



**British Columbia Teachers for
Peace and Global Education**

Provincial Specialist Association

Winter 2009
www.pagebc.ca

The GLOBAL EDUCATOR



That Every Political Eruption Be
Followed by a Conversation with Frogs

Illustration by:
Marianne Neill

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British Columbia Teachers for
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The GLOBAL EDUCATOR

Submissions

The Global Educator is published twice yearly, and welcomes unsolicited articles and graphics by December 15 (for the winter issue) and June 15 (for the summer issue). Article submissions should be sent as Word (.doc) attachments and/or pasted into the body of an email message. If an article contains web links, they should appear at the end of the article. Please convert any web link over 25 characters to the "Tiny URL" format (see www.tinyurl.com). Submissions to *The Global Educator* will be made available to other BCTF publications unless the author requests otherwise.

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Fill out an application at www.pagebc.ca. Our website also features information about upcoming events, lesson plans, resources, etc.

3. Jan31.09

Bold entries are lesson plans

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“Global Education is education that opens people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all.

Global Education is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Inter-cultural Education; being the global dimensions of Education for Citizenship.”

The Maastricht Global Education Declaration, 2002

For more information about PAGE, visit our website: www.pagebc.ca

Editorial: Why Did Canada Elect Stephen Harper Twice?

Patrik Parkes

The link between our inadequate democratic processes and our apparent taste for warmongering perhaps needs no introduction to readers of *The Global Educator*. It is nevertheless useful, from time to time, to outline the kind of extremism passed off as 'normal' in Canada. Beginning at the top, Canadians on the side of progress are deeply revolted by the fact of Stephen Harper as our Prime Minister.

In "Culture en Péril", a satirical response to Conservative arts funding cuts, Jean Rivard and other Quebec artists were dead-on to present Stephen Harper against the backdrop of a U.S.

the U.S.A. and Australia. Nevertheless, Harper has gutted environmental spending and obstructed international progress on climate change, winning us ten Fossil awards at the United Nations conference in Poznan. This obstruction extends also to freedom of speech, and in 2006, Canadian writer Mark Tushingham was barred from speaking to the National Press Club about his climate change novel, *Hotter than Hell*.

Harper is a bully who governs by silencing those who disagree with him, breaking promises when convenient (remember fixed election dates?), and forcing legislation by means of confidence votes. It would take far more

Canada now has the most extreme rightwing leader of any OECD country, with the possible exception of Italy. That's not to say our policies are already the most rightwing, but with a leader who uses the word "socialist" in the pejorative sense – as in the Kyoto accord being a "socialist scheme" – it's clear which road he wants to take us down.

Perhaps Canadians simply don't know what they voted for. As teachers, we tend to subscribe to the dogma that knowledge solves everything: perhaps those who voted Conservative simply didn't know enough – and indeed there is evidence pointing in this direction. Despite smug assumptions we're so much more knowledgeable than our neighbours to the south – see Rick Mercer's "Talking to Americans", for example – the reality is that we're not much better, and should probably be talking to Swedes or Austrians to get a truer idea of how much we know about the world. In 2002's *Civic Literacy: How Informed Citizens Make Democracy Work*, political scientist Henry Milner pondered whether Canada was heading down the same "low-civic-literacy highway" of the United States. Indeed, surveys taken in 1990 and 2000 indicated slipping awareness of political basics (identifying the Prime Minister and Finance Minister, for example), and Canadians' knowledge of international affairs was second worst (after the United States) among ten countries surveyed. Specifically with regard to knowledge of the United Nations, Canada ranked third lowest, just slightly ahead of the United States and Ireland, and far, far behind Norway, Austria, and Sweden, which topped the list.

Ignorance might explain not only Conservative popularity, but other political perceptions as well. According to a recent Dominion Institute survey, 51% of Canadians think they directly elect the Prime Minister. This (bizarre) misperception might explain why Canadi-

With the departure of George W. Bush, Canada now has the most extreme rightwing leader of any OECD country.

flag. Harper's veneration of the U.S.A., and its erstwhile president George W. Bush, is no secret. Harper was eager to have us join Bush's massacre of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians. More recently, he has voiced support for promoting the free flow of Canada's uranium, which has been used to devastating effect by way of U.S. munitions – and which, among Iraqi newborns, has resulted in mutilations too grotesque to relate. (Although, on balance, Harper's sadism isn't limited to foreigners: note his lack of concern for Canadians tortured abroad.) Thanks to our Conservative government, we are now a fully-deployed partner the U.S. imperial crusade. Our military expenditures – \$18 billion annually – are roughly double what they were a decade ago. In this respect, we now rank thirteenth in the world, which is remarkable considering the size of our population.

We also pollute more than most – indeed, almost all – other countries: at about twenty annual carbon tons per capita, we are edged out only slightly by

than one volume of *The Global Educator* to accommodate Stephen Harper's deficiencies as Prime Minister. In short, he is the antithesis of Canada's (inaccurate) self-image as a nation that respects values of multilateralism and social progress. The question is: why did Canadians elect him – twice?

In answering this question, many will be quick to cite the inadequacies of Canada's archaic first-past-the-post electoral system. Under this system it is possible – in theory – for a political party to get 49% of the popular vote, yet not win a single seat. Indeed, the Conservatives, despite having attracted only 38% of the popular vote, now have 47% of the seats. Of course, opposition parties could be blamed for not having formed a coalition, which they have every right to do. Nevertheless, we must not forget that 38% of Canadian voters *did* vote Conservative. This is alarming if we consider that Canada's Conservatives are not simply a run-of-the-mill centre-right conservative political party: with the departure of George W. Bush,

Editorial: Why Did Canada Elect Stephen Harper Twice?

ans failed to legitimize, in opinion, a post-election Liberal/NDP coalition. But perhaps our mainstream media bears some of the blame. In the case of coalition unpopularity, responses were to an Ipsos Reid opinion poll. The poll – commissioned by Canwest, which is under the direction of Conservative cheerleader David Asper – referred to

Social Justice 12 course would best be preceded by a “philosophy or logic course that teaches students the basics of critical thinking”. This would probably be a good idea. Clearly, as teachers we have a responsibility not just to transmit facts and ideas, but also to give students critical tools to use or dispute them. For politicians such as Stephen

for specialists in teaching geopolitics – and it is disturbing to consider that Canada has gone down the path of a ‘might-is-right’ mentality. If so, it may alert us to more appropriate strategies to attain peace and justice. To be sure, we still need to promote awareness of national and international politics. But political knowledge tests might best be complemented by another kind of national diagnosis – a kind found in the DSM IV. 🐦

On balance, Harper’s sadism isn’t limited to foreigners. Note his lack of concern for Canadians tortured abroad.

an “unholy” alliance between the Liberals, NDP and Bloc Quebecois. Word-ing goes a long way to explain the result, and media bias is clearly an issue of concern when Canada’s mass media is concentrated in just five companies. Unfortunately, our public broadcaster, the CBC, has long abandoned any pre-tence of balance: with blatant propa-ganda like “Afganada”, for example, we certainly can’t count on any critical assessment of our combat engagements.

Of course, media bias is no excuse for ignorance, and perhaps more than information, Canadians are in need of critical thinking skills. During the last municipal elections in B.C., Abbotsford school trustee candidate Lewis J. Van Dyk expressed the opinion that the

Harper, whose ideology is founded on the irrational, public ignorance is essen-tial to maintain power. On one level this is comforting because knowledge and critical thinking skills are something we conceivably can provide. This is, of course, only one theory of power, and another theory is perhaps less comfort-ing.

Andrew Coyne, in MacLean’s, describes Stephen Harper’s appeal as “that of the strongman: we wish to give him power because he so viscerally re-lishes it. Among the contenders in the ring, he alone displays the appropriate lust for battle. It is pure alpha-male dominance. He wins because he wins.” What Coyne posits is in the realm of psychology – perhaps a less familiar area

LINKS:

On the web:

Culture en Péril:

<http://tinyurl.com/3khzj4>

Canada’s Military Spending (CBC):

<http://tinyurl.com/733gbo>

Fossil Awards for Canada (Greenpeace):

<http://tinyurl.com/79tqg9>

Canada’s Media Monopoly (FAIR):

<http://tinyurl.com/9co4lq>

“The Harper Leadership Cult” by Andrew Coyne:

<http://tinyurl.com/3u6lne>

“EDUCATION worthy
of the name is
essentially education
of character”
Martin Buber,
philosopher, 1939

President's Message: Happy New Year

Susan Ruzic

As a new year dawns, so do expectations for improvement of self and hope for a better world with a brighter future. With global uncertainty around the economy, the health of the planet and the health of its citizens, 2008 closed out with much skepticism. Many hopes and dreams are being placed on Barack Obama as the new president of the United States, as people worldwide are trusting and hoping that he will represent them well. In Canada, citizens are awaiting to see what will transpire once parliament resumes. In this global tur-

tion. What he excoriates is that today there is only one incentive for doing business, and that is the maximization of profits. But the incentive of doing social good must be included. There need to be many more companies whose primary aim is not that of earning the highest profits possible, but that of providing the greatest benefit possible for human kind.

If you were able to attend the annual BCTF summer conference or our annual PAGE conference in Hope, BC, you may have gone to a workshop that was held to discuss our Teachers' Pen-

understood could not get passed. We reworked it slightly to reflect wording in another BCTF motion on the Salary Indemnity Plan that was in our handbook that, having been passed, was well understood by our membership. The BCTF's current Salary Indemnity Plan (SIP) socially responsible investing policy mandates investment in corporations and governments that don't do business in tobacco products, pornography, military products and services, and nuclear energy, and that do business in ways that strengthen communities, encourage progressive industrial relations with staff and employees, comply with environmental regulations, and avoid discrimination, cultural genocide, and the production and sourcing of products that involve child labour or sweatshops. We want our members' pension contributions to be invested in socially responsible businesses and governments whose policies on environmental, social, and governance issues are consistent with the goals and values of the BCTF. The CASJ motion, to be brought to the AGM by the BCTF Executive Committee, is as follows:

That prior to June 2009, the BCTF advise the pension plan member partners' appointed trustees to investigate the revision of the BC Teachers' Pension Plan statement of investment policies and procedures, such that they reflect the socially responsible investing principles articulated in 13.A.10, section 9.6 and 9.7, in the *Members' Guide to the BCTF*.

Please inform your colleagues and help build support for this motion so that it can be passed at the AGM.

Another exciting opportunity that has been planned for the new year takes place on April 15, from 7-9pm, at Langara College. Mark your calendars today. We will have a panel discussion with guest speakers, Adrienne Carr, Emmanuel Rozenthal, and Clarence Thomas. They will speak on Education, Politics and Social Justice. The discus-

What we need is not only democracy in our parliaments but democracy in our economy, too.

moil, what we need is not only democracy in our parliaments but democracy in our economy, too. Maximizing natural capital and human capital needs to be part of the equation along with maximizing profits. By natural capital I am implying the natural world, our environment. We need fresh air and clean water to be productive and we also need healthy, happy, and educated human beings who are not exploited and disposed of at the whim of profit making. By focussing on these additional kinds of capital, by extending the profit only business model to a triple bottom line of Profit (Economy), People (Community), and Place (Environment), and by balancing all three, in development and in ongoing operations – we will be able to preserve our earth and ensure that we leave for future generations the resources they will need. Additionally, many of society's current issues could be quickly solved. Muhammad Yunus, the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize laureate for his successful application of microcredit, said that capitalism, with all its market mechanisms, has to survive – there is no ques-

sion Plan and to come up with strategies to change it to an ethical and socially responsible one. In the last issue of *The Global Educator*, there were several articles written about the teachers' pension plan, including a PAGE-endorsed resolution to take to the BCTF's AGM. Several locals also have since passed this motion. At PAGE, we are concerned that, at present, our BCTF member pension contributions can be and are invested in corporations that have as their business the provision of products or services for military use, nuclear energy, pornography, and tobacco products; and that these products and services are inconsistent with the goals of the BCTF.

At the BCTF's Committee for Action on Social Justice (CASJ), as there was some difficulty getting the resolution passed as written, the PAGE working group slightly changed the resolution to exclude information about the Norwegian Pension Plan. Although it is a well-researched model to follow, there was not a complete understanding of it, and a motion that was not completely

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President's Message: Happy New Year

sion will be moderated by CBC journalist Mark Kelley. More details will follow.

As global educators, we give our students many opportunities through-

encounter during their entire school career. Adult activists often cite their teachers as having empowered them to do what they are doing to change the world. May your good work con-

Many students cite active global citizenship opportunities as the most meaningful ones they encounter during their entire school career.

out their schooling to become active global citizens and to share in solving and alleviating many of these issues. Many students cite these opportunities as the most meaningful ones they

encounter during their entire school career. Adult activists often cite their teachers as having empowered them to do what they are doing to change the world. May your good work continue: you may not realize how these seemingly little acts are changing the world one student and one teacher at a time. 🐦

Form a Local PAGE Chapter

IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK!

Perhaps you've been thinking about forming a PAGE LSA (local specialist association) in your district. There are a number of advantages to becoming a chapter.

- Firstly, it provides your district with a direct link to the PAGE PSA Executive, so you get all the news about PAGE initiatives.
- Secondly, your chapter will be asked about your concerns before each executive meeting, and these will be brought up for discussion / action at each meeting.
- Thirdly, a representative from your chapter could attend PAGE executive meetings and report LSA news.
- Finally, your LSA PAGE news will be included in our provincial publications, generating support and interest in your activities.

How to Form a Local Chapter

Have a meeting of interested teachers in your district. To form a chapter, you need to ensure that most of your members are also PAGE members. Elect some executive members. This can be any number you want, as long as the PAGE PSA has one main contact person.

Write a letter to our president, Donald Wilson, telling him that you wish to become a chapter, and provide him with the names, addresses, emails, faxes, etc., of your executive members.

At some point, ratify a constitution. The easiest way to do this is to use the "Constitution for a PSA chapter" in the PSA Guidebook (available at

bctf.ca/about/psa/guidebook)

That's it! Becoming a chapter is easy, and it's a great way to be more in touch with what is happening in the area of peace and global education around B.C. 🐦



There need to be many more companies whose primary aim is not earning the highest profits possible, but providing the greatest benefit for human kind.

"Where the attention goes, energy flows and life grows."

Ghandhi to King: Sixty-four for Sixty-four



Pummy Kaur

There are 64 days, and twenty years, between the anniversaries of the assassinations of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. These 64 days, between January 31st and April 4th, are becoming a globally recognized Season of Non-Violence. The violence we witness, or inflict, in the world is a reflection of the violence, and violations, we carry within each of our selves. Certainly there are forms of violence in the non-human world; however, they have not driven the entire life-sustaining biosphere of our only Earth to the brink of annihilating all signs of life as we humans need them to be in order for us to continue to be. We cannot survive outside of our biosphere, without going to extraordinary lengths to take it with us (for example, submarines and space vehicles). Our violent ways have put the very existence of our species at great risk.

For many in the modern world, the moment of our birth has become a violent, brutal, and unnatural experience, which began when control of child birthing was viciously wrenched from women during the witch burnings. As children we bear witness to violence, if not the innocent victim of it, through the media, and through the forms of entertainment provided by the adults in our lives. Our schooling institutions (as distinguished from genuine education*) promote competition, and lack of concern for the well being of others, even of our own selves. Most of the current forms of entertainment, communication, and information gathering are not only solitary, but also have greatly contributed to feelings of isolation in modern people. Few business or industries provide goods or services that are truly life affirming or life enhancing. Our political systems are generally adversarial. Many religions promote hatred, fear, intolerance, exclusion and violence. The continuous denigration of the feminine perpetuates violence against girls

and women. The outdated preference for the masculine continues to encourage the emulation of only masculine values, such as domination. The glorifying of war and violence desensitizes us to the death, destruction, and devastation they produce in the world, and subsequently in our own psyches.

To exacerbate the matter further we have made the fatal error of believing peace is simply an absence of war, and have devoted too much energy to either protesting wars, or promoting wars, in order to stop wars and violence. When, in fact, it is the way that we chose to live every day that is the root cause of all violence, with wars being only a small portion of the violence perpetrated every moment in the human world. It is our insatiable greed, and our addiction to convenience that gives impetus to ruthless men, and occasionally women, to continue to wage wars, make profit and have economic and military control. It is our own internal conflicts that create the external violence we witness, or perpetrate. Few of us are not complicit.

Peace entails a great deal more than the absence of war. It means freedom from want of basic survival necessities. It means personal security of body and mind. It means safety for women and children in their homes and lives, day or night, alone or in a crowd. It means equity, justice and belonging for all beings. It means no further need for crime, nor further need for the highly profitable judicial complex created for punishment of crime. It means an abolition of the violent military industrial complex in favour of an altruistic industrial complex of young men and women doing good through non-violence. It means perpetual access to a clean, safe, nurturing biosphere. And, perhaps most of all, it means having good reason to hope for a better world for all Beings.

What is offered is the suggestion to focus for 64 days on ways to bring peace into one's own life, for there will be lit-

tle or no global world peace, until there is peace in the lives, hearts and souls of each of us. This list offers 64 suggestions to contemplate and implement into ones life during the Season of Non-Violence. It was written to honour the two leading non-violent peace activists, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King – both assassinated violently!

There is no particular chronology to the suggestions that follow; though each and every one will make a dent in reducing violence, war, and insecurity, while increasing your personal peace. There is no prescription mandated. What is asked is that each of us do something to make more peace in our own lives. Regardless of whether each action is taken for a day or for a lifetime, the difference will not be just personal: it will be global, and hopefully permanent.

Some of the wisest words of peace ever uttered were by my late maternal grandmother; however, I expect they hold little of interest to anyone other than me. She would never have been recognized for her contributions to peace. She is one of millions of the unsung peace heroes to whom this book is dedicated. Those who have received the prize, and many of those nominated are eminently deserving of the recognition. None of them began their peace work with the intent of receiving recognition for doing what is right and good. They did what they did because they could do nothing less and still maintain their integrity.

May you find here inspiration for what you may wish to do because anything less would be unthinkable for you.

** Kaur, P, What Would Gandhi Do? Simple Solutions to Global Problems*

What follows is a modified excerpt from the manuscript of a book of the same title (scheduled for publication

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Ghandhi to King: Sixty-four for Sixty-four

late 08 – early 09), in which there is further explanation of how each WAY contributes to personal and global peace. For now, the reader will simply have to take my word for it.

- 1 Give gratitude before all meals, upon waking and upon retiring.
- 2 Hug at least four people a day
- 3 Spend regular, quiet time alone in the natural world
- 4 Read about Gandhi, other peace-makers, and those with the courage to take a stand for those unable to do it themselves.
- 5 Do something to honour every female in your life
- 6 Sit down and LISTEN to the children
- 7 Turn off the TV, computer, radio, cell phone, and electronic games.
- 8 Eat real food; local, seasonal, fresh, organic, low on the food chain.
- 9 Drink only water, from your tap (filtered is OK)
- 10 Buy nothing from any foreign owned establishment; support your own country
- 11 Stop use of disposables
- 12 Clean your body, home, car, and yard with natural, cruelty free products.
- 13 Spend the night sleeping on the street with a homeless person
- 14 Donate your time and energy, not your money only.
- 15 Eliminate, or dramatically reduce, use of all plastics
- 16 Encourage boys to cultivate “girl values” as we have with girls and “boy values”
- 17 Show your polite intolerance for any form of discrimination (jokes and stereotyping...)
- 18 Speak gentle words of love and compassion towards the less fortunate
- 19 Do good deeds anonymously
- 20 Practice selflessness
- 21 Buy nothing that is not essential for life
- 22 Invite neighbours you do not know to your home for dinner
- 23 Form a Block Goodness Police (give tickets for peaceful, compassionate practices)
- 24 Eat no meat or any other animal product
- 25 De-clutter your home, work space, car ...
- 26 Buy a bundle of flowers and give individual ones to people getting off a bus after work
- 27 Contemplate words of peace from a variety of sources (religious, spiritual and philosophical)
- 28 Write letters to political leaders and demand a peacekeeping role for your country, instead of a fighting role
- 29 Exercise your intellectual capacity and learn about the world from many sources
- 30 Spend the day with your family and make a family plan for the next five years
- 31 Do something fun, responsibly
- 32 Meditate regularly
- 33 Breathe deeply for at least 10 minutes a day
- 34 Take an interest in your community affairs, do community service
- 35 Attend City Hall and School Board meetings to keep them on track for justice and equity
- 36 Before every decision ask your self if what you are about to do is good for children
- 37 When discarding something consider how you might not have had the thing in the first place.
- 38 STOP recycling! Reduce, reduce, reduce consumption instead.
- 39 Support local, small business. Price may be higher, but the cost is much less.
- 40 Buy local, union made goods only
- 41 Refuse to patronize fast food establishments.
- 42 Dress for the weather, instead of turning up the heat or the air conditioner
- 43 Fight to keep universal health care
- 44 Support governments that support early childhood education and universal day care
- 45 Patronize raw food restaurants also
- 46 Locate peace and non-violence organization you and learn from them
- 47 Support your local organic farmers
- 48 Shop at consignment boutiques, if you must shop.
- 49 Volunteer at shelters for men, women, children, or other creatures
- 50 Play soothing music and just sit there with a cup of green tea
- 51 Run a fragrant bath for someone who needs it (including you)
- 52 Do not stay silent when your voice needs to be heard
- 53 Create beauty (bake, garden, paint, smile, write...)
- 54 Learn why Aboriginal people live in the worst conditions of anyone in your country, and become an advocate for them.
- 55 Reduce consumption of all petroleum products (synthetics, cosmetics, toiletries, processed foods/drinks, disposables)
- 56 Wear natural fibres, clean them with real soap.
- 57 Learn from alternative and public media for at least 30 minutes each day
- 58 Take up a creative, life-sustaining hobby (sewing is life sustaining, building monster cars is not)
- 59 Learn several versions of your country’s history (feminist, Native, environmental, economic, political ...)
- 60 Ask your librarians and local papers to feature resources on non-violence and peace for these 64 days
- 61 Make a list of passions you wish to pursue and begin with one of them right now
- 62 Never skimp on real food, do it on non-essentials for life instead.
- 63 Forgive yourself, and vow to be the best you can be
- 64 Always SHOW children they are loved, top priority, and of supreme inherent value. 🐼

Peace and Global Education

For the Five Months Ending November 30, 2008

Income	Current Month	Current YTD	Original Budget	Percent Used
Income surplus	0.00	-7,201.74	-7,202.00	100.0
Other surplus outside account	0.00	0.00	-8,969.00	0.0
Membership/subscriptions fees	-45.00	-300.00	-1,445.00	20.8
BCTF grant	0.00	0.00	-4,750.00	0.0
Interest Income	5.38	-61.21	0.00	0.0
Other surplus outside account	0.00	-515.00	-5,000.00	0.0
Conference fees	-4,750.00	-4,750.00	0.00	0.0
Conference grants	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0
Total Income	-4,789.62	-12,827.95	-27,366.00	46.9
Expenses				
Meeting-executive	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.0
Meeting-annual general meeting	0.00	0.00	750.00	0.0
Meeting - TOC costs	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.0
Publication-journal	0.00	1,896.30	4,000.00	47.4
Publication-newsletter	0.00	0.00	1,500.00	0.0
Operating	0.00	3,000.00	500.00	600.0
Chapter support	0.00	500.00	1,500.00	33.3
Scholarships	0.00	0.00	500.00	0.0
Miscellaneous	0.00	5.30	3,616.00	0.1
Conference-operating	0.00	0.00	2,500.00	0.0
Conference-facilities	0.00	0.00	3,000.00	0.0
Conference-catering	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.0
Conference-printing	0.00	0.00	500.00	0.0
Conference-committee costs	0.00	0.00	500.00	0.0
Conference-entertainment	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.0
Conference-speakers	0.00	0.00	4,000.00	0.0
Conference-Startup Costs	0.00	0.00	500.00	0.0
Total Expenses	0.00	5,401.60	27,366.00	19.7
Total	-4,789.62	-7,426.35	0.00	0.0

2009 Gandhi Award

Surrey PAGE would like you to consider nominating a high school student who exemplifies a life of compassion, consistent with Mohandas K. Gandhi's principals. The selected student will be recognized at a late celebration of Gandhi's birthday on October 24, 2008, as part of the PSA conference.

We will be honouring a student who lives by Gandhi's principals of compassion, non-violence, and *seva* (service). The nominee could be involved in service to humans, or other living creatures on our planet. Or they could be living or promoting non-violence within the community, or the world as a whole. Or the nominee could be the epitome of compassion. The nominee must be a high school student, able to attend the award ceremony, and someone who models, in Gandhi's words, "the change we wish to see in the world".

Following are some Gandhian principles you may also wish to use as a guideline:

- ◆ Keep life simple
- ◆ Be respectful
- ◆ Be humble
- ◆ Have silence regularly
- ◆ Give gratitude daily
- ◆ Live in pursuit of Truth
- ◆ Be self-sufficient and self controlled
- ◆ Practice non-violence in thoughts, words, and deeds
- ◆ Honour the opponent, never humiliating
- ◆ Use personal calamities for self improvement
- ◆ Perform *seva* (service) without an eye on any results
- ◆ Improve one's self in body, thinking, and soul,

These are but a few Gandhian principals. Do you know someone who strives to do or be these things on a daily basis? If so please nominate them by April 30, 2008. Please send nomination letters of no more than two pages, snail mail or email, describing the person, how they have been living a life of compassion, *seva*, and non-violence. 🐦

LINKS:

Send nominations to Greg van Vugt by email (vanvugt_g@sd36.bc.ca), or post to:

Greg van Vugt c/o
Fraser Heights Secondary,
16060-108 Avenue
Surrey, B.C. V4N 1M1

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Proceeds used to meet Festival costs and support a grassroots humanitarian projects in Africa (TBA)

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call 604 675 9307 or email jenois@telus.net

Organised by the



www.africapeaceforum.com

The Global Awareness Society at SKSS

Donald Wilson

One of the great pleasures of being a high school teacher is seeing young people develop and explore their ideals, seeing them cultivate their own optimistic vision of a just society and begin the work towards making it a reality. Moving to Kamloops and taking a position at the district's largest high school has been fortuitous for me in many respects, not the least in that it has given me the opportunity to support a remarkable group of students in their activism for global justice.

The Global Awareness Society at

grades 8 to 12. The leaders are generally from grade 11 and 12, but there is impressive project sharing throughout the group, in the form of numerous sub-committees who take responsibility for organizing and promoting events.

The group meets every week to organize, to make decisions collectively, and to give one another pep talks about social justice and environmental issues. The most powerful organizing tool, however, seems to be web-based communication. The young people frequently leave teachers mesmerized, mysteriously coordinating and orches-

taken a number of major projects this year. In September, the Global Awareness Society organized the 2nd Annual Peace Sign demonstration on the football field, involving hundreds of students wearing white. (You may recall the image of last year's peace demonstration on the cover of the *Global Educator*.) In October, they raised awareness in the school about genocide through posters and lunch hour films while raising money for the non-profit organization Darfur Wall. In November, they sold crafts at the 10,000 Villages Sale to raise money for a family in Zimbabwe and for ABC Orphanage in Swaziland.

In December 5, the society raised consciousness in the school regarding the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, handing out white ribbons to students. They celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the International Declaration of Human Rights with a week of activities: students signed 200 letters as a part of Amnesty's Write For Rights, participated in a Human Rights March, and made one minute of noise to show their refusal to be silent about human rights abuses.

For February, the students have planned a 24-Hour Wake event, for which students do a pledge drive, then stay at the school overnight and keep one another awake with music, games and workshops on justice issues. Last year this event raised thousands and thousands of dollars, which was sent to AIDS programs in Africa.

I have avoided coaching students regarding what to do, how to do it, and which non-profits to support. The activists in the South Kamloops Secondary Global Awareness Society have a strong sense of ownership of their work, and they have demonstrated initiative and a remarkable capacity to keep their vision fresh, meaningful and relevant. Nonetheless, I am so very proud of them and take every opportunity to boast about what they are doing. 🐾

One of the great pleasures of being a high school teacher is seeing young people develop and explore their ideals.

South Kamloops Secondary is a cadre of student activists, 70 or so students strong. Although they meet in my classroom and I'm technically their sponsor teacher, the society is entirely student-driven and organized. The spectrum of involvement includes students from

trating projects and events involving hundreds of their schoolmates.

In addition to their citizenship-focused projects like regularly coordinating a clean-up blitz on the school grounds and developing the school recycling program, the society has under-



Water Privatization and Pension Fund Investments

Paul Hutcheson

The BCTF is urging members to oppose the sale of bottled water in schools as a way of **taking a personal stand against water privatization.** (emphasis mine) *Keeping school drinking water flowing and combating the privatization of water*, Social Justice Newsletter, Summer 2008, page 9.

At the 2008 BCTF AGM, the following motions were passed:

- ◆ “That the Federation oppose the sale of bottled water in schools, and promote policies that ensure free safe drinking water access for every school.” and
- ◆ “That the BCTF endorse the concept that water resources be kept public and free.”

The Teachers’ Pension Plan through bcIMC has investments in the following corporations—each is involved in the privatization of water to some degree:

Name of corporation	Investment, in millions of dollars	Comments
Coca-Cola Company	\$112.64	Dasani / plastic waste an issue; obtains municipal water at bargain prices, resells at enormous profit
PepsiCo Incorporated	\$130.7	Aquafina/plastic waste an issue
Suez SA	\$ 62.8	Operates in developing countries
Veolia Environment	\$ 16.3	
Thames Water		No figure given, private placement investment
RWE AG	\$ 36.5	
Severn Trent PLC	\$ 2.8	
Kurita Water Industries Ltd	\$.8	
Waters Corp	\$ 13.9	
Allied Waste Industries and Waste Management Inc	\$ 17.5	(appears likely to become one company) Is interested in operating both sewage treatment and water supply systems—simultaneously
Nestle Inc	\$141.3	

I’ve just finished reading *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World’s Water* by Maude Barlow and highly recommend it. Additionally, there are any number of books on the shelves of your local public library that will provide additional information on the scope of water privatization. 🐼

Responsible Investing = Profitable Investing

Patrik Parkes

Fiduciary responsibility – that is, the responsibility to conserve or preferably grow clients’ money – has been cited as a concern by skeptics of ethical investing. There is, however, evidence that fiduciary responsibility is in fact better served by ethical investing. Speaking to *The Georgia Straight* (“Is B.C. Financing Genocide?”, December 4-11, 2008), Peter Chapman, executive director of the Shareholder Association for

Research and Education (SHARE), explained that unethical practices can have a negative impact on an investment’s risk and rate of return. This seems to be born out by Triodos, a social bank with a mandate to “make money work for positive social, environmental and cultural change”. According to an article in *The Guardian Weekly*, (“Alternative Model Thrives”, December 8, 2008) Triodos has been unaffected by

the recent financial crisis, and is in a position to step up investments. How the crisis has been weathered by BCIMC, in which B.C. teachers invest their pensions, will not be known until the end of March, when the annual statement is released.

LINKS:

SHARE: www.share.ca

Triodos Bank: www.triodos.co.uk

Darfur: the Case for Targeted Divestment

Joel Stephanson

The Darfur conflict in western Sudan is now well into its sixth year. While it is tempting to speak in statistics rather than paragraphs (hundreds of thousands are dead, and millions more are displaced), many people find individual stories of human experience and suffering far more compelling. Unfortunately, one does not need to go far online to find horrific stories of Sudanese origin. Here is one:

"I was collecting firewood for my family when three armed men on camels came and surrounded me. They held me down, tied my hands and raped me, one after the other. When I arrived

What can be done in the face of such unfathomable suffering? Can realistic – and concrete – action be taken by Canadian citizens? I, for one, am optimistic. And as a recent *Georgia Straight* article has demonstrated, one available tool may lie as close to you as your own pocketbook.

Here's what's happening: the BC Investment Management Corporation (BCIMC) manages and invests the pensions of a vast number of public-sector employees in British Columbia, including BC teachers. Unfortunately, some of those investments have generated income for the Government of Sudan, a primary blame-bearer for the

over \$127 million. These include Petrochina, Oil & Natural Gas Corp. Ltd., China Petroleum and Chemical Corp., Lundin Petroleum AB, ABB, Wartsila Oyj, Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd., Alstom, and the Electricity Generating Public Company Ltd. From Category Two, the BCIMC holds shares in a similar number of companies, this time worth over \$325 million. Here we find Total SA, GDF Suez, Atlas Copco, Reliance Industries, Man AG, Nippon Oil Corp., Schlumberger, Petrofac, and Mitsui Engineering & Shipbuilding Ltd. (Please note that these listings have changed in the past, and are subject to change again). Many of these investments are obviously made in the oil industry, or in China-based companies, or both – and as such have provided significant benefits to Sudan's military. According to a 2004 *Sudan Tribune* piece, helicopter gunships used against Sudanese civilians have been found to be of Chinese origin, and Beijing "has asked Khartoum to 'send troops' to areas in which Chinese companies operate". Even more disconcerting is the proportion of Sudan's oil revenue which is funneled directly back into the military: one former Sudanese finance minister estimated that figure to be a startling 70%.

Those who belong to a public sector pension plan in BC thus have the opportunity to wield their influence against mass atrocities and violent governments. In this scenario, the SDTF's proposed course of action is clear: to engage the suspect companies through one's investment manager (in this case, the BCIMC), and to consider selling off one's shares (or "divesting") if said companies are proven unresponsive to shareholder engagement over time. This is emphatically an option of last-resort, but an important one to keep on the table. The ultimate goal is to decrease the profitability of "bad business", and reduce the windfall profits that have

The most recent BCIMC inventory reveals investments in nine current "highest offender" companies, valued at over \$127 million.

home, I told my family what had happened.

"They threw me out of home, and I had to build my own hut away from them. I was engaged to a man, and I was so much looking forward to getting married. After I got raped, he did not want to marry me and broke off the engagement because he said I was now disgraced and spoilt.

"When I was eight months pregnant from the rape, the police came to my hut and forced me with their guns to go to the police station. They asked me questions, so I told them that I had been raped. They told me that as I was not married, I will deliver this baby illegally.

"They beat me with a whip on the chest and back and put me in jail."

These are the words of a sixteen-year-old Darfuri girl, as cited by Nicholas Kristof of the *New York Times* in 2005. And though I wish I could say it gets no worse than this, it does: stories of being burnt alive, shot at, bombed, and starved are tragically easy to find, and well-corroborated.

past 5½ years of violence, bloodshed and terror that has plagued Sudan's western region (though they are not alone: various rebel entities must also be held to account for crimes of their own). As for the corporations that are (or appear to be) operating in Sudan, the US-based Sudan Divestment Task Force (SDTF) places them in one of three categories. Of most concern are the ones they dub "highest offenders". In second place are those of lesser concern, which warrant "ongoing engagement". The third category features companies that have no publicly-traded equity, but whose corporate behaviour remains suspect. Finally, it is important to note that the SDTF has reviewed hundreds of other companies and left them off of the lists entirely, believing that their benefits to ordinary Sudanese outweigh any social costs that may be associated with their operation in Sudan.

The most recent BCIMC inventory reveals investments in nine current "highest offender" companies, valued at

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Darfur: the Case for Targeted Divestment

allowed Sudan to finance its violent campaigns against innocent civilians.

I personally became taken with the SDTF approach for several reasons, namely that their “targeted” approach to divestment does its utmost to balance the needs of ordinary Sudanese against the needs of a criminal government. If indeed a vast proportion of oil revenue

The goal of the Sudan Divestment Task Force, as I perceive it, is to *change corporate behaviour* – not to engage in grandstanding, or to merely shame various governments and corporations. To that end, we should remain open to the possibility of seeing this change happen – that is, that a given entity’s questionable ethics could be reformed over time,

If a vast proportion of oil revenue enables an intransigent, murderous regime, it only makes sense to restrict this capacity as much as possible.

enables a murderous regime to remain intransigent vis-a-vis the international community, it only makes sense to restrict this capacity as much as possible. That said, there remains the possibility of unintended consequences. To that end, it is important for investors not to drop any and all ties to Sudan, especially not without careful consideration. Indeed, the SDTF could not be more insistent that all divestment be managed in a *targeted* fashion, thus aiming to preserve those ventures that benefit the general population.

Targeted divestment, like most humanitarian campaigns, will only work if its proponents are sensitive, discerning advocates. In my view, we must even be ready to change direction if a tactic fails to have its intended effect, or if new information shows it to be inadequate. It is also worth mentioning that divestment is only one of a whole range of tools available for changing the outcome of global crises. Letter writing, demonstrations, and fundraising for reputable charities are a few of the others at our disposal. All that said, I believe targeted divestment can be a powerful tool for good, and has proven effective in recent history.

especially as a result of shareholder pressure.

Sudan could not be a more complex country, and its conflicts are accordingly difficult to understand. But I remain hopeful that with the proper mix of passion and education, a difference can yet be made in Sudan—in Darfur, and in the country’s other restless regions.

Joel Stephanson is a recent UBC graduate.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

The Sudan Divestment Task Force website (www.sudandivestment.org) is filled with valuable information, and resources for how to divest.

Stand Canada (www.standcanada.org) aims to make anti-genocide policies a cornerstone of Canadian foreign policy. Their Vancouver chapter can be reached at ubc@standcanada.org.

For two sites relating to your pensions, and the management thereof, see: “The Case for Divestment in Sudan” at Compact Quarterly (<http://tinyurl.com/casefor>). This article provides one argument for divestment, with links to opposing viewpoints. 🐦

Colombia: Canada's Newest Free Trade Partner?

Dawn Paley

September 15, 2008

During the first two weeks of August, 2008, more than two dozen youth were assassinated by suspected paramilitary groups in the streets of Santander de Quilichao, Columbia, and an extensive death threat was directed to Indigenous groups in the area. Call it the storm after the passing calm that swept Colombia and the world after the July 2 rescue of Ingrid Betancourt and fourteen prisoners of war held by the FARC.

Just months before the surge of violent killings in Santander de Quilichao, Canada's ministry of foreign affairs and international trade announced that negotiations for a Free

large mining, energy, water, agribusiness, pharmaceutical, garment, military industrial, communications-media-security-mercenary, financial, transportation and the other largest for profit consortia in the planet are consolidating their control over Governments, populations and territories through these agreements," adds Rozental. The control that he refers to is exercised in many ways in Colombia, including through state and paramilitary violence.

Cauca: a Microcosm of Colombia

Paramilitary violence historically pursues a double agenda of social cleansing and political cleansing through threats, detentions and killings; in this case, young men have been killed

days after our interview, the Communications Network received a seven page threat, signed by the "Irate *Campesinos* [Peasant farmers] of Cauca." Rife with racist comments, the threat accused the Nasa of being responsible for occupying lands, which led to the displacement non-indigenous peasant farmers. The threat was received on August 11th, and reads: "at approximately 00:00 tonight, you will receive information regarding the murders at the hands of peasants of paHECES [1] and the ex-guerrilla heads of the CRIC [Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca], which will be confirmed by phone and a consequences of their disrespect." According to a communiqué released by CRIC and the ACIN, "All indications lead us to believe that this letter comes from the landowners and paramilitaries in collusion with their counterparts in the government."

Adding weight to their claim that paramilitaries were responsible for the threat, the largest *campesino* associations in Cauca distanced themselves from the threat in a statement that reads "the Irate *Campesinos* of Cauca... are not *campesinos*, they just use the name to disguise themselves." The statement from the peasant organizations continues: "The construction of true Agrarian Reform and the defense of life and human rights are a goal that unites us with the indigenous movement..."

A Campaign of Continuous Terror

The Nasa people, who number about 110,000, live for the most part in the north of Cauca. It is estimated that over 50% of children from Nasa families in northern Cauca suffer from malnutrition, and 24% of the population does not have lands with which to sustain their families.

The Nasa have won Colombia's national peace prize twice for their commitment to non-violent social organizing and struggle, no small feat given that

The Canada-Colombia FTA was signed to subordinate the resources and peoples of both countries for the profits of transnational corporations.

Trade Agreement (FTA) between Canada and Colombia had been completed. "The Canada-Colombia FTA is an agreement signed between two governments on behalf of transnational corporations to commit the resources and peoples of both countries for their profit," says Manuel Rozental, a Colombian activist and surgeon who spoke at the BCTF's annual summer conference in Kamloops in August.

Regardless of election outcomes this fall, the early sessions in Parliament will be a crucial time for people who are concerned about Canadian foreign policy to demand answers from people seeking public office. Understanding a little about what is happening inside Colombia, and the aims of a Canada Colombia FTA will allow for critical reflection and questioning of Canadian foreign policy at this crucial crossroads.

"The Canadian Council of Chief Executives, together with other transnational corporate cartels that represent

by paramilitaries in what some locals likened to a low-level drug war in Santander de Quilichao. The extrajudicial assassinations carried out in Santander de Quilichao, a town of about 100,000 people, are part of the paramilitary agenda to rid a given territory of their perceived enemies, and create fear among the general population. For members of the Communications Network (Tejido de Comunicación) of the Association of Indigenous Authorities of Cauca (ACIN), the killings, in addition to often directly affecting their friends, families and communities, have another meaning: their leaders will be the next to be targeted.

"What I'm scared of is that this happened here about seven years ago, it started like this and then the killings started to become so normal, and our leaders started to be killed" said Vilma Almendra, a coordinator with the Communications Network. Almendra's perspective on the issue was prescient: just

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there are active paramilitaries, fronts of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and a huge army presence in their territories.

The violence against Nasa people does not happen without calculated reasons, the most prominent of which is control over territory. Landowners have been involved in planning massacres of

There are also instances of killings by the army, known as 'false positives', where the victim is later dressed up as and portrayed as a member of FARC. Amparo and Silvio Chaguendo were killed by the Pichincha Battalion of the Colombian Armed Forces on May 29, 2008, while seeking safety from gunshots outside. They were later accused

and dignity in a conflict zone has long been the norm in Colombia. The Permanent Peoples' Tribunal studied Colombia for three years, and recently ruled that "Colombia seems to be, in one sense, like a true institutional political laboratory where the interests of national and international economic actors are fully defended though the state's abandonment of its functions and its constitutional duty to protect the dignity and life of the population, to which instead the state applies the Colombian version of the doctrine of national security."

Between 2001 and July of 2008, there were 222 assassinations and 25 disappearances among members of the Nasa community.

indigenous farmers, which not only destroys the community leadership but leads to the displacement of the families and the communities of the victims, opening up territory for cash crops and resource extraction.

Nor does the violence against the Nasa happen in isolation. According to Ron Redmond, spokesperson for the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, "There are around a million indigenous people in Colombia, belonging to more than 80 different Indian-American groups with over 60 separate languages. Nearly all of these groups have been victims of forced displacement or are threatened by it as a result of the internal armed conflict."

Luis Guillermo Pérez, a lawyer with the José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers Collective estimated in 1997 that of the approximately ten people assassinated daily in Colombia, one out of ten is killed for political reasons, and seventy percent of killings are extrajudicial executions and massacres.

According to a new video produced by members of the Communications Network, between 2001 and July of 2008, there were 222 assassinations and 25 disappearances among members of the Nasa community. There have been six massacres of their people carried out by paramilitary forces since 1991, the latest took place less than a month ago, when 10 people from the village of El Tumbador were massacred.

of having been members of FARC, claims that were refuted by family and community members. Over the last eight years, there have been more than half a dozen assassinations of Nasa people by the FARC.

Economic Roots of Displacement and War

One major economic interest in Cauca is sugarcane crops, used to make state-subsidized bio-fuel. Monocultures of sugarcane destroy the fertility of the land, use up huge quantities of water, and are held in the hands of very few industrialists.

A recent wave of mining speculation has seen a number of junior mining companies, together with South African gold mining giant Anglo Gold Ashanti, commence exploration work for gold throughout Colombia. In Cauca, Canadian junior mining companies Latin American Resources and Cosigo Resources are exploring for gold, even amid the conflict.

The roots of the displacement of rural Colombians from the late 90s until today took place in the context of the US financed Plan Colombia. This has today been succeeded by Plan Colombia II, which aims for the social recuperation of territory by the state through a combination of repression and the creation of dependency.

Repression against the civilian population struggling to maintain autonomy

Free Trade or False Logic?

When Canada announced the FTA with Colombia on June 7, David Emerson stated "The free trade agreement will expand Canada-Colombia trade and investment, and will help solidify ongoing efforts by the government of Colombia to create a more prosperous, equitable and secure democracy."

The notion that an FTA between Canada and Colombia would result in increased prosperity for Colombians is based on the much-repeated concept of 'free trade,' which, according to the dominant economic model, opens up markets and encourages investment. "Colombia exports coffee, oil, coal, gold, emeralds and bananas. These are the same kinds of products that Colombia was exporting 100 years ago," states Mario Valencia, an economist with the Colombian Network in Response to Free Trade (RECALCA). "We import technology and industrial goods, and it is necessary to export more and more primary materials to buy the same amount of technology and machines. This type of exporting scheme is deepened with the signing of free trade agreements." In terms of being able to compete in Canada, an FTA is not expected open up the market in a significant way for Colombian products. Nor will it address agricultural subsidies that grant Canadian farmers a competitive advantage over their Colombian counterparts.

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Colombia: Canada's Newest Free Trade Partner?

Agreements on the Rights of Transnational Corporations

If the FTA between Canada and Colombia is not so much about lowering tariffs and improving market access for Colombian exporters, what are the benefits of this kind of agreement, and to which economic sectors will these benefits flow?

According to Colombian economist Héctor Mondragon, "These agreements should be known as 'Agreements on the Rights of Transnational Corporations' instead of as 'Free Trade Agreements.'" Indeed, investment guarantees for Cana-

and to Canadians." Eight companies signed on in support of the letter, including Barrick Gold Inc, Teck Cominco, Nexen Inc and Talisman Energy.

Hush, Rush and Sign

According to a press release issued by RECALCA, the Canada-Colombia FTA negotiations "were extraordinarily fast, and unlike the negotiations with the United States, which lasted sixteen rounds, they were wrapped up in the fifth round of negotiations, out of the six rounds planned at the outset in July of 2007."

By making this announcement only days before the Standing Committee on International Trade report would have been completed, the government is clearly saying that it does not respect the work of Parliament

dian corporations are a key element of the FTA between the two countries.

Canada has recently finished negotiating an FTA with Peru, the texts of which are public, and the deal with Colombia is expected to look similar. According to Foreign Affairs Canada, "An investment chapter in the Canada-Peru FTA locks in market access for Canadian investors in Peru and provides greater stability, transparency and protection for their investments."

This means that Canadian corporations investing in Colombia or Peru stand to further benefit from FTAs, because the agreements remove the possibility that the host government will raise taxes, change its laws, or expropriate properties.

Lobbying by industry in favour of an FTA with Colombia has been intense. In mid-May, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce sent a letter to Lee Richardson, Chair of the Standing Committee on International Trade, to "strongly encourage [the] committee to endorse these negotiations and the benefits that they will bring to Canadian companies

The texts of the Canada-Colombia FTA are still hidden from the public, despite the fact that negotiations have finished. One of the justifications used to push forward free-trade agreements is increasing 'transparency.' Instead, unelected Canadian and Colombian bureaucrats negotiated the Canada-Colombia deal in total secrecy. In fact, the end of Canadian negotiations with Colombia was announced before the Standing Committee on International Trade had finished the report it was preparing to advise the government during negotiations.

"By making this announcement only days before the Standing Committee on International Trade report would have been completed, the government is clearly saying that it does not respect the work of Parliament," stated Liberal International Trade Critic Navdeep Bains.

The report, meant to "guide negotiations," was released more than two weeks after negotiations were concluded. It contains eight recommendations, of which the second

"recommends that the Government of Canada maintain close ties with Colombia without signing a free trade agreement."

Teachers can speak out

Now that an early election has been called by Stephen Harper, the FTA will be sidelined during election campaigns. Because the agreement is already negotiated, however, once the new government is installed in Canada, the Canada-Colombia FTA may be among the first items to be tabled – presented to MPs – this winter, once Parliament sits again.

"Teachers are credible, legitimate citizens who can mobilize in response to this ethical challenge and demand that Canadians do not support a deal that excluded the participation of Canadians and Colombians and is embedded in terror, corruption and exploitation," says Rozental.

His advice? "Teachers can join the CLC Campaign against this agreement, write letters to MPs, mobilize their constituencies, write open letters calling for opposition to the FTA, develop a BCTF position statement in opposition to the agreement and lead an educational-mobilizing campaign on this very important issue.

[1] a racist slur. Instead of 'Paez', another name the indigenous Nasa go by, the author(s) use the word 'paHECES': 'Heces', in Spanish, means 'stool' or 'human excrement'. 🐛

Dawn Paley is a Vancouver based independent journalist and contributing editor with the Dominion, Canada's grassroots news cooperative. Her mother is a teacher. A previous version of this article appeared at www.dominionpaper.ca.

Editor's note: the Canada-Colombia FTA was signed on November 21, 2008.

Human Rights Violations, Over and Over: Report from the 2008 ALPHA Peace & Reconciliation Study Tour to Asia

Greg Van Vugt

Summer vacation for teachers is usually a relaxing time of the year, a chance to catch up of sleep, reading, family, exercise and the sun. But for a few of us this past summer we delayed that important part of our summer. We were a group of 32 teachers from Ontario, Alberta and B.C. who for the most part didn't know each other very well before we gathered in Shanghai on July 4th. By the end we were closer than we'd anticipated. We were able to cry together, embrace each other, and move forward with renewed passion for the subject we'd come to study. This was achieved with minimal financial outlay thanks to

this is the first time I truly came face to face with this kind of emotional and psychological devastation. A friend once said that so many of our problems today in Canadian society could be directly linked to the psychological damage that the war (mostly in Europe) had wrought. Many of our families experienced the horrors of war in Europe and brought it to Canada with them. Their emotional injuries may have had consequences in our own daily lives. The grandparent who drinks to forget or the emotional violence that resulted from the troubles of that time can still affect us today. The aunt who survived bombings is still emotionally scarred.

Nanjing.

These stories have been repeated in China, the Koreas, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, and Myanmar, amongst other places. As a history teacher it is important to experience history first hand to be able to bring that to our students. By participating in the Canada ALPHA Peace & Reconciliation Study Tour this past summer I have been able to relive parts of World War II in Asia. This type of a tour is a must for any serious historian of the war in Asia.

I was lucky enough to continue the tour on my own to the Philippines, where I met with more women who had been abducted as sexual slaves by the Japanese military during World War II. Here I was able to speak directly to some of the women. This was not possible in China or Korea due to our lack of a common language. In the Philippines we were able to communicate more easily. Here too, they are working towards healing themselves through repeated requests of the Japanese government to acknowledge its past wrongdoings and to teach their children the truth of what happened. Maybe Japanese youth might not be so eager to engage in militaristic behaviours if they knew the true history of World War II in Asia. Germany has done a fairly good job of educating their youth about the atrocities under the Nazi regime. Why can't Japan?

While in Korea, we were mistakenly labelled as an anti-Japanese group by one Korean person. I found this both surprising and disheartening. I was aware of the general dislike of Koreans towards Japan due to the colonial past. But I thought that the Koreans were able to move forward from there. As for us, I guess we should make our mission even more explicit and clear. The title of the tour is a "Peace and Reconciliation" tour. Its purpose is to heal the wounds of history, to bring peace to

This is the first time I came truly face to face with the emotional and psychological devastation of war.

the Peace & Reconciliation Study Tour organized by Canada ALPHA, the Association for Learning & Preserving the History of WWII in Asia.

If I were to recommend this study tour to other people I'd say that it is not for the beach set. The trip includes a lot of hard, long days where your physical and mental states are challenged. By the time we return to our respective homes we know that we will want to make people aware of this sad period of history. I know for myself it has let me understand the superficial aspects of World War II in Asia, as I knew the war in Europe – dates, places, names, battles, destruction. But as a peace advocate and teacher, talking with survivors and listening to stories of some of the most horrific parts of the war in Asia, while inducing sadness and anger, also renewed my passion to work towards a peaceful world.

For many years I have worked towards a more peaceful world in my classroom, in my social justice work, and amongst my friends and family. But

Now I have been able to meet with people in Asia who were directly affected by horrid acts of violence such as rape, beheading, maiming, and murder. I met with people who still live with the physical scars of bayonets, chemical weapons, and forced abductions. They told us they can live with these kinds of physical injuries. But the emotional and psychological scars may never heal for them. It was devastating to hear the stories of people like Madam Zhang who lives near Nanjing, China, where a massacre of 300,000 people took place in 1937. She told us that she had her private parts torn apart by the Japanese military when she was eleven years old. She was only able to have one child: the birth took three days, and almost killed her. Now 71 years later we can hear the anger in her voice and see by the redness in her face that she has not been able to forgive those soldiers. "I hate them. I hate their guts. They did such bad things to my sister. How can I forgive them?" she asked another survivor who also lives near

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Human Rights Violations, Over and Over: Report

those who were wronged, and to make sure this doesn't happen again. Not to fan the flames of distrust between nations. By us pushing the Japanese government to acknowledge their misdeeds, we help the victims to heal. While this makes my Japanese friends

friends. They are a kind, peaceful population in general. Why does its government continue to deny its past and therefore deny its victims a chance to heal their wounds? They are pressured politically by the far right wing ideologues to ignore their colonial war his-

as Tourism 11/12, or Social Justice 12. I will be a resource person for my fellow teachers on staff. And I will continue to work so that this sordid period of history will not be repeated again.



LINKS:

If you are interested in joining a future Canada ALPHA tour to Asia please check out their website www.alpha-canada.org/StudyTour/ or email **Thekla Lit** bcalpha@alpha-canada.org

The website also includes many useful Ministry approved resources. The tours generally happen at the beginning of the summer and last two weeks. For further reading on this period of history, read Iris Chang's book *The Rape of Nanking*.

By the end, we were able to move forward with renewed passion for the subject we'd come to study.

feel uncomfortable I feel the Japanese government must acknowledge and reconcile with a whole heart. Germany has done a lot towards this type of healing, especially within the Jewish community just by acknowledging the nation's past deeds. Japan continues to mislead its own people by not adding or by glossing over this part of their past in its national history textbooks. For me personally I find it difficult because I have lived in Japan, speak some Japanese and of course have many Japanese

tory.

Where to from here? I will have a much better understanding of the students in my classes and their personal and family histories. As a professional I will be able to integrate this period of history in Asia into the curriculum with more understanding and background knowledge. I will be able to encourage the ministry of education to put more of this part of history into our curriculum. I will integrate it more into my history classes, as well as other classes such

THIS IS A WAR TOY FREE ZONE



"Playing with war toys legitimizes and makes violent behavior acceptable. It desensitizes children to the dangers and harm of violent behaviour and increases the chance that they will resort to violent behaviour... The degree that youngsters are learning to take pleasure from aggressions decreases their ability to learn empathy, negotiation, and cooperation... I would recommend that parents not allow violent toys in their homes, but purchase non-violent toys and games."

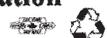
-- Dr. Arnold Goldstein, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Research
on Aggression
University of Syracuse



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Peace and Global Education
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Myths for Profit: Documentary as a Tool for Social Change

Amy Miller

The determinant of 'broadcast ability' grossly dictates which documentaries are produced and therefore seen and experienced in Canada. With nearly all-documentary grants cut by the Federal government in 2008, the capacity to find the finances necessary to develop a documentary project hinges on whether or not a broadcaster will air it. Most often the cycle is that the broadcaster gives money to the production company who sold the idea and rights of the film and then the director gets underway making their project. Obviously the director needs to be able to convince the production company

their own news. My documentary *Myths for Profit: Canada's Role in Industries of War and Peace* is part of the media from below movement. It is being done with an understanding that documentaries can be made in a way to maximize the work of coordinated community educational efforts, campaigns, activist movements and classroom projects.

As it stands today The Canadian Armed Forces continue to actively recruit through their forty-two recruitment centres across the country. They do this seemingly everywhere- whether it be at various major public events (such as exhibitions, sports games, con-

ining these myths we seek to find out what are the possible motives that hide behind these stories, and if there are certain people who stand to gain and maintain these misconceptions. Only by breaking down these myths can we hope to understand how these systems of power operate, and help empower people across Canada to change them.

◆ **Myth #1: "Canada is a peacekeeping nation"** examines the changes in the Department of National Defense since 1999 and takes a serious look at the role Canada has taken via NATO. A particular focus is given to the current perpetual war in Afghanistan, how Canada assisted in the illegal coup d'état in Haiti, and how Canada played a pivotal role in pushing the policy of 'bombing for humanitarian aid' in Yugoslavia.

◆ **Myth #2: "Canada's policies on 'reconstruction and redevelopment' are helping people around the world"** investigates how various government-run agencies and ministries operate agendas to be implemented around the world. From the department of foreign affairs (DFAIT) to Export Development Canada, policies are being designed and carried out to ensure a free market neo liberal agenda in different countries, regardless of the negative effect they may have on the communities and environment they impact. This includes how Canada's Development Agency's (CIDA) tied and phantom aid function in post and present conflict zones.

◆ **Myth #3: "Canada's military purpose is defense."** By investigating the magnitude of the Canadian military industrial complex, from the mining of uranium used for depleted uranium weapons to the production

The tight concentration of media ownership has translated into certain stories being told and many others being neglected and ignored.

that their project can be sold to a broadcaster. Apart from the public Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and community broadcasters, media in Canada are primarily owned by a small number of companies: CTVglobemedia, Canwest Global, Rogers, Shaw, Astral, Newcap and Quebecor. The chances of getting a film made will be decided by those working at these media houses. This decision by broadcasters will be largely based on whether or not their advertisers and viewers will be happy and if it fits with the image of the company. This tight concentration of ownership and power of production by the mass media has translated into certain stories being told and many being neglected and ignored.

On the upside the concentration of corporate media has also led to the on-growing grassroots media democracy movement that exists across Canada. Beyond encouraging people to critically examine what they are given as content by the media firms, the movement fosters people to create and disseminate

certs) with their tables on the streets or the most disturbing, within public learning institutions: high schools, colleges and universities. They have many tools at their disposal to mold the targeted minds of young people- their interactive website, glossy brochures and sleek videos that are enticing and meant to make the military look not only heroic but an adventure. In making *Myths for Profit: Canada's Role in Industries of War and Peace* I set out to make a documentary that could be used as a tool for social change to counter the onslaught of propaganda that glorifies the army and war. It is with much hope that *Myths for Profit* will be widely available to enable organizations, educators and individuals to continue the ongoing discussions necessary across Canada to challenge the numerous destructive public policies in place.

Through diverse interviews and case studies this documentary unveils the specific interests and profits that are made by certain corporation, individuals and agency within Canada. By exam-

continued on page 19

Myths for Profit: Documentary as a Tool for Social Change

of components in weapons systems, this section probes the intersecting relationships between various government agencies and corporations as well as public complicity in this vast industry.

With numerous graphs, animation, and comic sequences, the documentary offers multiple methods of entertaining

interviews from academics, researchers, activists and governmental officials and diplomats *Myths for Profit: Canada's Role in Industries of War and Peace* is not only educational but also interesting for a wide audience.

I encourage you to watch the demo reel and consider supporting this project. Currently we are in the post-production stage and hope to have the

full-length DVD version of *Myths for Profit* for \$15.

For organizations & individuals who would like to screen or publicly use this film in any non-commercial way (i.e. libraries, classrooms, etc.), the price for a copy with the lifetime public performance rights (PPR) is \$50.

The demo reel and information on ordering a copy can be found at:

www.wideopenexposure.com

Amy Miller can be reached at: **wideopenexposure@gmail.com**

Wide Open Exposure would like to thank and commend PAGE BC for becoming a sponsor of Myths for Profit.



In *Myths for Profit* I set out to make a documentary to counter the onslaught of propaganda that glorifies the army and war.

viewers while educating them on aspects of Canadian politics that are rarely discussed. With a wide array of

documentary finished by March 2009. But we need help. Please help us finish the documentary by pre-ordering the



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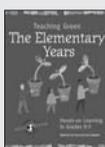
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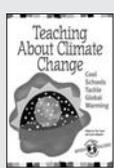


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Iran's Nuclear Program: Bias at the CBC

Patrik Parkes

On August 27, 2008, CBC Television's *The National* broadcast a report, by correspondent Terry Milewski, on Iran's nuclear arms program. The report, titled "Fearing Iran", relied exclusively on perspectives from Iranian expatriates in Israel. On CBC's website, viewers commented on the bias they perceived in this news item. One viewer asked if the CBC had become a "puppet mouthpiece" of the United States, and another expressed being "stunned and appalled that the CBC would allow Mr. Milewski to defy so many journalistic standards with his one-sided and biased account". In early December I made contact with Mr. Milewski by email and posed some questions, as follows:

- ◆ First, I'd like to ask you about Iran, which you characterize, in your report, as having a "messianic vision

of conquest in the name of god". I am not aware of Iran having attacked another country, although I am aware of foreign interventions in Iran (for example, by Iraq in 1980, and by Britain and the USA in 1953). Could you please elaborate on the threat Iran poses to other countries?

- ◆ I'd also like to ask about international legal considerations. Please correct me if I'm wrong, but according to my knowledge of international law, a country is permitted to acquire nuclear arms if it is declared an enemy by another country holding nuclear arms. Because Iran has been declared an enemy by two nuclear armed countries (Israel and the USA, the latter of which also has troops in neighbouring countries), is it not therefore legal for Iran also to hold nuclear weapons as a deterrent? Or, is Iran somehow exempt

from international legal considerations?

- ◆ In your report you ask, "Should Israel strike before the mullahs get the bomb?" You also interview someone who seems to invite the entire world, including Canada, to bomb Iran. I'm wondering about the timing of your report, especially considering the 2007 US National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) finding that Iran halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003. Since the NIE finding was announced, has there been any evidence that Iran has resumed nuclear arms development?

In response to the above questions, Mr. Milewski wrote that further correspondence with me would be "fruitless", and that his report "speaks for itself". "Fearing Iran" can be viewed online at: <http://tinyurl.com/8a9c6j> 🐦

Review: *Groundwork Guides*

Patrik Parkes



Groundwork *Guides* is a social issues series published by Groundwork Books, a children's book imprint of House of Anansi

Press. The mandate of this series is to "offer both a lively introduction and a strong point of view" on "pressing and sometimes controversial topics", including imperialism, Islam, oil, pornography, slavery, and urban development. These books are suitable for senior secondary students, and I recently provided them as a research essay resource in my English 12 classes. So far the response from has been positive. Students report

having learned a lot, and have commented that key points are readily accessible. These books are readable, and loaded with interesting facts that will be new to most readers. In general I would give the series a thumbs up, with a few misgivings. Strangely, the U.S. massacre of millions of Vietnamese civilians has been omitted from the guide titled *Genocide*, and *Empire* fails to acknowledge the Mongolian empire. Regardless, the Groundwork series is a welcome resource for social issues discussions in the classroom.

LINKS:

Groundwork Guides outlines and ordering: <http://tinyurl.com/6lxa3n>

Assignment Idea:

For a grade 11 or 12 English or Social Studies assignment that makes use of the *Groundwork* series, see the "Contemporary Topic Research Project" on the following pages. This assignment allows students to practice research and composition skills, and to explore a topic that interests them. Students had a lot of success with a similar assignment in my classes last year, and some of those who have me as their teacher again have requested the assignment. Staggering presentation dates allows for more class discussion, and provides the teacher more time for detailed feedback.

Contemporary Topic Research Project

(For background information, see *Groundwork Guides* review on facing page.)

STEP ONE: FIND A TOPIC

◆ You may use the *Groundwork Guides* as a starting point. Topics that can be found within this series include censorship, feminism, U.S. imperialism, urban transportation, Structural Adjustment Programs, genocide in specific countries, anti-hate laws, freedom of expression, women within Islam, terrorism, contemporary slavery, Alberta oil sands, and carbon emission reduction schemes.

◆ Other recommended topics of research include media coverage of international issues (Russia's intervention in Georgia, or Israel's relationship with Palestinians, for example), Canadian government policy (on drugs, social welfare, medicare, education, etc.), artistic movements of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (surrealism, absurdism, performance art, etc.), Canada's human rights record, Canadian sovereignty, military recruitment, Canada's intervention

in Afghanistan, Canadian political parties, poverty and homelessness, and political advocacy organizations (Adbusters, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the Fraser Institute, Greenpeace, the David Suzuki Foundation, Amnesty International, etc.).

- ◆ You can also propose a topic different from those listed above.
- ◆ Whichever topic you choose, you must consult with your teacher before moving on to the next step.

STEP TWO: WRITE AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

This assignment is due at least one week before you submit your essay (see Step Three). The criteria for the annotated bibliography are as follows:

Research Project: Annotated Bibliography	
Write a question you would like to answer through your research.	/4
Write an MLA-style bibliographical entry for each of three resources you will use for your essay.	/6
After each bibliographical entry, write, in point form, three to five facts you have found in the resource. These points will be assessed as follows:	/10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Meaning: each point must be relevant to your question. ◆ Format: each point be followed by a parenthetical citation (for example, "(Lee 36)"), and at least one of these points must be in the form of a quotation. 	/5
TOTAL	/25

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Contemporary Topic Research Project

STEP THREE: WRITE AN ESSAY ON YOUR TOPIC

Your essay must explore the question posed in your Annotated Bibliography, must synthesize and expand upon the research you have done, and should be between 1000 and 1500 words (three-and-a-half to five pages).

Research Project: Essay	
Works cited:	
◆ Write an MLA-style bibliographical entry for each of the four to six resources you cite in your essay. This will be at the end of your essay under the heading “Works Cited”.	/4
◆ All of the works listed in your bibliography must be parenthetically cited in your essay, which must include at least three smoothly integrated quotations from these sources.	/4
Structure:	
◆ The opening paragraph must introduce the topic and outline the structure of the essay.	/5
◆ Paragraphs should be focused and well structured, and, where appropriate, transitional sentences should be integrated.	/5
Meaning:	
◆ The content of your essay will be graded ‘holistically’, based on a synthesis of the English 12 provincial exam scoring guides for “Composition” and “Stand-alone Text” (see http://tinyurl.com/ 5rultn).	/12
TOTAL	/30

STEP FOUR: PRESENT YOUR RESEARCH AND FINDINGS

Research Project: Presentation	
Briefly introduce your project to your classmates	/3
Further to your introduction, present your research in a way that informs and/or engages your classmates. This can take the form of a brief (ten to fifteen minute) seminar with questions for discussion, a PowerPoint presentation, a poster, or other vehicle of your choice. As with the essay, the presentation will be assessed ‘holistically’ based on a six-point scale.	/12
TOTAL	/15

International Development Week: February 1-7, 2009

Held in February every year, International Development Week (IDW) highlights and illustrates the work of Canada's development community. For teachers, the IDW offers a readymade opportunity to help students and the broader school community to focus on global issues and

to get involved. This year, IDW will be held Feb. 1-7, 2009. IDW provides a great opportunity to:

- ◆ Increase the awareness of the role Canadians play in international development
- ◆ Learn more about life in developing countries

- ◆ Be inspired and find out how to become global citizens, actively involved in international development.

To learn about IDW activities across BC and Canada please visit CIDA's website www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/IDW. 🐦

NGOs Provide Global Education Resources: Recommendations from the BCCIC

Heather Turnbull

The BC Council for International Cooperation (BCCIC) is a coalition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating locally and globally, to reduce global poverty and achieve sustainable human development. BCCIC highlights global education initiatives, including specific projects, workshops and resources that NGOs have developed for BC schools and educators. Many NGOs are building partnerships with teachers and schools and implementing projects that deepen students' understanding of what it means to be a global citizen. Here are some examples:

Victoria International Development Education Association (VIDEA) has worked to inform and inspire youth, students and teachers for close to 30 years. VIDEA is excited to announce a new series of free interactive workshops that take a participatory approach to bringing global issues into the classroom. All workshops are designed to inspire and empower students and teachers with the knowledge and resources to further explore the issues and get involved outside the classroom setting. Upcoming workshops are free and topics include Education for All, Migrant Labour, Ethical Consumption and the Chocolate

Trade, and Colonialism, Power and the Global Economy. In addition, VIDEA's website (www.vida.ca) provides learning resources on topics relating to community development, the environment and free trade.

The Global Stewardship Program at Capilano University is delivering a series of workshops at high schools designed to engage students with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. A final conference is scheduled for May 2009. All high school students in Grade 11 or 12 are invited to enter the You Too Video, Audio Podcast, or PowerPoint contest, in which there is a total of \$1000 in prizes. Winning entries will be highlighted at the conference. The deadline is February 20, and details can be found at the Global Stewardship website (www.capilanou.ca/globalstewardship).

Seva Canada is an international eye-care charity with programs in Nepal, Tibet, India,

Tanzania, Egypt, Cambodia and Guatemala. As part of its public outreach, Seva offers a live, multimedia adaptation of Tolstoy's *The Three Questions*, for Grades 3 to 6. A young prince discovers the importance of kindness and forgiveness through his quest for

the answers to three questions. Information about blindness, its causes and prevention is an optional part of the presentation, to connect the concept of kindness and social responsibility with Seva's international development work. A resource manual, 'Active Citizenship', developed by Seva, is available and provides lesson plans for students to create and develop their own service projects. Contact **Paula Ford** (paula@seva.ca).

Partners for Prosperity (PPP), a Shawnigan Lake NGO has been building bridges of understanding and shared learning with students in the Cowichan Valley and surrounding districts. PPP is able to assist teachers and school districts develop and locate programs and resources to meet their needs in the areas of youth leadership, cross cultural understanding, food security and community capacity building through their network of over 100 projects locally and internationally. Contact **Barb Kruger** (partners@mgvinc.com).

Over the last three years, African Community Technical Services (ACTS) has supported the development of global awareness, citizenship and social responsibility with over 200 children at E.S. Richards Elementary School in

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NGOs Provide Global Education Resources: Recommendations...

Mission. ACTS has played a significant role in bringing fresh water to rural villages in Uganda for twenty years and ACTS staff and volunteers have used this knowledge to form a school club for students that is twinned with a village school in Uganda. Through slide shows, artifacts and demonstration activities, ACTS has discussed issues in

The Global Studies Program at Vancouver Island University and Global Village Nanaimo, an independent non-profit society engaged in fair trade, currently sponsor a public speaker series. In this series, NGOs describe their involvement in finding solutions and giving renewed hope in various parts of the world. According to Dr.

Many NGOs are building partnerships that deepen understanding of global citizenship."

education, health, water and sanitation. Hundreds of letters, valentines and artwork have passed back and forth between communities. Currently ACTS is distributing student-purchased malaria nets in Ugandan villages. ACTS looks forward to assisting other schools with global awareness initiatives. Contact **Richard Roberts** (roberts@acts.ca).

The Trans Himalayan Aid Society (TRAS) is a small Vancouver-based NGO which supports health and education for children and youth in the Himalayan regions of India, Nepal and Tibet. TRAS work has been supported both by schools and students interested in finding ways to help children in poorer parts of the world. Over the past five years, students at Argyle Secondary School in North Vancouver have raised funds to support a vocational training program in Nepal for the destitute and the street children. Inspired by student action, the Student Council at Sutherland Secondary School, North Vancouver took up the same challenge three years ago. Both student groups have raised substantial funds for projects. TRAS supports students' efforts with talks, slide shows, displays, pamphlets, newsletters, and letters from the field. TRAS is amazed by the students' enthusiasm and is looking for other schools to get involved. Contact TRAS (tras@portal.ca).

Catherine Schittecatte, chair of both Political Science and the Global Studies Program and also Global Studies Internship Coordinator "Not only do these speakers contribute their direct and personal experiences in various parts of the world, but they provide students with a sentiment of empowerment when exposed to the feasibility of the very constructive and positive work that these speakers have undertaken with marked results." Speakers not only complement classroom material with real life experiences but they open 'students' eyes to the possibilities of their own involvement in post-graduate careers. For information on this series, contact **Samantha Letourneau** (gynanaimo@gmail.com).

BCCIC is committed to international cooperation in two ways: by supporting the work of our membership and by promoting and mobilizing British Columbians as active global citizens. Like the other provincial councils across Canada, BCCIC's work is undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Please contact BCCIC for information on member organizations' work both locally and globally (info@bccic.ca). 🐦

British Columbians' share of the cost of the war in Afghanistan is \$1.5 billion!

Since 2001 the war in Afghanistan has cost the Canadian taxpayers \$18 billion. British Columbia pays approximately 13% of federal taxes. 13% of \$18 billion is approximately \$1.5 billion. What could this have been used for in British Columbia?

You do the math:

- ◆ Starting at \$60,000 a year for salary and benefits, we could have hired _____ teachers.
- ◆ Starting at \$84,000 for a salary and benefits, we could have hired _____ nurses.
- ◆ At \$190,000 each, we could have built _____ affordable housing units in Vancouver. 🐦

Statistics compiled by Scott Parker.

www.globalissues.org

Pummy Kaur

Recently I did a google search to determine how my life was connected to the turmoil through the natural resources that I consumed. At Global Issues, was astounded at how much comprehensive information I was able to receive in mere moments. And then, of course, I became addicted to the website. This is one of the most comprehensive websites on global issues, and ought to be a regular shopping spot for every global educator, or any person wishing to be a good global citizen. Happy shopping for awareness! 🐦

The War Prayer by Mark Twain

(adapted for reader's theater by Aaron Shepard)

PREVIEW: A mysterious stranger attends a church service on the eve of war.

GENRE: Fables (original), satire

CULTURE: American (early 20th century)

THEME: War and peace; patriotism

READERS: 8 or more

READER AGES: 12 and up

LENGTH: 5 minutes

ROLES: Citizens 1–6, Minister, Stranger, (Other Citizens)

NOTES: The language of the original text has been highly simplified for this adaptation. Twain wrote the story in 1904–5, but after trying just once to publish it, he set it aside. He wrote a friend, "I don't think the prayer will be published in my time. None but the dead are permitted to tell the truth." CITIZENS serve as narrators. For best effect, place all CITIZENS in the center.

CITIZEN 1: It was a time of great and uplifting excitement. The country was up in arms, and the war was on.

CITIZEN 6: In our small town, every breast burned with the holy fire of patriotism. Drums beat, bands played, toy pistols popped, firecrackers hissed and spluttered. On every street, a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun.

CITIZEN 2: Daily the young volunteers marched down the avenue, smart and fine in their new uniforms. Proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheered with voices choked with emotion.

CITIZEN 5: Nightly we packed the public meetings, where patriotic speeches stirred our hearts to the deepest deep. At every other word, we burst in with cyclones of applause, even as tears ran down our cheeks.

CITIZEN 3: A half dozen rash dissenters dared to disapprove of the war and cast doubt on its righteousness. But they right away got such a stern and angry warning that they quickly shrank from sight and offended no more.

CITIZEN 4: It was indeed a glad and gracious time.

* * *

CITIZEN 1: Sunday morning came and our church was filled. It was the day before the battalions would leave for the front.

CITIZEN 6: The volunteers were there, their young faces alight with visions of glorious victory. Beside them were their proud and happy dear ones, as well as envious neighbors with no sons or brothers of their own to send forth to the field of honor.

CITIZEN 2: The minister read a war chapter from the Old Testament.

CITIZEN 5: Then an organ blast shook the building, and together we rose with glowing eyes and beating hearts to pour out that tremendous invocation,

ALL (except STRANGER):

God the all-terrible! Thou who ordainest, Thunder thy clarion and lightning thy sword!

CITIZEN 3: Then came the minister's prayer.

CITIZEN 4: Never in our church had we heard the like of it for passionate pleading and moving language.

MINISTER: Ever-merciful and benign Father of us all, watch over our noble young soldiers. Bless and shield them in the day of battle and the hour of peril. Bear them in Thy mighty hand, make them invincible in the bloody onslaught. Grant to them and to their flag and country imperishable honor and glory. . . .

CITIZEN 1: An aged stranger entered from the back and moved up the aisle with slow and noiseless step. His long body was clothed in a robe that reached to his feet, and his white hair fell in a frothy waterfall to his shoulders. His rough face was unnaturally pale, almost ghostly.

CITIZEN 6: With all our eyes on him, he ascended to the minister's side and stood there, waiting. The minister's own eyes were shut in prayer, and he went on unaware of the stranger.

MINISTER: Grant us victory, O Lord our God, Father and Protector of our land and flag. Amen.

CITIZEN 2: The stranger touched the

startled minister on the arm and motioned him to step aside. The minister did so, and the stranger took his place.

CITIZEN 5: For some moments he surveyed his spellbound audience, then spoke in a solemn voice.

STRANGER: I come from the Throne of Heaven, bearing a message from Almighty God.

CITIZEN 3: The words smote us with a shock.

CITIZEN 4: If the stranger noticed, he gave no heed.

STRANGER: You have heard your minister pray, "Grant us victory, O Lord our God." The Lord too has heard this prayer, and He will grant it—if such is your desire. But first I am commanded to explain to you its full meaning. For it is not one prayer, but two—one spoken, the other not. Listen now to the silent prayer:

"O Lord our God, help us tear the enemy soldiers to bloody shreds. Help us cover their smiling fields with their patriot dead. Help us drown the thunder of guns with the shrieks of their wounded.

"God our Father, help us lay waste the enemy's homes with a hurricane of fire. Help us send out their women and children and elderly to wander homeless in rags and hunger and thirst.

"For our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, fill the hearts of the enemy with helpless fear and grief. Break their spirits, blast their hopes, and blight their lives. All this we ask in the spirit of Love, of Him Who is the source of Love. Amen."

(*pauses*) You have prayed it. If you still desire it, speak! The messenger of the Most High waits.

* * *

CITIZEN 1: Afterward, we agreed the man must have been a lunatic. What he said made no sense at all.

"The War Prayer" has been reprinted with permission from Aaron Shepherd (www.aaronshep.com).

Obituary: Harold Pinter

Harold Pinter, a British dramatist, political activist, and Nobel laureate, passed away on December 28, 2008. Pinter was a practitioner of absurdist theatre with a message: the intransigence and irrationality of power, for example, is instantly recognizable in “The Hothouse” – a cathartic read for anyone who has been

terrorized by such power. In his 2005 Nobel Lecture, Pinter made a blistering attack on U.S. propaganda and imperialism. This lecture was prefaced with the statement that in geopolitics – unlike the theatre – there is indeed a clear distinction between the real and the unreal. Pinter’s Nobel Lecture is an excellent resource for teachers, as a background

on imperialism and the mechanics of propaganda. It would be an appropriate resource to bring recent context to George Orwell’s *1984*, for example. Pinter’s Nobel Lecture, titled “Art, Truth & Politics”, can be found online at: <http://tinyurl.com/yj6ylo> 🐦

Review: *Rethinking Globalization: Teaching for Justice in an Unjust World*, edited by Bill Bigelow and Bob Peterson (2002)

Ilka Vogt

This practical resource contains many interesting readings and activities including role-plays and games on various topics including colonialism, economics and wealth distribution, sweatshops, child labour, culture, consumption, and the environment. I have used several of them with my Socials 9 and 11 classes and find that they are quite engaging for students. A few of my favourites are the

“Thingamabob Game” (in which students race to produce the most “stuff”, and determine the environmental cost), the “Transnational Capital Auction” (in which companies try to outbid each other to survive, sacrificing wages, the environment, and workers’ rights in the process), “10 Chairs of Inequality” (which shows wealth distribution), and “Oil, Rainforests, and Indigenous Cultures” (a role-play based on the Huao-

rani struggle against Big Oil in Ecuador). This book is U.S.-centred, and some of the statistics may be a bit out of date, but is otherwise very relevant. For more information, go to: www.rethinkingschools.org 🐦

Ilka Vogt teaches at Langley Fundamental Middle and Secondary School.

Review: *Kiumajut (Talking Back)*, by Peter Kulchyski & Frank Tester

Patrik Parkes

K*iumajut (Talking Back)* is a chronicle of game management and Inuit rights between the years 1900 and 1970. In detail, *Kiumajut* presents historical data in an academic theoretical framework beyond the scope of most grade school courses: it is, admittedly, not an easy read. It may, however, be a useful resource for Social Studies teachers wishing to deepen their understanding of Canada’s twentieth-century colonial relationship with the Inuit.

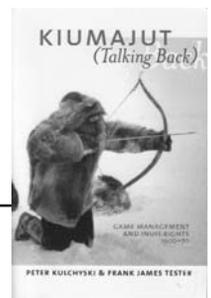
Authors Peter Kulchyski and Frank Tester are clearly sympathetic to Inuit interests, even at a textual level. Non-Inuit (that is, colonial settlers) are consistently referred to as *qallunaat*, and some chapter titles – and the book title

itself – also make use of Inuktitut terminology. At the same time, Kulchyski and Tester do not romanticize the Inuit, and provide a balanced, critical discussion of Inuit rights. One case of particular interest is that of Angulalik, an Inuit who established a capitalist fur-trading enterprise to rival that of the Hudson’s Bay Company. His case raises the question of Inuit status: should rights be based on ancestry or lifestyle? That is, if rights are granted to aboriginal peoples in order to preserve the traditional use of natural resources, what happens if aboriginal people exploit resources in a non-traditional, capitalist way? This is an issue that resonates into the twenty-first century.

Elsewhere in the book with regard

to resource management – especially the Caribou – Kulchyski and Tester address the limits of the scientific method, especially when science is applied with bias and disregard for the traditional Inuit lifestyle. As indicated by the title, *kiumajut* is an Inuktitut word that translates as “talking back”, and the book also explains how Inuit began resisting laws and practices being imposed on them. To most of us in the south, Canada’s arctic is an unknown land. *Kiumajut* sheds light on the modern history of this region. 🐦

Kiumajut (Talking Back) is available in soft cover for \$34.95 through UBC Press (<http://tinyurl.com/786fm6>)



Educating for Peace with Conscience Canada

Jan Slakov

The first freedom in the Canadian Charter of Rights is the right to freedom of conscience and religion. In 1985 the Supreme Court of Canada spelled out what this freedom means: "The values that underlie our political and philosophic traditions demand that every individual be free to hold and manifest whatever beliefs his or her conscience dictates". For conscientious objectors, this has meant that they were able to perform alternate, nonviolent service instead of being conscripted to fight in wars. In 1842

science Canada's Peace Tax Return when completing their taxes in order to let the government know of their conscientious objection to paying war taxes. This form is available through the Conscience Canada website, or hard copies can be ordered from members of the board.

Conscience Canada also produces educational materials that you may use regardless of whether or not you are a conscientious objector. One especially useful item is our eleven-minute DVD, *Work for Peace, Stop Paying for War*, featuring Justice Thomas Berger, who

ics such as Remembrance Day, media literacy, science for peace, etc.

With the Canadian government set to spend \$490 billion on the military over the next 20 years, Conscience Canada urges citizens to reflect on how we might truly improve global security if we invested that money in nonviolent security building measures instead. In 2006, the government spent about \$490 per citizen on the military: this is about \$60 less than the amount the Stern report said would be necessary for us to spend to prevent the most disastrous effects of climate change by cutting our greenhouse gas emissions. Since 2006, our military budget has increased substantially, while Canada's obstructionist role in responding to global warming has turned our country into something of an international pariah.

As educators, one part of the military budget of special concern is the approximately \$200 million spent each year on the Cadet programme. If we want to promote a culture of peace, either the cadet programme needs to be radically transformed or the government funding it receives should be directed towards a true peace-oriented youth movement. 🐦

LINKS:

Conscience Canada can be found online at www.consciencecanada.ca.

For more information, contact Jan Slakov at js@saltspring.com.

For more information, in French, on reforming the Cadet programme, see the latest bulletin of the *Centre de ressources sur la nonviolence* at www.nonviolence.ca.

The values that underlie our political and philosophic traditions demand that every individual be free to hold and manifest whatever beliefs his or her conscience dictates.

Canada's colonial government even agreed that taxes paid in lieu of military service would not be used for war, but for the building of roads and bridges.

Modern warfare is capital intensive; Canadians are not required to join the military but their taxes are 'conscripted' to pay for weapons and training. In essence, taxpayers are paying others to bear arms in their stead. As can be imagined, some people find this situation violates their conscience.

In 1983, the citizens' group Conscience Canada was incorporated with a mandate to do the following things:

- ◆ Increase Canadians' awareness of the connections between taxes and war
- ◆ Divert taxes away from war
- ◆ Support creative nonviolent conflict prevention and resolution
- ◆ Promote conscientious objection legislation

Individuals may wish to use Con-

took a case of conscientious objection to military taxation to the Supreme Court; former MP Jean Augustine and current MP Bill Siksay, who has presented a Private Members' Bill on peace tax legislation to the House; and citizens who have diverted the military portion of their taxes to the Conscience Canada peace tax Trust fund. You can order a free copy of the DVD or link to a slightly abridged version of it through our website.

We also have speakers available in many parts of the country, some of whom are comfortable in French too. One of our members wrote a play, which could easily be performed by school groups, entitled *STOP (Samuel s'en va-t-en guerre* in French), also available through our website. And if anyone is looking for information related to war and taxes (such as the environmental costs of war, the amount being spent on Canada's Afghan mission and so on), we often know how to access that information. We also have peace-oriented lesson plans on a variety of top-

Ethical Issues: Greek Philosophy, Multiculturalism and Immigration Lesson plans

Arthur Scott Parker

Philosophy - Greek

Brief Overview: Students will examine philosophical issues that the ancient Greeks debated 2500 years ago. Many of these issues are still relevant in our contemporary world. Students will be able to form opinions and have their opinions challenged on the human condition and on human nature.

Multiculturalism and Immigration

Brief Overview: Students will be able to examine their values in relation to multiculturalism and immigration.

Learning Outcomes: (for both lessons Philosophy Greek and Multiculturalism and Immigration)

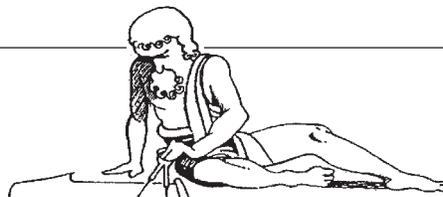
-Communicate ideas, opinions, and arguments effectively in oral and written forms

- Apply critical thinking skills:

- Questioning
- Comparing
- Summarizing
- Drawing conclusions
- Defending a position

Time Required:

One or two periods approximately 120 minutes total.



PHILOSOPHY - GREEK

Answer true or false to each statement. When you have finished the first column, find a partner and compare your answers. Through discussion come to a consensus. Repeat the process with groups.

1 2 4 8 16

Children should be raised for the common good of all.					
Human beings can be good without having to believe in god.					
No one is bad knowingly but only through ignorance.					
There is no absolute truth.					
The goal of the good life is happiness.					
Some are rich and some are poor and god has nothing to do with it.					
Man creates god, god does not create man.					
Marriages should be for the common good of the community.					
Happiness is relative.					
Doubt is the origin of truth.					

Ethical Issues: Greek Philosophy, Multiculturalism and Immigration

Materials:

Documents “Philosophy – Greek” or “Multiculturalism and Immigration”

STEP ONE: Pass out the true and false questions and read the instructions at the top of the page. Direct the students to think about the statements, determining for themselves what the statements mean. This is the quiet, individual part of the exercise. After they have completed all eleven answers in column one (this should take around five to ten minutes) they then leave their seats and attempt to convince as many students

as possible of the correctness of their views. Students should be told that they, too, can change their views. Once they have a partner, they are a team. They travel and debate together attempting to convince another pair to join them. Then they become a group of four, then a group of eight, etc.

STEP TWO: Step one should take thirty-five to forty-five minutes, depending on the nature of your class. When you feel the time is ready for a class discussion, have the students form a large circle or go back to their seats. Then go

through all eleven statements, discussing and debating the different opinions in the class. For example, how many students thought the first statement was true and why?

STEP THREE: Students choose two of the statements – one they strongly believe is true, and one they strongly believe is false – and write two persuasive paragraphs explaining their opinions. These two paragraphs can be written in class the next day or assigned for homework. 🐦

Name: _____

MULTICULTURALISM & IMMIGRATION

Answer the following statements either **True** or **False**. Find a student which agrees with all your answers. You can convince your fellow students to change their minds. Once you have a partner, find another pair, then you are a group of four, then eight.

	1	2	4	8	16
The Canadian government has always treated immigrants fairly.					
More people of coloured should be allowed to come to Canada to equalize theh races.					
It would benefit Canada if all ethnic groups retained their culture.					
The Canadian government should promote/fund multiculturalism.					
All immigrants should be fluent in either French or English before they are allowed to come to Canada					
The unity of Canada is weakened by the ethnic groups sticking to their “old” ways.					
Only French and English holidays should be celebrated in Canadian schools.					
Canada has an obligation to help the refugee problem in the world by accepting more immigrants.					
French should not be a core subject in British Columbia.					
Books which promote racism should be banned.					



EDUCATION AND POLITICS FOR A BETTER WORLD

Sponsored by B.C. Peace And Global Educators

LANGARA COLLEGE NEWBURY THEATRE

April 15th, 2009, 7:00 - 9:00 P.M.

MODERATED BY:



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C.B.C. National
Journalist

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Dr. (E)Manuel Rosental,
Colombia,
Human/Indigenous
Rights Activist



Adriane Carr,
Federal Green Party
Deputy Leader



Clarence Thomas,
Longshoreman,
Closed US west coast
ports to protest war



Dr. Patricia Vickers,
First Nations' Ethno-
consultant; Ancestral Law,
conflict resolution,
mediation practices
for positive change

ALSO SPEAKING: **Simon Child,** Youth recipient of 2008 Gandhi Award



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