

COMMUNICATING SCIENCE
IN TIMES OF CRISIS

EDITED BY

MARY JOHN O'HAIR

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**COMMUNICATION
AND EDUCATION**

PROMOTING PEACE
AND DEMOCRACY
IN TIMES OF CRISIS
AND CONFLICT



WILEY Blackwell

Communication and Education

Communicating Science in Times of Crisis

Series Editors

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Communication and Education

Promoting Peace and Democracy in Times of Crisis and Conflict

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H. Dan O'Hair, Ph.D.
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*This book is dedicated to the series founder and editor, **H. Dan O'Hair**, a visionary leader and contributor to the discipline of communication and, particularly, communicating science in times of crisis. Dan's consistent guidance and support for the discipline of communication, along with his steadfast love and nurturing of those around him, propelled him to become an outstanding scholar, mentor, and colleague in addition to an exceptional spouse, father, grandfather, and friend. His presence will be missed, but his influence remains indelible. We honor you, Dan!*

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1

The Promise of Communication and Education for Peace and Democracy

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Introduction

As unprecedented societal challenges continue to divide us, the necessity and interconnectivity of peace and democracy become increasingly apparent. However, contrary to popular belief, diplomatic efforts for peace and the building and sustaining of democracy are not limited to world leaders alone. Effective communication across multiple levels and contexts, as well as an informed and educated citizenry, is essential for addressing crises, reducing conflicts, and maintaining peace. Without a strong foundation of effective global education and communication, societies' organizational structures become increasingly unsteady and susceptible to armed conflict, terrorism, political upheaval, and civil disturbances. As Wells (1922) predicted over one hundred years ago, "human history becomes more and more, a race between education and catastrophe" (p. 1100).

If effective communication and education are intertwined, so too are peace and democracy and equally under persistent assaults and erosion. Volatile conditions including rapid technological advances, shifts in political structures, and cultural upheavals are creating challenges to democratic ideals and the maintenance of peace. We believe that true peace requires not only the absence of violence but also ways of living together characterized by respect, collaboration, justice, and freedom. We believe equally that democracy needs to nurture peace within and between societies because the voices of all cannot be heard where there is conflict and violence. Thus, effective communication along with education are essential nutrients in the soil in which democracy and peace can grow. They have a crucial role in reducing social and racial inequities, addressing grievances of previous conflicts and legacies, prioritizing social cohesion, and preparing and responding to natural and human-made disasters.

This book, *Communication and Education: Promoting Peace and Democracy in Times of Crisis and Conflict* is dedicated to shedding light on these critical issues. It serves as the third volume in the Wiley-Blackwell scholarly book series, "Communicating Science in Times of Crisis," which aims to study the communication of research findings and evidence-based practices across multiple disciplines and global contexts and to encourage organizational learning, ethical communication and leadership, community engagement, and activism. The book is designed to enhance the knowledge base of crisis communication related to crises

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impacting education, peace, and democracy. Authors from around the world examine the challenges of transforming local and global systems of education and communication for peace and democracy.

In the following section of this chapter, we examine educational systems in a “post-truth” world and the new global realities we face as educators and citizens. Next, we view the importance of communication through the lens of the *discourse of renewal theory* (Pyle et al., 2020; Ulmer, 2001), a prominent crisis communication theory for organizational renewal in times of crisis. Then, we explore the ecological interdependence of effective communication, education, democracy, and peace and make the argument for connecting communication and education disciplines to help support, sustain, and enhance democracy and peace. Lastly, we provide chapter highlights from authors around the world who provide a range of cutting-edge and unique frameworks, models, and theories; original research findings from ongoing research programs; and evidence-based practices from which to examine and address these global challenges to peace and democracy.

Challenges of a “Post-Truth” World

What some have termed the “Post-Truth” world (Hobbs, 2017; Mostagir & Siderius, 2022; Peters, 2017) challenges both communication and education. Integral to this eroding of truth is declining trust which has led to the positing of a “post-trust” society (Bentzen, 2018). Post-truth is “a breakdown of social trust” which owes much in its origins to how elites have organized and deployed mass communication technologies increasingly, not for policy education and argument, but for management of “emotion and attention” (Harsin, 2018, p. 1). Trust in traditional sources of knowledge, such as educational institutions and research findings, has declined, while public disagreements about established empirical findings have become rampant, often prioritizing opinion over evidence (Chinn et al., 2021, p. 51). Yet, trust is essential to knowledge (Shapin, 1994), and hence both to education in which awareness of shared knowledge and critical understanding of knowledge claims are developed, and to effective communication which involves exchange of ideas, open dialogue, and shared norms of acceptable communication.

Sustaining and enhancing such trust is challenged by concurrent trends. For example, we are witnessing the rise of “hyper-evangelical, neo-conservative, and populist movements built on platforms of hate, segregation, and fear of the Other” (Riddle & Apple, 2019, p. 1). Educational systems reflect the broader societal problems faced by communities around the world, including families living in poverty, high rates of crime and substance abuse, and historically/socially excluded or indigenous groups (Jacobson & Miller, 2021, p. 242). Inadequate educational structures, marginalization, and conflict exacerbated by distorted communication are at the root of these deep-seated problems. Recent global uncertainty and challenges, such as the triple pandemic threat of COVID-19, racism, and inequality, as well as fundamental threats to democracies worldwide, have highlighted the inadequacies of educational institutions in addressing these complex issues (Mehta, 2022). Thus, the pressing need for comprehensive educational systems transformation and renewal becomes ever more important as educational institutions struggle to effectively tackle the multifaceted challenges posed, ultimately revealing the deep-rooted flaws within these systems.

Verma (2021) encourages educators to act and become agents to interrupt hate in our schools and broader communities:

Complacency can be viewed as perhaps the opposite of hope and a failure to develop engaged citizens...Can this complacency or moment of paralysis and pause be transformed into action where there may lie a possibility for change? This, in essence, becomes a form of interruptive democracy where learner actors rise from complacency and sense the urgency to act. What does it look like, or what does it require to move from the moment of “pause” to “possibility”? (p. 37–38)

In summary, the discussion in this section suggests that to promote effective communication and education, and foster democracy and peace, there is a need to enhance trust and to weaken hate and fear. This duality of positive (enhancement) and negative (weakening) is reminiscent of love as an integrative power—that is, love that involves both a feeling of profound connectedness and a challenging stance toward unfair power and privileges (Woods, 2019). Such duality is indicative of a complex picture which we suggest can be more fully appreciated by understanding the discourse of renewal theory and the ecological interdependence of effective communication, education, democracy, and peace. It is to these issues that we now turn.

Crisis Communication: Discourse of Renewal Theory

Crisis communication plays an important role in renewing educational institutions and has yet to be explored extensively in the crisis communication literature, planning, and practices as found in other contexts. For example, in 2006, the *Journal of Applied Communication Research* published a special issue on Best Practices in Risk and Crisis Communication. Over the years since then these best practices have been applied, analyzed, validated, expanded, and disseminated in a variety of crisis contexts (Veil et al., 2020); however, the study of educational organizations facing multiple crises and interconnected threats to peace and democracy has been limited. We believe that if educational systems in our “post-truth” world are to provide the kind of rich, holistic education to which we refer in the next section, they need to be continually renewing themselves to support peace and democracy, and this renewal depends greatly on crisis communication to “provide stakeholders with messages that are timely, clear, and honest” (Veil et al., 2020, p. 392). As Verma (2021) confirms, we can no longer remain silent and hope the threats to democracy and peace will go away on their own.

In the midst of crises involving educational institutions and where the emphasis is on immediate reactive actions and the way forward is obscure, the discourse of renewal theory (Ulmer, 2001; Ulmer et al., 2020) offers invaluable guidance on how we can find hope, positive action, and renewal. The key focus of the theory is “to ensure that stakeholders are held in the highest regard, and that ethical communication and engagement remain at the forefront before, during, and after a crisis” as well as “emphasizing crisis communication that is optimistic, virtuous, and ethical” (Pyle et al., 2020, p. 345). Such communication can contribute to schools, for example, fostering care, hope, and positive feelings in situations of crisis and trauma (Örücü, 2023).

The core tenets of the discourse of renewal theory include: (1) organizational learning; (2) ethical communication; (3) prospective versus retrospective vision; and (4) effective

organizational rhetoric (Pyle et al., 2020). *Organizational learning* requires effective crisis communication that focuses on “learning from failure, vicarious learning, a willingness to unlearn ineffective policies and practices, and developing organizational memory” (Pyle et al., 2020). *Ethical communication* entails how an organization and its members use language, social media, journalism, and create relationships that are guided by morals and values and foster a culture of respect, transparency, fairness, and integrity of one’s own words. Ethical communication encompasses the old adage, “crises do not build character; they expose the character of the organization” (Ulmer et al., 2023). *Prospective versus retrospective vision* contrasts looking ahead with looking back. Retrospective vision often concentrates on past errors, creating a blame culture that can inhibit progress. Prospective vision, in contrast, emphasizes planning for future growth and renewal. It avoids blame, encourages learning from past mistakes, and fosters a positive, forward-thinking culture that promotes continuous innovation and improvement. *Effective organizational rhetoric* emphasizes the importance of clear and impactful communication that strengthens the principles of strong and ethical leadership, as well as visionary thinking, both before, during, and after a crisis (Pyle et al., 2020). It encourages individuals to adopt an activist approach, being proactive and prioritizing doing what is morally right, regardless of the potential costs involved.

Throughout the remainder of this chapter, we will continue using the term *effective communication* to encompass the fundamental principles of the discourse of renewal theory and to serve as a constant reminder that successful crisis communication utilizes “honesty, candor, and openness” while conveying “compassion, concern, and empathy” (Veil et al., 2020, pp. 380–381). By employing the discourse of renewal theory, educational institutions can navigate successfully crises with a renewed focus on growth, innovation, and continuous improvement.

The Ecological Interdependence of Effective Communication, Education, Democracy, and Peace

If we embrace complexity (Boulton et al., 2015), it is evident that effective communication, education, democracy, and peace are mutually influential. We argue also that they are mutually reinforcing. To explore how they are mutually influential and reinforcing, we outline six propositions.

The first proposition is that effective communication fosters peace. By effective communication we mean communicative flows and channels that facilitate exchange of ideas, open dialogue, and shared norms of assessing what is good, poor, and acceptable communication in differing contexts. As Tan (2012) summarizes it, effective communication is communication “to create things in common that sustain a community” (p. 300). More precisely we would say that it is communication that helps bring about some of the essential elements of a benign community. Effective communication is critical in enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation among groups with differing views. It is weakened by erosion of trust; however, where effective communication is a strong feature of society it helps to sustain and enhance trust. By encouraging a common understanding of issues, enabling cooperation and nurturing trust, effective communication can help defuse tensions and facilitate peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The second proposition is that effective communication is good for democracy. For example, the communicative flows and channels it facilitates are vital for the kind of transforming dialogue integral to a holistic and rich form of democracy. Such dialogue involves “sharing and exploration of views and engagement in open debate characterized by mutual respect, with

the aim of enhancing mutual understanding, reaching beyond individual narrow perspectives and interests, and seeking out the greater good” (Woods, 2021, p. 331). As such, effective communication strengthens the foundations of democracy and supports its healthy functioning.

The third proposition is that education is fundamental in nurturing peaceful societies. By education, we mean holistic education that seeks to support people “to develop the totality of capabilities which enable human flourishing” and foster “relational freedom” (meaning autonomy as an individual and as a social being interconnected with others and the world around them) (Woods & Roberts, 2018, pp. 1–2). Programs focusing on peacebuilding, human rights, and interdisciplinary intercultural citizenship (Byram, 2008; Byram et al., 2021) can significantly develop democratic competencies and transform societies affected by crisis and conflict. Studies suggest that such programs, when introduced in schools and communities, equip individuals with necessary skills such as constructive dialogue, empathy, critical thinking, respect for human rights—all crucial to participate actively in today’s complex, diverse democratic societies and for addressing crises and resolving conflicts peacefully (Heggart & Kolber, 2022; Rauschert & Cardetti, 2022). (See Cummins, Chapter 15.)

The fourth proposition is that education is essential to democracy and, relatedly, that democratic education needs to evolve to play its part in fostering democracy. We define democracy as “a way of living that requires the open flow and critique of ideas with an authentic concern for the interest of the individual as well as the common good” (O’Hair et al., 2000, pp. 8–9) and in which “people participate in the co-creation of their social and organizational environment” (Woods, 2021, p. 331). We, along with countless others around the globe, believe that democracy is more than a form of governance—democracy is a way of life (Dewey, 1923). It is not what we have, but what we do (Center for Living Democracy, 1998), our daily actions, and is integrally linked to education and schooling (Dewey, 1923, 1991; Giroux, 2019). Thus, we believe that it is essential that educators develop a personal understanding of the linkages between democracy and education. Educators are key to supporting democracy and transforming educational institutions to help “promote individual growth and participation in a democratic society” (O’Hair et al., 2000, p. 6), and the promotion of internal democracy in schools should be the initial step toward a schooling that is *for* democracy in which teachers and students have a real interest and stake in the democratic outcomes (Biesta, 2015, 2022). Some have referred to democracy *as* education and that an educated citizenry and a democracy are one and the same—the lack of one endangers the other (Glickman, 1998). However, lasting educational transformations are not solely a product of educators’ efforts. They frequently arise from societal movements and partnerships within the broader community as well (Apple, 2019). Thus, collaborations and partnerships between educational institutions and communities, both local and global, are essential for supporting and maintaining democratic education.

While a long tradition of scholarship regarding education and democracy exists, “the current global context requires a critical reexamination of the affordances, constraints, possibilities and contradictions of liberalist democratic values and the social institution of formal schooling” (Riddle, 2022, p. ix). Democratic education today faces several hurdles. One significant challenge is the growing inequality and polarization, which undermine the core values of democratic societies (Heggart & Kolber, 2022). Another hurdle is the integration of technology into education, which can both support and obstruct democratic participation (Kurian & Saad, Chapter 10; Selwyn, 2020). Educators need to be aware of technology’s potential risks and benefits (Tseng & Warschauer, 2023; Weissman, 2023). A further challenge is to bring aesthetic and embodied learning much more to the fore in

education for democracy.¹ Additionally, the rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation through social media (Spitzberg, 2021) necessitates educators to stress media literacy and fact-checking, enabling students to navigate the complex information landscape (DiGiacomo et al., Chapter 9; Hobbs & Tuzel, 2017). By addressing these challenges among others, democratic education can continue to evolve and adapt to the ever-changing needs of societies and individuals.

The fifth proposition is that effective communication and education complement and strengthen each other. Finding long-lasting solutions ultimately depends on our ability to communicate and collaborate across diverse cultures (interculturality) and on our capacity to converge ideas, perspectives, and methods from various disciplines (interdisciplinarity) (Rauschert & Cardetti, 2022, p. 30). Such convergence occurs as a result of education. Thus, effective communication and education foster social cohesion and inclusivity, reduce potential future conflicts, enhance societal stability, and create more favorable conditions in which each can flourish.

The sixth proposition is that democracy and peace also complement and strengthen each other. Democracy, as a governance system, correlates with reduced propensity for conflict and violence. Empirical evidence indicates that human security, and both international and domestic peace, strongly correlate with democratic governance (Altman et al., 2020; Hegre et al., 2020). According to the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem), democracies rarely engage in warfare with each other, and the proliferation of democracy decreases armed conflicts—a fact confirmed by numerous studies (V-Dem Policy Brief, 2021). Additionally, democracies, particularly long-standing, institutionalized ones, have lower tendencies toward civil war and internal volatility compared to autocracies, and they excel in absorbing and addressing discontent through legal and accountable channels, thereby reducing the risk of internal conflict (Fjelde et al., 2021; Hegre, 2014; V-Dem Policy Brief, 2021).

Equally, peace has a significant role in democracy, especially in times of crisis or conflict. Peace provides conditions for safe democratic activity and for democratic institutions to fully function and be developed or rebuilt where needed. Sustaining and building peace has a role in promoting respect for human rights, civil liberties, and citizens' active participation—for instance, peaceful protests (see Rebstock, Chapter 8), dialogue instead of violence (see Black et al., Chapter 11), peaceful resolution strategies (see Nanwani, Chapter 6), and cross-racial interactions through counter-storytelling (Morales & Fernandez, Chapter 5). Post-conflict conditions offer opportunities to develop participatory skills, as explored by Wibowo et al. in Aceh, Indonesia (Chapter 12).

The six propositions are not intended to give a comprehensive account of the array of overlaps and mutual influences between effective communication, education, democracy and peace. They offer a glimpse of the ways in which they support, and indeed are essential for, each other and demonstrate how they are ecologically interdependent. Varney (Chapter 3), through her focus on the dynamic patterning of peace rather than peace as a stable state, encourages us to promote peace in our everyday actions and lives. From a complexity perspective, a similar point may be made regarding the other three in this dynamic interrelationship—effective communication, education, and democracy: they are processes rather than achieved states and need to be promoted in everyday actions and lives. Democracy, for example, “is a process rather than a product,” extending “far beyond... decision making and governance structures” (O’Hair et al., 2000, p. 7).

Recognizing the interdependence of effective communication, education, democracy, and peace suggests that their daily activation and promotion needs to be done in ways that

reinforce and strengthen all four. This is especially so during heightened times involving critical events, crises, and conflicts. Effective communication and education, for example, play a crucial role during democratic crises or conflicts by informing the public, promoting transparency, and facilitating dialogue and democratic processes, such as supporting democratic education for all young people especially those from marginalized and disenfranchised backgrounds (see Riddle, Chapter 2) and reducing factionalism and conflicting worldviews (see Miller, Chapter 4).

The interdependence we are highlighting is a delicate ecology vulnerable to challenges which include those discussed in the previous section. Tackling these challenges requires a complex blend of theory, practice, policy, planning, execution, and coordination. Effective communication and education are pivotal in each aspect and can often make the difference between success and failure in dealing with catastrophic events (O’Hair et al., 2023), including nurturing peace and democracy amidst crisis and conflicts globally.

Figure 1.1 summarizes the elements of ecological interdependence explored through the six propositions. The four darker, outer diagonal arrows represent propositions 1 and 2 (effective communication’s positive influence on democracy and peace) and propositions 3 and 4 (education’s positive influence on democracy and peace). The vertical arrow, with arrowheads at each end, represents proposition 5—that effective communication and education complement and strengthen each other. In highlighting these darker arrows, we are drawing attention to the promise of effective communication and education. That promise is the crucial, interconnected, and wide-ranging role they have in promoting, sustaining, and enhancing democracy and peace. It includes, as noted in the discussion of proposition 5 above, the influence effective communication and education have in fostering social cohesion and inclusivity, reducing potential future conflicts, and enhancing societal stability, which helps to create favorable conditions in which each can flourish.

The remaining arrows in Figure 1.1 complete the picture of ecological interdependence. The inner diagonal arrows show that both democracy and peace are factors influencing effective

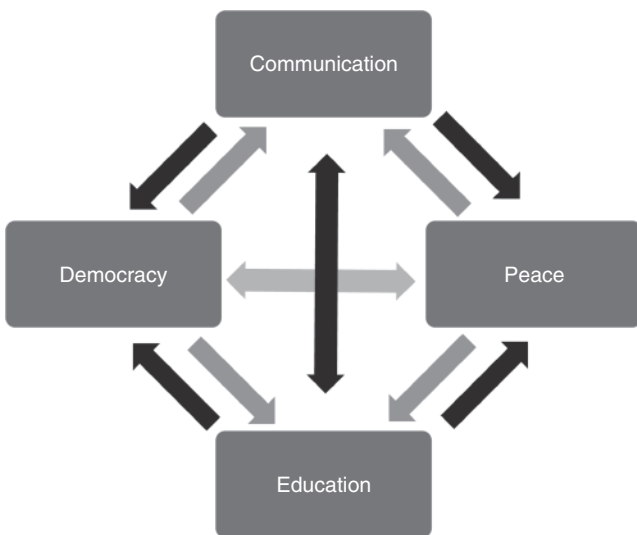


Figure 1.1 Ecological interdependence of effective communication, education, democracy, and peace.

communication and education. The horizontal arrow, with arrowheads at each end, represents proposition 6—that democracy and peace also complement and strengthen each other.

At all times, but especially during times of crisis and conflict, active attention is needed to all of the influencing pathways represented by the arrows, including the promise of effective communication and education.

Chapter Highlights

The importance of this volume is its ability to bring together the best minds across multiple disciplines and geographic boundaries on the topic as well as to enhance the “connectedness” of our academic worlds to practice in schools, universities, and communities around the globe. Chapter authors were commissioned, and their chapters refereed with the ensuing questions in mind:

- 1) What is the best available research in understanding impacts of communicating and educating for democracy to promote peace?
- 2) What theories are most relevant and applicable in this context?
- 3) What new ideas do you have to offer in this area (framework, model, theory)?
- 4) What are specific research directions, particularly transdisciplinary, that should be pursued for reducing conflicts and creating peace?
- 5) What pragmatic implications can you offer in this area of education and communication for peace?

The book is divided into five parts. Throughout each part of the book, readers will gain valuable insights into the transformative power of communication, education, collaboration, and innovation in building peaceful and democratic futures. *Part 1* focuses on frameworks concerned with communicating and educating for peace and democracy, *Part 2* explores challenges to peace and democracy through communication and education, *Part 3* discusses communication and technology in building peace and democracy, *Part 4* examines communication strategies and practices for fostering and sustaining democracy in education, and *Part 5* emphasizes transforming educational systems through communication and partnerships.

Part 1: Communicating and Educating for Peace and Democracy: Frameworks

The Frameworks for Democratic Education and Peace section includes three chapters, each with its own unique focus. **Chapter 2, Toward Schools as Sites of Radical Re-democratization: New Possibilities for Democratic Education**, authored by Stewart Riddle, seeks to address the problematic role of schools as sites of social reproduction and the neoconservative, neoliberal, and technocratic approaches to education policy, curriculum, and pedagogy that hinder efforts to democratize education for all young people, especially those from marginalized and disenfranchised backgrounds. Riddle proposes a set of propositions for a schooling that promotes democracy in the service of peace, equity, compassion, and a sustainable future.

Chapter 3, The Dynamic Patterning of Peace and Democracy: A Complexity Science Perspective, authored by Sharon Varney, encourages an ongoing and proactive approach to promoting peace in our everyday lives. Drawing on ideas from complexity science, the chapter reframes peace as a dynamic patterning rather than a stable state and highlights the dynamic nature of how democracy is manifested in terms of power and participation. The chapter

closes by calling for a wider conversation about what is changing in the ways that peace and democracy are manifesting and for more thoughtful consideration of how our everyday actions reinforce or change the status quo.

Chapter 4, How Factionalism and Conflicting Worldviews Threaten Classical Liberalism and Democracy: A Terror Management Theory Perspective, authored by Claude H. Miller, explains how individuals' cultural worldviews provide a sense of meaning and value to their lives, but also how these constructs can lead to intergroup disparity, polarization, and factionalism. Using a Terror Management Theory perspective, the chapter highlights how unprincipled leaders can exploit factionalism by promoting prejudices and suppressing dissent, thereby weakening the foundations of classical liberalism and democracy.

In conclusion, the chapters in Part 1 address the issues of democratizing education, promoting peace through complexity science, and examining how factionalism and conflicting worldviews threaten democracy. They highlight the need for equity, compassion, critical thinking, and active engagement to create a sustainable future based on democratic values and peaceful coexistence.

Part 2: Tackling Challenges to Peace and Democracy Through Communication and Education

Part 2 of the book focuses on conflict resolution and peacebuilding through communication and education. The chapters in this section present case studies and strategies for reducing hostilities, promoting dialogue, and fostering open and respectful communication channels among different groups to contribute to peace and democracy. **Chapter 5, The Educational Benefits of Diversity for Civic and Political Engagement: A Case for Facilitating Cross-Racial Interactions Through Counter-storytelling**, authored by Olivia Morales and Frank Fernandez, examines the educational benefits of diversity for civic and political engagement, emphasizing the importance of cross-racial interactions in promoting equity-oriented approaches to civic engagement. The authors argue that counter-storytelling can be adapted as a research methodology and pedagogical practice to facilitate cross-racial interactions in both classrooms and co-curricular spaces. The chapter provides specific strategies for creating opportunities for and facilitating counter-storytelling to support racially conscious civic engagement.

Chapter 6, Teacher Discourses: Challenging or Perpetuating Hierarchical, Authoritarian and Homophobic Social Institutions? authored by Sanjay K. Nanwani, investigates the role of teachers in fostering democratic skills and peace education in Colombian classrooms, a context marked by a history of violence, armed conflict, and a traditionally Catholic educational system. The chapter highlights the importance of student voice, influence, and agency in building peace and democracy, and explores fifth-grade teacher practices relating to education *for* and *in* democracy. The chapter critically evaluates the extent to which teachers challenge or perpetuate hierarchical, authoritarian, and homophobic social institutions in their classrooms.

Chapter 7, Education for Peace and Depeasantization: Challenges in Post-conflict Societies, authored by Irene Giovanni, argues that peace education in post-conflict societies must rethink peasant life to promote justice and stability. The chapter explores depeasantization and repeasantization theories and then discusses repeasantization efforts in post-conflict settings. Emphasizing the importance of socio-environmental aspects, social justice, and depeasantization,

the chapter advocates for incorporating peasanization as a core topic in peace education. Ultimately, it seeks to analyze the components of peace education for peasants and cultivate a culture of peace.

Chapter 8, Let Freedom Ring: Music as a Means of Communicating and Promoting Democracy and Social Justice, authored by Thomas C. Rebstock, explores the role of music in promoting cultural change, civil liberties, and freedom. The chapter discusses the impact of protest songs in leading movements of change, the potential for music to help refugees integrate into new communities, and the unique qualities of American jazz as a genre that exemplifies democracy and liberty. The chapter also discusses how music can be used as a tool for cultural diplomacy and the impact of influential musicians in promoting messages of peace and change.

Overall, Part 2 highlights the importance of communication and education in promoting peace and democracy and provides practical strategies and case studies for educators and practitioners. The chapters in this section demonstrate the transformative power of education, music, diverse perspectives, and open communication channels in promoting peaceful futures.

Part 3: Communication and Technology in Building Peace and Democracy

Chapters in this part focus on harnessing technology for peace and democracy as a recurring theme and the role communication and technology play in promoting peacemaking, sustainability, and democratic governance. The first chapter in this section, **Chapter 9, Developing Democratic Classrooms in the Digital Age: Teaching and Learning in K-12 Schools**, authored by Daniela Krue DiGiacomo, Carly Muetterties, Caitlin Taylor, Sara Trapp-Isaacs, Ryan New, and Chis Isaacs, focuses on the importance of K-12 civic education in strengthening American democracy. The chapter presents insights from a research–practice partnership between a public school district and a university in the Southeast of the United States. The authors discuss the intersection of schooling and democracy in the digital age and present practical suggestions for promoting peace and democracy through research, service, and teaching in communication and education.

Chapter 10, Designing Empathic Learning Experiences with Innovative Technology: Digital Storytelling, AI, and Gaming for Peace, by Nomisha Kurian and Caline Saad, discusses the potential of digital technology in promoting peacebuilding through education. The authors propose an approach based on human-centered design (HCD) that prioritizes the needs and perspectives of learners. The chapter presents three case studies that demonstrate the potential of digital storytelling, artificial intelligence (AI), and gaming to support peacebuilding. The authors acknowledge the ambivalent nature of technology and its potential for both conflict and peacebuilding and offer exercises in imagination to explore the possibilities of liberatory design.

Chapter 11, Building Positive Peace Through Dialogue and Deliberation, authored by Laura W. Black, Carson S. Kay, Michael Rodrigue-Barnes, Sheyla Finkelsteyn, Timothy J. Shaffer, and Daniel A. Lahera, delves into the challenges of our era and examines the application of deliberative democracy principles in promoting peace within communities. The chapter investigates literature on learning and practicing dialogue and deliberation in civic, community, and educational settings, and discusses how individuals develop civic habits and skills through higher education classrooms, adult civic education programs, and collaborative efforts between institutions and community organizations. The chapter reflects on the current state of deliberative and dialogic peacebuilding and suggests directions for future research.

Overall, this part of the book highlights the importance of communication and technology in promoting peace, sustainability, and democratic governance, and offers practical suggestions and case studies for educators, researchers, and practitioners.

Part 4: Communication Strategies and Practices for Fostering and Sustaining Democracy in Education

Chapters in Part 4 explore different strategies and practices for fostering and sustaining democracy in education. The first chapter, **Chapter 12, Reexamining the Democratic IDEALS and Best Practices in Education** authored by Scott N. Wilson, Lindsay A. Williams, Leslie A. Williams, Amy S. Goodin, and Ayanna M. Wheeler, provides an overview of the IDEALS framework, which serves as the foundation for all work and research at the University of Oklahoma's K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal. This chapter explores the application of the IDEALS framework in a collaborative, research–practice partnership through a case study of schools working to address student career and college-readiness needs. The chapter highlights the importance of creating positive school cultures and climates founded on principles of trust, respect, peace, and justice, and how cycles of inquiry, constructive discourse, educational equity, authentic learning, and shared leadership can be used to create democratic learning communities.

Chapter 13, Emotional Geographies of Teaching, Empathic Communication, Democratic School Climate, and Teacher Burnout, by Izhak Berkovich, focuses on emotional geographies in schools and their impact on democratic school climate and teacher burnout. The chapter identifies several emotional geographies, including sociocultural, moral, professional, political, and physical, that can create emotional distance between teachers and key stakeholders. The chapter highlights the importance of empathic communication in overcoming emotional geographies and fostering democratic school climates. The chapter presents new measures of emotional geographies and empathic communication in schools to evaluate the influence of these constructs on democratic school climate and teacher burnout.

Chapter 14, Nurturing Participation in Teachers: The Case of Teachers in Sukma Bangsa Schools, Aceh, Indonesia, authored by Dody Wibowo, Mahyudin, and Susan Sovia, examines how participatory skills can be nurtured among teachers, with a focus on post-conflict regions. The chapter highlights the importance of citizen participation as the cornerstone of democracy and the need to nurture participatory skills, including among teachers who subsequently teach these skills to students. The chapter presents findings from action research conducted at three Sukma Bangsa Schools in post-conflict Aceh, Indonesia, which emphasize the embedding of habits in the school system to facilitate teacher participation. The chapter highlights the importance of reinforcing a school system capable of nurturing participatory skills in teachers, who eventually will use the skills in their school and community.

Altogether, these three chapters provide insights into different strategies and practices for fostering and sustaining democracy in education, highlighting the importance of creating positive school cultures and climates, empathic communication, and nurturing participatory skills among teachers, particularly in post-conflict regions.

Part 5: Transforming Educational Systems Through Communication and Partnerships

This part focuses on two chapters that explore various distinct aspects of educational system change and the role of leadership and partnerships in driving positive transformation. In **Chapter 15, Building “Glocal” Literacy to Develop Global Citizens**, the author, Sarah Cummins, emphasizes the importance of education in developing capable individuals who can contribute positively to a changing world. The chapter advocates for teaching students to be globally literate starting at the local level, connecting them with their communities, and fostering engagement as global citizens. It underscores the role of the classroom as the core of a student's community, where they learn vital skills such as communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution. The chapter also discusses the significance of school

community and family involvement in creating a sense of belonging and investment in the education system. Furthermore, it explores the use of restorative justice practices and involving students in local community initiatives to promote peace, democracy, and active citizenship. The ultimate goal is to empower students to think globally and become leaders in an interconnected world.

Chapter 16, Flagship University Influences on Educational System Change: Kentucky and the Center for Next Generation Leadership, authored by Karen Perry, Justin M. Bathon, and Lu S. Young, examines the influential role of flagship universities in driving educational system change. Specifically, it delves into the University of Kentucky's Center for Next Generation Leadership (the Center) and its collaboration with the state's public school system. Over the past three decades, Kentucky has demonstrated its commitment to improving student achievement beyond traditional academic standards by emphasizing critical skills essential to democracy, such as collaboration, problem-solving, and citizenship. Through loosely organized but compatible partnerships, the Center has played a significant role in facilitating positive, democratic change. It has leveraged trusting relationships to promote innovative, learner-centered practices and strengthen community ties. The chapter concludes by highlighting the valuable lessons learned from these partnerships, emphasizing their potential to drive collective action that enhances democratic efforts in schools, communities, and beyond. Despite challenges that persist, these partnerships offer a promising approach to transforming educational outcomes for the benefit of all learners.

In summary, Part 5 showcases the importance of leadership and partnerships in driving educational system change. Both chapters in this section underscore the significance of collaboration, community involvement, and innovative practices in enhancing educational outcomes and preparing students for active citizenship in democratic societies.

Conclusion

Across the five parts of the book, authors from around the world examine the challenges of transforming local and global systems of education and communication for peace and democracy. Examples of successful transformations are provided, along with insights into how other systems can adapt to promote peace and democracy. Lastly, reflections and calls to action are presented regarding the future of communication and education in promoting peace and democracy. Emphasis is placed on our collective histories, emerging trends, potential challenges, and opportunities for innovation, emphasizing the importance of continued communication, research, and practice in this critical area in order to promote and sustain peace and democracy during times of crisis and conflict.

Note

- 1 As argued, for example, by the AECED project (*Transforming Education for Democracy through Aesthetic and Embodied Learning, Responsive Pedagogies and Democracy-as-becoming*) (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094052>).

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Part 1

Communicating and Educating for Peace and Democracy: Frameworks