Preface

Dr. Betty A. Reardon is a pioneering and world-renowned leader of peace education and human rights.\(^1\) Her groundbreaking work has laid the foundation for an inspiring new cross-disciplinary field that integrates peace education and the quest for international human rights within a gender-conscious, global perspective. In recognition of her internationally acclaimed contributions, achievements and awards as a teacher, activist, researcher, author, and consultant spanning five decades, she was nominated by the International Peace Bureau (Geneva, Switzerland) for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.

My association with Betty Reardon as a colleague and friend has spanned over two decades, and began with our first and auspicious faculty meeting together at Colgate University in 1990. Our mutual interest and dedication to the formulation of global peace and international human rights education have given rise to meaningful collaboration over the years. For example, as founding director of The University of Toledo’s Center for Democratic Education and Non-Violence, my colleagues and I were honored to organize the “Betty A. Reardon Collection,” an archive of her published and unpublished works, which opened in 2009 in the Ward M. Canady Center for Special Collections at The University of Toledo.

Given the wide range and complexity of Reardon’s work, this short commentary will highlight what I perceive as her core ideas, acknowledging that my summary is not exhaustive. These ideas include universal human dignity and universal moral inclusion; violence as dehumanization and the core problematic of peace education; a human rights ethical framework; a transformational paradigm of peace; and peace learning and reflective inquiry.

Central to Reardon’s conception of peace and peace education are two fundamental normative assertions: universal human dignity and universal moral inclusion. These two claims are normative, not empirical, in the sense that they

\(^1\) The author is very grateful to Mary M. Darbes for helpful and insightful feedback on this preface. A website on this book with additional information on Betty A. Reardon, including links to videos and a selection of the covers of her major books is at: <http://afes-press-books.de/html/SpringerBriefs_PSP_Reardon.htm>.
ethically assert what should be. These related core conceptions constitute the ethical foundations of Reardon’s overarching philosophy.

Universal human dignity and moral inclusion are logically interrelated. Universal human dignity is the normative claim that all human beings possess an equal intrinsic value that should be respected. In turn, this equal inherent dignity bestows upon each person standing in the human moral community. That is, each person is seen to be an equal member of the human moral community and thus each person has a right to equal moral consideration. This moral inclusion is universal in scope; it pertains to all human beings. These interrelated, normative assertions are the basis of Reardon’s value-based conceptions of peace and violence.

In making these two fundamental ethical assertions, Reardon is a part of the long tradition of cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitanism has many dimensions—epistemological, social, political, and ethical. The cosmopolitan ethical imperative mandates that we see the other as a person; it demands that we transcend the longstanding human patterns of violence, dehumanization, and objectification of persons in favor of the recognition of their humanity, and thereby embrace their standing in the human moral community.²

Violence is that which dehumanizes, which tears and erodes human dignity, and so being, it is the core problematic of peace and peace education. As Reardon states:

I identify violence as the central problematic of peace education. All violence degrades and/or denies human dignity. This is why I assert that the substance of the field should comprise an inquiry into violence as a phenomenon and a system, its multiple and pervasive forms, the interrelationships among the various forms, its sources and purposes, how it functions and potential alternatives for achieving the legally sanctioned, socially accepted, or politically tolerated purposes commonly pursued through violence.³

This conception is a similar to Johan Galtung’s understanding of violence as that which impedes and delimits human potential. Galtung writes:

... violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realization ... Violence is here defined as the cause of the difference between the potential and actual, between what could have been and what is. Violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance.⁴

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³ Betty A. Reardon, 2010: Human Rights Learning: Pedagogies and Politics of Peace (San Juan, Puerto Rico: UNESCO Chair for Peace Education, University of Puerto Rico), 55; see Chap. 11 in this volume.

Paulo Freire also conceptualizes violence as dehumanization; he writes:

Any situation in which ‘A’ objectively exploits ‘B’ or hinders his and her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression. Such a situation in itself constitutes violence … because it interferes with the individual’s ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human. With the establishment of a relationship of oppression, violence has already begun …

Freire maintains that it is our ontological and historical vocation to become fully human, to strive for and actualize our potential as human beings. We have a human right to the actualization of our humanity. All forms of coercive political, economic, and social interference, both direct and structural, with our human completion dehumanize and oppress, and are thereby unjust.

Reardon identifies a number of social structures and modes of thought that violate human dignity. They constitute what Galtung refers to as direct, structural, and cultural violence. These violent structures constitute a system of control, domination, and oppression, including ways of thinking and believing that justify and normalize these structures. In Reardon’s view, militarism (the war system), patriarchy/sexism, and a technocratic-managerial economic hierarchy, and its concomitant knowledge industry and social philosophy, constitute the basic structure of a violent society.

For Reardon the transformation needed for the ongoing pursuit of peace, and thereby, a reduction in violence, requires a fundamental paradigm shift in social values and worldviews—a shift from a paradigm of war toward a paradigm of peace. This value shift was expressed early on in her work through the assertion of the following “world order values”: “minimization of violence, war prevention; maximizing of economic welfare … increasing of social justice by relieving discrimination and oppression; broadening of the democratic base of public policy … restoration of ecological balance.”

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8 See Reardon’s bibliography of publications in this volume as well as 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and Epilogue.
In subsequent work, the value shift is articulated within a human rights framework. A human rights framework is the *lingua franca* of cosmopolitan ethics. Human rights are a way of expressing what one must do or can never do to another human being who possesses an equal inherent dignity. The language of rights thus can be understood to constitute the principles of a cosmopolitan ethic of human dignity, and thus a counter-point to violence. As Reardon maintains: “Human rights study provides us with tools of definition and diagnosis of what comprises violence, experientially as well as conceptually …”

There are a number of logically consistent ways of conceiving “rights,” all of which follow from the value of human dignity. One way to conceive a right is what a human being is due. From this perspective, “rights” constitute what each and every human being is owed by virtue of their humanity. Rights are also justified demands for the enjoyment of social goods. Rights are also conceived as protections against coercion, deprivation, and inhumane treatment. Rights protect the powerless from the powerful. In this sense, rights are political in that they are a means of adjudicating conflict as well as protecting the individual from harm.

Rights thus define what the individual as one who possesses equal inherent dignity is due, is justified in demanding, and/or is protected from. In this way rights are devices, which define what moral choices can never be made or those that must be made. As Reardon asserts, human rights function as “tools for the realization of the conditions necessary to human dignity.”

In turn, rights logically entail correlative duties:

1. Duties to avoid depriving another the right.
2. Duties to protect the other from deprivation of the right.
3. Duties to aid the deprived.

The duty to avoid deprivation entails restraint: the obligation to refrain from destructive action and/or interference. The duty to protect entails the responsibility for establishment of norms, social practices, and institutions that enforce the duty to avoid deprivation. The duty to aid is positive in the sense that it is an obligation

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16 Perry, *The Idea of Rights: Four Inquiries*.
to *provide* for those in need. These duties comprise the obligation of social responsibility inherent in human rights. As Reardon suggests: “Human rights learning, at its core, is the cultivation of ethical reflection and assessment for the exercise of social responsibility.”

In turn, Reardon conceives peace in terms of the realization of human rights and duties: “A sustainable world peace can only be assured through the universal actualization of human dignity.” She maintains that: “Human rights standards are the specific indicators and particular measures of progress toward and the realization of peace. Human rights puts flesh on the bones of the abstraction of peace and provide the details of how to bring the flesh to life.” A society, both national and global, that secures the human dignity of all citizens through the realization of their rights is the standard for “authentic peace.” Reardon writes:

As a political framework for the actualization of human dignity, human rights are the ethical core of peace education; not a complement, or a particular component, and certainly not an alternative or an educationally equivalent substitute for peace education. Human rights are integral to peace education, that is, without human rights peace education lacks a primary component of its core and essential substance. Human rights are the essence and the arbiter of peace, the antithesis of violence, touching on multiple and complex aspects of the human experience, illuminating the necessity of holism to the field. The potential of human rights as the means to cultivate transformational thinking lies in viewing all human rights norms and standards as a whole, an integrated ethical system.

This value-oriented, human rights conception of peace integrates the ideas of negative and positive peace.

Reardon defines negative peace “as the absence of war, achieved by the prevention and/or the general reduction and eventual elimination of armed conflict.” She argues that a fully actualized state of negative peace would entail the abolition of war as an institution (“the war system”), including complete and general disarmament.

Positive peace includes but transcends negative peace. It entails not only the elimination of armed aggression but also the positive establishment of justice. It constitutes a social order free of all forms of violence, including structural and cultural violence, as well as the establishment and sustainability of fundamental and widespread social fairness. Positive peace can be understood as the realization of the complete range of human rights: civil and political *and* economic, cultural, and social. She writes:

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22 Ibid.
The major areas of concern in the domain of positive peace are the problems of economic deprivation and development; environment and resources; and universal human rights and social justice. Peace education seems to have subsumed all of these areas into the general concept of global justice . . . “justice,” in the sense of the full enjoyment of the entire range of human rights by all people, is what constitutes positive peace.25

On the basis of both negative and positive peace, Reardon posits the notion of “authentic peace.” Reardon conceives authentic peace as the abolition of the war system and the establishment of global justice and a global civic community. Peace, so conceived, is therefore an ethical imperative, a fundamental human right.26

In addition to ethical reflection within a human rights framework as a core element of a shift to a paradigm of peace, there are at least two other elements of this shift in worldview. Reardon’s conception of peace and her understanding of the integral elements of a paradigm of peace are profoundly influenced by feminism and holism.27 This constitutes an ontological perspective, which generates an understanding of life that is interrelated and interdependent: life is understood as an interdependent web of relationships within which respecting and caring for the inherent dignity of life, human and non-human, is imperative. This view is a perspective of deep equality. This holistic ontology in turn leads to the inclusion of all life in the moral community, thereby bringing the moral consideration of the natural world and ecological balance under the umbrella of authentic peace. She writes for example: “Clearly, peace studies must begin to pursue wholism as the framework, process as the primary method, and peace in its widest sense as the goal, if it is to energize the intellectual transformation necessary to a paradigm of peace.”28 In addition, “Holism and critical reflection are essential and necessary to the transformation of thinking (and transformational thinking) conducive to the political processes requisite to the realization of human rights as the basis of a peaceful world order ...”29

Based upon her conception of authentic peace Reardon defines the educational task in holistic and transformational terms:

. . . the general purpose of peace education, as I understand it, is to promote the development of an authentic planetary consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens and to transform the present human condition by changing the social structures and the patterns of thought that have created it. This transformational imperative must, in my view, be at the center of peace education. It is important to emphasize that transformation, in this context, means a profound global cultural change that affects ways of thinking, world views, values, behaviors, relationships, and the structures that make up our

26 Note that this conception of peace as an ethical imperative is part of the cosmopolitan tradition; see for example, Kant, Perpetual Peace and Other Essays.
27 Her feminism, including her analysis of the relationship between sexism and militarism, is the subject of Volume 27 in this series.
28 Reardon, “Toward a Paradigm of Peace,” 25.
public order. It implies a change in the human consciousness and in human society of a
dimension far greater than any other that has taken place since the emergence of the
nation-state system, and perhaps since the emergence of human settlement.30

One of Reardon’s core insights is that peace requires and is constituted by
learning, and learning is reflective and dialogical, and thus, transformative. Her
approach to peace education is thereby transformational. The transformational
approach transcends but includes the two other prominent traditions in peace
education: the reform and reconstruction traditions.31 The reform approach is
devoted to the prevention of war, including the control and balance of arms. The
reconstructive approach seeks to reconstruct international systems, to abolish war,
and to achieve total disarmament. Its primary objective is structural and institu-
tional change and the establishment of global conflict-resolution, peacekeeping,
and peace-building institutions. The transformational approach aims at the rejec-
tion of all forms of violence, direct, structural, and cultural; its goal is a shift to a
paradigm of peace, including the development of the human capacities and ways
of thought necessary to sustain it.

The transformational approach employs a pedagogy that elicits learning.
Reardon describes this approach as follows:

[transformational] peace educators ... describe their goal as eliciting (not imposing or
inculcating) positive responses, recognizing that education is not so much a process of
imparting knowledge as it is “drawing out” the capacity to learn … In eliciting awareness,
the intent is to strengthen capacity to care, to develop a sincere concern for those who
suffer because of the problems and a commitment to resolving them through action.
Awareness infused by caring becomes concern that can lead to such commitment when
one action is followed by other actions, and when action for peace becomes a sustained
behavioral pattern, part of the learner’s way of life. The objective is to elicit an ongoing
and active response to the problems of peace and a commitment to their resolution. ... this
cycle of care, concern, and commitment is the core of the peace learning process.32

Reardon maintains that a transformational peace education should draw out “a
new mode of thinking that is life-affirming, oriented toward the fulfillment of the
human potential, and directed to the achievement of maturation as the ultimate
goal of ... positive peace.”33 More specifically, peace education should be

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30 Comprehensive Peace Education: Educating for Global Responsibility (New York: Teachers
College Press, 1988), x.
31 Betty A. Reardon, 2000: “Peace Education: A Review and Projection,” in: Robert Moon,
Miriam Ben-Peretz, and Sally Brown (Eds.) Routledge International Companion to Education
(London: Routledge).
32 Reardon, Comprehensive Peace Education: Educating for Global Responsibility, 21–22.
33 Comprehensive Peace Education: Educating for Global Responsibility, 53.
fundamentally concerned with the development of the political efficacy of future citizens—the capacity to engage in transformative political action.\footnote{Betty A. Reardon, Dale T Snauwaert, 2011: “Reflective pedagogy, cosmopolitanism, and critical peace education for political efficacy: a discussion of Betty A. Reardon’s assessment of the field,” in: \textit{In Factis Pax: Journal of Peace Education and Social Justice} 5, 1; see Chap. 13 in this volume.}

Political efficacy involves “complex learning that requires pedagogies of multiple forms of reflective inquiry.” Peace learning and thus reflective inquiry is both critical and ethical; it involves both the analysis of politics and value-based ethical assessment.

Reardon articulates three forms of reflective inquiry: critical/analytic; moral/ethical; and contemplative/ruminative. Critical/analytic reflection pertains to the discernment of power, an understanding and critique of social institutions, analysis of the structural dimensions of social life, and a critical consciousness (in a Freirian sense) of the political–economic origins of violence. Moral/ethical reflection addresses questions of justice, and thereby structural and cultural violence, guided by the principles of a human rights framework. Contemplative reflection is conceived as self-examination of internal moral motivation and commitment. It pertains to a reflection on what is meaningful and valuable. It also involves the exercise of imagination to envision alternative realities necessary for transformative action.\footnote{Ibid.}

The central method of facilitating reflective inquiry is not only the posing of questions, but more deeply the posing of queries. Reardon writes:

> Reflective inquiry initiated by the posing of questions is deepened through the consideration of queries. In that it is in essence a process of thinking by interrogation, it is thus essentially dialogic, beginning with focusing on and encountering the subject of the inquiry as the entry point into the process of examination of what is to be further explored. In this respect, reflective inquiry begins with an inner process of confronting and questioning toward a basic understanding of the subject or issue. While it is possible for the process to remain inward and still be productive of learning, the practice of reflective inquiry as peace education—learning toward social and political change—must become outwardly dialogic in the form of a learning discourse through posing queries to elicit the individual reflections of all who comprise the learning community (or class).\footnote{“Reflective Pedagogy, Cosmopolitanism, and Critical Peace Education for Political Efficacy: A Discussion of Betty A. Reardon’s Assessment of the Field,” 7.}

While questions elicit definitive, descriptive factual answers, queries call for conditional, speculative responses. Queries require reflection rather than recollection or deduction, which in turn produces group dialog and inquiry. “Queries are a way of putting the “quest” into questions and the “search” into research … It is the questing and the search that “opens” an inquiry.”\footnote{“Reflective Pedagogy, Cosmopolitanism, and Critical Peace Education for Political Efficacy: A Discussion of Betty A. Reardon’s Assessment of the Field,” 12.} Queries open inquiry to deeper reflection and critical analysis.
This conception of a pedagogy of reflective inquiry is deeply influenced by Paulo Freire’s critical pedagogy:

Critical pedagogy is the methodology most consistent with the transformative goals of peace education and human rights learning... I have argued that the theories and practices we have learned from Paulo Freire are the conceptual and methodological heart of the most effective peace learning and peace politics. I so argue largely because I see his work as the primary model of a process in which learning is politics and politics can be learning ... 38

Paulo Freire posits the general historical existence of a social reality dominated by oppression. 39 In response he points us toward the possibility of a society constituted by authentic subjects co-existing in dialogical solidarity seeking to fulfill their ontological vocation to become more fully human. The core problematic is how to move from oppression to liberation and empowerment, which entails both the transformation of the structures of consciousness and the transformation of the social structure. The Freirean means to this end is cultural action—dialogical and problem-posing educational interventions (critical pedagogy) to facilitate critical consciousness and authentic subjectivity. Within this theoretical framework Freire conceives hope as “untested feasibility.” Freire maintains that there is a strong tendency to perceive social reality as reified, as fixed. This perception locks the individual in a reality that is hopeless, leading to a disempowered self-concept. Freire maintains, however, that it is possible to understand social realities as fluid limit situations that are social constructions subject to critique and transformation. Critical pedagogy is a method that engages in problem-posing activities that re-present taken-for-granted social assumptions into problems to be critically explored and understood. It constitutes a method that empowers and liberates the consciousness of the student. This approach significantly shapes Reardon’s idea of critical reflective inquiry.

It is also apparent that Reardon’s pedagogy is significantly influenced by John Dewey. Dewey defines education as “that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience.” 40 Dewey conceives the reconstruction of experience in terms of the development of human capacities and powers. Learning is fundamentally about capacity building: knowledge is power. The reconstruction of experience, entailing the growth of capacity, is facilitated by various modes of reflective experimental inquiry and esthetic experience connected to the conjoint activity of social life. From this perspective, peace is a basic conjoint, communal activity, and peace education a process of the reconstruction of experience facilitated by reflective inquiry connected to that activity. Both Dewey and Reardon emphasize the development of the student’s internal capacities and powers through active reflective inquiry as the essence of education.

38 Reardon, Human Rights Learning, 66.
39 Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed.
In summary, Reardon’s transformational pedagogy addresses the core problematic of how to promote authentic planetary consciousness in the movement from oppression to empowerment. She argues that this pedagogy, and its reflective, dialogical inquiry, must be critical, ethical, and contemplative, which will cultivate the human capacities necessary for the political empowerment and efficacy of citizens, the core goal of peace education.

In conclusion, this book is a rich collection of reflective inquiry and ongoing learning by one of the great pioneers of peace education. This commentary introduces Dr. Reardon’s core ideas, which are elucidated consistently from the beginning of her work to the present. In addition to being a leading world figure in the field of peace, disarmament, and human rights education, Dr. Reardon has also been a major contributor to the development of a feminist analysis of peace issues within the context of a global, ethical perspective. Her major writings on peace, disarmament and human security from a gender perspective will be the subject of another volume in this series (volume 27). Betty Reardon has powerfully shaped the theory and practice of peace and human rights education over five decades. Her work is truly path breaking, both enlightening and inspiring to me and to many others. May the publication of these collections of her work serve to challenge and inspire peace builders and learners everywhere.

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