



Complexity in restorative justice education circles: Power and privilege in voicing perspectives about sexual health, identities, and relationships

Christina Parker & Kathy Bickmore

To cite this article: Christina Parker & Kathy Bickmore (2021) Complexity in restorative justice education circles: Power and privilege in voicing perspectives about sexual health, identities, and relationships, Journal of Moral Education, 50:4, 471-493, DOI: [10.1080/03057240.2020.1832451](https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2020.1832451)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2020.1832451>



© 2020 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 30 Oct 2020.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 1546



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Complexity in restorative justice education circles: Power and privilege in voicing perspectives about sexual health, identities, and relationships

Christina Parker^a and Kathy Bickmore^b

^aDepartment of Social Development Studies, Renison University College, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada; ^bDepartment of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

ABSTRACT

Restorative justice pedagogies, such as dialogue or peacemaking circles, allow students to learn how to share and listen with peers, set boundaries for moral dialogue, and engage constructively with each other's perspectives. This study is part of a larger project focused on teachers' professional development and circle implementation. The focus of this article is on one teacher's approach to using circles in teaching her intermediate health curriculum unit, situated in a school with a strong restorative justice initiative. In this restorative classroom, dialogue was integrated into regularly enacted academic as well as interpersonal curriculum; this interrupted, or at times reaffirmed, the status quo. Data includes classroom observations, professional development observations, teacher and student interviews, and a reflective researcher journal. Dialogue enacted in this classroom illustrated moral issues students grappled with, relating to sexual health, inclusive sexual identities, and sociocultural relationships. Results illustrated how the teacher's pedagogical choices transmitted values and shaped opportunities for critical dialogue, and that students' social and cultural capital impacted how certain topics were discussed.

KEYWORDS

Peace circles; restorative justice education; health education; relationality; dialogue; diversity; identity

Rooted in relational theory, restorative justice practices systemically address social, cultural, political, and economic dimensions of how individuals interact (Bishop et al., 2015). This study of restorative justice education in classroom practice reveals and challenges how individualism informs and structures many social institutions and governance practices (Kaveney & Drewery, 2011). Restorative justice is a form of peacebuilding process: it aims to challenge exclusionary language and culture—how people communicate and relate to one another (Parker & Bickmore, 2020). The integration of restorative principles in classroom curriculum and interaction has the potential to increase diverse students' opportunities for engagement and inclusion, while also promoting peace and democratic social change (Bloom & Reichert, 2014). We expect that restorative practices—such as peacemaking circles, mediation, dialogue, and discussions of conflictual issues—may build students' moral development by encouraging students to identify positively and to address conflicts with their classmates, their cultures, and their society.

CONTACT Christina Parker  christina.parker@uwaterloo.ca 

© 2020 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

This article offers a case of democratizing practice in action. We focus on one crucial aspect of restorative justice education: how teachers transmit and practice values through classroom circles, and how to empower and attend to all students' voices. We critically reflect on how power relations were reproduced, and the ways that restorative justice pedagogy either disrupted ordinary patterns of inclusion and exclusion in dialogue or perpetuated them. We discuss why we believe this happened and analyze ways educators may attend to these matters that are crucial for democracy.

In theory and intention, restorative justice practices such as circles are pedagogical tools for facilitating and sustaining dialogue and peaceful, just relationships. And yet, what qualitatively transpires within a restorative dialogue space does not always transform power relations. Dialogue experiences can reflect and reinforce hegemonic relations of power which, if not attended to, can be damaging for those whose voices or perspectives are silenced or not sufficiently heard (Wing, 2009). Within the specificities of practice, circle norms may evade or silence the feelings, identities and stories of some, while welcoming others: these choices (intentional or not) circulate and normalize unequal power relations. Without critical reflection on how power relations are produced spatially and culturally, restorative pedagogy could unintentionally perpetuate the harm it seeks to remedy (Lustick, 2017; Parker, 2020; Utheim, 2014). This is crucial for democratic development and participation. Lacking a sense of compassionate connection, students are less likely to be motivated to engage in deliberation and civic action (Barton & Ho, 2020; Parker, 2013).

Peer relationships in schools are often fraught with conflict (such as disputes, misunderstandings and tensions, not necessarily violence): these conflicts are learning opportunities, for good or for ill. School and classroom communities continue to struggle with learning how to better communicate. Too often, young people have never been invited to consider another's interpretation or perspective: the foundation for development of empathy (Upright, 2002). Like interpersonal tensions, conflicts embedded in classroom subject matter may be usefully encountered by engaging them as moral dilemmas (Clare et al., 1996; Lind, 2008). Yet teachers often need further institutional support and coaching, in order to enact pedagogies that support constructive, broad, and equitable student engagement in such conflictual conversations (Bickmore, 2008; Parker & Bickmore, 2020). In conflict dialogue including restorative justice circles, participants are encouraged to envision life from others' perspectives, whether they agree or not. Such dialogue shows students how they can maintain their own perspective while acknowledging and respecting another point of view; participants may thereby learn key components of developing empathy (Bickmore & Parker, 2014; Kwok & Selman, 2017; Zembylas, 2018).

Classroom restorative justice circles, at a basic level, take place when students and teachers are seated in a circle facing each other and are each given the opportunity to talk (in turn) and listen to peers about a concern (Boyes-Watson & Pranis, 2015). In this democratic practice, teachers are simultaneously listeners, learners, and participants, while also facilitating dialogue in ways that shape classroom conversation. In restorative *peace* circles, the focus of the dialogue is on discussing conflictual topics or resolving interpersonal conflicts; the goal is to engage dialogue that unsettles and challenges oppressive structures and broken relationships. Restorative *community* circles, in partial contrast, focus on sharing and discussion to build relationships, typically without engaging conflicts: these provide a strong foundation for engaging in peace circles (Pranis, 2015). In both types

of circles, a talking piece is usually circulated. This could be any tangible symbol—ideally a meaningful object that the group chooses. It is passed sequentially around the circle to every person present, and only the person holding it may speak (or may choose to pass without speaking). Through talking-piece circle pedagogy, for instance, students model and practise, along with the teacher, how to share and how to make space for others to share and be heard. They practise setting boundaries for moral dialogue and constructively engaging with each other's perspectives. Once they become skilful using talking-piece circle processes for sharing and simple conflicts, groups become increasingly able to speak and listen constructively together about conflictual matters (Boyes-Watson & Pranis, 2015).

Extant research illustrates a strong association between restorative justice education and strong student relationships and engagement in school (Reimer, 2019; Knight & Wadhwa, 2014). However, much less is known about how particular restorative pedagogies, such as circles, may contribute to strengthening relationships and to engaging a wide range of students academically (Parker & Bickmore, 2020). This paper is drawn from a larger multi-school study on enactment of restorative justice education in and around classrooms. In what follows, we share one classroom's experience with using circles for a health unit. Through this in-depth analysis of classroom circle practices, we focus on how one teacher grappled with teaching about the sensitive matters of sex education and relationships, with a particular focus on relational strategies.

Engaging moral education through peacebuilding pedagogy

Students' identities and social roles, including the cultural and social capital they wield, presumably influence the ways in which dialogue is taken up in the classroom. For instance, ethnocultural and gender identities and relationships among students and teachers can be expected to influence the ways in which conflicts and restorative peacebuilding practices are experienced and approached (Bickmore, 2017; Davies, 2008). This has implications for how various students might engage and feel included at school—pivotal for academic success (Diazgranados, 2014; Zhang et al., 2013). Teachers' pedagogy can be designed to be engaging and meaningful, through intentionally and inclusively handling conflict and moral issues (Simon, 2001; Zembylas & Bekerman, 2019).

Currently, although there are limits to the effective implementation of restorative approaches in the classroom, research has shown that, when done well, such practices can successfully ameliorate conflict and promote inclusion (González et al., 2019). In education, including and beyond restorative justice practices, students in marginalised positions often struggle to have their voices heard and understood (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Parker, 2016b; Skiba et al., 2002). Even within restorative schools, racist practices can still flourish (Lustick, 2017). But participation in inclusive peacemaking and conflictual issues dialogue can allow marginalised young people to engage openly with underlying causes of violence, and to explicitly acknowledge issues pertaining to ethnocultural difference and discrimination, such as racism and sexism (Bickmore, 2017; Ford & Malaney, 2012). Such opportunities for open, inclusive dialogue about conflictual issues can help students learn to practice tolerance and inclusion, thereby facilitating further engagement as participatory democratic citizens (Avery et al., 2014; Schulz et al., 2010).

Nurturing young peoples' moral development and confidence to respond effectively for the greater good of themselves and their society involves encouraging positive dialogic

engagement and critical reflection on difficult issues (Hess & McAvoy, 2015; Sim & Chow, 2019). While schools themselves may be sites of crime, including violence and sexual harassment (Hammarén et al., 2015; Robinson, 2005; Sykes, 2011), they are simultaneously sites for struggles towards social transformation, for building peace, democracy, and justice (Hantzopoulos, 2011). When students have a high moral identity, they are likely to be more inclined to demonstrate strong and ethical reasoning among their peers (Sonnetag et al., 2019).

In health and sex education, for instance, implicit messages in texts and discourse could easily perpetuate a dominant societal view of gender, sexual identity, and relationships (Bickmore, 1999). In subject areas that are bound to elicit students' personal experiences, such as the health curriculum, encouraging students to critically reflect on their individual choices, while critiquing neoliberal discourses that objectify or nullify concerns such as consent and self-care, is pivotal (Lamb & Randazzo, 2016). Integrative school practices focused on a culture of care can challenge normalised violence, confront hidden injustices, and promote dialogue and critical reflection about difficult and contentious issues that are directly connected to real and lived experiences (Coleman & Deutsch, 2007; Habib et al., 2013; Noddings, 2012). In restorative justice practices, teachers and administrators respond to young people's concerns and conflicts by asking them how social and structural circumstances—which may include institutional racism, sexism, and structural inequalities—have produced harmful behaviour (Evans & Vaandering, 2014).

Teaching young people to make choices, and to critically reflect on how their choices and actions impact both their lives and the lives of others, is fundamental to education for moral development. As they engage with the conflict perspectives and choices inherent in moral dilemmas, students explore and reflect on critical issues that are connected to their lives and experiences (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975; Wong, 2020). Such critical moral reflection can occur in post-incident restorative dialogue, or through proactive restorative dialogue techniques—such as peace circles infused into classroom curriculum practice—that encourage students' reflection and invite their diverse input.

Inclusion in moral dilemmas and restorative dialogue

Teachers of any subject matter across all ages contribute to building students' understanding when teachers encourage students' reasoning; instead of telling students the what and how, they may place students' voices at the centre—empowering students and building their practice of reasoning (E. Duckworth, 2005). In this way, teachers' pedagogical choices may nurture and sustain particular values, such as social justice principles (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2018). Souto-Manning's (2014) ethnographic study of a pre-Kindergarten classroom illustrates how conflict can be used as a learning opportunity for young children. In this class of 4-year-olds from diverse multiracial backgrounds, a conflict over who was causing a 'stink' in the schoolyard moved from interpersonal attacks between students, to a community initiative driven by the students' inquiry. Through the teacher's listening and facilitation of inquiry, the children found that the source of the stench triggering their conflict was the polluted river near their school. This led students to reflect on what they could do to address the issue.

Creating social norms to engage students' moral compasses through reasoning and deliberation is powerful; still, inadequate preparation (of teachers or student groups) could allow such sensitive conflict talk to reinforce the *status quo*. Beck (2019) explored the challenge students faced when disclosing a minority viewpoint, particularly when representing a marginalised identity. Beck described Jake, an African American student, who displayed support of same-sex marriage amongst his peers during classroom discussion. However, in his personal written reflections, Jake was clearly opposed to the idea and privately held a dissenting viewpoint. By integrating a regular peace circle practice into the classroom, for instance, students could become familiar with a process for healthy, inclusive dialogic engagement across such differences. In this way, students may become prepared to share and engage with each other while strengthening their relationships and deepening their knowledge of curricular content.

Restorative justice pedagogies can open the mind to moral development, through civic expression and political agency instead of condemnations, threats, and punishments. However, in some contexts, perhaps particularly in violence-ridden societies, sensitive curriculum content related to history or even sexuality and gender-based violence, may be censored, self-censored, or twisted (Altinyelken & Le Mat, 2018; Bellino et al., 2017; Staley, 2018). Still, even in relatively peaceful contexts, difficult topics, related for instance to gender and inter-group social cohesion, are often glossed over or not addressed at all (Bickmore & Kaderi, *in press*; Ugarriza & Nussio, 2016). In classroom opportunities to take a critical view of history and expose human rights conflicts, dialogically including multiple perspectives, students may engage subaltern narratives and find ways to respond to hegemonic narratives in their lives (Davies, 2017; Duckworth, 2015; Levy, 2017).

Restorative justice education in context

Restorative justice approaches are intended to replace punitive, inequitable anti-violence systems with a range of activities designed to nurture caring and inclusive relationships, learning from conflicts, and collaborative problem solving (Reimer, 2011). However, in practice, only some restorative initiatives challenge inequitable social relations in education (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012). Similarly, many antibullying initiatives emphasise surveillance and control more than they address the causes of violence (Bickmore, 2011; Noddings, 2012). Restorative justice has the potential to interrupt destructive conflict and instability, thereby challenging injustice and restoring balance and harmony (Llewellyn & Parker, 2018). The impact of such initiatives on young people can be significant. Examining alternative and transformative approaches to managing conflict can make visible the hegemonic hidden curriculum and structures of power and domination, creating space for development of critical consciousness (Bickmore, 2008; Lee & McCarty, 2017; Parker, 2016b).

Preparing and supporting teachers to implement restorative justice dialogue relies on structures of whole-school support, including staffing, professional development, and school-wide conflict management and discipline policies (Vaandering, 2014; González et al., 2019). Building upon Morrison's (2007) three-level approach to building a whole-school culture of restorative justice, this paper further elaborates how on-going inclusive dialogue and perspective-taking pedagogies may help to build restorative justice cultures in classrooms.

Table 1. Building inclusive, restorative, and peaceful classroom communities.

Pedagogy	Praxis	Restorative Methods
Rebuild relationships	Observe and confront divergent perspectives	Through restorative conferencing
Repair relationships	Ask questions, engage through attentive listening	Through problem-solving circles
Reaffirm relationships through developing social and emotional skills	Understand position of the other by identifying underlying interests and feelings	Through community-building and developing classroom culture
Accept and affirm diversity through dialogue	Acknowledge other perspectives through cross-cultural communication and engagement	Through integrating peacebuilding in classroom content and pedagogy

Table 1 illustrates how addressing diversity would be embedded in building inclusive, equitable classroom communities, whose diverse members would become able and inclined to address moral dilemmas and social differences restoratively.

Pedagogies that teachers implement in their classroom carry the potential to inhibit or nurture inclusive critical dialogue and reflection. Teachers face challenges when implementing restorative justice initiatives, particularly when they perceive such initiatives to be exterior to their daily curriculum implementation and pedagogy. In a restorative approach to education, safe and inclusive spaces need to be built so both students and teachers may learn and succeed. For teachers to take up these principles and integrate them into their enacted curricular programming, they also need to understand what these practices look like at the classroom level (Bickmore, 2013).

Inclusive dialogue about conflicts is a core element of democracy and peacebuilding, yet it is still quite rare and challenging for teachers to implement (Kahne et al., 2013; Lo, 2017; Peck et al., 2010). In what follows, we illustrate how one teacher integrated circle pedagogy and other restorative dialogue into her planned health curriculum unit on sexual health and relationships. We also describe and consider how students responded to the various restorative dialogue learning opportunities presented by their classroom teacher.

Methods and context

The study presented in this paper is connected to a larger project that examined how selected teachers were equipped and supported to implement restorative justice dialogue principles in their classrooms, and how they actually applied these principles when teaching and responding to conflicts in their intermediate grade classrooms. Through interviews with teachers and their students, and through observations of in-service teacher training and classroom practices, we explored how these teachers in diverse inner-city elementary classrooms learned to implement restorative education—in particular, guiding student practice in classroom dialogue.

By now the authors' positionalities may be evident: we believe in the importance of all teachers and students listening to each other inclusively to reduce status inequalities and we believe that restorative justice education, in particular circle dialogue, is a very powerful tool for this purpose. However, we also continue to witness how difficult this is in practice. We see conflict as a learning opportunity, which presumably shapes how

students and teachers learn from each other and how we interpret and gather data about restorative justice education and classroom dialogue.

Qualitative data presented and analysed for this paper include 10 classroom observations of one teacher from the study, pseudonym Judy, and her Grade 7/8 class over the course of the school year; three semi-structured interviews with the teacher throughout the school year; one administrator interview; and student group interviews towards the end of the year, to discover how students chose to address and discuss conflict and how they experienced restorative dialogue pedagogies. In our classroom observation notes, we detailed content of the implemented lessons, classroom set-up and environment, the teacher's questions, and students' responses including body language. Respecting the talking piece (meaning to listen silently while other people were speaking, and to share airtime), speaking and listening from the heart, and confidentiality are guidelines for all circle participants. Part of our research process involved explaining to students and their parents or guardians how we would document and share findings about their circle experience. Thus, students were aware that their participation in the research meant that what they shared in circle would be used for research purposes. All participants' identities have been anonymised and the students are referred to by a pseudonym.

Qualitative responses were coded using a grounded theory approach, thematically identifying patterns and relationships among participants' responses (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Data analysis of classroom observations and interview transcripts involved open coding by the researchers and student research assistants, followed by second-level theme coding, and then third-level themes, as codes were compared and contrasted amongst the research theme. Through this collaborative method of coding, we identified three significant themes: engaging contestation to build dialogue; generating trust and connection to address silence; and facilitating dialogic exchanges in unequal circle spaces.

A full analysis of this school's whole-school approach is beyond the scope of this article. However, in a survey of teachers and interviews with administrators at Judy's school, we found strong evidence of a whole-school implementation of restorative justice, including three different levels of intervention: universal (proactive education and participation opportunities for all students), targeted (for some students), and intensive (for post-incident management of complex conflict and violence situations; Morrison, 2007). This continuum of responses was based on common principles, in which all members of the school community could develop social and emotional skills and relationships to resolve conflict in caring and respectful ways. The school administrators worked collaboratively to prepare their students and teachers for restorative practices through professional development, guided practice, and leadership. They spent time focusing on building strong relationships amongst staff members and between students and staff. Furthermore, it was clear that teachers, particularly Judy, did not shy away from engaging students in open dialogue about sensitive issues, such as sexuality, sexual health, gender-based violence, and relationships.

Our focus on one intermediate teacher in her third year post-training allowed for deeper insights into how restorative practices could truly be embedded in classroom curriculum enactment for proactive peacebuilding. Restorative practices at this school were not primarily focused on post-incident conflicts between students or staff, but embedded in enacted curriculum content and pedagogy. Judy used circles to deliver

her health and language curriculum, focusing on relationship building and conflict management alongside the subject matter.

School context

Judy's school principal described herself as a leader in restorative practices in her school board. She reported that, since integrating restorative practices at her school, the incidence of suspensions and expulsions had lowered. She conducted her staff meetings using the circle format, and invited our research team to share our insights and reflections on circle processes. She offered support to teachers by sending out sample circle questions weekly, and encouraged teachers to use restorative diversions prior to sending students to her office, or in conjunction with sending them to the administrator. The school hallways were covered in posters that promoted community, showed sample restorative questions, and displayed students' work. The principal also partnered with four other administrators in neighbouring schools who were also committed to restorative justice education. They met monthly, regularly doing 'walk-throughs' of each other's schools to give each other feedback on the restorative climate in their schools.

The school appeared to be closely connected to the community; volunteers from the community in the school included older adults. A community police officer was also assigned to the school and regularly visited it, offering preventive lectures to groups of students, including providing stern warnings about the dangers of committing harm in the community such as stealing or engaging in illegal activity. The school included a diverse range of students from various socioeconomic backgrounds; what had previously been a high-needs community was gentrifying, and thus students from low-income and high-income families coexisted. Many racial divisions intersected with the class divides. For instance, in one classroom observation, two White male students boasted about their cleaning staff at home, while a South Asian female student said that her mother cleaned houses.

Based on a survey we conducted with the teaching staff, the teachers throughout the school claimed to use restorative justice practices to promote community building and teaching lessons. Most teachers (69%) reported that they felt confident exploring conflictual issues that arose from curricular lessons and almost all (90%) felt supported by their administration in using restorative justice approaches for resolving classroom conflicts. Judy used restorative approaches to deepen dialogue among her diverse class of students; through classroom circles focused on issues concerned with race, class, and sex, she engaged social and political issues relevant to students' lives.

Classroom context and participants

Judy had been trained in facilitating restorative classroom circles three years prior to my observation of her class. Ever since, she had consistently implemented circles in her class, as a way of proactively addressing conflictual issues to encourage learning. Judy identified as a White, heterosexual female, who had been teaching for 15 years; she was in her early 50s at the time of this study.

The students represented diverse ethnocultural identities. The majority of students were of colour. Most had been born in Canada, while others had recently arrived in Canada—two female students, who consistently wore their hijabs, had recently emigrated from Eritrea; one female student had arrived from Jamaica six months previously.

Judy said that, during the year of this research fieldwork, her homeroom class was particularly high-needs and had significant behavioural challenges. She described it as one of the more challenging groups of students in her 15 years of teaching—one that could cause her to burn out. Judy described herself as skilled in working with students from diverse backgrounds; she said she usually managed to win over challenging students. This class, however, was different. Many of the students, particularly some high-powered female students, challenged her, defied her, and consistently spoke back. After having to break up a physical fight between a male and female student one month into the school year, Judy was talking about whether she'd be able to continue in the teaching profession for as long as she had hoped.

In Judy's health education program, the focus of this article, she focused lessons on healthy nutrition, bullying, internet safety, sexual harassment and assault, and on developing healthy relationships and setting boundaries. Judy received training from her school board on a revised health curriculum that focused on gender-based violence. As researchers, we observed the training and saw how the facilitators encouraged Judy to engage students in dialogue and critical reflection on their choices. The facilitators also engaged the teachers in some of the dialogic activities and role plays outlined in their training manual. Having already been trained in restorative practices, this additional training on gender-based violence intersected with Judy's restorative philosophy. In this way, Judy chose to extend the curriculum program content by integrating restorative pedagogy through various perspective-taking approaches: building students' relationships and the classroom community through various activities, discussions, and frequent opportunities for proactive circle dialogue.

Findings

Creating space for contestation: ground rules for dialogic engagement

Judy invited her students to reflect on a perspective-taking exercise in which they had physically placed themselves in different areas of the room depending on their perspective on issues related to sexual assault and harassment. A White male student reflected that most people had followed their friends. Judy expanded on this point—she noted how peer pressure and the perceived need to conform could lead students to express or imply agreement, even when they disagreed. She reminded the students that people could still be friends even if they disagreed and that this applied to students and teachers alike.

Judy went on to explain to the class the importance of maintaining confidentiality during sensitive discussions—particularly appropriate for the new health unit, which focused on intimate relationships. Then she elicited other ideas for what their circle agreements (norms for interaction) should include. One female student, responding to a racist remark a peer made earlier, suggested the importance of respecting other people's opinions even if you didn't agree with them. Judy thanked her for providing this guideline, but also let her and the class know that, while they intended to respect everyone's

opinion, there were still things that people might say that were not appropriate, such as 'anything that is racist, homophobic, misogynistic, sexist or discriminatory—then that's not OK.' Students continued discussing the ground rule about making racist comments. One male student said: 'Some things that people might say might be racist.' A female student quickly reiterated the point: 'People need to think about what you say and make sure it's not's [sic] racist.'

As mentioned above, for many teachers, taking up discussions about race and racism is contentious and scary; thus, they often refrain, reframe, or simply refuse to engage in them (Parker, 2016a). When students open up sensitive, identity-linked bias issues, such as racism, some educators might consider this too risky a topic for dialogue (Hess & McAvoy, 2015). However, the peace circle is a powerful process that can help teachers to engage much more readily in constructive conflict dialogue: the circle is a pedagogy designed to facilitate both inclusion (such as turn-taking and encouraging multiple voices) and constructive dialogue (such as listening to alternative views, respectful norms for talk) for learning. Typical of many teachers, Judy chose to refrain from confronting the underlying issue that emerged from this discussion: students in this class had been hearing peers make racist comments, and they were not OK with that. Judy chose to not directly address their concerns, in an effort to placate the students and to encourage them all to voice what they felt. She added, 'Sometimes when we share some things and we say things out in the open, [that] might be upsetting and might be racist without people knowing, but we say it because we want to educate people about it.' Judy's presumption that 'people' were uneducated or wanted to 'educate' others toward their own point of view further complicated this discussion, as it shielded the reality of covert racism for those who had the privilege to ignore it. Meanwhile, the largely liberal student population carried the weight of the conversation to challenge racism.

Then Judy paused, while the students were still in circle, and calmly made a request to a White male student who had placed himself off to the side, outside of circle, leaning against the wall. She said: 'I can't see you; would you please join our circle. Thank you.' The student proceeded to move, but not without some protest. Sighing, he said: 'I was so comfortable. Come on.' Judy focused her attention back to the whole class and ignored the comment, proceeding to lead her discussion about norms for their circle discussions. While it was unclear whether this student's disengagement stemmed from the discussion about setting norms for addressing racist comments, or setting any norms generally, he clearly had felt motivated to tune out or at least to move himself away.

Judy set her expectations high for engagement from the students. She consistently chose to address students' apparent (physical) disengagement in the circle, continuing to elicit responses from students while pausing to refocus any students whose attention might have drifted from the circle conversation. One time, Judy continued to elicit ideas for circle norms the group could agree on, summarising her interpretation of the points that students raised: 'Everyone contributes ideas that are to be respected; honest disagreement is acceptable, [and] personal attacks and criticism are not permitted.' A White male student wanted to know: 'What's a personal attack?' She said it meant 'personally targeting someone about their idea.' The student challenged her: 'What do you mean, do we not debate each other's opinions then?' Judy paused, refocusing a group of girls (of colour) seated together whose attention seemed to have drifted, saying 'Excuse me, there's a bit of chit-chat over there. [The girls stopped.] Thanks.' Then she addressed

the student's concern: 'It's a bit different isn't it, [David], because you should be able to have a discussion with someone and them not attack you.' Not satisfied, he argued back: 'What if it's a really, really, really bad opinion. Then you should say something and get them to change how they think.' A Black female student chimed in to offer clarification, 'Yeah, but, like it's OK to criticise someone's opinion, but you can't criticise and attack them.'

This circle focused on building safe space for difficult conversations, particularly in escalated conflict situations when one or more parties might fear being attacked. Another time, Judy abstractly explored with the students the concept of perspective taking while setting clear boundaries. She affirmed the class ethos that she desired: 'Discussion and debates are good, but personal attacks are not allowed.' The ensuing discussion about the nature of classroom dialogue prompted students to reflect on their capacity to empathise—a built-in opportunity for community building and inclusion. Judy went on to elicit examples of personal attacks and then, together with the students, reframed alternative options for responses. In this way, she modelled examples of what constructive communication might look like when disagreeing with someone, while simultaneously using restorative approaches for classroom management during the circle, gently calling students back to attention when necessary. This modelling, and the explicit discussion about the nature and ideals for disagreement, are examples of how Judy sought to develop students' skills and ethical practices for constructive dialogue.

The fine line between voice and silence: generating trust and fostering connection

In an effort to encourage students to focus on approaches to self-care, Judy used the circle to invite and guide students to reflect on how they each did that. At the beginning of the circle, she reviewed the circle agreements and their commitment to confidentiality, and opened with a quote: 'Do whatever it takes to make your life worth living, just don't be mean.' She encouraged students to focus on categorising the self-care strategies they used, in terms of physical, emotional, and relational well-being. The students then went around the circle and responded to Judy's guiding question. Someone made a joke about how chocolate could fix everything, and everyone responded with laughter.

This humour lightened the energy in the room and students appeared to perk up, engaging readily. Many shared responses such as sleep, go on the computer, ask for forgiveness, and eat well. Some students chose to pass and remained silent. One South Asian female student said she wanted to travel, but then went on to share that this fantasy stemmed from her feelings of confinement and sexism in her familial home: 'Because in my culture, girls are expected to be all nice and everything, but they can't get away from their house, so like travelling would be like a dream to escape it all. Like you should be able to do what you want to do.' This prompted another South Asian female student to share that she and her mother did all the cleaning in her home, while her brother played outside, and that her mother had told her that she had to get prepared for when she married.

Judy responded to both of these students, first by saying 'This really does show that gender inequality is alive and well,' and then shared her own experience of going away to live in Australia before starting university, which helped her to gain independence and freedom. Judy's naming of cultural norms shows how implicit cultural knowledge may be

taken up in seemingly democratic spaces. While the two female students raised concerns about their plight for gender equality and independence, Judy sought to acknowledge and apparently empower these girls by voicing their experience as an example of inequality while also suggesting (indirectly with her own example) how they could challenge their prescribed cultural roles by adopting a Western (affluent-class) practice of travelling during a gap year. In this way, even in a space readily prepared for varying perspectives, Judy's response was unintentionally loaded with dominant cultural norms that were apparently in conflict with these students' familial cultural histories.

During this circle, some students began to chat amongst themselves, and Judy intervened, asking them to review the circle guidelines, reminding them that 'The person who has the talking piece is the one speaking, and everyone else is listening.' She also called on a male student who was slouching, and then as he reluctantly sat up, she empathised, 'You're tired, aren't you?' to which he agreed. Then she linked the incident to the lesson, suggesting that he reflect on what kind of self-care he might need, such as sleep and nutritious foods to help him feel better. The student appeared to re-engage in the lesson, participating more readily in the circle. At the end of the circle, in a debrief with Judy, she shared with me her surprise at where her students went with the question she had asked. She had not expected such 'dark responses with such tough emotions,' referring to student disclosures about gender inequity. The circle process had appeared to encourage her students to express themselves in a deeper way, and in a way that Judy herself—rooted in her own cultural background—was not quite used to.

Dialogic interventions: contested and unequal spaces for divergent perspectives

In the following weeks, Judy chose to elicit students' perspectives about discrimination, asking them why people discriminated against each other and to name some different ways in which discrimination occurred. Students offered responses such as physical appearance, race, money or possessions, religion, and age. Judy affirmed all their responses, and briefly expanded on the differing ways discrimination was enacted. As students sat together in circle, Judy asked them to shift their seating so that gaps in the circle would be closed.

Throughout the school year, Judy's students had had many explicit lessons preparing for dialogue through both circles and classroom discussions. By now, the talking-piece circle format allowed students to respond to other students' perspectives in an open, dialogic manner. The conflict held the dialogue together, and the strong peer relationships allowed for respectful discourse. In an interview with me towards the end of the school year, Judy explained her reasoning: 'I have a really difficult class this year and the circle really helps them. I know they want to talk about issues and this provides them with a platform to do so.'

Judy began one circle session by asking students to share their experiences of being discriminated against. She encouraged them by disclosing something of her own experience first, sharing and showing some personal artefacts: a framed photo of herself when she was 15, and her experience of going to see her dad in Australia. This got the students' attention. They all perked up to listen to their teacher's story about getting turned down for a dishwasher job she had applied for at a restaurant in Australia. Many students laughed and asked her questions about her experience of travelling, and suggested that she didn't get the job because she was a young girl. Judy affirmed that that was likely the

case—she didn't get the job because she was not male; she did not, however, say anything to complicate her White identity.

Judy then passed the talking piece to a female student of colour (South Asian ancestry) who shared her discomfort with the policy that some bathrooms should be gender-neutral: 'They have one at my cousin's school, and now one here too, and I just don't think [they?] deserve it.' Judy asked her: 'So, you're saying that you're uncomfortable with gender-neutral bathrooms?' She used a tone that gave the student space to expand on her perspective, which the girl did: 'Like they're for kindergarteners, but to have a gender-neutral bathroom in a high school is weird.' When she finished speaking, a few students attempted to respond to her and six students (all male, mix of South Asian and White) raised their hands. Judy silenced the voices, saying, 'Sshhhh, we're using the talking piece,' and then went silent before responding:

I just want to say that this is part of a much bigger conversation about gender identity and transgender people, and this is why it's important to have these conversations because I think the more you understand each other and ask each other questions, [the more] it becomes something that is actually quite normal.

Judy then restated her question, asking students to consider their personal experiences of being treated differently based on things such as religion, skin colour, or gender. As she passed the talking piece, some students chose to pass, looking downward. Others shared experiences of observing physical altercations that resulted from instances of ageism; or observing how people who were homeless or who apparently had a mental illness were treated; and about discrimination against homosexuals, citing how some had had their jobs taken away because they were gay. Instead of sharing a personal experience, one (White) male student chose to respond to his peer's comment about gender-neutral bathrooms:

I just wanted to respond to [student's name] to say something about the gender-neutral washrooms, because first of all we need washrooms for gender-neutral people because if somebody doesn't want to be called a him or she and they're forced to go to a girl's washroom or boy's washroom, then how is that going to make them feel? I don't really agree with not having it.

After speaking, this male student passed the talking piece to the male student directly beside him, who chose to continue this line of dialogue, arguing that he didn't agree with his female peer's comment, again saying that there were more than two genders and pointing out that 'gender-neutral and transgender people wouldn't feel comfortable' having to choose one or the other.

In the weeks that followed, Judy planned a circle connected to her health curriculum explicitly focused on diverse sexual identities. Students continued to share various perspectives on how they understood masculine and feminine identities, and respectfully listened to each other's interpretations and understandings. Here, Judy clearly took up the opportunity to expand on students' perspectives about diverse sexual identities and used the circle process to elicit students' constructive dialogue and communication about this morally sensitive justice issue.

Negotiating morality in circle: spoken and unspoken perspectives

The circle process is meant to be a tool to encourage sharing truthfully and openly and being heard when one does speak. Yet, even in a classroom where the teacher consistently

integrated opportunities for restorative dialogue, some voices remained hidden. Many students shared compelling experiences of exclusion, oppression, or difficult difference. However, it became apparent in these sharing circles that everyone's issues were not always taken up equitably. In many cases, sharing circles opened up sensitive experiences, yet some stories remained unexplored and unattended to. Where this happened, those students would often choose not to participate in subsequent circles, or they appeared disconnected from the process.

For instance, one racialised female student, Priya, openly spoke about her physical disability for the first time in front of her peers:

Well it might be very obvious that I get discriminated against by lots of people because of the swelling in my arm. A lot of people assume I can't do stuff, or it's broken, or I'm disabled ... I can't do anything about it ... they just hurt my feelings a lot.

Some of Priya's peers appeared to be listening to her; others looked downwards or away from her. Neither her peers nor Judy chose to respond to her. Priya was academically strong; privately, Judy told me that she believed Priya would 'be the next Prime Minister.' Still, while she had had the opportunity to share her experience of being discriminated against, having her story unacknowledged in the circle appeared to the researchers to fuel Priya's sense of her marginalisation. Other students shared experiences of having an autistic sibling, or having gay parents, divorced parents, or mothers whom they barely knew. These incidents raise questions about how to facilitate peace circle sharing in ways that would allow participants to be acknowledged as well as heard.

Because of the nature of circle dialogue, in particular the circulation of the talking piece around (rather than across) the group, circle participants may share open and raw experiences, yet never be personally affirmed or addressed. In some cases, circle facilitators, like Judy, may choose to offer a general summary of experiences or feelings participants have shared, or personally comment on a few interesting questions and responses. However, when the talking piece is continually passed around without such summary or responsive (inclusive) further questioning, in ways that leave issues unaddressed and experiences unacknowledged, it is possible that some participants may feel further marginalised or even traumatised, their voices and perspectives excluded after they had taken the risk to speak up. Depending on the participants, facilitator, and scheduled time allocated for circles, it is possible for certain issues and certain dominant or well-articulated voices to be validated and empowered, while others are disempowered (Parker & Bickmore, 2020).

One student who had felt that her initial attempt to speak her truth had not been acknowledged, in a later interview said she shared only 'half-truths' in subsequent circles. In this way, when one student's perspective is unacknowledged, their disengagement can increase. Thus, even when teachers and schools intend to create a restorative environment, power and privilege remain present; they are structurally embedded in the schooling system. Certain bodies, stories, and experiences are at times taken up more deeply, while other experiences are left unacknowledged or unchallenged, and at times silenced.

For people who have experienced discrimination, especially those who hold marginalised identities, voicing these experiences can open up raw emotions. This is a challenging process. In many contexts, facilitator and participants both have an obligation to acknowledge each

perspective—yet with junior elementary students, for example, the topics that students raise are vast and diverse, and quickly change course as dialogue ensues about one topic or another. Topics might shift suddenly from discussing a deep issue about a student’s lived experience of exclusion to discussing a trending video game. Transitions can be constant and fast-paced. Observing and analysing the lived practice of classroom circle dialogue process illustrates how power dynamics are at play, when attention to certain people is driven by the topics they present and feel related to. In an individual interview, Judy spoke about such experiences with circles:

Perception informs reality and language really shapes who we are. We’re doing circles to address behavioural issues, and one really big one is cyberbullying, and in one incident I thought they would get that what they posted [online] was wrong, but they didn’t and they actually sat there justifying it instead of recognising anything was wrong—the majority of them thought it was OK. That’s something that really threw us off and we weren’t prepared for that: that they didn’t really think anything was wrong. To them there was no conflict, and it was just the way they talk.

In this situation, the students’ perceptions clearly had conflicted with the teacher’s goal of using the circle to discuss the online attack they had observed as a conflict. At the same time, students’ perceptions of justice presumably were also impacted by power dynamics between and among students, since those with greater power (such as the instigators of the online bullying) had generated a script of compliance and accepting put-downs that permeated the group dynamics. In this way, students’ unequally distributed social and cultural capital carried weight in classroom discussions and apparently impacted the outcome of this discussion.

Students’ perceptions and beliefs

Towards the end of the school year, facilitating an individual reflection exercise, Judy asked her students to think about a situation in which they would have a different opinion from another student and how would they respond. Most students reported that they would discuss and justify their own opinion, respectfully wait their turn, and respond positively to their peers:

If I ever had a different opinion from a certain person, I’d wait till they finish their statement. Then I’d politely say “sorry, I don’t agree with your statement,” and give an excellent reason why.

Ask them why they picked that opinion and tell them why you picked your opinion. So you won’t have problem with your friendship or peers.

During small group interviews, students shared their feelings about participating in circles and their approaches to navigating different opinions and perspectives. They discussed responding in positive ways using various terms: ‘calm’, ‘respectful’, ‘honest’, ‘polite’, and ‘nice’. In particular, they mentioned listening to other students, understanding their perspectives, and asking questions. Students also shared other ideas, like faking agreement, keeping their opinions to themselves, and arguing until the other student agreed: ‘tell them mine [opinion, and] if they don’t like it I’ll remind them I don’t like theirs.’

In interviews some students reported positive experiences in circles, which had allowed them to share their opinions with their peers: 'sharing all types of feelings like, sentiments, happiness, laughter, not to mention the circle shape makes everyone able to see each other and be seen.' In contrast, other students reported feelings of indifference towards circles, saying they had been nervous that they would be judged, or felt weird and awkward. A few students reported that they did not like circles, sharing, for example, that they did not like the pressure they felt during circles, or feeling so judged that they began judging themselves.

As part of a whole class reflection, the researchers invited students to come up with questions to reflect on their circle experience. One Black female student, who rarely participated aloud in circles, suggested asking whether people had shared truthfully in circle dialogues. When students were asked this, some students—including this particular student—reported that they had not. Clearly, when given the opportunity to reflect on her experience, this one student found a way to articulate that her truth (and identity) had not necessarily felt welcome, and had not been previously included, in the classroom circle space. This was risky to say aloud in class: there may have been others who felt this way. Even in this classroom community, where consistent attention was paid to constructive communication and inclusive relationships, a sense of exclusion led to the silencing of some students and their refusal to share their true selves.

Still, over the course of the school year, students' voice and perspective-sharing increased, and so did (in general) female students' participation. The peace circles contributed to relationship building between students and between the students and the teacher. Most students appeared in observations to become more comfortable in sharing their perspectives and experiences on conflictual issues and also appeared to become more confident in taking a stand on a controversial issue, even if their peers disagreed. Finally, circles and other restorative practices contributed to providing a safe space for students to share grievances and to discuss the impact of interpersonal conflict issues that arose in the classroom.

Some of the pedagogical challenges Judy identified (in interview) focused on her skills facilitating circles, logistics such as time and place, and on student participation. Having a supportive administration contributed to this teacher's motivation to continually use circles with confidence and to engage with students' perceptions. Most students we interviewed shared that they would choose to participate in a circle to resolve a conflict. Some felt that more ideas could be generated through circle-based problem solving. One student said: 'I'd suggest participating [in circle] because you get some feedback on how to solve ideas and others can help you get through hard times.' Still, not all students supported the use of circles for addressing interpersonal conflicts: 'I wouldn't want to feel uncomfortable. It's hard enough to be a kid, but to be a kid with things going on in your life and everybody knowing about it when you didn't want them to know, is even harder.'

Overall, these intermediate students expressed how relationships were challenging and felt isolating at times. While some readily engaged with the circle process as a tool to navigate challenging dialogue, others felt compelled to disengage. Still, in being taught how to use constructive communication, set boundaries, and build empowering relationships, students

were given the opportunity to learn how they might develop trusting and healthy relationships with friends, intimate partners, and family.

Through Judy's deliberate discussion about LGBTQ issues, some students expressed, in the circle, the importance of not holding stereotypes, particularly when it came to sexual identity. The students' willingness to share in the circle illustrated their understandings of their individual uniqueness. The circle format, in conjunction with various other dialogic exercises that engaged potentially conflictual issues, encouraged students to reflect on their choices and taught them to respect boundaries. Through having participated in discussing various case studies and role-play scenarios, they reported feeling empowered to share how they would set their boundaries in various relationships; they practised saying 'No.' Setting boundaries and acknowledging the importance of consent was crucial learning for these students.

The students appeared to have developed, in the space of this series of lesson observations, a better understanding of what a relationship was, by learning about healthy and equitable relationships while engaging in relational pedagogy. As students engaged in the circles, they waited their turn to speak and, when they felt compelled to do so, many also expressed disagreement with their peers. Judy, through her commitment to working through the complexities of restorative justice pedagogy, expressed in an interview how her own perspective and values at times interfered with how various students felt empowered to make their views be better heard. In the end, Judy felt that her class, one of the most difficult ones that she had taught in her career, became one of the strongest in terms of how they came to respectfully communicate with each other even in moments of disagreement (when apparent) and how their strong relationships appeared to impact their overall engagement in her implemented curriculum.

Discussion and conclusion

The health curriculum unit that this teacher implemented included careful planning and attention to building healthy relationships. The students' exposure to learning about relationships through a relationship-focused pedagogical tool, peace circles and other dialogue pedagogies, led to some students' engagement in critical reflection on sexual health, well-being, and making healthy choices. Teaching about sexuality and relationships through dialogue involved an ongoing commitment to restorative justice education. The analysis of this series of observations showed that inviting students to share their stories and perspectives and to engage with their experiences takes time and perseverance. Students in restorative schools, such as this one, where all teachers and the administration were expected to embody restorative justice principles, have the opportunity to practise healthier relationship behaviours through ongoing circle dialogue. With such exposure and experience, students in restorative schools might be more emotionally secure and better connected to those around them, contributing to a strong foundation of healthy relationships in and outside of school.

In keeping with the findings of Morrison's (2007) multi-level approach to restorative justice practices in schools, students' relationships appeared to deepen over the course of the year as they participated in circle dialogue. Acknowledging circle participants' experiences is a complex process, which is further complicated in a class made up of diverse students who bring diverse experiences and perspectives (and changing

interpersonal relationships) into the circle. In an effort to sustain dialogue and encourage participation, some students' experiences were deeply analysed and explored in circle by their teacher and peers. However, what became clear as students progressed in their dialogue was that powerful voices generally received greater affirmation and validation, while other experiences and perspectives were sometimes left unacknowledged. In her studies of heterogeneous small-group work, Cohen (1994) demonstrated how status inequality often prevails, and is often even reinforced, during interactive group work—if the interaction encourages confident students to come to think of themselves, and to be considered by peers, as more valuable contributors to the learning process than quieter or marginalised students. When an alternative pedagogical process such as the restorative justice circle is created for inclusion, status and inequality remain present, and may even become more visible in the context of the ostensible equality of circle members (Utheim, 2014; Wing, 2009). In some cases, as observed in various circle interactions in this study, outgroup members become visible in ways that further entrench their exclusion. As with any individual pedagogical strategy, passing a talking piece sequentially might not be enough to encourage equitable participation, but some students would not have spoken at all without it. As this teacher began to position herself as a learner, she came to value the opportunity to listen to her students.

Consensus-building statements, listening and paraphrasing, and acknowledgement for all participants are crucial facilitation moves in the circle process. The difficult question of how to effectively respond to and acknowledge all voices that have (or have not) spoken in the circle is a missing piece in the development and implementation of restorative circle pedagogies in classrooms. When facilitators make a point to acknowledge someone's story, for instance, their experience living in oppressive or violent conflict situations, the facilitator is thereby choosing to encourage students' moral development, by demonstrating how to empathise with others who share traumatic experiences (Jackson, 2014; Zembylas, 2007). For instance, in one circle, when one student shared that her friend had died, the person beside her said, 'I'm sorry that happened to you' when the talking piece was first passed to her, before sharing her own response to the facilitator's question. This immediate acknowledgement allowed the student who had disclosed painful experience to be immediately validated, while also maintaining the principles of the talking piece. Such empathetic peer responses can be learned through modelling and practice.

Engaging students in encountering and discussing moral dilemmas is frightening work for many educators. It is, however, an educative process that engages diverse perspectives in dialogue and discussion (Sim & Chow, 2019). Like some educators, the teacher profiled here sometimes resisted engaging students in critical dialogue, or tried to maintain a sense of neutrality, thus avoiding conflict and thereby not disrupting the status quo (C. L. Duckworth, 2015); at other times, Judy found ways to engage contrasting voices and perspectives in a restorative or potentially transformative manner. Teachers' critical role in teaching young people moral principles for preserving human dignity and well-being is complicated (D'Olimpio, 2019). Inviting expression of diverse perspectives takes courage; it also involves careful planning and preparation. In a restorative justice classroom such as this one, inclusive, mutually responsive dialogue is expected, nurtured, and applied to increasingly complex issues over time. Using dialogue, students here showed their capability to work through conflict, to engage wholeheartedly with divergent ideas, and to situate themselves within

a strong classroom community. These contexts are ripe for engagement: students air divergent perspectives, and the platform of the well-facilitated restorative peace circle process for classroom dialogue enables them to engage readily.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

This work was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) [grant number 430-2019-00294]; Renison University College Faculty Research Grant [grant number 547]

Notes on contributors

Christina Parker is an Assistant Professor in the Social Development Studies Department. She conducts research on equity, inclusion, restorative justice and peacebuilding education in diverse schools and communities.

Kathy Bickmore is Professor in Curriculum and Pedagogy, and Director of the Comparative International and Development Education Centre and graduate specialisation at OISE, University of Toronto. She studies the complex roles of K-12 public schooling and curriculum in conflict, peacebuilding, and democratic education, from international comparative perspectives.

References

- Altinyelken, H. K., & Le Mat, M. (2018). Sexual violence, schooling and silence: Teacher narratives from a secondary school in Ethiopia. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 48(4), 648–664. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2017.1332517>
- Avery, P. G., Levy, S. A., & Simmons, A. M. (2014). Secondary students and the deliberation of public issues. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 47(4), 849–854. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096514001164>
- Barton, K. C., & Ho, L. C. (2020). Cultivating sprouts of benevolence: A foundational principle for curriculum in civic and multicultural education. *Multicultural Education Review*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2005615X.2020.1808928>
- Beck, T. A. (2019). Managing an unpopular opinion in a controversial political issue discussion. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 47(2), 205–227. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2018.1551165>
- Bellino, M. J., Paulson, J., & Anderson Worden, E. (2017). Working through difficult pasts: Toward thick democracy and transitional justice in education. *Comparative Education*, 53(3), 313–332. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2017.1337956>
- Bickmore, K. (1999). Why discuss sexuality in elementary schools? In W. Letts & J. Sears (Eds.), *Queering elementary education: Advancing the dialogue about sexualities and schooling* (pp. 15–25). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Bickmore, K. (2008). Peace and conflict education. In J. Arthur, I. Davies, & C. Hahn (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of education for citizenship and democracy* (pp. 438–454). SAGE Publications.
- Bickmore, K. (2011). Education for ‘peace’ in urban Canadian schools: Gender, culture, conflict, and opportunities to learn. In P. P. Trifonas & B. Wright (Eds.), *Critical issues in peace and education* (pp. 88–103). Routledge.

- Bickmore, K. (2013). Circle dialogue processes in elementary classrooms: Locations for restorative and educative work. In H. Cremin, E. Sellman, & G. McCluskey (Eds.), *Restorative approaches to conflict in schools* (pp. 175–191). Routledge.
- Bickmore, K. (2017). Conflict, peace-building, and education: Rethinking pedagogies in divided societies, Latin America, and around the world. In K. Bickmore, R. Hayhoe, C. Manion, K. Mundy, & R. Read (Eds.), *Comparative and international education: Issues for teachers* (2nd ed., pp. 268–299). Canadian Scholars Press.
- Bickmore, K., & Kaderi, A. S. (in press). Teachers' citizenship curricula in México, Bangladesh and Canada: Comprehensive vs. narrow values education for peace. In C. Carter (Ed.), *Teaching and learning for comprehensive citizenship: Global perspectives on Peace education*. Routledge.
- Bickmore, K., & Parker, C. (2014). Constructive conflict talk in classrooms: Divergent approaches to addressing divergent perspectives. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 42(3), 291–335. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2014.901199>
- Bishop, P., Picard, C., Ramkay, R., & Sargent, N. (2015). Restorative and reconciliation processes. In *The art and practice of mediation* (Chapter 10). Emond Montgomery.
- Blatt, M. M., & Kohlberg, L. (1975). The effects of classroom moral discussion upon children's level of moral judgment. *Journal of Moral Education*, 4(2), 129–161. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305724750040207>
- Bloom, S. L., & Reichert, M. (2014). *Bearing witness: Violence and collective responsibility*. Routledge.
- Boyes-Watson, C., & Pranis, K. (2015). *Circle forward: Building A restorative school community*. Living Justice Press.
- Clare, L., Gallimore, R., & Patthey-Chavez, G. G. (1996). Using moral dilemmas in children's literature as a vehicle for moral education and teaching reading comprehension. *Journal of Moral Education*, 25(3), 325–341. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305724960250305>
- Cohen, E. G. (1994). Restructuring the classroom: Conditions for productive small groups. *Review of Educational Research*, 64(1), 1–35. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543064001001>
- Coleman, P., & Deutsch, M. (2007). Introducing cooperation and conflict resolution into schools: A systems approach. In D. Christie, R. Wagner, & D. Winter (Eds.), *Peace, conflict, and violence: Peace psychology for the 21st century*. Prentice-Hall.
- D'Olimpio, L. (2019). Moral education within the social contract: Whose contract is it anyway? *Journal of Moral Education*, 48(4), 515–528. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2019.1580565>
- Davies, L. (2008). Gender, education, extremism and security. *Compare*, 38(5), 611–625. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057920802351432>
- Davies, L. (2017). Justice-sensitive education: The implications of transitional justice mechanisms for teaching and learning. *Comparative Education*, 53(3), 333–350. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2017.1317999>
- DiAngelo, R., & Sensoy, Ö. (2018). “Yeah, but I’m shy!”: Classroom participation as a social justice issue. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, 14(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1515/mlt-2018-0002>
- Diazgranados, S. (2014). How students' perceptions of the school climate influence their choice to upstand, bystand, or join perpetrators of bullying. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(2), 162–187. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.84.2.h488313410l651mm>
- Duckworth, C. L. (2015). History, memory, and peace education: History's hardest questions in the classroom. *Peace and Change*, 40(2), 167–193. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pech.12118>
- Duckworth, E. (2005). Critical exploration in the classroom. *The New Educator*, 1(4), 257–272. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15476880500276728>
- Evans, K., & Vaandering, V. (2014). *The little book of restorative justice in education: Fostering responsibility, healing and hope in schools*. Good Books.
- Ford, K. A., & Malaney, V. K. (2012). “I now harbor more pride in my race”: The educational benefits of inter- and intraracial dialogues on the experiences of students of color and multi-racial students. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(1), 14–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2012.643180>

- González, T., Sattler, H., & Buth, A. J. (2019). New directions in whole-school restorative justice implementation. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 36(3), 207–220. <https://doi.org/10.1002/crq.21236>
- Habib, A., Densmore-James, S., & Macfarlane, S. (2013). A culture of care: The role of culture in today's mainstream classrooms. *Preventing School Failure*, 57(3), 171–180. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988X.2013.798777>
- Hammarén, N., Lunneblad, J., Johansson, T., & Odenbring, Y. (2015). The school as crime scene: Discourses on degrading treatment in Swedish schools. *Power and Education*, 7(3), 272. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1757743815600289>
- Hantzopoulos, M. (2011). Institutionalizing critical peace education in public schools: A case for comprehensive implementation. *Journal of Peace Education*, 8(3), 225–242. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2011.621364>
- Hess, D., & McAvooy, P. (2015). *The political classroom: Evidence and ethics in democratic education*. Routledge.
- Jackson, L. (2014). 'Won't somebody think of the children?' Emotions, child poverty, and post-humanitarian possibilities for social justice education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 46(9), 1069–1081. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2014.931430>
- Kahne, J., Crow, D., & Lee, N. (2013). Different pedagogy, different politics: High school learning opportunities and youth political engagement. *Political Psychology*, 34(3), 419–441. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2012.00936.x>
- Kaveney, K., & Drewery, W. (2011). Classroom meetings as a restorative practice: A study of teachers' responses to an extended professional development innovation. *International Journal on School Disaffection*, 8(1), 5–12. <https://doi.org/10.18546/IJSD.08.1.02>
- Knight, D., & Wadhwa, A. (2014). Expanding opportunity through critical restorative justice portraits of resilience at the individual and school level. *Schools: Studies in Education*, 11(1), 11–33. <https://doi.org/10.1086/675745>
- Kwok, J., & Selman, R. (2017). From informed social reflection to civic engagement: How to interpret what youth say and do. In B. Garcia-Cabrero, A. Sandoval-Hernández, E. Treviño-Villareal, S. Diazgranados Ferráns, & M. G. P. Martínez (Eds.), *Civics and citizenship: Theoretical models and experiences in Latin America* (pp. 17–38). Sense Publishers.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2004). Culture versus citizenship: The challenge of racialized citizenship in the United States. In J. Banks (Ed.), *Diversity and citizenship education: Global perspectives* (pp. 99–126). Jossey-Bass/Wiley.
- Lamb, S., & Randazzo, R. (2016). From I to we: Sex education as a form of civics education in a neoliberal context. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 46(2), 148–167. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2016.1144465>
- Lee, T. S., & McCarty, T. L. (2017). Upholding Indigenous education sovereignty through critical culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy. In H. S. Alim & D. Paris (Eds.), *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world* (pp. 61–82). Teachers College Press.
- Levy, S. A. (2017). How students navigate the construction of heritage narratives. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 45(2), 157–188. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2016.1240636>
- Lind, G. (2008). The meaning and measurement of moral judgment competence revisited – A dual-aspect model. In D. Fasko & W. Willis (Eds.), *Contemporary philosophical and psychological perspectives on moral development and education* (pp. 185–220). Hampton Press.
- Llewellyn, K. R., & Parker, C. (2018). Asking the 'who': A restorative purpose for education based on relational pedagogy and conflict dialogue. *The International Journal of Restorative Justice*, 1(3), 399–412. <https://doi.org/10.5553/IJRJ/258908912018001003005>
- Lo, J. (2017). Empowering young people through conflict and conciliation: Attending to the political and agonism in democratic education. *Democracy & Education*, 25(1), 1–9. <http://democracyeducationjournal.org/home/vol25/iss1/2/>
- Lustick, H. (2017). 'Restorative justice' or restoring order? Restorative school discipline practices in urban public schools. *Urban Education*, 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085917741725>

- Miller, B., Anderson, R. C., Miller, B., Nguyen-Jahiel, K., Li, Y., Lin, T., & Miller, B. (2013). Children's moral reasoning: Influence of culture and collaborative discussion. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, 13(13), 503–522. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685373-12342106>
- Morrison, B. (2007). *Restoring safe school communities: A whole school response to bullying, violence and alienation*. Federation Press.
- Morrison, B., & Vaandering, D. (2012). Restorative justice: Pedagogy, praxis, and discipline. *Journal of School Violence*, 11(2), 138–155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2011.653322>
- Noddings, N. (2012). The caring relation in teaching. *Oxford Review of Education*, 38(6), 771. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2012.745047>
- Parker, C. (2013). Peacebuilding education: Using conflict dialogue for democratic and inclusive learning opportunities for diverse students. *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 18(2), 1–24. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24589574>
- Parker, C. (2016a). *Peacebuilding, citizenship, and identity: Empowering conflict and dialogue in multicultural classrooms*. Sense | Brill Publishers.
- Parker, C. (2016b). Pedagogical tools for peacebuilding education: Engaging and empathizing with diverse perspectives in multicultural elementary classrooms. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 44(1), 104–140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2015.1100150>
- Parker, C. (2020). Who's in and Who's out? Problematizing the peacemaking circle in diverse classrooms. In E. C. Valandra, W. W. Hoksila, & A. Goffe (Eds.), *Colorizing restorative justice: Voicing our realities*, (pp. 65–86). Living Justice Press.
- Parker, C., & Bickmore, K. (2020). Classroom peace circles: Teachers' professional learning and implementation of restorative dialogue. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 95, 103129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103129>
- Peck, C. L., Thompson, L. A., Chareka, O., Joshee, R., & Sears, A. (2010). From getting along to democratic engagement: Moving toward deep diversity in citizenship education. *Citizenship Teaching and Learning*, 6(1), 61–75. https://doi.org/10.1386/ctl.6.1.61_1
- Pranis, K. (2015). *Little book of circle processes: A new/old approach to peacemaking*. Simon & Schuster.
- Reimer, K. E. (2011). An exploration of the implementation of restorative justice in an Ontario public school. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 119.
- Reimer, K. E. (2019). Relationships of control and relationships of engagement: How educator intentions intersect with student experiences of restorative justice. *Journal of Peace Education*, 16(1), 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2018.1472070>
- Robinson, K. (2005). Reinforcing hegemonic masculinity through sexual harassment: Issues of identity, power and popularity in secondary schools. *Gender and Education (Australia)*, 17(1), 19–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0954025042000301285>.
- Schulz, W., Ainley, Fraillon, J., Kerr, D., & Losito, B. (2010). *ICCS 2009 international report: Civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagement among lower-secondary school students in 38 countries*. http://www.iea.nl/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Electronic_versions/ICCS_2009_International_Report.pdf
- Sim, J. B. Y., & Chow, L. T. (2019). Confucian thinking in Singapore's citizenship education. *Journal of Moral Education*, 48(4), 465–482. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2018.1556155>
- Simon, K. (2001). *Moral questions in the classroom*. Yale University Press.
- Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. L. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *The Urban Review*, 34(4), 317–342. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021320817372>
- Sonnentag, T. L., McManus, J. L., Wadian, T. W., & Saucier, D. A. (2019). Prioritizing morality in the self and consistent moral responses despite encouragement to behave immorally. *Journal of Moral Education*, 48(4), 412–422. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2018.1469479>
- Souto-Manning, M. (2014). Making a stink about the 'ideal' classroom: Theorizing and storying conflict in early childhood education. *Urban Education*, 49(6), 607–634. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085913496797>

- Staley, S. (2018). On getting stuck: Negotiating stuck places in and beyond gender and sexual diversity-focused educational research. *Harvard Educational Review*, 88(3), 287–307. <https://doi.org/10.17763/1943-5045-88.3.287>
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology: An overview. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 273–285). SAGE Publications.
- Sykes, H. (2011). Hetero- and homo-normativity: Critical literacy, citizenship education and queer theory. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 41(4), 419–432. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-873X.2011.00561.x>
- Ugarriza, J. E., & Nussio, E. (2016). There is no pill for deliberation: Explaining discourse quality in post-conflict communities. *Swiss Political Science Review*, 22(1), 145–166. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spsr.12195>
- Upright, R. L. (2002). To tell a tale: The use of moral dilemmas to increase empathy in the elementary school child. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 30(1), 15–20. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1016585713774>
- Utheim, R. (2014). Restorative justice, reintegration, and race: Reclaiming collective identity in the post-racial era. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 45(4), 355–372. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12075>
- Vaandering, D. (2014). Relational restorative justice pedagogy in educator professional development. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 44(4), 508–530. <https://doi.org/10.1111/curi.12057>
- Wing, L. (2009). Mediation and inequality reconsidered: Bringing the discussion to the table. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 26(4), 383–404. <https://doi.org/10.1002/crq.240>
- Wong, M.-Y. (2020, January). Beyond asking ‘should’ and ‘why’ questions: Contextualised questioning techniques for moral discussions in moral education classes. *Journal of Moral Education*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2020.1713066>
- Zembylas, M. (2007). The politics of trauma: Empathy, reconciliation and peace education. *Journal of Peace Education*, 4(2), 207–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17400200701523603>
- Zembylas, M. (2018). Reinventing critical pedagogy as decolonizing pedagogy: The education of empathy. Review of education. *Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 40(5), 404–421. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714413.2019.1570794>
- Zembylas, M., & Bekerman, Z. (2019). Engaging with teachers’ difficult knowledge, seeking moral repair: The entanglement of moral and peace education. *Journal of Peace Education*, 16(2), 155–174. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2018.1555154>
- Zhang, X., Anderson, R. C., Dong, T., Nguyen-Jahiel, K., Li, Y., Lin, T., & Miller, B. (2013). Children’s moral reasoning: Influence of culture and collaborative discussion. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, 13(5), 503–522. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685373-12342106>