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## Book Review: Encyclopedia of Peace Education

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**Roles**

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## Book Review: Encyclopedia of Peace Education

### **Abstract**

Peace education itself is a contested term; its conceptions, and thus its manifestations, are quite varied. This is why this succinct volume proves to be so timely; it aims to "provide greater nuance to debates around peace education" (p. 2). Despite its daunting title, this volume is not presented as an authoritative stranglehold, but rather, as a way of historicizing the field of peace education, highlighting major conceptual threads and identifying the exciting prospects for the future of the field. [*excerpt*]

### **Keywords**

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### **Book Review**

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Peace education itself is a contested term; its conceptions, and thus its manifestations, are quite varied. This is why this succinct volume proves to be so timely; it aims to “provide greater nuance to debates around peace education” (p. 2). Despite its daunting title, this volume is not presented as an authoritative stranglehold, but rather, as a way of historicizing the field of peace education, highlighting major conceptual threads and identifying the exciting prospects for the future of the field.

The volume is divided into four sections: I) The historical emergence of influences on peace education, II) Foundational perspectives in peace education, III) Core concepts in peace education and IV) Frameworks and new directions for peace education.

Within Section I, Ian Harris chronicles the advent of the modern peace movement from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. It singles out the prominent impact that World Wars I and II have had on the evolution of the peace movement, and on the creation of peace research and peace education. Although Harris admits that peace education has not achieved mainstream status in schools, he does acknowledge that its conceptualization has so sufficiently widened that it stands very viable for future expansion. John Dewey and his role in peace education is the focus of the second article by Charles Howlett. Dewey's instrumentalist and progressive view of education as per its role in the global creation of peace is well illumined in his focus on curricular contextualization as a way of deflating nationalism and domestic intolerance, while augmenting "world patriotism" (p. 29). Maria Montessori's contribution to peace education is detailed by Cheryl Duckworth. She notes Montessori's ardent belief in the benefits of child-led learning and a focus on the equal vitality of the spiritual and moral dimensions of the educative enterprise: global citizenship, the fostering of imagination, and the acquisition of problem solving skills; all of which are necessary to democratic peace building. The final article of Section I by Lesley Bartlett highlights the immense impact that Paolo Freire has rendered upon the field of peace education. The characterization of education as a form of politics, the problematization of the 'banking model' of education, the centrality of dialogue to critical consciousness and the

inextricable bonding of reflection and action to engender praxis all speak to the Freirean influence on contemporary peace education.

Section II commences with Johan Galtung's article on the form and content of peace education. He states the epistemological consequences for peace education's 'lagging behind' peace research and peace action, while also highlighting a major conundrum for the field by addressing the fact that peace education's advances toward societal transformation may be dimmed because many 'forms' of peace education are still structurally violent despite the progressive evolutions in 'content'. He posits that peace education, research and action have to work in tandem so as to foster a "strong formula for content" (p. 53). Magnus Haavelsrud, in the next article, addresses three components of the "educational problematic" that may assist in dispelling some of the wide conceptual disagreements over what is 'peace education': content, method of communication and organizational structure of the educational program (p. 59). Through the classic 'which came first? The chicken or the egg?' lens, Haavelsrud frames the debate of whether structural transformation must precede the introduction of peace education content or vice versa. Dale Snauwaert addresses the moral and spiritual aspects of peace education by commencing with political realism's myopic denial of morality in international relations; he posits that peace education challenges this orthodoxy to enlarge the view of "human flourishing" (p. 68). This deeper perspective therefore has global implications for a set of correlative duties and obligations, as per human rights. James Page rounds out Section II by focusing on how peace education's basic premises, goals and aims are all in synchrony with, and in some cases, even emanated from or informed, the United Nations charter, subsequent

covenants, declarations and member organizations. Despite the UN's mostly symbolic power, Page acknowledges the influence that the UN has wielded in the global dissemination of peace education.

Nel Noddings, in Section III, elaborates on the role of caring theory in peace education. In focusing on the boundedness of the dyadic 'cared-for' and 'carer', she susses out the dialogical necessity of fostering and sustaining a healthy relationship; the constancy of dialogue is always guided by reciprocity and mutuality. Carl Mirra pays special attention to 'militarism' in his article. Militarism's exclusion of alternative solutions to the world's problems presents opportunities for peace education; peace research can assist in countering the seemingly irrefutable claims that violence/war is instinctual to humans, allowing peace education to boldly re-define "human security" (p. 96). Felisa Tibbitts's article notes possible explanations for the global spread of human rights education (HRE): increased globalization, United Nations promotion of human rights and democratic citizenship, prior movements (such as the disarmament movement) and the increase in number and influence of non-governmental organizations. She notes that HRE has both normative and legal dimensions, and can be transmitted through diverse kinds of pedagogy. Lynn Davies tackles an equally contested subject as peace education: global citizenship education (GCE). She posits that GCE implies an ethics of "rights and responsibilities, duties and entitlements" (p. 110) which overrides artificial national boundaries, despite the fact that human rights standards, although created at a global level, are still enacted at a local level. GCE directed towards peace becomes inherently political; its success requires knowledge, analysis, skills and action, all working together.

Section IV commences with Robin Burns's theorizing peace education's linkage with and location within the field of comparative and international education (CIE). By tracing the bifurcated history of comparative education and international education to their contemporary, multidisciplinary configuration, she notes how absent peace education has been from official CIE journals. CIE's critique of globalization offers peace education an opportunity to gain increased prominence. David Hicks posits that peace education can benefit from futures education by asking "Where do we want to get to?" and "How do we get there?" (p. 128); futures education, with both its technical (predictive) and humanist inclinations, challenges peace educators to envision "probable and possible futures" (p. 132). Monisha Bajaj argues for a "reclaimed critical peace education" (p. 135), one that is focused on structural inequality and how people can harness transformative agency towards the dissolution of such inequity. She calls for increased peace research on power, domination and symbolic violence, which would in turn tender the field of peace education more scholarly rigor. H. B. Danesh concludes this volume with a call for a unity-based peace education; one that displaces 'conflict' and conflict management as the core *raison d'être* of peace studies. He makes the claim for an integrated peace theory, which has already been implemented in a few areas around the world.

This *Encyclopedia* is quite readable and offers a panoramic view of peace education; it makes a good starting point, but because of its size, one would have to refer to other texts/sources to secure 'deeper knowledges' about the various topics covered. However, therein lies the pedagogical genius of this volume: it practices what it preaches. In offering such a wide conceptual view of the field of peace education and offering readers a set of questions before

each section, the volume simultaneously challenges you to engage its text critically and to subsequently embark upon an expedition to seek out further answers, in true Freirean style!