

The Philosophy for Children Hawai'i Approach to Deliberative Pedagogy: A Promising Practice for Pre-Service Social Studies Teachers in the College of Education

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With the introduction of the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards (2013), the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has given new direction to K-12 social studies education in the United States. Among the notable changes is the expectation that primary and secondary teachers will use a deliberative pedagogy (Longo, 2013; Carcasson, 2013; Manosevitch, 2013; Molnar-Main & Kingseed, 2013) to teach elementary and high school social studies. While this is excellent news for advocates of democratic education (Dewey 1916; Freire 1970; Apple & Beane, 1995; Gutman 1987; Vinson 2006; Parker, 2010; The Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, 2011; Hess & McAvoy, 2015) it presents new challenges to colleges of education, which will take on much of the responsibility for introducing deliberative pedagogy to pre-service teacher candidates who did not have the opportunity to experience a deliberative pedagogy as part of their own K-12 schooling.

The purpose of this paper is to offer the philosophy for children Hawai'i (p4cHI) approach to deliberative pedagogy as a promising practice for colleges of education that are looking to provide pre-service social studies teachers with strategies for employing a deliberative pedagogy in the K-12 setting. P4cHI is a method of teaching that I have used for over fifteen years in my work as a high school social studies teacher, legislative internship program coordinator, and most recently in my position as a teacher educator in the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. To introduce the p4cHI approach to deliberative pedagogy I begin with a brief overview of the history of p4cHI and the connection between p4cHI and the wider field of deliberative pedagogy. Next, I draw from my experiences to explain how p4cHI works in the context of teaching deliberative pedagogy in the college of education. I share: (a) how p4cHI supports teachers in fostering respectful and ethical civic relationships, (b) tools used by p4cHI practitioners to distribute power and open up space for multiple perspectives, (c) p4cHI strategies for promoting dialogue, deliberation, inquiry, and civic action, and, (d) challenges faced by pre-service teachers as they move towards implementing a deliberative pedagogy in K-12 classrooms outside of the university. At the article's conclusion I circle back to the idea that in order to develop a deliberative pedagogy of their very own, pre-service teachers must have opportunities to *experience* (Dewey, 1929) deliberative pedagogy in the college of education.

PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN, P4CHI AND DELIBERATIVE PEDAGOGY

With roots reaching deeply into American Pragmatism and the thought of philosophers such as John Dewey and William James, Philosophy for Children (P4C) is a widely respected international movement in education. It was started around 1969 when Matthew Lipman, a Columbia University philosophy professor, observed that children did not think as well as they could or should in a democratic society (Lipman, 1988). To address these issues Lipman created a curriculum that incorporated the skills of logic and reasoning found in the practice of philosophy to improve students' thinking in the K-12 setting. In an effort to extend Lipman's original curriculum and vision to a variety of geo-cultural contexts, a number of P4C Centers have been established worldwide.

Among these centers is the Uehiro Academy for Philosophy and Ethics in Education (UAPEE) at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. The UAPEE is the home of p4cHI, which is Thomas Jackson's (2001; Makaiau & Miller, 2012) culturally responsive offshoot of Lipman's original approach. The goal of p4cHI is to move school culture from a top-down model to a community-based, participatory model grounded in sound pedagogy and effective educational philosophy. To accomplish this goal, p4cHI practitioners convert traditional classrooms into intellectually safe communities of inquiry where students and teachers develop their abilities to think for themselves in responsible ways.

Although it wasn't labeled as such, p4cHI has always been conceptualized and practiced as a deliberative pedagogy. Based off the ideas found in *Democracy and Education* (Dewey, 1916), p4cHI provides individuals with the "experience of dialoguing with others as equals, [and] participating in shared public inquiry [so] that they [are] able to eventually take an active role in the shaping of a democratic society" (Sharp, 1993, p. 343). It is a pedagogy, which carries out the notion that democratic education is more than just a content area that can be transmitted via power point, lecture, and closed-ended questioning at the end of a civics text book. Instead, it is characterized by "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire, 1970, p.33). Through dialogue and deep thinking, students and teachers deliberate "problems of democracy" (Matthews, 2014, p. xvii), and work together to make a positive impact on the lives of citizens (Horton & Freire, 1990; Matthews, 1994; Gastil & Levine, 2005; Nabatchi, Gastil, Weiksner, Leighninger, 2012). It is an overall approach to education that transcends discipline, age, and grade level by incorporating "deliberative decision making with teaching and learning" (Longo, 2013, p. 49) into a student's entire schooling experience.

Defined by both a theoretical framework and actual set of classroom strategies, the p4cHI approach to deliberative pedagogy aims to produce a number of observable outcomes. Students and teachers who practice p4cHI are seen:

- asking meaningful, relevant, and purposeful philosophical questions;
- exploring questions, topics, and problems of democracy that are important and interesting;
- accessing sources of information representing multiple viewpoints and cultural backgrounds;
- thinking about complex issues with diverse groups of people;

- reasoning for themselves;
- engaging in deliberative dialogue;
- listening with empathy;
- treating others with respect;
- reading and writing;
- and taking responsible action when it is just and necessary.

In the next section I will share how I've used a number of p4cHI strategies to both accomplish the educational outcomes listed above and teach pre-service social studies teachers methods for practicing deliberative pedagogy in the K-12 setting.

DELIBERATIVE PEDAGOGY IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Dewey (1916) argued against seeing teaching as the transmission of ready-made ideas to students, and such is the case with teaching about deliberative pedagogy in the college of education. P4cHI is not a prescriptive practice that can be easily passed on through a traditional power point or lecture. Instead it is a theory of education and set of classroom practices that must be experienced by teachers, and then molded by them to fit their particular teaching style and context. It is for these reasons that I *use the p4cHI approach to deliberative pedagogy to teach about the p4cHI approach to deliberative pedagogy*. Organized into four main sub-headings, the following are brief examples of what the p4cHI approach to deliberative pedagogy looks like in my classroom at a large public research university that services multi-ethnic students from across the U.S. and Pacific Rim.

Respectful and Ethical Civic Relationships

One of the defining features of the p4cHI approach to deliberative pedagogy is students and teachers working together to create “intellectually safe” (Jackson, 2001, p. 460) classroom communities of inquiry. I start this work on the first day of class when I challenge my social studies teacher candidates to come up with examples and counter-examples of what an intellectually safe learning environment looks like. Not only does this activity help us to establish norms for respectful and ethical civic relationships, but it also introduces my students to the idea that “democratic dispositions –to be open-minded, to trust others, to be committed to finding a common ground that transcends difference– do not happen by default” (Flanagan, 2013, p. 163). Instead, they must be taught, and as my pre-service social studies teachers reflect on their own experience of co-constructing the definition of intellectual safety with their classmates, they come to see how defining, modeling, and practicing respectful and ethical civic relationships must be ongoing activities in a democratic classroom.

Distributing Power and Accessing Multiple Perspectives

Another key feature of the p4cHI approach to deliberative pedagogy is the “community ball” (Jackson, 2001, pp. 460 – 461). Seated in a circle, my students and I use the community ball to mediate turn taking and open up space for multiple perspectives to be heard during our classroom deliberations and inquiry. The rules of the community ball are: (1) only the person with the community ball speaks, (2) the person with the community ball chooses who speaks next, and (3)

you always have the right to pass. Put in place to shift the traditional power structures found in most classrooms, the rules of the community ball help to cultivate and nurture a collaborative civic space in which no one perspective is dominant, and every voice is valued. They also work to redefine teachers and students as co-inquirers (Freire, 1970) who recognize that in order for the work of a democracy to move forward, everyone must constantly be learning together (Matthews, 2014).

Dialogue, Deliberation, Inquiry, and Action

There are two additional strategies found in the p4cHI approach to deliberative pedagogy, which are essential for promoting dialogue, deliberation, inquiry, and action. They are the Good Thinker's Tool Kit (GTTK) and Plain Vanilla. The GTTK is a set of seven philosophical moves that assists students and teachers in generating questions, making claims, and in thinking responsibly about the problems of democracy (Matthews, 2014). Used in concert with the GTTK, Plain Vanilla is a five-step inquiry process that structures classroom deliberations. The five steps are: (1) read, (2) question, (3) vote, (4) dialogue, and (5) reflect (Jackson, 2001; Miller, 2014). In the 2014-15 school year alone, my pre-service social studies teachers used the GTTK and Plain Vanilla to question and deliberate with one another about topics such as: "Is it true that teaching is a political act? What are some counter-examples to the notion that standards-based education reforms make the schooling experience of diverse populations more equitable? What about the histories of people that are left out of the standards? What are the implications of non-Native Hawaiian social studies teachers teaching Hawaiian history? What are the reasons for the high teacher turnover rate in Hawaii, and what does this imply about the profession? Is it true that what we do in our classrooms will impact how students act in society?" To aid in their reflection, I follow up with my students at the end of each Plain Vanilla process by asking them to explain what they learned from one another, and how they intended on using their new perspectives and points of view to take informed action in their K-12 classrooms.

Challenges

I have learned a lot from listening to my pre-service teachers' reflections, including the challenges they believe they will face in implementing a deliberative pedagogy in their classrooms outside of the university. As a whole they connect with the theoretical foundations that support a deliberative pedagogy, and in the context of their own educational experience, they find the p4cHI strategies enjoyable, engaging, and meaningful. However, when I ask them to elaborate on how they will use these theories and strategies to shape their future practice, they voice great concerns about having enough time for inquiry, deliberation, and informed civic action in their eventual placements as certified K-12 classroom teachers. Worried about the external pressures being put on them by principals, statewide mandates, and national initiatives, they lament that they would love to implement a deliberative pedagogy, *but* they don't have the time to "get through" the content that will be covered on our state's high stakes exams. As I listen to what they have to say I know that their concerns are real, but I also know that they will be able to draw from their experiences with p4cHI in the college of education to become K-12 classroom teachers who are "real fixers" (Matthews, 2014, p. xvii).

Creating Teachers Who Are Real Fixers

Real fixers, or the people who make our democracy work as it should “aren’t interested in quick fixes. They deal with obvious problems [like failing schools]...however they sense that more fundamental and systemic problems are behind the obvious and that these have to be dealt with” (Matthews, 2014, p. xvii). Over the years, I have observed that teachers who experience p4cHI at the university become more adept at identifying those more fundamental and systemic problems, and they use what they learn in the college of education to address these problems with a deliberative pedagogy of their very own. As a part of this process they come to see themselves as real fixers. They acknowledge that one of the many purposes of education is to move forward, but they also know that the community building and inquiry that is necessary for making meaningful progress in schools takes time. They are “not in a rush” (Jackson, 2001, p. 465), and neither should colleges of education be as they work to develop teachers who are prepared to address the problems of democracy (Matthews, 2014) in classrooms, schools, and communities.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

“Can students be educated for a democracy in a non-democratic classroom” (Parker 2010, p. 11)? The answer is no, and as educational initiatives like the (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards gain momentum in promoting the use of a deliberative pedagogy in the K-12 setting, colleges of education must respond by making sure that teacher candidates have opportunities to *experience* a deliberative pedagogy as a part of their teacher preparation programs. In this article I offer p4cHI as a promising practice for colleges of education that are looking to take on this new challenge. Adaptable to a variety of different teaching contexts, the p4cHI approach to deliberative pedagogy fosters ethical and responsible civic relationships, provides students and teachers with the tools for distributing power and accessing multiple perspectives, and creates opportunities for dialogue, deliberation, and action. It is “an educational practice that itself is both liberatory and participatory, that simultaneously creates a new society and involves the people themselves in the creation of their own knowledge” (Horton & Freire, 1990, p. xxx). I like to imagine what this new society will look like if students and teachers, from kindergarten to graduate school, experience a deliberative pedagogy throughout their schooling. “Perhaps we will [all] begin to remember a now half-forgotten idea that was to guide the purposes and programs of our public schools. The idea was, and is, democracy” (Apple & Beane, 1995, p.2).

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