

Volume 19 Number 1 (2025): 37-40

<https://openjournals.utoledo.edu/index.php/infactispax>

ISSN 2578-6857

Review Review

Snauwaert, Dale T. 2023. *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice: Toward a Pedagogy of Moral Reasoning*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

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Dale T. Snauwaert's *Teaching Peace as a Matter of Justice* takes on the lofty goal of tackling the need to clarify the definition and importance of peace for the protection and maintenance of the human condition and impress upon the citizen an articulation of the language essential for moral/ethical argumentation, which Snauwaert specifies as "problem analysis and action planning for peace" (p. 13). More importantly, Snauwaert's work seeks to help the reader (assumed educator) formulate a cohesive normative philosophical framework for the creation of an educational approach to teaching peace as a matter of justice, nested in the foundation of moral and political philosophy. Normative here is defined as "ethical and moral" and placed in contrast to a solely empirical approach. The components of peace studies is the tool of choice to inform the framework construction, the focus of which is noted as "inquiry into the causes of violence and its consequences, methods of conflict resolution and transformation, methods of peace-building, justifications of peace on multiple levels of the human experience" (Lopez, 1999, 2008; Snauwaert, 2023, p. 15). In essence, the book claims a hope to instill educators with the skillset to help inform student viewpoints with an understanding and desire to form a democratic political philosophical informed by moral

reasoning for the sake of peace with a human rights framing that qualifies peace as a form of fairness, and fairness as a component of justice.

The book is organized into two main parts, three of nine chapters in Part I and the remaining six chapters in Part II. Part I focuses on defining and clarifying the varying definitions of peace and violence, the formation of normative justification (i.e., justifiable principles of justice), and the development of reasoning and judgment based in the logical structure of peace studies. Part II is organized around five questions, of which chapters four through eight are respectively named: Whose security? Whose belongs? Whose truth? Who gets what? Who decides? Part II is introduced as the segment that encompasses the framework for useful pedagogy for the formation of moral reasoning and ethical judgment. The book begins by imparting the notion of fairness as the presupposition to moral reasoning for the sake of construction of claims of justice (i.e., the logical foundation from which one can argue for the entitlement/right to peace as a component of the already settled entitlement to fairness) with fairness encompassing equality, recognition, reciprocity, and best efforts for impartiality.

The treasure of the book reveals itself in Part II, where the educator is called to create a framework that seeks to help the student comprehend the utility of unfounded opinions and their uncanny resemblance to verified knowledge (add definition from truth section of book) to power-hungry, bad-faith actors when the public's moral and philosophical reasoning are being manipulated and/or overcome with bias-induced tribalism in the face of rapid change and uncertainty. In line with this logic, the book calls for further untangling of the aforementioned chapter questions through the lens of peace studies. The overarching goal is the growth and strengthening of an informed, politically participating population via the "development of the citizens' knowledge and capacities for moral reasoning and judgment" for the sake of peace and the for the sake of the creation of a political and philosophical predisposition for peace. The untangling and clarifying process begins by unpacking and analyzing reasoning behind security and who (e.g., citizen, noncitizen, homeless citizen, immigrant citizen, etc.) is afforded security from national and international perspectives; the basis on which decisions regarding nation-state membership rests on; the conflict around how facts and historical truth are "settled" as objective knowledge and the principles of justice related to the process of fairly settling truth and belief; theories on fairest methods of distribution of social goods (i.e., distributive justice); and political power and the necessity of consent by the people.

My critique of the text is three-fold. First, based on the rights arguments and claims asserted in the book, I find it would have been suitable to entertain the concept of a right to the dissemination and transparency of policy, legislation, and

elected official voting pattern information. In his introduction, Snauwaert notes that what is paramount to the success of this teaching is an informed voting populous. It could be argued, then, that there is a right to digestible information dissemination relating to the upkeep of the political institution for the sake of the upkeep of the political institution, as the power of the institution is bestowed by the people, all of which are of equal person and worthy of just treatment under the elements of fairness and thereby justice, if one is to problematize the issue through the lens of peace studies.

Second and related explicitly to chapter 4, "Whose Security?", I found there was a missing dialogue on the differing work required to engage a nation-state with an already-set political philosophy of political realism, in a dialogue around adoption and application of human rights from a peace studies and global community perspective. In line with that political realism philosophy, I saw a need to problematize the likelihood of unified decisions for "democratic peace" from the international society of nation-states (e.g., UN) when each nation in question follows and calls for the respect of a political realism doctrine and an international duty of non-intervention as it relates to their individual internal and international affairs. There was call to further dissect this perspective in relation to the nations' right to sovereignty.

Lastly and related explicitly to chapter 6, "Whose Truth?", there was room to dig deeper into the importance of interrogation of propositions put forth by political powers in the same manner they are supposed to be critiqued in the "epistemic regime" (Rauch, 2021, p. 75-76; Snauwaert, 2023, p. 132). Emphasis on the proposition implies an explanation of the importance of the content of the declarative claim made by the political power or authority figure, as well as the truth value of the content of the claim. This method of interrogation allows for the checking of the validity of the claims being put forth in a way that cuts through in-group bias noise that can tend to seep through in times of rapid change and uncertainty, clouding otherwise thoughtful interrogation methods. Given the strength of the human desire to lean into more intuitive and less critical notions of deliberation when faced with situations that bring about fear and confusion, it seemed prudent to note the utility of adhering to a method of inquiry that seeks relevancy of claims being made, truth value and, from a peace studies perspective, a valid justice claim.

Regardless, critiques were outweighed by the realistic applications I found in the text. Dale T. Snauwaert's work is rigorously compiled and makes what I find to be both a realistic and pragmatic argument and justifications to situate peace in the rights of fairness and equality granted to citizens of a democratic nation-state. I

would consider this work required reading for those creating curriculums for civics education, critical thinking, peace education, and human rights education.

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