

**BRIDGING THEORY AND PRACTICE:
THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE**

by

Judy L. Ettinger

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ABSTRACT

Within the human rights community a breach between theory and practice, or between ideas and action exists. Current prescriptions for successful education 'for' human rights comprise a form of interactive learning, where the values of tolerance, mutual respect and understanding may be engaged and fostered. In contrast, the operation and scholarship of the broader human rights community fails to exemplify these priorities of inclusiveness and diversity. This thesis explores this disjuncture between prescription and practice and the failure of human rights dialogue to become more 'open', or democratized. The contention is that the lack of inclusiveness characteristic of human rights dialogue has resulted not merely in theoretical stagnation, but also in the subversion of the cornerstone of human rights goals; human rights education.

The thesis presents a more inclusive communicative vision for the human rights community. Referencing the current state of human rights dialogue and principles of education 'for' human rights with the communicative theory of Jurgen Habermas the linkages between communication and human rights education are made explicit. Bridging the gap between the communicative action of the human rights community and the ideas of education 'for' human rights is essential, it is argued, for the success of human rights goals and for the realisation of a 'culture of peace'.

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This thesis is dedicated to those throughout the world who continue to struggle for human dignity in silence.

INTRODUCTION

If you would be passionate, then ... realize that unless we are equally passionate and equally disciplined in sharing our knowledge, ... and understand that knowledge must be humanized ... in a broader collective endeavour, it will not ultimately enter the realm where ... it has ... significance: ... reproducing the world in a transcendence of ignorance and partiality.¹

Much of the literature within the International Relations sub-field of human rights regards the relationship between democracy and human rights as complementary. Moreover, human rights is considered to embody, ideally, 'democratic education', where a democratic learning atmosphere comprises an integral component in the creation of a culture conducive to and respectful of human rights. Despite this fundamental association between human rights and democracy, the dialogue within which human rights conversations take place is far from democratic. Scholars within the human rights arena are beginning to bring issues of this nature to the forefront, making explicit such theoretical deficiencies as the marginalization of women's views and the hegemonic position of individual over collective rights.

Despite this increasing awareness of the lack of perspectives which have been, traditionally, incorporated in human rights dialogue, the absence of varied perspectives has been lamented as detrimental primarily due to the

¹ Mary O'Brien, *"Feminism as Passionate Scholarship,"* in *Reproducing the World - Essays in Feminist Theory*, Mary O'Brien ed. (London; Westview Press, 1989), p. 257.

resulting limitations upon disciplinary growth. In other words, the lack of perspectives has been criticized for being a limited pool of thought, and for hindering the advancement of the discipline as a whole. Though this is, in and of itself, a significant realization, there exists another manner in which human rights dialogue has not realized its full potential and for which the 'exclusionary' dialogue has failed to realize an aspect of its potential consistent with its own goals; as a practical application of human rights education.

Oddly, this deficiency remains despite the prominence of current human rights education prescriptions of educating 'for', rather than 'about' human rights.² In some respects it would appear as though a disassociation of knowledge from action has given way. Though a realization of the exclusionary nature of traditional human rights dialogue and, more broadly, international relations conversations, has begun, along with an accompanying recognition of the power of 'consciencization'³ within human rights education

² This distinction refers to what may be termed the 'traditional method' of human rights education which comprised teaching 'about' specific human rights documents, declarations, and conventions. In contrast, the contemporary emphasis is upon the actual educational climate or classroom atmosphere itself being structured so as to enable students to internalize and acquire those attributes considered to be consistent with a respect for human rights. This distinction is explored more fully later in the thesis.

³ I borrow this term from Catherine A. MacKinnon

literature, the connection between the two has not been highlighted.

It is in recognition of the latent potential which remains untapped within current human rights dialogue that my thesis finds its motivation. My thesis explores the failure of human rights dialogue to become more 'open' or democratized and emphasizes the manner in which such dialogic stagnation has subverted the capacity for human rights education. Further, my thesis offers an alternative vision of human rights dialogue drawing from Habermasian Communicative Theory⁴ thereby structuring discursive practice in such a manner as to make the goals and values espoused by the human rights education movement a part of the lived reality of human rights dialogue.

A comprehensive vision of this nature has not yet been advanced, human rights education efforts themselves having been concentrated within pre-existing educational structures, or formal educational environments. My thesis probes the manner in which such a paradigmatic conversational shift may be pursued and the implications such a shift may embody for the realization of human rights goals.

⁴ See, for example, The Theory of Communicative Action, two volumes (Toronto; Beacon Press, 1984 & 1987), or Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action (Cambridge; MIT Press, 1990). Also, Habermas' article entitled "Discourse Ethics: Notes on a Problem of Philosophical Justification," in Seyla Benhabib & Fred Dallmyer, eds. The Communicative Ethics Controversy, (Cambridge; MIT Press, 1995), pp. 60-110.

Having stated my thesis scope it is necessary, for further clarification, to state what this thesis does not purport to do. Firstly, my thesis does not revisit the dispute still waging between the relativist and universalist worlds of International Relations.⁵ Obviously, in exploring the potential for successful human rights education revisiting the universalist/relativist argument is entirely ineffectual. At the same time my thesis cannot accurately be couched, given its obvious endorsement of human rights aspirations, within essentialist or universalist rhetoric, as that limits the alternative views which can be expressed concerning the material contained herein in much the same manner as, I contend, human rights dialogue has itself been limited thus far.

Instead, I advocate a perspective on human rights articulated by Richard Devlin, termed the *Critical Modernist Perspective*.⁶ From this perspective, human rights are an "ideological discursive practice, that is, ... a way of thinking, knowing and talking that facilitates, structures

⁵ For work in this area see, for example, Richard A.T. Harvie, Human Rights and Conflict Avoidance in U.S. - Iranian Relations. (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Acadia University, 1996).

⁶ Devlin refers to this perspective in the article entitled "Solidarity or Solipsistic Tunnel Vision? Reminiscences of a Renegade Rapporteur," in Human Rights in the Twenty-First Century: A Global Challenge, Paul Mahoney & Kathleen E. Mahoney eds. (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1993) Devlin characterises this perspective as conceiving of human rights discourse as "open-ended and revisable."

and underpins the ways and means of social interaction."⁷ Devlin argues that this view of human rights eradicates problems of ahistoricity, reclaims a definition of 'power' as empowerment rather than as merely 'power over' and enables human rights to respond to human needs. It is within this malleable framework of diverse perspectives that my thesis rests.

The idea of diverse perspectives articulated by Devlin is advocated throughout this thesis. It also represents the definition of human rights which comprises the core of this thesis. The ultimate struggle toward, and demands for, a better human rights dialogue assumes a more open and evolving approach to the definition of human rights than has been the norm. An evolving and dynamic conception of human rights has not been the tradition of human rights terminology to this point.

Definitions of human rights as outcroppings of human rights dialogue to date have been problematic in two respects. As a result of the lack of breadth and applicability of the theory which has defined human rights dialogue to this point and which is explored extensively throughout the course of this thesis, human rights definitions themselves have failed to represent the

⁷ Richard Devlin. "Solidarity or Solipsistic Tunnel Vision? Reminiscences of a Renegade Rapporteur," in Human Rights for the Twenty-First Century: A Global Challenge, Paul Mahoney & Kathleen Mahoney eds. (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1993), pp. 992 & 993.

diversity of human rights issues. This dysfunction stands in contrast to many of the common criticisms which have been waged against so called, 'rights language' for what has been seen as its increased usage and, resultingly decreased meaning. Consistent with the arguments within this thesis, it is not as a result of conceptual growth that the term human rights has 'lost' meaning. Rather, the difficulty with the term human rights has derived from attempts to apply a form of terminology which barely applies to the new situations that require and warrant its usage.

The second difficulty which is characteristic of the concept of human rights is the tradition of dichotomization within which conceptualizations of human rights have been contained. As they have been a part of broader theoretical approaches within International Relations theory, definitions of human rights have been limited by a necessarily oppositional relationship. In essence, International Relations theory has presented scholars with a choice between two alternatives in defining human rights. Human rights have been either a social creation native to particular cultural values, or human rights have existed as a inalienable right of all human beings as a function of that humanity.⁸

⁸ Again, the active force of these two perspectives on human rights has found its impetus in the traditions of Universalism and Relativism. The oppositional relation of conceptions of human rights may be observed within the Universalist and Relativist literature.

The damage of the tradition of dichotomizing perspectives within the discipline of International Relations is evident in the stagnation of human rights terminology. Defined within the confines of the longstanding debate between the Universalist and Relativist modes of thought human rights terminology has been unnecessarily static. Efforts to move beyond the two traditional approaches to thinking of human rights and to advance study related to the concept have been curtailed. In this way the concept of human rights has been a somewhat dead concept, rather than a living and evolving way of dealing with the dynamic world within which human rights issues reside.

Richard Devlin's idea of human rights initiates the opportunity for the concept of human rights to find a new and evolving basis. Devlin's Critical Modernist approach opposes the idea that human rights can be, "ossified, reduced or restricted to any pseudo-determinative idea."⁹ In fact, Devlin argues that human rights should be, "open-ended and revisable."¹⁰ The view of human rights articulated by Devlin, eradicates the oppositional tradition of human rights discourse and also by destroying those traditions, rids the concept of human rights from an

⁹ Devlin, p. 993.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 993.

abundance of philosophical assumptions and prejudices which have challenged the applicability of the concept.

What I am trying to grapple with ... is the articulation of what might be called an Integrative Theory of Human Rights. In this approach concepts of solidarity and interdependence are dovetailed with the dream of equality of condition to provide us with a discursive ideological practice that empowers us to go beyond liberal essentialism; assuage the seeming contradiction of the individual and community; and recognize the mutuality of 'self' and 'other'. ... An integrative vision helps us to resist the subdivisioning (and therefore hierarchicalization) of human rights into civil, political, economic, social and cultural ghettos ... that ... fractionalizes and does violence to our existential reality.¹¹

Feminist scholars and others are beginning to offer alternatives to the tradition of dichotomization of the concept of human rights.¹² The work of feminist scholars in exposing the exclusive nature of the traditional International Relations theoretical basis is the topic of the next chapter and thus, will not be explored in great depth here. Still, it is worth mentioning in the discussion of human rights as a concept, that feminist scholars have begun to show how the oppositional relationships of theory within the field of International Relations have curtailed the applicability and potential of that theory. Such

¹¹ Devlin, p. 1001.

¹² See, for example, Johan Galtung, Human Rights in Another Key (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994). Galtung also attempts to find a new basis for human rights discourse based on human needs. In so doing he attempts to expunge some of the Western liberal tradition from human rights discourse.

revelations are related, directly, to the dichotomization of conceptions of human rights within the field. Charlotte Bunch discusses problems of this nature in the article, *Feminist Visions of Human Rights in the Twenty-First Century*. Bunch outlines criticisms against the diluted nature of the concept of human rights as more groups begin to articulate their struggles through the language of human rights. Bunch, however, contends that, "this fear ... should not stifle the vitality of the concept of human rights."¹³ Rather, expanding the concept of human rights to,

address the dignity of all people strengthens not dilutes the human rights movement. It is a dynamic vision that continually brings allies to the human rights struggle since as new actors **define their own human rights**, they bring new energy and insights to the movement.¹⁴

Bunch exposes the difficulties inherent within predominant conceptions of human rights, with the designation of various 'generations' of rights and the need for the traditional boundaries of those designations to expand, and with what she terms the 'gatekeeping' which has characterized decisions about what comprises legitimate human rights issues. Like other efforts attempting to create a more applicable concept of human rights, this thesis is based on

¹³ Charlotte Bunch, "Feminist Visions of Human Rights in the Twenty-First Century," in Human Rights in the Twenty-First Century: A Global Challenge, Paul Mahoney & Kathleen E. Mahoney eds. (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1993)

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 968.

a dynamic, rather than a static, notion of human rights. To that end the thesis offers,

a broader vision of human rights that incorporates the feminist understanding of human rights as the struggle for dignity and hope of all people. If the human rights concept and community can be responsive to ... the ever expanding definitions of people's struggles for human dignity, then it can remain at the center of hopes and visions for what the 21st century can bring.¹⁵

It should be noted that in the spirit of the recognition of the importance of diverse viewpoints as it is advanced throughout the thesis, that I draw heavily upon the work of feminist authors in the field. This is not done to the exclusion of a plethora of other viewpoints, rather it is merely a reflection, in and of itself, of the lack of consideration of these questions within human rights dialogue. It has been, to date, almost exclusively through the work of feminist scholars, or through the use of a feminist lens that the need for dialogic restructuring has come to light.

Finally, in clarifying what this thesis does not endeavour to do, it must be made explicit that this thesis is not a test of Habermasian theory. Habermas' communicative principles are advanced throughout the course of this thesis as a bridge for communicative achievement by way of which current realities of communication can be improved. Habermas' theories of potential communicative

¹⁵ Bunch, p. 977.

competence are, arguably, one of the most significant advancements of thought currently defining the sub-field of political philosophy and they are being challenged by alternative visions of the reality of human communication such as those of Richard Rorty¹⁶ and Michel Foucault¹⁷. This thesis, however, is not the venue to pursue these disagreements. Rather, the project at hand comprises a linkage of the goals of human rights education and the construction of human rights dialogue. At its core my thesis is offered as a facet of the project of 'critical ferment' within human rights dialogue and to bring together some of the practical prescriptions for human rights education with the spirit of the human rights struggle.

Chapter One consists of an exploration of the state of human rights dialogue at present, placing an emphasis on the manner in which conversations have been, to date, exclusionary. The chapter focuses upon some of the scholarly criticism which has come to light regarding International Relations subject matter, its philosophical underpinnings, and its 'gendered' worldview. In making the lack of diversity of the field of International Relations

¹⁶ See, for example, Contingency, Irony and Solidarity. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) and/or Objectivity, Relativism and Truth. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

¹⁷ See, for example, The Archaeology of Knowledge. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972) and/or Politics, philosophy, culture: Interviews and other writings. (New York: Routledge, 1972).

explicit, and in exposing what has been neglected, the chapter demonstrates the importance and relevance of the topic.

Chapter Two concentrates on the principles advanced by the human rights education 'community' with particular emphasis on the methodological shift from education 'about' human rights to education 'for' human rights. Focus is upon the contemporary vein of education 'for' human rights where human rights necessitates considerations of educational 'climate' rather than merely attention to subject matter. Parallels are drawn between the traditional methods of human rights education based on 'instruction' and the manner in which such an approach reflects the dialogue within human rights scholarship more broadly, such as the 'monologue' which has been seen to characterize discourse between the developed and developing countries.

Chapter Three entails a discussion of the Habermasian dialogic model which I advocate as a bridge between the current human rights monologue and the educative guidelines of the human rights education community. Raising Habermasian discourse theory with reference to the state of communication within the human rights community makes considerations of communication and dialogue more explicit and, therefore, opens the door for dialogic restructuring.

Chapter Four considers what practical forms dialogic restructuring might assume. The chapter contemplates how

improved interchange, or a congruence between the reality of human rights dialogue and the demands of education 'for' human rights, might be pursued. Specifically, consideration is given to tangible ways of initiating and ensuring the exploration of better communicative practice within the human rights community. Traditional human rights vehicles as well as those mediums which have not traditionally served, effectively, as human rights venues are considered.

Finally, the concluding chapter indicates the implications that a restructured dialogue may have for the future of human rights aspirations and achievements. Establishing a congruence between human rights education prescriptions and the practice of the human rights community would positively impact upon human rights goals. Through a diversity of input and a recognition of the important linkages between ideas and practice human rights goals would be advanced by way of the cornerstone of that progress; human rights education.

Chapter One**THE SILENCE IS DEAFENING -
THE STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE**

If positive, inclusive, forward-looking social change is to occur, a progressive and more inclusive conversation must begin ... communication across divides of cultures, races, gender, professional and social backgrounds, religions and regions [will] identify and deal with barriers to progress better than any single perspective alone [can]. The aim [is] to seek enlightenment as to the way forward through confronting in dialogue groups that are unaccustomed to meeting one another ... once such a dialogue [is] in place, more global, realistic approaches to shared challenges will evolve.¹

Recognition of the traditionally exclusive nature of dialogue within the field of International Relations began to occur relatively recently. Scholars within the field are beginning to consider the breadth of contribution to the discipline and it is the initial undertaking of this chapter to make concerns in this regard evident, thereby demonstrating the exigency of a more inclusive dialogue. Consistent with my subject matter, emphasis is upon human rights literature and dialogue. Reference occasionally will be made to broader International Relations scholarship however, as the perspectives which have dominated the discipline as a whole have also helped to define its sub-fields. I begin with the work of a vast array of feminist

¹ Kathleen E. Mahoney, "Preface," Human Rights in the Twenty-First Century: A Global Challenge. Kathleen E. Mahoney & Paul Mahoney eds. (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1993), p. xii.

authors as it is from that body of thought that much of the impetus for change can be found. Perhaps the most substantial contributions expressing concern over the exclusiveness of human rights dialogue have derived from the work of feminist scholars in the field. Employment of what is widely termed a "gender sensitive lens"² may be said to have initiated a trend of self awareness within the discipline of International Relations. Further, this new found reflexivity³ is directly impacting the field of human rights.

One of the most exciting developments today in human rights education is the education that the human rights movement itself is going through ... specifically how the human rights movement, and democratic forces around the world are being educated by feminism.⁴

In surveying the revolutionary impact feminism is currently having within the field of I.R. it is essential to note that this does not imply complete coherence within the plethora of feminist writing. Certainly, as characterizes feminist theory throughout the social sciences, different streams of feminist thought flourish within and diversify

² V. Spike Peterson & Anne Sisson Runyan, Global Gender Issues, (Oxford: Westview Press, 1993), p. 1.

³ For an explanation of this term and its relevance to IR see the article "Reflexivity & International Relations Theory" by Mark Neufield in Beyond Positivism: Critical Reflections on International Relations, Claire Turanne Sjolander & Wayne S. Cox eds. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), pp. 11-35.

⁴ Ed Broadbent, "Gender Equality and Democracy". Speaking notes for the UNESCO Congress on Education for Human Rights and Democracy, Montreal. (1993)

the literature in order to expose the 'gendered' nature of the field of I.R. The distinctions between the various streams of feminist theory will not, owing to space constraints, be entertained here.⁵ Neither do I claim that the diversity of feminist thought is, itself, reflected in the following pages. My intention is to expose some of the vast content of feminist criticism impacting the field of I.R. and which is shattering the traditional theoretical paradigms within which I.R. has contained itself.

The commonality of feminist commitment is that of consciousness raising⁶ as it provides a philosophical underpinning for the diversity of feminist scholarship and criticisms reverberating within the backrooms of I.R. In contrast to scientific inquiry which strives for impartiality and eliminates lived realities, consciousness raising,

does not devalue the roots of social experience as it uncovers them ... [it] affirms a product of the determinants - self as knower of one's condition - while building a criticism of the conditions that have produced one as one is.⁷

⁵ For a concise summary of the various schools of thought contained within feminist scholarship see, for example, the work of Sandra Whitworth in Feminism and International Relations: Towards a Political Economy of Gender in Interstate and Non-Governmental Institutions, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), pp. 11-25.

⁶ For a detailed explanation of this term see, for example, the work of Catherine A. MacKinnon in Toward a Feminist Theory of the State, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), pp. 83-105.

⁷ Ibid., p. 102.

Consistent with consciousness raising and in the spirit of critical ferment and inclusive dialogue, the eclectic approach defended by Sandra Whitworth, which incorporates a promising amalgamation of the diversity of feminist perspectives, necessitates special emphasis. Whitworth outlines the important aspects of the various feminist schools of thought and advances an approach which she believes incorporates the strength of all of these combined.

The most useful point of departure for a feminist I.R. theory is one which relies on socialist-feminist insights and critical theory more generally and takes into account gender relations. Such an analysis permits us to assess not only the particular institutional and policy biases which affect the lives of women and men, but also the manner in which these biases were created, the effects that they have, and the possibilities for change.⁸

The most essential contention being brought to bear against the current state of I.R. dialogue and study is expressed in the claim that I.R. is 'gendered'. Simply, this claim works to subvert the 'invisibility' of women, or an androcentric bias characterizing the study of International Relations. Feminist authors have begun to expose "what has been one of the most gender-blind, indeed crudely patriarchal, of all the institutionalized forms of contemporary social and political analysis".⁹ The

⁸ Whitworth, p. 31.

⁹ R.B.J. Walker, "Gender and Critique in the Theory of International Relations", in Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory V. Spike

assertion that I.R. is gendered does not simply draw attention to an absence of women working in the field. Rather, the strong sense of the claim refers to substantially masculine underpinnings upon which I.R. study has been based. Feminists argue that the experiences upon which I.R. concepts and, resultingly theory, have been based are men's experiences. In this way the 'picture' of International Relations which has been representative of international reality is a partial one. An entire dimension of the International System, based in the experiences of women has been neglected. From an awareness of the 'service' work women provide in the global economy to the relevance of the 'security' established upon military bases worldwide by way of the observance of specific masculine/feminine relations, women have been omitted from I.R.'s worldview.¹⁰ Feminist authors, in their claim that I.R. is gendered, demonstrate how the invisibility of the experiences of the world's women, and their exclusion as a facet of I.R. subject matter, has limited the potential of I.R. study.

Peterson ed., (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), p. 179.

¹⁰ For more examples of the experiences of women in the international arena which have been overlooked in IR studies see, for example, the work of Cynthia Enloe in Bananas, Beaches and Bases, (Berkeley: University of California press, 1990)

In order to correct the inaccuracy of I.R.'s world picture, feminist authors are establishing feminist I.R. theory. The impetus for bringing gender, or the experiences of women, back into the world picture is accomplished by employing a 'gender sensitive lens'. The core of this approach comprises an acknowledgement of gender in the study of the world or a cognizance of the fact that gender matters. At first glance this may appear, given the pervasiveness of feminist theory throughout the social sciences, to be a rather routine claim. However, its force is particularly significant in the field of I.R. where though " ... there has begun to be an awareness within I.R. of feminism [there exists] little understanding of its relevance to I.R."¹¹ The force of feminism within I.R. labours to achieve more than a reflection of the systematic political oppression to which much of feminist literature has previously drawn attention.¹² Rather, the feminist authorship emphasizes the manner in which the study, and resultingly the understanding, of world interaction has been characterized by an absence of women's experiences. An attempt is then made to consider the implications of this omission for the accuracy of the study. The profound neglect of the lives of women has resulted in a

¹¹ V. Spike Peterson, "Introduction," in Peterson, p. 1.

¹² It should be noted that 'Third Wave' Feminists such as Julia Kristeva are also theorizing beyond the social oppression of women.

characterization of "men's experience as representative of human experience ... a ... patterned distortion of truth claims about social reality."¹³ The 'gender sensitive lens' paves the way for the realisation that traditional I.R. conversations have excluded not only the lived realities of women but also a manner of thought and being from which alternative approaches or perspectives on world relations may be derived. In essence, a recognition of gender can lead I.R. to a more comprehensive view of the world.

In speaking of the gender sensitivity to which feminist I.R. writers have given voice an important clarification of the term gender demands attention. Clarification of this term as it is used by feminist I.R. scholars involves distinguishing between masculinity and femineity as socially constructed concepts, as opposed to biological sexual identities. Virtually all feminist authors writing in the I.R. field make reference to this distinction. V. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan clearly differentiate between these concepts. The authors cite sex as the "biological distinction between males and females [while] gender refers to socially learned behaviour and expectations that distinguish between masculinity and femininity".¹⁴

¹³ Peterson, pp. 6 & 7.

¹⁴ Peterson, & Runyan, p. 5. For another example of this distinction, and in order to demonstrate its shared use by feminist writers see J. Ann Tickner's explanation of the

Gender then, from this perspective, is a learned 'role', way of behaving, or socially imposed identity which impacts upon the way in which we view the world.

A view of gender as a socially constructed concept makes the relational association of masculinity and femininity evident. The gender roles of femininity and masculinity are defined "in oppositional relation to one another [with] ... constancy in assigning greater value to that which is associated with masculinity and lesser value to that which is associated with femininity."¹⁵ Thus, the qualities typically associated with, or definitive of the social category of masculine - such as rationality - take precedence and are valued more than those qualities typically associated with the social category of feminine, such as passivity. Establishing a consciousness of the role of gender and the way in which these social categories have defined I.R. scholarship to date, comprises an integral part of the awareness for which feminist literature is serving as a catalyst within I.R.

In surveying the contribution of feminist scholarship to contemporary I.R. theory it is imperative to highlight the feminist focus upon the Realist paradigm of I.R. thought. The incorporation of a 'gender sensitive lens'

distinction in Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), pp. 7-9.

¹⁵ Peterson, & Runyan, p. 7.

alters the appearance, and exposes the diminishing capacity, of Realism as a theoretical guide by which to make sense of International Politics. Feminists contend that Realism is predicated upon, and through its predominance has subsequently assisted in the maintenance of, a gendered view of the world. Having been plagued by a 'blindness' to the relevance of gender, Realism has naturally imposed an intellectual boundedness, and an inaccuracy of description upon any view of the world taken from the vantage point of its epistemology. J. Ann Tickner, one of the current contributors to the important body of feminist thought (re)defining I.R., advances one of the most compelling and specific criticisms against the Realist paradigm within contemporary I.R. scholarship.¹⁶ Her efforts are focused upon achieving an understanding of women's exclusion from the field by observing the way in which the 'traditional' world of I.R. has been constructed.¹⁷ Though theoretical challenges to it have surfaced throughout the history of

¹⁶ Tickner, pp. 9-14.

¹⁷ Tickner does give credence to the fact that women have contributed to the field of IR and is, in this manner, not merely attesting to an absence of women in the field. It is the very gendered structure of study within the field that Tickner focuses upon and which is further substantiated by her outline of the areas within the field where women have been concentrated such as I.P.E., distributive justice, and North-South relations. These, have not, Tickner points out, been definitive of mainstream IR scholarship.

International Relations as a discipline,¹⁸ Realism has comprised the dominant paradigm of thought since the conclusion of the Second World War. Evolving out of a profound disillusionment with what was considered to be an 'idealist' approach to International Politics, Realism embarked upon a world view which takes power and conflict to be paramount aspects of International Relations. Tickner argues that the Realist manner of thought has, by virtue of this, been defined by a way of thinking which privileges a masculine view of the world. Predicated upon, and actually assuming conflictual inter-state relations Tickner argues that the dominating Realist paradigm of I.R. has gendered "the traditional Western academic discipline of international relations [privileging] issues that grow out of men's experiences".¹⁹

The thrust of Tickner's argument in this respect goes back to the feminist definition of gender as a socially constituted category. As outlined earlier, the differentiation between masculinity and femineity as social roles and as definitive of social experience have been defined in oppositional relation, with priority consistently assigned to those traits or abilities associated with masculinity. It is simply a matter of historical fact that

¹⁸ See, for example, 'interdependence', 'dependency', 'world order', and 'postpositivist' schools of thought.

¹⁹ Tickner, p. 4.

the 'conflictual relations' preoccupation of Realism and its focus upon the 'high' politics of war and weaponry, given the tradition of these as a male domain, would fail to include the experience of women.²⁰ The Realist approach, then, fails to bring to light international issues which would be pertinent to the social experience of women. Spike Peterson aptly describes the plight of such curtailed or oppositional thinking stating that,

as long as we remain locked in dichotomies, we cannot accurately understand ... not only do oppositional constructions distort the contextual complexity of social reality, they set limits on the questions we ask and the alternatives we consider.²¹

Perhaps Tickner's most compelling argument against the gendered nature of I.R. and Realism specifically, is contained in a reformulation of Hans Morgenthau's principles of Realism, a statement of Realism which, Tickner contends, has had substantial impact upon I.R. theory since 1945. In the article entitled, Hans Morgenthau's Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation, Tickner argues that Morgenthau's principles comprise an incomplete view of the International Political System. Grounded in an attempt to establish an objective and scientific approach to

²⁰ See Rebecca Grant's "The Quagmire of Gender and International Security," in Peterson, pp. 83-97. Grant demonstrates how even the reality of women as Amazon warriors has not been accepted as part of the norm and she advances arguments for International Security comprising 'archetypal male experience'.

²¹ Peterson, p. 54.

International Politics where, "states use morality as a cloak to justify the pursuit of their own national interest",²² Realism is based in masculine assumptions of human nature.

International Relations has de-valued or been oblivious to social roles or capacities long associated with the position of women in the world, such as emotion, co-operation, nurturing and re-generation. This hinders the capacity for viewing International Relations issues in terms other than conflictual interaction with a view to self preservation. According to Tickner this approach further compounds the inability of the Realist paradigm to deal with the more contemporary, and ever changing, issues with which International Politics is faced. Approaches to environmental issues, for example, which necessitate a cooperative approach and which call for a nurturing of the biological system within which we live are not provided for by a Realist approach to political action. Realism, Tickner points out, is "embedded in the traumas of World War II [and is] no longer able to deal with an increasingly pluralistic array of problems ranging from economic interdependence to environmental degradation."²³ This argument concerning

²² J. Ann Tickner, "Hans Morgenthau's Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation" in International Theory: Critical Investigations, James Der Derian ed., (New York: New York University Press, 1995), p. 59.

²³ Ibid., p. 60.

the inaccurate categorization of International Politics as merely conflictual relations void of any capacity for co-operation or understanding can be likened to similar arguments made against the Hobbesian 'State of Nature' upon which Realism is often thought to be predicated.²⁴

A broader recognition of the role of classical political theory and its contribution to the gendered construction of the field of I.R. assists in further comprehending the half-world view with which Realism and I.R. have been plagued. The androcentric bias which feminist authors are beginning to demonstrate within I.R. and which is apparent within the perspective of Realism is internal to the very words through which ideas, and consequently actions are formed. The manner in which political discourse is specifically male referential is made evident by V. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan. Peterson and Runyan expound upon the manner in which the conceptualization of terms such as 'power' 'strength' and 'security' have been gendered within Realist dominated International Relations. The understanding of these concepts, and their applicability to I.R. have inhibited a full representation of world reality.

²⁴ See, for example, Diana H Coole, Women in Political Theory: From Ancient Misogyny To Contemporary Feminism, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988), pp. 71-102. Hedley Bull, "Society and Anarchy in International Relations", in International Theory: Critical Investigations, James Der Derian ed., New York: New York University Press, 1995), pp. 81-90.

Runyan and Peterson point out the fact that security has been an essentially 'harm' based concept as opposed to a "celebrating and sustaining [of] life"²⁵, that power has comprised 'power over' rather than empowerment and that strength, which has been a quality attributed to men, refers essentially to the muscular composition of men rather than to the constitutional strength exhibited by women.

The female ... has greater stamina, lives longer, fights disease better, and endures all sorts of devitalizing conditions better than men: starvation, exposure, fatigue, shock, illness and the like.²⁶

Thus, not only has the discipline of I.R. been limited by the theoretical boundedness of Realism, but also by the linguistic and definitional constructs of I.R. terminology which, by their very nature, constrain the capacity for a complete and fully descriptive world view. Criticism of Realism's anarchic world picture, and its inability to accommodate itself to the changing world scene is perhaps one of the most significant contributions of feminist writers in I.R. Robert Keohane aptly describes this plight of the discipline and the potential for conceptual revolution suggesting that,

feminist analysis ... re-analyze key concepts such as power, sovereignty and reciprocity ... ask[ing]

²⁵ Peterson & Runyan p. 35.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 35

whether male constructions of these concepts have affected how we think about International Relation, and how our thinking might be changed by reflecting on the concepts.²⁷

The public life/private life distinction is one such concept. Prevalent throughout political theory this distinction, much like Hobbes' 'State of Nature', has been an important definitive construct in International Relations. Feminist writers have chastized the public/private distinction for its ignorance of the plight of women and, thus, for facilitating human rights abuses proliferating in the private sphere. The public/private distinction and the broader repercussions it retains for the discipline are, perhaps, best exhibited in consideration of one of the most predominant considerations of International Relations, that of national security.²⁸

As articulated by Robert Jervis, the security dilemma of I.R. deals with the relative security of states and the idea that, "most of the ways in which a country seeks to increase its security have the unintended effect of

²⁷ Robert Keohane, "International Relations Theory", in Gender and International Relations, Rebecca Grant & Kathleen Newland eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), p. 42.

²⁸ I have limited my security considerations, owing to space constraints, to the concept of 'national security'. For detailed reference to other aspects of security issues such as ecological security and economic security and the way in which they too are gendered see, Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security by J. Ann Tickner.

decreasing the security of others."²⁹ A nation-state, never knowing its relative power for certain with respect to other nation-states, maintains peace of mind by way of the proliferation of its means of defence. Within this conception of security, and consistent with Realist thought, the traditional actors within the international arena have been nation states posited as 'rational' political actors. Security has been a phenomenon assessed, therefore, in respect of intra-state activity to the neglect of either individual actors or efforts organized in concert. In this way, I.R. dialogue has perpetuated an approach that fails to incorporate abuses of power, or systematic forms of oppression, at a sub-state level and this short sighted approach, for the reality of the world's women, has neglected very real occurrences of torture and violations of human rights.

The state is not all there is to power. To act as if it produces an exceptionally inadequate definition for human rights when so much of the second class status of women, from sexual objectification to murder, is done by men to women prior to express state involvement. If ... one is including the unjust power involved in the subjection of half of the human race by the other half- male dominance- it makes no sense whatsoever to define power exclusively in terms of what the state does. The state is only one instrumentality of it. To fail to see this is pure gender bias. Usually this bias flies under the flag of privacy, so that those areas which are defined as inappropriate for state involvement, where the

²⁹ Robert Jervis quoted in "*Sources of Gender Bias in International Relations Theory*" by Rebecca Grant, in Grant & Newland, p. 14.

discourse of human rights is irrelevant are those areas in which the majority of the world's women live out their days.³⁰

The maintenance of the public/private sphere distinction has been upheld, in part, through the predominance of liberal individualism and its basis in Enlightenment philosophy. Consistent with the tradition of Enlightenment philosophy's 'reasoning man', International Politics has likewise, posited its 'reason endowed' actor - the nation state. Kate Manzo, in her article '*Modernist Discourse and the Crisis of Development Theory*' states,

in its liberal variant, modernist thought has privileged the individual as the ultimate site of sovereignty, but the state [has] been invoked as providing that site. ... Reasoning man is assimilated into a larger agency - ... which itself becomes an invariable presence, an originary voice, a foundational source of truth and meaning.³¹

In this way, the discussion of individual nation states acting as rational political entities, as has been predominant throughout I.R. theory, has an origin and the isolation of 'power' in I.R. theory to matters of state action has found its basis.

In the struggle for the realization of worldwide human rights aspirations, this solidification of the public/private dichotomy has proven to be a recipe for

³⁰ Catherine MacKinnon, "On Torture: A Feminist Perspective on Human Rights," in Mahoney & Mahoney, p. 27.

³¹ Kate Manzo, "*Modernist Discourse and the Crisis of Development Theory*," in Studies in Comparative International Development. Summer 1991. Vol. 26, no. 2. p. 7.

tragedy. Further it has, again, curtailed the capacity for I.R., as a discipline, to evolve along with new world realities. Riane Eisler makes reference to the failure of the international community to have dealt, effectively, with the sale of young girls and women into the sex trade by their male family members. This practice is currently a booming tourist industry proliferating in many areas of Asia and has international ramifications in respect of the related rise of positive HIV testing in these areas. States Eisler,

It is only when we begin to apply one standard to violations of human rights, whether they occur inside or outside of the family, that we see how the distinction between the public and private spheres has served to prevent the application of human rights to the most formative and fundamental human relations.³²

The limited study of 'power' in I.R. has, essentially, left many women experiencing horrendous human rights abuses with no recognizable vocabulary through which to articulate the injustice they face. In the article, *On Torture: A Feminist Perspective on Human Rights*,³³ Catharine A. MacKinnon demonstrates how many experiences of women which, in description, comprise acts of torture coincident with Amnesty International accounts of torture, fail to be

³² Riane Eisler, "Roles of Women and Men," in Human Rights for the 21st Century: Foundations for Responsible Hope, Peter Juviler & Bertram Gross, eds., (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), p. 249.

³³ Kathleen E. Mahoney, in Mahoney & Mahoney, pp. 21-31.

considered human rights violations. There exist virtually no human rights standards for the majority of the 'tortures' with which the female gender is faced regardless of the specific national boundaries within which these experiences occur. Violence against women within national boundaries fails to come to light as a violation of human rights because, as MacKinnon demonstrates in her article, such abuse is not seen to be of a politically motivated nature or of a power oriented action involving state actors.

A feminist analysis of standard approaches to International Relations and human rights subject matter, such as 'security issues,' demonstrates that confining conceptions of power to matters of state action fails to address some of the most pressing issues of personal security for one half of the planet's inhabitants. The dissolution of the public and private spheres is essential in order for many of the security issues unique to the 'feminine' gender to be incorporated into human rights dialogue and, thereby, to warrant consideration within the human rights realm.

It is of the utmost importance that the theoretical revolution being undertaken by feminist scholars in the field operate to alter the construction of the discipline of I.R. and should not be confused with a project merely attempting to highlight the exclusion of women from the field, thus effectually starting a companion dialogue to

that of I.R. A companion dialogue would continue the tradition of women operating outside of the 'mainstream', rather than reforming what feminists establish to be an incomplete world view and which calls into question the accuracy and applicability of the philosophical offerings derived from the field. Still, it remains the case that in order for such goals to be met, for those experiences unique to the world's women to become recognized as fundamental human rights violations harbouring their own form of objectification and domination, women's concerns must first be heard and taken seriously. Their voices must become a part of the dialogue. Progress in education in matters of this nature is, obviously, beginning to surface, primarily through the work of feminist scholars in the field, but fully democratic discourse does not, as yet, prevail. Further, the predominant vocabulary through which human rights discussions find their expression remains androcentric. Within the very philosophical subterrain of the discipline of I.R., conceptual and definitional reform is required within the mainstream dialogue rather than as a sideline exhibition.

Shelley Wright addresses these necessities, speaking of the marginalization of women's issues in the area of human rights.

Women are, linguistically, and on consequent deeper levels of thought and action, consistently marginalised in the mainstream international instruments. Only where women are dealt with in

their own conventions, committees and other international fora are issues relevant to them discussed.³⁴

Much of the difficulty in this area resides in the conceptualisation of the notion of 'equality' as equivalent to 'sameness'. Essentially the claim here is that in treating women as 'equals' one must treat them as the 'same' as men, in relation to whom the standards of 'sameness' are referenced. This proves an inadequate notion of equality in that, again, those experiences that are unique to women because they are women are discounted or ignored. Differences that are addressed are dealt with in conventions or by committees designated to deal specifically with these 'female differences' such that the issues are, as is the case in the private/public sphere distinction, relegated to take place outside of the standard realm of discussion. In this way women's concerns are to be dealt with in a 'special' manner instead of being acquainted with a humanness as substantial as that possessed by the male half of the population.

Equality, ... where ... the ideal is sameness with men, accepts the validity of the male standard as human and indirectly silences or subverts the value of specifically female experiences ... half the human race is marginalised and denigrated and

³⁴ Shelley Wright, "Human Rights and Women's Rights: An Analysis of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women," in Mahoney & Mahoney, p. 77.

... women's rights as opposed to human rights are ghettoised into their own convention.³⁵

Kathleen E. Mahoney substantiates these claims of equality for women being conceived of as 'sameness' with men as it has manifested itself within the Canadian court system.³⁶ Since the introduction of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* in 1979 and its extensive ratification in January of 1990, Mahoney contends that the world status of women has scarcely been altered. Quite simply, women have not assumed a position as active participants within the systems that "create, interpret, and apply laws".³⁷ International law is construed disproportionately in favour of men such that, "general human norms are equated with male norms and [thus] ... the interests, rights and concerns of women tend to disappear."³⁸ Mahoney, and many feminist scholars, believe that the fundamental restructuring necessary to eradicate this inherent bias resides in the inclusion of more women's voices. "Strategies must be developed to ensure that women's voices are heard, [and] that gender

³⁵ Ibid., p. 79.

³⁶ Kathleen E. Mahoney, "International Strategies to Implement Equality Rights for Women: Overcoming Gender Bias in the Courts" Paper prepared for the Human Rights and Canadian Solidarity Conference, Ottawa. (1990)

³⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

biased myths which buttress the law are removed".³⁹ For Mahoney, the courts of the world have the capacity to assume a vital role in transcending androcentric views of the world in their interpretation of international human rights conventions and other documents oriented toward the preservation of 'human' rights.

Drastic institutional change is required for concerns of inclusion similar to those articulated by feminist scholars to be addressed, yet the necessity of that change can not be recognized failing an awareness of the problems which plague the institutions. For that, human rights dialogue must be democratized; the voices of women are required so that it may come to be acknowledged that,

To be the same is not to be equal. To be equal is to be treated as an equal based on relevant differences ... to be free from discrimination, from those traditional and erroneous assumptions that ascribe merit rather than acknowledging it.⁴⁰

One final aspect of feminist concerns with the traditional approach to fairness as 'sameness' offers an alternative conception of equality termed a 'harms-based' equality approach. This alternative concept surfaces in line with arguments regarding the proliferation of pornography as detrimental to women's human rights. Such a

³⁹ Ibid., p. 6.

⁴⁰ Rosalie Silberman Abella, "From Civil Liberties to Human Rights: Acknowledging the Differences," in Mahoney & Mahoney, p. 66.

perspective is another line of argument pursued in the work of Kathleen E. Mahoney where she demonstrates the failure of the traditional liberal treatment of the issue - revolving around freedom of speech and expression as well as the undefinable nature of pornography - to live up to the liberating nature that is claimed for it. Liberal philosophy, in view of criticism from the left, assumes equality and is predicated on abstract principles which "fail to address the historically specific oppression actually experienced by dominated groups."⁴¹

The harms-based equality approach focuses on a balancing between harms as a way of adjudicating between competing rights and freedoms. With respect to the competing claims surrounding the issue of pornography, then, the "broader societal, political, and legal context of sex inequality - the fact of rape, battery, prostitution, incest, and sexual harassment as part of daily life for women - must be considered."⁴² Considered within the scope of this broader contextual framework it becomes evident that efforts to achieve equality rights for women are undermined by pornography's reinforcement of the "systematic violence and social harm they suffer."⁴³

⁴¹ Kathleen E. Mahoney, *"Destruction of Women's Rights Through Mass Media Proliferation of Pornography,"* in Mahoney & Mahoney p. 770.

⁴² Ibid., p. 771.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 771.

Emphasis in the pornography issue must evolve from an obsession with freedom of expression issues which assume the ability to exercise that freedom, to issues involving the systematic oppression of women, perpetuated by pornographic materials, which impede the realisation of full equality for women.

Where barriers impede fairness for some individuals they should be removed, even if this means treating some people differently. ... I do not see why any democracy should be embarrassed or uncomfortable prioritizing the needs of the impoverished, disempowered and disadvantaged over those who are more privileged. ... The goal of a more humane and egalitarian society requires new ways of talking about the problems of free expression; otherwise we will find the progressive tools of an earlier era turned against that progress.⁴⁴

Consistent with the attempt of the feminist movement within I.R. theory to make the theoretical and literal worlds of I.R. more in tune with one another, approaches such as these find their basis in the lived reality of the world's inhabitants. Much of the feminist struggle may, therefore, been seen in light of its consciousness and observance of reality, juxtaposed with I.R.'s historical adherence to the discipline's originating doctrines of theory. This adherence has prevailed despite the vast juncture between theoretical reality and the calls to action of the current world picture. Only with such all encompassing awareness, and through an incorporation of the

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 774-775.

diversity of perspectives which may enable such an awareness, can the antiquated world assumptions upon which traditional I.R. theory is based be abandoned so that I.R. may begin to assess and respond to the present world scene and the struggle for human rights contextualized in the contemporary.

In order for I.R. theory to continue to accommodate itself to the 'moving' world picture, however, a view to an actual I.R. dialogue must prevail. It is simply inefficient for mere 'perspectivising' to predominate. The critical ferment that characterizes I.R. theory at present is a huge step forward in terms of awareness, however, the danger remains that that dialogue be restricted unto itself. Sandra Whitworth raises such concerns, speaking of the fact that the important revelations of relevance to I.R. which have been raised by feminist theorists have been undertaken, "primarily from outside the discipline".⁴⁵ Further, scholarship committed to critical ferment still does not function so as to facilitate interactive or discursive practice between approaches as little communication between scholars from the various approaches appears to be occurring.⁴⁶ In order to transcend the age old adages of the discipline and to begin to devise new approaches such interaction is imperative. Further, as will be argued later

⁴⁵ Whitworth, p. 31.

⁴⁶ Whitworth, p. 40.

in the thesis, such communicative practice is especially significant within the human rights arena as a practical manifestation of human rights education principles thereby bringing theory and practice in line.

Though the vast majority of criticism in I.R. theory is deriving from the work of feminist scholars, others are contributing to that literature working to redefine I.R. and helping to, "[call] into question the very language, concepts, methods, and history (that is the dominant discourse) which constitutes and governs a 'tradition' of thought in the field".⁴⁷ Some of the work in this regard considers the privileging of certain forms of communication and, thereby, the ostracization of cultures not comfortable with that chosen communicative venue. Other scholars focus upon the dominance of human rights dialogue, an aspect of social science so intricately tied to 'real' people's lives, by specialists drawn from the areas of philosophy and the legal profession. Regardless of their more specific subject matter, writers analyzing the state of human rights dialogue demonstrate the urgency of a dialogue open to the contributions and insights of a varied people.

Much of the non-feminist critical theory manifesting itself in opposition to the exclusionary nature of I.R. dialogue, and specifically human rights dialogue finds its basis, similar to many if the arguments of feminist authors,

⁴⁷ James Der Derian quoted in Whitworth, p. 39.

in a criticism of the privileging of certain conceptual principles to the complete exclusion of others. As was touched upon briefly already, the predominance of liberal individualism has been the source of faults in this regard. Beyond the feminist criticism of the private/public sphere distinction and the 'rational political actor', other critical thinkers have begun to find fault with ingrained liberal concepts.

John Ladd argues against the strict definitional restraints which have governed, conceptually, in human rights discourse. Ladd refers to these concepts as 'essentially contested concepts' and argues that they have been characterized by extreme ethnocentricity. He refers to the use of concepts such as violence, solidarity, and rights which he believes to be far more complex notions in reality than is indicated by the meanings which they have assumed within the scope of human rights discourse.

By way of example, Ladd asserts that the conception of violence which has taken precedence in human rights literature is a 'privatized' model of violence based on the western notion of criminal violence where violence is distinguished from the idea of justifiable force such as that exercised by a soldier or a public official. In making this distinction explicit, Ladd exposes what may very well be an ambiguous categorization of actions, based in the "presuppositions, implications and consequences of our own

beliefs and practices".⁴⁸ Ladd acknowledges that considerations of the ethnocentricity of concepts tends to resurrect aspects of the universalist and relativist arguments, however, Ladd is not attempting to resurrect this debate. Rather, he embarks upon a 'deconstructionist' activity of exposing the weaknesses of the concepts traditionally employed in human rights dialogue. Once the weaknesses of a concept are understood a more accurate and applicable reconstruction may be undertaken, in an effort to free the terms in question from ideological baggage.

As an example, Ladd demonstrates how equating collective violence such as terrorism, with the traditionally conceived notion of 'privatized' violence is inappropriate. Such a line of thinking, argues Ladd, may lead to a completely inaccurate and potentially dangerous analysis of a given international situation. Ladd refers to potential misinterpretations of the collective violence asserted by international players such as Hitler or Saddam Hussein. To equate the actions of these individuals with the notion of 'privatized' criminal violence, argues Ladd, suffices to describe the behaviour or rationale of these individuals as, essentially, irrational. Thus, inquiry into their motivation is subverted and, given the 'criminal' nature of their actions other political authorities, or

⁴⁸ John Ladd, "*Ideological Components of the Concepts of Collective Violence, Human Rights, and Solidarity*," in Mahoney & Mahoney, p. 223.

nations, assume justification in exerting whatever force deemed necessary to curtail their behaviour. In such a context, retaliatory action may be embarked upon by a given world superpower at any juncture to curtail the action of the 'irrational' opponent. Inherent in this way of thinking, argues Ladd, is the notion of 'just war', the often unjust results of which may go completely unconsidered.

This kind of argument entirely disregards the disanalogies between individual and collective entities like nations. ... When it is maintained that a nation is guilty or ought to be punished, who are we talking about? The rulers, the populace, some, most, everyone? Who is punished in a war? Are they the guilty ones?⁴⁹

Ladd exposes these uneasy connotations of terms within traditional human rights literature in order to stimulate a reform of these often arbitrarily applied terms. An awareness of the limitations and connotations of applied concepts, such as violence, is essential to achieving a more broad manner of thinking able to accommodate everchanging world dynamics. The answer is not to abandon all attempts to apply concepts, rather it is to devise more sophisticated and contextually adaptable concepts and to then apply them with a view to difference rather than as definitional absolutes representative of a truth beyond context.

Richard Devlin articulates what he sees to be the "inability of mainstream human rights discourse to fully

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 232.

come to terms with the concept of collective rights".⁵⁰ Devlin raises the example of the Canadian Government's failure to reconcile issues with its First Nations peoples as characteristic of the profound reliance upon liberal individualist rights rhetoric. According to Devlin, this failure to think in the alternative form of 'collectivism' prevents us from a more 'contextualized' approach to human rights claims which would be better able to incorporate a diversity of realities. Devlin's claim in this respect is very similar to the argument against pornography by Kathleen E. Mahoney discussed earlier in the chapter. Devlin similarly agrees that various 'rights' as they have been traditionally conceived may be better able to accommodate, and thereby eliminate, human rights abuses were they viewed in their situational or 'contextual framework'. As an example, Devlin argues there would be an increased applicability for refugee rights if the variety of reasons for becoming a refugee were considered, from gender to sexual preference, rather than simply having refugee status referenced against a 'prototypical norm'. Having posited the individual as the sole unit for identifying human rights claims has curtailed those concerns and experiences not neatly articulated by individualist rhetoric.

⁵⁰ Richard Devlin, *"Solidarity or Solipsistic Tunnel Vision? Reminiscences of a Renegade Rapporteur,"* in Mahoney & Mahoney p. 1000.

Iris Young characterizes the impediments to full participation that a failure to facilitate collective expression have helped create. Young emphasizes the fact that even when there has been an attempt, within the shadow of liberal individualist thought, to reference group claims those groups have been construed, "either on the model of aggregates or on the model of associations, [in essence] ... methodically individualist concepts".⁵¹ The considerations of identity raised by this debate have scarcely been undertaken within the realm of human rights literature because the hegemony of liberal ideology has preempted such expression from ever taking place. An ability to conceptualize human rights in terms of communities or collectivities, rather than merely as individual endowments, would enable the articulation and consideration of an abundance of claims which the current dialogue silences.

Richard Devlin identifies another fundamental way in which human rights discourse has prevented the inclusion of a plethora of voices; through its prioritization of the written over the spoken word. This is evidenced in the

⁵¹ Iris Young, "*Justice and the Politics of Difference*" quoted in "*Democracy and Multiculturalism*" by Fred Dallmayr. Paper prepared for the Conference on 'Democracy and Difference' at the Annual Study of Political Thought: An International Organization. Yale. (1993) p. 11. According to Young, both aggregates and associations assume the individual to be "ontologically prior to the collective" and therefore, privatize difference.

preoccupation of, "international human rights organizations with conventions, declarations, protocols, and judicial decisions compared to the almost total disregard of oral traditions of ... the African verbal tradition or First Nations".⁵² Not only have women and other minority groups been ostracized due to particular structural and philosophical restrictions upon appropriate human rights jargon but, so also have the modes of communication within which human rights discourse is traditionally undertaken prevented the participation of those who may prefer, or be better able, to communicate in another manner.

Western Civilization has conquered, among other reasons, because of its superiority in human communication; but ... this superiority has been asserted at the cost of communication with the world ... modern Western thought tends to conceive communication as 'only interhuman' - a conception predicated on the notion that 'world' cannot be a grammatical subject or partner in dialogue.⁵³

Limiting the manner and modes of expression of potential participants to a dialogue constitutes the validation of those cultures who choose to communicate in that manner and fundamentally inhibits the participation of those people who are better able to communicate in some other manner. Quite reasonably it could be expected that

⁵² Richard Devlin, *"Solidarity or Solipsistic Tunnel Vision? Reminiscences of a Renegade Rapporteur,"* in Mahoney & Mahoney p. 1001.

⁵³ Fred Dallmayr, *"Democracy and Multiculturalism"*. Paper prepared for the Conference on 'Democracy and Difference' at the Annual Study of Political Thought: An International Organization. Yale. (1993) p. 1.

the privileging of written communication would implicitly disadvantage the participation of many inhabitants of the developing world due to the lower literacy rates in those regions. The omission of the perspectives of such potential contributors is a particularly discouraging omission as so much of the animosity to the internationalization of the human rights struggle has been predicated upon the view of the dialogue as being a particularly 'Western' monologue of development which posits the 'West' as a model of achievement which the developing world ought, appropriately, to emulate. J. Paul Martin has insisted on the need for a re-examination of the human rights agenda with respect to this imbalance as he states the agenda has been, "set primarily by the rich industrialized countries".⁵⁴

The privileging of written expression as the venue for human rights conversations places these dialogues out of reach of many potential conversants. This necessitation of written form helps to embed such interchange within the confines of elite interaction. Not only are a number of individuals with vitally important reflections on real life human rights struggles being asked to master a preferred form of expression in order to contribute their worthwhile perspectives, but also those ideas which do exist about human rights are failing to make their way to those

⁵⁴ J. Paul Martin. Paper entitled "*Human Rights Education: The International Agenda*". (1993) p. 1.

individuals excluded from the conversation and, therefore, provide them with little opportunity to adopt these ideas to their realities. Charles Henry articulates the problems of elite domination of human rights dialogue and its operation on a particular world plain. Human rights education, writes Henry,

is generally a very narrow, rigid, and brief exposure to the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in a formal setting. That is, many rights are 'universal ideals' in the sense that they are widely known by elites in the world community; however, they cannot be accepted and acted upon by nonelites.⁵⁵

In this way, the dialogue itself is stagnating from a lack of diverse input and the objectives of the conversations are also being curtailed because they are operating within an atmosphere entirely removed from those circumstances which it is their mission to rectify. Charles Henry, in contrast to the problems imbued in the current approach advocates an 'incorporative' approach where human rights become infused within the very manner in which we act and interact. It is not enough, however, for the curriculum advocated for human rights education to consist of pedagogical teaching aids and prescriptive practice for implementation outside of the community within which the advocates of these approaches operate. The movement and growth of the human rights

⁵⁵ Charles Henry, "Human Rights Education for a New World Order," in Human Rights for the 21st Century: Foundations for Responsible Hope: A U.S.-Post Soviet Dialogue Peter Juviler & Bertram Gross eds., (New York: M.E. Sharpe 1993), p. 234.

community must not merely espouse, but itself be governed by, a commitment to those principles it holds aloft to others.

William Warden also recognizes the exclusionary plight concealed within the human rights community's greater struggle for the global resonance of human rights. Warden reaffirms the reality that the human rights movement is, "by and large the preserve of the elites ... [and] human rights activism ... a 'luxury' affordable by the more affluent and the few".⁵⁶ In this way human rights are often characterized by complex inter-relationships which may be definitive of the situational context within which a person resides. A starving refugee can scarcely fathom a struggle for nourishment let alone an intense pursuit of political rights aimed at the realization of his/her 'good' life. Only by grounding the human rights struggle in contextual experience while still engaging the lofty pursuit of a more humane world can tangible approaches to human rights dilemmas be discerned and implemented. Should, conversely, human rights theory find its philosophical underpinnings based in the provision of rights to 'homo oeconomicus'⁵⁷, "on having rather than being, [as] self-centred,

⁵⁶ William Warden, "From Analysis to Activism," in Mahoney & Mahoney, p. 985.

⁵⁷ I borrow this term from Peter Leuprecht.

individualistic, and petulant",⁵⁸ then the human rights struggle will undoubtedly flounder in the sea of irrelevance, mired in its own inapplicability and lack of diversity.

The essential idea conveyed by the abundance of critical ferment which is coming to light within I.R., and within the human rights community more specifically, is that both are plagued by a certain antiquatedness. Having derived from and been characterized by the hegemony of Realism, their approaches have been unable to extricate themselves from a world picture which only vaguely reflects the world and which has long been partial and ignorant to the life realities of many of the worlds inhabitants. Simply, in the tradition of I.R. and human rights theory, people, experiences, views, and concerns are being excluded. A 'democratized' form of dialogue is not occurring. To be excluded from the flow of expression which does exist entails exclusion from the provisions/and or rights which are determined to flow from that dialogue. As well, exclusive dialogue, if it may still accurately be termed dialogue, stunts its own progress and fails to be effectual. Though much progress has been made in the area of human rights over the past fifty years and the importance of the bureaucratic international institutions which have comprised

⁵⁸ Peter Leuprecht, "Conflict Prevention and Alternative Forms of Dispute Resolution," in Mahoney & Mahoney, p. 961.

the heart of this progress to date cannot be denied, the decade of human rights demands new approaches. One need only survey global happenings to discover that human rights abuses, lamentably, are still a regular occurrence.

Future progress in securing a culture of peace for the world requires global effort. Global effort, to be achieved, must be enabled. Most importantly, combating human rights abuses around the globe requires that the occurrence of these abuses be made known through an open dialogue which facilitates expression. The criticisms outlined throughout this chapter are not the only criticisms with which the international human rights community must be concerned. These criticisms do demonstrate, however, that undemocratic human rights dialogue is preventing many important issues and perspectives which could facilitate awareness and educate the human rights community, from being discussed. Effort must be taken to bring these concerns to the forefront, to educate those already engaged in the dialogue and to promote the capacity for greater contribution so that human rights may come to represent, more tangibly, the plurality of interests it purports to serve.

What is meant by universality is inclusiveness of human rights as opposed to exclusiveness, respect for cultural diversity without falling into cultural relativism, ... regional efforts

supporting the world-wide effort in favour of human rights.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 963.

Chapter Two**DO AS I SAY . . . OR DO?
EDUCATION 'FOR' HUMAN RIGHTS**

We human beings, confused by that which we do not understand, are in the process of steadily improving our knowledge of a very small number of things, and understanding less and less what they represent.¹

The task of human rights education is, perhaps, one of the most crucial components in the creation of a culture of peace. Within the context of globalization, where every human being may well be described as a 'world' citizen in addition to a more localized notion of citizenship, human rights awareness and education are ever crucial. Contemplation of pedagogy in terms of its role in the production of a citizenry is not a new phenomenon. From the writings of Plato and Jean Jacques Rousseau, through the work of Paulo Freire, to contemporary feminist considerations of the neglect of women in the academic sphere, writings on the power of, and in turn the construction of pedagogy have been numerous. Lamentably, however, many of the essential considerations derivative of this concentration have not been reflected in educational practice. Moreover, considerations of pedagogy have often consisted of attention to curriculum content rather than to the composition of the educational process or dynamic

¹Phillipe Augier, The Sovereign Citizen: Education for Democracy (Paris: UNESCO, 1994), p. 82

itself. Most discouraging of all, dominant educational formats, despite the formulation of alternative approaches, have continually found their philosophical underpinnings in an entrenched notion of student passivity to the neglect of any 'engaged' form of learning. In terms of citizenship preparation, or contextualized in the broader human rights struggle, this neglect proves particularly discouraging. Discouraging because education, especially that undertaken with a view to human rights awareness and practice, consists of more than its subject matter, it consists of its very process.

This chapter addresses the importance of pedagogy and the manner in which comprehensive education 'for' human rights is strongly dependent upon actual educational technique, rather than merely upon attention to 'human rights issues' being included in the curriculum. The traditional and dominant approach to learning predicated upon student passivity is explained and contrasted with the alternative approach being advanced by the human rights education community. Further, education 'for' human rights, taken to be crucially related to the democratization of dialogue² and to learning based in engagement, is

² It is not within the scope of this work to embark upon an explanation of the broader links between human rights, development, and democracy. For considerations of this nature see, for example, the work of Marshall Conley & Daniel Livermore, "Human Rights, Development and Democracy: The Linkage Between Theory and Practice," in Canadian Journal of Development Studies, Special Issue, 1997.

contrasted to the lack of democratization in broader human rights dialogue, as was exhibited in the previous chapter. Contrasted with human rights education principles it is evident that human rights conversations are failing as potentially educative human rights practice. Finally, this chapter explores parallels between the prevalence of undemocratic human rights dialogue, and its resulting educative failure, to the tradition of human rights relations between the developed and developing worlds. A recognition of the implicit relationship between principles of human rights education and the exchange of information within the human rights community could facilitate dialogue in the international sphere. More than merely increasing the mass of human rights information, such awareness could serve as the catalyst for a new perspective-rich engagement in world citizenship.

Considerations of the importance of pedagogy have often dealt, primarily, with the 'what' of education while considerably less emphasis has been placed on the 'how' of education. In the wake of considerations of human rights education many of the educative conclusions reached in the realm of critical theory are undergoing a revival as it once again comes to the forefront that, "what we learn is influenced by how we learn it. It is not that the how is more important than the what, or vice versa, but rather that

the two are inseparably connected."³ In terms of the role of educational process in providing the individuals of a globalizing world with those skills necessary to become 'citizens' or to enter public life in the broader social sphere, the 'how' of education warrants special attention.

Pedagogical choices, as creations of relational dynamics within which the process of learning is undertaken, represent practical exposure to human interaction, working relationships, the nature of authority, and the value of knowledge. "The way in which students experience power and authority ... has important consequences for ... life beyond school and for society at large."⁴ Research has indicated that differing instructional approaches in formal educational environments retain the potential to convey fundamentally different messages regarding the nature of education and, more importantly, of existence.⁵ In an increasingly interdependent world the lessons of existence learned in educational environments have ramifications for interrelations spanning the entire globe.

Students can learn that learning (and, indeed, life) is an individual business; that it is a

³ Ken Osborne, Teaching For Democratic Citizenship (Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves Education Foundation, 1991), p. 9.

⁴ Osborne, Teaching For Democratic Citizenship, p. 18.

⁵ See, for example, the work of Sara Lightfoot in "Politics and Reasoning Through the Eyes of Teachers and Children" in Harvard Educational Review, 43, 1973, pp. 197-244.

matter of competing against others; that it involves trying to second-guess what those in power want ("Will this be on the test?"); that success means outsmarting others, by fair means or foul; that there are winners and losers and that the important thing is to be a winner. Alternatively, students can learn that learning is best done in cooperation with others; that many heads are better than one; that cooperation is more effective, and certainly more rewarding, than competition; that learning means sharing ideas, working with others, offering one's own ideas for comment and criticism.⁶

The very atmosphere within which students acquire the knowledge expected to govern their broader worldly interaction also structures the skills that will be internalised for that interaction and, perhaps even more profoundly, the expectations they have for the world environment itself. In the creation of a 'world' citizenry equipped with those values of interaction necessary to encounter the demands and obstacles of the twenty-first century and sufficient to enable a cooperative international approach in pursuit of human rights, much hinges on the experiences of learning and exchange, both inside and outside of formal institutions, that each world inhabitant has come to internalize.

In recognition of the importance of education to citizenship, and especially to interaction in the 'global community', there have been attempts to make human rights a facet of education. The essential distinction being drawn

⁶ Ken Osborne, Teaching For Democratic Citizenship (Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves Foundation, 1991), p. 16.

in the search for meaningful human rights education is that between the idea of educating 'about' human rights in contrast to education 'for' human rights. The essence of the differentiation resides in contrasting the 'instructional' approach to human rights education, revolving around the formal teaching of particular human rights related documents, with the modern approach in which human rights education is thought to be best achieved by way of forging a climate within which the values and skills associated with human rights may be fostered and practised. Contemporary scholarship contends that human rights education is best achieved in a 'democratic' learning atmosphere where credence is given to the interactive process as an integral component in the creation of a culture conducive to and respectful of human rights.

This distinction in educational approach has been drawn and referred to in varying ways by a number of human rights and educational authors. Birgit Brock-Utne refers to the distinction as constituting the difference between "education about peace and development and value-centred education intended to promote them".⁷ Ken Osborne distinguishes between traditional 'Transmission' pedagogy and contrasts it with the alternatives of 'Teaching as

⁷ Birgit Brock-Utne, "The Distinction Between Education About Peace And Development And Value Centred Education Intended To Promote Them," in Education For Human Rights: An International Perspective, Douglas Ray et al. (Paris: UNESCO: International Bureau of Education, 1994), pp. 55-81

Inquiry and Discovery', critical pedagogy, and feminist pedagogy.⁸ In order to represent the relationship between pedagogical choice and the issue of human rights, I will contrast the two alternative approaches as teaching 'about' human rights verses teaching 'for' human rights.⁹ Because the propensity of human rights education literature concentrates upon the formal educational environment, namely the classroom, much of the clarification between these two modes of education will make reference to formal educational settings. The philosophical and practical force of these distinctions, however, extends far beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

Within the confines of traditional educational settings efforts of human rights education have assumed a primarily 'instructional' format. Despite theoretical alternatives to this methodology, the hegemonic educational tradition continues. "The kind of human rights education referred to is generally a very narrow, rigid, and brief exposure to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in a formal school setting."¹⁰ Though awareness of human rights on this

⁸Ken Osborne, Teaching For Democratic Citizenship (Toronto: Our School/Our Selves Education Foundation, 1991)

⁹ Ian Lister, "The Challenge of Human Rights for Education" in The Challenge of Human Rights Education (London: Cassell Educational Limited, 1991), p. 249

¹⁰ Charles Henry, "Human Rights Education for a New World Order," in Human Rights for the 21st Century: Foundations for Responsible Hope (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), p. 234.

level remains, in and of itself, an important component of human rights awareness, it accomplishes little in the way of facilitating the internalization of those qualities deemed to be consistent with a respect for human rights. Though a knowledge of the existence of human rights 'concepts' may, itself, be established, as well as an awareness of the 'legal status' of these rights, no deeper association with them is established. The concept of human rights remains a highly abstract notion, quite removed from the experience of those being made aware of its more literary substance. In the case of human rights, and in fact all political education where understanding means, in a large sense, a way of living and interacting in the world as opposed to mere intellectual awareness, a more subjective experience is integral to achieving full understanding. Being based in human interaction, human rights education involves learning interaction compatible with those sentiments from which the observance of human rights may be said to flow, and must be largely based in experience. Human rights education, then, may be said to involve experiencing such values as tolerance, respect, understanding, and cooperation.

If in most social situations the individual finds himself subservient to some authority figure, it is likely that he will expect such authority relationships in the political sphere. On the other hand, if outside the political sphere he has the opportunities to participate in a wide range of social decisions, he will probably expect to be able to participate in political decisions as well. Furthermore, participation in non-political

decision-making may give one the skills needed to engage in political participation.¹¹

The World Plan of Action on Education For Human Rights and Democracy aptly expresses the idea that achieving the goals of human rights education based in experience necessitates that "educational processes and methodologies must be models for what the plan wishes to achieve in society as a whole."¹² Students are best educated 'for' human rights understanding, then, through the experience of human relations which are human rights sensitive.

In the traditional approach to human rights education 'about' human rights and in the contextual environment within which such learning occurred, the values supportive of a respect for human rights have not been nurtured. Scholars having characterized the interactive culture to which students are, latently, being indoctrinated describe a power laden dynamic where the student occupies a position of subordination and in which the instructor comprises the ultimate, and unequivocal source of knowledge. Retrieving information from that source and internalizing it in an almost digestive sense the student is then considered to be responsible for that information which has been imparted to

¹¹Gabriel Almond & Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1965), pp. 271-272

¹² *World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy*, Adopted by the International Congress on Education for Human Rights and Democracy, Montreal, Canada, 8-11 March, 1993.

them and, if necessary, to regurgitate it in a display of understanding on command. Education, in this manner, is something that happens to students rather than something in which they comprise an integral part, and for which they are equally responsible. Contrasted with the position they assume in the broader society as a citizen, such confines of inactive agency fail to prepare students for active citizenship roles, to take control of their lives, or to learn in concert and live harmoniously with others. The neglect of such training is substantial in the formation of character as well as in its more visible deficiencies relating to political action. One such detriment being that in failing to share social preparation of this nature with students, feelings of confidence, self esteem, and personal worth are not as readily established, and thus the potential for intolerance based in fear and insecurity may be increased.

Paulo Freire has written extensively on the deficiencies inherent in this traditional educational approach.¹³ Freire characterises teaching centred upon instruction by a teacher as a 'banking' model of education where students comprise the empty accounts into which teachers make deposits of knowledge. Entirely passive in this process such an experience of education disempowers

¹³See, for example, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, (New York: Continuum, 1970), and/or A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education, (London: MacMillan, 1987)

students, and alienates them from their own education.¹⁴

Freire contends that such a model of education comprises a tool of oppression, and that it is,

invaluable for maintaining an oppressive social order, for the more that students put their efforts into receiving and storing information deposited in them, the less they can attain the critical consciousness that comes from intervening in reality as makers and transformers of the world.¹⁵

This demeaning environment is further exacerbated, in Freire's view, by a complete lack of reciprocal communication and by the 'false generosity' the situation imbues.

There is no idea of reciprocal communication in which the interests and intentions of all parties are given a voice within the common project to know and understand reality more fully and accurately in order better to promote the humanity of all. ... It is assumed that everything the learners need to know has already been determined (by others who know better).¹⁶

Ian Lister relates Freire's ideas of alienation and disempowerment to human rights education goals. Citing Freire, Lister outlines the principles governing 'banking-style education':

¹⁴ Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York: Continuum: 1970)

¹⁵ Colin Lankshear, "Functional Literacy From a Freirean Point of View". In Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter. Peter McLaren & Peter Leonard eds., (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 99.

¹⁶ Lankshear, p. 100.

- *The teacher teaches and the students are taught.*
- *The teacher knows everything and the student knows nothing.*
- *The teacher thinks and the students are thought about.*
- *The teacher talks and the students listen - meekly.*
- *The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined.*
- *The teacher chooses and enforces his/[her] choice, and the students comply.*
- *The teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it.¹⁷*

In an atmosphere of this type the 'hidden' curriculum, regardless of what is being espoused in terms of curriculum content, is a message of inequality, of domination and subordination, and of competition rather than cooperation. There remains in educational environments so constructed, a striking incompatibility between the values and ideals of respectful and peaceful interaction as conceptualized prescriptions, and the incorporation of those values into lived reality. Students may very well be 'instructed' to live in one fashion, but they are being conditioned or developed to the experience, understanding, acceptance, and eventual perpetuation of one vastly contradictory.

It is difficult to teach peace in a setting where children are taught to compete against one another. It is difficult to teach about equality between States large and small when there is so

¹⁷ Paulo Freire quoted by Ian Lister, p. 250.

little equality between teachers and pupils, to teach about equality of the sexes when the boys in the class are allowed to dominate the girls.¹⁸

In this way, human rights education has, for a long time, embodied a monologue of 'knowledge' determined 'by' the teacher and directed 'at' the student. The interactive skills conducive to a respect for human rights, and the ideals which human rights embody, have not been incorporated into the lives of those being educated to cherish them. Human rights have become an 'idea' quite removed from the student and have been reduced to another aspect of subject matter about which they must learn, rather than being incorporated as a manner of living which they may come to internalize as an important and definitive factor in their own personal interactions. Enrique Gonzalez Pedrero captures the idea that approaching education with a view to more internalized understanding and with a validation of diverse experiences retains much potential in the realisation of a 'humanist', and more practical, understanding of the world.

So long as we think of humanity as something ethereal or as an abstract substantive, nothing will make us feel that we form part of it. ... We must use more concrete terminology: let us talk about the problems that plague the people of Latin America or of central and southern Africa, or of the same problems of the Middle East. And let us come down this ladder until we see the same occurrences in the slums of our own cities, in our

¹⁸ Birgit Brocke-Utne, p. 69.

neighbours, in our relatives, and in our friends.¹⁹

It is an awareness of the incompatibility between the goals of human rights education and the climate within which those goals have been pursued, along with the companion realisation that human rights is a 'way of living' as well as a manner of thinking, which have served as the impetus for the abundance of attention currently being devoted to the improvement of pedagogy within the human rights education community.

In contrast to education 'about' human rights, human rights education proponents now focus upon educating 'for' human rights, anti-racist, and multicultural education.²⁰ It is suggested that efforts be made to ensure that educational settings facilitate the acquisition of skills such as "oral and written expression, including the ability to listen and discuss, and to defend one's opinions."²¹ Though many scholars in the field focus primarily upon the

¹⁹ Enrique Gonzalez Pedrero, "Education As A Social Necessity," in Political Education: North American Perspectives, Marshall William Conley & Carlos Alberto Torres eds., (Hamburg: Kraemer., 1993) p. 18.

²⁰ For a clarification of the distinction between anti-racist education and multicultural education and comparisons of the two see, for example, "The Limitations of Multicultural Education and Anti-Racist Education," in Multicultural Education: The State of the Art National Study: Report #1, Keith A. McLeod ed., (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1993)

²¹ Hugh Starkey, "The Council of Europe Recommendation on the Teaching and Learning of Human Rights in Schools", in The Challenge of Human Rights Education, Hugh Starkey ed., (London: Cassell Educational Ltd., 1991), p. 26.

structure and climate of the formal education system, similar prescriptions are being cited as a plan of action outside of the confines of the formal setting. The *Draft World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy* stipulates that there must be a "holistic view of education, developing strategies for learning in formal and non-formal settings."²² The intent is to ensure that students of human rights be encouraged to interact with one another in a manner which enables them to express themselves as well as to entertain and respect the opinions of their peers, or to incorporate the skills of democracy and human rights as a familiar and intricate part of their being. In an atmosphere of this nature, where respect for human rights is actually experienced and where it becomes a valuable component in the day to day life of individuals it begins to become a valuable and respected means of interrelating.

Education 'for' human rights, then, may be said to embody a manner of teaching, learning and interrelating quite different from the 'instructional' form of learning which has characterized human rights education practice to date.²³ To teach a way of living, hypothetical

²² *Draft World Plan on Education for Human Rights and Democracy*, document SHS-93/CONF.402/4, (Paris: UNESCO, 22 February 1993)

²³ For a brief overview of the introduction of human rights to considerations of education from its beginning in the early 1970's see, Russell A. McNeilly "Movements Toward Human Rights Education: Part I - A Developmental Endeavour," in Human Rights Issues and Trends, Abdul Q. Lodhi & Russell A.

abstractions must give way to the practice of that living through the realisation of an active, and valued agency. Learning, from this perspective, is approached as an experience for both the educator as well as those being educated. It involves a recognition that all participants in the process, potentially, have something to share with the others, and from which everyone can gain new insight and understanding. As previously stated, the benefits of 'active' learning have, philosophically, been explored in the past but they have not been characteristic of educational practice. Further, with what seems to be, in the face of the 'new economy', the contemporary emphasis upon education as yet another consumer product which students 'procure' in order to place them in the job 'market', the varied meanings of education are being further eroded.

The final purpose was to get the diploma that the firms required ... Nothing was to be studied for its intrinsic merit or to make any kind of better world. You were merely moving from one classification to another to complete a diploma to qualify you for a job in a world which school made little comment on.²⁴

Education 'for' human rights works to subvert this desensitization of students to the educational process. Such an approach does not imply the complete erosion of the

McNeilly, eds., (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc., 1993), pp. 107-122.

²⁴ David Hickson quoted by Osborne, p. 81.

role of the educator. Rather, it involves the modification of roles. Instead of students being a 'tabula rasa' upon which educators inscribe information, the educator is something of a mirror, reflecting information out for students and yet also enabling them to see themselves and their lives in the images presented to them. It is important to note that prescriptions for alternative pedagogical practice or, more specifically, for education 'for' human rights do not imply that the authoritative role of the educator be entirely dissolved. The distinction is that between an authoritative environment as opposed to an authoritarian, and disempowering environment.

A human rights effective classroom is one,

where each student is respected by all others and where the teacher designs and implements the instructional plan with the students. [It] fosters an environment in which human rights are not only taught but remembered as well.²⁵

By way of practical principles, Ken Osborne designates some of the specific features which distinguish alternative pedagogies from the predominant 'transmission' pedagogy of the past. As the essentials of education 'for' human rights, Osborne's principles may be juxtaposed with the defining aspects of the traditional educational climates outlined earlier in the chapter;

- Teachers no longer monopolize the front and centre of classroom action.

²⁵ Henry, p. 241.

- *Teachers become less instructors and more facilitators of learning.*
- *The image of the student as an empty vessel or a blank slate is rejected.*
- *Students are seen as active participants in and shapers of their own learning.*
- *Classroom must be ... characterized by sharing, trust and mutual respect among students and between teacher and students.*
- *Teachers must see themselves not as wielders of power whether on their own behalf or as agents of the wider society, employed to educate students for their own good, but as people whose job it is to help students grow and develop.*
- *The key goal is student empowerment ... not that students learn a lot of facts for their own sake.*
- *Reject[s] any concept of the curriculum as something that stands apart from students, expecting them to simply learn what is put before them regardless of its relevance to their own lives.²⁶*

Though the preponderance of human rights education literature is concerned with prescriptions for formal educational environments, the claims consistent with the goals of the movement hold true for the broader informal/societal setting. For the goals of human rights education to be achieved in a meaningful way with the hope of longevity, the values supportive of them must also be fostered as an intricate part of a culture of human rights.

Contrasts between the 'traditional' climate within which human rights education was contained and prescription

²⁶ Osborne, pp. 78-79.

for education 'for' human rights have important implications for issues of human rights education in the world at large. The contrasts between education 'about' human rights and education 'for' human rights may also be seen as a microcosm of the broader relations, interactions and struggles concerning human rights in the international arena. In many respects, for example, the traditional authoritative structure of the classroom seems representative of the manner in which the 'West' has been seen to 'deal' with the 'developing' world in attempting to combat the extensive human rights violations within those countries. The Western control of the global media, an issue raised in the work of Ziauddin Sardar, is an example of the way in which potential human rights achievements through dialogue are undermined by the monologue of the West. Sardar contends that,

the total control and management of the global media by the West restrains and silences authentic voices from the Third World, making mockery of freedom of expression and free flow of information.²⁷

It appears to be the case then, that efforts of education 'for' human rights, in terms of practical political action endeavouring to achieve their universal consolidation, have been undertaken by way of the 'developed' countries showing the way to the developing countries. Or, human rights

²⁷ Ziauddin Sardar, "Future Challenges of Human Rights and Democracy". In FUTURESCO: The Futures of Human Rights and Democracy. (UNESCO bulletin; No. 5, June 1996), p. 21.

interaction globally has not been interactive. Rather, it has comprised a global clone of traditional 'transmission' pedagogy. As mentioned earlier in the thesis, J. Paul Martin characterized this human rights agenda as one, "primarily set by the rich industrialised countries",²⁸ in the formulation of which, 'developing' countries have had little participation. Thus, the processes of democratization and development have been undertaken as a 'Western monologue' rather than as a dialogue between the developed and developing worlds and have failed to facilitate the acquisition of human rights education, by the world citizenry, through experience.²⁹

In the article, *Modernist Discourse and the Crisis of Development Theory*, Kate Manzo outlines the history of development theory and its acceptance of "the Western model of national autonomy as ... the one to emulate."³⁰ It is not the case that this has occurred due to a complete unwillingness on the part of the 'developing' countries to

²⁸ Martin, p. 1.

²⁹ A contemporary and practical political example of the manner in which the human rights agenda may be seen to be a 'developed' world conversation exists in recent controversy surrounding Canada's interactive approach with Cuba and the extensive U.S. condemnation of that approach. More attention was payed, in terms of the media, to the 'sparring' of the two prominent 'developed' world governments than to the actual issue of human rights and potential approaches to addressing their existence in Cuba.

³⁰ Manzo, p. 6.

address such tendencies.³¹ J. Paul Martin expresses the fact that human rights activists operating within the borders of countries rampant with human rights violations, "see human rights ... as basic to the well-being of their countries but they want to distance themselves from the Western definitions of these terms."³² In the article, "*Problems and Future Prospects of Human Rights and Democracy*", Agnes Poirier discusses the paradoxical sentiments surrounding present attempts at democratization where the popularization of the idea of democracy is accompanied by frequent violations of human rights. Poirier, like Martin, draws a distinction between the ideas of human rights and democracy and western-identified ideas of human rights and democracy. Poirier argues that in observing the democratization of developing countries,

the problem stems from the fact that what the West seeks to impose on them is not democracy as such but a method of government, that is, representative government. ... What African and Asian thinkers reject and criticise is this western model ... There should be a distinction between democracy as an end and democracy as a means.³³

³¹ This is not to suggest that the regimes which prevail in some of these regions (ie: Myanmar) do not, specifically, have a vested interest in the suppression of human rights 'inquiries'. Rather, it is meant to express the reality that contained somewhere within the borders of these countries there often exists some concern for human rights issues.

³² Martin, p. 2.

³³ Agnes Poirier, "*Problems and Future Prospects of Human Rights and Democracy*". In FUTURESCO: The Futures of Human Rights and Democracy. (UNESCO bulletin: No. 5, June 1996), pp.

It is human rights education grounded in a view of dialogue rather than monologue that, Martin contends, is still "in search of a comprehensive theory".³⁴

The 'global monologue' which has characterized the supposedly 'international' human rights struggle may also be identified as reflecting 'old-style' human rights education in terms of the failure of much of the 'Western' world to curtail the manifestations of human rights abuses within its own borders. William Warden draws attention to such neglect and contends that human rights are often treated, by many of those advancing the human rights agenda as something that exists 'out there' rather than 'in the here and now'.³⁵ Warden chastises the 'developed' country's failures to address human rights concerns within the scope of their own borders, and the hypocrisy imbued by such, in their quest for the realization of human rights goals. Warden describes this practice as the "dulling of sensitivity to abuses on one's own doorstep,"³⁶ and he cites Canada's failure to reconcile its issues with the Aboriginal population as a prime example of this failure. Further, the recent resignation of U.N. Human Rights Commissioner Jose Ayala

35-36.

³⁴ Martin, p. 2.

³⁵ Warden, p. 985.

³⁶ Warden, p. 985.

Lasso was met with calls for a successor who, "[would] take bolder actions against human rights abusers" as many human rights groups have brought forth the criticism that, "Lasso was ineffectual in dealing with alleged abuses by influential member states."³⁷ Thus, it appears to be the case that the practical mission of the human rights movement is defeated when the concepts supportive of such goals fail to be internalized within the institutional networks which serve as the impetus for that struggle. As human rights fail to be internalized through traditional approaches to education 'about' human rights the human rights movement is inhibited when human rights exist as something quite removed from one's own experience.

Given the literature that has been surveyed throughout chapters one and two there appear to be two substantial requirements within the arena of human rights. Firstly, an increased awareness of, and attention paid to, the biased construction of human rights dialogue and the urgency of actively facilitating the inclusion and contribution of those groups which have been excluded. Secondly, a focus upon human rights education being brought into practice - rather than merely comprising a venue for philosophical volleying - in order to ensure that the skills required for, and respective of, a 'culture of peace' can be fostered.

³⁷ "United Nations: Human Rights Resignation". Globe and Mail, 22 February, 1997, p. 6.

Moreover, it is imperative that a congruence be established between the knowledge of effective human rights education prescriptions and the manner in which the human rights community itself interacts, grows, educates, and proceeds in its endeavour for human rights. For the achievement of an international culture of human rights and peace, the means of interrelating consistent with those values must be internalized, consolidated, and solidified on an international scale. The most positive means of heeding these aspirations resides in educating the inhabitants of the world, through interactive process, to a lived recognition of the value of sharing the earth with others. It is essential to teach, to exhibit, to embody, and to demonstrate, through engaging both those currently within the human rights community and those who have been relegated to the sidelines the value of learning as a lifelong endeavour the very best of which is achieved in concert.

Chapter Three

THE LOST ART OF CONVERSATION: HABERMAS' COMMUNICATIVE THEORY

Discourse ethics ... directs our attention to the multiple kinds of solidarity at work today: from those very particular and concrete solidarities that bind together friends, families and communities ... through the most basic solidarity by which we acknowledge and respond to the questions and needs of any human being. A discourse-ethical critique would have to address ... human rights, and the willingness to listen and discuss.¹

In the previous chapter, the principles of human rights education were outlined with emphasis upon the way approaches to human rights education have been characterized by a paradigmatic shift away from a concentration upon mere 'human rights content' to considerations of educational context, or climate. In essence, prescriptions for successful education 'for' human rights entail the creation of a climate in which the responsibility for learning is shared in an interactive manner between the educator and the students, where the experiences of students receive validation, and where the knowledge which students acquire may be tangibly related to the diversity of their life experience. In this way, a successful human rights educational environment is very much a process of dialogue, or a matter of exchange. The conditions consistent with an

¹William Rehg, Insight & Solidarity: The Discourse Ethics of Jurgen Habermas (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 248-249.

educational environment so constructed have been likened to a 'democratized' atmosphere, where the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and understanding may be fostered. Given that the concerns of both students and educators are integral to the educational environment consistent with educating 'for' human rights, and based upon the emphasis upon a 'democratized' setting, it is evident that communication is an important facet of the project of human rights education.

In contrast to these prescriptions for a more open interchange through which the values consistent with human rights may be practised, experienced, and fostered, chapter one outlined the manner in which human rights scholarship, has been limited and exclusive. The chapter demonstrated the way in which contribution to the sub-discipline has been characterized by an absence of diversity, and considered the way these limitations have, to a large extent, been inherent in the overarching theories which have defined the scope of considerations with which International Relations has concerned itself. Further, the chapter alluded to the fact that the lack of perspectives which have been characteristic of I.R. has been particularly detrimental in terms of the ability of I.R. theory to keep pace with the challenges of the international arena. A corollary to this is the fact that in the struggle for human rights, a multiplicity of perspectives is essential but even more importantly, in the

vein of human rights education prescriptions, participation requires efforts directed toward the facilitation of that expression. Though the gravity of human rights abuses are often responded to with rebuke and other immediate forms of political posturing, efforts must, simultaneously, be taken to preserve foresight and vision within the human rights community and to sustain a vigilance in attempting to improve world relations on the level of ideas, not merely on the level of action.

This chapter seeks to reconcile some of the aspirations of human rights education, with the reality of activity of the human rights community. Specifically it considers a reorientation of human rights efforts to include a concern for, or addressing of, external matters of human rights violations, but also in cultivating an international communication 'for' human rights. A long term commitment to the development of a human rights dialogue is crucial to surpass impediments to human rights goals and to replace what has been to date, a human rights monologue. The importance of such communicative goals to the achievement of human rights aspirations are considered. A better human rights dialogue retains great capacity as an impetus for a practical manifestation of human rights education on the level of international human rights dialogue.

Finding its incentive in the exclusive nature of present human rights conversations, as discussed in chapter

one, and the quite opposite principles of interaction determined to be integral to furthering the human rights education process, as discussed in chapter two, this chapter seeks to begin a reconciliation of the inconsistencies of thought and action characteristic of the human rights community. Moreover, this chapter posits a revised communicative vision, more consistent with the dialogic demands of education 'for' human rights and by which the reality of human rights dialogue may endeavour toward a project of self-reflexivity similar to that which is beginning to characterise the discipline of International Relations as a whole. Within the communicative ideals embodied in the *Ideal Speech Situation* of Jurgen Habermas exists, for human rights goals and for a resurrection of the humanist vision, much potential as a constant beacon which helps to light the way to a critical vantage point.

In contemplating the goals of human rights education as they comprise an advocacy of an 'open' form of communication and relating those goals to the plight of creating better dialogue for the human rights community as a whole it is, then, necessary to contemplate the notion of communication. In the book entitled, The Media Society - Basic Issues and Controversies, Ross A. Eaman outlines four competing conceptions of what communication consists of, and therefore, has the capacity to achieve. The four alternative visions are distinguished as, '*Communication as*

the Movement of Messages', *'Communication as the Mutual Exchange of Messages*', *'Communication as a Meeting of Minds*', and *'Communication as the Social Construction of Texts*'.² It is the third of these four, *'Communication as a Meeting of Minds*' which retains potential for helping to bring the interaction of the human rights community in line with the aspirations of the human rights education movement. Described as "an essentially humanistic"³ form of communication, the *'Meeting of Minds*' model of communication distinguishes itself from the other three notions of communication in that it posits the process of communication as heavily dependent upon the intention of those involved in the communicative process.

Intention is an integral component of this model of communication in that communication may only be said to occur, from this perspective, if, "one person or group comes to understand better the actual thoughts, beliefs, or feelings of another person or group."⁴ In this way it is important that the individual attempting to convey an idea also intend to convey a truth about his/her consciousness, rather than to become mired in considerations of expression

² It is beyond the scope of the work at hand to elaborate upon these differing theories of communication. For an explanation see, Ross A. Eaman, *The Media Society - Basic Issues and Controversies* (Toronto: Butterworths, 1987), pp. 5-31.

³ Eaman, p. 21.

⁴ Eaman, p. 20.

itself. This form of communication is referred to, by Eaman, as a 'meeting of the minds' in lieu of this significance placed on understanding, or on one mind coming to know another mind better.

The second distinguishing feature of the '*Communication as Meeting of Minds*' model which, Eaman contends, warrants emphasis is the fact that communication, given its reliance on the intention of the sender, is differentiated from propaganda. Propaganda, from the '*Meeting of Minds*' perspective, exists as a deliberate, organized, purposeful activity which involves the distortion of reality and which is known, by the propagandist, to be a distortion.⁵ The distinction between communication and propaganda is significant from this account because failing the distinction,

we can not even begin to consider what kind of message making environment contributes to genuine communication and discourages propaganda. We cannot compare different institutional structures, economic arrangements, and technological strategies to see whether some are more likely to promote communication than others. We cannot, therefore, use communications research to help create a basis for better human relations.⁶

⁵ Eaman, pp. 22-23. Certainly there are other definitions of propaganda which may not be entirely consistent with that of Eaman. This one is offered here as a facet of clarification in defining communication as is distinctive to Habermas.

⁶ Eaman, pp. 23-24. It must be said that alternative definitions of propaganda do not necessarily represent the separation as being that readily accessible.

It is a 'humanistic' view of communication in the vein of the '*Meeting of the Minds*' model which is offered in the work of Jurgen Habermas. Before embarking upon a description of the communicative competence advocated by Habermas, it is first necessary to make explicit the uses to which I am raising Habermasian theory, and the limits to which such reference is confined. The scholarship and contribution which Jurgen Habermas has made to the social sciences, including the realm of International Relations, is significant.⁷ For present purposes consideration will not revisit, as outlined in the introduction, the philosophical debate of communicative ethics currently characteristic of the field of political philosophy. Nor will focus upon questions of morality, or ontology, prevail. Rather, consistent with the intentions of this thesis, the work of Habermas is raised specifically as a procedural dialogic referent. It is the means of dialogic interaction outlined by Habermas, rather than the moral 'ends' which it may be interpreted to advocate which are of importance to the communicative relations existing in the human rights community. Much as the human rights education community has

⁷ It is not my intention to embark upon a survey of Habermas' work as it relates, broadly to International Relations. At the very least, however, Habermas' contribution to I.R. in terms of the contemplation of state interaction in the International sphere undertaken in Habermas' consideration of the legitimacy crisis of modern industrial states is essential to note. For understanding in this area see, for example, Habermas' work in Legitimation Crisis (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975).

shifted to an emphasis on procedure and context as opposed to intellectual content, so to is Habermas' *Ideal Speech Situation* significant apart from its philosophical contemplations of the nature of truth, and morality, questions which it is simply impossible to pursue within the scope of this thesis. My intentions and concerns in this thesis are for increased contribution within human rights dialogue and the companion achievement of human rights education. In attempting to provide the human rights community with an impetus for 'democratized' interaction comparable to education 'for' human rights, it is the specific contemplation of interactive process represented by Habermas' *Ideal Speech Situation*, with the process itself consisting of the 'ends' of achievement, rather than the ethical guidelines for communication orientated toward truth, which are of importance. In this way, Habermasian theory will be dealt with in a very practical or methodological sense, rather than on the level of moral ideals.

The communicative procedures throughout the work of Habermas derive from Habermas' earlier works concerning the problems of legitimation in modern industrialized states. Legitimation incoherency derives from the one-sided rationalization of social institutions and Habermas' work endeavours toward an alternative model of justification. Further, work in the realm of discourse 'ethics' may be

characterized as a response to the competing perspectives of the scientificism of the notion of reason⁸ and to the pure abandonment of reason characteristic of postmodernism. Referenced with the debates of contemporary political philosophy, Habermas' *Communicative Ethics* presents itself as an alternative to both the longstanding philosophical tradition of the Enlightenment, based in the tendencies of idealism, universalism or the unity thinking of metaphysics⁹ and scientific reasoning, as well as to the more contemporary post-modern approach of 'radical contextualism'¹⁰ exhibited in the work of Richard Rorty. Habermas' alternative to what many have come to consider the failed Enlightenment project and to the 'empty negation of everything' postmodern alternative which champions the contingency of human life and language and the 'textual' conception of human freedom or self-definition consists of a commitment to what may be termed, "the unity of reason in the diversity of its voices".¹¹

It is not my intention to evaluate the aims, or presuppositions of Habermas' *Communicative Ethics*, however,

⁸ Rehg, p. 21.

⁹ The essence of metaphysics, or the unity of the Enlightenment project are, perhaps, best exhibited in the work of Immanuel Kant. See, for example, Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964).

¹⁰ Jurgen Habermas, Postmetaphysical Thinking, (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1992), p. 115.

¹¹ Habermas, Postmetaphysical Thinking, p. 115.

it remains necessary, before embarking upon a description of the *Ideal Speech Situation*, to make brief reference to the derivation of the I.S.S. in Habermas' thought. The *Ideal Speech Situation* arises from Habermas' effort to rescue some of the direction of the Enlightenment project from the 'nothingness' of postmodernism.¹² It is Habermas' position that, "there are compelling reasons for recasting moral theory in the form of an analysis of moral argumentation".¹³ Habermas offers a basis for the justification of social/political institutions and procedure by recasting reason in a communicative rather than a scientific fashion. Legitimation, or justification derives, in Habermas' view, from argumentation. His is a view of argumentation governed by a universalism presupposed in the very construction of language and speech acts. Based in the reality of human/social relations there exists, in Habermas' view, an orientation toward the possibility of reaching understanding.

Any competently speaking and acting subject is aware, at least implicitly, of what it means to justify his or her beliefs or actions to another with reasons and is prepared to provide such a justification should the ... claims be contested. It is this rationally binding force at work in our everyday communicative practices that it

¹² For an in-depth exploration of the postmodern challenge to Habermas see, for example, Jane Braaten, Habermas's Critical Theory of Society (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), pp. 105-139.

¹³ Jurgen Habermas, Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action, (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1990), p. 57.

constitutive for communicative action and is a condition of possibility for social action in general.¹⁴

Governed by the rule of universalization, or (U),¹⁵ justification may be tested through discourse where, a "norm can be considered objectively right if it would be consented to in free discussion by all concerned as consonant with their interests".¹⁶ For Habermas, objectivity then, refers to a way of thinking enabled by the consideration and exchange of a diversity of perspectives as opposed to a more radical 'de-personalized' objectivity such as that necessitated within John Rawls *Original Position*.¹⁷ Essentially, Habermas is presenting a format for conversational construction geared toward reaching 'rational' consensus through practical discourse. In order for the outcome of discourse to be justified, it must be the

¹⁴Kenneth Baynes, The Normative Grounds of Social Criticism (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), p. 81.

¹⁵ For a derivation of (U) see, for example, Rehg's third chapter entitled, '*Deriving a Dialogical Principle of Universalization*'.

¹⁶ Peter Dews, Autonomy and Solidarity - Interviews with Jurgen Habermas (London: Verso, 1992), p. 17.

¹⁷ For an explanation of Rawls 'Original Position' see, John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971). I am not suggesting that Rawls and Habermas are different in all respects. There are, arguably, many similarities in their approaches to the formation of public policy (each offer a method of derivation as opposed to a method of choice). My distinction merely refers to the fact that, in some respect, Rawls abandons context at the decision table while Habermas, in some sense, provides for it.

product of unconstrained debate between citizens, where the only type of force that exists in coming to agreement, should agreement ensue, is the rationally motivated force of a sound, logical or better argument. It is important to note, with respect to this that the notion of 'rationality' entailed in the discourse ethics of Habermas should not be taken to be a limitation upon varied expression, or as a tool of exclusion similar to the scientific 'rationalism' which has been one of the contributors to I.R.'s distorted world view, as was a major consideration in chapter one. Rather, the notion of consensus, and the discourse ethics for which it provides the foundation,

does not presuppose that individuals be transformed into perfectly rational agents or that they participate in one harmonious order ... The notion of consensus does not point to a form of life in which everyone shares the same ideals, but to one in which the ideal of diversity and plurality is publicly affirmed and maintained.¹⁸

Further, given that reason is recast, in Habermasian style, to be a procedural and communicative process it is plausible that the notions of 'reason' and 'rationality' may themselves evolve and grow over time. Mark Neufield alludes to this fact in the article, *Reflexivity and International Relations Theory*, when he states that in the work of Habermas one can detect,

emphasis upon the elucidation of a dialogic form of reason that refuses to limit our conception of human

¹⁸ Baynes, p. 121.

rationality to a mechanical application of an eternal, unchanging standard; that affirms that a broader and more subtle conception of reason is possible.¹⁹

This expansion of the notion of reason would be facilitated, with respect to human rights, by the diversity of perspectives which will be admitted to human rights dialogue should a 'dialogue' actually begin to take place. After all it is important to remember that when viewed against the backdrop of 'Realist' dominated International Relations, alternative interpretations of primary concepts within the field have been effectively limited or even precluded.²⁰ Increased contribution will, in this manner, revolutionize the very conceptual basis of International Relations and, specifically, human rights dialogue, thereby increasing its capacity to keep pace with the fluctuating entity that is international politics. In keeping with the commitment to diversity espoused in this thesis, the possibility of conversation ending in 'rationally oriented'

¹⁹ Mark Neufield, 'Reflexivity and International Relations Theory', in Beyond Positivism: Critical Reflections on International Relations Claire Turenne Sjolander & Wayne S. Cox eds., (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994)

²⁰ This notion was discussed in chapter one with respect to, for example, the idea of 'national security'. In similar fashion, 'reason' and 'rationality' have, in the social sciences, been interpreted within the confines of the 'scientificism of reason' to which Habermas is offering an alternative. In the face of an increasing scope of perspectives and contributors to the field, the interpretation of such notions as 'facts' may come to encompass 'lived experience' as opposed to mere cerebral consideration or numerical data, and 'reason' may itself grow and evolve to be based more in a matter of procedure than in 'logic'.

agreement is of less importance to the endeavour of dialogue 'for' human rights than is the very procedure of dialogue itself, particularly an open dialogue governed by genuine attempts at inclusion and 'true' communication. Baynes makes this procedural function of the *Ideal Speech Situation* of primary importance as well stating that,

The ideal of a rational consensus (and related notion of the ideal speech situation) should not be interpreted too concretely. It does not require ... that every social norm or public policy receive the unanimous agreement of all who might be affected by it. What is required ... is that ... processes be fair in the sense that ... citizens collectively deliberate about ... their collective life.²¹

It is procedural guidelines consistent with such aims that are embodied by Habermas' *Ideal Speech Situation*. Habermas' principles governing dialogue oriented toward communication as 'Meeting of Minds' comprise democratized discussion and exemplify the educational atmosphere human rights education seeks to achieve. Habermas' dialogic guidelines retain the capacity, I contend, if posited as guidelines for the restructuring of international human rights dialogue, to assist in replicating similar principles to those championed by human rights education scholars. Habermas' principles might spur accomplishment in transforming the defective conversational format which has inhibited human rights dialogue on an international scale,

²¹ Baynes, p. 121.

by specifically relating communicative guidelines to the limited contributive character of international dialogue at present. This is not to suggest that dialogic comparison can be accomplished in some manner of scientific rigor or statistical comparison.

The ISS cannot be contrasted with real situations and the gap between ideal and reality read off like figures from a calculator. [It can] not provide a complete basis for the critical analysis of real situations, since one must still balance truth against sincerity against appropriateness ... human situations can be ambiguous ... the very stuff of tragic drama and literature. ... The ... ISS provide[s] guidance for situated critique ... for analysis of real speech situations by making issues of truth, truthfulness and appropriateness problematic.²²

Above all else, Habermas' notion of communicative rationality functions in a manner of critical consideration which calls assumptions about the world into question. The democratization of human rights dialogue would, then, serve as a venue for orienting human rights to human reality, consisting of a form of human rights education for all of those who partake of the dialogue as well as assisting in increasing the accuracy of I.R.'s worldview through increased access to a diversity of world perspectives.

It is a principle of unrestricted discussion which Habermas seeks to achieve in the *Ideal Speech Situation*, and which could flood human rights endeavors with newfound

²²Robert Young, *A Critical Theory of Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1990), pp. 126-127.

diversity and education. Seyla Benhabib cites this unrestricted discussion as a particular strength of Habermasian discourse theory in that it provides for the dissolution of the public/private sphere distinction which has inhibited conversations on many issues from ever coming to light.²³ Benhabib's assertion retains special application in consideration of human rights dialogue as its sentiments are antiphonal to feminist criticisms of the limitations which the public/private sphere distinction has placed upon International Relations theory, as discussed in chapter one. Whereas traditional liberal models of legitimation prefaced on the public/private sphere distinction essentially eradicate the possibility of discussion ensuing upon matters of a 'private' nature, the discourse model of Habermas does not advocate a separation of the public and private spheres prior to open debate. This facet of Habermasian theory could have profound implications for past difficulties of addressing human rights violations relating to the 'security' and 'torture' of women, considerations which have been rendered difficult in the past as they have often been perpetrated within the boundaries of the private sphere.

²³ Seyla Benhabib, "Liberal Dialogue Versus a Critical Theory of Discursive Legitimation, " in Liberalism and the Moral Life, Nancy L. Rosenblum ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 145.

In order to enable this unrestricted discussion to occur there must, on the Habermasian account, be some level of communicative competence established. Habermas understands communicative competence to be, "the ability of a speaker oriented to mutual understanding to embed a ... sentence in relations to reality".²⁴ The establishment of such competence integral to the creation of unrestricted discussion may be achieved formally through the implementation of the *Ideal Speech Situation*.²⁵ The *Ideal Speech Situation* is structured in such a way as to ensure that it is not perverted by institutional impediments, power inequities, or inherent prejudices. The principles of unrestricted discussion that govern the structure of the *Ideal Speech Situation* have been articulated by Robert Alexy and are as follows,

- (1) *Every subject with the competence to speak and act is allowed to take part in the discourse.*
 - (2) *Everyone is allowed to question any assertion whatever.*
- Everyone is allowed to introduce any assertion whatever into the discourse.*

²⁴ Jurgen Habermas, Communication and the Evolution of Society (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), p. 29.

²⁵ In some of his more recent work, Habermas has taken to referring to the 'Ideal Speech Situation' in Apel's terms as the Ideal Communication Community so as to better represent that the possibility of communicative action is presupposed within the very nature of speech acts and is, therefore, achievable as opposed to merely comprising a definition of what such a form of communication would look like.

Everyone is allowed to express his/[her] attitudes, desires, and needs.

- (3) *No speaker may, by internal or external coercion, be prevented from exercising his rights as laid down in (1) and (2)²⁶*

Principle (1) exists as a statement of inclusion, making explicit the potential participants in the dialogue. Principle (2) comprises the solidification of 'equal opportunity' in the realm of conversation. Finally, principle (3) establishes the conditions under which an open form of dialogue may be maintained by ensuring that, "the right to equal participation can be enjoyed equally by all, that is, without the possibility of repression, be it ever so subtle or covert."²⁷ This final principle is especially significant in terms of human rights conversations as a means of ensuring that dialogue is not curtailed by way of introducing subject matter that, in and of itself, works to disempower the potential for contribution of others. The idea here appears similar to some of the work of Kathleen E. Mahoney discussed in chapter one where Mahoney reminds us that in the contemplation of some issues, the contextual reality within which those issues are considered must, itself, be appreciated.

²⁶ Jurgen Habermas, "*Discourse Ethics: Notes on a Program of Philosophical Justification*," in *The Communicative Ethics Controversy*, Seyla Benhabib & Fred Dallmayr eds., (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1990), p. 86.

²⁷ Habermas, "*Discourse Ethics: Notes on a Program of Philosophical Justification*", p. 86.

The uninhibited discussion thus characterized by the *Ideal Speech Situation* constitutes a norm of communication referred to as 'Egalitarian Reciprocity', within which Habermas conceptualizes a form of life where, based in intersubjective capacities, "noncoercive and nondistortive argumentation is built into our everyday, pretheoretical communicative interactions".²⁸ Unlike *Modus Vivendi* liberalism models of legitimization which advocate conversational restraint and actually anticipate disagreement before a conversation begins, Habermas' *Ideal Speech Situation* pursues truth as the ultimate goal, a truth about which genuine agreement is at least possible through participation in 'truly free' discourse.

In every instance of communication governed by the *Ideal Speech Situation* and based in communicative competence four validity claims come into play so that communication can be oriented toward reaching some type of understanding. Habermas believes these validity claims underlie the operation of communication oriented toward understanding. They exist as the validity basis for speech upon which participants in conversation may evaluate or give credence to the speech acts which are taking place. The validity claims in operation are those of comprehensibility, truth, rightness, and sincerity. Habermas offers a rigorous and

²⁸Richard J. Bernstein, Habermas and Modernity (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1985), p. 19.

detailed explanation for the manner in which these validity claims comprise the conditions for acceptable discourse based in the analyses of speech acts and linguistic constructions, arguments which it is beyond the scope of this thesis to entertain. What he has in mind, however, means that,

a hearer understands the meaning of an utterance when, in addition to grammatical ... and contextual conditions, he knows those *essential conditions* under which he could be motivated by a speaker to take an affirmative position on the claim raised by the speaker. These last conditions are broken down into two further categories: conditions of fulfilment, which refer to the sort of succeeding orientation or action a given speech act typically requires, and conditions of ... agreement which refer to the conditions under which the claim in the speech act ought to be agreed to.²⁹

In essence, the relevance of the validity claims which Habermas delineates ensure that communication remains legitimate. The claims help guarantee that offerings to the conversation remain sincere reflections by the individual communicating them, that they are intelligible to the potential 'hearers' and that they actually embody considerations of truth and rightness situated in the world rather than in abstractions. Should these conditions not be satisfied, should the offerings of a contributor be insincere and thus not oriented to understanding, it is easy

²⁹ Stephen K. White The Recent Work of Jurgen Habermas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 40.

to the see how conversation, and ultimately communication, would be impeded and become ineffectual.

Perhaps one of the most important facets of Habermasian discourse theory, particularly when referenced with the dialogic deficiencies of the human rights community, is that its 'openness' is constructed so as to incorporate those who have traditionally been excluded from public policy conversation into the dialogue in a meaningful way. In so doing, discourse theory represents a means of transcending existing social power relations which have been, inevitably, perpetuated by existing forms of power infused conversation. Seyla Benhabib speaks abundantly of this problem, alluding to the damage conversational restraint models of communication have had upon those who traditionally have not been actors in the public space outlined by liberalism.³⁰ Benhabib asserts that this has been evidenced on numerous occasions throughout history when excluded groups have finally demanded entry to the public sphere so that issues of concern to them may become a matter of the public justice. Thus, Benhabib suggests, the *Ideal Speech Situation* enables the restoration of dignity for previously excluded members of the citizenry so that the distinction between that which is public and that which is private does not occur prior to open debate. Were a view to this inclusion to be incorporated into the operation of the human

³⁰ Benhabib, 1989.

rights community, it is conceivable that accusations of 'Western' domination might erode somewhat as efforts were made to discern the perspectives of those individuals for whom matters of human rights abuses are a facet of day to day living. Synchronous with the realization of human rights educators that the internalization of those values which foster the observance of humane interrelations must be based in experiencing those values, so might the internationalization of the human rights movement be furthered if it were a form of communicative education 'for' human rights and the values of learning in 'concert'.

At the core, then, of communicative ethics is the image of open conversation in which one is obliged to listen to other voices. Such conversation is ultimately to be seen as a "continual learning process" in which different experiences are shared in the processes of recognizing more clearly who we are and who we want to become.³¹

In this way the *Ideal Speech Situation* is a continual learning process within which conversants exchange experiences and come to a 'deeper understanding' of both themselves as well as of those with whom they converse. This description of the *Ideal Speech Situation* is a powerful articulation of the demands of human rights education as well as a poignant testimony to the distorted communication characteristic of current human rights dialogue. As demonstrated in chapter one, the present state of

³¹ White, pp. 82-83.

International Relations, and for present purposes, human rights dialogue is deficient. It is, in fact, human rights contradictory, as it fails to represent actively the interests of many of those voices for whom the realisation of human rights goals is most pressing. Chapter two presents a contrast to this reality, as the musings of human rights education scholars posit interactive and inclusive, interchange as, perhaps, the most crucial component of a successful human rights education project. Outlined throughout the course of this chapter has been a bridge between the poles of reality and prescription which are inherent to the human rights endeavour at present. The separation between the poles of the human rights struggle seems odd at first glance. It almost appears unreasonable that such a disjuncture has occurred along the way especially in the wake of what, in the age of an ever increasing interconnectedness, might be viewed as the expanding importance and necessary role of the human rights movement. Still, the gap between that which constitutes an 'educative' approach to human rights relations and the reality of the manner in which such relations are 'discussed', lamentably, persists and must be considered.

Throughout the course of this thesis, some of the underlying causes of stagnating human rights dialogue have been mentioned, from feminist criticisms of the traditional underpinnings of International Relations, to the

exclusiveness inherent in the accepted modes of communication whereby contribution to the dialogue may be undertaken. The discourse theory of Habermas retains the capacity to address some of these deficiencies by making the communicative aspects of human rights education more explicitly relevant to broader human rights dialogue. Given that the contemplation of human rights education, despite its inherent focus upon communication and dialogue, consists of a formal methodology geared toward educators, the communicative principles it advocates recede in the face of educational focus despite the fact that successful education embodies a specific form of communication. In contrast, the dialogic guidelines of Habermas draw communicative consideration to the forefront, and emphasize the composition of 'true' communication.

There are, quite obviously, ways in which the *Ideal Speech Situation* must be conceptually modified in order to aptly be applied to human rights dialogue. The most obvious necessity in this respect is that the ISS be related to more than the idea of 'face to face' seminar type interaction. Such an intimate level of interaction is simply impossible to establish between all potentially competent contributors to human rights dialogue. Furthermore, to privilege personal and oral communication above all others would be to limit the ability of contributors to choose that method of expression by way of which they feel best able to convey

their knowledge, understanding, and experiences. Privileging particular expressive forms in this way would suffice to limit contribution in the same manner as written communication in the form of conventions, and declarations has been privileged in the conversation to this point. It is the task of the following chapter to embark upon some practical considerations of this nature. With a view to the Habermasian representation of communication as a continual learning process between conversants, the potential for a new human rights dialogue congruent with human rights education prescriptions is considered. The chapter probes potential approaches and venues for creating new spaces for contribution and expression within human rights dialogue and hence, for a plethora of voices to begin activating an educative dialogue 'for' human rights in pursuit of a 'culture of peace'

In conversation, I must know how to listen, I must know how to understand your point of view, I must learn how to represent to myself the world and the other as you see them. If I cannot listen, if I cannot understand, and if I cannot represent, the conversation stops, develops into an argument, or maybe never gets started. Discourse ethics projects such ... conversations in which reciprocal recognition is exercised, onto a utopian community of human kind. But the ability and the willingness of individuals to do so begins with the admonition of the parent to the child: "What if others threw sand in your face or pushed you into the pool, how would you feel then?"³²

³² Benhabib, The Communicative Ethics Controversy, p. 359.

Chapter Four**TALK IS CHEAP:
BRIDGING THEORY AND PRACTICE**

An international system based solely on relations between governments is no longer adequate for the twenty-first century. The time has come for the United Nations to practise what it preaches to others: wider participation by those whose lives are affected by the decisions made.¹

Throughout the course of this thesis, a breach between theory and practice within the human rights community has been explored. Specifically the prescriptions for, and knowledge concerning, that which constitutes successful education 'for' human rights is not manifested in the interrelations of the human rights community. Rather than fostering such values as tolerance and mutual respect as they are known to be integral to human rights education, the human rights community operates in a quite exclusive manner, failing to incorporate the diversity and experience which its work is meant to empower and reflect.

The previous chapter brought the communicative considerations which provide the philosophical underpinnings of the education 'for' human rights approach to centre stage by situating the deficiencies of human rights conversations within the scope of discourse or 'communicative' theory. Rather than heeding the tendency to separate human rights

¹ UNESCO. Our Creative Diversity (Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development: EGOPRIM, 1995)

education prescriptions from the operations of the broader human rights movement, situating the analysis in explicitly communicative considerations makes the inconsistencies between prescription and practice, and the impediments for human rights goals, of primary importance. Central to the achievement of all human rights aspirations and awareness is education 'for' human rights as it exists in a restructured communicative practice of 'open' interchange and inclusiveness. This is true, both in terms of the capacity for education inherent in increased contribution to the field as well as that garnered through the process of interaction itself. Linking the knowledge of educative necessity as it exists within the human rights education community with the communicative principles advanced by Jurgen Habermas may serve as a more effective catalyst for an invigorated human rights dialogue based on principles of self-reflexivity. In turn, this may enable communicative evaluation to occur within the human rights community. It is the task of the present chapter to consider how realizations of communicative deficiency within the human rights community might be tangibly addressed so that the reconstruction of dialogic practice may begin.

In any contemplation of communication as it relates to politics or to attempts to facilitate interchange amongst peoples despite physical distance, the mass media and modern communication technologies come to mind. As venues which

inherently retain the capacity to bridge physical distance and to facilitate transborder communication, the potential of such communication advances, in and of themselves, can scarcely be denied. Lamentably, however, technology is limited, not merely by the time required for its own evolution, but also by the manner in which it is implemented. Along this line of thinking much literature exists and continues to develop concerning the shortcomings of the mass media, including the problems of ownership, sensationalism and the like.² Rather than delving into that well represented terrain, I extend but a few observations concerning the effective role that the mass media and other communication technologies could assume in the pursuit of human rights goals particularly by enabling conversations. Companion to this, however, are reservations concerning the manner in which an unbridled technological enthusiasm void of careful consideration may suffice to complicate, rather than facilitate communicative goals.

As an instrument with the capacity to inform world citizens of widespread occurrences throughout the globe, the mass media retains potential as an information base for human rights conversations. Increasing global familiarity

² Along these lines see, for example, Michael Parenti, "Inventing Reality," (excerpt) in Democracy: Key Concepts in Critical Theory. Philip Green ed. (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1993); Noam Chomsky, Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the media. (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1994); or George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four (London: Penguin Books, 1949)

with the vast diversity of human rights issues and occurrences that are the reality of the international scene can only facilitate the incorporation of these issues into human rights conversations. Though the concentration within this thesis has been upon human rights education as a matter of practice as opposed to mere content, it cannot be denied that in bringing issues to light, or to discussion, wide proliferation of their existence is a useful tool. For such an information base to be a part of the agenda, however, a vast overhaul of the present structure and goals of the media would need to be undertaken. Attention would necessarily have to shift from a concentration upon highlighting those issues with the most discernible political ramifications on the home front, from efforts of maintaining 'regime stability' and from 'style' over content. Such comprehensive reconstruction is no simple task and warrants further consideration and research.³

Once the potential of the mass media as an information device in this vein is cited, however, it is the manner in which the medium falls short of such potential that becomes apparent. A primary example of the insufficiency of the media as a facilitator of better human rights conversations

³ For some work that has been undertaken concerning the role of the mass media and its relationship to human rights see, for example: Michael Bratvold, Human rights, children, and the role of the mass media: the case of the Latin American street child. (Unpublished M.A. thesis; Acadia University, 1996).

is exemplified in the attention which has been devoted to Canadian/Cuban economic and political relations and the resulting American condemnation of such, as alluded to earlier in the thesis.⁴ It is very difficult to discern, after accessing a media story concerning Canada-Cuba relations and the human rights situation in Cuba, exactly what the nature of human rights issues in Cuba are. As well, very little information may be acquired with reference to the 'detailed' substance of the disagreement on approach to these Cuban human rights issues as they are embodied by the Canadian and American perspectives. Essentially, the issue is presented as one of vast disagreement, and the potential political ramifications imbued by such divergence, between the two prominent Western countries. As a facilitator of actual dialogue on human rights, as an awareness of human rights abuses in Cuba, and as a venue for exploring approaches to these questions, the media does not realise its potential. Quite removed from the life experience of those residents of Cuba whom human rights issues effect most deeply, the media features a sensationalized story of Western powers and their fates, sloughing over the important human rights concerns which

⁴ This should not, obviously, be interpreted as a blanket statement covering every feature on human rights in Cuba. Of note, for example, is attention given to the plight of Cuban writer Sombra, currently spending two years as "writer in exile" at Wilfred Laurier University. See, for example, Globe and Mail, Friday May 16th, 1997, pp. A1 & A12.

truly rest at the heart of the entire issue. In presenting 'information' with a complete lack of reference to the human rights aspects of fundamentally human rights issues and by focusing instead upon the 'dominant' regime influences, an effective impetus for human rights awareness and dialogue by way of alternative approaches is effectively curtailed. Moreover, such actions would seem to provide those who accuse human rights pursuits of being little more than Western dominance and arrogance with further fuel for their fire.⁵ The more subtle power infused message which emerges then, when this is measured against the backdrop of Habermas' dialogic guidelines, is that human rights dialogue truly is a Western monologue and the plight of those living with human rights abuses in Cuba are subordinated to yet another Western political dynamic.⁶

In the *Information Age*, a conceivable argument which could be constructed concerning efforts directed toward a

⁵ The propensity of the deficiencies of the media in this regard may, arguably, be inherent to the methods of operation of the modern manifestation of the medium itself. It has been cited, for example, that the average length of a news 'sound bite' has decreased from 42 seconds in 1968 to 9 seconds in 1992. See, Moses Znaimer, T.V. T.V.: The Television Revolution. (C.B.C. film, 1995) Still, in any contemplation of the deficiencies of public communication, the mass media must be attended.

⁶ This is not to say that the efforts of those countries attempting to oppose Helms-Burton are insignificant, rather, it is merely to advance the idea that in the face of the power struggle between these developed regions the philosophical foundations for disagreement are quite secondary, if at all, considerations.

more international human rights dialogue may be based in the *new and improved* communicative vehicles with which the world is now equipped. Certainly, the revolutionary role of communication technologies in making the new information based world a much smaller place cannot be denied, however, these new technologies must be approached with some degree of trepidation. Though they may, in effect, enable some manifestation of 'conversation' to occur amongst individuals between whom communication was an impossibility before there are, conceivably, quite contradictory values embodied by new information technology. The connotations and messages inherent in new information technology and the very solitary nature of their use are manifestations of the same individualistic learning embodied by the more traditional educational philosophies. Moreover, as with the possibilities of the mass media the potential of new information technologies is highly dependent upon the uses to which that technology is put. The current revolutionary impact of the use of new information technologies has profound implications for the very character of the world as we know it as well as for the nature of social relations. In this way, information technologies, and their potential in creating a better 'world communication' are highly dependent upon the more subtle messages embodied by the very existence and form these technologies take.

One facet of contradiction inherent in the existence and proliferation of new information technologies and related to considering their potential in human rights considerations is that social interactions, as they become evermore structured by information and communication technologies, raise new human rights concerns. The vast quantities of personal information processing which are quickly becoming a definitive aspect of the global marketplace raise new human rights questions which need be addressed before proclaiming the virtues of the information highway. From the lack of privacy of electronic mail through the reality of 'cookies', to on-line harassment, new communication technologies may introduce as many human rights questions as they answer. Despite the fact that the rapid development of new information technologies demands that such issues rapidly be attended the reality of public policy development dictates otherwise.

Despite the proximity of human rights concerns in this area to the actual life of the everyday citizen, the impetus for action derives primarily from the economic 'high politics' of transborder trade. The passing of the *European Community Directive on the Protection of Individuals with Regard to the Processing of Personal Data and on the Free Movement of such Data* on the 24th of October 1995, and its pending deadline for compliance, is demanding that external countries give consideration to issues of this nature. The

issues are configured, predominantly, as matters of facilitating and securing safe transborder trade. Thus, there exists a danger that the human rights issues imbued by the global economy may be overlooked. Moreover, in attention to these issues, at such a high, 'political' and economic level, human rights dialogue is once again constructed in such a way as to be quite removed from the lives of the consumers upon whom transactions of personal information are dependent. For example, research has shown that few Canadian citizens are aware of issues of personal information protection, from legislation or programs attempting information protection to potential avenues of redress.⁷ At a time when new information technologies retain profound implications for the everyday lives of citizens, due to the processing of vast quantities of personal information, few citizens are aware of initiatives being taken to update the means through which the security of such transactions are ensured.

Further considerations of the relationship between human rights and new information technologies are aptly given voice by Ziauddin Sardar in the article entitled, *Future Challenges of Human Rights and Democracy*. Sardar reminds us that the future to which new information technologies will lead remains undetermined and that the

⁷ See, for example, Philippa Lawson and Marie Vallee, 'Canadians Take Their Information Personal,' in Privacy Files, Vol 1 No. 1, October 1995.

capacity for fragmentation and exacerbated individualism may very well comprise a distinguishing feature of the *New Information World Order*. As well, Sardar prompts the recognition that the information world order is not entirely absolved from those communicative problems inherent in the somewhat antiquated and more familiar mass communication mediums.

In adhering to the goals of Habermasian communicative theory - aimed at understanding and inclusion and distinguished from propaganda - there exist many respects in which the very nature of new information technology may enable a far more subtle manipulative capacity. The ability to distinguish informational legitimacy on the Internet may, failing some form of regulation, prove an even more gruelling endeavour than assuming a critical posture toward the mass media and its hard-core visuals.

An individual sitting in front of a computer terminal is no less capable of being manipulated by soundbites than by any other means. Moreover there is a real danger of further divisions between information rich and information poor societies as well as individuals linked to decision making and those, for lack of technology or other reasons that are cut off from this process. But, perhaps more seriously, the very idea of the citizen sitting in front of his or her terminal ... actually takes individualism to a new level. It also leaves the nation state and all its oppressive apparatus intact. Far from creating a community based on consensus, the information technologies could easily create states of alienated and atomized individuals, glued to their computer terminals, terrorizing and

being terrorized by all those whose values conflict with their own.⁸

Also cited as problematic for the goals of increasing solidarity and understanding amongst the world's peoples as expressed within Sardar's quotation is the potential for exacerbating divisions between the rich and the poor, polarized in this sense by the comparative distribution of information access. Obviously, this polarization already complicates human rights communication problems. Jan Bauer, for example reinforces that,

adequate attention has [not] been given to the fact that participation for women, and thus freedom of expression and access to information, largely remains an illusion both in developed and developing countries and irrespective of the social and political systems.⁹

Whether it be the lack of character diversity featured in modern film or on television, to the social circumstances that prohibit the communication of very vital experiences, part of the lack of awareness that may be seen to characterize these issues is predicated upon polarized positions of access and opportunity. In the case of new information technologies, at least in the short term, similar polarization of access to both the technology itself as well as to the information and communicative worlds which

⁸ Sardar, p. 19.

⁹ Jan Bauer, 'Only Silence will Protect You. Women, Freedom of Expression and the Language of Human Rights,' in Essays on Human Rights and Democratic Development: Essay No. 6. (Montreal; International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, 1996) p. 91.

that access may open up, is conceivable. Similar to the communicative prejudices embodied by the traditional vehicles of communication which have been human rights community protocol, so too, may the immediate proclamation of new information technologies as the *new communication way*, usher in an era of well-meaning and unconsidered exclusion.¹⁰ It is for this reason, again, that the constant struggle for action within the human rights community must be tempered by ideas, primarily ideas of the interconnectedness of theory and practice. The reality of global interconnectedness demands the recognition that,

He who speaks controls what is said. Since his perception of the world fills his consciousness, the oppressor inevitably draws the criteria of universality from his own experience. Transmitted from generation to generation, they are further reinforced by the centuries-long silence of the dominated. Thus, the definition of the other that is conveyed by knowledge is the very one established by the dominator, a definition that inspires and is reproduced by the so-called human sciences.¹¹

An integral facet, then, of the project of democratized discourse is constant awareness of the relationship between theory and practice. Literally, a rigorously maintained consciousness ensuring neither ideas in complete isolation,

¹⁰ It is, perhaps, worthy of note in making explicit the 'meaninglessness' of technology to many of the world's inhabitants that approximately one third of the world's population lack access to any electricity. Globe and Mail, Friday, May 16th, p. A24.

¹¹ Lise Noel, Intolerance: A General Survey (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), p. 24.

nor action isolated from ideas is essential. Such a critical posture was long absent from the realm of International Relations. It has been outlined the way such an absence may allow a discipline to evolve, evermore, away from the realities it is meant to represent.

It is the case, then, that within the existing human rights community there needs to be a concerted effort toward maintaining an awareness of the linkages between theory and practice. Further, in the case of human rights education that awareness must be translated into significant efforts for inclusion and breadth of scholarship and contribution within the human rights community. The awareness of the importance of ideas to the success of human rights pursuits represents more than a matter of cognition, it comprises an integral facet of the barriers which elude the goals for which the human rights community struggles. Enabling and in fact 'living' ideas, within the human rights community, actually means actively and practically educating for those ideas simultaneously. Much in the same way that new dandelions grow literally by virtue of the **existence** of the others, so may the achievements of the human rights community grow, by virtue of the release, in practice, of those values within which the spirit of human rights existence may be found. Tangibly, then, consideration must be given to creating mechanisms through which the privileged communicative access, venues, styles, assumptions, and fora

which prevail within the human rights community, may be curtailed. Certainly the demands of such a project are immense, however, likewise are the demands of human rights goals.

It is not sufficient, however, to place the entire onus for awareness and inclusion upon those by whom the conversation is already conducted. Obviously, as demonstrated in the previous quote, and throughout the thesis, the path to linking theory and practice may not always be readily discernible by those who define the parameters of discussion. For these reasons, the impetus for increased awareness, inclusion, and contribution must also be a product of commitment on the part of the excluded. Certainly, given the inherent difficulty in revolutionizing the very processes from which one is excluded, this prescription must be taken with a degree of forbearance. What remains necessary is that, despite the predominance of the common dialogue, it is essential for those groups' whose experience fails to be given voice in that dialogue to continue to push for self-reflexivity within the discipline. The impact, for example, of feminist thought as a revolutionary device within the state of IR theory is profoundly clear. Despite the fact that the fora for bringing these issues to light have been limited, the impact of feminist theory within the field of IR has begun and will, undoubtably, continue. Similarly, other critiques

must find their voice. The achievement of inclusion, in this respect places great demands on the excluded in that it is also,

up to the dominated to alter the rules of the game in their favour and undermine the discourse of the objective fact through the politics of the fait accompli. By pushing back the limits of the "extremes" through fundamental challenges ... away from a centre that until then had propped up the established order. ... The oppressed first will have to become conscious of their condition of inferiority. Imbued with the dominant discourse, which keeps them in subjection, they must relearn how to speak for themselves, at the same time that they have to demand the right to speak.¹²

The reality of this essential role of the excluded in transforming human rights dialogue should not be interpreted as an impenetrable barrier. Rather, the possibilities for impact reside in the recognition that a commitment to new and evolving ideas retain a profound capacity for re-invention. Such endeavors vastly contradict the sentiments of Francis Fukuyama's work, entitled, The End of History and the Last Man¹³, which seems to suggest that the current level of democracy which human beings may be said to have realised is, virtually, the end of human history.¹⁴

¹² Noel, pp. 75-76.

¹³ Francis Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, (New York: The Free Press, 1992)

¹⁴ Fukuyama's reverence for current achievements of democracy may be aptly juxtaposed to the work of C.B. MacPherson who contends that the Western conception of democracy is fundamentally distorted. MacPherson believes western democratic achievements have replaced the vision of human beings as 'developers' of themselves, with 'consumers' of individual utilities. It is Macpherson's contention that the

Imprisoned by the dominant rhetoric of western individualism and measuring by way of a western yardstick, Fukuyama abandons all struggle for human improvement through ideas. Instead Fukuyama is acquiescing to a supposed dialogue wherein western rhetoric has emerged victorious, essentially, by default.

In the face of these requirements for excluded groups to make a concerted effort to identify and dismantle the underpinnings of dominant discourse such groups must, themselves, maintain a vigilance against division. The increased contribution and exposure of alternative contributors goes a long way in transforming the structure and content of the exiting agenda. What may curtail such progress, however, is the privileging of certain 'identifying' criteria within the membership of these alternative contributors themselves.

Voice has been given to the way in which division within a group may subvert its goals in the article by, and experience of, Zoe L. Hayes. Hayes speaks of the ostracization she experienced at the 1996 CAUT Status of

reality of technological advancement in western society could, in contrast, now enable the transcendence of the notions of scarcity and individual desire which served to create such a diminished conception of democracy. Thus, a more 'humane' democracy might be pursued. C.B. Macpherson, Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1973)

Women conference.¹⁵ Hayes relates the lessons in, "ageism, racism, exclusion and silencing" which pervaded the conference, "in a way ... [she had] never experienced anywhere else." It was a conference wherein views of moderation were less than well received, and where disagreement with the most accepted sentiments was unwelcome contribution. From the conference, Hayes came to the important understanding that, "letting someone say her piece does not constitute giving her a voice". Further, the conference made explicit questions concerning the depth of, "ideas of inclusion and equity if our zeal to right the injustices we have experienced does not permit us to practise, in all aspects of our lives, what we preach so vehemently".¹⁶ Linked with the Habermasian dialogic guidelines which were outlined as communicative goals for the human rights community, such subliminal and insidious segregation flies in the face of the third principle which resists internal coercion in its most subtle forms.

Hayes' experience speaks, fervently, to the commitments which must be sustained within and between groups striving for dialogue within the human rights community. Furthermore, there must also be cross-communication pursued between various groups lest achievements in the growth of

¹⁵ Zoe L. Hayes, *"Conference Reality Belies its Theme,"* in CAUT Bulletin. (Ottawa: CAUT, 2 April 1997) p. 6.

¹⁶ Hayes, p. 6.

contribution be characterised by a 'relegated' exclusion such as that which has come to find the issues of women's rights addressed in entirely separate venues from general human rights considerations.¹⁷ In acquiring critical voice, newly emerging groups must be careful not to become caught up only in the defining features or parameters of their respective groupings. The overall project and common goals of increased openness and accessibility for all individuals whose reality is not captured within the hegemonic world snapshot must be maintained. In this way, commitment must always be to the project of inclusion, rather than to preoccupations with the particular affiliations of those who, in concert, work toward dialogic enrichment. Like the vigilance which must be sustained by the human rights community to practice those principles it extends for the adoption of others, so must the commitment of various groups endeavouring for inclusion within that community work in conjunction with one another to exhibit the practices they wish the human rights community to emulate.

Another facet of the importance of ensuring congruence between theory and practice is considered at length in the

¹⁷ For other important arguments concerning the ways in which the achievement of women's human rights have been inhibited through the very construction of language, by a lack of access to information, etc. See: Jan Bauer *"Only Silence will Protect You. Women, Freedom of Expression and the Language of Human Rights"*.

paper, *From Montreal to Beijing: Integrating Action Plans with a Viable Human Rights Education for the Democratic Citizen - Experiences from UNESCO*.¹⁸ The paper considers the demands of inclusive human rights dialogue and human rights education referenced with the action plans of various international fora. The work concludes that these plans of action, for the most part, are more aptly calls to action than plans of action. The paper suggests that failing a comprehensive understanding of the mutually dependant relationship between actions and ideas integral to the achievement of human rights goals, the advancement of such goals will remain significantly curtailed. The suggestion is that a 'democratized' discourse, attuned to the expression of a diversity of interests and secured through the active participation of a variety of stakeholders, would help such traditional 'calls to action' to evolve to their designation as 'plans of action'.

In considering the structural and functional limitations of current human rights endeavors and especially in considering conferences, plans of action and the like, it is virtually impossible to ignore contemporary criticisms of

¹⁸ Marshall Conley & Judy Ettinger, *"From Montreal to Beijing: Integrating Action Plans with a Viable Human Rights Education for the Democratic Citizen - Experiences from UNESCO,"* Paper prepared for the conference on 'Democracy and the Younger Generation' organized by the Research Committee on Political Socialization and Political Education division of the International Political Science Association. (Prague: May 20-25th, 1997).

that body which has been at the heart of much of the human rights struggle. Since the introduction of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in 1948, the labours of the United Nations in attempting to secure human rights for the world's peoples can not be denied. However, in the face of an increasing neo-conservative economic agenda, the United Nations finds itself coming under fire for its perceived bureaucratic extravagance and comparatively lacking demonstrable results.

In addressing criticisms of this kind an awareness of the demands of restructured communication and coordination may facilitate structural reorganization. Though criticisms of bureaucratic excess often initiate systematic purges it might also serve well to recognize that increased communicative coordination can improve the efficiency of an organization. Better cross-communication practice between various divisions of the UN which deal in related subject matter could, potentially, serve the efficient achievement of project goals. As well, 'cross-pollination' of the various sectoral fields by those specialists¹⁹ working within them would seem to prove an effective instrument of increased information and coordination. Finally, if more 'democratized' participation in human rights coordination at

¹⁹ The use of the word 'specialist' here is not meant to comprise an endorsement of the current dominance, within the U.N, of 'professional diplomats'. In the vein of this thesis, the incorporation of 'the other' must be undertaken at all levels of research, formulation, and action.

the level of the UN were to occur, the insight and experience which could then be accessed might also increase the practicality and applicability of potential policies and approaches to the plethora of issues which comprise its mandate. In some respects, these issues comprise eternal political perplexities. Whether an organization is better served by way of established bureaucratic elite, adept at process, or whether a frequent turnover and new perspectives better enable a body to evolve with external realities remains a longstanding question.

A particularly important aspect of synthesizing the prescriptions of human rights education and the interaction of the human rights community, has to do with the precedence of what may be termed, 'academic' fashion. What I mean here is the tendency within academics, much like the broader social environment, toward trends. Though it is, of course, necessary for academic scholarship to maintain some degree of evolution and consistency with the social world around it this should not necessarily preclude and diminish important endeavors in areas of research deemed to be less in 'vogue'. Much as it defeats progress to stop questioning longstanding hegemonic theories, so too may much fruitful inquiry be curtailed should alternative work be dismissed as an outdated vagary of history. That being said, the distinction must be drawn between criticising a stream of thought for antiquatedness, as feminist criticisms of

realism within IR endeavour to do, and abandoning study in an area which is not sufficiently current or cutting edge. The existence of neo-realism, for instance, attests to efforts still being made to revamp the applicability of traditional theories while, in contrast, the contemporary appeal of feminist thought has markedly diminished despite the continuing urgency of its objectives.

Lise Noel aptly delineates the shortcomings of the dictates of 'academic fashion' stating that,

it has become fashionable ... to claim that emancipation movements are "out of style". Activists who continue to defend a cause are supposedly merely "nostalgic" for a past era, and theorists interested in analyzing the relationships of domination give the impression of sailing against the current in an era completely focused on practical concerns. ... Some have hastened to declare the end of ideology. Activism may appear outmoded, but the problems have not gone away. It is somewhat suspicious the way the media (among others) have insisted on portraying only important phenomena as fads. The death knell has been sounded far more often for feminism, for example, than for dieting, or for the preoccupation with fashion. ... Transposed into every field of endeavour, this absence represents an immeasurable loss for humanity.²⁰

Against this backdrop of fatalism implicit in the current academic, political and social agendas, the progression of the human rights community toward a more inclusive dialogue is denied. Few gains can be expected of the human rights community in initiating breadth and growth of endeavour, when that same community must direct every facet of its energy to defending its very existence.

²⁰ Noel, pp. 238-239.

Despite the prominence of academics within the human rights community and the lack of inclusion which, undoubtedly, comprises a large facet of the structure of the human rights community, human rights issues are far more than traditional venues for competing academic theories. Human rights are about human lives. Dismissing the spirit of activism, humanism, or any other awareness which may serve as an impetus in this area because it is not sufficiently contemporary not only eradicates the potential for academic communication, it disables the hope of world communication.

This chapter has outlined some of the areas within which practical considerations of communication may be undertaken within the human rights community with a view to initiating a more inclusive dialogue. Certainly, it is the case that changes in these respects are no small task. Crucial to alternative developments in these areas is a recognition of the intricate relationship between ideas and action, the power of ideas themselves, and the importance of self-reflexivity. With the communicative deficiencies and contradictions of the human rights community made apparent, and with the vision of a 'democratized discourse' serving as a practical implementation of human rights education, the challenges and tools for re-invention of the human rights community are readily apparent. A concerted effort toward dialogic democratization is essential to the long term goals of the human rights movement for which human rights

education remains the cornerstone. Far from being out of fashion, the realities of the international arena speak to the continuing relevance of the human rights mission.

If this is forgotten, we run the risk of exposing human rights to a new threat - the real danger of taking them for granted. Like democracy, human rights would seem to be a well-established acquisition, no longer needing to be fought for. ... To criticize human rights merely on their failures in the world smacks of intellectual dishonesty. Should medical research be decried because it has not yet got the best of cancer or AIDS?²¹

²¹Poirier, p. 36.

Conclusion

To have the benefit of diversity is to have the benefit of heterogenous input - human, intellectual, economic, cultural and political. It is to appreciate that the social orchestra ... sounds best when it is harmonious. The sounds blend, they do not merge. It is a symphony, not a concerto. All the players expect to contribute to the melodious whole, and are interdependent on one another for support. It is a sound based on understanding the unique value each different instrument brings to the orchestra. It is a sound we must never stop trying to achieve.¹

The above quote articulates the sentiments of inclusiveness characteristic of contemporary prescriptions for the achievement of human rights education. The quote is, likewise, indicative of the aspirations of the human rights movement and its effort to achieve a culture of peace. In essence the quote speaks to the value of diversity in the constitution of the social whole and, envisions a harmonious world order. The idea is a powerful one, but it is one which, in terms of practice, has been quite absent from the human rights community.

Throughout the course of this thesis, a lack of integration between ideas and action within the human rights community has been highlighted. The prescriptions and values advanced as fundamental aspects of successful human

¹ Abella, Rosalie. "From Civil Liberties to Human Rights: Acknowledging the Difference," in Human Rights in the Twenty-First Century: A Global Challenge. Kathleen E. Mahoney & Paul Mahoney eds., (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1993), p. 69.

rights education have not been made an integral facet of the 'lived reality' of the human rights community itself. Despite the fact that open and inclusive dialogue is advanced by human rights education scholars as the most effective manifestation of human rights education, such a dialogue does not prevail within the current boundaries of the human rights community as a whole. This schism comprises a tremendous obstacle to a human rights education process at a global level, subordinating the very cornerstone of human rights achievement; human rights education, to the hegemonic theoretical and operational traditions inherent to the study and practice of international relations. The contention of this thesis is that the human rights community must come to an awareness of these inconsistencies as inhibiting its progress. A reconciliation of the inconsistencies within the human rights community is essential for a reinvention of the human rights community for the twenty-first century and to sustain the applicability of the human rights movement's vision of a culture of peace.

As chapter one demonstrated, critical ferment focusing on the exclusionary state of dialogue within international relations, and particularly within human rights scholarship is beginning. The seeds for better communicative practice are, in this sense, being sown. That a recognition of the 'exclusionary' nature of human rights dialogue to date has

begun comprises, in and of itself, an initiation of the important awareness of the profound linkages between **ideas** and **action**. A continuation of this awareness such that the **ideas** and **action** of the human rights community might resonant in concert within the world wide struggle for the achievement of human rights would be an immense advance of the process of human rights education. To that end, the human rights community requires fervent attempts to synthesize the spirit of the human rights struggle with the values which that struggle aims to consolidate. In essence, a commitment to a plurality of voices within the human rights community is essential.

In order to ensure the continued applicability of human rights goals and activism, continued steps in this direction of awareness, and inclusiveness are crucial. Having already become drastically out of step with the life experiences of many of those it purports to serve, the human rights community must begin a revolution of practice. For the achievement of human rights goals to become a reality, comprehensive education 'for' human rights must become an integral part of the operation of the broader human rights community. Specifically, the human rights community must endeavour to recognize, and reconcile, the discontinuity that has occurred between the theoretical principles which human rights theory supports, and the manner of interacting which the human rights community actually exhibits. If

human rights activists wish to reckon the dawn of a culture of human rights, a concerted attempt toward the democratization of their own thought must be undertaken. Not only will the human rights movement be advanced through the variety of perspectives enabled by the democratization of discourse, so will the international community and each member of humanity become enveloped in a transformative process of erecting and consolidating an international 'climate' for human rights.

On 10 December 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights came into being, given birth by the United Nations General Assembly. See this as one stop on a journey, long possibly endless. There are more stops, new passengers enter, there is a dialogue inside. Maybe some passengers exit. There are more stops ... each time reflecting an ever deeper and broader *dialogue des civilisations*. Each ... gives something. Each ... feels grateful that others have something to contribute. ... As the journey progresses ... instead of a conclusion let us try to write ... a dialogue.²

² Galtung, John, Human Rights in Another Key, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p. 154.

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