# Coproducing Peace: Beyond Psychologized Approaches — Toward a Transrational Onto-Epistemology and Dialogic Learning Community as the Foundations of Peace Education

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**Abstract:** This paper critically examines the underlying theoretical premises of the psycho-social peacebuilding agenda upon which much of peace education is founded. I do this specifically through a reflexive and diffractive analysis to examine the epistemologies, theories and pedagogies that permeate the field. Overall, the paper is positioned within educational sociology, theoretically informed by new materialisms, and drawing on literature from peace studies and peace education. I locate the study within the epoch of postmodernity and global neoliberalism. The paper contributes to already existing disparate literatures on higher education peace studies, peace pedagogy, and educational neoliberalism. It merges these areas to provide new insights into contemporary theoretical and pedagogic practices within peace education with a particular focus on critiquing common psychologized approaches.

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**Introduction**

This paper seeks to explore the limits and possibilities of psycho-social peace education with a particular focus on peace education in a global context. I start with an explication of my psycho-social positioning within peace education broadly and then within higher education peace studies specifically. I locate the writing within social thought on new materialisms, reflexivity and diffraction (Barad 2003; Bourdieu 2003; Bozalek and Zembylas 2017; Brookfield 2009; Daley 2010; Lather and St. Pierre 2013). I then offer critical reflections on the dominance of psycho-social reflexivity in much peace education (Pupavac 2001), and question whether reflexivity is limited in its application toward the transformative objectives of the field (Kester 2016; Kester and Cremin 2017). Finally, I discuss some methodological and pedagogical implications for diffractive reflexivity in peace education before concluding with a call to de-psychologize peace education. I am arguing throughout for a transrational onto-epistemology and a dialogich community of learning as the foundations for transformative peace education in the 21st century.

In the pages that follow, I employ a diffractive methodology that criss-crosses between various bodies of literature in peace studies and peace education, and in and out of personal experience and primary research. This criss-crossing and diffractive methodology "reference[s] a traveling back and forth along intersecting lines… [an] approach [that] puts relationality at the center, sees research as an active process of criss-crossing, and aims to surface the entangled complexity…" (Sobe 2018, 11). This approach is iterative and read differently across time-place (Barad 2003; Bozalek and Zembylas 2017; Ulmer 2016) and through various theoretical lenses (e.g., Bourdieu, Freire, Foucault, critical race theory, and neoliberalism, etc.). In empirical and philosophical research elsewhere, I have examined the theoretical premises and practices of contemporary peace education through diverse theories (see Kester 2017a, 2017b, 2017c, 2018; Kester and Cremin 2017; Lee, Sweeney and Kester 2017). These other analyses link to the arguments in this paper and diffract the results, sometimes agreeing, sometimes contesting the argument presented herein. The criss-crossing and diffractive method presents insights into second-order reflexivity in the field (Kester and Cremin 2017).[2] Using this diffractive lens (Bozalek and Zembylas 2016), I turn now to my educational backstory as an entry point into the discussion.

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[2] Second-order reflexivity is a collective effort by scholars engaging in field-reflexivity to protect against structural and epistemic violence seeping into peace work (Fontan 2012; Gur Ze'ev 2001; Zembylas and Bekerman 2013).

**The Peace Researcher as (Re)source of Peace and Conflict**

My professional engagement with peace education began at Columbia University's Teachers College in Tokyo in 2004. Noted peace educator Betty Reardon acted as my mentor then and for many years after. This positioned me firmly within a particular school of peace education that might be called 'transformative peace education'. With this a number of accompanying pedagogical and philosophical tenets taught at Columbia entered my professional practice, most notably, the notion of a 'pedagogy of democratic engagement' (Kester and Booth 2010).

As Reardon's (1988, 1999, 2001) conceptual work in the field has been influential my mentorship with her locates me in part (but not totality) among those other centers and peace educators who have been influenced by Reardon (yet it must be noted that these scholars have developed divergent approaches to the field). I later entered into a second peace education studies program with Reardon's support at the United Nations University for Peace (UPEACE) in Costa Rica. Reardon had been instrumental in developing the MA program at UPEACE (Jenkins 2004). There, my thinking and networks in the field expanded widely. The university is a cosmopolitan community of students and scholars from over 60 countries, which provides an experiential learning community for the practice of peace and conflict resolution (Kester 2016). I read theories of peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding and applied these theories to educational settings and beyond. Whereas Columbia enhanced my pedagogical skills, UPEACE developed my technical field-based knowledge of peace and conflict resolution theory and practice.

Since then, I have sought to combine these content and pedagogic lenses in my work as peacebuilder and educational researcher. For example, I have applied these skills to the development of three educational peacebuilding programs at three different universities in Korea: Hannam, Keimyung, and Woosong universities. Together, the programs offer higher education in peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding to Korean students aiming to work within educational settings, government, NGOs, business, and non-profit sectors. In particular, the curricula draw on theories of sociology and politics as applied to contemporary global issues, especially in the fields of education and research. The ongoing questions that I seek to address include: 'What are the a/effects of such programs?', 'What pedagogies have transformative potential?', and 'How might peace scholars better protect against inadvertently reproducing structural and epistemic violence through their peace work?' In this paper, I am reflecting on this experience through

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diffractive analysis to understand the limits and possibilities of common reflexive methods used in peace education.

*The Role of Reflexivity and Diffraction*

It is typical in critical qualitative research for the researcher to position oneself in the study to provide full disclosure and context for the reader to understand and interpret the dependability and credibility of the work (Lather 1992, 1993; Fanow and Cook 1991; Harding 2004; Daley 2010; Rich 1986; Lather and St. Pierre 2013). This positioning can be interpreted as an attempt to supply the mental and physical states and social positions that influence the textual and analytical choices of the author. It might also be understood to disrupt the dominant logic of objective empiricism (where the author puts nothing of oneself in the text) as the primary foundation of knowledge (Koppensteiner 2018; Lee 2012). For example, Bourdieu (2003) said:

> [The researcher]…making rational use of his native - but previously objectivated - experience in order to understand and analyze other people's experiences. Nothing is more false, in my view, than the maxim almost universally accepted in the social sciences according to which the researcher must put nothing of himself into his research. (287)

In addition, in *Research as Resistance* (Brown and Strega 2005), Indigenous scholars Absolon and Willett write:

> It is our opinion that one of the most fundamental principles of Aboriginal research methodology is the necessity for the researcher to locate himself or herself. Identifying, at the outset, the location from which the voice of the researcher emanates is an Aboriginal way of ensuring that those who study, write, and participate in knowledge creation are accountable for their own positionality. (Absolon and Willett, as quoted in Brown and Strega 2005, 97)

From this research standpoint, then, I have positioned myself here (drawing briefly on Indigenous scholarship, feminism, and post/structuralism) to indicate the diffractive politics of location from which this debate is emerging. I will re-turn to my positionality again throughout the rest of the paper (in the analytical framework and discussion sections). Examining positionality diffractively across space-time allows depths of meaning and complexity to emerge not accessed upon initial review (Brantmeier

forthcoming; Cremin 2018; Ulmer 2016). I turn now to address the literature before moving to the analytical framework.

**A Brief Review of Literature**

A popular approach to peace education referenced in much literature is Gordon Allport's (1954; see also Pettigrew 1998) intergroup contact theory. It is one of the earlier and most well-known theories to be applied to the field (Aboud and Levy 2000; Abu-Nimer 2004; Chavrous 2005; Gawerc 2006; Hewstone et al. 2006; Kester 2018a; Maoz 2000). Specifically, in *The Nature of Prejudice* (1954)*,* Allport outlines his 'contact hypothesis', where he argues that within a supportive environment members of majority and minority groups might identify commonalities that help them overcome their differences. Contact theory, thus, argues that direct interaction will assist members in altering the stereotypes they hold of each other. There are certain conditions, Allport writes, under which such interactions might support social transformation, including: i) a supportive environment, ii) close sustained contact, iii) equality of status among community members, and iv) continued encouragement for cooperation (Kester and Booth 2010). Hence, intergroup contact is an important psycho-social approach to peacebuilding, yet it is argued elsewhere that while important this method is inadequate for durable social peace (Bekerman 2007; Helman 2002; Johnson and Johnson 2005; Kester and Booth 2010; Lave and Wenger 1991; Pettigrew 1979; Zembylas and Bekerman 2013).

A different (perhaps complementary) approach is offered in the work of Johan Galtung (1969, 1990). His development of the concepts of cultural and structural violence aids scholars and practitioners in analyzing the social structures (e.g., customs, institutions, and policies) apart from the individual and group psyche that contribute to violence and peacebuilding. Galtung's cultural violence, for example, addresses beliefs, attitudes and social norms that support prejudice and discriminatory action (e.g., greed, racial stereotypes, misogyny). In contrast, his notion of structural violence details the ways in which state laws and institutional policies buttress social inequalities (e.g., unfettered capitalism, structural racism, and patriarchy). In other words, Galtung's concepts of cultural and structural violence help explain the multiple layers and levels of social violence that impede cultures of peace. Many peace educators draw on Galtung's foundational work in their research and practice (Bickmore 2013; Cabezudo and Haavelsrud 2013; Cremin 2016; Fontan 2012; Jenkins 2016; Reardon 1988). This is an approach that transcends the focus on the individual as the locus of social change. It too has its limitations, however, in mostly externalizing violence and peace toward outside agents. Thus, a third

approach might help.

A third approach is found in the work of Pierre Bourdieu's (1986, 1988, 2003) socio-cultural theory that blends together aspects of the structure and agency interrogations of many of his sociological predecessors, including Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Louis Althusser. I find promise in Bourdieu's post/structural work on reflexive sociology to overcome the antinomy of peace/violence, object/subject, and mind/body found in the earlier work. Bourdieu's thinking is similar to many of the new sociologists of education working in his time, including Sam Bowles, Herb Gintis, and Basil Bernstein who together critiqued the reproductive aspects of education. In short, Bourdieu's reflexive sociology and that of the new sociologists, and critical pedagogues such as Henry Giroux, offers insights for turning the gaze of peace work back onto scholars to assess the a/effects of peace practices. Elsewhere I have discussed this as 'second-order reflexivity' (Kester and Cremin 2017), a theoretical tool emerging from my prior research investigating peacebuilding practices within the UN (Kester 2017a, 2017b, 2017c; Kwon 2017). The second-order reflexive approach challenges the common use of first-order reflexivity as a prescriptive panacea to combat structural and cultural violence. I argue that such a first-order approach is incomplete as peace is relational and the aggregate a/effects of peace education happen beyond any one individual.

A fourth strand of work is now emerging from educational studies and qualitative research more generally that has important ramifications for peace education, notably the notion of diffraction. This strand of thought is coming from post-qualitative research and new materialisms (Barad 2003; Lather and St. Pierre 2013). It suggests there is not only one reality with multiple truths to be examined, but multiple realities that co-exist (Zembylas 2017). This offers the potential for constructivist and critical pedagogues (as well as others) to go beyond pressing the mind alone as the site of social change; peace, from this perspective, must be seen from multiple angles. There are embodied and transrational possibilities here because the mind is no longer the locus of multiple interpretations of one reality (as in peace approaches reliant on representationalism and voice), but only one of many spaces that occupy the synchronous truths about multiple intersecting possibilities, human and non-human. Peace pedagogy then needs a critical ontology for the people that takes into account the material and embodied, a shift from the mind to the body and body-politic – a transrational embodied materiality. In this, trans-academic, trans-epistemological explanations of the world that are practice-led and theory-informed offer a way forward in a return to a focus on relationality and materiality beyond the popular discursive and mind-centric approaches of peace education. This is not to discard of psycho-social and

Enlightenment-oriented critical pedagogies, but to expand beyond them. Indeed, I find a number of contemporary approaches useful to engage the nexus of the trans-epistemological and critical ontological, including critical peace education (Bajaj and Brantmeier 2011), transformative peace education (Jenkins 2016), and transrational peace education (Dietrich 2012; Cremin, Alvarez and Kester 2018), all approaches that have influences from earlier Enlightenment-oriented thinking. This paper in part draws on each but focuses primarily on transrationality. I turn now to discuss the reflexive analytical framework.

**A Reflexive and Diffractive Analysis**

The diffractive analytical framework for this paper (which has already been referenced) draws on conceptual tools from reflexive sociology (Bourdieu 1986, 1988, 2003; Brookfield 2009) and new materialisms (Barad 2003; Lather and St. Pierre 2013). This framework provides new insights into the role of first- and second-order reflexivity as an emancipatory or problematic practice within peace education. In particular, this method offers insights for scholars gazing inward on their own practices (Jenkins 2016) and on the collective practices of the field (Brookfield 2009). Bozalek and Zembylas (2016) claim that "diffraction constitutes an alternative methodology to reflexivity… reflexivity remains caught up in sameness… whereas diffraction is specifically attuned to differences and their effects in knowledge-making practices" (2). They continue, "diffraction is not only epistemic, but ontological and ethical" (ibid), which bears a sharp contrast with the concept of reflexivity which is epistemic and representational.

Fox and Alldred (2015) explain in relation to new materialisms, diffraction "replace[s] the conventional conception of human agency with the Spinozist notion of *affect*, meaning simply the capacity to affect or be affected" (401). Thus, reflexivity promotes self-reflection while diffraction promotes new analytical insights through relationality. Therefore, I relationally blend reflexivity and diffraction in this paper drawing on the strengths of each. For example, one critical contribution that reflexivity makes where diffraction may fall short is in the ease with which educators relate to the concept. Reflexivity is familiar, thus making it relatable for a variety of practitioners and scholars, whereas diffraction is complex, new and dispersive. Still, I hold that educators should retain the lessons that diffraction teaches, that reflexivity is limited in its foregrounding of liberal human agency and representationalism in understanding the complexity of social relations that peacebuilding is built upon. Thus, a diffractive reflexivity that is aware of these limits is what is needed.

I contend therefore that applying a diffractive reflexive inquiry may critically inform social justice work as scholars interrogate their role within the promotion (or not) of field-based orthodoxies, and in the pathologization of students' minds as the site of social change (Brown and Strega 2005; Cremin 2016; Spry 2016). Hence, diffraction has implications for embodiment and a re-examination of the relationality between selves, others, the text, context, and larger social and political possibilities. Because these phenomena are not static, diffraction reveals different details at different times. I will now re-turn to apply these concepts to my own backstory in peace education, and then use this to consider the limits and possibilities of diffractive reflexivity as a modality of ethical and socially-just peace work. In the end, I question whether reflexivity is too limited in its first-order psychologized methods of peacebuilding, and whether a second-order of reflexivity/diffraction might assist in overcoming some of these limitations.

*Diffracting Reflexivity*

I apply diffractive reflexivity here to my personal case as a form of critical inquiry. Looking back now, I realize that I intuitively employed reflexivity when I was younger to move about spatial and intellectual boundaries (Howarth 2006), yet I of course did not think of it as such at the time, nor did I apply diffraction — that is, materialist inquiry and theoretical analysis. For example, in primary and secondary school the contrast between my school's middle-class ethos and my own working-class family background inscribed in me both a "sense of one's place" (Goffman 1951, 297), and an urgency to disrupt this social location. Over time I intentionally adopted the 'langue legitime' (Bourdieu 1991; Reay 1999), that is, the accepted nomenclature of the middle-class that would in turn allow me social mobility. For instance, I was inspired to read the classics, adopt the references, learn linguistic codes of 'high culture', and mimic standardized accents – all objects and forms of reflexive capital. Most importantly, I did all of this strategically. Gazing back now diffractively, e.g., with a Bourdieusian and Foucaultian lens, it is clear to me that there were strands of social and economic influences (beyond my family and community) that led to my performance of normative social standards. Thus, the behavior was neither individual nor apolitical — it served hegemonic social purposes.

Therefore, today using a critical reflexive framework informed by diffractive theories (e.g., Bourdieusian field theory, Foucaultian technologies, critical race theory, neoliberal analyses, etc.; see Kester 2017a, 2017b, 2017c, 2018; Kester and Cremin 2017; Lee, Sweeney and Kester 2017), I also consider

such rejection of my working-class background and middle-class mimicry to have lent itself to a self-imposed cultural violence and epistemicide (de Sousa Santos 2007), although I did not realize I was engaging in such. In adopting middle-class attitudes and behaviors I denounced my working-class cultural background and accepted the liberal norms inscribed above. I gained some (e.g., social mobility, normative alignment with broader society), but I also lost much (e.g., autonomy, pride, culture, a sense of familial dignity). Hence, I now turn this personal reflection to an academic critique of the 'good-intentioned' peace education that individuates violence onto students (not the system) by promoting the adoption of accepted liberal social norms and reflexive accountability as the pedagogic pathway to peace (Gur Ze'ev 2001; Zembylas and Bekerman 2013). This is highly problematic, and the approach should be much more contested than it is. For in this the individual student and lone educator become scapegoats of larger structural inequalities that go under-criticized. If naively accepting peace education as benevolent without critical interrogation there is a danger that systems of inequality are reproduced. In other words, the therapization of peace and education through psycho-social approaches (that omit structural analysis) threatens to become a form of neoliberal biogovernance and endemic symbolic violence (Ecclestone and Brunila 2015).

The accountability regime in education generally is well documented in other literature (Ball 2016; Reay 2004; Lareau and Weininger 2003). Here, then, I turn the gaze back specifically onto peace education and common practices within the field (Kester and Cremin 2017). I argue that both personal and field-based reflexivity, i.e., second-order reflexivity, are needed to prevent against the reproduction of social inequalities through peace education. By returning the focus to the collective social and political actions of the field, rather than individual reflexivity alone, field-based transformation becomes possible. In the final two sections of this paper I will turn to discuss the methodological and pedagogical limitations of the psycho-social peace education approach, and offer some possibilities for a second-order reflexivity in education and peacebuilding that leads toward transrationality and dialogue as the foundations for new ways of practicing peace through education.

**Some Methodological and Pedagogical Implications**

The combined constructivist and critical foundations upon which much of reflexive peace education is founded are too often criticized as narcissistic, self-obsessed, and of little value beyond the individual, since reflexivity turns itself inward and applies primacy to the idea that individuals and social groups make of the world what they will (Kim 2010; Davies et al. 2004). Younger

scholars might playfully refer to such work as an 'academic selfie'.[3] Thus, qualitative reflexive work is judged to have negligible potential to contribute to society due to its limited audience and inherent potential for bias. For instance, it has been pointed out that self-reflection, picking at dialectics, pulling apart concepts and words to reveal dominant paradigms, and/or telling the story of ourselves and others, does not in itself serve to better the actual material conditions of people (Moosa-Mitha 2005; Goldthorpe 1996; Hanssen 2000). In other words, critics proclaim that qualitative reflexive traditions tend to be myopic and offer little by way of changing the actual circumstances of scholars and students within educational contexts. Critical qualitative scholars might respond that the qualitative tradition in itself is an intentional challenge to the dominance of psycho-social and neo/liberal approaches to education, research and peacebuilding (Denzin and Lincoln 2018).

The way forward, then, may be through marrying subjective experience with structural critique, and diffraction with reflexivity, for a second-order reflexive peace education agenda that takes account of the dialectic of structure and agency, power and empowerment, and other field-based orthodoxies that scholars find themselves entangled within (Bajaj and Hantzopoulos 2016; Brookfield 2009; Lather and St. Pierre 2013). Susen (2011) counterpoints, though, that even this integrative position is problematic, in reference to Bourdieu: "To the extent that Bourdieu's social theory not only reproduces the antinomy between universalist and contextualist approaches to knowledge but also favors the latter over the former, we are left in an epistemic no-man's-land" (81). Susen is arguing that Bourdieu is trying to accomplish too much, and by extension so too are critical peace educators and diffraction scholars who wish to work at the nexus of the personal, social and material to create new possibilities. Hence, in this respect, critical peace educators drawing on diffractive reflexivity - by focusing on personal and social change with a strong emphasis on the latter - might be prone to insufficiently cover either. In this regard, I maintain that peace scholars must remain focused on the social processes of knowledge creation, and protect against a priori dogmatic and individuated politics. Hence, power is constituted in knowledge creation, as scholars have long argued (Gramsci 1971; Sriprakash & Mukhopadhyay 2015), both human and non-human (Barad 2003; Bozalek and Zembylas 2016), and peace educators must be cautious against reproducing systems of privilege through their good work.

Fairn Herising (2005) builds on this to argue that researchers "are always already situated in and in relation to multiple communities and ongoing

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[3] In common parlance, a 'selfie' is a photograph that one takes of him/her*self*, typically with a hand-held camera.

multiple passageways" and thus she argues crucially against the sort of first-order psychologized "formulaic re-presentations of positionality that present researcher subjectivity in Cartesian terms" (147). I interpret this to mean that Herising is critiquing the tendencies to isolate and separate the research project from the researcher positionality, the researcher from the researched, the researcher and researched from others who are researchers and researched, and all from larger economic, social, and technological forces. This is to separate the personal and the political while also creating artificial silos. In this, Herising argues, "Integral to such considerations is whether we re-produce epistemic or colonialist violence in our process of entry or participation in and with marginal communities" (147). The net of reflexivity must thus be widened. Importantly, this position does not deny the value of positive psychology/thinking but it insists on not reducing conflict and peace to one's individual happiness or rational action. Though hopeful, the positive psychology position is reductionist and loops backward onto itself to support narratives of neo/liberal governance and personal accountability. Thus, the common individuated practice of first-order reflexivity presents important methodological and pedagogical challenges for peace education.

Methodologically, the implication of reflexivity is that it should be a continual critical process of reflection and action with oneself (first-order) and with and in community with others (second-order). As this process evolves it becomes diffractive. Thus, a peace educator's positioning as a practitioner and scholar is an ongoing critical practice that must refuse fixed identities of researcher/researched, object/subject, participant/observer, methodology/findings. This in itself is not new, but doing it at the level of the field is. The latter aims, for example, to disrupt the traditional qualitative method of positioning oneself simply at the beginning of a study (Lather and St. Pierre 2013), or positioning violence simply as the social sum of individuals' actions (Danesh 2006). The iterative process of diffractive reflexivity throughout research and in the second-order across the field is critical. Here, then, I wish to reiterate that I am writing from the intersectional position of a White, working/middle-class, North American, English-speaking male — although I also want to clarify that I do not believe that all those who identify as I do necessarily share the same values and worldviews. This would be an essentialist position with little room for change. Thus, it is important for diffractive reflexivity to look at phenomena through different theoretical lenses, across time, and through community.

Pedagogically, peace education has long operated on the assumption that altering the psychology of the individual has a multiplying effect that in aggregate alters society toward peacebuilding (Aboud and Levy 2000; Abu-

Nimer 2004; Chavrous 2005; Gawerc 2006). Hence, to paraphrase UNESCO, "war begins in the minds of men (and women), so it is in the minds of men (and women) that the defences of peace must be constructed" (UNESCO 1945). The issue with this pedagogical approach is that it also places the locus of social change within the individual student's head thereby under-examining social causes, such as neoliberalism, capitalism, sexism, etc., that contribute to social inequalities and violence (Bekerman and Zembylas 2017; Ecclestone and Brunila 2015). Thus, this has implications for a peace education pedagogy that is often overly rational and mind-oriented (Alvarez, Ingruber and Koppensteiner 2018). Zooming outward this is reinforced through naive cultural and technocratic approaches to peace education that essentialize psychology, nations, cultures, knowledge, and peacebuilding. In turn, a more holistic approach that emphasizes relationality and teaching to students' bodies — through embodied learning, meditation, and experiential activities — that links the subject with her psyche and society could be a more socially aware approach. I will discuss how below.

**De-Psychologizing Peace Education Through Second-Order Reflexivity**

It may seem from above that there is a contradiction in the argument of promoting a peace educator's awareness of positionality and diffraction in the practice of peace education but at the same time arguing for a de-psychologized perspective. I contend to the contrary. The two are not mutually incompatible if the scope of reflexivity is widened. Here then I argue for second-order reflexivity (Kester and Cremin 2017), to which I posit diffraction contributes. First, I will explain why de-psychologizing peace education is important, and then I will outline how and why second-order reflexivity offers a constructive response.

Psychologized peacebuilding hinders the social transformative purposes of peace education. For example, Bekerman (2007) claims intergroup contact encounters rest on the same "constrained theoretical approaches" (23) that lack reference to educational theorizing. The primary argument is that a psycho-social approach is rarely evidence-based and ignores the broader social structures that underscore social inequality and violence. This approach is limited because of its over-emphasis on the atomization of education to the individual and pathologization of the mind (see also Brunila and Siivonen 2016). Zembylas and Bekerman (2013) too have argued for de-psychologizing peace education specifically. For example, they explain that Palestinians and Jews should not be talked about as a "what" (i.e., the psycho-social explanation), an essential characteristic or being, but as a "when", a "how", namely, defined by the wider historical and social particularities that at the

time in/form the identity. Hence, first-order reflexivity and psycho-pedagogy is insufficient to counter the dominant approaches of psycho-social peacebuilding within the field. There are at least a few reasons why. First, the heterogeneity of peace education models and peace education lecturers challenges the limits of promoting a singular approach. In other words, peace education must be cautious of promoting hegemonic psycho-therapeutic models/methods alone and should embed such methods within discourse on the various approaches available acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of each. Psycho-social peacebuilding is only one method, limited yet dominant today (Pupavac 2001). Second, externalizing (i.e., focusing on the material world, ontologizing) what has been internalized (i.e., psychologized, epistemologized) challenges the presumption that peace and violence are simply in the minds of individuals (Bekerman and Zembylas 2017), and that consequently effective rational interventions too are in the minds of scholars and students. Accepting this idea opens up the possibility of relational and embodied responses to conflict and violence.

For example, pedagogically Ranciere (1991) wrote about this in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster,* where he explained that progressive Socratic methods are in part flawed according to their strong focus on the educator's mind and the inherent hierarchy of knowledge where the educator knows best. Here, the method too often is used to position solutions within the minds of a progressive educator who guides students to the already foreseen answer. Hence, Socratic queries may push in a particular direction rather than open exploration according to Ranciere. Brookfield (2009) similarly writes about reflection and ideology in education: "For reflection to be considered critical it must have as its explicit focus uncovering, and challenging, the power dynamics that frame practice and uncovering and challenging hegemonic assumptions (those assumptions we embrace as being in our best interests when in fact they are working against us)" (293). Here, the assumptions being that the educator has the solution and that rational dialogue necessarily brings about changed thinking/behaviors. This is clearly limited and problematic.

Moving away from this Enlightenment baggage of discursive and rational emancipation opens space for more sensory experience in learning (Ellsworth 1989). In response, scholars have proposed embodied pedagogies, meditation, personal reflection, yoga, dance, theatre, sport, Qi Gong, arts-based learning, community service, etc., as ways to promote the relationality of knowledge to being and learning (Cremin 2016; Dietrich 2012; Toh 2004). In this collaborative space of being, scholars and students coproduce knowledge together in dialogue with inner and outer processes of balance, intuition and harmony. Hence, the process of de-psychologizing peace education allows for

more collective engagement with bodies amongst scholars, students, schools, and society at large. For example, Jenkins (2016, 1) explains from the approach of transformative pedagogy, "Transformative peace pedagogy fosters the development of a self-reflective praxis and nurtures a holistic, inclusive relationship between the inner (personal) and outer (political, action oriented) dimensions of peacebuilding." He details further, "transformation indicates a reorientation of worldview that leads to a new rendering of the world and one's place within it" (Jenkins 2016, 2). The transformative approach is crucial here toward opening up possibilities for transformative learning (O'Sullivan 1999), yet another approach – *transrationality* – brings in the possibility of relating to peace differently, from the body and spirit in addition to the mind. For example, in using theatre exercises for peace learning the body is the conduit of knowledge, not the head, and students are encouraged — challenged — to think with the muscles and heart. These two approaches in tandem, along with a third – decolonial peace education – offer for me a new foundation for a comprehensive peace education in the 21st century. Such multi-modality in learning, teaching and research for peace education then offers *multiple ways of knowing, learning, and being*, i.e. wisdom, humility, and compassionate vulnerability. I briefly focus here on transrationality.

As peace education is de-psychologized the focus shifts toward transrationality (Dietrich 2012). Transrationality accepts that rationality is important, yet it is only one small part of knowing and learning, and one tiny part of explaining our social, political, and environmental world today. Transrationality appreciates the experiential and embodied knowledge that students and scholars bring with them into the peacebuilding site, understanding that such knowledge has not necessarily been acquired rationally (i.e., through reason and experience) (O'Sullivan 1999; Dietrich 2012). Such an onto-epistemological framing notably has potential today to provide insights in this post-truth era, where rationality and evidence is increasingly eschewed for emotionality and belief (Kester 2018b). The accompanying transrational pedagogy, therefore, posits that bodily reflexivity enhances personal and social peacebuilding by opening processes of vulnerability and emotional exploration. Transrationality is vulnerable because it is affective, personal, and unorthodox. It builds upon the introspective reflexivity of critical pedagogy. Koppensteiner (2018), for example, relates the transrational method specifically to researcher and practitioner reflexivity arguing that transrationality and reflexivity are integrally linked. Transrationality then creates knowledge equity between the scholars and students, between the rational and emotional faculties, and follows methodologically on the second-order critiques of first-order reflexivity I have given thus far. Transrationality thus supports second-order reflexivity in its

emphasis on relationality. Furthermore, in its displacement of the mind as the center of knowledge it opens possibilities for new materialist diffractive insights.

To re-emphasize, de-psychologizing peace education opens the space for second-order reflexivity by moving toward the material world yet still foregrounding humanist relations. But how might scholars practice such second-order reflexivity and diffraction? Some pedagogic examples include reflection groups, conferences, symposia, embodied learning exercises, and learning communities as spaces for engaging in and with second-order reflexivity (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998). They are communities of collectively informed reflection and social action. Such educational communities offer the potential for continual sharing, investigation, critique, and the creation of new social and political possibilities for personal and social transformation (Brookfield 2009). The International Institute for Peace Education is one case of such a learning community within peace education. In addition, scholars in these learning communities would benefit greatly by putting themselves aside (to displace their person) to think with and through theory with others. This onto-epistemological re-turn to community and group awareness serves as a reminder of the limitations of modernist, neo/liberal, individuated, and psychologized approaches to peacebuilding and education that have become conventional (Kester and Cremin 2017). Thus, second-order reflexivity in tandem with transrationality re-engages collective field-based awareness and collaborative decision-making, and may be enacted in communities of practice that re-affirm the value (and limits) of de-psychologizing peace education for imagining new transformative possibilities for peace education today.

## Conclusion

In this paper I have sought to explore the limits of peace education when approached from a psycho-social framework, and to offer an alternative. Using my personal narrative as a case analyzed through a reflexive and diffractive lens, the paper has offered a critical reflection on the dominance of psycho-social theory in peace education, and questioned whether first-order reflexivity is limited in its application toward the transformative objectives of the field. In the end, I have raised a call to de-psychologize peace education and to promote second-order reflexivity through transrationality and a dialogic learning community as the foundations of peace education.

I contend that peace is necessarily a coproduction, as conflict is embedded within social relationships, and it is in the relationality of each/other, nature/culture, ontology/epistemology/communication,

mind/body/spirit, and matter/what matters that sustainable peacebuilding through education becomes possible. Moving the exploration from the mind (in the psycho-social approach) toward people, processes and pedagogies (in a critical social ontology) constitutes a significant onto-epistemological shift that provides the foundations for new ways of being/relating. Diffraction, new materialisms, second-order reflexivity, and transrationality offer some of the building blocks, or assemblages, for this new foundation in 21st century peace education.

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