiled and examined more closely in regard to their impact on social conflict practices.

The **main intent** of this report is to encourage that this research be equally criticized as the CME that it criticizes. I acknowledge, that instead of a ‘balanced’ critique of CME, where the “positives” and “negatives” are both brought out, I prefer to strategically make-up for the gross imbalance that exists in CME, where the positives far outweigh proportionately the published space that negative criticisms have had. Ultimately, CME and CCE will both do best when they establish a ‘bridge’ to communicate with each other and to ‘battle’ up-front with their differences, if not contradictions, that they each represent in values, politics, social ideas and prescribed social practices to create citizenship for a strong democracy. Analogously, the CME-CCE conflict I’ve constructed is found in the political and pedagogical heated debates going on for years between multicultural educators and anti-racist educators.¹⁰ The rest of this report will point out some of the CME-CCE differences and contradictions and their potential impacts on conflict resolution in the future. CCE and a ‘conflict’ pedagogy begin when the long historical *conflict over conflict* is acknowledged as the starting political point of reference for all teaching and learning about ‘conflict’ and peace.

The Larger ‘Conflict’ Research Project

To understand the critique of CME in the thesis, it is valuable to have a larger picture of the context and project that drives my research of ‘*conflict*’ and *pedagogy*. As well, this brief section provides some biographical background that have influenced the ‘conflict’ research project.

a) Conversion From a Peacemaker to Conflictworker

At age five I was a ‘gang’ leader of “white” (Canadian) guys-up-on-the-hill fighting “waps” (Italian-Canadians) down-below-the-hill. Even though, there was no obvious economic stratification between these two communities, the hill in Calgary, Alberta was the territorial boundary which exaggerated the ethnic boundaries of two distinct groups. I was involved as victim and perpetrator of racism before I knew anything about prejudice or how I was supposed to treat ‘others’ of difference. I and they, were enemies, and we used words of hatred (terrorism), broken glass, rocks, pipes and anything we could find to fight each other for power and access to the hill (which was the boundary that separated us and made us feel, paradoxically, ‘safe’).

Raised poor working class of a Belgian mother and second generation Canadian father (of German and Russian heritage), I had no recognition of why the guys below-the-hill were our enemies. Later in life, I put together the pieces [somewhat] of why my family was alcoholic-dependent, emotionally unstable and neglectful, and why I was easy prey to several sexual abuse situations from pedophiles during my youth. Our family was centered around ‘fear.’ Paranoid fear, is what my mother brought to Canada as an “unskilled” “uneducated” immigrant and war-bride. She was a [non-Jewish] survivor of the Holocaust. Dad was a survivor of some front-line duty in WWII. he never spoke of his feelings to us kids. Mom’s teen life was traumatized individually, and as a cultural group collectively, by the Nazi invasion of Belgium for over three years. This traumatization was compounded by generational poverty, alcoholism and incest abuse. The horrors of that experience she will not reveal fully, to this day. My adult interest in social conflict¹¹ and the inability to resolve the wounds and terrorization that go with such violent conflicts, have deep roots in my identity and being. Many years of my adult life have been devoted to the valuable, often expensive, journey of recovering from the hurt.

Over two decades of experiences in various forms of professional organizations and intentional communities, pushed me to search for ways to avoid conflict as a means to leading a “peaceful” life. Anything the opposite of my family history was an improvement. I wanted to be a nature-loving Zen Buddhist monk at one time. In the 1970-80s a new optimism for humankind and a peaceful ecologically sustainable world seemed within the near grasp of the “new consciousness” of the baby-boomers. Many so called “feminists,” “new agers,” “peace-activists,” and others promoting “peace and harmony” (and spirituality), turned out to perpetuate *domination-conflict-fear-violence* invariably, or so it seemed. Few leaders or followers seemed to know how to do conflict well—mostly, they didn’t want to talk about it, and relationships of all kinds suffered greatly while links and coalitions were dissolved to fragments of “split” groups become virtual “enemies”—yet still fighting under the common cause of “peace and harmony.” A contradiction?

As I studied the 22 CME manuals, talked to people who practice and teach conflict resolution, and pondered my eight years of intense conflictwork at Quest Ranch Treatment Centre for “at-risk” teenage boys and families in crisis, I found myself repulsed deep inside by the “management” agenda of CME texts. I couldn’t put exact words on why I disliked the CME “talk” at a gut-level intuition. The masters thesis was a beginning toward clarifying academically my concerns at a head-level intellectual

analysis. But it took Dr. Arnold Mindell's¹² words to ring true in my heart-level of criticism of CME discourse. He wrote,

Today conflict-resolution schools often deal with social issues in an academic fashion and avoid working with the experience of rage. The mainstream [who write and publish the CME manuals] in every country tends to skirt the anger of the oppressed classes. (Mindell, 1995, p. 36)

Living [working, learning] in a group can be a painful experience.... There are many reasons for the difficulty we have in living in groups, but one of them must certainly be the tendency for conflict and chaos to arise in them. Dealing with conflict and using conflict resolution methods are most effective with people in reasonable, rational states of consciousness, but how can we deal with highly charged, emotional, rigid, or even violent groups? Almost any bargaining, negotiating, or conflict resolution procedure will work when people have already agreed [often by coercion and 'fear'] to work on conflicts with one another. But how do we work with a group in the midst of turbulence, violence, ecstasy, or insanity, where no one wants to solve anything? (Mindell, 1993, p. 30)

[He argues that we try to build 'community consensus' most often through subtle, or overt, coercion and moralism to be 'good' — meaning 'cooperative' and not 'upsetting the boat']. The first stage of conflict resolution is to do what most of us do when confronted with conflict: avoid it. Forget the conflict. Try to ignore it and act peaceful. (Mindell, 1993, p. 86)

Western thought is biased toward peace and harmony. That's why many non-mainstream [oppressed, marginalized, non-Anglo-Saxon¹³] groups consider the very idea of 'conflict resolution' a mainstream fabrication. (Mindell, 1995, pp. 36-37)

Mindell is speaking to my heart and experience, with a critique of Western [colonialist] approaches to conflict resolution and peace work. I have known the pain of being in a marginal oppressed group within North American society. I have the privilege of being a "white male" — and, I can only imagine the hostility of other marginalized groups less privileged in Western society, who are asked, by the mainstream privileged of CME, to "manage" their social conflict better. Who's voice dominates CME? Who benefits? CME manuals never seemed to have a voice for these marginal views, nor did they acknowledge their own privileged "mainstream" view of conflict and prescriptions of what to do about it. Their bias, culturally speaking, is unacceptable (and oppressive itself) within this critique which Mindell (and others) have raised. Later, I'll demonstrate the data from the manuals which pervades and dominates toward a "clean" and "rational" conflict management and peace education.¹⁴

“The problem of human conflict is perhaps the most fundamental problem of all time” (Bondurant, 1965, p. xv). I’ve concluded, that despite the best intentions of loving kindness and non-violent ‘peaceful’ spiritual rhetoric, social conflict, predominantly, rips apart the best of human intentions and relations. Is it ‘conflict’ alone that is so destructive? ‘Conflict’ itself is not the problem. All 22 CME manuals basically declare this as a fact. They assert that ‘conflict’ is “natural,” “normal,” and an “essential” part of living together. What seems to be the problem is that we don’t know how to handle conflict well (i.e., constructively and non-violently), so says these conflict resolution manuals. My argument is that the claims of ‘conflict’ as natural, normal, positive¹⁵ etc. are all questionable because of the way these manuals define conflict. None of the manuals question the defining of conflict as perhaps being in need of deconstruction and reevaluation, as I recommend. None of the manuals included any systematic discussion about why they write about “conflicts” and not ‘conflict’ itself. The definition of ‘conflict’ is always operationalized in pragmatic technical terms of behaviors, actions, events—that is, “conflicts.” I argue that tends to bias, and misinterpret, a way of conceptualizing what ‘conflict’ itself might be about.

The focus for my ‘conflict’ research project has therefore led to a longterm study of what is ‘conflict’ itself? What kind of process is it? Is it natural? Is it inevitable? Is it visible behavior alone? But most importantly, how is it definable in terms of its relationship to other social phenomena and concepts, which cannot be left apart from the defining of conflicts. The CME manuals do not follow this line of questioning and I believe it puts their conflict resolution [mediation] into a highly biased, and rigidly limited, form of pedagogy and social practice. The starting place for a ‘conflict’ pedagogy and CCE will do well to focus on getting away from the CME tendency to separate conflict as if the phenomena is individual-centered and separate from a complex of historical and social processes (see also Tidwell’s, 1998, excellent critique). I believe the critical complex of the **Domination-Conflict-Fear-Violence** (DCFV) cycle, is a useful corrective to current dominating ways of conceptualizing conflict in isolation. The DCFV cycle, is beyond the scope of this report, but suffice it to say that an understanding of ‘conflict’ will come with a new conflict imaginary¹⁶ which holds the concept and phenomena of ‘conflict’ in a complex like the DCFV cycle.

My Ph.D. research is dedicated to the study of ‘fear’ as another of the important components of the DCFV cycle—a cycle which I believe is still poorly understood, and far from being undermined by the field of conflict resolution, peace education, anti-violence and “safety” campaigns, etc. ‘Fear’ (and fearlessness) are likely to be critical aspects in both understanding ‘conflict’ and conflict knowledges and practices. The rise of research interests in the “culture of fear” (e.g., Glassner, 1999) and its relationship to the search for *safety* and *security* in our communities and schools, is directly related to how people will conceptualize and handle conflict. What is the impact of this increasing *fear* (and mistrust) culturally, and how ought CME define and deal with fear (‘fear’)? Is it possible to teach and learn *conflict management* without equal importance given to *fear management*?¹⁷ My concern is that “safety” is becoming the highest value in this culture of fear, and with that a flood of capitalist-technological interests to capitalize on this

value shift. The sociologist, Furedi (1997) concluded that “Personal safety is a growth industry” (p. 1).

My conversion, is one of being less interested in *unity-in-diversity* (alone), and less interested in “peace” and “harmony” as the goal or key to democratic community. Rather, I’ve become more politically interested in what gets in the way of authentic relations where, inevitably *unity-in-conflict* is the better way to create a strong democracy in the world we live in. We ought not to ignore any longer the culture of violence and fear (the DCFV cycle) as the context for our everyday (formal and informal) teaching and learning. To hope for “peace” and “harmony” as the future context is an ideal world that is fine, but not real and present now. The conflict education I seek is one that acknowledges reality and envisions ideals, without getting lost in idealism (or romantic ideologies). Simply, this can be captured in a curriculum focus that is more involved (and values) learning how to “fight” well, than learning how to “not fight.” As Mindell (1995) would say, *we have to sit in the fire* of “trouble” and conflict long enough, with awareness and skills (and a lot of floundering, chaos and confusion), before true or authentic community is possible (see also Peck, 1988; Summers, 1994). I heartily agree with conflict transformation theorists, who are less interested in focusing on “managing” and controlling conflict rationally by moral discourses of “peace” and “cooperation” (because then we are “good” and not “bad”). Beyond moralism, the conflict transformation theorists and practitioners provide the basis for a conflict education which says, “make peace with war”¹⁸ (“conflict”)—“Fewer people will be hurt—that’s the revolution we need” (Mindell, 1995, p. 241).

I argued in the thesis that the study and teaching/learning about ‘conflict’ and its resolution is overly dominated by a ‘peace’ discourse¹⁹ (talk). This is part of the “hidden curriculum” that is not so “hidden” in CME. Nonetheless, it has not been acknowledged in the 22 CME texts as the dominant ‘talk’ over, and above, other discourses that are equally interested in ‘conflict’ (and violence) and how to deal with it. The educational literature searched in this study indicated a “split” in the CME knowledge. Using the ERIC data base only 73 entries of articles dealing with *conflict education*²⁰ as the search term found—and 793 entries of articles dealing with *peace education* were found. The 73 conflict education titles were virtually all about peace education and a very rare few focused on “conflict education” as the subject. Clearly, there is a “hidden” division in CME which needs to be unveiled further. This symbolic division is apparent when the most popular book cited regularly by “peace” educators in CME is entitled *Educating for a Peaceful World* (Deutsch, 1991). How come there isn’t an equally popular book cited with a title something like *Educating for a Violent World* (the latter, my own preference)? Is the avoidance of valuing and attending to the development of *conflict education* related directly to the cross-cultural research by Duryea (1992) that shows, almost universally people have a very negative attitude and association with conflict, and mostly prefer to deny and avoid it?

An Integral Approach to ‘Conflict’ Pedagogy

In my search for a universal grand theory for conflictwork, I ought to be challenged, and often am, to clarify and defend such a position. Anything prescribed as “universal” or “grand theory” stirs a lot of ‘red flags’ as being typically another form of violence and colonialist discourse that tries to wipe-out the rich variety of local ways of knowing and dealing with conflict. In no way do I want that rich variety and wisdom erased with developing and applying a ‘conflict’ pedagogy and CCE. There is always that danger. But it is a dangerous world, and sometimes, dangerous means are required to intervene. I will assert, as a strategic hypothesis (albeit, I’m confident), that the DCFV cycle is universal on this planet, for all intensive purposes. I cannot imagine, nor do I know of, any society that is completely free today of the DCFV cycle, and such a freedom is likely to be more unlikely as globalization continues rapidly to infiltrate every culture on the planet.

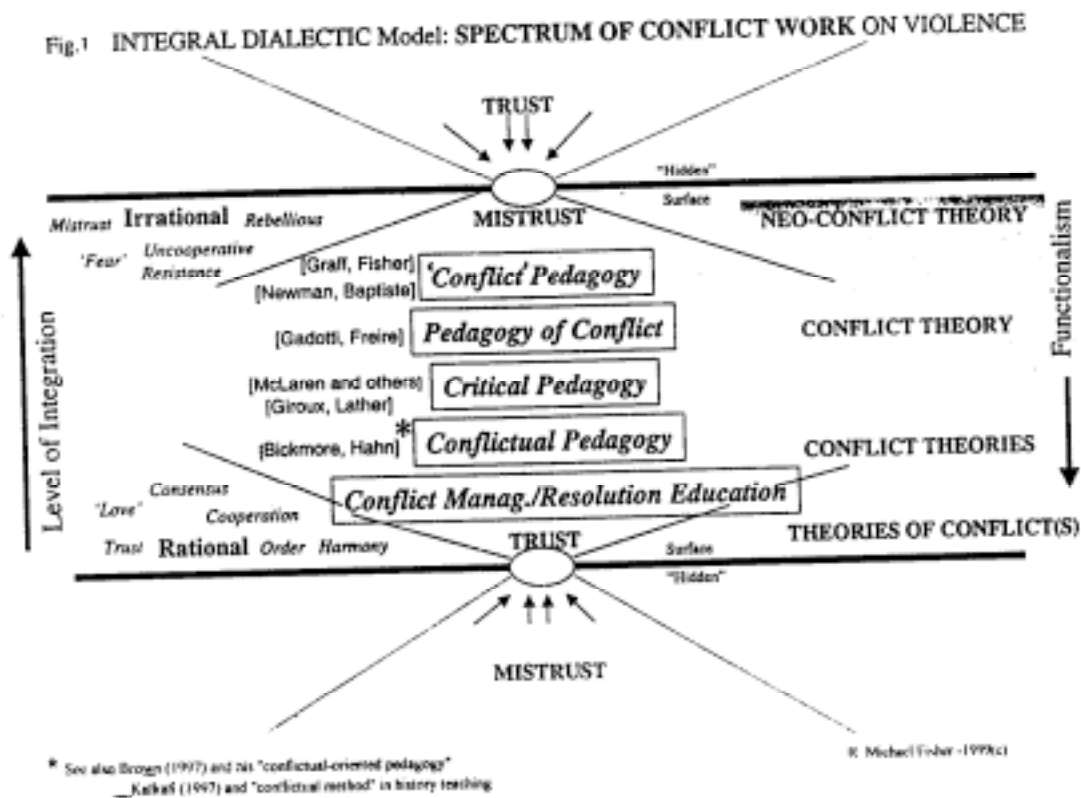
I argue a ‘conflict’ pedagogy is one of the critical elements to undermining the DCFV cycle—both are thus, universal process and social practices. All cultures already have some form of a ‘conflict’ pedagogy—they just don’t call it that—and most, have not systematically studied their own ‘conflict’ pedagogy. I wish to create an entire discipline to assist in the growth of such research worldwide. Rohrs (1994) has already developed this agenda in the study of a “pedagogy of peace”²¹—so again, we see the conflictworkers behind the peaceworkers in terms of systematic study of conflict and peace knowledges.

However universal these social phenomena, I am striving to construct a ‘conflict’ pedagogy based on an *integral* critical theory/perspective.²² There would develop, from many sources beyond my thinking, several ‘conflict’ pedagogies specific to interests and needs—with a root ‘conflict’ pedagogy to them all. Although, too complex to fully describe for this report, this integral approach is intended to give space for ‘all’²³ the spectrum of ‘voices’ and wisdom knowledges about conflict and how to best deal with it. My interest, is to find a framework and methodology called ‘conflict’ pedagogy, which would assist all the diversity of views to also see their contradictions and conflicts with each other. No longer, in such an integral framework, do divergent views of conflict or peace need to go “hidden” underground in trying to assert various ideologies over other ideologies. The battle over ideologies and values they carry can be recognized upfront by each view and principles and practices of a grand ‘conflict’ pedagogy utilized to work with the *conflict over conflict*. CCE text I’ve studied ignore this and their curriculum agendas become ideologies “hidden” from view and critique. CCE would foreground the battles over conflict knowledges and practices as central to a good quality conflict education. How then do we apply conflict or peace practices to the battles over conflict and peace knowledges? That ought to be interesting, and it is an unknown territory that I’ve found no writing about anywhere.

In youth and adult educational literature/traditions, an integral model of conflict education and pedagogy is created as a “spectrum” in the thesis. I have drawn upon various authors whom, in particular, seem to take a conflict perspective²⁴ (more or less) in their approach to writing about conflict and what we ought to do about it. Later, I will discuss how these authors are usually labeled as critical theorists and pedagogues, and how *critical pedagogy(ies)* are not adequate (alone) to the task we face in undermining

the DCFV cycle. No where else have I seen such a spectrum of authors (Figure 1) brought together under one integral model for developing “conflict education.” This is hardly an attempt to be a “complete” inventory and with time it will be enhanced with other’s efforts.

Figure 1



There is not one definition of “conflict education” in the literature, and usually, as Brezinka (1979, 1989) pointed out, the definitions and conceptualizations of terms are a mess of confusion and unclarity, limiting research precision in this area. To my knowledge, the strongest American promoters of “conflict education” (Webster-Doyle’s²⁵), are not mentioned in the ERIC data base (see Fitzell, 1994 as an application of the Webster-Doyle’s model). I suggest in the thesis that CME may be a more useful category to define and research on. I propose CCE as an adjunctive improvement on current CME theory and practices. In the limited space of this report, little more can be said about the important work of the following authors who have provided important foundations for synthesizing a ‘conflict’ pedagogy in the future: sociopolitical theorists (feminists) like Ring (1991), Bickford (1996), Mouffe (1993), Mansbridge (1983, 1996); schooling educators like Bickmore (1991, 1993, 1993a, 1998, 1999, 1999a), Hahn (1996), Kafkafi (1997), Brown (1997); adult and higher educators like Dixon (1998), Pratt (1991, 1993), Newman (1993, 1994/98, 1995, 1997), Baptiste (1998, 1998a). Less directly, critical pedagogues like Giroux, Freire, Gadotti, Horton, McLaren, hooks, Lather and many others, have much to offer as foundations for a ‘conflict’ pedagogy as well. In the Latin America context, Gadotti (1980) and Gadotti, Freire, Guimaraes (1985) have written directly about a “pedagogy of conflict.”

In North America, Graff (1990, 1992, 1995, 1998), Graff and Looby (1994)²⁶ have labeled *conflict-pedagogy* as a way of dealing with the “culture wars” in higher education (particularly, in the Humanities). Gerald Graff’s²⁷ leadership is commendable and I highly recommend his writing to anyone interested in ‘conflict’ pedagogy. He is mainly concerned that students in universities are not getting a good education because the instructors are “split-off” into their isolated ‘cells’ (specialist Departments, Institutes, Centres), with their isolated views—views which conflict, he says, are not being heard directly by students. He works to bring diverse faculties and divergent views about “readings” and human nature etc. into the classroom so students can “learn the conflicts” from the battles that go on in interdisciplinary classrooms—and professors can “teach the conflicts” in person, while being accountable to refutation and debate in front of their students and peers. At this point, Graff has not developed very much theoretical or in-depth pedagogical writing on this notion of conflict-pedagogy, although, he agrees with my approach to go further with developing CCE.²⁸ Of all the writings above, with a conflict perspective, there is no writing that systematically explores (or researches) what I define as ‘*conflict*’ pedagogy—the study of how best to teach and learn in the locations, times, and ‘heat’ of conflict and violence.

Examples of Some Findings from Studying the CME Manuals

1. Several critiques of CME were evaluated in the thesis. None provided a systematic critical review of the conceptualization of ‘conflict’ as a key area of research concern, or interest in the future. None provided a critical discourse analysis (or poststructuralist) view of conflict knowledge and its relation to power. Neither CME manuals, nor the critics mentioned critical pedagogies²⁹ or the conflict theory tradition of sociology³⁰ as important sources for understanding ‘conflict’ and how best to deal with it. Rather,

the discourses are predominantly from a line of thinking in social psychology that connects Lewin-Follet-Deutsch as the primary approach to conflict and resolution practices. This leaves CME text with a “hidden” political ideology based in “individualism” and conservative politics re: maintaining the status quo inequities of power, slow social change and reform, and a highly “rationalist” (middle class-white-patriarchal) approach to working through conflict or disputes.

2. The teaching approaches to defining “conflict” were of a transmission-like training modality where content, rather than process of learning and critical thinking about the nature and role of conflict, were used exclusively.

3. ‘Conflict’ was defined and written about as “conflicts” (behaviors, action events). Little attention was given to analysis and teaching about ‘conflict’ itself. No doubts about the definitions of conflict were raised. No interest in expanding our imagination about ‘conflict’ were shown in the text.

4. Discourses on conceptualizing ‘conflict’ were shown to fall almost exclusively in consensus theoretical discourse, where the definition and meaning of conflict was not a challenge to the status quo power relations in society. Common definitions of conflict tended toward a psychology discourse of “inner” needs, drives, wishes, and less focus on structural societal forces in conflict (of which individuals and groups participate). In other words, CME text tended to keep to “simple” conflicts (disputes is the more accurate term) and avoided teaching social conflict and how to deal with the tougher conflict (i.e., big oppressions like classism, racism, sexism, etc.).

5. The ignoring of diverse discourses on social conflict, and conflict knowledges in theory and traditions (beyond social psychology) is thought to lead to propagandist-like practices (symbolic violence) in CME “hidden curriculum.” These texts, with their bias, therefore are part of the problem of the violence, which they argue they are attempting to undermine.

6. A tendency in CME text toward creating “safe” cooperative classrooms for optimal learning, denies the possibility that some of the most critical learning in schools and workplaces may come from learning how to learn in places “unsafe” (more like the real world). Learning in the ‘heat’ of conflict (sometimes violence) is not apparently valued in CME text as it is in a ‘conflict’ pedagogy.

7. A significant ‘gap’ is found in conflict knowledge formations in general. The CME authors are not talking to the critical pedagogues and *visa versa*. An integral ‘conflict’ pedagogy is an attempt to ‘bridge’ the ‘gap’ and to validate all the forms of conflict knowledges and to synthesize their best aspects for a universal application. Several recommendations are made for prioritizing research in the building of a CCE and ‘conflict’ pedagogy.

Closing Remarks

There is a great deal of research ahead to investigate the critical interrelationship of ‘conflict’ and pedagogy in the face of education in the 21st century and the continuation of the cycle of violence. The approach must be interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary, with diverse knowledges contributing to the dialogue and battles for the kind of social order and quality of life we want. We won’t all agree. That is why conflictwork is essential to ensure the disagreements don’t need to necessarily end up in violence (be it subtle or obvious). My own research will continue to explore the following eight domains of knowledge in pursuit of a ‘conflict’ pedagogy and CCE:

- 1) Freirean critical pedagogy,
- 2) conflict tradition in social philosophy and sociology,
- 3) neo-Marxist theory (and the “radical middle),
- 4) depth psychology (and “shadow work”),
- 5) metaphysics and ethics of ‘Love’ and ‘fear,’
- 6) CME (conflict management education),
- 7) the Sacred Warrior-shaman traditions (transpersonal studies and the prophetic intellectual)
- 8) Foucauldian (sociology of knowledge) critique.

I am looking for a critical integral theory (*a la* Wilberian) of education and liberation that moves individuals and the collective social body from *victim* to *survivor*—across the ‘fear’ barrier (so rarely taken)—to a “civic courage” [beyond to “fearlessness”] based on *sacred warriorship* and finally to *royal leadership* [or “fearless leadership”].

But how difficult it is, if not arrogant, to critique those who are trying to help out with better methods of conflict resolution/management for improving the conditions in a violent world. This research is a critique of discourses, not people and their motivations. Duryea (1992) commented on this difficulty of critiqueing conflict resolution and its roots in the peace movement. She wrote, ‘Indeed, with its ‘apple pie nature’: (who is against consensus and harmony?)... (Fisher, 2000, p. 13)

About the Author

[written in 2000] **R. Michael Fisher** is a father of two teenage daughters, and currently lives with his partner/wife Barbara Bickel. He has travelled many career tracks from park interpreter, to environmental biologist, teacher, artist, musician, rehabilitation practitioner, to therapeutic-counselor. He has recently finished an MA in Adult Education at The University of British Columbia. He has been an entrepreneur and independent scholar for over 15 years. His recent return to education is to return to his love for creative design and curriculum innovation in a very challenging world of formal and non-formal life-long learning. He is an accomplished writer with several monographs and

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² Copies to read are available on microfiche or hardbound copies in The UBC library. A hardbound copy is available in the Coolie Verner Library (Ponderosa F. Bldg. UBC Campus). I have my own copy for loan. A copy is also available at the Justice Institute of British Columbia Library, Vancouver, BC.

³ 'Conflict' written with the (') marks, is a convention I apply to the term because I think it is time to re-evaluate critically all the assumed normal and common definitions for this term. I argue that we may discover something fresh about both 'conflict' and violence if we deconstruct our normal, habitual, traditional (biased) definitions/conceptualizations. Therefore, I approached this study of 'conflict' without privileging any particular definition or meaning of the term as being "correct" or "proper." I believe a 'conflict' pedagogy has to start with this [postmodern] research agenda of seriously re-evaluating what 'conflict' is, what it means, and what it may mean in the future. When I use conflict, without the (') marks, I am referring to its normal and popular use and meaning. This deconstructive critical questioning of our biased definitions of 'conflict' is also taken up in the radical "sociology of conflict" research by Dr. Donald Black, University of Virginia (see for e.g., Black, 1998).

⁴ Dr. Kathy Bickmore (OISE/Uof Toronto) has informed me personally that this manual has since gone through revised editions, not with her invited involvement. Apparently, the text has lost much of its original spirit. Bickmore's research work in social studies education has important roots for a 'conflict' pedagogy

and as a validation that elementary school children are very capable to combine conflict resolution with global politics in the curriculum (see Bickmore, 1999).

⁵ Hidden curriculum "... is a term used to refer to those aspects of learning in schools [or other less formal educative sites] that are unofficial, or unintentional, or undeclared consequences of the way teaching and learning are organized and performed..." (Meighan, 1981, p. 34).

⁶ Propaganda is defined as "... ideas, facts, or allegations spread deliberately to further one's cause or to damage an opposite cause..." (Webster's New College Dictionary, 1981, p. 916). I argued in my masters thesis that conflict management education generally, could be called a new social movement—and thus, like all movements/causes/advocacy are necessarily political (whether they believe they are or not), there is bound to be a tendency toward propaganda as some set of values and knowledges are being constructed and given priority hierarchically and competitively over others (see footnote 7).

⁷ In his supportive sociological analysis of conflict resolution and peace studies, Olsen (1996) wrote, "The interest in researching conflict, violence, and war has grown to the point where YOU are now part of an international movement to build a Social Technology of Peace" (p. 3). This is no exaggeration. Bodine & Crawford (1998) estimated that there were over 8500 conflict resolution (and peer mediation) programs in schools in the USA alone—a number which has likely doubled since the increase in student-led rage killings in public schools in early 1999.

⁸ In particular, for example, with the proliferation of "certificate-granting" conflict resolution (mediation) and peace studies programs in private and public agencies, colleges and universities, there is, arguably, a strong tendency that a more "technical" and "practical" training is dominating, which produces 'instant' marketable-trained conflict practitioners for the "conflict industry"—the latter being preferred (under economic and political pressures), to theoretically-based critical thinkers and analysts who center their conflict practices in a broad-based *critical conflict education* (CCE). In no way am I against this proliferation of conflict practitioners, rather, I'm concerned with their quality of education. This is not a concern I have alone, as conversations with some teachers/designers of these certificate programs share this concern.

⁹ The term *conflict management* was preferred in this thesis to *conflict resolution* to accompany the word *education*, because the reality is that conflict (distinct from a more simple dispute) is infrequently "resolved" successfully, and more often "managed" reasonably successfully (see Tidwell, 1998). CME was created as a category for strategic purposes of analysis of a large genre and body of conflict knowledge production and distribution. This term places CME as a cultural phenomena, where 'conflict' is situated as very important in cultural formations of social order (political order/control). CME was chosen as an umbrella concept for a diversity of approaches to schooling/training and education that deal with conflict and violence, some more implicit, while others are explicit in advertising their "educational" agenda. For purposes of this study CME refers to: - all forms of schooling/training or education where the aim is to improve understanding of conflict and develop skills to handle conflict so as to avoid or minimize violence. Commonly included in this conceptualization of CME here are: conflict (dispute) resolution, alternative dispute resolution (ADR), conflict resolution education, conflict management, negotiation training, conflict studies/science (polemology), peace studies/science, conflict education, peace education, cooperative or collaborative education, and other variants on these general types. Not included in the thesis research (due to time constraints) were other forms of education that also could fit in the CME category; that is, feminist education, post-Colonial education, anti-racist education and others.

¹⁰ The simple distinction (albeit, problematic) could be that, "Multicultural education centers around concepts of culture and cultural awareness [based on the assumption that with more knowledge of differences, we will cooperate more = less conflict]. Anti-Racist education, on the other hand, is concerned with issues of power and injustice [with the assumption that with more knowledge of differences, we will further see inequities and oppression and have more tough conflict to battle through before there should be cooperation and less conflict].... the goals of each are frequently perceived as being in conflict with each other" (Froebe, 1996, pp. 16-17). See Sivak (1998) for a more detailed analysis and Sleeter and McLaren (1995) for explorations in building what they call a "critical multiculturalism"—not a dissimilar attempt analogously, with my attempt to build a "critical conflict management education" or "critical conflict education" = CCE or "critical 'conflict' pedagogy" and so on.

¹¹ In general, albeit problematic, Coser's (1968) classic (and respected) sociological definition is used in this study: "Social conflict may be defined as a struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce

resources, in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values but also to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals.... Intergroup as well as intragroup conflicts are perennial features of social life” (p. 232).

¹² Dr. Amy and Arnold Mindell, are unique therapists/activists with a political agenda. They founded “process-oriented psychology,” “Worldwork,” “conflictwork” and “deep democracy” – and the training centre called the Process-Oriented Psychology Institute in Portland, OR. Their work in “conflict transformation” with large groups on issues of racism, sexism, classism and other major forms of social conflict is impressive and a referent point for contrast with CME—and, a part of the foundation for building ‘conflict’ pedagogy and CCE.

¹³ Salem (1993), an Arab professor of Political Studies in Beirut, critiqued the “triumphant West” and its over virtuous thinking about “peace” and its underestimation of the “virtues of battle” when injustices prevail. He charged the hidden assumption of Western conflict resolution as based in “Utilitarianism and the comfort culture of the 20th century, ... [which] relies heavily on the assumption that pain is bad and pleasure, or comfort, is good” (p. 364). Slowly, in the 1990’s, CME writing (e.g., Duryea, 1992; LeBaron et al., 1998) has been realizing this W. cultural bias toward conceptualizing, defining and making meaning of ‘conflict’ and how best to deal with it.

¹⁴ I grant this claim, at this time, is based on very limited data into “peace education.” I’m guessing, with some evidence, that future research findings on “peace education” will be very similar to the conflict resolution/management literature discourse that I studied for this thesis.

¹⁵ In the thesis, I am particularly critical of the “conflict-positive” movement in CME (see Follett, 1925/95; Johnson and Johnson, 1995; Tjstvold, 1991, 1993, following Deutsche’s social psychology theory of conflict and the agenda of conflict resolution/management education as if it is “value-neutral” politically—see Deutsch, 1973, 1991). Deutsch’s large impact on the theory of conflict resolution in the workplace and school settings is highlighted because of his emphasis on what people/groups in conflict have as common/cooperative interests, rather than as Coser (footnote 11) emphasized re: conflict in oppositions/competition. I, like Mindell, and other critics of CME, tend to take a general Coserian view, without neglecting that Deutsch’s view has its value and place in social interactions—although, Deutsch’s conflict-positive initiative is more suitable to conflicts/disputes that are within already coherent groups (for e.g., business organizations or associations with similar vested interests and fairly high levels of trust). Deutsch’s theory and the conflict-positive thinking in CME tend to downplay, overly so, the powerful impacts of sexism, racism, and classism (oppressive power differentials) as inevitably part of most all social conflict.

¹⁶ The *conflict imaginary* is a conception that was created for this study to begin an analysis of how imaginative, creative, flexible, and healthy a person, group, or culture’s view of ‘conflict’ is. My current definition suggests the conflict imaginary is a quality of imagination that embraces the entire complex of ability to imagine, create, transform, learn and practice conflictwork—especially, beyond the normal status quo bounds (or habits) taught by a particular family or cultural background. The type of conflict knowledge that is provided and encouraged in CME students, will determine a specific kind of conflict imaginary. CCE is intended to extend that CME conflict imaginary.

¹⁷ Arguably, ‘fear’ and ‘conflict’ are central aspects that shape social policies to maintain social order, generally—and specifically, that shape urban planning (see Ellin, 1997 on the *Architecture of Fear*). I am most interested in the way ‘fear’ and ‘conflict’ shape urban curriculum and educative practices, no matter what the subject area involved.

¹⁸ See this emphasis in conflict transformation writers like Shrock-Shenk & Ressler (1999).

¹⁹ *Discourse* has many different meanings in academic writing, depending on the discipline and context in which it is being defined and used. Throughout this study “Discourse then, consists of recurrent [patterns of] statements and wordings across texts (Foucault, 1972)” (Luke, 1995-96, p. 15). “... discourses are not simple groupings of utterances or statements, but consist of utterances which have meaning, force [power], and effect within a social context” (Mills, 1997, p. 13). Although, I only studied the discourse of texts in CME, the discourse is likely to be the same in actions and structures of those who follow the CME text as guides (see Michel Foucault’s critical philosophical writing on the nature of discourses and their political implications in constructing knowledge/power and self-identities).

²⁰ *Conflict resolution education* had 48 entries and *conflict management education* had 11 entries, most all involved schools and training programs. The conflict management education entries were all administrative

in nature—indicating the validity of my claim that “management” (as method) in conflict resolution and peace education take priority concern over “pedagogy” (as method) in dealing with social conflict.

²¹ Rohrs (1994) publication summarizes the tone and conception (more or less) that I envision for a ‘conflict’ pedagogy. He wrote, “This document discusses peace education not as a subject but as part of the teaching of various academic subjects depending on the extent to which they lend themselves to this. The intention is to produce educational situations where young [and older] people can develop skills in the art of peace and [a] peaceful approach to conflict resolution. The pedagogy of peace is understood here as the sum of scholarly and scientific thinking on the nature of peace education and the way it should be organized. The pedagogy of peace is an interdisciplinary branch of science using a broad range of methods, including observation, description, and analysis of peace-educational processes and interrogation of participants with regard to their motives” (p. 1).

²² See Crittenden (1997) on Ken Wilber’s critical integral theory. It is worth noting that Wilber’s theory is not a liberalist relativist “multicultural” type of model; or, one of a “flat” eclecticism where any views can just be mixed and matched together without any critical examination of their “truth” claims and, processes of comparing knowledges. Wilber’s theory suggests some knowledges may be “better” for certain problems than others—especially, in generalizing applications over wide and deep territories of knowing.

²³ I wish this ‘all’ to be taken critically, problematically, and merely theoretically. The actuality of equality, in social practices of any kind, is usually more a fantasy than reality.

²⁴ In social theory and sociology, the *conflict perspective* is contrasted with a contradictory view of social life/social order as based on cooperation and consensus. The latter view, called *order theory* or *consensus theory* (or functionalism, associated with theorists like Talcott Parsons). I take Collins (1994) sociology writing on the conflict perspective or *conflict theory* as foundational to CCE and a ‘conflict’ pedagogy. According to Collins (1994) (re: the conflict theory/perspective) “Its main argument is not simply that society consists of conflict, but the larger claim that what occurs when conflict is not openly taking place is a process of domination.... The conflict vision of society is rarely popular. Conflict sociologists have usually been an intellectual underground. Prevailing [consensus theory] views have usually stressed a much more benign picture, whether based on beliefs in religious beings underpinning the social world, or on secular beliefs in the goodness of one’s rulers and the charitable intentions of established elites. To conflict sociologists, these kind of justifications are ideologies cloaking real self-interests of groups hiding beneath them. To point this out, obviously, does not usually make one very welcome in the mainstream society” (pp. 47-48).

²⁵ Jean and Terrance Webster-Doyle, co-founders of the Atrium Society, have long-experienced as educators and entrepreneur’s working in a variety of educative contexts. They foreground the values and principles, as well as practices, of the E. martial arts and conscious awareness (mindfulness) in their teaching of people how to “fight” well. Their website is <http://www.atrumsoc.org/organization.html>

²⁶ See Thomas (1994) and Cain (1994) for writing about Graff’s *conflict-pedagogy* project and its applications.

²⁷ Dr. Graff is currently Associate Dean of Curriculum and Pedagogy, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Illinois at Chicago.

²⁸ “I think you’ve got a great point that we need ‘to start realizing that we do not really know what ‘conflict’ is.’ As you bring out well, ‘conflict’ itself has always been one of the most conflicted concepts around, and this needs to be a starting point of thinking about the ‘management’ of conflict and the pedagogical use of conflict.... I also find very important the way you are bringing together work across very different disciplines by writers who don’t yet know one another but clearly should” (personal communications, Dr. G. Graff, Feb. 4, 2000).

²⁹ Rarely, with the exception of Lederach (1995), does one find any of the conflict resolution literature address the *pedagogy of conflict* by Gadotti and Paulo Freire, popular education, adult education, or poststructuralist neo-Marxist writers like Giroux, McLaren or Apple. Feminist pedagogy and post-colonial pedagogy, etc. are also not referred to for theorizing about ‘conflict’ and pedagogy in the CME text and/or critics of CME.

³⁰ Rarely, would a CME text cite or refer to Marx, Weber, Dahrendorf—and a little more frequently, but rarely did they mention Coser.