

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL CONVENTION

HONOLULU, HAWAII • JULY 31–AUGUST 4, 2013

Outreach with
Peace Psychology:
Different Methods
Different Constituencies

Remarks accompany each slide, removing what's already on the slide, and not including side-remarks made on the occasion.

Relatively New Methods

- Web Pages
- Social Media
- Blogs
- Comments on blogs
- Wikipedia articles
- YouTube




Social media has now been shown to be helpful in organizing nonviolent revolutions in places like Tunisia and Egypt. It's also been helpful when thousands of people participate in inducing the media to cover stories they were otherwise disinclined to cover. It would naturally be an outlet for educating various groups on various concepts within peace psychology.

I especially want to highlight Wikipedia articles. There are all kinds of topics within peace psychology that can be added to this online encyclopedia, and it's designed so that anyone with any expertise can add them. I encourage you to look up your own area of expertise within the field, and see if it's already well covered there. If there are tweaks or major additions needed, you can get outreach to a wide group of people by adding them. If the topic isn't there at all, then now's a good time for you to add it in. You can go to www.wikipedia.org for instructions on how to add or edit content.

Finally, YouTube has become the go-to place for all kinds of videos, and creative videos are a wonderful way to get across various kinds of concepts in a way that's memorable.

Tried-and-true Methods

- Books for all audiences
- Articles in popular magazines
- Letters to the Editor
- Radio & TV
- Films / DVDs



Books for all audiences, ranging from children to people interested in specific topics or groups

Letters to the editor have traditionally been one of the most read parts of the newspaper, whether on paper or online. These are quite short, of course, so not good for extensive lessons, but short points can be gotten across and over time they can add up to more knowledge for the general public.

Now I want to discuss different constituencies that we need to do outreach to, and I'm going to start with the rather obvious ones we're already familiar with:

Constituency: Children

- Conflict resolution skills
- Bullying / school violence
- Concepts for understanding why adults act so funny
- Concepts for understanding what to do about it.



We have of course already produced a large set of materials for teaching children conflict skills and have influenced education in areas such as Montessori or the jigsaw technique. This is an area of intense interest. Children would also be keenly interested in how to deal with bullying and such problems in their own schools. We can teach concepts such as those that come from the Milgram experiments, the Stanford Prison experiment, and the plethora of psychological concepts that help explain why adults act so funny.

The Saturday after the attacks of September 11, 2001, a TV network that didn't feel comfortable with ordinary cartoons instead held a Town Hall-style show with an audience of children in order to help children process the events. They had an airline pilot, a Muslim cleric, and a therapist to explain trauma. The *children* brought up the question of why these men had done it, and instead of the war-hysteria type of answer we often see – that is, they did it because they're monsters – the children came up with some remarkably insightful answers. The answers were in child-level language, but showed some sophistication. This inspired me to write my book *Gaining Mind of Peace: Why Violence Happens and How to Stop It*, for middle-school level children. We can come up with more materials of this kind so that by the time children grow up, they'll be able to make incisive psychological insights into whatever's happening in the news, since they've known the concepts for years. Division 48 does of course have an active peace education working group, which covers both children and various groups of adults.

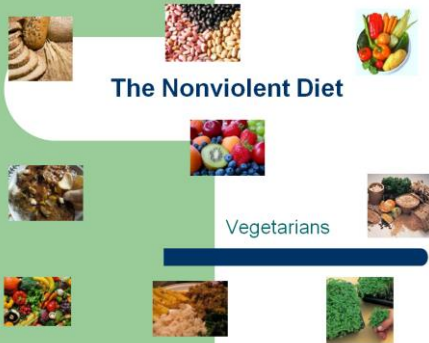
Constituency:

Activists

- Conflict transformation skills
- How to make activism more effective
- Concepts for understanding why people are violent
- Concepts for understanding what to do about it.



In addition to the conflict skills and concepts we want to teach everyone, activists naturally need to know the psychology of how to be effective – ranging from running groups smoothly to how to make their handouts clear and attracting. There were several of us that worked together for a book put out by Impact Publishers and Psychologists for Social Responsibility called *Working for Peace: A Handbook of Practical Psychology and Other Tools*, second edition, which does this outreach. This area is a prime one where specific concepts and tools need to be applied.



One specific group of activists I want to highlight. While activism on related issues such as environmental health, societal conditions for individual health, and various points having to do with nonviolence will be prevalent among peace activists, as yet most peace activists don't apply these principles to their diet in whole by being vegetarians, though they do tend to let vegetarian ideas influence what they eat.

Survey Question: Politics and Diet

Giving percentage of opposition:

War in Iraq/Afghanistan	62.5%
Death Penalty	57.3%

n = 562
MacNair, R.M. (2008), unpublished

What about in the other direction? How do vegetarians fare on peace concerns? Mainly, we don't know; I'm not aware of any polls on this. But as an example we do have this survey of over 500 vegetarians. It shows this group was more likely than the general population to oppose the recent wars and the death penalty.

So --

Most sympathize
But a large portion don't




Yet there's a nonviolence point of view to appeal to

So we have a question here that may apply to other issues as well: Can we build upon an interest in nonviolence in one area in order to educate for nonviolence in others?

Of course, people who are themselves vegetarians will have more credibility with other vegetarians.

Some may object that there are many vegetarians who do the diet for their own individual health reasons, which is true, but my research shows that over time vegetarians tend to expand their reasons for their practice in order to fortify their behavior and defend it from criticism. So building on the altruistic reasoning they either start with or develop later is a definite avenue for helping more people understand the concepts and research of peace psychology. Some of the psychological research will be of great interest to their own issue, and then if we pay attention we may be able to get that to expand.

<p>Constituency: Religious groups</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict Transformation Skills • How to make service more effective • Connections to religious explanations for violence and peace. 	<p>In the United States, roughly 40% of the population attends church, synagogue, mosque or temple regularly. How many of our organizations can get that percentage of its membership out to monthly meetings, or even annual meetings, much less weekly ones? Most people attending are being asked at the time to be mindful of the well-being of all people, and they're participating in a community, so this is fertile ground for offering insight on how psychology can advance the cause of peace and of service to others in general.</p> <p>We do have a Spiritual and Humanitarian Service Working Group, and I serve as liaison to APA Division 36, Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, having attended most of their annual conferences. But well beyond what Division 48 itself does, we can be attentive to opportunities that come from religious organizations and religiously-motivated individuals to spread the concepts and empirical knowledge of peace psychology.</p> <p>These are the groups that we might commonly think of as our constituencies. Obviously, people inclined to be sympathetic immediately are liable to be very fruitful and easy for outreach, and we should be taking full advantage of this. But if we limit ourselves to people inclined to be sympathetic, to the low-hanging fruit, then we limit ourselves severely. We would also then be failing to follow the insights of our own discipline by allowing the division of our whole society into different camps, where we stay in our own camp. We would be failing to see the humanity in other groups, and we would be losing some prime opportunities. So I want to cover where those opportunities may be in constituencies we don't ordinarily think of.</p>
---	--

These are the groups that we might commonly think of as our constituencies. Obviously, people inclined to be sympathetic immediately are liable to be very fruitful and easy for outreach, and we should be taking full advantage of this. But if we limit ourselves to people inclined to be sympathetic, to the low-hanging fruit, then we limit ourselves severely. We would also then be failing to follow the insights of our own discipline by allowing the division of our whole society into different camps, where we stay in our own camp. We would be failing to see the humanity in other groups, and we would be losing some prime opportunities. So I want to cover where those opportunities may be in constituencies we don't ordinarily think of.



Unusual Outreach: Libertarians



"The consistent right-to-life position should be to protect the unborn and oppose abortion, to reject the death penalty, and to firmly oppose our foreign policy that promotes an empire requiring aggressive wars that involve thousands of innocent people being killed."

Ron Paul as a presidential candidate last year was often found to be making remarks against overseas wars, consistent with libertarian principles. While he also expressed views that many of us found objectionable according to those principles, he does represent a voice among Republicans for a view consistent with their anti-big-government rhetoric – actually applying it to the military, where it belongs.

A friend of mine who was once on the Hill lobbying against nuclear weapons came across Ron Paul and asked him his position. Paul responded that he thought 6 or 7 nuclear weapons on submarines ought to do the trick. Personally, that's 6 or 7 more than I had in mind, but it's in stark contrast to other Republicans. Paul is quite eloquent on how intolerable the overseas bases of the United States would be were foreign powers to put them within our shores, using this to illustrate why it's wrong for the U.S. to extend bases into theirs.

Unusual Outreach: Anti-War Conservatives

Pat Buchanan distinguishes between Defense spending and Empire spending



The American Conservative, 9/30/2010

Conservative Pat Buchanan has an interesting approach in the long-simmering connection of war spending to poverty by virtue of its crowding out spending on good anti-poverty programs. He proposes a distinction between *defense* spending and *empire* spending. No matter what he thinks of the social programs, he argues it politically unrealistic that those will be seriously curtailed; Democrats will see to their continuance. So if the Tea Party is serious about cutting federal spending, then *empire* spending is where the major cuts can and should be made.

Unusual Outreach: Anti-death penalty conservatives

"Conservatives have every reason to believe the death penalty system is no different from any politicized, costly, inefficient, bureaucratic, government-run operation . . ."

— Richard Viguerie
"When Governments Kill"
Sojourners, 2009



Richard Viguerie is quite well-known in conservative circles, and here's what he says on the death penalty: "Conservatives have every reason to believe the death penalty system is no different from any politicized, costly, inefficient, bureaucratic, government-run operation . . . But here the end result is the end of someone's life. In other words, it's a government system *that kills people*. Those of us who oppose abortion believe that it is perhaps the greatest immorality to take an innocent life. While the death penalty is supposed to take the life of the guilty, we know that is not always the case. It should have shocked the consciences of conservatives when

various government prosecutors withheld exculpatory, or opposed allowing DNA-tested, evidence in death row cases. To conservatives, that should be deemed as immoral as abortion . . . But even when guilt is certain, there are many downsides to the death penalty system.” End quote.

Conservative columnist George Will has also noted that since the death penalty involves a large government bureaucracy, quote, “skepticism is in order.”

Unusual Outreach:
Anti-Drone Conservatives

Title of article: “Pro-Life Means Anti-Drone”

“Should we stop using robots that randomly kill children?”

Jack Hunter, The American Conservative, 10/26/2012

Since U.S. President Obama has markedly increased the use of weaponized drones, there have actually been several sources skeptical of Obama who have now become markedly skeptical of the drones. Here, in the *American Conservative*, Jack Hunter makes an extensive case that targeted killings by robot are bound to kill, and do kill, innocent children, and cannot be excused as accidents. He points out that pro-lifers don’t excuse abortion as a result of accidental pregnancy, and the same point must consistently apply to weaponized drones.

Troy Newman, director of Operation Rescue, was full of sarcasm when he referred to President Obama getting the Nobel Peace Prize and then using these weapons that directly target individuals. He referred to the “kill all the right people” philosophy, of which he strenuously disapproves, as applying to both abortion and weaponized drones. Which leads us to:

Unusual Outreach:
Pro-lifers



Here we have a wide group of people, where the media are fond of stereotypes and the politicians are fond of some bizarre statements that are not well-thought out, a point which is true of many of their statements on other topics as well.

We do already have a good portion of pro-life activists as peace movement activists – or peace activists who have become pro-life as well – generally covered in the “consistent life ethic,” which links and opposes war, the death penalty, abortion, euthanasia, racism and poverty. Pro-life feminism and the Pro-Life Alliance of Gays and Lesbians also tend to be sympathetic to peace concerns. In this picture, the pink sign reads “Women for Nonviolent

Choices” No War * No Abortion * No Death Penalty,” and is being held up by friends of mine with Feminists Choosing Life of New York. And in the lower photo, the sign which says “Consistent Life: Pro-Peace, Pro-Life” is being held at the annual March for Life in Washington D.C., where the leadership is hostile but much of the crowd is quite pleased, making for excellent outreach. The woman in the black coat holding up the sign is me.

For purposes of outreach, I think it’s best to leave outreach about peace concerns to proliferators to those who are also pro-lifers. Pro-choicers who make the attempt will usually discover quickly that they lack credibility. They would do best to refer pro-life activists on to the web pages of groups like Consistent Life or Feminists for Life. I do advise those pro-choicers who find themselves in discussion with pro-life activists that the most productive conversation will be to bring up the bias of the media; it’s keenly felt by practically all activists, and can therefore serve as a common ground conversation even among activists of opposing views.

Activists vs. Politicians



“It is sad and alarming that we have come to this point where some of the major pro-life leaders in the Legislature are choosing to put the illegal immigration issue and who pays for what, over the life and health of babies in the womb . . . When did it become important to pick and choose which babies deserve prenatal care and which don’t, by virtue of the womb in which they reside?”





Julie Schmit-Albin, Executive Director, Nebraska Right to Life, April 9, 2012 Open letter to Nebraska State Senators in support of a bill to restore prenatal funding for undocumented pregnant mothers.

But even among the moderate and rightwing parts of the pro-life movement, there is more concern that shows that outreach with peace theories and empirical data can be fruitful. As an example I offer here a quote from an open letter last year to Nebraska lawmakers from the head of Nebraska Right to Life in support of a bill to restore prenatal care funding for undocumented pregnant women. She says, [read slide]

Then the final constituency I wish to discuss is:

<p>Constituency: Ourselves</p> <p>APA ANNUAL CONVENTION JULY 31—AUGUST 4 HONOLULU, HAWAII</p>  	<p>If I suggest that there are times when we haven't quite lived up to the concepts and ideals in our own discipline, I have a fair degree of confidence that most of the people in the room will have examples spring to mind from their own experience. I'm not going to offer any examples, because many of those that sprang to your mind may well have been of other people who had some spring into their minds about you. I know that I, for one, have fallen short on many an occasion, and really, so have we all. We're only human.</p>
	<p>After all, there have been high ideals in an assertive nonviolent community that arose during the Roman Empire, and as Christianity this is been going for almost two millennia now. Jews and Buddhists have had such ideals for longer than that. Even in concentrated communities of round-the-clock lifestyles, such as convents and monasteries, both Christian and Buddhist, people as a whole have fallen far short of 100% in maintaining the ideals they set for themselves. So why should it surprise us that newcomers like us have the same problem?</p>
	<p>Still, it's been noted many times that when people behave inconsistently – the technical term for this is hypocrisy – this does damage the philosophy from which they are deviating. If we don't get our own act together as peace psychologists, it will be much more difficult to convince others that peace is possible or that we're the ones that will help establish it.</p>
	<p>Therefore, learning our own discipline and having self-discipline is crucial to any other outreach efforts.</p>
	<p>It's been my observation of interactions among our society's members that when a concept of peace psychology, such as avoiding enemy images or us-and-them thinking, is labeled as a problem, those who receive the label do not understand this as a sudden burst of insight, but rather as a simple argument and an insult which does not deserve being taken seriously. The method of labeling the phenomenon when we notice it in others does not seem to be terribly workable. We need to explore other options, and gain empirical data, on what works even among ourselves.</p>

 <p>Constituency: Ourselves</p> <p>APA ANNUAL CONVENTION JULY 31-AUGUST 4 HONOLULU, HAWAII</p>	<p>But we know that the discipline of peace psychology is crucial, to my mind is indispensable, to improving the human condition. We have a great deal to offer the world, as I show on this slide – people whose work has inspired us to name awards after them, plus our journal, newsletter, and the peace psychology encyclopedia, along with innumerable books and articles and letters that I could have included. The more we cultivate the knowledge and practice within ourselves, the more we have to offer to all the other natural constituencies and to groups that might be willing to give us a look.</p>
 <p>AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION</p> <p>ANNUAL CONVENTION</p> <p>HONOLULU, HAWAII • JULY 31-AUGUST 4, 2013</p> <p>Rachel M. MacNair, Ph.D. 816.753.2057 president@peacepsych.org</p>	