

Earth and Peace Education Associates



EPE Transitions

Volume 4 Issue 1

March 2009

Special issue on Futures Education

Transitions, the E-educational resource of Earth and Peace Education Associates International (EPE) focuses on our global community's progress towards a culture of peace, i.e. a society of institutions and norms based on nonviolence, ecological sustainability, social justice, intergenerational equity and participatory decision-making. This issue explores the links between futures education, peace education and environmental education as a way of educating towards a culture of social and ecological peace.

You are invited to join the global network of educators working to bring about this transition. *Anita Wenden, Editor* < wenden@rcn.com >

CONTENTS

- Reflections on integrating peace, environment, & futures education 2
- Resources for integrative value-based learning 8
- Upcoming conferences 13
- News about educational civil society organizations 14
- A plea and a challenge 16

- Contact information 17

Guest column

Reflections on the connections between peace education, environmental education, and futures education

Francis P. Hutchinson

Francis P. Hutchinson is internationally known for his work in peace education, environmental education and futures education. He is Coordinator, Peace and the Environment, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies/CPACS, University of Sydney, Australia, and in 2008 was a visiting professor and Tamkang Chair at the Graduate Institute of Futures Studies, Tamkang University, Taipei. He serves as Consulting Editor for the *Journal of Futures Studies* (Tamkang University), is a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Peace Education* (Taylor & Francis), and is a councilor of the Peace Education Commission of the International Peace Research Association.

These reflections bring together views shared during an online conversation between Anita Wenden, Transitions editor, and Frank Hutchinson on topics related to the integration of peace, environmental and futures education in educating for a culture of social and ecological peace.

Distinctive dimensions of Futures Education

'Futures education' has much in common with other areas of educational innovation, such as peace education and environmental education. Whether in schools, colleges, universities or in community education, these areas of teaching and learning attach major importance to not only what is but what might be.

Indeed, much of what we do as teachers and students has within it an implied sense of the future. For the peace educator, there is likely to be not only criticism of militarism, including gendered violence and extreme nationalism, but an emphasis on encouraging social imagination about alternatives to violence. Much importance is usually attached to developing skills for transforming conflicts non-violently. With environmental educators, there is often a deep concern about current trends in environmental destruction but also for encouraging students to tread more gently on the earth and to work compassionately toward a more sustainable future.

Where futures education is distinctive is in the strong emphasis that it places on an explicit futures dimension in the curriculum. Here the interest is not in predicting 'the future' as if it were just some kind of extrapolation of existing trends. The fallacious assumptions of the future as a singularity and as, for

example, mostly 'business-as-usual' or even as 'apocalyptic certainty' need to be unpacked. The future is far from surprise free.

Futures education is concerned with encouraging deeper forms of learning that are open to diverse knowledge traditions and which welcome cross-cultural and inter-civilisational dialogue. It offers creative opportunities in the present for students to question taken-for-granted views of the future. In important respects, it is about inviting reflection not only on what feared-futures students may have, including what might be shaping these anticipations, but also offering enabling learning environments that encourage a constructive play of ideas about preferred futures and possible pathways for creating them . There are interconnected issues of moral imagination and responsibilities to future generations (see table below).

Conventional learning	Deeper learning
Axiom	Hypothesis
Knowledge acquisition. Transmitting established 'truths' or 'expert knowledge'	Questioning taken-for –granted views about the nature of reality and potential reality. Openness to alternative knowledge traditions
Monologue	Dialogue
Surface analysis	Causal layered analysis(e.g.of long-held myths or mental-maps about unilinear 'progress', neoliberal /cowboy economics, consumer paradises and 'a resourceful earth' that are coming under questioning with the current interlinked global financial, military and environmental crises)
Linear projections, extrapolative thinking	Action research spirals, alternative futures thinking about cultures of peace and sustainability

Futures education as a necessary component of education for a culture of social and ecological peace

To seek to educate for cultures of social and ecological peace, invites active participation in the present in building better futures. Clearly, there are many empirical indicators and early warning signs that our interconnected world faces some critical challenges, economically, socially and environmentally. In such a context, it may be possible to be either immobilised by the politics of fear or to live out the escapist politics of denial and consumerist fantasies. With the latter,

there are the delusions of ignoring or seeking to ignore existing and emergent signs of both structural and ecological violence, or of attempting to blame-shift problems onto others.

From a futures education perspective, it is important to question such conventional assumptions or habits of thought for responding to difficulties. As peace educators and environmental educators, the challenge is not simply to confirm worst fears or grim, in perpetuity 'us' versus 'them' scenarios of times to come. After all, this is precisely the mind-set that military strategists tend to take for granted in their planning for future operations, and in arguing for high military budgets 'to ensure security.' With the latter, there is foreclosure on the possibility of creating durable cultures of peace and sustainability. Rather with such scenarios projected future landscapes comprise escalating violent conflicts with struggles over scarce resources and intensifying climate change destruction. There are no real exits visualised from permanent war economies and future onslaughts. The notion of transition or transformative futures thinking and non-violent action for cultures of peace and sustainability are dismissed in these narrowly security-oriented and masculinist discourses as 'naïve, unrealistic or unattainable'.

Elise Boulding, a leading feminist futurist and peace educator, in talking about futures thinking and enhanced moral imagination some years ago, coined the term 'image literacy'. She introduced this concept to help explain what she meant by forms of literacy that get beyond taken-for-granted 'national security' discourses, colonising or impoverished media images of what might be. Crucial to such a task is the provision of adequate opportunities in the classroom to critically reflect on current challenges. This, however, in itself is unlikely to be enough to encourage any real sense of agency as global citizens in resisting non-violently feared futures.

From my years of teaching experience at the school, college and university levels, I strongly agree with Boulding here. In what we do, it is vital to integrate both the languages of critique with the languages of hope. This means inviting active learning, including the use of cooperative learning techniques and 'futures workshop' activities on how to make hope practical. Such peaceful pedagogy is not about confirming fatalism or making despair convincing.

Futures education and intergenerational equity

To get beyond narrowly egocentric ethics is in part a matter of how we may begin to negotiate a sense of inter-being or interdependence, including notions such as a 'global ethic', 'peace with environmental justice' and 'intergenerational equity'. In an increasingly globalized world, this entails particular challenges and many contradictions. Rather than one identity, we may have plural identities (e.g.as a teacher, a student , member of a local community , member of a global

community). How these identities play out may have significant implications for the future.

As teachers, we usually feel a strong sense of responsibility to our students. There is within such a professional and moral framework an implied futures perspective. We are not just concerned with what happens here and now in a particular classroom context, but much more. We are concerned with what will happen when our students finish school and, if they have the chance, go on to college or university. If I run into former students and they tell me that they are doing well and are engaged in doing socially valuable work, I am delighted.

Yet, such an implied futures perspective arguably needs to be made explicit both within the formal curriculum and how we teach. In so doing, there is an important invitation to rethink our moral imagination in ways that include not only responsibilities to the present generation but to future generations. Our sense of inter-being and active hope would then be part of an emergent global civic culture. Foresight and a compassionate regard for future generations, both human and other species, would be integral to visions of good teaching for this century and beyond.

An integrated approach to peace, environment/sustainability and world futures.

There is still too much of a tendency in curriculum development and design to focus on narrowly disciplinary frameworks rather than encouraging active cross-disciplinary dialogue and an explicit futures dimension. As part of the push of the past with the ways in which the major Western academic disciplines have come to be constituted, we tend to ignore interconnections. I have attempted to address such problems in both undergraduate peace studies units that I have taught over the years at the University of Western Sydney and, more recently, as part of a Masters program at the University of Sydney. The first unit that I developed and taught at the University of Western Sydney during the mid 1990's was called, 'Peace, sustainability and world futures'. It was later to become a foundations unit for the undergraduate program within the social science undergraduate program. Similarly, when I earlier worked as a curriculum consultant in peace education (kindergarten to year 12), I attempted to bring together issues of peace, sustainability and world futures.

We tend to put areas of knowledge into specialized categories or little boxes like commodities to be purchased on supermarket shelves. Or, to change the metaphor to a one of conventional military strategy, there are rivalries perceived between jealously guarded 'knowledge territories'. These are often seen as needing to be protected from incursions and threat-laden times to come rather than as openness towards plural ways of knowing, including non-Western perspectives.

Issues of peace, social justice and environmentally sustainable futures do not neatly fit into 'boxes' or 'territories'. The direct and indirect environmental impacts, for example, of unequal patterns of global consumption and bloated military budgets cannot be adequately understood by staying within the conventional disciplinary, interpretative frame of economics. If we are genuinely concerned with working toward better futures rather than accepting our feared futures as inexorable, both enhanced cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural dialogue are likely to be important.

Emerging trends in peace education and environmental education suggest the importance of more integrated approaches, providing such approaches welcome diversity and do not confuse integration with uniformity in philosophy and methods. To the extent that even in such areas of cross-disciplinary curriculum innovation as peace education and environmental education there has not been enough dialogue and sharing of ideas, this needs to be actively addressed. Each cross-disciplinary field brings both insights and a variety of voices on current challenges, and much may be learnt from the other.

Still, there remains a real issue of the need for greater cooperation across diversity. For cross-disciplinary fields to approach questions relating to cultures of social and ecological peace in a discrete or separate manner that substantially ignore the other's insights (or even misunderstandings), I think is short-sighted. There is some definite evidence that such compartmentalization and lack of foresight persist in some strands of both environmental and peace education even today.

However, in saying this, I would also caution against any uncritical approach that seeks to telescope one field into the other. An appreciation of biological diversity is a central precept in ecological thinking. At the same time, active listening and openness to cultural diversity are important pedagogical principles in peace education, along with notions of creating vibrant, equitable and inclusive learning communities that respect 'the rights of future generations'. In other words, we should not be frightened of diversity. We do not need to work for a uniform curriculum between peace education and environmental education. That would risk what Vandana Shiva has critiqued as 'monocultures of the mind'. The goal should be unity in diversity rather than unity in uniformity.

My current involvement with an Indigenous studies curriculum project, has made me particularly conscious of the risks of forms of 'integration' that insist on assimilation and which privilege or take for granted Western ways of knowing about the environment rather than valuing equal participation. Similarly, as a peace educator and futures educator, working recently in an Asian culture, I think the importance of cross-cultural and inter-civilisational dialogue is crucial, including a greater awareness of Islamic, Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist knowledge traditions on peace and the environment. I like the metaphor of

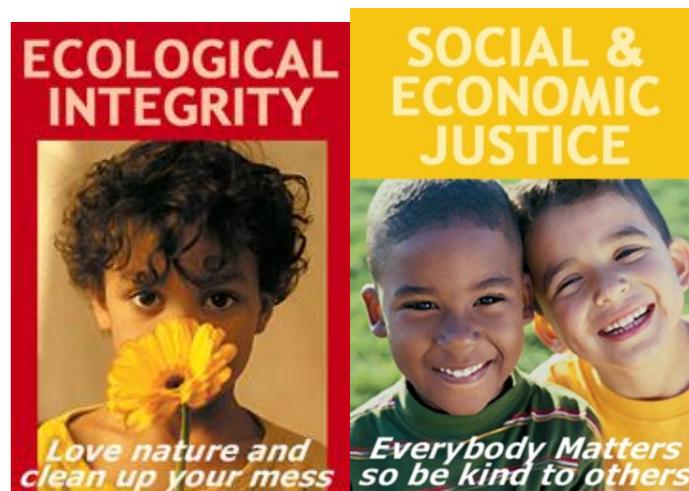
building rainbow-coalitions across diversity. In so doing, we seek to avoid culturally arrogant claims to 'superior' knowledge, and are prepared to better cooperate together as both teachers and learners.

Need for an explicit futures dimension across the curriculum

In conclusion, I would argue that a need exists to rethink our current priorities in education and other spheres in less short-sighted, more imaginative and less greedy ways so that there may be greater global cooperation in actively meeting the basic needs of all humanity and the environment

In reflecting on how to possibly begin to transcend the combined addictions of armament culture and the disproportionate 'wants' of high carbon consumptive economies, the prospects of building 'a culture of peace and sustainability' may appear to recede quickly into the realm of impossibility like a mirage in the desert. After all, our school and university systems remain still, in many ways, very much part of the problem in their lack of an explicit futures dimension to curricula and teaching.

Moreover, integrated approaches to issues of 'environments for peace' are not easy given the many institutional constraints, often petty or parochial rivalries, and 'business-as-usual' habits of thought. There remains a strong 'push of the past' within established academic disciplines and power structures. Too often, there is inadequate funding or support for newer cross-disciplinary fields of social inquiry to enable them to establish themselves and to make a real difference. I am reminded of Gandhi's comment that the world has enough for our needs but not for our greed or manufactured wants. Yet, at the same time, our schools and universities are contradictory sites. In various ways, they are crucial parts of any potential solutions. To use an ecological metaphor, they are places where seeds of peace and sustainability may be planted but which may be affected by seasonal changes, and how much attention is given to nurturing creative growth and diversity.



Resources for integrative value-based learning

Integrating peace, environment and futures education

We thank Dr. Hutchinson for bringing these resources to our attention.

COURSES

*Peace and Environment Unit, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies(CPACS)
University of Sydney <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/cpacs>*

Taught by Frank Hutchinson, the unit is mainly integrated thematically around important issues of ecological peace and ecological violence, moral imagination and intergenerational equity, non-violent social change and active citizenship. The approach taken does not attempt a one-size fits-all combination or make claims to a supposedly 'holistic' integration for the various strands of peace and environmental education.

The aim of the unit is to facilitate active learning communities in which greater collaboration may occur, appreciation of diversity may be enhanced, and participatory consciousness may develop about 'environments for peace'. Students are provided with a detailed resource guide. They are encouraged to do cooperative learning projects. As part of the unit, there is a practical peace education and environmental education activity outside the university's usual classrooms and lecture halls. Students participate in an urban walk, and are invited to reflect in their learning journals on issues raised about creating a culture of social and ecological peace.

Among the diverse and valued contributors to this unit are Peter Herborn(urban planning ,eco-cities and peace education), Jake Lynch(a peace journalist), and Ariel Salleh (a leading eco-feminist thinker whose published works include *Eco-sufficiency and global justice*); Lindsay Mell and Sandy Yang (the United Nations Association), Mark Diesendorf (ecological design and green technologies), Eva Rodriguez Riestra (Architects for Peace), Frances Parker(a social ecologist), Jill Finnane(an Earth Charter movement member), and Susan Thompson(built environments and sustainability); Dan Cass(Greenpeace), Dana Murty(a Buddhist environmental scientist), Rebecca Gilling(Planet Ark), and Vanessa Russ and Emily McDaniel (Indigenous perspectives on land/Mother Earth/Country as expressed through the creative arts).

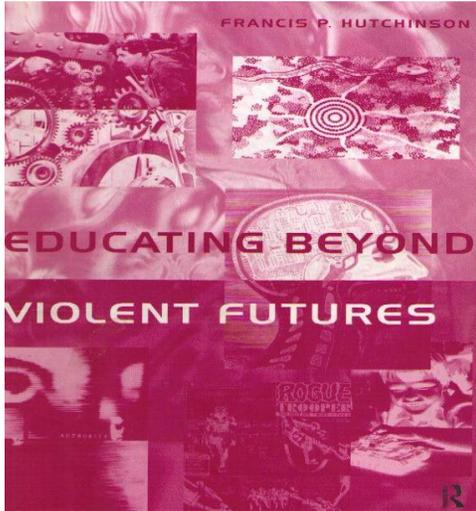
Teacher Education Programs Bath Spa University College (England)

Taught by David Hicks and others, this program seeks to encourage a sense of global citizenship, drawing upon aspects of peace education, environmental education and, futures education. www.bathspa.ac.uk

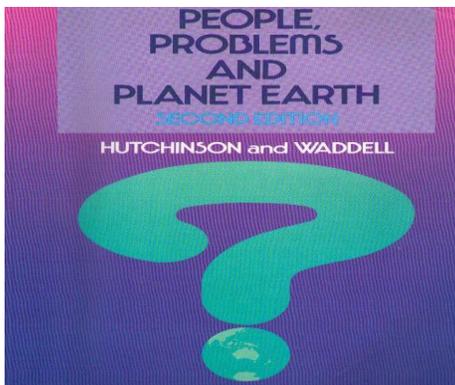
Peace Studies Program, University of New England, Australia

Coordinated by Bert Jenkins, the program has a range of innovative units that address issues of peace with environmental justice and explore the implications of 'the precautionary principle' about climate change and our planetary environment for the ways we teach and learn. www.une.edu.au

BOOKS



Educating beyond violent futures, F.P. Hutchinson, London, Routledge 1996 includes some practical examples for futures workshop activities.



People, Problems and Planet Earth (F.P. Hutchinson & L. Wadell, Macmillan:Melbourne, 1982, 2nd edition 1986)

Designed for use in both upper secondary and first year tertiary classes, this publication draws upon both the traditional social science disciplines and

areas of cross-disciplinary inquiry such as peace studies and environmental studies. The book is dedicated to the authors' daughter and 'to all who care about planet Earth and the resolution of its problems'(p.viii) and takes a global citizenship and peace education perspective to these problems. Though published in 1996, the author agrees that many of the issues addressed in the work have greater salience now than then.

Here is but one example of the kind of issues and case-studies that were included the book that linked the theory and practice of non-violent action and notions of active citizenship with creating cultures of peace and sustainability

306 *Major World Issues and the Futures Debate*

CASE STUDY: Franklin River Environmental Campaign



1. Investigations
2. Negotiations
3. Public Education
4. Direct Action
5. Long-term Struggle

This series of stages doesn't just apply to the no-dams campaign, it applies to any environmental or other social change campaign you care to name—from wood-chipping or nuclear disarmament to campaigns for full employment or social equality.

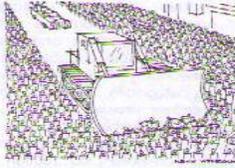
Ode to a Bulldozer Driver
(by Shane Markham)
Tune: 'Hey, big spender'

The minute you walked in the joint (ba-doomp)
I could see you were a man of extinction
A real tree-bender
Good woodchip, so refined
The thought of all that sawdust really blows your mind.

So let me get right to the point (ba-doomp)
I'm gonna chain myself to your machinery
Hey, Tree-Bender
Hey, Tree-Bender
Let the wild rivers run free (ba da da da da da dump)

Wouldn't you like to have ferns, ferns, ferns
How's about a few plants, plants, plants
I can show you some... huon pine
Let me show you some... huon pine

So let me get right to the point (ba-doomp)
I'm gonna chain myself to your machinery
Hey, tree-bender
Hey, tree-bender
Let the wild rivers run free (Ba da da da da da dump)



(Source: *Franklin River Blockade Handbook*, Melbourne, TWS, 1982, and *Franklin River Blockade Songs*, Hobart, TWS, 1983, p. 107)

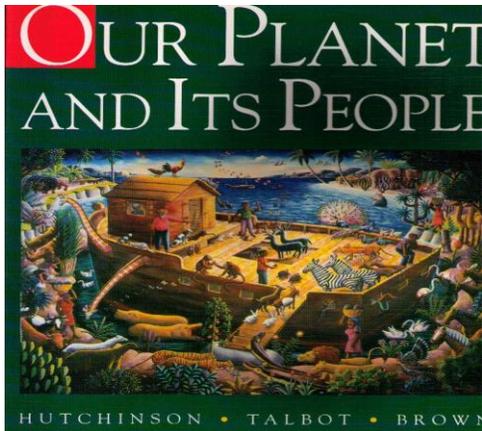
The Franklin blockade follows in a world wide tradition of Non-Violent Direct Action as a means of bringing about change. This tradition is strong in Australia and other parts of the South Pacific, such as New Zealand. Actions such as the obstruction of rainforest logging in the Terania Creek Basin, the Vietnam Moratorium Movement, the campaign against the NZ Springbok tour, the Women Against Rape, Anzac Day marches and the occupation of Alcoa's Wagerup refinery site in WA by the Campaign to Save Native Forests, are all non-violent actions.

In taking this action we join with millions of people throughout the world and throughout history who have taken a strong and principled stand against many forms of injustice and exploitation through non-violent direct action.

Blockade & wider campaign

The blockade is only a part of the ongoing campaign to save the Franklin River and the unique South-West wilderness. The activities of the campaign over its six year development have been diverse and exhaustive: from meticulous background research and the production of films and photo-displays, to public meetings and rallies, street stalls and political lobbying.

The range of activities which have been, and will be carried out, can be grouped under a number of commonsense headings which comprise the long-term campaign. These are:



Our planet and its people (Hutchinson et al, 1992; Macmillan: Melbourne) has many practical suggestions for integrating futures thinking in the curriculum.

ARTICLES

The following articles have also been authored by Frank Hutchinson.

'Listening to young people's voices on the future: are there lessons for environmental educators?' *Environmental Education Research* (1997), vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 189-202,

'Education for future generations', *Future Generations Journal* (International Environmental Institute, Foundation for International Studies, University of Malta, in assoc. with UNESCO and UNEP) no. 23, issue 2, 1997, pp. 10-15,

'Futures education', *World Yearbook of Education* (Kogan Page Ltd, UK). 1998,

'Learning journeys and future generations: towards cultures of peace', *Journal of Futures Studies*, vol. 5, no.3, 2001, pp, 131-142, and as a contributing author in

Youth Futures: empirical research and transformative visions, Bergin & Garvey: Westport, Connecticut & London). 2002. (contributing author)

'Community Building, Education and the Future', Keynote address given at the *Futures of Education: Future Studies in Education International Conference*, Taipei (2008). Forthcoming in *Journal of Futures Studies*, August 2009

Teaching and Learning for Peace (TLP)

TLP website http://www.tlpeace.org.au/peace-building_guide.htm

The website presents new programmes, an international noticeboard, information about published peace-building stories and most importantly, ways you and your families, friends, local schools, libraries, child care centres and communities can become involved in peace-building ...for the sake of children, and their children and the generations to follow.

TLP's Peacebuilding Storytelling Guide

For the Sake of the Children by Anne Mason addresses the following questions:

- how do we nurture belief in the possibility of a peaceful world in our children?
- how do we counteract the picture of violence and suffering offered daily by the mass media?

The author of this book argues that children must be offered a different view of human nature. They must learn that peaceful solutions to problems can work and, better than violent ones in the long term, in other words, that a peaceful world is not only desirable but possible. (**From the Preface of the Storytelling Guide**)

The guide is available free and may be downloaded from the TLP website.

THE ROAD TO PEACE: A Teaching Guide on Local and Global Transitional Justice

This comprehensive teaching guide, provided by the **Discover Human Rights Institute**, introduces students to the concept of transitional justice through:

- Lessons on the root causes and costs of war and conflict
- Overview of human rights and different transitional justice mechanisms
- Mock war crimes tribunal and mock truth commission role plays
- In-depth country case studies
- Individual case studies on human rights abuses
- Investigative tools to study the need for transitional justice in the U.S. the U.S.
- Skill-building resources on how to apply reconciliation on a local level
- Conflict resolution and peer mediation exercises
- Transitional justice glossary
- Resources for further study and action on peace and justice

Appropriate for 9th grade through adult learners.

This is available for free from Adobe. Download from <http://discoverhumanrights.org>

Contact information for the Institute:

650 Third Avenue South, Suite 550, Minneapolis, MN 55402
Phone: (612) 341-3302 Fax: (612) 341-2971

Human Rights Index of United Nations

The Universal Human Rights Index provides instant access for all countries to human rights information from the United Nations system. The index is based on the observations and recommendations of the following international expert bodies:

- the seven Treaty Bodies monitoring the implementation of the core international human rights treaties (since 2000)
- the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council (since 2006)

You can access the information by country, by rights and by body at <http://www.universalhumanrightsindex.org>

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

World Creative Youth Forum (WCYF) 2009 on Education for Sustainable Development.

The forum will be held May 5 to 10, 2009 in Manila, Philippines. The official theme is "ONE LIFE, ONE EARTH"

Program topics include:

- Peace and Human Rights – in depth discussion and skills sharing on effective approaches towards peace and human rights education
- Climate Change - promote awareness and instill action towards supporting ways to lessen the effects and causes of climate change.
- Sustainable Lifestyle - promote the importance of individual action in sustainable development and how our actions affect others and the world.
- Ethical Living and Technology - an in-depth understanding of ethical living as a prime source for creating an ideal living environment
- Advocacy for Sustainable Development - building skills and knowledge on how to effectively influence and/or enforce policies to reflect genuine sustainable development.

For more information and/or to participate visit the Forum website at

<http://www.worldcreativeyouthforum.net>

The Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association Conference (APPRA)

The conference will be held September 10 – 12, 2009 at the College of Indigenous Studies, National Dong Hwa University, Shengfu, Hualien, Taiwan. The integrative theme will be on innovation and change in education, with sessions on the challenges of sustainability and building cultures of peace. For further information, contact the conference co-ordinator, Dr John Synott j.synott@qut.edu.au or visit APPRA at www.appra.org

The International Peace Research Association (IPRA)

Conference will be held at the University of Sydney, Australia (6-10 July 2010). The conference's theme will be, 'Communicating peace' with plenaries and presentations organized by IPRA's commissions, including the Peace Education Commission, and the Earth Charter Commission. Further information about the Conference may be obtained from the conference organizer, Associate Professor Jake Lynch, Director of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/cpacs>

We must realize thathuman development is primarily about being more, not having more. Earth Charter

News about civil society organizations (CSO's)

PACHAMAMA ALLIANCE

The Pachamama Alliance's two fold mission is to preserve the Earth's tropical rainforests by empowering the indigenous people who are its natural custodians and to contribute to the creation of a new global vision of equity and sustainability for all. It is a U.S. based not-for-profit organization born out of a relationship developed between a group of people from the modern world and the leaders of remote indigenous groups in the Amazon region of Ecuador.

The Alliance recognizes that those of us in the modern world and the people who call the rainforest their home-each have a critical stake in the health and well being of this vital element in our global life support system.

Members of the alliance also recognize that economics plays a pervasive role in the fate of our rainforests and that in the economic equations which shape decisions regarding the use of the Earth's resources, rainforests seldom show up as up as adding any value simply remaining in their natural state. Also, the direct costs to society of having to use technology to replace the environmental services nature provides are seldom considered.

For more information about the Alliance's views and activities visit
<http://www.pachamama.org/>

Great Transition Initiative

The *Great Transition Initiative* envisions and advances a future of enriched lives, human solidarity, and environmental sustainability. ...At once rigorous and inspiring, the *Great Transition* story brings the message that a better world is possible if we shift our values and transform our institutions. Critical to this hopeful transition is growing public awareness of the dangers ahead and the need to revise our ways of living – and living together – on this planet. In this, our time of choice, a vast movement of global citizens can carry forward a *Great Transition*. **<http://www.gtinitiative.org>**

Visit the GTI website for their key perspectives on this transitional moment and to review the following resources:

Slide Show: Overview of Great Transition ideas

Video: Global Futures

Lecture by GTI Director Paul Raskin at Harvard University

Paper Series: Frontiers of a Great Transition Institutional, cultural and environmental dimensions of a GT shift

Tellus Institute, 11 Arlington Street, Boston, Ma 02116-3411, USA
Email: gti@tellus.org, Tel: +1 (617) 266 5400, Fax: +1 (617) 266 8303

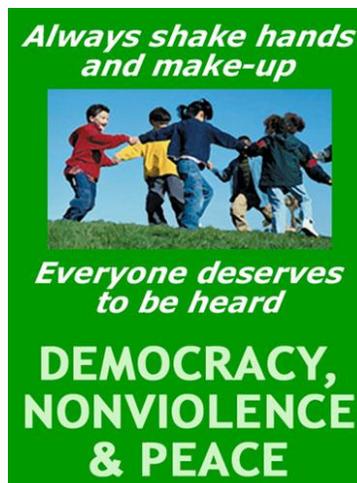
A plea and a challenge

Who Will Change the World?

The growing chasm between the obsolete institutions of the twentieth century and the de-stabilizing trends of the twenty-first is portentous. Which social actors can tilt history toward a Great Transition? Multilateral bodies are enfeebled by the myopia of nationalism, the private sector is subject to the tyranny of the bottom line, and civil society organizations are limited by organizational and philosophical fragmentation. Collectively, actions for a sustainable and just global society remain too dispersed, diffused, and small scale; progress painstakingly won here and there is overwhelmed by systemic deterioration. While the public's awareness of emerging dangers grows, apprehension breeds fear and resignation in the absence of a compelling alternative vision.

The awakening of concern and the upsurge of civil society activity paves the way for a new force on the global stage: a global citizens' movement. A systemic movement would connect issues, themes and regions in a common project to mute global dangers and advance a vision for planetary civilization. An adaptive process of learning, educating, and organizing would necessarily evolve. A politics of trust, a predisposition toward seeking common ground and tolerating proximate differences would nurture the ultimate basis for solidarity. To envision a Great Transition is to imagine a society based on trust, tolerance, and solidarity. Embodying these norms in the means to that end is integral.

Copyright © 2007 Great Transition Initiative



Epe mission statement

Founded in 1992, Earth & Peace Education Associates International (EPE) consists of a global network of educators who aim to promote the recognition of the reciprocal relationship between ecological degradation and the violation of human rights on a local, national and global level.

Contextual sustainability, the organizing principle underlying EPE's educational approach, defines this relationship. It assumes that the Earth is the primary context and essential foundation of all social activity and that ecological sustainability is key to achieving a culture of peace. Reciprocally, respect for human rights characterizes the social context essential to ecological sustainability.

EPE's educational activities facilitate the development of an *integrated* and *value-based* perspective on issues related to the achievement of a culture of social and ecological peace.

EPE contact

Earth & Peace Education Associates International (EPE)

97-37 63rd Rd 15e, Rego Park, N.Y. 11374;

718 275 3932 (tel & fax)

info@globalepe.org

www.globalepe.org

Frans C. Verhagen, Director of Sustainability Education and Research

Gaia1@rcn.com ; Anita L. Wenden, Editor of *Transitions* and Director of Peace Education and Research wenden@rcn.com

Contributions to Transitions

Send to Anita Wenden Wenden@rcn.com



