

Democracy: A Critical Red Ideal

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Education for a democracy has provided a deeply treasured language for shaping or children's schooling and a litmus test for judging their purposes and practices... democratic schooling has been the basis of struggle....

—Linda McNeil, 2002

Surely it is time to re-open public discussion about the aims of education and ensure that our current policies and practices are consistent with the core qualities of democracy; democracy not narrowly defined as a form of government but as Dewey characterised it—as a way of life, as an ethical conception and hence always about the democracy still to come.

—Roger Simon in Portelli & Solomon, 2001

Introduction

My overarching purpose in this paper is to trouble popular notions of democracy and in the process generate questions that raise doubts about the validity and value of popular conceptions of the meaning and practices of democracy. I will also suggest some core qualities of democracy for the readers' consideration that I use in my work as an educational researcher, preservice and post-graduate teacher education instructor, and practicum supervisor to evaluate educational philosophies, policies, curriculum, pedagogy, cocurricular activities, decision making and discipline in schools.

Is democracy a way of life, a way of organising the political, social,

and economic life of communities that is defined by a generalised participative dialogic process that is directed towards the nurturance of peace, and social, economic and ecological justice? In this paper I will be comparing and contrasting, this ideal, what I refer to as critical red democracy,¹ with the popular view and practice of democracy. I have written this political paper as an intervention in the world (Freire, 2004), an intervention directed towards reclaiming and reasserting an ideal of democracy I believe worth struggling for. According to my understanding of democracy, which has been composed, coloured and shaded by my first hand experiences of “Fourth World” “democracies” (Bobiwash, 2001) and my mixed Haudenosaunee and working class Scot/Irish heritage the core distinguishing content qualities of a democratic community are: generalised and empowered dialogue, ecological justice, peace, equity, anti-racism, cooperation and sharing, freedom from hunger and freedom to shelter and clothing.

Specifically, I will examine multiple constructions of democracy in popular and academic discourse. I argue that continued attempts to clarify the meaning(s) of democracy, to analyse the academic and popular discourse on democracy, and to examine diverse, historic, and contemporary examples of indigenous democracy is crucial if we hope to reclaim a substantive democracy and counter the popular flawed logic that voting and free markets define democracy.

Aboriginal ways of knowing guide my thinking. My purpose here is anti-colonial, and disruptive, yet hopeful, playful and constructive. I am, of course, keenly interested in issues related to the continuing and seemingly inexorable power of the social, economic and political minority to name, rename, define, redefine, populate and depopulate the world and the word. The philosophy of hope and possibility guiding this intervention paper springs from the discursive and redemptive moral and intellectual power of fourth world people’s knowledge, practices, and institutions (Gunn, 1986; Graveline, 1998; Maracle, 1988; Said, 1993). Ironically, this paper is also situated within an approach to social science research Walter Mingnolo (2002) conceives of as “critical cosmopolitanism.” Mingolo portrays efforts to explore contextualised democratic experiences that respect diversity in order to avoid the dread homogeneity of a “new universalism,” as crucial. Mingnolo suggests these inclusive democracy stories from below are an empowered counter narrative to globalisation from above, and that these local histories must be given a prominent hearing in critical dialogues exploring and analyzing democracy.

The Rhetoric and Reality of Democracy

I am deeply concerned that in popular and academic usage democracy has become reduced to being dangerously associated first and foremost with elections and specific procedures with the result of demeaning and degrading the importance of content as a distinguishing feature of democracy. Like Chantal Mouffe (2002) I can't help but draw a connection between reduced political engagement as evidenced by the alarming absence of voting and political participation by our youth and marginalised members of our society, and the lack of meaningful substantive choice and visions of democracy in popular discourse. I am also concerned by the blurring of the demarcated policy lines that once served to differentiate the major political parties in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States apart from one another that in effect left marginalised populations with little or no representation or choice. In contrast to popular and academic charges of apathy against these groups, my explanation is anti-pathy. That along with a decline of the content and meaningful alternatives in democracy, has come an understandable interpretation by our youth and so many other "citizens" that voting and other forms of formal political participation does not matter. That democracy is an elite dominated process and procedure show, where the outcomes are often predictable and often only marginally important to their lives. Many people do not see their visions of their own and collective futures and pasts represented in many self proclaimed democracies. Is it not rational, moral, and even pragmatic for "democratic citizens" to resent a system that neglects their needs, and hopes, and that goes on in an inexorable way as if every life system and life support system of our earth is not in decline? For many citizens even the ideal of democracy embodied by these governments is not worth struggling for, not even worth a drive to the local school to cast a ballot.

I am surprised more educators are not alarmed by the demeaned usage of the term *democracy* in both the popular media and academic discourse. Democracy is being regularly used fast and loose as a verb, an adverb, an adjective, and a noun in both popular and academic usage. It is most often used to describe a process of elections and procedure of leadership selection and representative decision-making, to describe states that utilise some form of universal suffrage, and that conform to a large extent to neoliberal economic policies. Perhaps, as a symptom of the "war against terrorism" it is also presented as something citizen armies must fight for, something that western nations can bring to or impose on "others," or even a gift one enlightened people can give to "others."

Democracy is also held up as an end in itself that individual citizens

create together and preserve by casting their vote or it is portrayed as fragile, and under constant threat from within by unpatriotic and apathetic citizens and from beyond its borders by “terrorists,” undemocratic regimes and “backward” civilizations. Ironically it is also portrayed as a political-economic system that makes nations strong and free, but can also make them weak in times of crisis, and so according to its defenders needs well defined limits. It is also frequently portrayed as a system of governance that can only be built upon and sustained by free markets, private property, increased consumption and productivity, and the overarching pursuit of profit. Unfortunately, democracy is often presented as a system of government to be uncritically appreciated. Likewise, it is seen as a system of governance that depends on elections, laws and institutional force and coercion to protect and preserve it.

Democracy is ubiquitously constructed as a system of governance the world owes to the enlightened elite few of ancient and modern Europe and North America; therefore, we hear the common catchphrase “western democracy.” Democracy is portrayed with folktale regularity in the academy, popular culture and letters as moving from the centre to the periphery. From “cultural” centres of “civilization” like Athens, Paris, Washington, and London democracy is described as radiating out to the outer world like the rays of a purifying white light. According to these accounts democracy is not associated with non-European or non-western peoples,² and importantly with the way of life and governance of many different people historically and today, in theory and in practice.

The popular view of democracy as primarily a process rings hollow in my ears and in my heart. It conflicts and contrasts with, and is contradicted by critical democratic theories and practices of democracy, and by the world and the word of many Fourth World or Original peoples. I can’t help but marvel at the brazen audacity of some western nations, who use “democracy” as a semantic Trojan horse to hide the psychotic³ corporate captains of transnational capital inside. Behind this cloak of decency, of self-proclaimed “democracy,” most industrialised “democratic” nations pursue their historic and continuing war for market expansion, oppression and domination. Arguably the result has been the commoditisation of Third and Fourth world suffering, human to human alienation, the decline of local communities,⁴ and the continued conquest of the peoples of the Fourth World and exploitation of the land, air, and water and all living beings (Bobiwash, 2001; Chomsky, in Hill, 2001). Within these same “democratic” nations, disparities of opportunity, treatment, and personal wealth have arguably reached new levels, or remain disturbingly inequitable. Industrial and military pollution, prisons overpopulated with Black, Aboriginal and the poor, homelessness, poor underfed

children without adequate health care or educational opportunities, union busting, layoffs, executive compensation, and rampant corporate malfeasance all speak to the undemocratic content of self-declared democratic nations. In short, inequity and injustice, and environmental destruction and devastation continue at an alarming pace within these self-declared democracies throughout the world. Despite these realities Freedom House, a high profile non-government organisation created to monitor “freedom” and “democracy” by the likes of early supporters such as Eleanor Roosevelt and Wendell Wilkie, endorses 112 nations as electoral democracies and very generously anoints 89 nations as maintaining the content of democracy as they construct it.⁵

The Language Game: What is Democracy?

Is “democracy” a language game? There is no consensus on “democracy” and what it means. The Oxford English dictionary defines the term simply as “government by the people.” “Democracy” is often used to describe the process, procedures and content of group decision making, leaders and approaches to leadership with a stress on process and a neglect of content. According to Bertolo (1997) the term *democracy* which was coined by its enemies

is inappropriate as *kratos* means domination or force exercised by one part of society over another, while legitimate authority is *arkhe*. It would thus be more correct to speak of demarchy than democracy and maybe *acracy* than anarchy. (Bertolo, 1997, ft. 22)

Democracy could be said to be an empty vehicle to be filled with meaning through reflection, dialogue and experience. Michael Apple (2002) characterises democracy as a contested concept and that the “use automatically presupposes ongoing dialogue with other competing meanings” (Apple, 2002, p. 14).

Dewey (1938) was one of the first twentieth century non-Original peoples to argue that democracy is a way of life.⁶ He also quipped that different democracies can represent different people and suggested we could differentiate democracies by asking the following telling questions: which people’s interest are served and represented, why and how (Dewey, 1937)? Miles Horton co-founder of the Highlander Folk School⁷ tells us in *The Long Haul* (1990) that he could never define democracy because “it’s a growing idea.” Rousseau (1978) proposed that democracy was the social expression of the intrinsically egalitarian nature of humankind. In contrast, according to Marx, democracy was a capitalist construction and was simply a transitory phase in world history, waiting to be supplanted by socialism (Muhlberger & Payne, 1993).

The meaning of democracy, it would seem, then, could be said to be socially constructed and contextual. One could also argue that democracy is constantly under reconstruction. There are competing definitions and expectations of democracy. Some definitions of democracy are epistemically privileged and others are contained. Macedo argues that democracy is a pervasive literalism that disguises our social, economic, and political realities (Macedo, 2003). Fotopoulos (1997) states today's democracy is a "flagrant distortion of the intended meaning." He passionately argues that democracy should be participatory and dedicated to realising social justice.

Noam Chomsky (1987) also speaks of "the complicit...inherent hypocrisy of contemporary democracy." Chomsky (1987), in his book *On Power and Ideology*, offers one of many of his definitions of democracy that he seems to develop extemporaneously and sprinkle like rough gems throughout his writing and interviews.

Democracy...refers to a system of government in which elite elements based in the business community control the state by virtue of their dominance of private society, while the population observes quietly. So understood democracy is a system of elite decision and public ratification, as in the United States itself. Corresponding popular involvement in the formation of public policy is considered a serious threat. (p. 6)

Castoriadis (1996) makes a distinction between democracy as a "regime" and as a "procedure." Democracy has also been described as possessing content, as well as being both a destination and a journey. There are arguably also different aspects and degrees of democracy. Democracy is also described paradoxically as being about liberation and control.

Watson and Barber (1988) comment on the contradictory nature of democracy, noting that it is "most often the product of wisdom and blood, of reason and violence." Democracy is often described as messy and noisy, and as being "deeply rooted in talk" (Watson & Barber, 1988, p. xvii), and Montesquieu (1721/1993) told us this is because where there is "orderly silence" there is "tyranny"(pp. 140-141).

Democracy then is not a zero sum equation. For some it exists as part of their daily life and is associated with social justice, and for others it is simply a process. For some an ideal to struggle towards, and for others still, it seems to represent a somewhat abstract and demeaned, yet integral part of their national mythology or story—a democracy story or myth that often serves as the rhetorical wellspring of their pride in their nation or communities. Thus, for many adults and children democracy is a vague distant notion, a label defined by their own nation's practices, institutions and history, and not to be applied to "others." Democracy

is most often described as difficult to achieve but worth struggling for. Toqueville (1835) described democracy as a levelling process for wearing down hierarchy. Democracy could then be also described as being about hope and commitment, power, possibility and promise.

Democracy is most often defined in academic discourse by process, rather than by content.⁸ There is no shortage of political scientists, philosophers, economists, and educationists attempting to define, analyze, compare and contrast definitions of democracy. Many of their definitions are stipulative or conversely ambiguous and persuasive. Many attempts to define democracy also seem complicated by the differences between how it exists in theory and how it exists in practice; and further, by how it existed in “classical” Greece, and how it exists in contemporary nations, societies, communities, and organisations around the world today.

Unsurprisingly, many academic writers and researchers on democracy seem to take great relish in describing the “Classical Athenian democracy” as both a model and an ideal. In their starry-eyed retelling, Athens sounds a lot like what many hard liberal commentators would like to realise for their nations, with its “ideals”⁹ of political participation, strong sense of community, the sovereignty of the people, and equality of all citizens under the law (Ober & Hedrick, 1996). This classical Athenian ideal, so beloved of western writers on democracy, stands in stark contrast to the practice of individualistic capitalist power politics in modern representative democracies (and in complimentary shading to the Haudenosaunee conception of democracy which I will introduce later), which stress the procedural nature of representative democratic governance over the participatory and community based ideals of Athens. Attempts to expand the criteria for democracy demonstrate that it makes some sense to talk about *degrees* of democracy based on content and process rather than neatly dividing states or organisations into categories of democracies and non-democracies. Arguably, it makes sense to think that classrooms, pedagogies, and pedagogues, schools, and theories may come in different degrees of democracy. What do we learn if we begin to look at education and schools in this way? However what is the highest degree, or ideal we should use to judge our schools, organisations, leaders and governments? Who names it? Who are the custodians of the democratic ideal(s) in our society?

A Critical Red Conception of Democracy

For me an organisation, community, or nation can only be said to be truly democratic when it realises the process related ideals of generalised participation in decision-making and the content goal of peace, as

defined as the presence of social, economic, and environmental justice. I refer to this democracy as critical red democracy. Goodman (1992) articulated a similar expanded notion of democracy, which he refers to as “critical democracy.” His theory of critical participatory democracy, like Paulo Freire’s (2004), is dependent upon the dialogic process, which brings the voices of the oppressed and marginalised to the table at the moment of decision-making as subjects and honouring their words in the world. However, it is the core qualities related to social, economic, and environmental justice that distinguish a critical democracy.

Critical democracy also implies moral commitment to promote the ‘public good’ over any individual’s right to accumulate privilege and power. In this sense, it suggests strong values for equality and social justice. As a result critical democracy presupposes that social arrangements will be developed within a socio-historical context. When groups of people have suffered historically from economic, social, and/or psychological oppression, there are accepted responsibilities to alter current social arrangements to redress previous inequalities, whether these are based upon class, race, religion, ethnic, heritage, gender, or sexual preference. Critical democracy also suggests the extension of this responsibility beyond the borders of any particular state; that is, it recognises the interdependence of all life forms on this planet, and therefore implies a commitment to the welfare of all people and other living species that inhabit the earth. (Goodman, 1992, pp. 7-8)

Goodman and others who write in support of critical democracy are following a long and distinguished tradition in many Fourth World communities today and going back thousands of years in others. For example, the Haudenosaunee democracy could serve as an ideal of democracy that could supplant the classical Greek ideal, or the popular view of democracy. Of course, the Haudenosaunee democracy is just one example of many possible diverse sources of democratic inspiration and example for establishing contextualised or localised approaches to democracy as a way of life and governance. Exploring, celebrating, and struggling towards the Haudenosaunee ideals of democracy might possibly have a contagious and expansive effect on the participation of youth and non-dominant and marginalised groups in organisations, local, regional, national, and international civic and political society.

Critical Red Democracy: An Alternative Radical Grand Narrative

Before contact and to the present day the Haudenosaunee democratic ideal was of a participatory democracy with an equitable distribution

of economic, political, and social power, an inclusive social, economic, political, and environmental democracy, with an ideal trinity of protection, provision, and participation for its entire people. A “confederation” of distinct peoples who arguably achieved and continue to practice a freedom from wants and fear, and a freedom to speak, think and act that was the envy of many “enlightened” people who encounter(ed) them.¹⁰ Many more people and thinkers on democracy were first introduced to the Haudenosaunee through the eyes and words of writers like Rousseau (1978), Thomas More (1516/1929), Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (1884/1942) and Benjamin Franklin (in Johansen, 1982). From the rich and varied primary source records it is clear the Haudenosaunee achieved a remarkable level of inter-tribal peace, prosperity and “social justice.”¹¹ Agriculturists, democrats, diplomats, keen observers of mother earth and her teachings, the women and men of the Haudenosaunee were sometimes romanticised in early colonial accounts, yet not nearly as often as they fell to the colonial strategies of discipline, assimilation and ultimately attempted extermination.

As rigorously documented in the histories of the Haudenosaunee by Johansen (1990) and Oromo peoples of Ethiopia by Legasse (2000), there is mounting evidence to challenge western claims to historical precedence or superiority in the procedure and organisation of representational democracy. Similarly, Spring (2001) also recently argued “from evidence” of a strong historic respect for human rights in Muslim, Hindu, and Confucian “civilisations,” and the ongoing and inexorable interchange of ideas between the west and the “others.” Spring unfortunately fails to take into account the “asymmetrical power relations” (Mclaren & Giroux, 1997; Young, 1990) between nations, civilisations, cultures, and individuals that has resulted in an “inequitable global flow” of credit and claim to democracy, and its core qualities.

The continuing and historic contributions of Fourth World peoples to the conceptualisation, approach, procedure, and content of a range of democratic ideals, warrants broader public, academic, and intellectual recognition, nurturance, and critical celebration in our governments, academies, workplaces, schools, classrooms, texts, and discussions. The Haudenosaunee see values as shared principles that guide a good mind, good decisions and the good life. First among the democratic values is the importance of the participation of all members of the group and their thinking in decision making. Thinking is to be done collectively, with all decisions made by consensus. All people and points of view must be heard and respected including the interests of the coming seven generations and maintaining respect for the past seven generations.

For a discussion of the highly convincing evidence on the influ-

ence of the Haudenosaunee on the constitution of the United States the reader should refer to the well researched and engaging works of Grinde (1977), Johansen (1982, 1998), Bagley & Ruckman (1983), and Calloway (1995). The influence of Aboriginal “civilizations” on a progressive “democratic’ spectrum of writers and thinkers, including Utopians, anarchists, syndicalists, feminists, suffragettes, guild socialists, Marxists, environmentalists and Federalists to name but a few sects of, or approaches to democracy is richly detailed in primary sources. However, this “influence” is often neglected or ignored in the mainstream secondary literature on democracy and in the media (Johansen, 1998).

I hope that a short exploration of the example of the living Haudenosaunee democratic ideal, and its historic and continuing potential for influence on the practice, organisation, and philosophy of democracy will help the reader transcend the endemic cultural democratic myopia that serves to essentialise and mythologise democracy as a European legacy to the world, a legacy that erroneously ties democracy as a regime and process to western “representative democracies” and their predatory transnational military-industrial-liberal economies. I recognise that my efforts to use Haudenosaunee democracy as a comparative ideal (based on historic and living experience) will be resisted by some readers. As Forbes states, the imperial “denial” of “Native American intellectual influences” is a “cardinal act of faith in European superiority” (1990). I am preparing myself for a baptism in Eurohegemonic fire. Even the stodgy national newspaper of “multi-cultural Canada,” *The Globe and Mail* can be counted on to guard the Eurocanon by questioning the existence of the Haudenosaunee Peacemaker Deganiwidah and their long history of democracy, because “most experts don’t think they really existed” (17 August 2002). I can’t help but remain mindful that while the “Noble Savage” was “idealised” and even idolised by the great white fathers of democracy, they were “being slaughtered to make silence and way for progress” (Grinde, 1990, p. 48)

Haudenosaunee democratic tradition is a living ideal of democracy supportive of the transformative praxis of critical pedagogues and a source of philosophic inspiration and practical foundation for a redemptive democratisation of educational philosophy (Grande, 2004). Haudenosaunee democracy is inspired by inclusion, voice and participation, and founded upon a vision of peace, as the presence of economic and social justice, and the importance of reverence for, and the need to uphold a respectful custodianship of the air, water, land, and all animal life. A democracy that makes all decisions based on their possible benefits and consequences for the “coming faces” of seven generations, a democracy where even the voices of unborn children are heard and answered in

peace, protection, provision, and participation. Although conscious of the problems of portraying the Haudenosaunee nation, history, and people in monolithic terms, an overview of the ideals of the Haudenosaunee democracy or way of life, offers a valuable illustration of an alternative approach to democracy, as both a process founded on voice, and expressed through a content stressing peace and social, environmental and economic justice

The Peacemaker (Deganiwidah), the founder of the Haudenosaunee nation (1100 AD), carried with him the message of Kaianeraserakowa (The Great Law of Peace). The Huron Peacemaker came to the Haudenosaunee with his message of Skennen (Peace), Kariwiiio (The Good Word), and Kasatensera (Strength), which contains the principles of peace, equality, respect, love, and justice. All members of the Haudenosaunee are expected to be responsible to every other member past, present and future. This responsibility is to all members no matter their age or status. Responsibility and duty begins with service to the family, creation, clan, nation, and the Confederacy. Because each individual is a reflection of the group and creation they are asked to value and care for themselves without being egotistical and possessive or acquisitive. In fact, all labour and the results of all labour must be shared. Reality for the Haudenosaunee is also a collective ideal, with reality represented as a shared conception achieved only when a shared perception by all members (Johansen, 1998, p. 171). This shared or communal sense of reality is referred to as *Ethno niihtonha k ne onkwa Nikon:ra* (Now our minds are on one path). All gifts of the creator including special talents or abilities must be used to the benefit of the collective. The Haudenosaunee are also responsible for being observant, like the Far Seeing Eagle atop the Great Tree of Peace. They must be alert to changes in the environment and dangers on the horizon that may affect their neighbours, community, any relation (all people) and Mother Earth or themselves. One way to be observant is to listen carefully, a skill honoured as greatly as the power to speak.

One of the best ways to understand the Haudenosaunee is to look at what is being right minded among the Haudenosaunee. One of the most admired qualities of the right-minded individual is their desire to share and be generous with others. The right-minded Haudenosaunee is respectful of every person, creature and thing and is prepared at all times to offer their labour and ideas in cooperation with others. They honour others before themselves and give their love freely to all people. They offer hospitality to all people and living spirits in need and out of kindness to every person of the Four Colours and from the Four Sacred Directions. The right minded live in peace with all people and leave only the faintest prints on the earth where they have tread to mark

their passing. They must live in balance and harmony with nature, at all times considering the impact of their actions on the earth and all living beings including the sun, moon, earth, winds, and rain, and the living spirit in animals, plants, water, winds, and even minerals (Six Nations, 2003). The righteous Haudenosaunee give thanks for all that they receive from the creator and others and is not covetous or insincere in their appreciation for even the humblest gift of other living being and living spirits.

Conclusions

Discussions of democracy are rich in practical and theoretical possibilities for policy makers and public educators struggling daily to provide our children democracy in education, and an education for democracy. Dialogue on democracy helps us get our moral heads straight, to identify the sources of doubt, the ambiguities, contradictions, controversies, failures and successes, constraints and possibilities.

The grand narrative song of “western democracy” dominates, demeans, and degrades our understanding of the possibility and true nature of democracy. And so it has been the goal of this paper to focus critical red light on democracy on the word and the world, to journey along with the reader from Doxa to Logos, from the workhouse to the Longhouse.

Will we find the “quasi religious” path or inspiration in democracy that Stanford ecologist Paul Erlich (1986) theorises that we must locate to work our way out of our destructive way of life which threatens to irreparably poison our air, water and land, and threaten human and animal and plant survival? The biophilia, or literally love of life, that Harvard Biologist E. O. Wilson (1984) theorises that we must uncover and nurture within ourselves and our society if we and our Mother Earth are to survive? Can we start by raising the bar on what it means for an institution, state, or education system to be considered democratic? By adopting an ideal that stresses a substantive content of economic, social, and ecological justice, as well as procedures, that favour direct generalised participation and dialogue over elite representation and cooperation over competition, we may just survive. The only thing worth struggling for as educators, as people, are ideals, but we must first make sure the ideals are worth struggling for. Is democracy as popularly constructed worth struggling for, or, dying for?

Even if democracy is only a language game, should we all not be playing? The Peacemaker of the Haudenosaunee taught us that even unborn children should be playing, for democracy is about the past, present and future, about hopes, and possibilities. I believe educators

must take the lead in analysing, revitalising, debating, and reclaiming a resuscitated approach to and understanding of democracy. Our classrooms and schools should be sites where the core qualities, values and possibilities of democracy are discussed, and experienced. The social, economic, and ecological injustices we face together on our shared planet can only be ameliorated through a revitalised deliberative and participative democracy struggling for a clear core set of content based democratic ideals. As Dewey reminded us schools are laboratories for the study of different theories of democracy, not just the popular view.

Think not of yourselves, O Chiefs, nor of your own generation.
 Think of continuing generations of our families,
 think of our grandchildren and of those yet unborn,
 whose faces are coming from beneath the ground
 —The Peacemaker of the Haudenosaunee

Notes

¹ I am using critical “red” democracy in recognition of Sandy Grande’s (2004) recent book *Red Pedagogy* which explores the synergies embedded in the commonalities and differences within critical democratic pedagogy and indigenous ways of knowing, learning, living, and deciding.

² See Mulberger & Payne (1993). Democracy’s Place in World History, *Journal of World History*, Vol. 4, No. 1. pp. 23-45 and Price, J. *Reclaiming Democracy for the Longschoolhouse* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto, 2004.

³ See the documentary film, *The Corporation*, where Joel Bakan et.al compare the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual’s definition of psychotic with the public actions and stated policies and positions of Corporations.

⁴ Tönnies (1957) outlined the inherent contradiction between capitalist social relations and the development of community based on a sense of belonging, custom and tradition. In his concept of *gemeinschaft*, community respect is mutual and innate in all social relations which are not based primarily upon utilitarian or economic association. In contrast *gesellschaft* communities are characterised by predatory competitive legal relations where “others” are simply a means to an economic end. Where neighbour becomes client, customer, or potential customer, employee, or investor, and all are treated mechanically, as profit making capital units devoid of intellectual, cultural, social, spiritual and ecological value.

⁵ Freedom House in effect reinforces the popular view of democracy by stressing good governance and rule of law (processes) over content such as distribution of wealth, and environmental custodianship policies for example.

⁶ It should also be noted that for Dewey (1954) the philosophic basis of democracy was the expression of a pragmatic and productive spirit, while for the Haudenosaunee democracy is both the gift and the natural expression of the spiritual and the inherent human desire for peace and justice. In fairness, Dewey also offers an ethical argument for democracy as the most “humane condition”

in *Experience and Education*.

⁷ Freire (1970) held the Highlander Folk School up as an example of an empowering democratic school. For Horton the purpose of education was to empower individuals to think and act for themselves and to challenge social injustice. He worked alongside black civil rights leaders including Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, and Andrew Young, and poor white Appalachian mine workers.

⁸ For example: a reading of some western writers on democracy turned up the following attempts to define or describe features of democracy: (a) it is “not majority rule: democracy [is] diffusion of power, representation of interests, recognition of minorities” (John Calhoun, as paraphrased by Roper, 1998, p. 63); (b) “government by the people; that form of government in which the sovereign power resides in the people as a whole, and is exercised either directly by them . . . or by officers elected by them” (Oxford English Dictionary, 1933); (c) “a form of institutionalization of continual conflicts . . . [and] of uncertainty, of subjecting all interests to uncertainty . . .” (Przeworski, 1986, p. 58); (d) a regime that is “first and foremost a set of procedural rules for arriving at collective decisions in a way which accommodates and facilitates the fullest possible participation of interested parties” (Bobbio, 1987, p. 19); (e) “a system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives” (Schmitter & Karl 1991, 76); (f) “a state where political decisions are taken by and with the consent, or the active participation even, of the majority of the People. . . [L]iberalism, though recognizing that in the last resort the ‘legal majority’ must prevail, tries to protect the minorities as it does the civil rights of the individual, and by much the same methods. . . Liberal democracy is *qualified* democracy. The ultimate right of the majority to have its way is conceded, but that way is made as rough as possible” (Finer 1997, pp. 1568-1570); (g) characterised by providing “opportunities for (1) effective participation, (2) equality in voting, (3) gaining enlightened understanding, (4) exercising final control [by the people—WR] over the agenda, and (5) inclusion of adults”; (h) political institutions that are necessary to pursue these goals are “(1) elected officials, (2) free, fair and frequent elections, (3) freedom of expression, (4) alternative sources of information, (5) associational autonomy, and (6) inclusive citizenship” (Dahl 1998, 38 & 85); (i) democracy is “governance by leaders whose authority is based on a limited mandate from a universal electorate that selects among genuine alternatives and has some rights to political participation and opposition” (Danziger, 1998, p. 159).

⁹ Largely unrealised goals. The exclusionary nature of Athenian “citizenship” is a sharp contrast to the equitable participation in Haudenosaunee democracy with its empowered participation of women and youth, and the absence of property or racial qualifications for full “citizenship” and suffrage.

¹⁰ Alfred, 1995; Austin, 1986; Bagley, 1983; Bruchac, 1995; Burton, 1983; Calloway, 1995; Cassidy, 1995; Churchill, 1993; Deloria, & Lytle, 1983; Grinde & Johansen, 1995; Grinde, 1977, 1993, 1996; Hirschfelder, 1995; Howard & Rubin, 1995; Jaimes-Guerrero, 1995; Johansen, Grinde & Mann, 1996; Johansen, 1982; Joseph, 1995; Loewen, 1995; Markoff, 1996; Mihesuah, 1996; Parillo, 1996; Pom-

mersheim, 1995; Pratt, 1996; Steniem, et al,1998;Wagner, 1996; Zimmerman, 1996.

¹¹ See references in footnote 10.

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