

Intersectional Pedagogy

Creative Education Practices for Gender
and Peace Work

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Chapter 1

Introductions

Critical pedagogy and the intersectional
complexities of names

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1 Introductions

Critical pedagogy and the intersectional complexities of names

Writing the introduction to a book is not all that different from introducing a new group of students to one of my courses in gender and critical pedagogy, even if students are not my only target readership here. Those in a class before me may, or may not, already have an idea about what I teach, and they will probably have expectations of some kind, hopes, inhibitions, or perhaps even fears. Similarly, you, as the reader of this book, have purchased, borrowed, or downloaded this book with a certain expectation in mind, a pre-formed idea as to what this book is about. Perhaps you saw it advertised by the publisher, it may have been recommended to you, or perhaps you have simply judged the book by its cover. Either way, the ideas already present in your mind as you embark upon this introduction will be paramount to your perception and understanding of the content and may possibly shape the impact—or lack thereof—of this book on your own work and thinking.

This introduction will not simply introduce the topic of the book as a classical introduction. Instead, it will combine the first chapter of the book with introduction by focusing on how to start a workshop or a course. This is the way I often open my courses and learning workshops. We will begin, then, by examining the very concept of introductions in the widest sense, with a special focus on the function of names: the names that individuals are given at birth, usually by their parents or extended family, and that are often chosen because of their significance. People's names are imbued with meaning, with symbolism, with cultural—and often religious—meaning, which for some may carry positive connotations while others may find a certain name at best aseptic or, at worst, frightening. And in most cases, your name is the first aspect of your person that others experience.

By reflecting on the origins, meanings, and effects of our names, such prejudices can be nipped in the bud at the beginning of a course and

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thus serve not only the simple pragmatic purpose of introducing students to one another, rapidly building trust within the group by encouraging participants and facilitator to remember each other's names, but also highlight from the beginning the intersectional complexities inherent in the bearing, speaking, and perceiving of other people's names. Think about your own name. Have your parents or those who raised you told you why they chose this name for you? What possible ideas about the child and adult you would become were inherent in or presupposed by this name? Does it carry with it assumptions, expectations, associations, and, if so, how might these have impacted your life so far in your own specific sociopolitical context? Does your name carry with it implicit privileges or disadvantages? Who students are, where they come from, and what they do is relevant and often determines a great deal of the content of the course and the process of learning and creating knowledge together. This encompasses questions of who gave an individual their name, its meaning, provenance, and what historical, cultural, ethnic, religious, and gender contexts the name carries for them. In addition to asking what they like about and identify with their name, the method presented in this chapter serves as an introduction to critical education practices and explores how these practices are used in different contexts.

Our intersectional identities will determine the extent to which we will be challenged by this book and how it will resonate with us. This book will therefore not have the same effect on all readers. This introduction seeks to translate theories of critical pedagogy into educational practice, and to use this practice as a metaphor to show how this book can be implemented by education practitioners. It takes the critical practice of name analysis to explore with students their (and others) racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, class, ability, marital status, and other identity characteristics and stereotypes that are crucial and relevant to their work and studies. The act of integrating who the students are, what they do, and are passionate about into the beginning of the course underscores that all experiences are equal and relevant in the class, in an atmosphere of sharing our experiences, backgrounds, and opinions (Clegg & Rowland, 2010; Kincheloe, McLaren, Steinberg, & Monzó, 2017).

Name-story sharing and name analysis is a method that aims to build bridges and encourage open and trusting dialogue. It is an educational practice in which participants and students of a course, workshop, or dialogue encounter share their name stories and are able to question, challenge, and explore identity, language, heritage, privileges, and (power) relations right from the beginning. It allows participants to

reflect on the histories, traditions, and backgrounds that they are coming from, present whatever they would like to the group, and explore stereotypes they may have about others and themselves. In this book, I argue that encouraging participants to “bring” themselves and their diverse intersectional identity into the classroom creates an open atmosphere that allows for learning on a different level, the intellectual level (analysis of context and culture), which enables rich first-hand learning. This intellectual learning is woven together with emotional and social learning about identities, stereotypes, and prejudices in regard to names, backgrounds, and intersectional identity and individual and group reflection. The learning process itself is thus contextualized and linked to both the content and analytical and emotional framework of multicultural and diverse analysis.

In my educational work I am therefore particularly interested in phenomena such as names that act as “empty frames,” to be “filled” in everyday life by what might be associated with them. This book presents structures and frameworks that can be used in a variety of subject areas and in relation to myriad topics relating to gender, social change, and peace studies. In this introductory chapter, I take the example of names and show how raising an awareness of their intersectional complexities can be an entry point to critical analysis. However, names are just one example of the framework that we carry around with us for others to “fill”; these can also be accents or dialects, styles of clothing, language usage, skin color, and so on; the list is inexhaustible as this method can be applied to almost any object, habitus, cultural ritual, context, or idea.

The fundamental term “intersectionality” was coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw. In her academic teaching and her book *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color*, she shows how systems of oppression operate differently depending on the specific cross-section of gender and race experienced by an individual or group of people. Crenshaw refers to this as “double oppression,” as in the case, for example, of black women, who often experience discrimination both as a person of color and as a woman. Crenshaw’s work opened up the field of gender studies and ethnography to the deep complexities of identity and discrimination (identity politics). Intersectional awareness in the field of education is valuable in that it helps educators and peace workers to design their courses and classes to fit the very specific intersectional needs and interests of their students. In peace work, in particular, this is particularly important because such contexts (refugee camps, peace negotiations, and development interventions) derive from and are traditionally

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built upon concepts of ethnicity, language, race, and culture. By introducing an intersectional approach to teaching and peace work, for example, the content matter being addressed in the classroom, peace workshops, or mediation processes can be brought into context with the specific and relevant complexities of individual and group identities. Intersectional awareness also helps to navigate contradictions by moving beyond binary thought patterns and male–female or black-and–white dichotomized categories of thinking.

Just as intersectional work in the classroom and in mediation processes takes a concept rooted in academia and applies it to the everyday and necessary practice of negotiating deeply complex and entrenched situations, so this book has originated in my work as a university professor and peace facilitator, and seeks to bridge the divide between theory and practice. It is therefore written first and foremost for practitioners in peace education but also for those working in more traditional academic spheres who wish to raise the level of intersectional awareness in their fields. Such academics are in a unique position to bring about social change via human rights education and intersectional approaches. They may be particularly effective when not restricting the transmission of knowledge to the privileged students sitting in their lecture halls and seminar rooms, but when making use of widely accessible communication technology and social media, such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. While there is controversial debate about the peace-building potential and risks inherent in social media, there is no doubt that its high level of accessibility and interactive possibilities widens opportunities for marginalized people and groups.

Knowledge about anything in the world, from how to repair a car, braid hair, build a house, or speak eight languages, is—from the point of view of critical pedagogy—relevant to the course material and can serve as effective examples via which to explore key issues. Ultimately, the practices presented in this book seek to unveil how everything we do and say—or do not do or say—is based upon the specific ideological framework unique to every individual and informed by that person’s own particular knowledge, experience, fears, and values. These practices aim to render visible such unspoken or subconscious ideologies that inform our everyday communication and actions. Students who thus become more intersectionally aware have a far greater potential for success in intervention and mediation processes as well as in educational contexts, thanks to their deeper insight into the complexities of human identity and processes of—often inadvertent—discrimination. Clegg & Rowland claim that the link between the different types of learning can be exchanged with the term “kindness.” They suggest that teaching and

practicing kindness in academic institutions is a political, radical act, and argue that linking the emotional to the intellectual is subversive of neoliberal values. They reject the binary segregation between academic or intellectual work and emotion or reason, and the associated gendered racial and cultural binaries of learning (Clegg & Rowland, 2010).

The student's experiences thus serve as part of the curriculum, and the learning materials are thus part of their own experiences. The analysis and reflection, and later the translation into educational practices, is conducted in the language format that is most convenient to the students. Similarly, this book will explore complex concepts and use language that is accessible to wide audiences as a pedagogical act that is critical and radical (Kincheloe, 2012). One of the key arguments of this book is, therefore, that if we are truly engaging in intersectional work, we need to communicate in accessible language rather than in what has been referred to as "hegemonic language." To what extent is it possible, however, to publish with renowned academic publishers if one does not conform to traditional conventions of academic writing? The book aspires to challenge peace- and gender-related mediation processes and structures established in the academic world, especially in conflict areas or regions with significant economic disparities.

Critical pedagogy encourages a conscious educational synthesis with the individual and group experience in regard to place, action, or involvement. A critical pedagogy analysis emphasizes intersectional aspects of social experience, drawing from its lessons learned and actions (Crenshaw, 1991; hooks, 1991, 1994; Gerhards & Hans, 2009). Furthermore, critical pedagogy scholars argue that reflections on critical practices and the learner's experiences in relation to power dynamics and an exploration of backgrounds provide a way to define and recognize teaching and learning styles that are gendered and culturally relevant (Apple, 1993, 1983; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014). When students/participants are encouraged to share their historical narratives, backgrounds, and the way they perceive their identities it legitimizes who they are in regard to the learning material. The curriculum or learning materials based on their presented experiences encourage a fluid understanding of culture, and a teaching practice that explicitly engages questions of equity, politics, and justice which become relevant and therefore engaging, enriching, and inspiring, ultimately waging change (Apple, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014).

The reflective, self-ethnographic, and participatory critical observation of group dynamics and one's own work is part of a long tradition of feminist and participatory action research and represents the ideology, theory, and practice of critical and feminist pedagogy (Kincheloe, 2012).

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Students' involvement, self-research, and relations between concept and object and between signifier and signified are challenged by such a research method. The assumptions are that social power relations are not objective and cannot be factual but are always indicative of hegemonic power structures. The language and jargon of academic disciplines are tools to maintain the status quo (Gor Ziv, 2013). In the following chapters, therefore, I use accessible language and seek to make my reflections and analyses of the practices relatable to the reader's experience. The aim is to encourage readers to use these practices, draw their own conclusions, and to enable educators to translate their own preferred theories into educational practices (Kincheloe, McLaren, Steinberg, & Monzó, 2017).

At the beginning of a workshop with refugees and education students, in which a book on human rights was to be developed, one of the participants began: "My name is Abdulla. I love my name as it is the second strongest (most powerful) and most beautiful name a person in Islam can have. It represents strength and my culture." During the group discussion one of the German students commented that she was surprised by Abdulla's story as many people in her community are afraid of this name, and similar names, associating them with negative stereotypes: "It is a terrorist name for me." It is this necessary space for discussion and dialogue surrounding the inherent and latent stereotypes people bring with them that forms the foundation of the practices explored in the following.

Alford states that ethnographic research has not yet identified a single society that abstains from using naming practices, and that names signify realities, cultures, and values (Alford, 1988). Since everybody possesses a name and it is a universal commonality, name-sharing is an example of how language plays a major role in international educational settings, such as courses, academic workshops, and dialogue encounters. The meaning of the participants' names and how they are analyzed and perceived sometimes affects the ways in which they act and behave, and whether they can thrive in the class or course and indicate the complex, multi-layered identities, hidden conflicts, ethnic and cultural tensions, and prejudices they bring with them to class (Crenshaw, 1991; Gor Ziv, 2013).

Names are crucial to the process of introduction and getting to know one another. Names help us to create order and structure our conception of the world. It is through naming that we make the world comprehensible (Lévi-Strauss, 1996). My academic courses, workshops, and training, like most others, usually begin with participants and students introducing themselves and their names. This introduction helps the participants to remember each other's names. Due to language

differences within a class, this is often very revealing, especially with regard to meaning and etymology. Interestingly, on some occasions, this process humanizes the other by demonstrating that participants would choose to avoid sharing their name's meaning, or just lessen its significance.

Many names, especially in the Global South but also in traditional societies in the Global North, have deep connotations to historical, ethnic, political, and religious positions. In many cases names serve as metaphors for national and religious concepts (Barry & Harper, 1995). A metaphor is the use of one thing as representative or symbolic of another. It is a figure of speech that conveys an analogy between ideas. A metaphor carries meaning via association, via resemblance or via comparison to the denoted object. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) talk about "dead metaphors" to describe metaphors that are normally unnoticed since they are so regularly used. Dead metaphors are no longer seen as metaphors but are treated as a linguistic expression, as a word. Such metaphors become conventions that do not require an interpretation or comparison between two fields of meanings. Exploring the metaphorical aspects of names enables participants to look into our deep culture and how it is represented in our everyday use of language (Galtung & MacQueen, 2008). Names are usually such dead metaphors; we know that they have meaning but we do not think about them in our daily lives. However, in the process of the course or workshop, the participants can search for their deep meanings and thereby reanimate the dead metaphor. Dafne's example from an online course on gender and peacebuilding is illustrative here:

My name is Dafne, with an "f" instead of a "ph" and it's "Dafne like the one from Scooby Doo." The last phrase is exactly how I introduce myself many times in order for people from my own country and even my relatives to know how to write or pronounce it (I have an uncle that cannot pronounce my name and calls me Flounder, like the one from *The Little Mermaid* or *Waffle*, I am not kidding!). Dafne or Daphne is a female name and means "laurel." It derives from a minor figure in Greek mythology known as a naiad—a type of female nymph associated with fountains, wells, springs, streams, brooks and other freshwater bodies. The mythological narrative states that because of her beauty, Daphne attracted the attention and ardor of the god Apollo. As she did not want to be with him, she asked her father to transform her into a laurel tree. My father (deceased) chose my name and, unfortunately, I never asked him why he did; what I do know is that my mother had

another name in mind, but she agreed because she liked it. One of my uncles asked my mother to not use the ph, because “we are not English speakers,” as he said. What I like about my name is that it is unique in my hometown and even in Mexico. What I don’t like is the fact that many people cannot spell it: Dacne, Dagne, Dafani.

Dafne’s name story opened up the meaning and interpretation of her name that served right from the beginning as an intersectional identity analysis. Through such analyses, one can learn about family relations, ethnicity, power, and language background, in addition to cultural foundations and gender. Dafne was also willing to share that her father passed away and her sensitivity to changes in her name by other people seem disrespectful to his memory for her. This practice not only allows for its introduction at the beginning of the workshop, but also enables the other students to get to know her better and to start exploring intersectionality analysis as a practice in the course.

“My name is Snow,” shared a female student from the USA. “My parents wanted me to have a unique rare name that represents the location from which I am from that no one else shares.” Children’s names often strongly reflect the cultural, ideological, religious, and political values of their background, and symbolize the way parents would like to socialize their children with their own values (Alford, 1988), representing political, environmental, gender, social, and religious ideology. Oliver, Wood, & Bass suggest that liberals favor unique names that represent their cultural wealth and status while at the same time foregrounding their level of education. Conversely, conservatives choose traditional names that will distinguish their children as economically successful and represent money and power (Oliver, Wood, & Bass, 2015).

Naming the background

Lakoff and Johnson write about “meta-metaphors” that are used to structure our reality and create analogies between the concrete and the abstract. They form not just our language but also our conceptual maps and our understanding of reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In areas of ethnic and religious conflict such as Israel and Palestine, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Northern Iraq, names reflect people’s background irrespective of whether it is openly discussed or obscured. A similar phenomenon of hidden knowledge regarding ethnic and religious background exists in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. A person’s background and therefore religious

affiliation is easily discernible based on accent, the spelling of their name, or the school she/he attended, even before this information is shared in a dialogue encounter.

Name introductions can empower marginalized sub-groups or individuals in the course group to share something unique about themselves or their culture, and to have voice and space right at the beginning of a course. Name-story sharing may also be used to legitimize religious or political views and positions. The critical educational practice of a circle in which all participants share whatever they choose to about their names enables the group to raise questions, concerns, and even prejudices right from the beginning of the process.

Guevara was a participant from Syria in a human rights children's book production workshop in Germany. He explained that his parents adore the revolutionary hero Che Guevara and named their oldest son after him to symbolize their admiration and hope that one day he would bring freedom to his country. Even people who do not think of Che Guevara as a positive figure could empathize with his parents' aspirations. By sharing his name story Guevara simultaneously highlights ideology and the legitimation of revolutionary sentiments.

In Israeli and Arab-Palestinian contexts, ethnicity, religion and relative piety, the political views of parents, social and economic background, class, and gender are all exposed merely by the utterance of one's name. Identity is immediately unveiled via a commonplace introduction. For example, the Hebrew masculine names Erez (cedar) and Gilad (mountain) are commonly read as deriving from Zionist backgrounds; at once close to nature and predominantly secular. Beginning in the 1970s and continuing until the early 1990s it was fashionable to name Jewish-Israeli children after natural phenomena found within the country's borders, such as mountains and flora. This was done intentionally in order to "root" the children within Israeli culture and historical territory and to encourage their emotional and physical connection to the homeland. Such names were instrumentalized to represent the attachment of the Jewish people to their rightful, historical, homeland. They were also a continuation of a custom from the 1950s and 1960s of Jewish parents naming their children after historical figures and geographical locations mentioned in the Bible. Such names signified the return of the Jews to an historical land that was ordained to them by a biblical God. These names represent the power of the Jewish people and the continuation of the Jewish heritage in Israel through Hebrew masculine names like David, Shaul, and Shmuel. From the 1920s into the 1960s, the naming of children was part of the wider phenomenon of the creation and development of a series of symbols that represented the historical right of

Jews to the land of Israel, including the renewal of biblical names, the revival of Hebrew—the Jewish biblical language—and the reuse of biblical place names. Old Arabic names also carry volatile political significance, such as in the case of Haifa, Acco, and Gaza—the female name that signifies the Palestinian city which since 1948 has been situated in Israel.

Names can also share the background of a political situation and even serve as a symbol of colonialism or heritage. “My name is Atiano which means ‘born at night,’ but you can call me Grace as it is easier for you,” said a South African student in a gender and peacebuilding training course for development workers in an international training course center in Austria. I asked her which name she preferred. She said that she likes her African name, but since it is hard for “Western people” to pronounce it she uses her Christian name. She shared that, during her childhood in apartheid-era South Africa, black people were not allowed to register their children without an official English name. She does not like the name Grace but uses it by default for people who have difficulties with her African name. Similarly, international or globally popular names are common in postwar countries or in conflict areas where parents would like to hide their child’s mixed or marginalized ethnicity, as in the case of Jennifer from South Sudan, who participated in a workshop on peace education at the Austrian peace center, IPT:

My name is Jennifer. It is a very easy name to say and no one can tell my ethnicity or background; no one can even tell if I am black or white. In my country there is ethnic cleansing against my ethnic group and since I am in favor of mixed marriages, I could be in danger of being killed by different groups. My parents named me Jennifer and changed my surname to an international name as well, so no one will know anything about me.

But even away from the threat of ethnicity-based persecution, globally viable names are given with a view to promoting world citizenship. “My name is Hannah,” shared a German student at the University for Peace in Costa Rica:

My parents named me Hannah, a Biblical Jewish, but also Christian and Muslim name, that is easy to pronounce and exists all around the world. This shows that they wanted me to be a citizen of the world, that people everywhere could say my name. I love it that when I am in Arab countries or even in Asia people find it easy to say my name and feel connected to it.

Naming the conflict

The sharing of name stories in a group can also serve to emphasize the shared humanity of participants coming from conflicting sides in mediation processes and dialogue encounters. Personal histories can thus be shared, recounted, and compared to the histories and names of the “others” (Johnson & Johnson, 1991). By telling personal and family histories, hostile and antagonistic feelings that arise when people from conflict zones express their political views can be addressed and perhaps overcome (Bar-On, 2006). Although the conversation surrounding name stories may conceal many aspects of the conflict and raise negative emotions like anger, fear, fury, and even in extreme cases hatred, still they allow people to listen to each other’s personal narratives without having to argue on whether their story is “correct” or not, as is often the case when historical stories or political events and situations are examined (Bar-On & Adwan, 2004). Further, the name analysis exercise also helps the participants to remember each other’s names and overcome the first step in a long process toward humanizing the “other.” This has an enormous effect on the dialogue process, as Isra, a female Palestinian facilitator using these practices in dialogue encounters in Israel states:

The one part of the dialogue encounter that makes me feel that I really hate this work and the Jewish people is the phase when the Jewish participants can’t pronounce the Palestinian participants’ names. Ugh, it says so much about language and power in this country that they can’t even say their peers’ names properly.

Here we see how name-story introductions can be one of the hardest steps in creating dialogue, particularly perhaps in a multicultural course where the access to the privileges of language and power are unequally distributed among the participants. It is often the case that participants from hegemonic groups who are unaware of the hegemony of their own language feel that they cannot, physically or emotionally, pronounce the “other” group’s names correctly. For instance, a male student from a privileged background and a hegemonic European culture who was participating in a human rights children’s book workshop that was conducted in his home town (in Western Europe) stated that he “just can’t remember foreign names.” He suggested either giving the refugee participants in the groups “easier names” or simply “remembering their faces.” Another male student from the USA participating in a human rights course at the UN University for Peace in Costa Rica reacted angrily when I asked him to remember some of the fellow

students' names: "It is impossible for me; I never encountered these names before," he protested, making it clear within the group that we were asking too much of him. This act of refusing to learn and memorize the names of people from diverse ethnic and racial groups sends a strong message to the non-hegemonic group. For those coming from the most marginalized language groups, the statement that one has "never heard that name before" renders members of such groups unimportant and invisible. Participants' names from strong groups are often remembered more easily by their peers, and by facilitators and professors.

The request to try and remember names from diverse cultures can result in fraught situations, especially in progressive universities that aim to diversify their student body but prefer students to adjust their names to the hegemonic language, and organizations where the failure to remember names that fall outside of the hegemonic power discourse can become particularly conflictual. This failure to remember the name of the "other," particularly in conflict areas, while in many cases perhaps no more than a result of poor memory skills or pure laziness, can also be symbolic of the power dynamic, indifference, ethnocentric values, or even colonialist practice.

Various political notions can also be conveyed via names with "militant" meanings such as "fight," "struggle," "power," or "victory." For example, the Hebrew name Oz, meaning "strength, powerful, courageous," refers culturally to military strength (a few elite military units are named Oz as well). The Arabic masculine name Jihad, meaning "holy war," represents a religious (and, from a Jewish perspective, militant) background. The female Arab name Fida, meaning "act of courage and bravery," similarly refers to the Jihad, or holy war. A 22-year-old Jewish-Israeli participant described her encounter with this name in a group of Israelis and Palestinians in Israel thus:

I was shocked to find out that someone's name is Jihad. I always thought Jihad is a name of a terrorist who will blow himself up in our shopping mall. I thought to myself, what kind of crazy human-hating parents would name their son like that? I didn't talk to him, yet in the group he said very nice things, so I took a deep breath and asked him about the name ... He explained that his parents were religious and that the name only bore meaning on the religious level and that it is a symbol of purity as well. I calmed down a little but not entirely. His name made me realize how distanced we are from each other and how little we know about the "other."

Names also reveal a connection to shared geographical areas and cultural symbols, places where a war has taken place, or as a symbolic act that commemorates war, heroes, and conflict. In conflict zones, names and the act of naming can thus become “weaponized.” “My name is Victor, after the victory of my ethnic group against the government,” shares a male student from a West African country, in an international training course for development work in Austria. “My name symbolizes our victory and their loss and defeat. It is a strong name that can give power to those who fight.”

According to Galtung, our deep culture is the internalized social constructions that are reflected in many of our habits and acts and are signified in our choices about what we do and how we do it. Names often represent deep cultures and are used as meta-metaphors. Such names demonstrate ways of thinking, feeling and acting in both societies on a very deep and rooted level (Galtung, 2017, Galtung & MacQueen, 2008). In this sense, names can also serve as monuments or as symbols of memory cultures. Several students in my courses from conflict zones have been given the name of someone who was killed in a war, an attack, or in a heroic act, demonstrating how names manifest a connection to meaningful political and cultural role models. Students share that they carry the obligations and sometimes burdens, but also the honor, of the person they are named after. Such stories can represent challenges to groups that are dealing with peacebuilding and mediation, but they also pave the way for participants’ historical narratives and allow other members of the group to ask about specific individual ideologies and opinions. “I am named after my father’s best friend, Bashar, who protected him and was killed during the war,” said a Syrian student at the Austrian International Civilian Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Training Programme (IPT). Many students were taken by surprise and asked the speaker about the responsibility and emotional burden. Bashar explained that it is a common practice and that he had never reflected on it. “It is there to remind me who I am and where I come from.”

Some names are bilingual synonyms, sharing the same meaning but giving rise to conflicting narratives. The Arabic female name *Watane* means “homeland,” referring to the Palestinian land. Palestinian parents give this name to daughters in order to emphasize the connection to their homeland Palestine and to “root” them within Palestinian culture. Names like *Watane* that carry national meanings became common among Palestinians in Israel as much as among the diaspora after the 1948 war and even more so after 1967. Likewise, the Hebrew female name *Moledet* has the same meaning, and is given to female children as a symbol of holding on steadfastly to the land. Palestinians

and Jews thus refer to the same geographical piece of land; however, it is seen as this or that nation's exclusive homeland. Two further examples are the female Arabic name Amal and the female Hebrew name Tikva, both meaning "hope"; and the Arabic name Haiat and the Hebrew name Haim meaning "life." It is easier for Israelis and members of other hegemonic groups to remember names that are linguistically closer to theirs. The political choice of giving children names that are easier to pronounce by the hegemonic group determines one's potential identity, connection, and relationships (Lévi-Strauss, 1996). Some Jewish examples include Nir, meaning "green field"; Omer, originally a unit of dry measure referring to a sheaf, or an amount of grain large enough to require bundling; Yarden, Gilad, Gilboa, and Arbel are names of Israeli mountains underscoring the continuity between the Jewish people and the land, and the occupation of Israel both in biblical times and today. Similarly, names which carry political memory in the wake of wars, occupations, or peace accords were fashionable in Israel around major historical events, such as the female Jewish name Shlomit, meaning "peace."

We thus see that telling name stories and expanding on the meanings and uses of one's name are essential components of the dialogue process. They symbolize and reinforce the reality of conflict and power dynamics that are latent in language and knowledge and expose the fact that many participants are excluded by the structural imbalances of a dominant discourse that cannot even pronounce their name, and therefore neglects to address them.

Gendered names

Names also represent power, control, and future success based on gender. According to Oliver, Wood, & Bass, liberals in the United States prefer birth names with "softer, feminine" sounds while conservatives favor names with "harder, masculine" phonemes. These findings have significant implications for both studies of consumption and debates about ideology and political fragmentation in the United States (Oliver, Wood, & Bass, 2015).

Those with "soft" feminine names are less likely to be hired for what are considered powerful and dominant jobs such as political positions, management, or high-trust appointments (Barry & Harper, 1995; Whissell, 2001).

My name is Rafael. As I have travelled quite a lot, as well as living abroad, I can say that I consider my first name international. It is

easy to pronounce, and people do not really know where I come from. What is clear about my name is its gender, as the female version would be Rafaele or Rafaela.

Similar masculine names from around the world (Daniel, Gabriel, Luis) are rendered in their feminine form by appending the name with a vowel, typically “a” or “e.” The “original” name is masculine by default and the ending feminizes it. Simone de Beauvoir (1989 [1952]) argued that “humanity is male, and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him.” Rafaela, Gabriela, and Daniela are examples of names derived from masculine versions rather than conversely. They are but a handful of examples among millions of others that testify to the patriarchy that has been passed across generations and is symbolized in names. Names can thus represent and symbolize the gendered views of parents whose naming of their child can be seen as a microcosmic reflection of society. In addition to being given the names of sturdy trees and lofty mountains, males are also named after powerful animals, such as Channing, Lowell, Phelan, and Rudolph/Ralph variations, all of which derive from “wolf.” Similarly, the primordial meaning of the name Draco is the Greek “dragon” or the protector of or from one. Several names, such as Philip and the feminized Philippa, derive from the root “horse protection,” while Rosamund is a name whose meaning has shifted from that of protection to equine beauty and elegance.

Women are typically named after smaller, more delicate, and symbolically non-threatening animals, such as doves, which symbolize peace and purity, for example Paloma, Jona, Frauna, or Jamima/Jemima. Yara is a common name in Spain and South America with Arabic origins, meaning “butterfly.” The female names Vanessa, Kimana, and Farasha also derive from words for butterfly. Female and male names represent and reinforce traditional values and societal expectations. If we consider the energy and intention behind names and compare a lion or bear to a butterfly, we can link the future expectations and the social roles that are premeditated for men as protectors, defenders, and strong public figures and women as protected, delicate creatures who need to be guarded.

One particularly vivid example is the convention of female names that symbolize honor, purity, and virginity in the family, community, and the nation, such as the name Catherine, of French origin meaning pure or clear. According to the name-meaning app *mamajunction* there are 519 female names that signify purity, from Tahira, which means pure and clean, to Svetlana, meaning “pure and light.” A shortlist of names from

across the world that symbolize female purity and innocence are Alma, Chepa, Caylen, Dalaja, Anisa, Aneesha, and Tristyn, meaning a virtuous and pure virgin. Names for women also derive from floral terms, beautiful natural phenomena, and objects that are pleasing to the eye. “My name is Meshi, meaning ‘silk.’ It represents the softness and gentleness that the female child is supposed to have or acquire, and I feel that all my life my community expected me to be as delicate and beautiful as silk,” said a student in a gender course at the Academic College of Society and the Arts in Netanya, Israel.

The Arabic female names Hitam and Nihaya, meaning “end” and “final,” are usually given to girls born after “too many” girls had already been born to their parents. These names are said to be given in order to stop the stream of girls’ births on an energetic level. They represent the strong social preference for boys (especially as a first-born) and the fact that a man who fathers “too many” girls is ridiculed in many parts of the world (Nwokocha, 2007).

A study conducted in the 1980s in the United States and followed up on in the early 1990s measured frequencies of unisex names in Pennsylvania in 1960 and 1990. Barry and Harper (2014) concluded that unisex or non-sex or non-gender revealing naming is increasingly popular. The frequency of unisex names was four times higher in 1990 than in the previous time period surveyed. Barry and Harper contend that people strongly preferred to give unisex names to girls and were reluctant to name boys with unisex names, visible and pronounced masculinity being considered a positive attribute. In a world where men own the majority of businesses and fill most of the highest governmental and corporate positions (Acker 2004), having a masculine or gender-neutral name can be a strategic advantage for both males and females. Some of my students have reported on this: “[my name is] Daneyra. My father loves the word ‘donaire’ (grace, charm) which can be a masculine name. My parents knew I was a baby girl, so they decided to make that word feminine. They played around with the letters and Daneyra came out.” Names like Daneyra, Yarden (after the Jordan river), and Gal (a wave in the sea) create confusion and are meant to blur the child’s gender, particularly in the case of females. Female participants often state that their parents would have preferred a boy but since they were born, their parents gave them a masculine name. Others state that their parents wanted to protect them from being a girl, so they named them with a unisex name to enable her to pass as male. According to Duffy and Ridinger (1981), gender-masking, the allocation of unisex names to female children, protects women from sexism in the workplace, school, and social life, and may determine their social role and position.

Names and migration

Second-generation migrants' first names reveal the acculturation and assimilation processes of first-generation migrants, as well as how migrants define themselves based on their cultures and languages, both of their host and of their origins. First names are often chosen freely by immigrants and encompass identity, ethnic, and religious characteristics not associated with any material cost (Lieberson, 2000). In their article "From Hasan to Herbert: Name-Giving Patterns of Immigrant Parents between Acculturation and Ethnic Maintenance," Jurgen Gerhards and Silke Hans claim that (first) names can be a symbol and an indicator that migrants feel a sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group. They examined first-name giving in three different immigrant groups in Germany. They found out that patterns of acculturation and self-definitions of identity can be observed in the patterns of first-name giving. People who migrated from Southern and Western Europe gave their children German names more often than people who migrated from Turkey (Gerhards & Hans, 2009). Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) demonstrate that people with names perceived by some as typically black in the US are discriminated against much more frequently, and that black people with non-black names or white names face less discrimination in the workplace and are invited to more job interviews.

Talking with migrants and refugees about their names thus opens up a sensitive dialogue about discrimination, racism, and their family's values and views. As names are often culturally exclusive, local or international migrants make a political choice whether to project assimilation, acculturation, and integration, or to give their child a name maintaining their origin culture, language, and ethnicity. "My name is Anas. My parents wanted me to have an Arabic name although I was born in France," shares a male student (27) at the International Development Workshop in Austria. "In Hebrew my name means rapist. They wanted me to be named this in order to avoid my ever hooking up with a Jewish woman ... They also wanted me to have a strong or significant name in a foreign country, so I will not forget where I'm from or who I am."

"That's funny," a female student (24) at the same course reacts:

I'm also an immigrant in France and I have a very French name, Sophie, to symbolize integration and that my parents gave up their past and left their heritage and language in Vietnam. We speak French at home and they gave me a French name so I'll have an easier time integrating. They even changed part of their last name

to something more French so people will not discriminate. It works well, and people assume that I'm French and invite me to job interviews.

Asian immigrants in the US often give their children names perceived to be "white American" in order to have them pronounced correctly, since they feel that their language is not valued as much as the hegemonic culture. By giving their children American names they feel more assimilated and see themselves as American first and foremost. People from Latin America, on the other hand, tend to maintain their ethnic and cultural names and to define themselves as Latinos due to the proximity to Latin America and the visible and known culture and language of Latinos in the US. Many also perceive themselves as a large minority. Thus, rather than being seen as a risk, it is rather considered an opportunity and privilege for a child to be known as Latino in their community (Lieberson, 2000). Similarly, a female student (25) at a human rights and gender course at Hacettepe University, Turkey, shared:

My name was Hannah. My parents who emigrated from Iraq gave me this name, so I would pass well in our new European country, but I changed my name to Hamida to symbolize that I am a Muslim. I want to carry my identity with my name, and I would like everybody else to know that I'm a Muslim and Arab.

These three examples highlight the discourse and constant dialogue around names within migration processes. Interestingly, it seems that when non-immigrants name their child with a foreign or unique name, they are considered to project creativity and imagination, while immigrants who give their child a more unusual name are perceived to be insufficiently integrated.

Conclusions

In the educational practice of debriefing names, some students analyze their own names critically, while others present their name implicitly accepting their own cultural milieu and status quo. During the analysis, the students are asked to refrain from analyzing other names and to only give meanings and explanations when asked. Allowing them to reflect about the deep culture of their names and the way their own name represents more or less power can be an inspiring but also a painful process. Each student takes part as much as they would like

and exposes as much as they are comfortable with. For some it is easy, while for others it is difficult, arguing that analyzing their name can be disrespectful to their parents, culture, and community. Participants therefore first analyze their names and then allow time for conversation and thoughts about the process. This sets the stage for a dialogue about social constructions, intersectionality, race theory, and critical analysis of peacebuilding and development interventions. The name-story exercise allows participants to explore their hidden stereotypes, present their histories and heritage, and recount something about their parents and their political, religious, and ideological views. Exploring names together facilitates a dialogue process right from the beginning of the encounter or workshop about hidden and invisible assumptions about the “other.”

I have begun this book with an introduction that looks into the intricacies of introductions themselves—in this case, the functions of names—in order to reveal right from the outset how important it is to maintain a critical awareness of how quickly we form impressions and prejudices on the basis of the use of words and language, among other things. There is no one way in which this book might prove useful, but I hope that it might be used in the following three ways.

The first is the use of the practices described in this book for practitioners, university professors, teachers, informal educators, and peace workers. I hope that the structures and frameworks for teaching designs presented here might provide a space for subject-specific content required by curricula or peace intervention work. What I present in Chapter 2 as a gender-object analysis, for example, might be implemented elsewhere as a conflict-related or ageism-related analysis, or an examination of how different sexual orientations are depicted in a children’s book, for example. Similarly, the analysis of stereotypes through the practice of ice-cream sculpturing and fast drawing discussed in Chapter 4 can be shifted into a discourse about stereotypes but also other societal issues, such as ableism, adultism, and classism. My hope is that the readers of this book will use these practices and methods for their own purposes and in accordance with their own needs.

The second way in which I hope this book might prove useful is in the inspiration of storytelling. The process of storytelling by students, teachers, peace workers, and refugees can be extremely valuable. Everyone has a story; a narrative that others can learn from or be inspired by. The objective here is to create knowledge based on experiences, and to encourage others to develop new knowledge together with learners based on their experiences.

Finally, this book seeks to illustrate some ways in which theory can be translated into practice, with the aim of revealing to students and workshop participants how formal ideologies and theories can be made relevant to their everyday lives, by conducting a gender-related analysis of an everyday object, for example. Innovative experiential learning encourages students to actively think and analyze rather than passively absorb information via rote-learning.

But the practices and methods presented here will not in themselves provide the answers or solutions to the societal problems of our time. They seek to raise questions and to foster conversations that shape a critical intersectional lens through which we look at the world. This book will probably not directly change reality by itself, but I hope it will unveil means by which we can change the way we talk and think about our reality. Ultimately, it is such shifts in thought and discourse that bring about changes to reality itself, toward gender equity, human rights for all people, and sustainable peace based on social justice.

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